

## **History of Altrusa's Association with the United Nations**

The preamble of the United Nations Charter affirms the aims and purposes that “we the peoples of the United Nations” are committed to realize through the United Nation’s Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC). The mission of ECOSOC, as set up by the Charter, is the promotion of “higher standards of living, full employment and conditions of economic and social progress and development; solutions of international economic, social, health and related problems; and universal respect for and observance of human rights and fundamental freedoms for all without distinction as to race, sex, language or religion.” Article 71 of the Charter provides for Ngo consultative status with ECOSOC. NGO are non-governmental organizations whose work is related to ECOSOC’s areas of responsibility, namely social and economic well being.

In 1946, Altrusa was the first international classified service club for executive and professional women to have an official observer appointed to the United Nations. The observer was Frances K. Marquis, president of the New York City Altrusa Club and chairman of the International Public relations Committee. Mrs. Marquis was Captain was Captain Marquis in World War II and the commanding officer of the first compete unit of WACS to arrive at General Dwight D. Eisenhower’s headquarters in North Africa.

In 1978, Altrusa received consultative status with ECOSOC, thanks to the efforts of Hilda Moar who succeeded Frances marquis as our UN representative. There are three categories of status for NGOs. General consultative status is for larger international NGOs whose area of work covers most of the issues on ECOSOC’s agenda. Special consultative status is for NGOs that have special competence in a few fields of the Council’s activity. The third category, which is inclusion on the Roster, is for NGOs whose competence enables them to make occasional and useful contributions to the work of the United Nations and who are available for consultation upon request. Altrusa falls within the third category.

Hilda Moar served as our UN representative from 1969 to 1983. She was said to have been a walking advertisement for Altrusa at the UN. Another Altrusan with a strong connection to the United Nations was Eleanor Roosevelt. Mrs. Roosevelt joined the Altrusa Club of New York City just a few months after the club received its charter on October 19, 1927. At the UN, Mrs. Roosevelt served as chairman of the Commission on Human Rights and was one of the drafters of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

The ensuing years saw a succession of UN representatives drawn from the Altrusa Club of New York City: Olga Bendiz (1983-1987); Austra Root (1987-1989); Maxine Gilliland (1989-1995); Mary Bartlett (1995-1999). These dates of service indicate each representative’s tenure as the main representative; however, in a number of instances, these representatives also served additional time as UN alternates to the preceding main representative. The current representative, Margaret Stadler, served as Mary Bartlett’s alternate for four years (1995-1999) and became the main representative in 1999.