

# Serving the United Nations

*A Collection of Memoirs of  
Chinese Former International Civil Servants*

联合国早期华籍  
国际公务员传略选辑

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Serving the United Nations: A Collection of Memoirs of  
Chinese Former International Civil Servants  
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Dedicated to our colleagues  
and friends who devoted  
their lifelong work to the  
international civil service

## PREFACE

The Association of Former International Civil Servants in New York – AFICS (NY) – was created in 1970 to serve those who had been employed by the United Nations or any of the other organizations of the United Nations System since its origin in 1945. It was spearheaded through the initiative of a group of retirees and serving staff members and their representatives on the UN Staff Committee and UN Staff Council, with strong approval, encouragement and support from the then Secretary-General, U Thant.

One means of carrying out AFICS (NY)'s mission<sup>1</sup> is to foster communication and mutual support among its members (now 3,500 and growing steadily) by promoting a sharing of their diverse experiences while working in one or another of the UN organizations. This is accomplished, in part, by publishing a *Quarterly Bulletin*, distributed to the AFICS membership, which includes accounts of various incidents or assignments members recall from their UN working days. In addition, AFICS (NY) published, in 1999 and 2000, two publications entitled "Remembering the United Nations – Memorable Experiences Recalled by Former UN Staff Members." It also issued "Memories of Dag Hammarskjöld," a collection of recollections of the former Secretary-General by members of AFICS (NY), in September 2001 on the 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of his death.

I was thus delighted to learn of plans to publish a two-volume book in Chinese, "The Chinese in the United Nations," initiated by a dedicated group of Chinese former international civil servants, many of them AFICS members, and we were happy to assist the researchers in locating Chinese former staff members to obtain their stories. The book in Chinese was published in 2004 and reviewed by AFICS (NY) in its July *Bulletin* of that year.

Realizing that the stories of many of the Chinese men and women who worked within the UN system since 1945 would be of interest not only to the Chinese community, but to the UN family in general – retirees as well as staff presently serving – the originators proceeded to locate or produce translations of some of the stories contained in the Chinese book, as well as to obtain additional material that was available in English. The present volume is the result of that effort.

It must be noted that "Serving the United Nations – A Collection of Memoirs of Chinese Former International Civil Servants" is not all-inclusive. Time, space and logistical constraints did not permit the addition of accounts from the very large number of Chinese technical experts in various fields who served the United Nations system over the years. Nevertheless, the English-language book does offer a glimpse of the wide range of experiences of Chinese former international civil servants at all levels, from translators, interpreters and administrators, to senior officials dealing with trusteeship and non-self-governing territories, peacemaking, political,

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<sup>1</sup> The mission of AFICS (NY) is to support and promote the purposes, principles and programmes of the UN System; to advise and assist former international civil servants and those about to separate from service; to represent the interests of its members within the System; to foster social and personal relationships among members, to promote their well-being and to encourage mutual support of individual members.

General Assembly, Security Council and conference services issues, and technical assistance and technical cooperation.

The members of the Governing Board of AFICS (NY) join me in hoping that the stories in this publication will instil in all readers a sense of pride and solidarity in the accomplishments of a group of former international civil servants that has contributed so much to the UN and its achievements worldwide.

Andrés Castellanos del Corral  
President, AFICS (NY)

## FOREWORD

In 2004, a two-volume Chinese book, titled "联合国里的中国人" or "The Chinese in the United Nations," was published in Beijing, China. The book is a collection of personal recollections and memoirs written by or about staff of Chinese origin who served the United Nations family of organizations during the period 1945 - 2003. A brief review of that book in English, as published in the *Quarterly Bulletin* of the Association of Former International Civil Servants – AFICS (New York) – is reproduced below.

Although the book was published in Chinese, it has attracted the attention of many non-Chinese readers who are interested in this period of contemporary history and the history of the United Nations. There has thus been a demand for an English volume that would reproduce part, if not all, of the book's contents.

