

Transnational Associations

The review of the Union of International Associations



6/99

Le devoir de mémoire

Henri Lafontaine:
a true international man

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Associations transnationales

La revue de l'Union des associations internationales

Transnational Associations Associations transnationales

Transnational Associations is a unique bilingual journal whose aim is to deal with major current problems within the perspective of international nongovernmental organizations. It is intended to provide a forum for authoritative information and independent reflection on the increasing role played by these organizations in the international system, and on its philosophical, political, economic or cultural implications.

The approach is intrinsically interdisciplinary, and calls for both specialist expertise and practitioner experience in transnational association matters. Transnational Associations provides background information about the actions and achievements of international associations, and insight into their interrelations with intergovernmental organizations. It covers a wide range of topics, among which social organization, humanitarian law, scientific cooperation, language and culture, economic development, to cite just a few.

The programme of the review, in accordance with the principles of the UIA, clarifies general awareness concerning the association phenomenon within the framework of international relations and, in particular, informs associations about aspects of the problems which they tend to share or which are of common interest to them. Contributors to the journal review include association officers, research workers and specialists of association questions who engage only themselves.

Founded in Brussels in 1907 as the Central Office of International Associations, the UIA became a federation under the present name in 1910 at the 1st World Congress of International Associations. Activities were closely associated with the Institut international de bibliographie, which later became the International Federation for Documentation. Its work contributed to the creation of the League of Nations and the International Institute of Intellectual Cooperation (the predecessor of UNESCO). During the 1920s, the UIA created an International University, the first of its kind.

The UIA has consultative relations with UNESCO, UN/ECOSOC, and ILO. It collaborates with FAO, the Council of Europe, UNITAR, and the Commonwealth Science Council.

Associations transnationales est la seule revue traitant des grands problèmes contemporains dans la perspective des organisations internationales non gouvernementales. Elle se propose d'apporter des éléments d'information provenant des sources les plus autorisées, propres à susciter une réflexion indépendante sur l'affirmation du rôle joué par ces acteurs dans le système international et sur les aspects philosophiques, politiques, sociaux et culturels de cette évolution.

La visée adoptée est essentiellement interdisciplinaire et fait appel à un savoir comme à la pratique des spécialistes du champ d'action des associations transnationales. Les documents, articles et études publiés par Associations transnationales traitent également des liens établis entre celles-ci et les organisations intergouvernementales. Les domaines couverts s'étendent aux problèmes de société, au droit humanitaire, à la coopération scientifique, aux questions linguistiques et culturelles, au développement économique ou à tout phénomène affectant la vie de ces associations.

Le programme de la revue, conformément aux buts de l'UIA, vise à éclairer l'opinion sur la signification de la dimension associative des relations internationales, notamment en informant les associations au sujet des questions qui relèvent de leurs domaines ou affectent leurs intérêts communs. Les textes des auteurs publiés par la revue (dirigeants d'associations, chercheurs et spécialistes des questions associatives) n'engagent que leur opinion.

L'UIA a été créée officiellement en 1910 à Bruxelles au cours du premier congrès mondial des associations internationales. Ses fondateurs, le Sénateur Henri La Fontaine, prix Nobel de la Paix 1913 et Paul Otlet, Secrétaire général de l'Institut international de bibliographie, avaient mis sur pied en 1907 l'«Office central des institutions internationales» auquel l'UIA succéda sous la forme de fédération. En 1914, elle regroupait 230 organisations, soit un peu plus de la moitié de celles qui existaient à l'époque. L'UIA devait incarner, dans l'esprit de ses fondateurs, les aspirations internationalistes et les idéaux de paix qui animaient les associations et qui allaient aboutir en 1920 à la création de la Société des Nations.

L'UIA a obtenu le statut consultatif auprès de l'ECOSOC, de l'UNESCO et de l'OIT. Elle collabore avec l'UNITAR, la FAO et le Conseil de l'Europe. Elle entretient des relations générales et ponctuelles avec les organisations régionales.

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Le devoir de mémoire

par Federico Mayor*

Nous peuples des Nations unies, résolus à préserver les générations futures du fléau de la guerre... Par ces mots, débute la Charte des Nations unies. C'était en 1945 à San Francisco. La guerre qui venait de s'achever avait été le théâtre des plus abominables pratiques de destruction massive et individuelle. L'horreur au fond des yeux, les peuples de la Terre songeaient à leurs enfants et leurs petits-enfants, et décidaient de leur éviter les déchirements qu'ils avaient vécus.

Les guerres prenant naissance dans l'esprit des hommes, c'est dans l'esprit des hommes que doivent être élevées les défenses de la paix. Ce paragraphe ouvre l'acte constitutif de l'Unesco, signé à Londres en novembre 1945.

La paix se construit chaque jour, et sa construction est l'oeuvre de chacun. La paix est une attitude forgée par l'éducation, par la science et par la culture, qui confère à chaque être humain la faculté d'agir selon sa conscience. Lorsque les V-2 tombaient sur le Royaume-Uni, le ministre britannique Butler eut la conviction que seule l'éducation, seuls la connaissance et le respect des autres cultures, la certitude de la force du dialogue, la participation aux affaires publiques, pourraient désormais empêcher le génocide, la sélection ethnique, la torture, le baïllon.

Eviter la guerre en prenant le mal à la racine : l'injustice de l'exclusion et de la misère, source d'émigration et de comportements fanatiques et extrémistes. Mieux partager, pour prévenir les disparités sociales aiguës. Au «Si tu veux la paix, prépare la guerre», nous avons progressivement opposé le «Prépare la paix» : si tu veux la paix, prépare-la, consolide-la. N'accepte pas l'inacceptable; écoute, toujours, mais agis selon ton critère; ne recherche pas autour de toi les réponses aux questions essentielles, car ces réponses sont en toi. Eviter la guerre par le développement, par la liberté d'expression, qui transforme la légalité en justice, par une meilleure répartition des ressources de toute nature.

Combien d'affrontements avons-nous évités
Combien de dignité - la «solidarité intellectuelle et morale» prônée par la grande charte de l'Unesco - n'avons-nous défendu ou restauré! Ce qu'on a su éviter, ce qui n'est pas arrivé, on ne le voit pas. La paix ne se voit pas. On ne voit pas la vie hasardeuse ou souriante et pleine d'espoir.

On ne voit pas ce qu'on évite. Mais il n'est pas de plus grande victoire, et nous devons tous - les médias en premier - contribuer à dire et à concrétiser l'invisible, ce qu'on ne montre pas à l'écran, ce qu'on n'annonce pas à la radio, ce qu'on n'écrit pas dans la presse.

Depuis quelques années, la démocratie gagne du terrain; la voix du peuple se fait entendre là où il n'y avait auparavant que silence. C'était la paix de la sécurité. Aujourd'hui commence à apparaître la sécurité de la paix. La discrimination raciale - l'abominable apartheid - a été vaincue en Afrique du Sud et en Namibie. La paix a été obtenue au Mozambique, au Salvador, au Guatemala, et elle va l'être en Ulster et au Moyen-Orient, grâce à la détermination et à la persévérance. Grâce aussi à la vision de l'avenir. A cette vision surtout, car dans les moments de crise, seule l'imagination importe plus que la connaissance, comme le disait Einstein.

L'éducation pour tous

Préserver du fléau de la guerre. Comment? Par un développement durable à l'échelle mondiale, et par un juste partage. En aidant tous les pays à acquérir les connaissances nécessaires. En faisant en sorte que tous les citoyens puissent participer, c'est-à-dire compter dans les affaires publiques et pas seulement être comptés dans les sondages d'opinion et les élections.

Au centre du triangle interactif paix-développement-démocratie se trouve l'éducation. L'éducation pour tous, tout au long de la vie. Le démocrate est le meilleur moyen de lutter contre la pauvreté, écrit Amartya Sen, Prix Nobel d'économie.

Dans les années 90, comme s'ils pressentaient la nécessité du changement, de nombreux pays, parmi lesquels les plus peuplés du monde, ont consenti un gros effort d'investissement dans l'éducation, introduisant dans leurs budgets de nouvelles priorités. A un essor de l'éducation correspond, de façon presque inversement proportionnelle, une diminution de la croissance démographique. L'éducation est le meilleur régulateur de la natalité. Le rythme actuel d'apparition de 254.000 nouveaux «passagers» de la planète Terre chaque jour - souvenons-nous! - devrait décroître si les tendances récentes se maintiennent.

* Ancien directeur général de l'Unesco. Article paru précédemment dans Le Soir (édition du 16 août 1999).

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Cependant, le cercle vicieux d'un système financier fondé sur des prêts qui enrichissent ceux qui le accordent (et font marcher leurs usines) et appauvrissent ceux qui les reçoivent (ne pouvant créer les leurs ni exploiter leurs ressources naturelles) engendre une asymétrie croissante. La richesse s'accumule d'un côté, la misère de l'autre. Richesse souvent inaperçue et triste, car on n'aime pas ce qu'on n'a pas rêvé et mérité.

Ainsi, guidés par les forces du marché et les indices à court terme, au lieu de l'être par des mesures politiques inspirées de la Déclaration universelle des droits de l'homme, nous avons Oublié peu à peu l'horreur de la guerre. Nous sommes allés à de grandes conférences mondiales sur l'environnement, la population, le développement social, le rôle de la femme-mais nous n'avons pas honoré nos engagements. En 1974, les pays développés convenaient, à l'Assemblée générale des Nations unies, de consacrer 0,7 % de leur PIB aux moins favorisés. Il leur en restait 99,3 %. A l'exception de certains pays nordiques, ils n'ont pas tenu non plus cette promesse. Pire, depuis trois ou quatre ans, le pourcentage du PIB affecté à la coopération internationale a baissé (jusqu'à 0,2 % !), tandis que les dépenses militaires augmentaient (de 3 à 5 fois dans nombre de pays).

Délit de silence

Devoir de mémoire, délit de silence... Nous avons oublié les déchirements et la douleur de la violence et de la guerre. La guerre est perverse, non les peuples. Non ceux qui sont brutalement balayés par la tourmente. Mais nous n'avons pas élevé la voix assez fort pour que la clameur alerte nos dirigeants. Et au lieu de consolider la paix, nous avons laissé la raison de la force l'emporter à nouveau sur la force de la raison, prévaloir sur la prévention, sur l'effort permanent de persuasion et de dialogue. Nous n'avons pas créé d'alliances sous-régionales pour intervenir rapidement en cas de catastrophe, pour limiter leur impact, pour anticiper, dans la mesure du possible, les incendies de foi dévastateurs, les ouragans... Nous n'avons pas appris encore à payer le prix de la paix, et nous voilà déjà en train de payer à nouveau celui de la guerre.

Le prix (en vies humaines - le monument le

plus accompli à préserver) du conflit mondial de 1939-1945, a entraîné la création des Nations unies. En 1989, la chute du mur de Berlin a fait entrevoir au monde de nouveaux horizons de changement. Le Rideau de fer était corrodé : fondé sur l'égalité, il avait laissé de côté la liberté. Nous connaissons aujourd'hui la faillite d'un système fondé sur la liberté qui a oublié l'égalité. Et, comme l'autre, la fraternité.

Quand nous pensions enfin toucher les «dividendes de la paix» et voir renforcé le système des Nations unies, c'est le contraire qui s'est produit : il est affaibli, réduit à des fonctions de «maintien de la paix»... après les conflits, et d'aide humanitaire. Le mécanisme du développement dans son ensemble (agences pour l'agriculture, pour la santé, pour le travail, pour l'éducation, la science et la culture) se voit appliquer la «croissance zéro». Et l'Unesco, dont les tâches sont multiples mais qui n'a qu'une seule mission : consolider la paix, substituer une culture de la paix à la culture de guerre et de violence qui prévaut depuis l'origine des temps, voit les Etats-Unis, le pays le plus puissant de la terre, ajourner son retour annoncé, pour des raisons budgétaires (quelques petites dizaines de millions de dollars).

1999 : de nouveau il est fait usage de la force, avec les moyens les plus sophistiqués, même si au bout du compte - pour une bonne part grâce aux journalistes et aux reporters, les forces aériennes doivent toujours descendre des hauteurs, sauf dans le désert, pour faire la guerre maison par maison, arbre par arbre. De nouveau la force et cette fois hors du système des Nations unies, ce qui crée un précédent très dangereux. Si, dans sa composition et ses attributions actuelles, le Conseil de sécurité ne peut agir avec la rapidité et l'autorité requises, qu'on en modifie et qu'on en améliore les caractéristiques... Mais se passer des Nations unies équivaut à encourager cette incohérence qu'est l'existence de démocraties à l'échelle nationale, pour régler les problèmes nationaux, et d'une oligarchie à l'échelle mondiale, pour régler les problèmes transnationaux.

La vérité, première victime

Les Nations unies sont la seule structure démocratique internationale stable capable d'en-

raier à la base la violence et la terreur qui trop souvent engendrent sentiments nationalistes, religieux et idéologiques; de dire que la communauté internationale ne reconnaîtra pas ceux qui ont obtenu le pouvoir dans le sang et non par les urnes; d'interposer fermement et sans délai ses forces lorsque l'absence de gouvernement ou la violation massive des droits de l'homme sont flagrantes. Chacun saurait alors à quoi s'en tenir et l'on éviterait l'énorme confusion qui s'ensuit après toute conflagration, parce que la première victime de la guerre est la vérité.

1999 : il nous faudra réfléchir et agir comme en 1945. A l'aube d'un nouveau siècle et d'un nouveau millénaire, il nous faudra renforcer, dans l'esprit des débuts, l'union entre les pays pour prévenir la violence et la guerre. Cette union doit reposer sur quatre nouveaux contrats : social, naturel, culturel et éthique. Il nous faudra instaurer et respecter les codes de conduite .- sur les mouvements de capitaux, l'énergie, l'eau, les armes... à l'échelle planétaire. Il nous faudra investir davantage en faveur de cette merveille unique qu'est chaque être humain. Le coût est raisonnable si l'on pense que l'investissement en armements a approché l'an dernier les huit cent milliards de dollars.

Devoir de mémoire. Je me souviens aujourd'hui avec une émotion particulière du moment où nous avons dit, à Auschwitz et sur l'île de

Gorée - deux sites déclarés patrimoines de l'humanité par l'Unesco : Plus jamais! Du moment où, apercevant Rubben Island de la ville du Cap, je me suis écrié : Plus jamais! Et lorsque nous avons ouvert à Kigali la «Maison de la presse» et à Bujumbura la «Maison de la paix». Et en Somalie... Nous répétons : Plus jamais! Puis à Sarajevo, et à Mostar, où l'on commence à reconstruire les ponts. Plus jamais...

Il n'est jamais trop tard pour la paix. Mieux vaut aujourd'hui que demain. Que cessent les hostilités : mettons autant de prodigalité à faire marcher la machine de paix que nous en avons mis jusqu'alors à faire marcher la machine de guerre. Que la vérité se sache et que justice soit faite. Que sous la garde des Nations unies, ceux qui ont été expulsés de leurs foyers et de leur terre retournent dans un Kosovo autonome, pluri religieux et pluri ethnique. Les blessures s'ouvrent en quelques heures et mettent longtemps à se refermer. Il faut commencer au plus vite.

Il faut au plus vite prendre l'autre voie, et écrire une histoire autre que celle que pour l'instant nous ne pouvons que décrire. Ce serait là le meilleur hommage à rendre à nos enfants et à nos petits-enfants, à qui nous promettons en 1945 que le fléau de la guerre leur serait épargné. Le devoir de la mémoire.

Les intertitres sont de la rédaction

Henri Lafontaine: a true international man (1854-1943)

by Irwin Abrams*

In 1905, when the conference of the Interparliamentary Union met in Brussels, an American journalist with the American delegation interviewed Henri La Fontaine, the Belgian senator who was one of the most active members from the host country. Hayne Davis was awed by the vast number of activities which the Belgian senator was carrying on. It was "more than the work of one man," he wrote. He told how from the Belgian Senate La Fontaine goes over to the House of Documentation and from there he goes to give his lectures, about music to working men or on international law at the institution of higher studies which he helped found. He had also lectured in Paris and in the United States.

Davis learned that La Fontaine was Secretary of a Technical School for Young Women, a model which had been copied all over the country, that he had worked to gain the admission of women lawyers to the bar and of women to freemason lodges. He was so prolific as an author of articles and books on subjects as diverse as Wagnerian music, mountain climbing and international arbitration that to Davis his publications seemed to have poured forth like a mountain stream. Along with his IU activities, La Fontaine took a prominent role in the work of the peace societies of the world. He had helped found their coordinating office in Bern, the International Peace Bureau, and he had organized the "Universal" Peace Congress at Antwerp in 1894.

Before La Fontaine was eligible to join the IU, he had covered its international conferences as a reporter. In the 1890s he had helped campaign for universal suffrage in Belgium. After the electoral law was passed, La Fontaine was elected to the senate as a Social Democrat and promptly joined the IU in 1895. He soon became one of its leading members and now at the Brussels conference was on two important commissions, one on the plan for an international parliament and the other formulating a model treaty of arbitration.

In 1913 he was granted the Nobel Peace Prize as "the true leader of the popular peace movement in Europe" In the history of internationalism La Fontaine stands for much more than that. Not only was he a pioneer scholar of inter-

nationalism and one of the elite leaders of both branches of the international peace movement, the IU of elected deputies and the peace congresses of private citizens, but in his own person he embodied many of the cultural movements that were beginning to draw peoples together in activities that spanned national borders.

At the House of Documentation, the much impressed journalist found La Fontaine "demonstrating, at an almost inconceivable cost of energy, how track can be kept of everything that is now said in writing anywhere in the world, or that ever has been recorded and the record preserved." La Fontaine and his friend Paul Otlet had been working ten years on this project, and the classified account of the book they were producing, organized according to the American Dewey system, already ran to 2,300 pages and had an index of 40,000 titles. The plan was for the House of Documentation to become the World's Office of Documentation. Such dreams could only be realized in an age of computers, but La Fontaine and Otlet did establish the International Institute of Bibliography, the forerunner of what is presently being done by UNESCO.

La Fontaine was one of the first not only to recognize that the international networks of every kind which were growing in number were laying the foundation of a peaceful world, but to work to promote and organize this development. He was the founding father of an astonishing number of organizations in many fields of endeavor, including education, labor, business, immigration and monetary standards, to mention but a few. Primary among these was the Union of International Associations, which he and Paul Otlet established in Brussels, and which still exists there.

When he was 49, La Fontaine finally found the love of his life, Mathilde Lhoest, and their marriage was a very happy one. He built a fine house for her in the Brussels suburb, with a grand salon where they entertained their many friends, including artists and musicians and peace leaders from all over the world. La Fontaine often delighted their guests with his piano playing. Especially for Mathilde he would play her favorite pieces on his return from his many travels. On these trips he would write to

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her every day, celling about the international meetings in which he participated, and his private papers, which have been preserved, represent a treasure-trove of documentation of the many social and political movements of his time.

Henri Marie La Fontaine had been born in Brussels in 1854. He studied law at the Free University of Brussels, obtaining his doctorate after he had already begun his legal career at the Brussels Court of Appeal. For the next sixteen years he practiced law with great success and at the same time began to give his attention to social questions and to problems of international peace.

In 1885, when mountain climbing in Switzerland with his young friend Emile Vandervelde, who was then beginning his career as a socialist, La Fontaine extolled to his friend the merits of Wagners music, and in turn, Vandervelde converted La Fontaine to socialism, of the moderate, not revolutionary variety. Actively engaged in any cause he took up, La Fontaine made speeches and wrote about socialism and was one of the founders of the socialist newspaper. The Second International was just another transnational organization in which La Fontaine was active.

