



“STUDENT ENGAGED LEARNING THROUGH ADVOCACY OF MOUNTAIN WOMEN IN UTAH AND GLOBALLY”



Dr. Ross “Rusty” Butler,
The Main Representative to the United Nations
The Russian Academy of Natural Sciences
[an NGO in general consultative status with
the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC)]

PRESENTATION AT ROUND TABLE:
“JOINT ADVOCACY OF THE MOUNTAIN WOMEN AND
AGENDA AT THE UNITED NATIONS”
UTAH VALLEY UNIVERSITY,
OCTOBER 2, 2017

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- ✘ UVU model of student engaged learning contributed to the advocacy of mountain women as a result of the university:



- ✘ 1) Joining the United Nations Mountain Partnership (MP) in 2006; and



- ✘ 2) Hosting international Women of the Mountains Conferences under the umbrella of the MP as major events in North/South America to promote UN gender and sustainable mountain development agendas of the United Nations since 2007

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Item 19 (j) of the provisional agenda*
Sustainable development

Sustainable mountain development Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

Mountain and upland areas have a universal importance: they provide water and other global goods and services to humanity. However, mountain ecosystems are highly vulnerable to climate change, extreme weather events and land degradation and recover slowly from disasters and shocks. In the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, Member States pledged to leave no one behind and stressed the importance of reaching those furthest behind first. Mountain communities in developing countries are particularly vulnerable and require special attention, given that one in three people in those areas is at risk of hunger and malnutrition.

To achieve the Sustainable Development Goals and the targets relating to mountains as well as to poverty, hunger, sustainable agriculture, climate change and gender equality, there is a need to prioritize mountain areas by focusing on the specific challenges they face and the opportunities they provide. Mountain-specific policies and the inclusion of mountain communities in decision-making processes and capacity development can improve the livelihoods of communities while also conserving and restoring mountain ecosystems. In particular, efforts should be made to increase scientific knowledge of mountains and collect disaggregated data for sound analysis, policy advice and, ultimately, for change.

39. The Utah International Mountain Forum hosted the fourth International Women of the Mountains Conference at Utah Valley University in October 2015 to address the critical issues faced by women and children living in mountainous regions across the globe and provide a forum to discuss gender equality. The outcome document contained the following observations:³

- (a) Goal 5 could be achieved through strong support for improving women's rights and welfare, including women's full and effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership at all levels of decision-making in political, economic and public life;
- (b) Successful implementation of target 6.6 could be achieved by supporting the vital role that women play in the protection of the environment and water sources, particularly as custodians of traditional knowledge that builds resilience and allows for adaptation to climate change;
- (c) With respect to target 15.1, women play a critical role in joint planning as promoters of innovation, development and cooperation for common benefit.

* A/71/150.

3 "The final document of the fourth International Women of the Mountains Conference". Available from www.womenofthemountains.org/images/2015/16-03-31-WOMC-Finalized.pdf.



The fourth international Women of the Mountains conference was hosted for the first time by students as an engaged learning initiative.

The United Nations Secretary General's report on sustainable mountain development A/71/256 from July 29, 2016 featured the Utah International Mountain Forum, a coalition of student clubs as a:

- Host of the event; and
- Contributor to the implementation of such Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) of the United Nations as SDG#5 on gender; SDG# 6 on clean water and sanitation and SDG #15 on life on land

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- ✘ UVU and the Russian Academy of Natural Sciences (RANS) collaborate on SDGs related to gender equality, health, education, poverty eradication, sustainable mountain development, among others, since 2008.



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- ✘ RANS is an NGO in general consultative status with the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) since 2002 – one of only 136

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- ✘ UVU and RANS are members of the MP under the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO-UN).

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Tony Medina, President, UIMF at the 60th session of the UN Commission on the Status of Women, New York, March 15, 2016



UIMF members at the 61st session of the UN Commission on the Status of Women, New York, March 22, 2017



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- ✘ UVU, RANS and Utah China F.I.S.H.& D.& C., jointly contributed to the UVU students engaged learning by participating at the 60th (2016) and 61st (2017) sessions of the UN Commission on the Status of Women, UN headquarters, New York.



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- ✘ Main goals of the visits were to report about students contribution to the UN gender agenda by hosting WOMCs since 2007

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(Second row L to R): **H.E. Peter Thomson**, PR of Fiji, President of the 71st Session of the UN General Assembly and his wife **Marijcke, Mrs. Irina Churkin**, wife of PR of Russian Federation to the UN, **H.E. Katalin Bogyay**, PR of Hungary and her husband Tamas;
(First row L to R): **Dr. Rusty Butler**, the main representative of RANS to the UN, and **H.E. Vitaly Churkin**, PR of Russian Federation to the UN at the residence of the Hungarian PR to the UN.



- ✘ In May, 2016 UVU and RANS were honored for their joint UN-related work by Permanent Representatives (PRs) of several countries at the United Nations.

- ✘ The unique UVU/RANS collaboration was celebrated for its singular accomplishments of student inclusion in SDG advocacy, and as a model for youth worldwide.

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- ✘ Major statements made by RANS at the UN which highlighted UVU model of student advocacy of mountain women during the:
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- ✘ 1. 2017 ECOSOC Integration Segment on May 8-10, 2017:
<https://www.un.org/ecosoc/sites/www.un.org.ecosoc/files/files/en/integration/2017/RANS.pdf>;
 - ✘ ***
- ✘ 2. 55th Commission for Social Development (CSocD55) on 7 February 2017 (jointly with the Mountain Institute) : <http://mountain.org/wp-content/uploads/Final-TMI-RANS-MP-statement-for-CSocD55.pdf>
 - ✘ ***
- ✘ 3. Fourth High-Level Political Forum at ECOSOC on Sustainable Development (HLPF) on 11-15 July 2016
<http://womenofthemountains.org/docs/2016/the-russian-academy-natural-sciences.pdf>

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✘ RECOMMENDATIONS:

- ✘ 1. UVU model of successful student engaged learning through the advocacy of the gender and sustainable mountain development (SMD) agendas of the UN since 2007 needs to be shared with other academic institutions in North America;
- ✘ 2. Joint collaboration between UVU, RANS, TMI and Utah China F.I.S.H.& D.& C. needs to engage other interested UN-registered NGOs to further advocate both the mountain women and SMD agendas at the United Nations and during the CSW62 on March 13-23, 2018 as well.