In fact, while most of the articles in the book were written in Chinese, some of them were originally written or published in English and were later translated into Chinese. Even among those articles originally written in Chinese, a number had already been translated into English and so were readily available in an English version.

As members of the Editorial Board of the Chinese book, we have voluntarily undertaken to collect the English versions of articles in those two categories and put them together as a separate publication. Given this limited scope of coverage, a large number of articles in the Chinese book unfortunately had to be left out. We especially regret that many valuable articles pertaining to Chinese individuals who joined the UN and its affiliated organizations after the restoration of China's representation in the United Nations in 1971 could not be included, simply because of a lack of available English versions.

Thus, this volume is not an English edition of the Chinese book, nor is it intended to be. It may be considered essentially as an English abridgement of the Chinese book, covering mostly the earlier generation of Chinese international civil servants, for the benefit of non-Chinese readers.

For this reason, this book has a different title than the Chinese one. It is called "Serving the United Nations," adapted from the title, "Remembering the United Nations," that was used by AFICS (New York) for its series of two volumes of a similar nature. Nevertheless, it follows the same layout as the Chinese book, with its contents divided into sections according to the main fields of UN activities. Within each section, articles are arranged in the order of the individual's entry into UN service.

As it is, this book contains a collection of the service record of a total of 30 individuals of Chinese origin who devoted their lifelong work to the UN system.

This service record comes in different forms and styles. A large part of it consists of extracts from autobiographical or biographical works that were written or published, in English or in



Chinese, by the individuals concerned or their family members. A number of articles are personal recollections of memorable experiences during their service with the UN organizations. Others are sketches or vignettes written by colleagues or family members in remembrance of the individuals concerned. A few are adapted from newspaper articles.

The variety of sources from which this collection of memoirs is drawn offers different perspectives of the work experiences. We have not striven to set a uniform tone or consistency of style since we believe that each article brings with it an insight into not only the workings of the UN organizations, but also the personalities of the individuals concerned. We hope that the readers will find each article informative and interesting.

In sum, this book represents our joint efforts to collect and preserve, in the English language, the historical record of a generation of persons of Chinese origin in the service of the world organization to which we ourselves have dedicated our working life. We are gratified that our voluntary project has received the support of the Governing Board of AFICS (New York) through its endorsement of this book, as indicated by the thoughtful Preface written by its President, Andrés Castellanos del Corral.

In preparing for the publication, we are first of all grateful for the contributions of our colleagues to both projects. We also appreciate their consent or the consent of their families to our gathering these articles in their English versions.

This project would not have been possible without the kind cooperation and assistance of Professor Li Tieching, the chief Editor of the Chinese volumes, in gathering some of the English texts and Mary Lynn Hanley, the Editor of the AFICS (New York) *Quarterly Bulletin*, in editing all the English versions with meticulous care; and for the valuable advice and support of our former colleagues Kuo-Ho Chang and Jack Ling. We also sincerely appreciate the contribution of Professor Chung-Heng Liu who designed the book cover, with the motif of the bamboo plant, which, in Chinese legend, is a symbol of the virtue of public officials who strive to stand tall, upright and incorruptible. Last but not least, our thanks go to Ying-Ying T. Yuan, the daughter of Patricia Tsien, who played a pivotal role in coordinating the publication of this book.

Patricia Koo Tsien  
Shing-Yi (S. Y.) Huang



# THE CHINESE IN THE UNITED NATIONS

By S. Y. Huang

(Reproduced from the July 2004 issue of the *AFICS, New York Quarterly Bulletin*)

"The Chinese in the United Nations" is a two-volume book published in Chinese under the title "Lienheguo li di Zhongguoren." It is basically a compendium of personal remembrances or memoirs written by or for a group of individuals of Chinese origin who worked for the United Nations since its founding in 1945, up to the year 2003. The book therefore provides a unique service record of international civil servants from a single Member State, namely China, who have served the world organization during that period.