La Fontaine served for thirty-six years in the senate, with only two interruptions. For fourteen years his fellow senators chose him as secretary of that body, and for thirteen years he was one of the vice presidents. From 1904 to 1908 La Fontaine was also a socialist member of the city council of Brussels. In the senate La Fontaine concerned himself with legislation to improve labor conditions and reform education, and he was always active in matters of foreign affairs, supporting arbitration and other issues endorsed by the peace movement.

La Fontaine first entered the international peace movement when he was in his thirties. In 1889 he organized the Belgian Society of Arbitration and Peace, and in the same year he attended the first world peace congress of the series that was to last until ended by the war. In 1907 he became president of the commission of the International Peace Bureau, a position he held until his death. It was said of him that at least until World War I he had helped organize

every peace meeting in Belgium that was held there.

Of all the international organizations in which he played a part, La Fontaine considered the Interparliamentary Union the one which had the capacity to become a part of the institutional structure of world peace. It was his conception that as the world moved gradually toward world government, these gatherings of the elected representatives of the people were a step on the way to what Tennyson called "the parliament of man." His earliest activities in the IU, however, had to do with the major international reform on which all elements of the prewar peace movement were concentrating their efforts.

In the Antwerp Peace Congress of 1894 La Fontaine presented the plan for arbitration which had been developed within the International Peace Bureau. This advocated the principle of obligatory arbitration and called for the establishment of a permanent court of arbitration. This was approved by the congress. In the Belgian senate La Fontaine suggested that the government take the initiative to propose to other neutral states to constitute an international court of arbitration, which the great powers might eventually join. In the next year at the international conference at Brussels, La Fontaine, now a qualified member, spoke in favor of the peace congress plan, but a more moderate proposal was adopted, advocating the establishment of the arbitral court along with treaties between two or more governments agreeing to refer to it any differences between them. La Fontaine, along with several other participants, now proposed that the IU turn to neutral states like Switzerland and Belgium and directly ask their governments to convene an international conference to discuss such possibilities.

This, too, was too radical a move for the more cautious deputies of the IU, but they approved the idea of a direct communication to governments and asked the president of the Brussels conference, the prominent Belgian jurist and senator Edouard Descamps, to examine this question. His *Mémoire aux Puissances* on international arbitration had an influence on the governmental Peace Conference of The Hague

in 1899, where Descamps was the rapporteur of the commission on arbitration. The result was the establishment of the so-called Permanent Court of Arbitration at The Hague, which was no more than a permanent panel of judges ready to serve if called. It was the IU which influenced President Theodore Roosevelt to bring the first case before the Court in 1902 and make it operative.

With the thought that the reluctance of states to use the Court was due to ignorance about arbitral procedures, the IU turned to the member most qualified with expertise in both international law and bibliography and asked La Fontaine to edit a history of cases of arbitration. In 1902 he produced the monumental work, *Pasicrisie Internationale*, in which he assembled documentation of 368 cases of arbitration from 1794 to 1900, and two years later he published the first major bibliography of peace and international arbitration, containing 2,222 entries.

In 1903 at its conference in Vienna, the IU expressed the wish for a second conference at The Hague, and in 1904, meeting in St. Louis, a delegation was sent to ask President Roosevelt to convene such a meeting. In 1906 at London the IU conference asked that a series of such meetings be held, endorsing a proposal for a general treaty of arbitration, with provision that in certain cases arbitration be obligatory, always excepting those concerned with vital interests and national honor. La Fontaine strongly defended this proposition, pointing out the confusion which a great number of bilateral treaties could represent. Here for the first time he introduced his concept of a world constitution, modeled after constitutions of democratic states, a concept to which he was to return again and again.

When the Second Hague Conference of 1907 failed to advance the principal of arbitration, La Fontaine at the subsequent IU conference in Berlin in 1908, suggested that, rather than seek universality, a start could be made with the 32 states which had supported a general treaty of arbitration. This was approved and added to the general resolution listing proposals to be submitted to the Third Hague Conference planned for 1915. In the IU conference of 1912 in Geneva, La Fontaine led the forces supporting arbitration without any reservations, which the

majority adopted over the opposition of the German parliamentarians. This conference also established a new commission to study international jurisdiction and appointed La Fontaine as the rapporteur. Since such a jurisdiction had to have a base, La Fontaine proposed that the states be invited to transform the Hague conferences into "an international Congress with automatic and periodic reunions." The IU only approved the proposal to invite the powers to make the conferences meet periodically. As Davis had said in 1905, La Fontaine was "always going forward, always going up higher."

In the three meetings of the commissions, two in 1913, one in April 1914, La Fontaine developed a new idea, far beyond that of reforming the Hague Court. What he now proposed was an international court of justice, with 15 judges who would not represent their countries, but the international community, to be elected secretly during the periodic peace conferences. The competence of the court would not only cover the interpretation of international treaties, but litigation between individuals in matters of international private law and between individuals and states, in cases where all recourse to national courts was exhausted. This revolutionary idea was to be presented to the IU conference in Stockholm in 1914, which was called off because of the war. The war dashed the high hopes of IU members that the Third Hague Conference would finally make some important progress on arbitration.

The war also aborted another bright idea of La Fontaine. In 1913 he and Paul Otlet planned to broaden their earlier efforts to establish a Universal Bibliographical Repertory and to build a World City, where all the offices of international organizations would be located, and there would be situated an international research institute with a library and a museum containing copies of all the newspapers of the world and other such collections. La Fontaine poured the money of his Nobel prize into this so-called Mundaneum, but the war intervened and they never found the resources to go beyond the rough sketches of their vision.

When the war began, La Fontaine and his wife fled to London and then to the United States, where he was able to put all his internationalist

ideas into one large work with an imposing title, *The Great Solution. Magnissima Carta. Essay on Evolutionary and Constructive Pacifism*, (1915). The Magna Carta in medieval English history regulated relationships between individuals; La Fontaine's "greatest charter" was to regulate relations between states, which were to be juridical. Rights of peoples, including minorities, "backward peoples" and individuals were to be recognized. Another far-reaching idea was the riches of the earth were to be exploited "in the collective interest of men." War was permitted only when it was defensive or employed by the community of states after every other means, moral, political or economic, had been tried. Existing institutions, the Hague peace conferences, the Hague Court, and the Inter parliamentary Union, were to be developed to become elements of a federal world body. There would be a world court, a world bank, a universal language and other components of his World City. Many of these ideas were to become realities in later years through the League of Nations and the United Nations and their affiliated agencies.

In 1913 La Fontaine had succeeded in bringing the Belgian peace societies into a federation, and during his war years in the United States, he hoped to unite the peace organizations to influence the future peace. His failure, together with the difficulties he encountered in seeking salaried employment, left him disillusioned, declaring, "America has taught me what jealousy means."

After his return Belgium sent him as a technical delegate to the Conference of Peace in Paris and then as a delegate to the sessions of the League of Nations Assembly between 1920 and 1921. The Magnissima Carta did influence the discussions leading to the establishment of the Permanent Court of International Justice, although the principle of obligatory arbitration was not accepted. And although the League of

Nations did represent a move forward internationally, despite Woodrow Wilson's insistence on open diplomacy, the great powers still indulged in what La Fontaine had predicted in 1916, when he declared, "I foresee the renewal of ... the secret bargaining behind closed doors." On the other hand, the Union of International Associations emerged stronger after the war, and La Fontaine and Otlet took up again their work at the House of Documentation, promoting intellectual cooperation. Their new project was the establishment of an international university, to be based upon cooperation between governments, non-governmental associations, and the League of Nations. There was much support, but no funding.

La Fontaine continued to be active on other fronts. The author visited La Fontaine in his Brussels home in 1937, when he was 82 years of age, a man of medium height, his drooping mustache now very gray, with a keen memory and a hearty handshake. He had retired from the senate only in 1936, but he was still president of the Commission of the International Peace Bureau and fully conversant with its affairs, and he was not to resign from the chair of international law at the Institut des Hautes Études until 1940. He still talked of the world state that would eventually be achieved, with its parliament of the peoples, not of the governments, as in the League of Nations then existing.

His last years were sad. He had to witness once more an invasion of his country by Germany, and in 1941 his adored companion Mathilde died. They had had no children, and most of his friends had also died. La Fontaine did not live to see the liberation of Belgium. He died in 1943 at the age of 89 in the house he had built for Mathilde at the beginning of the century.

I want to thank Dr. Nadine Lubelski-Bernard of the Université Libre de Bruxelles, the authority on Henri La Fontaine, for her kind assistance.

Towards a new system of education: heads, hearts and hands in the service of society

by George Kibedi*

Education in human values: the miracle school of Zambia

In the year 1992 a new school was opened in the African country of Zambia, in the copper district's capital called Ndola. This school has been the first school to implement, outside of India, the system of education propounded by Sathya Sai Baba, a great spiritual leader, who has started an extensive network of schools in India, based on some of his insights into the problems created by the modern systems of education.

He affirms repeatedly and emphatically, that education should not be the mere imparting of book knowledge, neither should it be solely for the sake of livelihood. He says that education is for life. The educated person should be able to live, not only for himself but for serving the fabric of the human society. Such a kind of education would enable mankind to live in peace and harmony and to make efforts to discover the cause and reason for human life. If educated in a proper manner, people would not only be useful for their own purposes, but would also be of use to other people around them. This new kind of education would diminish wars, hatred, antagonism and exploitation in the world.

The basis of this system of education are five human values, which according to Sathya Sai are inborn in human beings, but efforts have to be made to bring them into the forefront. The five values are truth, righteous conduct, peace, love and non-violence. When children are taught to practise these values, egoism, which is the main cause of conflict in the world, would significantly decrease. How can these values be brought into the forefront? By acting upon them in our daily activities. That is to say, truth is that which we have to utter, virtuous conduct is what we have to put into action and these two will bring about peace. When such peace resides in the human heart, love, which is the basis of the human personality, will radiate freely and will preclude all violence.

Of course, it is obvious that these values are embedded in the basic teachings of all religions, but, because the followers of the different religions are somewhat obsessed with the superiority of their own type of faith, religious education has brought about many conflicts, misunder-

standings and hatred among their followers. Now, what is imperative at this critical juncture, is to understand the value and importance of human character and leave religious intolerance and hatred behind. Let any one practise his own faith without criticizing and demeaning the faith of others. This is one of the important ideals taught in this system of character development. The next important aspect is for the individual to understand that education has to be a tool for the person to develop interest in society, not to use it or exploit it, but to serve it loyally and without selfish ambitions. Thus, heads, hearts and hands have to be immersed in useful social work and the spirit of self sacrifice and moderation of ambitions should be taught in school.

The Sathya Sai School of Zambia¹ was initiated by a middle aged couple: Genevieve and Victor Kanu. She was born in South Africa, while Victor came from Sierra Leone. Both of them were educated in the West. Victor obtained his M.A. at Oxford University, while Genevieve finished hers at Columbia University in the state of New York.

The two founders of the Sathya Sai School of Zambia taught for about twenty years in London, England, where they met and married. Later they were attracted to the simple but ideal teachings of Sathya Sai and felt that in the chaotic political situation prevailing in Africa, the only thing to be done would be to establish an educational institution geared towards the transformation of the character of the students. They spent two years in India, learning the system of education in human values and were given the go ahead to spread Sathya Sai's message in Africa. The country chosen by the great master was Zambia. He advised them to open a school in the poorest district of Ndola to give access to education to the children of the poor. The school was also founded on the conviction that education should not be barred to the poor due to their lack of economic capacity to finance their children's education. The fees would be minimal, so small that anybody would be able to afford it, but face the financial effort seriously, since people don't generally appreciate something that is entirely free.

Victor and Genevieve sold their large property in England and started building the school in

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1. Sathya Sai established the educational system based on character development thirty years ago in Prasanthi Nilayam, India. Then several dozens of schools were established in the various regions of India, and in Canada, the USA and Mexico.

Zambia. In spite of enormous difficulties due to lack of material, transportation, specialized workers and so on, in one year the basic school was ready. Teachers were hired and the ideas propounded by the school explained to them in great detail. Only those, who could agree with the spirit of the school, were hired. The next step was the admission of students. The Zambian school took their students, in the primary grades, from among the poor people of the district and in the secondary grades from the drop-outs and failures proceeding from other schools, who would not find admission anywhere else.

The education is based on sound and solid academics, but the core of the daily activities is to develop faith in God and the basic divine nature of human beings. This is affirmed by two assemblies a day, during which the students sing the divine glory of God in their native language and praise all the names and forms of God, basically adopted by the different religions present in Zambia. The teaching of ordinary curricular material is also trying to connect the importance of human values and excellent behaviour, imparting these to the children, as well as the marvellous character of nature and its mysterious workings. Discipline is, of course of the greatest importance, while, at the same time, all corporal punishment is banned in the school. This compounded effort, which also requires the children to keep the school clean, devoting a fraction of their time to the cleaning of the classrooms, corridors and bathrooms, as well as doing some gardening in the campus, has given amazing results.

At the end of the first year, the students, who had been drop-outs, street children, we could almost call them bums, were model students and they all, without exception, were able to complete the degree in which they had been admitted. The fame of the school increased year after year and in its fourth year of inception was called, in the general press of Zambia, a "miracle school". In its fifth year, the miracle school was visited by the president of Zambia and it became nationally recognized as the most excellent school in the country, superior to even the expensive private schools existent in the nation. While in the generality of the schools there is

much vandalism, windows are broken, furniture ruined, washrooms are broken down and are a bad source of cholera and other infections, to the extent that many have to be closed down temporarily, in the miracle school all equipment is functioning, all the washrooms are spotlessly clean and students are achieving awards and recognitions on a national level. There has not been any failure among the students to graduate at their own level.

Many of the students who have finished secondary school, have decided to enter the teaching profession in order to serve their country and spread the message of five human values and the ideal role of heads, hearts and hands. The Sathya Sai School is financing their educational effort at the teacher's training college. The behaviour, simplicity, modesty and high level of culture of these youngsters is exemplary. Having understood the importance of their role in the future development of their nation, the necessity of discipline and devotion and the primary importance of serving their fellow citizens, these youths have become practically ideal people, keeping a severe discipline and being totally aware of the fact that their success in life solely depends on their own effort and consistency in putting human values into daily practice.

Talking to them one can easily see how they have shed all former bad habits and are now ready to stand as ideal young adults before the community, proving by their example that the most important aspect of education is, indeed, the development of character. With the emphasis on character building, all other aspects of education fall into place. The students learn, attaining excellent results, they cooperate with each other and with anyone they have to work with, because their entire approach is based on love, compassion, tolerance and sympathy. They don't try to impute faults and mistakes in others, because they have been taught to search for any shortcomings in themselves. Thus, they know in a practical way, that the world they live in is fashioned by them and that the discipline and self control they apply to themselves makes their life happy, easy and successful.

This educational system, which is simple in its implementation, once the people involved in the process acquire the requisite understanding,

is not only effective in Zambia, but, if implemented in other countries, would gradually diminish the phenomenal egoism that is overwhelming the human communities all over the world and causing so many wars, conflicts and devastation. The Miracle School of Zambia demonstrates clearly that the basic principles of proper human behaviour can and will eliminate hatred, antagonism, greed and other bad characteristics from people who are willing to learn it

and put it into practice. There is no doubt that factionalism and division based on colour, creed and general upbringing is plunging our world in its present sad situation and it only depends on us to understand that we as human beings, cannot make emphasis on our rights, but should, above all, look into our obligations and pursue those wholeheartedly. Then our problems will greatly diminish, first in our immediate surroundings and ultimately in the entire world.

NGOs and the United Nations

by James A. Paul*

On the occasion of the Second Report of the Secretary General about the relationship of non-governmental organizations to the United Nations, Global Policy Forum offers the following report to the UN community. It is written not just as "input" to the office of the Secretary General, but also as a document to stimulate discussion among NGO colleagues, delegates in the diplomatic missions, international civil servants, and all others who care about the future of global policy making.

GPF has devoted considerable research and resources to this project. In an effort to do justice to the issues, the report speaks more frankly than is common in most United Nations discourse. It seeks to plainly identify problems and find useful solutions.

Those who wish further information should consult the Global Policy Forum web site, where they can find more than 150 documents and analytical articles on NGOs and the UN system. The site address is www.globalpolicy.org

A number of NGO colleagues read drafts of this report and provided helpful comments, corrections and additional information. We have learned much from them and from others in the UN community who believe in NGOs. In particular, we want to thank the many delegations and Secretariat staff who have offered us their generous and wholehearted support and cooperation over the years. Their help and encouragement are greatly appreciated.

Introduction

1. NGOs have an increasingly vital role to play. Non-governmental organizations (NGOs) participate vitally in the international system. They contribute valuable information and ideas, advocate effectively for positive change, provide essential operational capacity in emergencies and development efforts, and generally increase the accountability and legitimacy of the global governance process.

The Secretary General has frequently affirmed the importance of NGOs to the United Nations. Again and again, he has referred to NGOs as "indispensable partners" of the UN, whose role is more important than ever in helping the organization to reach its goals. He has affirmed that NGOs are partners in "the process of deliberation and policy formation" as well as in "the execution of policies." Other top UN officials, as well as many delegations, have expressed the same ideas. Germany, speaking recently for the European Union, affirmed that NGOs are "essential partners for government and the international community" and spoke of their capacity to "participate constructively in policy-making and implementation."

This report assumes that NGOs will grow in importance in the years ahead and that the United Nations must find ways to be ever more open to NGO partnership. Furthermore, the

partnership must be based on real practice and outlook, not on rhetoric and symbolism. Global policy making today and in the years to come will require new levels of participation of NGOs, if it is to be effective in a globalizing, ever more interdependent world. This partnership must be built with hard work, dedication and leadership, to overcome many substantial obstacles.

NGOs do not claim to be paragons of virtue or perfect expressions of the public interest. Nevertheless, NGOs can bring to the global policy making process a vitally important voice that complements and widens the policy discourse, resulting in better and more legitimate decisions.

For these reasons, it is imperative that the United Nations explore means to widen and make more meaningful the access of NGOs to the organization and its negotiation and decision-making processes - ways that strengthen and also transcend the framework laid down in Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) Resolution 1996/31, adopting the spirit of Decision 1996/297.

2. A Mixed Picture since 1996

Since ECOSOC adopted Resolution 1996/31 establishing new accreditation rules for NGOs on July 25, 1996, NGOs have enjoyed important advances but also suffered disappointing setbacks.

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(a) Advances

On the positive side, NGOs have set new standards of positive contribution to the UN and reached further levels of access in new settings. During negotiations towards an International Criminal Court, NGOs participated informally but effectively, alongside governments, in a high-level negotiating process. They spoke, circulated documents, met frequently with delegations, and overall had a major impact on the outcome. While NGOs do not enjoy formal decision making rights, they exercise a substantial influence over outcomes through their expertise and creative policy proposals.

The annual sessions of the Commission on Human Rights, held in Geneva, attracts a large number of NGO participants, who provide vital information and substantial input to its deliberations. The Commission has incorporated NGO participation extensively, giving NGO representatives the opportunity to speak at plenary sessions, as well as broad rights to circulate documents. Public support from the worldwide human rights movement has strengthened this process and kept it moving forward.

