

## Lecture by Mr. Maher Nasser, UN-DPI on Multiculturalism and Climate Change



On November 28<sup>th</sup>, 2018, Mr. Maher Nasser, from the United Nations Department of Public Information, came to Utah Valley University to lecture about the UN's responsibilities, mission, and ultimately the Sustainable Development Goals. The UN is a system of about 56 organizations, which affect people all around the world without restriction on religion, cultural differences, or status across the world. They support all people. For example, the World Food Programme (WFP) provides food aid to 80 million people, and the United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF) provide 40% of the world's children vaccinations, and IMO aviation organization to make sure airplanes are on separate courses during flight. They support and help in many aspects of our lives, in ways we would not even believe.

As Mr. Nasser mentioned, there are three pillars to the foundation of the UN: 1) Peace and Security. Peace and security are hard to measure and identify the significance of their role with quantitative figures. As the public, we typically only see the negatives in this area, for example,

when a group is unable to come to a consensus or agreement. However, there are many initiatives that are successful within local, national, and world organizations and governments. 2) Development. Mr. Nasser stated that it is hard to mention development without prefixing it with sustainable. Seventeen sustainable goals were recently created with the input of over 10 million people around the world. 3) Human Rights. Human rights is the “key pillar of the work of the organization because we all are born free in dignity and rights” words adopted by the UN in 1948.

Ultimately, the topic I found to be a highlight and a focus was how the UN comes together to solve world problems, like terrorism, crime, and disease, and climate changes, which know no boundaries. Mr. Nasser stated that climate control is a major priority that we all need to take action on today. He talked about natural disasters, which due to climate change are ultimately related to an increase in refugees, dry areas are getting dryer, rainy area becoming rainier, there are more frequent super storms. He mentioned that the sea levels are projected to increase due to 1-3 degree changes in the oceans median temperature, the acidity of the ocean has increased and 25% of the coral reef in Australia has been beached (died). All these phenomenas have been determined to be directly caused by human actions and this has been supported by numerous scientists.

Climate change affects all countries, and groups/sub-groups of people across the world. This topic is quite controversial and believed by some to be a “fake” issue and others feel like this topic should be the number one targeted issue worldwide. This is evident within the comparison of President Obama and President Trump’s beliefs on the topic. President Trump has put this issue on the back seat in America for right now.

Mr Maher stated that the biggest summit ever (about 5,000 people invited) is going to happen next year in New York at the UN to create a plan for the future in regards to climate change. We are so fortunate to have such an organization that supports all people no matter the current political situations between and within countries.

*Titus Elanyu, UVU student*