Published in March 2004, the book is the result of a research project undertaken by the United Nations Studies Center of the Beijing University of Culture and Language in China in cooperation with several retired staff members of the UN Secretariat. Accordingly, it begins with two studies of a general nature: an introduction to the international civil service system and an overview of the history and present status of the Chinese staff serving with the United Nations. It also includes, at the end, press interviews with a number of prominent Chinese officials currently serving with the UN Secretariat, and with the first Chinese national ever to hold the position of the presidency of the International Court of Justice.

The main body of the book consists of a collection of articles that record the work experiences and accomplishments of some 87 international civil servants of Chinese origin, including three former judges of the International Court of Justice. The articles are distributed among chapters according to the main fields of UN activities. Within each chapter, articles are arranged in the order of the entry of the individual it concerns into United Nations service. In most cases, articles are accompanied by photographs of the staff members concerned.

The Chinese staff covered in the book may be said, figuratively, to belong to two generations. The first generation comprises those who joined the Secretariat in its formative years when China, emerging as a permanent member of the Security Council, was one of the major sources from which many UN Professional staff were recruited. Moreover, as Chinese was prescribed as one of the official languages of the new organization, there was also the need to employ a large number of translators and interpreters of Chinese origin.

This initial group of Professional staff was recruited from the ranks of Chinese diplomatic service and from Chinese scholars and graduate students who happened to be in the United States and Europe at that time. Most of them stayed on to become career staff of the Secretariat and formed part of the original core of the international civil service. They included Dr. Victor Hoo, one of the first Assistant Secretaries-General in the Secretariat; Dr. Feng-Yang Chai, the first Secretary of the Security Council; Fu-Tchin Liu, a pioneer in peacekeeping operations; Dr. Chi-Yu Wu, a Director of Public Administration; Dr. Yuen-Li Liang, a long-time Secretary of the International Law Commission; and Patricia Tsien, in charge of non-self-governing territories' affairs, to name a few whose careers are covered in the book.

The second generation is composed of Chinese staff who joined the Secretariat after the restoration of China's representation in 1971. Most of them were officials of the Chinese Government on secondment to the United Nations. They brought with them rich experiences in diplomatic and other public services. Starting with Under Secretary-General Tang Ming-Chao for trusteeship and political affairs, they were led by a succession of USGs, responsible for economic and technical cooperation affairs or General Assembly and conference affairs.

Throughout UN history there have been a large number of other staff members of Chinese origin who have served the world organization in different categories, at various levels and in all fields of activity. Regardless of the generation to which they belonged, they all came from the heritage of a traditional Chinese civil service system based on meritocracy and loyalty, two of the cardinal principles of international civil service.

The book has an appendix that sets out two separate staff lists covering a total of over 1,200 such Chinese staff members. On the basis of relevant public records, the lists – one of former staff members and another of current ones – are compiled in a comprehensive and systematic way to show their names in English and in Chinese along with a resume of their UN career.

The significance of the book is fully reflected in its two prefaces. One of them is written by former Vice-Premier and Foreign Minister Huang Hua in his capacity as the first Permanent Representative of the People's Republic of China accredited to the United Nations. He considers the book to be "of great value as an historical record" that "fills a gap in the history of China's multilateral diplomacy, to the benefit of not only contemporary readers, but also of future generations."

Another preface is written by former Under Secretary-General James Jonah who at one time served as the head of the UN Personnel Office. He points out that, at the present juncture when the international civil service is facing challenges, "it is important that the public at large understands the deep meaning that the concept of international civil service had to a group of Chinese nationals" and recognizes their dedicated service and contributions to the United Nations and the international community. He would therefore "encourage wider dissemination of the contents of this valuable historical record," with the hope that the book could serve as "a model for other Member States to encourage their nationals who have retired from the international civil service to record their experiences with the United Nations."