To provide additional avenues for NGO participation, delegations and the Secretariat have recently experimented with new meeting arrangements in other forums. The panels and consultations of the Working Group of the General Assembly on Financing for Development, organized in 1999, provide a current and significant case in point. They give NGOs a framework to make presentations and to have discussions with delegations in an informal setting, outside the meetings of the Working Group, but still part of its overall process.

NGOs have also experimented with informal dialogues in new policy arenas, such as the Security Council. The NGO Working Group on the Security Council, comprised of some thirty NGOs with active program work on Security Council matters, has been meeting increasingly frequently with members of the Council since mid-1997 and expects to hold over 30 sessions in 1999.

At the same time, various institutions in the UN system have affirmed the importance of NGOs by establishing new focal point offices

and by further opening their decision-making process to NGO voices and input. For several years, the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs has held important monthly meetings with humanitarian NGOs. In early 1999, the High Commissioner for Refugees consulted with leaders of about thirty major human rights and relief NGOs - a meeting that resulted in a follow-up dialogue process. The pace of such meetings across the UN system has markedly increased.

The Secretariat and other agencies have also constructed excellent sites on the world wide web, making an increasing amount of UN information and documents available instantly around the globe. Additionally, the Secretariat has strengthened its relations with NGOs by improving some services such as the processing of accreditation applications, the NGO Resource Center and NGO training programs.

Delegations have also set up useful web sites and they increasingly hold meetings and briefings with NGOs on matters of common interest.

(b) Problems and Setbacks

NGOs have also experienced serious problems and even setbacks in their relations with the United Nations, due to intergovernmental action and action by the Secretariat.

Intergovernmental NGOs are disappointed that member states could not agree to grant formal consultative rights with the General Assembly, a step that seemed a likely followup to Resolution 1996/297. Negotiations on that issue bogged down in the spring of 1997 and efforts since then have failed to obtain results, even though ECOSOC Decision 1996/297 spoke of broadening NGO participation to "all areas of work" of the United Nations.

Some delegations in the ECOSOC Committee on NGOs have recently spoken of a need to place new restrictions on NGOs. NGOs feel that these critics unfairly blame NGOs generally, by exaggerating the actions of a very small number of NGO representatives. The Committee has discussed actively several proposals that would greatly harm NGO work. Member states of every region, including Cuba, Tunisia, the United States and the United

Kingdom, have offered proposals of this kind. NGOs were also alarmed at a 1998 United States proposal in the Fifth Committee suggesting that NGOs pay for the cost of services they receive at the UN.

NGOs have suffered immeasurable loss because the UN has sharply scaled back its global conference series. NGOs greatly profited from these conferences, which provided ease of accreditation, intense interaction with delegations in the preparatory process and outstanding networking opportunities. But after the 1996 World Food Conference in Rome, it appears that there will be very few such events in future, especially because of the opposition of the United States. The UN has shifted to special sessions of the General Assembly or other UN venues. NGOs have encountered serious access difficulties in these new settings.

Recently, NGOs have faced deteriorating legal and financial conditions in many countries. Governments have imposed new restrictions on NGOs, narrowing NGO scope and placing limits on their ability to speak critically and independently. Funding for many such organizations has declined as well. These developments inevitably sap NGO capacity to participate effectively at the global level.

Overall, then, many factors make the current environment much less NGO-friendly than the late 1980s and early 1990s, particularly for Southern NGOs. In addition to domestic problems, they now find the UN more difficult to access on global policy issues. This has drained worldwide NGO interest and support for the UN at a very critical time in the organization's history.

Secretariat. NGOs have been surprised to encounter negative and restrictive action by the UN Secretariat, especially in New York. The Secretariat has recently promulgated restrictive security rules that have made NGO entry to UN buildings more difficult and have closed off sections of the UN headquarters complex to NGOs. Security officers have subjected NGOs to document searches both at the perimeter entries and inside buildings. The Secretariat has changed security rules suddenly, with minimal consultation, little apparent justification, and no advance notice, disrupting the consultative process.

The Secretariat has imposed onerous fees for access to electronic UN documents through the Optical Disk System and it is also considering a fee for access to the Treaty Database, now provided for free. Fee-based approaches of this kind can have an especially negative impact on Southern NGOs, who most need documents in languages other than English, found only sparsely on the web site.

NGOs find many friendly and helpful staff in the Secretariat, but, too often, NGOs also encounter people who are not supportive and not attuned to NGO concerns. Secretariat officials fail to engage NGOs in serious consultation, even in matters of great importance to NGOs, like the Optical Disk System or security rules. NGOs have been especially disappointed at the troubled interaction they have had with Secretariat officials, as well as problems of access to Secretary General Kofi Annan.

In spite of the best efforts of NGOs to explore the significance of the Secretary General's proposed "partnership," there is little evidence of a clear mandate or plan within the Secretariat or at the intergovernmental level for developing this partnership into a meaningful new reality. Contrary agendas are clearly colliding with NGO interests. Only a broad and consistent initiative, that commands the support of NGOs, delegations and Secretariat leadership, can succeed in solving the present impasse.

3. Short-term Action and Long-Term Vision
NGOs need short-term action in a number of important policy and practical areas - action that will address and solve security issues, strengthen support for NGOs within the Secretariat, maximize the availability of documents and information for NGOs, and lead to a better quality consultation and expansion of NGO access to new areas of the intergovernmental process.

While considering and addressing these short-term goals, the UN community should develop a long-term vision about the role of NGOs at the UN in ten, twenty or even thirty years. In this globalizing world, with changing roles for states and non-state actors, and radical shifts in communications technology, we need to think about how NGOs will interact with a changing UN.

Should there, for example, be new forums and formal arrangements for NGO input to the UN? How can Southern NGOs be brought more successfully into the UN's deliberations? Should we be planning for a greater number of NGOs in regular consultation at headquarters and how can facilities be changed to meet such a development? How can communications technology better engage NGOs around the world with the UN and vice versa?

Main issues

1. Access to Information

NGOs seek the greatest possible access to UN information, including official documents. NGOs serve as primary disseminators of UN information and they need these documents for their work in monitoring and policy consultation. NGOs enjoy formal guarantees of access to UN documents in Resolution 1996/31.

In the recent past, the UN has developed a large and very useful web site. The UN made an early commitment to the web, which has paid off handsomely by providing a substantial improvement in information distribution. The site is well-designed and extremely heavily-used. In addition to news releases and other information, the site provides access to about fifteen percent of all current UN documents in English, with much thinner postings in other languages.

The web site enables the UN to service NGO needs without requiring their physical presence. In this way, it has allowed the overall number of accredited NGOs to grow, while the number of NGO representatives actually in the building has stayed the same or even declined. But many documents that NGOs may need are not available on the site. NGO representatives must still obtain these documents in printed form, but they would much prefer to have electronic access, an arrangement that would save UN printing costs and reduce the number of NGO visits.

When the UN made available the Optical Disk System (ODS) to member states in late 1996, NGOs asked the Secretariat for access to this system, which includes all UN public docu-

ments, in all six official languages. The Secretariat eventually decided to charge NGOs an access fee, now \$1,250 per year, per computer, payable in advance, a 50% discount from the commercial rate. Secretariat staff argued that under stringent budget conditions, a fee was necessary to "charge-back" the cost of new computer hardware and phone lines. Recently, NGOs discovered that the new equipment cost in New York and Geneva amounted to only \$30,000. To recoup a sum of about \$100,000 (a larger investment would have been needed for more users), the Secretariat denied information to thousands of potential users, especially affecting Southern NGOs, operating at a distance from headquarters, which have small budgets and need documents in languages other than English. The cost of document printing, plus ODS sales costs, have probably been far more than the technology investment.

The UN may be on the verge of compounding this error. The Secretariat has told NGOs that it is planning to charge a fee for access to the Treaty Database of the Office of Legal Affairs, a database that has previously been available free of charge. Many NGOs use this database heavily and they are very concerned about a future fee, which would impair their work dramatically, especially low-budget Southern organizations.

The ODS is outmoded and that it should be replaced by a newer and more advanced system. Some have argued against providing open electronic data access to NGOs, on the ground that additional investment in an outmoded system would be a waste of scarce UN resources. In fact, according to technical experts in the Secretariat, computer and communications equipment are not specific to the type of database, so the access investments will work with present and future systems. The Secretariat is now planning an entirely new, more efficient document database that could be operational by the summer of 2000. After initial installation costs, the new system promises to be cheaper, faster and far easier to operate, lowering the unit costs of additional users and making free NGO service even more logical and cost-efficient.

The Secretariat is now re-thinking the UN web site, to make it an even more effective vehicle for UN information. Ms. Angela Kane,

Director of the Library and Publications Division of the Department of Public Information, is in charge of this project, on special leave from her regular duties. However much the web site improves, NGOs will continue to need the extended access to documents, especially documents in languages other than English, that the ODS database now provides.

NGOs would also like access to a broadened universe of ODS documents, to include selected draft texts, non-papers and other such materials. These are now generally available only in paper form and NGOs must pick them up in conference rooms, requiring a physical presence in New York or Geneva (the documents exist in electronic form, of course, but access to them is now restricted). Electronic publication (assuming greater ODS access) would make them instantly available around the world, providing much greater opportunity for involvement by Southern NGOs that cannot afford a New York office.

Delegations have improved NGOs' information access, too, by providing more briefings and by posting their own web sites. On some sites missions have posted press releases and the texts of formal speeches. They have also posted informal documents such as non-papers, speeches to General Assembly Working Groups, and Security Council presidential press statements. Delegations could greatly improve information about their work by expanding these web sites and posting more of their documents there.

2. Access to UN Premises

(a) Perimeter Security

According to UN Chief of Security Michael McCann, the UN faces increasing challenges to its perimeter security system at headquarters in New York. He reports that there have been threats to bomb the building and that security has apprehended persons attempting to enter with concealed weapons. Controversial international events have heightened these security problems, which tend to increase during the General Debate in the early fall. But no one has alleged that NGOs have posed threats of this kind.

In response to major protest demonstrations at UN buildings in Geneva in early 1999, the Swiss Army has patrolled the UN precinct there and ringed it with barbed wire. Delegates, staff

and NGOs have often had to use just a single entrance, where all pass through the same security check. By contrast, New York headquarters presents a less ominous visage. But perimeter security has steadily tightened since about 1992, when NGOs lost their ability to "sign in" guests. Since the early fall of 1998, UN security has asked even NGOs with an annual pass to go through metal detectors and have their bags or briefcases scanned. Security has sometimes required all NGOs to enter the building by the 46th Street "Visitors' Entrance." Those with a temporary pass, including NGO representatives attending Prep Comms or conference followups, must now always enter at 46th Street.

NGOs object to passing through metal detector searches when staff and delegations are not searched in this way. Security procedures imply that NGOs pose a far greater risk, diminishing NGOs' sense that they are trusted partners.

UN security now asks even NGO representatives who regularly enter and leave the building to undergo rigorous metal searches, sometimes requiring removal of bracelets, belts, key chains and other articles of clothing. These searches can be time-consuming and humiliating. Furthermore, security staff have set metal detection equipment at unusually high levels - considerably higher than most airport equipment -- leading to routine hand-sweeps by security officers, because shoe tacks, metal fasteners in clothing, credit cards and the like set off the alarms. Security guards "sweep" longtime NGO representatives who must stand by a busy entrance, with hands in the air, looking like they have just been arrested for a street crime, even though they are peacefully going about their business, and in spite of the fact that they may enter the buildings two or three times each day.

In two meetings with NGOs in March or 1999, neither Chief McCann, nor other Secretariat officials were able to provide evidence that NGOs pose a special threat to UN security. One official spoke several times about NGOs' recent "explosive growth" (an ominous term). This argument was not persuasive, because there was no evidence of an actual increase in the numbers of NGOs present at headquarters, nor was there evidence that such an increase would cause demonstrable security

problems. Secretariat and delegates commonly speak in exaggerated terms about the growth in number of NGOs.

Some say that member states are pressing the Secretariat to curb NGOs. This, they say, rather than real security concerns, has shaped the new policy. Whatever the cause, Secretariat officials seem to have assigned very little weight to NGO access needs and their actions fit badly with notions of "partnership."

(b) Document Searches and Internal Security

On a number of occasions in 1998, UN security staff searched NGO representatives for documents, both at the perimeter and inside the UN premises. Security personnel repeatedly insisted on the right to examine and pass judgement on NGO documents. They even refused entry or expelled NGO representatives because of the content of documents. In one well-known case, security officers denied entrance to an NGO representative because he was carrying leaflets announcing the annual vigil on the UN's financial crisis. Though Chief McCann and others later apologized for this incident, NGOs have never received a promised copy of UN policy on this matter, including assurances on freedom of speech for NGOs and a statement of circumstances under which the security department would deem document searches to be permissible. NGOs are alarmed at the potential for future security department control over the content of NGO documents and for the possible "frisking" of NGO representatives.

Increasingly, in 1998 and after, UN security barred NGOs from access to the main floor of the General Assembly chamber or the lower galleries, from the Second floor hallway and meeting chambers in the Conference building, and from the Delegates' Lounge. Assistant Secretary General Sorensen asked NGO leaders on March 31, 1999 to make recommendations for administrative details of restrictive new security arrangements. In a letter dated April 7, 1999, the NGOs refused to be party to these arrangements and instead expressed sharp opposition to the new rules.

Delegates cite recent misconduct of NGOs in both Geneva and New York as a reason for new

restrictions. These incidents, however unfortunate, involved only a very small number of persons and did not pose a serious threat to delegations or UN property. Neither the Secretariat nor delegates have adequately shared information about the incidents with the NGO community, so NGOs know only details of cases discussed in public meetings. In other cases, it appears that corridor rumor has inflated the facts. Since delegates have clear means under Resolution 1996/31 for determining the facts and for imposing sanctions on offenders, they should use them, rather than writing new rules or inflicting group punishment. The overwhelming majority of NGOs has been sensitive and diplomatic, constructive and valued within the UN system.

In a memorandum dated April 19, 1999 Mr. Iqbal Riza, Chef de Cabinet of the Secretary General, issued extensive new rules governing NGOs in New York. The rules now exclude NGOs from the second floor except with a special pass, or in case of ECOSOC-related meetings. The memorandum also announces a regular system of metal-detector searches, bans NGOs from going above the fourth floor in the Secretariat building without an appointment, bans NGOs from the General Assembly chamber except in the fourth floor balcony, bans NGOs from the Delegates' Lounge except in the company of a delegate or carrying a special pass, and imposes other restrictions. NGOs see this memorandum as a serious setback. And they regret that it sets forth new rules after such slight consultation (none with Mr. Riza) and with virtually no concessions to NGO concerns.

(c) Lack of Clear and Consistent Rules

In spite of the Riza memorandum, rules governing NGO physical access and conduct in the UN buildings remain vague and apparently subject to change without notice. This permits the security department to alter the "level" of security, in response to circumstances such as a visit by a head of state. NGOs understand the need for a certain degree of flexibility. But there exists far too much vagueness, obscurity and uncertainty in the overall security environment, so that NGOs lack clear and stable rights.

When a visiting German NGO leader recently cried to distribute a statement by a large group of NGOs at the Copenhagen +5 Prep Comm in May 1999, a Secretariat staffperson confiscated the statement. Realizing the importance of the NGO networks that authored the statement, the staffperson then apologized and placed the statement on a table in the conference room. The NGO representative, who had attended many previous meetings in New York, was astonished at these events and realized that he had no benchmark of rules to consult and no clear rights to invoke.

NGOs do not want to be bound by a big book of rules. But, on the other hand, an absence of rules opens the way to abuse by over-zealous security and Secretariat officers. The UN and the NGO community must jointly consider how to clearly define NGO rights, to protect against abuses in an increasingly restrictive security environment.

(d) Consequences of the Financial Crisis

The UN's financial crisis has deepened problems of NGO access. As we have already seen, it has led the UN to charge for electronic documents. Also, according to the Security Department, it has meant that the security staff cannot provide the needed coverage in all areas of the building, leading to additional restrictions on NGO circulation.

Financial problems have weakened the capacity of UN offices to provide services, shortened print runs of UN documents, slowed development of electronic communications, lowered staff morale and much more that has negatively affected NGOs.

The financial crisis provided the rationale for the December 1998 proposal by the US delegation in the Fifth Committee that the UN should charge fees for services provided to NGOs, including use of the UN premises, provision of documents, translation services and so forth. This proposal caused great alarm in the NGO community. Fortunately, other delegations rejected the proposal and the US withdrew it. It would have had an especially heavy impact on NGOs from the South and on small and low-budget NGOs from every region. NGOs and delegates took note of the irony that this pro-

posal came from the delegation that had failed to pay its assessments and owed the UN more than one billion dollars. NGOs worry that this commercial approach to access may re-appear, since the Secretariat is preparing further information on the cost of NGO services.

NGOs object to a policy environment in which the financial crisis becomes the excuse for denying needed services to NGOs. If the UN is to develop a new partnership with NGOs, it must spend additional (if modest) resources in this area. When delegations insist that all spending occur "within existing resources," they block the positive development of the organization and pit NGO needs against other very urgent crises and mandates. NGOs thus have a high stake in finding a solution to the financial crisis and they are extremely unhappy at those member states most responsible for prolonging it.

(e) Physical Facilities

UN Physical facilities have a great impact on NGOs, affecting their capacity to carry out their work. NGOs suffer particularly from a lack of meeting space and office space in the UN complex and environs. The steadily increasing number of intergovernmental or government-sponsored meetings in the headquarters complex (including conference followup events) tends to squeeze out NGO meetings. NGO Committees that formerly met monthly in UN conference rooms now must find alternative venues, or risk being denied space at the last minute, making planning a nightmare. Alternate meeting space in the UN neighborhood is often simply not available. [For more on this issue, see Section 9 below]

Physical facility problems at the UN reflect the organization's financial crisis, including deteriorating physical infrastructure. The earpieces, used for listening to translators during public meetings, offer a clear example. In most of the UN's public galleries, these earpieces do not work, making it difficult for NGOs to monitor the proceedings. In February 1999, when a number of NGOs attended a Security Council open meeting, they discovered that none of the earpieces in the public gallery of the Council chamber were functioning. When NGOs reported this problem, Secretariat staff

explained that financial constraints made it impossible to fix the earpieces in the near term. Because Council members make use of all the official languages during the course of a typical session, NGO representatives cannot exercise their full right to attend these meetings as long as the earpieces are broken.

3. *The Right to Participate*

(a) *Progressive Consolidation of Resolution 1996/31*

Resolution 1996/31 gives accredited NGOs considerable rights to participate in UN meetings. Secretariat personnel and government delegates must elaborate the formal texts in actual practice, to meet a wide variety of needs and circumstances.

NGOs expected that Resolution 1996/31 would greatly strengthen NGO participation, given stronger language than the previous text. They hoped that, beginning in the summer of 1996, the Secretariat and delegates would work towards a "consolidation" of new practices and new precedents across the range of UN forums. In fact, NGO participation has made only modest progress overall and in some areas there has been regression. The Conference of NGOs (CONGO) has called for more consolidation, as have NGO leaders in a number of fields.

Unfortunately, many delegations do not support progressive consolidation in the present political climate. But others see progress as possible and even necessary for a healthy UN.

(b) *"Existing Practices" and "Best Practices"*

Practice not only elaborates and amplifies rules, it sometimes precedes rules or extends them into new areas. This is especially true at the UN, where there are dozens of different forums. Since the earliest years, NGOs have participated far beyond the bounds of ECOSOC, including active consultation with the General Assembly (GA), its Main Committees, Subsidiary Bodies and a variety of other forums. NGO representatives have even spoken to the GA (though formally the session was temporarily suspended) and GA committees regularly find means to hear the views of NGOs.

