

## Mr. Maher Nasser of United Nations Speaks on UVU Campus



*Mr. Maher Nasser lectured at Utah Valley University*

On November 28, 2018 students at Utah Valley University's (UVU) Office of Global Engagement hosted the United Nations' Director of Outreach for the Department of Public Information, Maher Nasser. He visited our university following a press conference he held with the mayor of Salt Lake City, Jackie Biskupski, where they announced that Salt Lake City would host the United Nations Department of Public Information and Non-governmental Organizations Conference in 2019. This is an event that students and faculty involved in the Utah International Mountain Forum at Utah Valley University will have the opportunity to help host.

In his speech on Wednesday the 28th, Nasser began by addressing multilateralism. Multilateralism is when several governments work together for the good of the people, which is exactly what the UN does. He tied this into the UN's sustainable development goals and why their work to achieve those goals is for the collective good and a great example of

multilateralism in action. He gave several other examples of multilateralism. He said that flight patterns, vaccinations, and international humanitarian organizations, specifically UNICEF, are examples of countries communicating and working together for the success and safety of everyone.

As Nasser moved into what multilateralism can do to obtain the sustainable development goals set by the UN, he used the issue of climate change as an example. He talked about the UN's attempt to reverse the effects that people have already set in place as much as they possibly can. He said that the issue of climate change isn't something that only one state can fix, but it's something that countries all over the world need to work on together to preserve our planet. Mr. Nasser pointed out that these sustainable development goals aren't just the goals of the United Nations, but they are the goals of the people. He said that while making these goals, members of the UN reached out to citizens across the globe looking for feedback as to which goals would best benefit the whole. He said that these goals aren't talking points, they aren't trying to push a political agenda, they are just looking to help the citizens of their country. The especially turned to the opinions of the youth because there are currently more young adults and children on earth than ever before.

Mr. Nasser emphasized that the issues he talked about, those referred to the sustainable development goals, are not going to be fixed by the government alone. One way that they are trying to get people outside of the government to care about these issues is by raising awareness. That is what Mr. Nasser is doing as he shared this information with the students of UVU. By making sure that students are informed of the danger and possible outcomes if issues like climate change and poverty persist, he hopes that they will decide to make a conscious effort to aid in finding a solution to these issues. It was my understanding that one of the main goals is getting the youth engaged in preserving our planet and the safety of our people across the globe.

I was very impressed with Mr. Nasser's ability to speak intelligently and with conviction. I was impressed by his passion for youth involvement when he stated that we shouldn't "wait to be invited to sit at the table." As a young member of society, I felt that there was more that I could be doing to decrease my negative impact on the world. While Mr. Nasser was speaking to a group, I felt like he was speaking directly to me. I enjoyed the facts and statistics that he shared during his short time on campus, but I especially enjoyed the call to action that he extended to those in attendance. There is so much more that I can be doing to leave an impact, not just right now, but for generations to come.

**Mary Nelson, UVU Student**