## LIST OF ACRONYMS USED IN TEXT

<b>ACABQ</b>	Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions
<b>ACC</b>	Administrative Committee on Coordination
<b>AFICS (NY)</b>	Association of Former International Civil Servants, New York
<b>ASG</b>	Assistant Secretary-General
<b>CCAQ</b>	Consultative Committee on Administrative Questions
<b>CMA</b>	Chinese Medical Association
<b>CNRRRA</b>	Chinese National Relief & Rehabilitation Administration
<b>CSC</b>	Chinese Supply Commission
<b>DAMS</b>	Directorate of the Army Medical Service
<b>DPI</b>	Department of Public Information
<b>DG</b>	Director-General
<b>ECA</b>	Economic Commission for Africa
<b>ECAFE</b>	Economic Commission for Asia and the Far East
<b>ECE</b>	Economic Commission for Europe
<b>ECOSOC</b>	Economic and Social Council
<b>EOSG</b>	Executive Office of the Secretary-General
<b>ESCAP</b>	Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific
<b>FAO</b>	Food and Agriculture Organization of the UN
<b>GA</b>	General Assembly
<b>GATT</b>	General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade
<b>IAEA</b>	International Atomic Energy Agency
<b>IBRD</b>	International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (also called The World Bank)
<b>ICAO</b>	International Civil Aviation Organization
<b>IC.ITO</b>	Interim Commission for International Trade Organization
<b>ICSC</b>	International Civil Service Commission
<b>IGO</b>	Inter-Governmental Organization
<b>ILO</b>	International Labor Organization
<b>IMCO</b>	Intergovernmental Maritime Consultative Organization
<b>IMF</b>	International Monetary Fund
<b>IRO</b>	International Refugee Organization
<b>ITU</b>	International Telecommunications Union
<b>JAB</b>	Joint Appeals Board
<b>JAC</b>	Joint Advisory Committee
<b>OAS</b>	Organization of American States
<b>OEEC</b>	Organization for European Economic Cooperation
<b>OIHP</b>	Office International d'Hygiene Publique
<b>ONUC</b>	Organisation des Nations Unies: Congo
<b>OPS</b>	Office of Personnel Services
<b>PASB</b>	Pan American Sanitary Bureau
<b>PICAO</b>	Provisional International Civil Aviation Organization
<b>Prep Com</b>	Preparatory Committee
<b>PUMC</b>	Peking Union Medical College
<b>SG</b>	Secretary-General (of the UN)

<b>SMCC</b>	Staff-Management Coordination Committee
<b>TAB</b>	Technical Assistance Board
<b>UN</b>	United Nations
<b>UNCIO</b>	UN Conference on International Organization
<b>UNCTAD</b>	Un Conference on Trade and Development
<b>UNDP</b>	UN Development Programme
<b>UNEF</b>	UN Emergency Force
<b>UNESCO</b>	UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
<b>UNFICYP</b>	UN Force in Cyprus
<b>UNHCR</b>	UN High Commissioner for Refugees
<b>UNIC</b>	UN Information Centre
<b>UNICEF</b>	UN Children's Fund
<b>UNIDO</b>	UN Industrial Development Organization
<b>UNMOGIP</b>	UN Military Observers Group for India and Pakistan
<b>UNOGIL</b>	UN Observers Group in Lebanon
<b>UNROD</b>	UN Relief Operation in the Dacca area
<b>UNRRA</b>	UN Relief and Rehabilitation Administration
<b>UNRWA</b>	UN Relief and Works Agency
<b>UNTAA</b>	UN Technical Assistance Administration
<b>UNTC</b>	UN Tennis Club
<b>UNTSO</b>	UN Truce Supervision Organization
<b>UPU</b>	Universal Postal Union
<b>USG</b>	Under Secretary-General
<b>USPHS</b>	U.S. Public Health Service
<b>Weishengshu</b>	National Health Administration of China
<b>WHA</b>	World Health Assembly
<b>WHO</b>	World Health Organization
<b>WHO.IC</b>	WHO Interim Commission
<b>WMO</b>	World Meteorological Organization