A large area of practice and regular informal participation has come to assume rule-like

authority. These practices have never been codified, but they have become well-established precedents, recognized broadly in the UN system. Of course, such practices are subject to the good will of the delegates and rely on continued cordial relations between delegations and NGOs. With the steady turnover of delegations, Secretariat staff and NGO staff, institutional memory is sometimes lost and existing practices may change or diminish. At the same time, though, creative new practices arise. So the body of existing practices continues to expand the possibility of fruitful participation by NGOs and to expand the arenas of NGO access. "Best practices," can inspire progressive change and can spread from one forum to another.

Nearly every committee of the General Assembly has practices for consultation with NGOs, including those committees working outside the area of social and economic policy. The First Committee, for example, has developed substantial means for consulting with the Disarmament NGOs [see the paper "Enlarging the Contribution of NGOs to the Work of the First Committee" by the NGO Committee on Disarmament, October 1996]. Another example is the Sixth Committee, which developed close working relations with NGOs during the preparations for the International Criminal Court negotiations, beginning in 1997.

(c) *Legal Interpretations by the Office of Legal Counsel*

The UN Office of Legal Counsel has long enunciated a restrictive approach to the question of NGO access. The Office has taken the position that only formal rules, such as the Charter or resolutions of intergovernmental bodies, can be a basis for deciding issues of NGO access. In this way, the Office has ignored fifty-four years of practice, which go considerably further than the rules. While Common Law systems place especially heavy emphasis on practice and precedent, all legal systems take such practice into account. So the Office has leaned unreasonably towards restriction.

NGOs have expressed their concerns to officials in the Office and some NGOs believe that the Office has recently adopted a more flexible approach. But others think little has changed. It

seems, therefore, that the Office's stance calls for review. NGOs will continue to press for clarification on these legal issues so that their rights of access can enjoy full support from the Office of Legal Counsel. NGOs want the Office's legal positions to reflect the perspective of partnership and rights-expansion.

(d) NGO Access to the General Assembly

Various NGOs and delegations have proposed that the General Assembly grant ECOSOC-accredited NGOs formal consultative status to its plenary deliberations, its Main Committees and Special Sessions. They see this as the most urgently-needed step in an expanded partnership of NGOs with the United Nations. But progress towards this goal has been disappointing. After consultations in the fall of 1996, GA President Razali Ismail named Ambassador Ahmed Kamal of Pakistan to chair a sub-group on NGO access of the Working Group on the Strengthening of the United Nations System. But after six months of effort, the sub-group could not even agree on its mandate.

Since then, in an effort to move the issue ahead, various parties have proposed draft resolutions, including the United States, Canada, the Netherlands and the World Federalist Movement. Some proposals have included reference to "Subsidiary Bodies" of the General Assembly. But so far, member states have failed to reach agreement.

At a time when conference reviews take place in General Assembly Special Sessions or even in Main Committees, NGOs badly need GA accreditation, not only to move forward but also to maintain best practices. Accreditation of NGOs to the General Assembly would affirm existing practices such as the disarmament NGOs' work with the First Committee and it would re-establish the right of NGOs to attend Committee meetings that take place in the Second Floor conference rooms.

CONGO has proposed that the General Assembly adopt NGO consultative arrangements based on ECOSOC Resolution 1996/31. Recently, on May 3, 1999, the World Federalist Movement-INTGLIM circulated a draft resolution that could be the basis for agreement. Many NGOs hope that the General Assembly will

consider a similar resolution and pass it. If so, a new era of partnership and cooperation can begin.

(e) Conferences and Review Processes

Many NGOs view the world conferences as the UN's most open and democratic process. Member states should re-consider the current restrictions on global conferences and again make use of this important process, both for defining new areas of global policy and for review and elaboration of the work of previous conferences. It seems obvious that governments should hold periodic world conferences on Women, the Environment, Social Development, Population and other topics - perhaps at ten-year intervals. The new, uniform arrangements for conference accreditation, incorporated into Resolution 1996/31, provide a good basis for NGO access to future conferences. When member states undertake a periodic review of a major conference, they should do this in the most open and accessible forum. The recent results in GA Special Sessions have not been encouraging to NGOs. NGOs have faced onerous new restrictions for six reasons: (1)the insufficiency of conference facilities at UN headquarters, (2)tighter and varying accreditation rules, (3)more limited rules of NGO access to the GA, (4)more limited physical access to the meeting chamber, (5)more irregular scheduling of meetings and (6)fewer available funds for Southern NGO participation. As a result, the Rio+5 session in 1997 disappointed many environmental NGOs, who found it to be much less open than the original event.

In the summer and fall of 1998, the five-year follow-up to the Vienna human rights conference proved to be a particularly negative case. Human rights NGOs prepared carefully for this review process and even organized their own preliminary conference. They were astonished that the intergovernmental review allowed for only one NGO speech and otherwise was completely closed to NGO consultation. A special meeting, organized at the last minute by High Commissioner Mary Robinson outside the formal review process, provided the only substantial opportunity for NGO comment. NGOs have had access problems (though less severe) in the followups to Cairo and Beijing as well

Member states should adopt the spirit as well as the rules of the original conference to insure optimum NGO access. Delegates should never hold closed events such as the Vienna review and they should work to open up followups to Cairo, Copenhagen and other summits.

The European Union and others, speaking on May 24, 1999 at the Copenhagen +5 Prep Comm, called for an open process and also called for the General Assembly to adopt a standard set of rules for this type of event. That statement offered a basis for action to resolve the matter, though NGOs want to especially emphasize their right to speak at followup events. NGOs see broad consultation with the GA as the best solution for ECOSOC-accredited organizations, but they want stable rules for other NGOs as well.

Since UN headquarters offers such limited space for expanded delegations and NGO participants, the UN must consider using more adequate space in New York - for example the Convention Center — or moving the event to another city. Perhaps the UN needs to build more meeting halls in the headquarters complex area. If there is no space for NGOs, there can be no meaningful NGO participation.

4. Advocacy and Support within the Secretariat and UN agencies

NGOs have very multifaceted relations with the Secretariat. Many NGOs maintain close and cordial relations with Secretariat offices that work on their particular area of policy specialization. NGOs also occasionally relate to high UN officials, such as the Secretary General and his Executive Office - most often in the form of letters, petitions, and other communications about policy matters. And finally, NGOs relate to offices and programs in the Secretariat that work on NGO affairs. The specialized NGO offices can be very helpful in providing information and assistance to NGOs. These offices also work on the process of accreditation and rule-making, the area of greatest friction and conflict.

(a) NGO Offices of the Secretariat

The NGO offices of ECOSOC and the Department of Public Information (DPI)

(known in UN parlance as the "NGO Sections") have important similarities but also significant differences. Though they both supervise accreditation of NGOs, one does so through an ECOSOC intergovernmental process [see Section 7 below], while the other does so entirely through the Secretariat.

The two offices' service reputations have varied in the past. In spite of the importance of these offices to the overall NGO environment, the Secretariat rarely consults NGOs about the service quality. Quality might improve if the Secretariat sought NGO input into a periodic review of these offices and their staff.

At present, the leadership in these offices appears to be committed to good service and the ECOSOC office now has a bigger budget, more staff and even a sorely-needed in-house fax machine. The DPI office gets good marks for timely processing of pass requests and for overall courtesy and helpfulness. But its management of documents in the NGO Resource Center tends to be chaotic. Serious problems exist in both offices.

The DPI accreditation process lacks transparency and it is subject to political pressures like that in ECOSOC. Though the threshold of admittance is supposedly set lower than in the ECOSOC process, the DPI office has been known to reject respected NGOs if they face opposition from powerful member states. DPI must address and correct this problem, particularly as regards the human rights field.

Many NGOs complain that some of the notoriously bureaucratic and unresponsive behavior of the ECOSOC office in the past still persists. The office employs cumbersome and time-consuming procedures for issuing passes, it too often it loses accreditation letters, and its staff can be discourteous. The office imposes an unacceptable three-day wait between receipt of a letter or fax and the issuance of a pass, a wait that DPI does not require. This inexcusable wait can waste precious time during the short stay of an NGO based outside of New York, sometimes ruining the opportunity for participation at critical meetings.

NGOs also find the application procedures for new accreditation in both offices tend to be bureaucratic and paper-bound. Staff have lost or

misaligned accreditation folders and have been inflexible in applying rules for evaluation. The NGO world is changing very fast, in terms of activities and needs, and UN offices that relate to NGOs must be change-oriented and flexible. The offices should consider a streamlined, web-based application system.

(b) Non-Governmental Liaison Service

The Non-Governmental Liaison Service (NGLS) offers support to NGOs across the entire UN system, a very broad mandate. It has the advantage of being free of accreditation and pass-issuing responsibilities. Nor does it issue or enforce rules. Instead, it has a broad role of advocacy and information for the NGO community. Run by a small but very effective staff, NGLS has established a solid record, and it has provided a buffer between NGOs and the more intractable rules and practices of the UN system. NGOs are generally very enthusiastic about NGLS, and they appreciate its several excellent publications.

NGOs are surprised to learn that NGLS is minimally funded and that senior professional staff have been on short-term contracts. One very experienced and well-regarded staff person left in early 1999 from the New York office, doubtless in part because of this situation. NGLS has recently gone through a broad evaluation process that yielded a very positive report. It is time that NGLS be given the budget and staff that it needs, to solidify and expand its activities that do much to foster the NGO "partnership" across the broad UN system.

(c) The Assistant Secretary General's Office

The Office of the Assistant Secretary General (ASG) for External Affairs, Gillian Martin Sorensen, acts as the coordinator for NGO issues within the United Nations and also chairs the Inter-Departmental Working Group on NGOs. NGOs favor a high-level focal point in the Secretariat, and they favor system-wide coordination. However, ASG Sorensen and her office have extremely broad responsibilities in other areas, since they address the whole range of contacts with the "outside world." In this setting, NGO matters apparently do not command consistent attention in the office and con-

tact between the office and NGOs is sporadic. This problem was clearly reflected in the fact that the office produced a report on NGO access in the summer of 1998 without any NGO consultation.

Many NGOs feel that, both symbolically and practically, the NGO portfolio should not be in the hands of an office charged with "external relations," since NGOs are not external but internal to the UN system. CONGO passed a resolution on February 26, 1999 that expressed strong concern about this problem.

NGOs want a focal point that can be a partner, advocate and friend. But the External Relations office has not succeeded in creating such an environment. It interacts very formally and distantly with NGOs. This has heightened misunderstandings, especially because interaction has largely focused on restrictive new rules. Relations between the ASG's office and the NGO community have increasingly deteriorated, particularly in the wake of the security restrictions of the spring of 1999.

In soliciting input for the second report of the Secretary General, the ASG's office missed an opportunity to hold regular meetings with NGOs, especially NGOs visiting from the South. The office devoted only a half-hour segment of a single meeting with New York-based NGOs to this topic. It inexplicably cancelled a second meeting.

Relations with the NGO community have become so strained that the ASG twice declined to have lunch with the President of CONGO to discuss matters of mutual concern in the spring of 1999. Somewhat earlier, the ASG declined to attend (or to send a representative to) the Stanley Foundation conference on NGOs that took place at Arden House in late February. Since a number of key NGO leaders and heads of delegations were present at the conference, it would have been an ideal time to build bridges and discuss problems informally.

(d) The Inter-Departmental Working Group on NGOs

The Inter-Departmental Working Group on NGOs first met more than ten years ago to coordinate policy on NGOs within the Secretariat and the UN system. It has func-

tioned sporadically since, sometimes meeting regularly and sometimes dormant. From the first, the Working Group invited a small number of NGO representatives, usually officers of CONGO and the DPI-NGO Executive Committee, to participate in some of its meetings. The meetings offered the possibility of wider contact and consultation between the leaders of the two main NGO umbrella organizations and UN system officials. After a period of dormancy, the Working Group resumed its work in 1993 with NGO participation. But since early 1998, though the Working Group apparently continues to meet, it has not invited NGO representatives to attend. A useful contact is now broken.

(e) Role of the Secretary General

Secretary General Kofi Annan is very busy and has many demands on his time. Nevertheless, it seems fair to ask what role he does or should play personally with respect to NGOs, since he often says that they are such "indispensable partners" of the United Nations.

The Secretary General (SG) meets often with leaders of important international NGOs like Amnesty International or Oxfam to discuss questions within their mandates such as human rights, humanitarian relief and the like. In this regard, he is accessible and supportive of UN-NGO cooperation. He meets exceedingly rarely, however, with regular NGO representatives for the purpose of discussing the role and access of NGOs within the United Nations. He has come to only one CONGO board meeting in his two and a half years in office, though his two immediate predecessors regularly attended.

On a number of occasions, NGOs in New York have approached the Secretary General and asked for meetings on NGO access, but to no avail. When Mr. Annan first came into office in January 1997, a group of NGOs invited him to have lunch with them to discuss broad NGO issues and concerns. After four months of effort, the organizers were told that the SG was too busy and that they should meet with Ms. Sorensen instead. More recently, when CONGO asked to meet with the Secretary General in March 1999 to express concern about access problems and deteriorating rela-

tions with the office of the Assistant Secretary General, the SG did not agree to a meeting and instead passed the matter back to Ms. Sorensen.

The NGO initiative on the Optical Disk System had a similar fate. After extensive NGO efforts to work with lower-level Secretariat officials, a group of twelve NGOs wrote a letter and memorandum to the Secretary General on April 25, 1997 asking for urgent action. The SG never replied, but instead passed the matter along to the head of the Department of Public Information, Samir Sanbar. Mr. Sanbar finally replied on June 19, promising that "a policy review is under way." In spite of additional efforts on the NGO side, the Secretariat offered no further response. The policy review, if it ever took place, disappeared without a trace.

Most recently, the Secretary General's Chef de Cabinet, Mr. Iqbal Riza, reportedly took a very strong position in favor of reduced NGO access and tighter security regulations for NGOs. This touched the core of NGO interests and has aroused great NGO concern. NGOs wonder: does this represent the position of the Secretary General himself, or is the SG unaware of the matter? Even though the issue is of enormous importance to NGOs, they are unable to discover the answer, since the SG has placed himself beyond the reach of NGO representatives who work day-in-day-out at the United Nations.

NGOs expect the Secretary General to intervene occasionally on their behalf, to help decide matters that are of special importance and urgency to the NGO community. The Secretary General could surely find time once or twice a year to have an extensive chat with NGO representatives, to find out how the organization he heads could really, in practice, develop a partnership with them.

5. Consultation in Administrative Decision-Making

Because the UN system hinges on mandates and pressures from member states, the Secretariat understandably does not give high priority to the views of NGOs. But if NGOs are the UN's partners, some decisions must take NGO views into account. There must be regular consultation with NGOs, especially on administrative decisions that directly affect the general

interests of NGOs, or the interests of an NGO sub-group.

Means exists for consultation. The DPI-NGO Executive Committee and CONGO are two NGO umbrella organizations that offer points of interchange between the Secretariat and the NGO community. These are elected bodies and are broadly representative of NGO opinion.

The DPI-NGO Executive Committee operates at a disadvantage, since it lacks an office or staff. Its volunteer capacities are severely stretched. Further, the Department of Public Information often acts in a controlling way over jointly-sponsored activities and events. Though the Committee is not particularly active on access issues, it works in many ways to express the concerns of DPI-accredited NGOs.

CONGO has a substantial budget, as well as an office and staff. In the past, many NGOs viewed it as a conservative body that was exclusively interested in the privileges of ECOSOC NGOs. But CONGO has now changed its name and taken steps to incorporate and represent all NGOs. CONGO has recently developed a useful electronic mailing list to inform the UN community about NGO access. It has organized a number of meetings on NGO access questions and has developed a statement on this question.

The Secretariat has regularly consulted with the leaders of these two umbrella groups, who until recently participated in meetings of the Inter-Departmental Working Group on NGOs. The Secretariat also occasionally consults beyond CONGO and the Executive Committee, inviting other NGOs with expertise, special knowledge, or additional perspectives to participate in consultation sessions, as was the case with three meetings convened by ASG Sorensen in December 1998 and March 1999.

In recent years, some NGOs have urged the Secretariat to develop policy-consultation groups, which could provide valuable NGO input in policy areas, like the web site and information services. Secretariat staff generally reacted negatively to this idea. In doing so, they have usually expressed two views. First, they have raised problems of representation: who would decide, and on what basis, whom they should

consult? This is a valid concern, but it is one that can be solved practically if there is a will and an interest in solving it.

Another Secretariat reaction is that NGO views are not relevant and do not have to be considered when policies are decided. A number of high-ranking staff expressed this view during the Optical Disk System controversy in late 1996 and early 1997. NGOs responded that they should be consulted as stakeholders . . . or at worst they should be consulted as customers. NGOs asked the estimated cost of the proposed system improvements. They asked for discussions to explore alternative pricing systems. The Secretariat refused.

Sometimes, offices in the Secretariat chose to consult by means of questionnaires or by inviting written input. This sidesteps the problem of representation. Though it appears to be more open to input from NGOs based outside New York and Geneva, in practice it often yields unsatisfactory results. Secretariat offices can select the input they prefer and ignore the rest, and there is no creative interaction between NGOs and Secretariat policy makers. While "input" of various types can be valuable from time to time, it does not substitute for direct face-to-face consultation. Substantial direct discussions would have improved the current consultations on access and on web site improvements.

The problem of consultation is most acute in the areas of access rules and security policy. In recent months, as the Secretariat has developed new rules in this area, the process of consultation with NGOs has been very unsatisfactory. NGOs were astonished that the Secretariat developed important new policies in the absence of NGOs. Then, the Secretariat issued these policies without any serious effort to present justifications. Ideally, Secretariat officials would work with NGOs to clarify problems and jointly work on how to solve them.

The Secretariat additionally has a tendency to announce new rules immediately before their implementation or even after implementation has already started. The memorandum of Mr. Riza, dated April 19 and implemented about the same time, reached NGOs in the post only in late May. NGOs would appreciate timely notifi-

cation, when important new rules affecting them are introduced. The Secretariat could set up a special list-serve for this purpose and it could use the UN Information Centers to relay information more quickly at the national level. The UN might save a great deal in postage costs and reach NGOs world wide far sooner.

The Secretariat also might make use of the UN web site to post more information on NGO issues, including existing rules and regulations, access rights, examples of best practices and so forth. This would be a gesture in support of NGO access and an important move to increase the transparency of NGO rules.

There is no magic formula for how policy consultation should work, how much of it there should be and how much NGO voices should count. Obviously, there are many pressures on the Secretariat and Secretariat officials must make complex political calculations involving the views of member states. Also there are the perceived interests of the Secretariat itself, and its officials' wish to be free from outside interference. Furthermore, consultation is time-consuming (for all parties). This must be especially burdensome in a downsized, under-funded and somewhat demoralized Secretariat, where staff are overworked and under-resourced. But in the end, better consultation will work better. It will strengthen relationships and produce better policy. And it certainly is an essential ingredient in partnership.

6. Relations with Delegations

NGOs' relations with the United Nations depends a great deal on their relations with the diplomatic missions of member states. Many delegations offer vital support to NGOs' quest for access to particular UN forums. Delegations provide background information and private reports on the progress of negotiations. They intervene with the Secretariat on NGOs' behalf. They promote informal access to meetings and new formal rights. And they help NGOs to meet and work with other delegations. Without such support, NGOs could not function effectively in the UN system.