## TABLE OF CONTENTS

		<b>Page</b>
Preface	Andrés Castellanos del Corral	v
Foreword	Patricia Koo Tsien Shing-Yi (S. Y.) Huang	vii
List of acronyms used in text		xi
<b>PART I. THE UNITED NATIONS SECRETARIAT</b>		
<b>A. Under Secretaries-General and Assistant Secretaries-General</b>		<b>3</b>
Victor Chi-Tsai Hoo	Mona Yung-Ning Hoo	3
Painting the Shadows: The Extraordinary Life of Victor Hoo (Excerpts)	Mona Yung-Ning Hoo	4
Chapter Seven: Trusteeship Department		4
Chapter Eight: Israel		13
Remembering Fu-Tchin (F. T.) Liu	George L. Sherry	23
My United Nations career and UN peacekeeping operations	Fu-Tchin Liu	26
USG Tang Ming-Chao	Patricia Koo Tsien	35

<b>B. Other Secretariat staff members</b>		37
<b>1. Political Affairs</b>		37
Feng-Yang Chai	Robert H. Eastbrook	37
Chapter XI of the Charter and Decolonization (1947-1979)	Patricia Koo Tsien	39
Mission to Togoland: insights and sidelights	Fuyun Hsu	54
<b>2. Economic Affairs and Regional Economic and Social Commissions</b>		62
In remembrance of Heng-Kang Sang	Nancy Hou Sang	62
In memory of Kia-Kwei Tsien	Dawn Tsien	65
	Andrew Joseph	66
	Mona Yung-Ning Hoo	66
Life as an international servant	Nian-Tzu Wang	67
Some recollections from my years of working for the United Nations in Africa	Ke-Chiang Wang	88
<b>3. Social Affairs and Public Administration</b>		96
My experience as an international civil servant in the United Nations (1947-1974)	Chi-Yuan Wu	96
Remembering Teh Lu Tchang	Tsung Chu Tchang	103
<b>4. Administration and Management</b>		105
Remembering Hui Kwong	Patricia Koo Tsien	105
	Kuo-Ho Chang	106
	S. Y. Huang	107

My United Nations days	Kuo-Ho Chang	109
In remembrance of Robert Shun-Hsian Lee	Francine T. Lee	121
My life as an international civil servant	S. Y. Huang	122
From the Budget Division to the Economic and Social Commission of Asia and the Pacific	Samuel Chao	141
<b>5. Language services</b>		147
Robert T. Mok, a pioneer Chinese language translator of the United Nations Secretariat	Ellie Mao Mok	147
My friend, Paul You	Kuo-Ho Chang	150
Chia-Ching (C. C.) Fan and simultaneous interpretation in the United Nations (1946-1981)	Maria Fan	160
Remembering Ray Peng	Kuo-Ho Chang	162
From international civil service to retirement	Lien Lai	164
<b>6. Other services</b>		170
Dr. Szeming Sze	Sharon Vos	170
Working for the United Nations, 1948-1968	Szeming Sze	173
A champion of the rights of women in the United Nations	Mei-Sun Yen	185
Memories of the United Nations Protocol Office	Juliana Young Koo	188
My work at the Information and Reception Unit	Shih Ping C. Cho	191

Architect Yen Liang	S. Y. Huang	193
Librarian, Dag Hammarskjöld Library	Olia Wang	197

## **PART II. OTHER ORGANIZATIONS IN THE UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM**

<b>1. World Health Organization</b>		205
The origins of the World Health Organization	Szeming Sze	205
<b>2. UNESCO and International Atomic Energy Agency</b>		217
In remembrance of Kia-Chi (K. C.) Tsien	Patricia Koo Tsien	217
<b>3. General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade</b>		222
Constant Shih of GATT	Diana Shih	222
<b>4. UNICEF</b>		223
A half century of service with the United Nations	Jack Chien-Sheng Ling	223



## **PART I. THE UNITED NATIONS SECRETARIAT**