Cordial relations with delegations does not come to NGOs as a matter of right, but rather they result from a mixture of NGOs' diplomat-

ic efforts, mutual NGO-delegation interest, and a sense among delegations that NGOs are indispensable partners and useful sources of information.

A considerable number of delegations have recently offered more briefings, receptions and other meetings with NGOs. They actively brief NGOs on their major policy work and they seek input from selected NGOs in specialized areas of their work. The US and UK delegations, among others, have developed active and effective outreach programs of this kind. Many delegations have also established web sites, some of which are especially valuable. These make more information available to NGOs and the public than ever before.

Delegations are selective in their relations with NGOs. They make strategic choices about their NGO contacts and allies. Delegations inevitably chose NGO partners whose goals coincide with their own national policies and agendas. But many delegations interact broadly with the NGO community.

Sometimes, the personal commitments of individual delegates, including Permanent Representatives (PRs), have made an especially important contribution to progress in the work of NGOs. For the recent past, a few outstanding examples are Ambassadors Juan Somavia of Chile, Antonio Monteiro of Portugal, Razali Ismail of Malaysia, Richard Butler of Australia, Ahmed Kamal of Pakistan, Hans Dahlgren of Sweden, Paolo Fulci of Italy and Samuel Insanally of Guyana. Below the level of PR, there are very many persons who have given NGOs tremendous help, and who interact intensively with NGO representatives. The Canadian and Dutch delegations, among others, have a reputation for outstanding support for NGOs.

The strong and growing network of relations between delegations and NGOs promises to solidify NGO relations with the United Nations and move it forward in the years ahead. It will continue to be the keystone of NGO action.

7. The ECOSOC Committee on NGOs

The Committee on NGOs of ECOSOC consists of 19 members, with new elections every four years. The Committee reviews applications

for accreditation, conducts a quadrennial review of those NGOs already granted accreditation, and considers general policy matters and rules governing NGO access and activities. It has an extremely heavy volume of work. The Committee has held consultation meetings with NGOs from time to time in the past and it has held such meetings in December, 1998, and June, 1999. There appears to be better dialogue with NGOs than in the recent past, but Committee members usually have heavy responsibilities for other committee work and time pressure limits their capacity for lengthy interaction. NGOs are very concerned about several dimensions of the Committee's work.

(a) Accreditation Process

NGOs are concerned that the process of granting accreditation is politicized. Qualified NGO applicants can be denied accreditation if they face the concerted efforts of one or more powerful member states, or a bloc of states. Similarly, NGOs that do not adequately fill the qualifications may be accepted if they have powerful member states or blocs as sponsors. Too often, government-sponsored NGOs ("GONGOS" in UN parlance) achieve accreditation.

The most politicized area of the Committee's work concerns NGOs in the human rights field. In early June of 1999, the Committee denied accreditation to Human Rights in China, a respected and well-established group. Such decisions weaken the credibility of the accreditation process in the eye of NGOs and they weaken UN-NGO relations.

NGOs wonder whether new means can be found to reduce the politicization of the accreditation process. For example, the Committee could invite a panel of experts to make recommendations, or the Committee could establish clearer rules that would be applied in a more even-handed manner. The Committee should act to ensure the fairest possible process for all applicants, especially those in the human rights field.

(b) Proposals for Restricting NGO Access

The Committee has recently considered proposals that would restrict the number of NGO representatives accredited to particular meet-

ings, impose requirements that NGOs submit membership lists, place punitive regulations on the quadrennial review, and impose a new "code of conduct." NGOs have spoken on the shortcomings of these proposals to the Committee in December 1998, but a few comments are in order here.

Firstly, NGOs are aware that a few cases of misconduct have occurred and that NGO consultations are not always as fruitful as they could be. Discussions between the Committee and NGOs can address these problems and seek to resolve them. But general rules of the kind that Committee members propose would seriously set back relations with NGOs and weaken the United Nations.

If delegations restrict the numbers of NGO representatives at any one meeting, they would hamper the work of major international NGOs that bring many representatives from their national sections to important forums. Human rights NGOs accredit many persons, since they need a diversity of voices and expertise to address world wide conditions at the Human Rights Commission. Similarly, during the Prep Comms of the International Criminal Court process, some NGOs accredited many representatives, helping to provide legal expertise and diverse international views. There are many other cases of legitimate use of significant numbers of passes by single NGOs.

If delegations demand membership lists as a condition of accreditation or as part of regular review, they would create impossible problems for NGOs. Large international NGOs may have millions of members in hundreds of chapters world wide. Most do not maintain centralized lists and in any case they would want to protect their members' privacy. If delegations withdraw accreditation of NGOs who are just slightly late in submitting their quadrennial review documents, they may punish those who have fallen prey to problems of postal service, unstable political conditions, or similar reasons beyond NGO control. This would obviously be unfair.

Finally, if delegations impose a general code or conduct on NGOs, they will be interfering unduly in the free operation of these organizations. NGOs should consider the need for such a code among themselves, but they certainly

should not be subjected to a code that is invented in an intergovernmental process.

The Committee, wisely, has not passed any such resolutions. But proposals remain under active consideration. NGOs are very concerned but they are encouraged that the Committee, in its June 1999 session has decided to widen its problem-solving dialogue with NGOs. NGOs hope that after further consultation, delegates will decide to set these proposals aside and that it will turn to more positive solutions.

(c) Other Issues

Looking ahead, NGOs would like strengthen dialogue with the Committee. They would like the Committee to regularize its NGO consultation process (perhaps making it a feature of every bi-annual meeting) and to include NGOs in the agenda-setting for such consultations.

NGOs also urge the committee to operate more transparently and to share information on problems that it perceives, including details of cases of unacceptable conduct by NGO representatives. NGOs think the Committee would do well to make more use of the disciplinary process that is mandated in Resolution 1996/31, rather than considering broad new rules that negatively affect all NGOs. The Committee should develop a grievance or disciplinary procedure that affirms NGO rights and conforms rigorously to due process

8. The Problematic of "Civil Society"

We will not comment at length on the question of the developing relationship between the United Nations system and "civil society" including business corporations, a question that has far-reaching practical, ethical and political ramifications. It is worth noting, however, that NGOs are worried about the long-term implications of this new policy direction and concerned that it may hamper UN-NGO relationship.

When the Secretariat increasingly uses of the term "civil society" in UN reports, interchangeably with the term "NGOs," it blurs an important distinction that is made in the UN Charter. At the very least, there should be a thorough and meaningful consultation between the Secretariat, delegations and NGOs about this issue.

9. Office and Meeting Space

As we have already noted, NGOs suffer from a serious shortage of office and meeting space. This shortage is growing more acute, as more NGOs seek access to the UN, missions expand, intergovernmental meetings increase in number, more conferences and followups take place in New York, and the local real estate market tightens.

NGOs need space to carry out their work. They need reasonably priced office space and they need free or very-low-priced meeting space. The trends suggest that this problem could get much worse in the future. It particularly affects Southern NGOs and NGOs who come to New York on a short-term basis. The UN has made no provision for solving this problem, though its arrangements for correspondents might serve as a precedent and a model. Another useful precedent is the NGO office space now being developed by the canton and municipality of Geneva. It is time for urgent action in New York, before developers seize all the real estate possibilities in the neighborhood.

The UN could develop a site (or part of a mixed-use site) that would be used for NGO offices and meeting areas (perhaps some provision could be made for low-budget missions as well). Such a site would ideally be contiguous with the site at headquarters - such as the "Boys' Club" site to the West or the "Con Ed" site to the South. The UN could perhaps obtain low-cost financing through the City of New York, as was done for construction of other UN buildings like UNICEF

Possibly, private foundations, individuals or governments could be interested in supporting the project. Or the space could be included in a development as a public amenity mandated by the City Planning Commission. Resulting office space could be rented to NGOs at a rate that would cover the carrying costs, a rate that would be considerably below the market level. Meeting space might also be provided at low or no cost to NGOs in the same development.

The "Con Ed" site in particular lends itself to development on a multi-use basis by a private developer, with concessional space included under a plan prepared by the Planning Commission. This might burden the UN with

only minimal cost and very little development planning effort. The UN must move quickly, though, since developers and city planners are already getting submissions ready for the new use of this enormous site.

10. The Challenge of Southern Participation

NGOs from the Global South have a relatively weak presence at the UN. They are represented through international NGOs, of course, but with rare exceptions "national" (single-country) NGOs are present only sporadically, at the time of major conference Prep Comms or followups. This feeds criticisms that NGOs are not adequately representative of the world's population and it weakens the NGO movement. NGO leaders are concerned about this problem, and in recent years they have taken steps to find solutions.

Some international NGOs bring representatives of Southern affiliates regularly to New York and Geneva to important meetings. The World Council of Churches, the International Federation of Human Rights and the Coalition for an International Criminal Court are among many NGOs that actively bring affiliates to UN meetings. In any single year, NGOs spend hundreds of thousands of dollars on this effort, with grants from foundations, governments and individual donors. NGLS and other UN offices, including the secretariats of world conferences, have also used funds provided by governments to bring NGOs to UN events. All efforts of this kind pose difficult problems of selection criteria - how to get the fairest representation, the best input, the greatest diversity, geographical and gender balance and all with utmost transparency of selection. Clearly existing results do not suffice. Much more needs to be done.

Visiting NGOs need help in understanding the UN system and getting quick orientation, assistance with accreditation and the like. NGLS and the Church Center for the UN have traditionally assisted visitors in such ways. But if Southern NGOs come in larger numbers, the UN will have to organize more programs of this kind.

As we have pointed out earlier, there also must be space for visiting NGOs to have temporary

offices and to hold caucuses and meetings. The Church Center for the UN has done outstanding work over the years in providing space for NGO secretariats and caucus meetings, but there is a great and growing space shortage. The UN must act to help resolve it.

The UN and NGOs should also organize more events on a regional basis. CONGO is organizing a series of conferences in Asia, Latin America, the Arab World, Africa and Eastern Europe to promote discussion of implementation of the UN world conferences, to strengthen dialogue between regional NGOs and to improve relations with the UN system. The Secretariat is organizing regional hearings to solicit input into the Millennium Forum. The UN and the NGO community can do more in this area, to bring the UN out to the regions. UN bodies could have regular meetings and hearings in regions, incorporating NGO consultation. A revived ECOSOC might consider moving in this direction. Even Security Council initiatives, such as efforts to make sanctions more effective, could profitably incorporate regional NGOs into monitoring processes. The possibilities are endless.

The UN could take a number of other steps, too, that could address the problem. Free access to the Optical Disk System (or the equivalent) would help. A much larger trust fund to bring NGOs to UN sessions would help. More use of video conference facilities (especially as communication costs drop) would help. So would wider UN use of list-sen's and other modern communication methods.

Delegations and the NGOs must stop ritual complaints about this problem and start finding solutions. The Secretary General might produce a report on the topic. NGOs and delegates might convene a special joint working group to consider options. All concerned must engage in serious and broad-based planning, followed by action.

Conclusion

NGOs are at a critical point in their relationship with the United Nations. They can make substantial further progress or they can suffer serious setbacks. The future is open and NGOs

must seize it. They must make their case to governments around the world. And they must come together for stronger, more effective, and more united action at the UN. This will require a new level of focus and organization, a much more efficient lobbying process, and a well-articulated long-term strategy. They must engage in constructive self-examination, remedial action and improved quality of NGO coordination and input into UN forums.

NGOs have a great deal to contribute to the United Nations and they have made substantial strides forward in their access to the UN's decision-making process. Key questions are now on the table, which will have to be answered by delegations, the Secretariat and the NGO movement. Each party will bear pan of the responsibility for the final outcome. With good fortune and hard work, NGOs can assume new levels of involvement with the UN system and can contribute to a strengthened UN that is needed for the new millennium.

Summary of recommendations

1. Access to Information

- * Secretariat should increase the proportion of UN documents posted to the UN web site and especially the non-English document postings. It should continue with the development of this very useful information tool.
- * Secretariat should provide free access to the Optical Disk System in the short term to all accredited NGOs and should explore the options of a more effective document database system for the future.
- * Secretariat should continue to provide free access to the Treaty Database.
- * Delegations should agree to the posting of draft texts, non-papers and other non-public documents on a selective basis, to strengthen the consultation process, especially for NGOs not based in New York and Geneva.
- * Delegations should continue to develop their own web sites and to post their press releases and major documents on these sites.

2. Access to Premises

- * Security department should eliminate the special screening of NGO representatives at perimeter entrance points or develop a securi-

ty screening system that treats NGOs the same as delegates, press and UN staff.

- * Security department should set metal detectors (if they are to be used) at sensitivity levels consistent with standard airport security, not at ultra-high levels.
- * Secretariat should clearly explain the need for security arrangements and should announce new rules reasonably in advance, after full consultation.
- * Security department should not search NGOs for documents, read NGO documents or confiscate NGO documents.
- * Security department should very carefully define all rules relating to searches of NGOs beyond the perimeter security zone, after full consultation, and should publish these rules so that they are clear to all.
- * Secretariat should give NGOs full access to the Second Floor, including the main floor perimeter of the General Assembly Hall, the Delegates Lounge and the corridors and meeting rooms in the Conference Building.
- * Secretariat should allow NGOs to circulate freely in other areas of headquarters recently closed off.
- * To the extent that the Secretariat determines that special NGO security issues exist, it should establish a special committee of NGO representatives to engage in regular consultation with the security department so as to consider these issues and find solutions with minimum impact on NGO access.
- * Secretariat and NGOs should consult together to create clearer rules and regulations ensuring NGO rights and responsibilities in the UN buildings. Publication of security department instructions to its own staff on some of these issues would help promote transparency and clarify expectations on NGO conduct.
- * NGOs should not have to pay for access to the UN and use of UN services now provided for free, such as use of conference rooms.
- * Secretariat and member states should develop future budgets with considerations of expanded NGO access needs in mind.
- * Secretariat should look into the broad issue of NGO-related physical facilities at the UN, including conference space. Earpieces should be promptly restored to working order.

3. *The Right to Participate*

- * Secretariat, delegations and NGOs should work together to consolidate the new arrangements for NGO consultation contained in ECOSOC Resolution 1996/31.
- * Secretariat, delegations and NGOs should work together to define "existing practices" in various UN forums and to extend "best practices," including practices of NGO consultation with the General Assembly, its Main Committees and Subsidiary Bodies.
- * The Office of the Legal Counsel should affirm its commitment to an expansionist view of NGO rights that takes into account not only formal rules but also well-established practices.
- * The General Assembly should pass a resolution giving GA consultative rights to NGOs already in consultation with ECOSOC. Such rights should apply at least to the General Assembly, its Main Committees and Special Sessions. Rights to Subsidiary Bodies should also be considered.
- * Even in the absence of new NGO consultative rights with the General Assembly, the GA should pass a resolution establishing strong and uniform rights of access to Special Sessions, especially those that undertake reviews of major conferences. All NGOs accredited to the conference should be accredited to the Special Session.
- * Plans for Special Sessions and other major conferences should take into account the problem of space at headquarters and should consider alternative venues, in New York City or elsewhere.

4. *Advocacy and Support within the Secretariat and UN Agencies*

- * Secretary General should clarify his position on the matter of NGO access and security regulations and should elaborate the meaning of NGO partnership in this context.
- * Secretariat should invite NGOs to provide regular evaluations on the services provided by the DPI and ECOSOC Offices.
- * Secretariat must take steps to shield the DPI accreditation process from political influences, particularly in the case of applications from NGOs in the human rights field.

- * Secretariat should take steps to improve the service provided in the ECOSOC office, particularly the issuing of passes in a timely manner. The three-day wait for passes must be eliminated and paperwork must be better and more reliably organized.
- * Secretariat should improve both offices' handling of accreditation applications and consider flexible rules for evaluation of NGO work. Forms should be regularly updated and made available electronically, possibly in a web-based format.
- * UN and UN system agencies should substantially increase the budget of NGLS to consolidate its present work and to support an increase in its work program, including building of a web site.
- * Secretary General should create a new focal point office exclusively for NGOs in the Secretariat, perhaps in his Executive Office.
- * Inter-Departmental Working Group on NGOs should again include NGO representatives, on a regular basis in its sessions.
- * Secretary General should meet from time to time with working NGO representatives to consider how a partnership can best be built and how the UN can best work with NGOs, especially in its deliberative and administrative operations.

5. *Consultation in Administrative Decision-Making*

- * Secretariat should increase its consultation with NGO representatives, including the use of policy-consultation groups in such areas as the web site, information services, NGO support services and physical facilities.
- * Secretariat should use face-to-face consultation process, as well as questionnaires and invitations for written "input." Face-to-face consultation can be organized during commissions, conference followups and other such periods, to maximize the participation of NGOs based outside New York, especially Southern NGOs.
- * Secretariat should especially consult NGOs on access and security rules that affect NGOs.
- * Secretariat should announce new rules well in advance of their implementation. Last-minute announcements, or announcements after the fact are not acceptable.

- * Secretariat should make use of list-servs and the UN web site for timely communication of information to NGOs. There remains far too much reliance on postal notices, which are both slow and expensive.
- * Secretariat should use the UN web site to post information about NGO access, including regulations, rights, best practices and so on.
- * Secretary General should consider Secretariat-wide initiatives to define and strengthen the culture of openness, accessibility and partnership with NGOs.

6. Relations with Delegations

- * Delegations and NGOs should continue to build closer relations, as a key element in strengthening NGO work at the United Nations.

7. The ECOSOC Committee on NGOs

- * Committee should hold a consultation meeting with NGOs during each of its bi-annual sessions and it should consider other means to increase dialogue with NGOs.
- * Committee should take steps to de-politicize its work on accreditation, including possibly using the recommendation of an expert body. Sharper definition of accreditation criteria would also help.
- * Committee should drop consideration of new rules restricting NGO access, while at the same time consulting with NGOs to rectify problems of conduct or promoting more effective interaction at intergovernmental meetings.

& The Problematic of "Civil Society"

- * UN should cease to use the term "civil society" interchangeably with "non-governmental organizations."
- * Secretariat or UN agency proposals to increase UN interaction with private business or other non-state actors should be fully and openly

discussed, with an eye to its future impact on relations with NGOs.

9. Office and Meeting Space

- * Secretariat should broadly consider the space needs of NGOs, both for meetings and for offices.
- * Secretariat should consider a site development in the area of headquarters that would serve urgent NGO space needs.

10. The Challenge of Southern Presence

- * Secretariat should meet office and meeting space needs of visiting Southern NGOs
- * Secretariat should broaden programs for orientation and assistance to visiting Southern NGOs.
- * UN should organize more events in Southern venues, including regional events, special regional hearings and the like.
- * UN should develop a substantial trust fund to bring Southern NGOs to major meetings and conferences.
- * Secretariat should make more use of video conferences and other modern electronic technology to promote consultation with Southern NGOs.
- * Secretariat, delegates and NGOs should convene a working group to explore ideas and means to increase Southern NGO participation.

Conclusion

- * NGOs should work harder to promote their cause and at the same time they should consider means to improve the quality of their consultation with UN forums.
- * UN, governments and NGOs should work together more vigorously to overcome obstacles, increase opportunities for consultation, and build a strong NGO-UN partnership.

Consultation on the NGO / United Nations relationship 3 November 1999

This meeting was the second in a series of consultations convened by the Conference of NGOs to review issues relating to NGO participation in UN meetings having arisen in connection with the work of the ECOSOC Committee on NGOs, and to suggest avenues for resolving points of difficulty that have been circulating among NGOs, Missions and the Secretariat. NGO representatives, Member State delegates, and Secretariat staff were all invited to attend. Approximately 50 persons participated in the meeting, with member state representatives attending from Cuba, Denmark, Luxembourg, Norway and the USA.

Building on the preliminary session of October 1st, discussion on each agenda addressed experiences having arisen in connection with Commission meetings and other UN sessions, and sought to identify what might be flexible yet effective frameworks to ensure both order and broad-based NGO representation and participation in UN meetings, as codified by Resolution 1996/31.

How to gather data on the number of people who register for, and those who actually attend, Commissions and other UN meetings

In announcing the first agenda item, Afaf Mahfouz, CONGO President, observed that most NGOs do not understand why NGO numbers are perceived to be a problem. In her remarks, Hanifa Mezoui of the UN NGO Section concurred, and asked Michele Fedoroff to present pre-

liminary data which suggests that the numbers of NGOs registered for specific Commission meetings generally exceeds the number that actually attend. Michele presented information from the Commissions on Social Development, Population and Development, Sustainable Development and the Status of Women. In all of them, numbers suggests that since 1988 there has been between a 30-50% discrepancy between pre-registrants and actual attendees. The only Commission for which there is not such data is Human Rights, but it will be gathered going forward. Similarly, greater attention will be paid to gathering this information at other future Commission meetings.

In the discussion, a participant observed that this data, when examined over time, will help us to identify general trends and fluctuations, such as those relating to Special Sessions and their PrepCom, which generally attract more NGO attendees than regular Commission meetings. It was also commented that it was a pity that a representative of UN Security was not in attendance, given their past promise to help us gather relevant data and come up with related solutions.

Further defining the need for data, another person asked whether there is a way to know how many NGO representatives are at a particular UN meeting at any given time. While the NGO Section does not feel that they have the human resources to do such detailed tracking at this time, it was suggested that an

informal survey could be taken with NGO assistance, perhaps via sheets at the Conference Officer's desk in each official meeting room, which NGOs could sign up every time they entered. The representative from Cuba observed that this is difficult information to gather, but others felt that even a general picture would be helpful. An NGO representative asked whether similar information could not be gathered for the Second and Third Committees, where NGO numbers have been quite low, and should increase. Another person made a plea for lists of NGO participants at Commission meetings, which would be useful for networking.

Esmerelda Brown, Chair of the NGO Steering Committee for Sustainable Development, observed that at the Commission for Sustainable Development there were more actual attendees than the number gathered by the NGO Section. She conjectured that this could be because a large number of participants attending had ECOSOC status (and hence needed not register). She also observed that numbers of attendees might be generally lower than registrants because many participants from developing countries register for meetings in the hope of attending, then are unable to do so because of scarce resources. Another person drew notice to another possible cause, that people sometimes do not expect to attend, but wish to see their name in the program anyway. These observations support-

ed the idea of an informal survey instrument to get to the true numbers of NGOs at specific meetings.

Techeste Aderom, Congo Secretary, who co-chaired a portion of the meeting, observed that NGO instinct on numbers not being a problem in and of themselves has been borne out, but mentioned that we still need more information on where bottlenecks do occur. We need to look at each Commission on a case-by-case basis, including those where numbers have never been perceived to be a problem (eg. Statistics), and learn which agenda items bring overcrowding, and who the NGOs are that attend for all agenda items. This information should be extended to learn who is requesting to speak when.

Update from the NGO Section on guidelines for NGOs when visiting UN Headquarters

On this agenda item, Hanifa Mezoui stated that guidelines for NGOs are all over the UN, and for example are included in publications by NGLS and DPI, and in the recent report by the Secretary-General. She also mentioned document A/54/329, which contains member state and NGO responses to that report. She committed the NGO Section to gathering and publishing those guidelines, along the lines of their publication of more substantive guidelines for NGO work at the UN. Hanifa asked CONGO and DPI participate with the NGO Section in reviewing this material, in consultation with other NGOs, to finalize a publication by March 2000. It was also suggested that the guidelines eventually appear on the NGO Section's Web site.

Lessons from the NGO Commission on Sustainable Development-how to open and maintain clear channels of communication and problem-solving with Bureaus and member states

On Agenda Item #3, Esmerealda Brown, Chair of the NGO Steering Committee on Sustainable Development, recounted the development of NGO facilitation for the Commission on Sustainable Development. It dates back to the post-UNCED period, when NGOs decided to organize strategically to eliminate potential misunderstandings. This process culminated in the creation of the Steering Committee, comprised of NGO representatives from South and North, and in the decision to seek regular meetings with the Commission Secretariat. This arrangement has functioned well for 5 years, with a Secretariat liaison person assigned to work with the Committee, member states increasingly comfortable with NGO input, and NGOs able to highlight their expertise. To manage the diversity of the caucuses and regional groupings attending Commission meetings, the committee provides basic orientation on procedures and comportment, and each day conducts meetings to strategize on the handling of available NGO speaker slots, with an emphasis on speaking from consensus. Esmerealda allowed that this can be tricky, but that it keeps decision-making in NGO hands. The Committee's main challenge is finding resources to get people to meetings, and for translation. The use of internet technology has been very useful for the Committee.

Additional lessons from the Commission on the Status of

Women, the Commission on Human Rights, and Commission on Social Development

In the discussion, Afaf raised the importance for all NGOs to balance coordination with the need to allow NGOs at large to participate in UN consultative processes. The Chair of the Committee on Social Development said that their procedures are similar to the Steering Committee, though it is a less formal process due to fewer people being involved. The Chair of the NGO Committee on Sustainable Development noted that the committee has interlocking membership with the Steering Committee, and coordinates closely. Another NGO representative observed that few NGO committees emerge as directly from a UN world conference as did the Steering Committee, with this and other dimensions of its history not entirely easy to replicate.

Adding to this discussion, the former Chair of the Committee on the Status of Women described the past four CSW sessions as increasingly productive. The committee sets up topical task forces, which then turn into caucuses at the actual Commission meeting. The group selects spokespersons on the basis of diversity criteria, but among problems: there is no guarantee that people on the NGO speakers list will be called; and there is a bias against individual NGOs making independent statements. On the latter point, a representative of UNIFEM observed that there is no reason to expect that a diverse grouping of NGOs will all be able to speak with a single voice. Other NGO representatives concurred with this point.

Techeste, speaking from the experience of the Commission on Human Rights, remarked that NGOs should anticipate problems at forthcoming commission meetings, and take necessary steps, for example control the number of times each NGO can speak. We do not want to end up in a situation where we are relegated to speak after delegates, who will then just leave. We need to keep our current rights, but respond intelligently to some government

concerns. Another NGO participant agreed that we ought to affirm the notion that all NGOs have the right to speak and circulate statements, but seek opportunities for common action as appropriate. Member states reserve the right to speak individually, and as clusters, so such a principle should be applicable to NGO contributions as well.

On a final note, a participant observed that NGOs must keep

from being paralyzed by the thought that they are not welcome at the UN. Instead, they should focus on the existing prerogatives in ECOSCO Resolution 1996/31 and what they are therefore able to do. It may be a role for CONGO to assist in this regard.

(Conference of NGOs in Consultative Relationship with the United Nations)

Appel à la création d'un Mouvement mondial pour la culture de la paix et de la non-violence

En proclamant l'An 2000 Année internationale de la culture de la paix, en novembre 1997, les Nations Unies se sont données pour objectif de «mobiliser l'opinion publique au niveau national et international afin d'instituer et de promouvoir une culture de la paix et le rôle central que le système des Nations Unies peut jouer à cet égard».

L'An 2000 représente en effet une opportunité, symboliquement très forte car liée au passage du millénaire, pour le lancement d'un Mouvement mondial pour la culture de la paix basé sur l'engagement des individus dans leur vie quotidienne et comportant l'implication d'institutions et d'associations à tous les niveaux, de l'international au local, y compris les Etats et les gouvernements, tant il est vrai que l'existence d'une volonté politique est indispensable pour créer les conditions d'une paix durable.

Le Mouvement mondial doit être fondé sur une définition très large de la culture de la paix basée sur «le respect des droits de Thom-

me, la démocratie et la tolérance, la promotion du développement, l'éducation pour la paix, la libre circulation de l'information et une plus grande participation des femmes». Cela signifie que le mouvement pour la culture de la paix existe déjà à travers l'action de nombreux individus, groupes, organisations et institutions dans le monde entier. Ainsi, ceux qui sont engagés aujourd'hui dans des organisations humanitaires témoignent, par leur travail, des valeurs de tolérance et de solidarité et contribuent au refus de l'image de l'«ennemi» qui conforte la culture de la guerre. Ceux qui militent pour la démocratie et les droits de l'homme s'opposent à la culture de l'oppression qui est à la base des structures autoritaires, de même ceux qui oeuvrent pour assurer un développement pour tous luttent contre l'exclusion et la pauvreté, qui sont très souvent à l'origine de la violence.

Le Mouvement mondial doit donc être une «grande alliance de mouvements existants», un pro-

cessus rassemblant tous ceux qui d'ores et déjà travaillent à cette transformation profonde de nos sociétés. L'objectif recherché est que chaque individu ou organisation, dans le cadre de son action quotidienne, puisse contribuer à ce processus de transformation d'une culture de violence et de guerre vers une culture de paix en termes de valeurs, d'attitudes et de comportements individuels aussi bien que de structures et modalités de fonctionnement des institutions.

Dans chaque pays, ville ou quartier la culture de la paix peut se réaliser de multiples façons, en s'attaquant à l'élimination des racines culturelles profondes de la violence et de la guerre, telles que la pauvreté, l'exclusion, l'ignorance ou l'exploitation.

Les Nations Unies et l'UNESCO, en encourageant cette «grande alliance» à tous les niveaux de la société, reviennent à leur mission originelle. Elles s'adressent directement aux individus, en faisant appel à leur responsabilité personnelle, et elles mettent leur force de

rayonnement et de communication au service de la valorisation de l'action de groupes et d'organisations, souvent d'origine non gouvernementale.

Ces groupes et organisations, en opérant au niveau local et dans des domaines spécifiques (par exemple, la protection de l'environnement ou la sauvegarde de la diversité culturelle), n'ont parfois pas conscience de contribuer de façon substantielle à l'instauration d'une culture de la paix à l'échelle de la planète. Valoriser leur action dans le cadre d'un Mouvement mondial signifie les aider à sortir de leur isolement et permettre à d'autres individus de les connaître et de rejoindre leurs activités.

Le développement de ce Mouvement mondial est envisagé en trois phases :

1. Une campagne de sensibilisation du public par les médias

L'objectif est de faire connaître l'Année internationale de la culture de la paix au plus grand nombre et de créer une prise de conscience la plus large possible de cette nécessaire transformation culturelle dans les comportements individuels et les fonctionnements institutionnels - qu'appelle le nouveau millénaire. Cette campagne a débuté officiellement le 4 mars 1999 par une conférence de presse internationale donnée à la Tour Eiffel à Paris, qui a été suivie par d'autres conférences régionales en Amérique

latine, Asie, Afrique, Europe de l'Est et dans les pays arabes.

Un des moments phares de cette campagne a été le lancement mondial de l'Année internationale de la culture de la paix, le 14 septembre 1999, qui a coïncidé avec la "Journée internationale de la paix" et avec l'ouverture de la dernière Assemblée générale des Nations Unies avant l'an 2000. Cet événement du 14 septembre, s'est célébré dans tous les Etats membres de l'ONU, appuyé sur des sites et monuments symboliques qui, de par leur notoriété, ont servi de plates-formes pour annoncer l'Année internationale au grand public. C'est le cas de la Tour Eiffel à Paris, des Pyramides de Teotihuacán au Mexique, des sites de Byblos et Tyr au Liban ou de Hiroshima au Japon.

Le point culminant de cette campagne de sensibilisation sera l'Assemblée du Millénaire des Nations Unies en septembre de l'an 2000, qui verra réunis en même temps les chefs d'Etat et les représentants des organisations non gouvernementales de la planète. La diffusion du logo officiel de l'Année et des slogans (comme «Cultivons la paix») sur tout support écrit, radiophonique, télévisuel et informatique possible, contribuera grandement à cette campagne de sensibilisation.

2. L'appel à engagement individuel

Le «Manifeste 2000 pour une

culture de la paix et de la non-violence» est l'instrument majeur de cet appel. Ce Manifeste a été élaboré par un groupe de Prix Nobel de la paix qui souhaitaient donner au plus grand nombre possible d'individus la possibilité d'exprimer leur engagement personnel pour une culture de la paix au quotidien. L'objectif est de collecter 100 millions de signatures avant l'Assemblée générale des Nations Unies du Millénaire en septembre 2000.

3. L'appel à l'action

La signature du Manifeste 2000 doit être vue non comme le point d'arrivée mais comme le point de départ de cet engagement personnel. L'objectif est de mobiliser le plus grand nombre d'individus dans des actions en faveur de la culture de la paix, notamment en les encourageant à s'associer aux activités des organisations et des institutions qui travaillent déjà dans les différents domaines de la culture de la paix. En particulier, on s'efforcera de créer des "réseaux de réseaux", de façon à diffuser une très large information sur les activités d'organisations existantes dans les différents pays. Des sites web sur Internet, reliés entre eux, tout comme des numéros verts d'information au niveau national permettront la création de ces réseaux d'échanges de ressources et d'information.
(Contactweb : www.unesco.org/manifesto2000)

Euro-Med water ministers meet in Turin

NGOs call for higher profile for water issues in Euro-Med

Ministers and other high-ranking officials responsible for the water sector in the Euro-Med

Partner countries met in Turin, Italy to adopt a Plan of Action for regional co-operation in water

management. An official declaration by attendees, reaffirmed commitments stressing the importance

of water in the region, including the Mediterranean Charter for Water (signed in Rome 1992), the Barcelona Declaration, SMAP, and the Declaration of the 3rd Euro-Med Ministerial Conference, held last April. The action plan promotes six priority fields for cooperation, including, among others, integrated management of local drinking water supply and sanitation, combating drought, and use of non-conventional water resources.

The meetings were reportedly very tense, with the main subject of controversy being the insistence by some countries, notably Syria, to introduce basin-wide management according to the Helsinki agreement into all international waterways. Predictably, this led to fierce opposition by states whose water supply could be threatened by such measures, notably Turkey,

Israel, and Egypt. In the end, the subject was not included in the joint statement.

NGOs commented that while the initiative of a ministerial-level dialogue was appreciated, still much work remained to be done in order to protect the region's rapidly diminishing and deteriorating water resources. A declaration by Mediterranean NGOs called for the Ministers to "make sure that water issues have proper visibility at all levels of the Euro-Med cooperation; [and to] make sure that poor and marginal communities of the basin are not left to the mercy of profit driven water suppliers to get their basic water requirements..."

Regarding the impact of the Mediterranean Free Trade Zone (MFTZ) on the regions water supplies, the declaration stated, "that the process of trade liberalization

within the Euro-Mediterranean region is leading to increased production, transport, consumption, and disposal of goods which translates directly into increasing the demand of the limited water resources and increases the potential of their quality deterioration through the production of various pollutants." Recommendations of the NGOs included ensuring that a strong priority be placed on water for the environment, people and food in the MEDA II Programme (2000-2006) (see MEDA article below) including stating defined targets, and ensuring that water issues have proper visibility at all levels of the Euro-Med cooperation.

A copy of the NGO declaration is available on-line at www.foene.org/Inf/zlitir.htm

Quel est l'impact économique du bénévolat?

En 1992, elles exploraient un domaine peu connu l'impact économique des activités à but non lucratif au Canada. Cinq ans plus tard, elles publiaient la première recherche empirique sur les banques de données existantes au Canada dans ce domaine. Aujourd'hui, Kathleen M. Day et Rose Anne Devlin, professeures au Département d'économie, sont considérées comme les expertes par excellence au pays sur l'impact du bénévolat dans l'économie canadienne.

En 1995, Judith Maxwell et les Réseaux canadiens de recherche en politiques publiques chargeaient les deux collègues de broser le portrait du secteur canadien des organismes à but non lucratif.

Les professeures Day et Devlin ont donc évalué l'état de la connaissance empirique dans le domaine en consultant toutes les banques de données qui existaient sur les bénévoles et les organismes de bienfaisance (enregistrés ou pas). L'étude a permis, pour la première fois, d'avoir une meilleure idée des repercussions de ce secteur sur l'économie du pays.

En novembre dernier, les deux professeures publiaient dans la Revue canadienne d'économie les résultats de leurs nouvelles recherches. Elles y soulignaient que les gens qui avaient fait du bénévolat avaient des revenus de 6 à 7 p. 100 plus élevés que ceux qui n'en avaient pas fait. Ce pourcentage équivalait, pour une personne qui

gagne 40 000 \$ par année, à un revenu additionnel de 2 800 \$. «Le bénévolat donne peut-être des contacts dans les milieux d'affaires, ou peut-être permet-il d'acquérir des compétences particu-

lières ou d'impressionner favorablement les employeurs, nous n'en sommes pas certaines, mais le fait est que les gens qui ont fait du bénévolat ont des revenus supérieurs à ceux qui n'en ont pas fait», précise Mme Devlin.

Statistique Canada avait déjà procédé en 1987 à un sondage sur la main-d'oeuvre canadienne, qui comportait un questionnaire sur le bénévolat. Dix ans plus tard, alors que l'organisme se préparait à reprendre l'exercice, on avait demandé aux deux spécialistes de

critiquer la démarche. «Le projet de Statistique Canada était louable. Mais, du point de vue d'une économiste, la méthode employée comportait certaines lacunes. Par exemple, il n'y avait pas de distinction réelle entre les ménages et les particuliers. En économie, nous étudions les particuliers», affirme Mme Devlin. On devrait rendre publics les principaux résultats du sondage de 1997 prochainement.

Les deux chercheuses comptent sur les résultats de ce sondage pour étudier un autre phénomène. En effet, s'il est vrai que les bénévoles ont des revenus un peu plus élevés que les non-bénévoles, il semble que ce soient surtout les hommes qui bénéficient de cet avantage. Le bénévolat n'aurait pas d'effet significatif sur le salaire éventuel des femmes. «Il faut être prudent car, au niveau empirique, nos conclusions sont moins caté-

goriques. Les données de 1997 nous permettront peut-être de clarifier cela.»

La professeure Devlin ne s'en tient pas seulement à la théorie du bénévolat; elle le pratique aussi. En 1997-1998, par exemple, elle a été la coprésidente de la campagne Centraide de l'Université d'Ottawa.

Maxime Pedneaud-Jobin
(Gazette d'Ottawa,
23 Avril 1999)

NGOs and Governance in the Arab Countries

Call for papers for a Conference organized jointly by the MOST Programme (UNESCO), the CEDEJ, the IRD, the CPSS of Al Ahrām. 29th and 30th March 2000 in Cairo.

Steering committee: Sarah Ben Nefissa, scientific coordinator, Institute of Research for Development (ex-ORSTOM); Nabil Abdelferrah (Centre of Political and Strategic Studies of Al Ahrām); Sari Hanafi (Centre of Legal, Economic and Social Studies and Documentation [CEDEJ]); Carlos Sanchez Milani (Most, UNESCO).

Objectives of the conference: the principal objective of this conference is to examine whether one can regard the NGOs of the Arab world as one of the main actors of the governance of these countries and of their national and local development.

Organisation of the Conference: the conference will be held in Cairo on 29th and 30th March 2000. The researchers wishing to take part in this conference will have to send a summary of two pages (a minimum of one page) of

their communication draft presenting methodology, the tools used as well as the principal assumptions. The summaries will have to be written in one of the three languages (Arab, English or French) and to arrive at the three addresses specified below before 30th October, 1999. In addition to this document, it is also necessary to attach a Curriculum vitae and a professional address. The complete communications will have to be sent to the same addresses by 1st March 2000 at the latest. This is needed so that they can all be sent to the participants before the start of the conference.

The selected contributions will lead to a publication within the framework of the "MOST Discussion Papers" series (approximately 25 pages will be required, in French or English, with summary, all on computer disk and PC WinWord format).

Summaries of communications should be sent to the following addresses: Sarah Ben Nefissa, Centre de recherche d'Ile de France, Institut de Recherche pour le Développement,

32, avenue Henri Varagnat
93143 Bondy Cedex, France
Tel: 00 33 (0) 1.48.02.56.25
Fax: 00 33 (0) 1.48.47.30.88
Email: bennefissa@bondy.ird.fr
Sari Hanafi, Centre de Recherche et de Documentation Economiques, Juridiques et So
P.O. Box 392 Muhammed Frid,
Cairo, Egypt

Tel: 00 202 392 87 11/16/39
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Email: sara@idscl.gov.eg

Carlos R. Sanchez Milani,
"Management of Social Transformations" Programme (MOST/UNESCO)

1, rue de Miollis, 75015 Paris,
France

Tel: 00 33 14.56.84.576

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Margery B. Daniels, Executive

Director, International Society for

Third Sector Research

The Johns Hopkins University

551 Wyman Park Building,

3400 N. Charles Street,

Baltimore, MD 21218, USA

Tel: 410-516-4678

Fax: 410-516-4870

Website: jhu.edu/~istr

One year Master of Arts in Humanitarian Assistance at Tufts University

Tufts University is offering a Master of Arts in Humanitarian Assistance as a joint degree from The School of Nutrition Science and Policy (SNSP) and the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy.

This one year degree in Humanitarian Assistance is geared toward mid-career professionals with significant field experience in the areas of famine, conflicts and complex emergencies.

The School of Nutrition Science and Policy, the only one of its kind in the United States, has achieved international recognition for its cross disciplinary training of professionals to work in nutrition and related programs, such as human nutrition and nutritional epidemiology, applied nutrition and food policy, world hunger, malnutrition, development, and policy making.

The Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy is the oldest school of international affairs in the United States devoted exclusively to graduate study in international relations. It educates professionals from throughout the world for careers leading to positions of leadership or influence in the national and international arenas, such as, negotiation/mediation, environment, refugees and migration, population issues, international law, global business, foreign service and other world issues.

This new degree program in Humanitarian Assistance fills a vacuum in the academic world in the United States. It is a unique program with a focus on relief and development in the world.

Mid-career professionals will learn and contribute to innovative theory, research and policy in this expanding field. Already, the traditional ways of looking at relief and development are being challenged in the context of Afghanistan, Bosnia, Burundi, Haiti, Rwanda, Somalia and Sudan. There is growing appreciation both of humanitarian assistance in and of itself, not just as a part of development studies, and of the need for innovative analysis and research on new models for effective assistance at the time of complex emergencies and other disasters.

The M.A. is Humanitarian Assistance consists of two semesters of academic work totaling eight semester courses approved by SNSP and Fletcher. Students are expected to complete the following core courses: 1) Humanitarian Aid in Complex Emergencies, 2) Nutrition in Complex Emergencies, 3) Independent Seminar in Humanitarianism, 4) One course selected from the other core courses offered by the program. The remaining four courses can be chosen from SNSP/Fletcher offerings. Students are required to

write a Masters thesis as part of the second semester requirement.

Typically the thesis applies theory and analytical skills learned in the program to the professional's previous experience.

This program is available to mid-career professionals with varied backgrounds and from different countries to enhance learning from each other's experiences. The candidate must have an undergraduate degree, be mid-career, have demonstrated leadership qualities and have a potential to make a substantial contribution in the field of humanitarian assistance.

The program will be administered by a joint Fletcher-Nutrition Academic Affairs Committee. Prospective students must apply to this committee through the Felstein International Famine Center. The degree will be a combined School of Nutrition Science and Policy and the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy degree.

*For further information, contact:
Admissions Committee for
Masters in Humanitarian
Assistance*

*Felstein International Famine
Center - Tufts University
96 Packard Avenue, Medford,
Ma 02155, USA
Phone: 1-617-627-3423, Fax: 1-
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www.tufts.edu/humanitarian/famine*

The First Convention of civil society organised at European level held at the initiative of the European ESC

Convention proposes practical steps to promote a more participatory Europe

The First Convention of civil society organised at European level has come to a successful close. The Convention was held on 15 and 16 October at the initiative of Mrs Rangoni Machiavelli, president of the European Economic and Social Committee (ESC). The EU is facing a serious crisis of confidence. Rightly or wrongly, the EU public is accusing it of lacking efficiency and pointing to its democratic deficits. The European Economic and Social Committee is seeking to provide a practical response to the situation described in its opinion on the role and contribution of civil society organisations in the construction of Europe, adopted on 22 September 1999 (rapporteur: Mrs Anne-Marie Sigmund, Various Interests Group, Austria). In the ESC's view, this can be achieved by offering more civil society organisations the opportunity to make their voices heard in the EU institutions.

Set up in 1957, the ESC already represents three interest groups at European level: employers, workers and "various activities" (farmers, SMEs, the professions, etc.). Its 222 members (appointed by the EU Council) give their views on a wide range of European legislative proposals. As Mrs Rangoni Machiavelli pointed out in opening the Convention, however, society has changed since 1957. New types of organisation had come into being, such as the socially-oriented non-governmental organisations (NGOs). She argued that the

ESC must now hear what they had to say, if it wished to continue reflecting a true image of organised civil society.

The Committee has certainly achieved its aims with this first Convention, which brought together some 300 participants, representing the different economic and social categories: employers, workers, farmers, SMEs, the liberal professions, consumer and environmental protection organisations, family associations, socially-oriented NGOs, minority and charitable organisations. The Convention was also attended by numerous representatives of the European institutions, national economic and social councils and socio-economic organisations from countries and regions outside the EU, in particular the applicant countries.

The Convention set out to address two questions: (1) How to strengthen the role and contribution of civil society organisations in the construction of Europe, and (2) The role of the European ESC in this setting.

A clearer and more detailed view of what "civil society" really means emerged from the debates. The conclusions of the two days of discussions included the view that in order to strengthen cooperation between civil society and the EU institutions, the ESC could - in close liaison with the European Commission - act as a catalyst for a civil dialogue, supplementing the social dialogue.

More specifically, it could support the NGOs call for a legal basis (Treaty article) on the civil

dialogue. It could also invite NGOs to attend ESC hearings on crucial issues such as the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights, or the guidelines for the Member States' employment policies. The ESC could also back the idea of involving those civil society organisations which are not currently represented on the Committee in the drafting of its opinions.

The challenge for the Committee now is to maintain a regular, structured dialogue between the ESC and NGO coordinations at European level. One first step could be to establish twice-yearly meetings to look at mutual agendas, plan common actions and discuss ways of extending mutual support and collaboration.

The Economic and Social Committee should actively promote the right of association at European level and thus the European recognition of the legal personality of civil society organisations.

In view of the enlargement of the European Union, a structured dialogue with civil society organisations in the candidate countries is also indispensable.

A further conclusion of the proceedings was that civil society organisations are under an obligation to increase their representativeness more in terms of quality than quantity and, as far as possible, to reflect the simultaneously complex and fluid nature of European society. They should also cultivate the highest degree possible of democracy and transparency in their structures and

activities, together with a developed sense of their responsibilities. Citizens' rights must be enshrined in the European Treaties and thus be made legally enforceable at Union level as elements of European citizenship. But Europe should also identify, through an intense dialogue with the European citizen, the need for new kinds of citizens rights. The Economic and Social Committee should reflect on the conditions sine qua non for their practical application, such as, inter alia, transparency, information, education, legal advice, clarity and simplicity of procedures-

Organised civil society can contribute directly and indirectly to improving competitiveness and increasing growth by means, in particular, of:

- training, especially of excluded individuals, and continuous training;
- assistance with the delivery of public services such as education, health and social services;
- assistance with local economic development;
- the regeneration of depressed areas and the integration of socially and economically excluded individuals and groups, and
- the provision of proximity services.

The emergence of a more inclusive and participatory model of society would undoubtedly provide added value for Europe through the greater collective engagement of citizens in issues of

general societal interest transcending national frontiers.

In his introductory address to the Convention, Jacques Delors hailed the ESC's initiative, maintaining that the golden rule to achieving the goal of bringing EU citizens closer together was to "listen, listen listen to what society says, interpret what it has said clearly and then [...] inform, inform, inform". The ESC, as a sort of interactive institution, was well-placed to play this role.

Ms Loyola de Palacio, Vice-President of the Commission, voiced similar sentiments. She shared the initiative's aims which she felt demonstrated the Committee's willingness to respond to the demands of civil society and to be of even greater service to it. This was clearly shown by the openness the Committee had always displayed towards the applicant countries, by helping to set up joint consultative committees. These firstly encouraged the creation and growth of associations, which were the basic building blocks of civil society, and secondly, fostered dialogue and cooperation between the economic and social interest groups of the applicant countries, by giving structure to civil society. The Committee's initiatives in the applicant countries, are on the right path, and enlargement would succeed partly as a result of these initiatives.

Ms de Palacio added that if the participants at Convention agreed - and the conclusions of the debates unmistakably showed

that they did - she would speak up within the Commission in support of the Committee playing a more significant role as a forum for dialogue with civil society. It would then be up to the ESC to decide on how to communicate the aspirations and needs of civil society organisations to the other European institutions (Parliament, Council and Commission).

Lastly, Mrs Sinikka Mönkäre, Minister for Labour of the Republic of Finland, speaking on behalf of the Presidency-in-office of the Council of the European Union, expressed her confidence that the Committee would make a valuable contribution to the preparation of a Charter of fundamental rights. The process had been launched in Cologne, and had recently been confirmed in Tampere. This process, in which citizens had to be fully involved, should ensure a Europe founded on political, social and participative democracy. The participation of the ESC was the ideal means of bringing the EU institutions closer to citizens.

The large number of participants in this First Convention on civil society organisations demonstrates that the ESC now appears as the sole European "institution" with the capacity to fulfil this function, which is crucial to Europe's future.

(Press release No. 9599, European Economic and Social Committee, Brussels, 19 October 1999)

A bridge between Europe and civil society

Why is the ESC so important for us?

The European Economic and Social Committee (ESC) is a forum representing the various streams of economic and social life within the institutional framework established by the Treaties. It is a consultative body set up by the 1957 Treaty of Rome. The ESC has a distinctive place in the EU's decision-making process. Placed between the EU's executive (Commission), the European Parliament (EP) and the Council, it provides a forum for all who play an active role in the economic and social life of the community. In 1986 the Single European Act consolidated the ESC's role of close cooperation with the EU Institutions in devising and implementing common policies in furtherance of EU. The Treaty of Maastricht (1992) reinforced this trend by putting the Committee on a similar footing to the other Institutions, notably in terms of its rules of procedure, budget, consolidation of the right of initiative and appointment of officials to its Secretariat-General. The Treaty of Amsterdam (1997) broadened the ESC's scope considerably, particularly in the area of social affairs. In addition, the EP now has the possibility of consulting the Committee in the areas of: employment (guidelines and measures (fourth and fifth articles of the Title on Employment); social policy (directives under the codecision procedure, directives and measures adopted unanimously, the report on social policy, Articles 118.2 and 118.3, measures to combat social exclu-

sion (Article 118.2); equality of treatment between men and women (Article 119.4).

Usually the Committee reaches a consensus in formulating its opinions, despite the fact that initial positions often diverge considerably. ESC opinions are valuable on several counts: they help the decision-making bodies to ascertain a) what impact Commission proposals are likely to have on those most directly affected, and b) what amendments may be necessary to enlist wider support. Further, the departments of the Commission and the EP have to tackle a wide range of specific issues and the Committee can often provide valuable technical expertise. Last but not least, the ESC's own-initiative opinions and the information reports produced by its sections are of particular importance since they cover subjects neglected or ignored by other institutions, and frequently prompt the Commission to table proposals. The Committee's consultative role enables its Members, i.e. the organizations they represent, to participate in the EU decision-making process.

With views occasionally diametrically opposed, the Committee's discussions often require real negotiations involving not only the traditional social partners (Groups I and II) but also, and this is the distinguishing feature of the ESC, all the other socio-occupational interests represented (Group III). These discussions and the search for convergence are bound to improve the quality and

credibility of the EU decision-making process, for they make it more comprehensible and acceptable for Europe's citizens and increase the transparency which is so vital for democracy. In this way the concept of political democracy is complemented by the concept of economic democracy in which the EU's economic and social players have a say.

In addition to its increased scope for action, current developments have been a factor in the ESC's enhanced importance. The EU Institutions have decided not only to abolish the internal borders and create a single economic and social area but also to establish an authentic political union. A venture with such high stakes requires the participation of all its citizens, and first and foremost those responsible for the day-to-day functioning of the EU economy.

As a debating and consultative chamber, the ESC strengthens the democratic credentials of the process of building EU, including the promotion of relations between the EU and socio-economic groupings in third countries. In so doing it helps to promote a genuine identification with Europe. The ESC: A Bridge between Europe and Civil Society; Free in all the official EU languages.

Headquarters: 2, Rue Ravenstein
(B - 1000 Bruxelles)
Tel.: (+322) 546 92 07
546 93 93 - 546 95 53
Fax: 546 97 64
Internet: <http://www.esc.eu.int>

CIC Conférences intercitoyennes

Les 28, 29, et 30 mai s'est tenue à Cologne, en marge du sommet européen, l'Assemblée générale des Conférences Inter Citoyennes (CIC), réseau d'ONG, d'associations et de mouvements civiques européens qui cherchent à construire un dialogue sur l'avenir de l'Europe entre citoyens des différents pays européens et à promouvoir un espace public transnational.

Trois candidats à l'élection européenne - Hélène Flautre, Verte française, Ilka Schröder, Verte allemande, Laurent Ledoux PPE Belge — se sont prêtés au feu roulant des questions des Européens réunis sur un bateau amarré sur le Rhin. Des questions tirées des «26 propositions pour une Europe sociale

et citoyenne» rédigées par les partenaires des CIC et déjà débattues au cours des semaines précédentes en France, en Espagne et en Autriche.

Pour vous procurer les 26 propositions, n'hésitez pas à contacter Europe 99 au 01.40.11.97.76 au par courrier électronique: europe99@globenet.be

Colloque Karl Polanyi

Le VII^e colloque international Karl Polanyi «Pour une nouvelle approche des besoins humains» a eu lieu à Lyon du 26 au 28 mai 1999.

Le Centre Walras de Lyon et l'Institut Karl Polanyi de Montréal ont organisé cette rencontre internationale qui a regroupé une centaine de sociologues et économistes du monde entier. Pendant trois jours, les exposés et les interventions se sont succédé pour

éclairer l'actualité de la pensée polanyienne et ses multiples facettes. Les sujets abordés ont été très variés : de l'économie solidaire aux théories de la monnaie et de l'inflation, de la réforme de l'État providence au projet pour un monde post-néo-libéral.

Cela témoigne de l'ampleur de la pensée de cet économiste hors norme qui a su nourrir son raisonnement de l'expérience de l'anthropologie et de la sociologie.

Son idée-clé, de la nécessité de «l'encastrement de l'économique dans le social», reste la référence pour tous ceux qui adhèrent à pensée. Ce colloque a en outre été l'occasion de lancer la création d'un site web et d'une Fondation Polanyi, qui permettront à ce vaste réseau international de se donner les moyens d'un travail de fond sur le long terme et d'acquiescer plus de visibilité auprès du public. Elisabetta Bucolo

Concours international d'idées pour la reconversion de la base de sous-marins de Lorient Keroman (France)

Au mois de décembre 1998, le District du Pays de Lorient (Morbihan) - France - a lancé, avec le soutien du Ministère français de la Défense, un concours international d'idées, ouvert et anonyme, pour la reconversion de la Base des Sous-Marins de Lorient Keroman. D'une superficie de 26 hectares, l'ensemble se compose principalement de trois ouvrages monumentaux en béton, édifiés pendant la seconde Guerre mondiale, pour abriter les U-Boote de l'Amiral allemand Dönitz.

Ce concours visait à doter ce grand projet d'une réflexion puissante sur le futur schéma directeur d'aménagement et d'urbanisme du site. La procédure avait reçu l'approbation de l'Union Internationale des Architectes (UIA).

Le Jury

Présidé par Jean Yves Le Drian, président du District du Pays de Lorient, le jury se composait de cinq représentants des collectivités territoriales concernées : Norbert

Métairie, Daniel Gilles, Jacques Sinquin, Roger Keraudran et Robert Remot, du Chef de la Mission pour la réalisation des Actifs Immobiliers, Ministère de la Défense, Alain Villaret et des architectes suivants : Alexandru Beldiman (Roumanie), représentant l'UIA, Raci Bademli (Turquie), Stefano Boeri (Italie), Jordi Garces Bruses (Espagne), Henri Gandin (France), Suk Won Kang (République de Corée), Stefan Lungu (Roumanie), Axe Sowa

(Allemagne), Jade Taber (Liban).

Cinq personnalités ont assisté aux délibérations du jury, en tant que consultants, sans toutefois prendre part au vote. Il s'agit de Joseph Kergeris et Catherine Giquel, représentant le Conseil général, Anthony Le Saffre, au titre des représentants du site, Mme Penven, Trésorier Principal Municipal, M. Plouzenec, représentant la Direction départementale de la Concurrence, Consommation et Répression des Fraudes.

192 équipes ont soumis un projet aux membres du jury international qui se sont réunis à Lorient, le 8 et 9 juillet 1999, sur le site même du concours qu'ils avaient auparavant visité.

L'examen des projets par le Comité technique et par le jury international a donné lieu à un débat d'une grande richesse qui a permis de dégager de façon unanime, les grands principes de traitement urbanistique du site singulier que constitue la Base. Une idée commune s'est dégagée consistant à répondre à la violence du bâti des bunkers par un traitement urbanistique et architectural à la fois discret et signifiant pour le futur.

Palmarès

Premier Prix :

Atelier d'architecture Bodhan Paczowski et Paul Fritsch, archi-

tectes (Luxembourg) en collaboration avec : David Cras et Pascal Debard, architectes associés, Mike Besch, architecte assistant, Peter Latz, paysagiste, Georges Bern, éclairagiste, Bureau d'études techniques OTH, Bureau Structures RFR, Ricardo Basualdo, scénographe, Bertrand Ney, sculpteur.

Second Prix :

Agence d'architecture Nieto-Sobejano (Espagne), associé à Ove Arup & Partners S.A., Bureau d'études techniques.

Troisième Prix :

Christophe Boyadjian, architecte (France), en collaboration avec Patrice Prevel, Lionel Boulay, Bruno Romanet, architectes.

Mentions :

- James Campbell, architecte (Royaume-Uni), en collaboration avec Tim Rees, paysagiste, David Johnston, ingénieur (Ove Arup & Partners), Pete Grainger, écologiste
- Jean Pierre Durig et Philip Rami (Suisse), en collaboration avec Christophe Tschannen, ingénieur, Eduard Witta et Hansjurg Leibundgut, ingénieurs.
- Atelier d'architecture Olivier Souquet (France), en collaboration avec SARL Epure, paysagistes, Yves Desiant, program-

mateur, François Defrain et Pascal Grabli, architectes.

Accessits hors classement ;

- Peter Beard, architecte (Royaume-Uni)
- James Horan, architecte (Irlande)
- Nicolo Privileggio, architecte (Italie).

A propos de la procédure

Le maître d'ouvrage ainsi que les membres du jury ont apprécié le caractère exemplaire du déroulement du concours. Son règlement était en effet parvenu à concilier les règles UIA/UNESCO et les impératifs du Code des marchés publics français. Comme l'a déclaré Alexandru Beldiman, membre du jury et Vice-Président de l'UIA «ce concours devrait faire jurisprudence de ce point de vue. D'autre part, il devrait servir de référence quand à la préparation et à la réflexion qui ont caractérisé les débats».

Exposition et publication

L'ensemble des projets fera l'objet d'une exposition ouverte au public, dans les locaux de la Base de Kéroman, au cours de l'automne 1999. Les projets seront publiés dans un catalogue.

Paris, le 27 juillet 1999
(Communiqué de l'UIA)

Le débat est enfin lancé sur la construction d'un droit pénal européen. L'accent est généralement mis sur la protection des intérêts financiers de l'Europe et le projet dit «Corpus juris», présenté à la presse en 1997 par le Parlement européen et la Commission, fait l'objet de débats publics dans plusieurs pays : en Italie et au Portugal, sous l'égide du ministre de la justice, et plus récemment en Angleterre, à l'initiative de la Chambre des Lords, ou en Allemagne, lors de rencontres organisées par des universitaires et des responsables politiques à l'Académie de droit européen de Trèves. Qu'il s'agisse de lutter contre le crime organisé dans son ensemble ou plus spécifiquement contre les fraudes au budget de l'Europe (80 % du montant relève de fraudes transnationales fortement organisées), la nécessité d'une « lutte européenne » n'est plus à démontrer. Selon une formule du Corpus juris reprise par la Cour des comptes européenne en 1998, il convient d'apporter « une réponse radicalement nouvelle à une absurdité dénoncée par tous, mais toujours tolérée, qui consiste à ouvrir largement les frontières aux délinquants pour les renfermer aux organes chargés de la répression, au risque de transformer nos pays en véritables paradis pénaux ».

Il est clair en effet, comme la ministre française de la justice vient de l'écrire, que « les procédures classiques de l'enquête judiciaire sont inopérantes ». De façon imagée, l'un des magistrats qui avaient lancé l'appel de Genève disait que les systèmes judiciaires sont comme des éléphants : ils écrasent ceux qu'ils attrapent, mais ils n'attrapent pas grand monde en ces matières où les criminels sont comme des léopards,

Si rapides et si souples qu'ils échappent toujours...

Paradoxalement, le risque d'impunité pour les délinquants les mieux organisés n'exclut pas, pour les quelques petits délinquants finalement poursuivis, le risque de traitement discriminatoire. Une étude récemment menée par une ONG (Fair Trials Abroad), qui défend les droits des citoyens européens jugés dans un autre pays de l'Union, démontre que depuis quelques années les problèmes posés ont considérablement augmenté, qu'il s'agisse de la détention provisoire, plus largement utilisée contre eux, de la preuve, beaucoup plus difficile à fournir, ou tout simplement du risque fréquent de double poursuite et de jugements par défaut.

Il reste à savoir comment construire cet « espace de liberté, de sécurité et de justice » annoncé par le Traité d'Amsterdam. C'est à la fois la difficulté majeure, compte tenu de la diversité des traditions juridiques nationales, et le défi le plus stimulant, car il préfigure celui qui est aujourd'hui lancé à l'échelle mondiale et, en ce sens, l'espace judiciaire européen apparaît comme un véritable laboratoire de la mondialisation. Sa construction devra nécessairement se faire de façon pluraliste. Il ne s'agit de revenir ni à l'Empire romain, ni à la « grande nation » napoléonienne, ni à plus forte raison au totalitarisme hitlérien. Toutes les tentatives d'unification hégémonique ayant échoué, la chance historique de l'Europe est d'être contrainte de se construire de façon pluraliste et dans le respect des diversités nationales.

C'est évidemment beaucoup plus difficile. Il faudra apprendre à connaître les diverses traditions

juridiques européennes, ce qui implique de développer le droit comparé, longtemps considéré comme une spécialité purement académique. Une meilleure connaissance montre que bien souvent des différences que l'on croyait irréductibles, comme la vieille opposition entre procédure britannique « accusatoire » (laissée entre les mains des parties et de leurs avocats sans intervention active le représentant de l'Etat) et procédure continentale « inquisitoire » (marquée par la double intervention d'un juge d'instruction à la fois enquêteur et juge, et d'un parquet omniprésent dépendant du pouvoir exécutif), sont très affaiblies par l'évolution des pratiques.

Mais la comparaison ne suffit pas. Il faudra apprendre à ordonner le multiple, par exemple en combinant l'unification (des règles communes strictement identiques) quand elle est nécessaire et possible et, sinon, l'harmonisation (des principes communs pouvant être appliqués dans les différents Etats avec une « marge nationale d'appréciation »).

S'agissant des fraudes au budget européen, ou de la criminalité organisée, l'unification des définitions pénales est nécessaire, comme l'expérience en a surabondamment fait la preuve, et possible, comme le démontre le projet Corpus juris. Elle devra s'accompagner d'une unification partielle des règles de procédure, au moins à la phase préparatoire du procès qui le plus souvent détermine la solution finale. La création de procès-verbaux européens d'interrogatoire et d'audition pour les suspects et les témoins, ou encore d'un mandat d'arrêt européen, permettrait de supprimer

le jeu incertain des commissions rogatoires internationales, à la condition essentielle de respecter les droits de la défense et le principe de garantie judiciaire.

Le risque est en effet que l'Europe des polices se construise plus vite que l'Europe judiciaire. D'où l'urgence de créer un parquet européen, indépendant du pouvoir exécutif (national et européen) et responsable devant le Parlement et la Cour de justice des Communautés. Ce parquet devrait lui-même mener les enquêtes sous le contrôle d'un «juge des libertés» désigné comme tel par chaque Etat membre.

En revanche, la création d'un tribunal pénal européen n'est sans doute pas aussi indispensable, du moins dans une première étape. Si les définitions de fond et les règles de preuve sont suffisamment unifiées pour que les juridictions des divers Etats les appliquent dans le respect, qui s'impose à toutes, de la Convention européenne des droits de l'homme. Car la construction d'un droit pénal européen ne peut être qu'être évolutive. Il serait logique de commencer par les fraudes au budget, car il s'agit de protéger des intérêts supranationaux, européens par nature, intérêts d'une importance vitale pour l'Europe dont ils commandent la crédibilité et l'efficacité, en particulier au moment du lancement de l'euro.

Dans un deuxième temps, la compétence du parquet européen devrait s'étendre à la lutte contre toute la criminalité organisée, celle qui concerne des intérêts internationaux, européens par vocation pourrait-on dire, car les organisations criminelles se déploient bien au-delà des frontières nationales et, selon la for-

mule de la ministre de la justice, « l'argent sale bouge à la vitesse électronique ».

Cette construction juridique européenne, pluraliste et évolutive, est d'autant plus nécessaire qu'elle répond à un double objectif: mieux protéger les intérêts de l'Europe et de ses citoyens et, plus largement, constituer une alternative à la menace d'une mondialisation hégémonique qui étendrait à la planète le système juridique de l'Etat économiquement le plus puissant.

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(Le Monde, Vendredi 6 Août 1999)

L'UNESCO a créé la Commission mondiale de l'éthique des connaissances scientifiques et des technologies. Le défi : introduire les notions de responsabilité, d'équité, et de partage, dans le débat scientifique. L'éthique est le fondement de tout acte humain. Le fait, par exemple, de respecter l'environnement guifie que nous plaçons la valeur du respect de l'autre et des générations à venir au-dessus de notre intérêt immédiat d'utilisation des ressources naturelles. Une éthique est un questionnement toujours ouvert sur l'actualité, sur les connaissances et les découvertes constantes de l'homme. Pour reprendre un terme de Kant, il ne s'agit pas de fa raison pure mais de la «raison pratique». À quelles fins l'humanité utilise-t-elle toutes ces découvertes scientifiques, qu'il s'agisse du feu, de la roue ou de déchiffrer le génome humain?

L'un des mandats de l'UNESCO est de réfléchir sur les enjeux éthiques que posent de nos jours les découvertes scientifiques et technologiques ainsi que leurs

applications. Pourquoi maintenant ? Parce que nous avons tous compris qu'elles présentent certains risques pour la société. La deuxième raison: les décideurs, mais aussi le grand public réalisent que leurs choix ne tiennent pas compte d'une appréciation complète des enjeux éthiques et des valeurs sur lesquelles ils se fondent. La question est de savoir Si en prenant ces décisions, ils sont parfaitement conscients des valeurs éthiques qu'elles véhiculent, de manière claire ou sous-entendue.

Dans les pays industrialisés, par exemple, le choix de l'utilisation du pétrole ou du nucléaire pose un dilemme. Le premier accroît l'effet de serre tout de suite, le second est anodin sur le plan des changements climatiques mais, en cas de catastrophe nucléaire, pourrait tuer des millions de personnes; sans oublier les déchets nucléaires qui s'accumulent et dont les effets nocifs pourraient se déclencher des milliers d'années plus tard. Quelle unité de mesure pourrait-on établir pour pouvoir prendre des décisions dans ce domaine? Se poser ces questions revient à affirmer que le fonctionnement des sociétés d'aujourd'hui présente un certain nombre de menaces et qu'il n'y a pas de degré zéro du risque.

Jusqu'à présent le débat sur ces questions a été dominé par le discours économique. Le rôle de la Commission mondiale de l'éthique des connaissances scientifiques et des technologies (COMEST) est d'en souligner la dimension éthique. Les travaux de cette Commission se situent dans le cadre d'un dialogue avec tous les secteurs: le public, le privé et l'industriel. Tous sont conscients qu'on ne peut pas développer une

réflexion en se coupant de l'une des parties impliquées. Et le secteur industriel a compris l'intérêt de sa participation, ce qui est encourageant pour la Commission.

La Commission mondiale de l'éthique des connaissances scientifiques et des technologies est un forum intellectuel avec une structure ouverte, présidée par Vigdis

Finnbogadonir; ancienne Présidente d'Islande, et comptant 18 membres. Elle a pour mandat d'anticiper les situations à risques; de conseiller les décideurs; et de favoriser le dialogue entre scientifiques, décideurs et grand public. Elle est indépendante du Comité international de bioéthique de l'UNESCO. Elle a tenu sa pre-

mière réunion du 28 au 30 avril prochains à Oslo (Norvège). Trois tables rondes urgent ouvertes au public sur les thèmes: énergies; ressources en eau douce; et protection des droits et libertés des scientifiques.

<http://www.unesco.org/ethics>
fax: 33 1 45 68 55 15
(Sources, mars 1999)

L'humanitaire en catastrophe

par Pierre de Senarclens, Paris, Presses de science Po, 1999, 145 pages.

Le malheur des temps a voulu que l' "humanitaire" ait cessé d'être le qualificatif d'une activité altruiste pour devenir, en accédant au substantif, une catégorie mentale, au même titre que " le militaire" ou "le nucléaire". Bien qu'inaperçue du grand public, cette mutation insidieuse du vocabulaire est à la fois signe d'une sérieuse perturbation dans la pratique et source de perversion dans les jugements.

Le mérite du petit (mais très dense) ouvrage de Pierre de Senarclens est de jeter une lumière crue sur cette évolution récente, Certes l'ingérence n'est pas une invention moderne. D'une certaine manière, elle a toujours existé. Mais c'est la prétention de la codifier et d'associer au poids des armes le soulagement humanitaire qui fait désormais problème.

Les organisations humanitaires, souvent préoccupées de paraître sur le devant de la scène (subventions gouvernementales et incitations médiatiques obligent, même quand on fait sincèrement profession de désintéressement et de générosité) ne sont généralement pas responsables des désordres liés à leurs interventions sur le terrain. Dans le cas où il y a déjà eu recours à la violence (Somalie, Afrique des Grands Lacs, Yougoslavie, Timor), c'est parce que la "catastrophe" s'est déjà produite en amont et que la responsabilité de cette catastrophe incombe à toutes les parties en cause ; gouvernements sanguinaires, Etats voisins, grandes puissances, Organisations régionales et universelles. Quand toutes les ressources de la diplomatie ont été

épuisées et que la menace des sanctions, économiques ou militaires pour mettre un terme aux exactions a échoué, la tentation est grande pour les groupes humanitaires de se porter au secours des victimes actuelles ou potentielles et de le soustraire aux bras des bourreaux. Malheureusement, l'expérience des conflits armés qui se sont déroulés depuis dix ans à l'intérieur des Etats prouve que ce type d'action humanitaire tombe forcément dans un piège où les autres acteurs sont déjà ou vont bientôt être impliqués.

L'image simpliste de la Croix-Rouge, dont les Secouristes viennent porter aide et assistance aux blessés après la fin des combats, est périmée. Lorsqu'un pays est en proie à une sorte de guerre civile, toutes les distinctions antérieures s'effacent (plus vite même que dans les guerres entre Etats) : il n'y a plus ni théâtre des opérations, ni différence entre objectifs militaires et civils, entre combattants et non-combattants, entre contrainte armée et contrainte économique. Dès lors l'humanitaire est, autant qu'un moyen, un enjeu pour les protagonistes ou un instrument au service de leur cause. L'un sert d'alibi à l'autre, ou réciproquement. Il y a là, comme le montre fort bien P. de Senarclens à travers plusieurs exemples, une regrettable confusion des rôles au-delà d'un certain seuil de violence, l'aide humanitaire est dérisoire, quand elle ne devient pas complice de ceux qui sont coupables d'atrocités. L'aide humanitaire ne peut pas et ne doit pas remplacer l'intervention militaire. Mais ceux qui décident de

l'usage des armes doivent aussi savoir qu'ils sacrifient des biens et aussi, hélas, des vies humaines innocentes dans l'espoir d'en sauver un plus grand nombre.

Tel est l'état de "catastrophe", dont sont individuellement et collectivement responsables ceux qui, faute d'avoir su prévenir en temps utile, ont laissé l'abcès se percer et n'ont plus d'autre ressource que d'en stopper la propagation. Par delà le décor et les rites propres aux organisations, c'est la faiblesse des Etats qui éclate au grand jour. Or, derrière la façade des Etats il y a les gouvernements, souvent réticents à s'ingérer dans les affaires intérieures des autres pays, les parus politiques, dont l'horizon dépasse rarement la scène politique intérieure et l'opinion publique qui préfère la dénonciation verbale à la mobilisation des ressources et à celle des troupes. C'est donc la démission collective des détenteurs du pouvoir de décision qui est en cause et que ne peuvent pas compenser les prestations des ONG (desquelles sont astreintes à la prudence pour ne pas perdre leur crédibilité ou une neutralité illusoire sur le terrain).

Il faut donc mettre un terme à l'imprévoyance qui règne à tous les niveaux et aux improvisations incohérentes qui en résultent quand on passe à l'action. L'auteur déplore justement l'atomisation de la société internationale en un trop grand nombre d'unités politiques et territoriales, dont beaucoup ne sont pas viables et devront se contenter de la condition d'assistés. Il regrette, sans pouvoir y remédier, la paralysie du pouvoir collectif de décision et souhaite que les Etats

qui disposent de la capacité d'intervenir limitent leurs ambitions quand il s'agit d'aller remettre de l'ordre au-delà des frontières. A ce propos, il esquisse une distinction, trop souvent masquée par le vocabulaire, entre les interventions dites humanitaires (modèle somalien ou yougoslave), qui exigent le recours à des moyens de coercition rapides et puissants, et les actions plus modestes et à plus long terme en faveur de la protection des droits de l'homme. Un

mauvais usage de la terminologie risque de provoquer l'ascension inutile aux extrêmes : on ne traite pas un génocide comme de simples "bavures" policières ou comme les manifestations d'une discrimination ancestrale entre les sexes.

De ce point de vue, une clarification destinée à réduire l'inflation du vocabulaire qui entoure la notion de droits de l'homme finira par s'imposer, malgré la difficulté qu'il y a à tracer la frontière au bon endroit.

Enfin, l'auteur plaide en faveur de la réduction des inégalités de développement, non seulement économiques mais culturelles (ce qui constitue une innovation intéressante dans ce domaine). On ne peut que lui donner raison sur ce point comme sur les autres.

Bref, c'est un livre qui ne fera probablement plaisir à personne, ce qui prouve que tout le monde en aura besoin.

Marcel Merle

Leadership for Global Citizenship: Building Transnational Community. London: Sage, by Barbara C. Crosby, 1998. 294 pp. ISBN (Paper) 0-7619-1747-0.

I find it difficult to praise this book too highly. It is not only that it is unique in its field. It is also that it represents both a review of the issue and a handbook. It can therefore be used by students, by teachers/trainers and by the (would-be) leaders themselves. And, in addition to the conventional introduction and conclusion, it also has a chapter summaries, these making it easy to obtain an overview of the whole in an hour or two. It has useful methodological appendices and thought-provoking diagrams. My feeling is that it is going to become the standard work in the field.

The chapter headings make the book appear comprehensive but technical and, possibly, dull: leadership and global problems; leadership in context; then chapters on leadership in terms of the personal, teamwork, the organisation, the visionary, politics, the ethical. The whole is, however, organised around a consideration of two organisations, the well-known Amnesty International and the less-well-known Women's

Rights Action Watch. And we cannot have too many case studies of such transnational NGOs.

Barbara Crosby is explicit about being herself white, Western and middle class, and that she is basing her argument on two international human-rights organisations that have a similar base and origin - although with the obvious gender difference. She also shows how they have met, or attempted to surpass, their original limitations. This is not, however, the place to go for an extended theoretical or ideological critique of the leadership of Amnesty or WRAW since their role is rather to provide examples of leadership than objects for criticism.

What are the assumptions - about the world, about global citizenship and civil society, about politics and ethics - that Crosby works from and with here? The author has a notion of a 'shared-power, no-one-in-charge world' (5), within which organisations, networks and alliances can develop some kind of global civil society. She draws her model from

the US, with its powers shared between executive, legislature and judiciary, and with its assumption that power rests with the people, who exercise such not only through elections but through individual and group action. Although this is an idealised view of how power is exercised in the US, and although she is aware of left and right (my terms) criticisms of her global model (also idealised), this does not significantly devalue the work. This, in my view, is because the creation of some kind of any kind of liberal or participatory democracy on a world scale would be a dramatic step forward from one that is decreasingly so!

Crosby appears to endorse a (borrowed) notion of ethics, expressed in terms of Dwelling (respect for natural and human existence and development), Freedom (resources meeting both needs and potentials), Justice (structures allowing fairness in distribution of resources), Participation (engagement in and sharing of power), Love (care).

respect and forgiveness for oneself and others), and Responsibility (judgement and accountability for action). Any such set of values is bound to be challenged, or used by special interests for nefarious purposes, but this set seems to me a useful one to argue about, spell out, and then apply to both the hegemonic global leadership(s) and those claiming to tame or replace them.

Perhaps the only qualification I would make would concern the failure of the book to pay sufficient attention to communication and culture. Crosby is certainly aware of the importance of media (including the electronic), message, image and even of charisma. But hers is essentially a study of leadership in organisational/ political terms. It does seem to me that as the building of transnational

community is increasingly "mediated" (takes place in and through means of communication) we will need to increasingly consider leadership in cultural/ communicational terms.

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