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NEWSLETTER NO. 94 MAY-AUGUST 2002

Reflections on the present world monetary system - after the World Summit on Sustainable Development, Johannesburg 2002

Observing and listening - contemplating and acting

The crux of the world problem today is a financial one. Is the present money system appropriate for our global challenges in the social, economic, ecological and spiritual fields? What accountability, reliability, transparency or compassion do we have in the present use of money? The prevalent misconception is that "the possession of money is a personal right". Would "an attitude of stewardship and responsibility towards money" not be more suitable to our needs?

Money has become for all of us a problem because we have been trained to gather as much as we can for ourselves, and because we live in the fear to lose it. Theoretically, we know that it is better to give than to receive, but in practice, we still prefer to receive. Money is no longer a neutral means of exchange. It has degenerated into an end in itself, a product that is more valuable than all other products because it multiplies by itself, thanks to the interest rate and speculation. Its value is no longer related to the material value of actual goods and services and it is no longer earned through the production and exchange of goods and services, but is rather made through speculation. Many people no longer earn money, they make money. And the more money you have, the more money you can make. This has created a powerful global dictatorship of money which does not know any democratic rules.

Decisions that affect billions of people are made by a minority of individuals who channel the money flow according to their personal, short-term interests, and

not for the benefit of the struggling humanity. At all negotiation tables, the conclusion is always the same: on one side are all those who want to retain their positions of power by concentrating wealth further and further in terms of money, land, resources and knowledge. In their view, the logic of profit should dominate all decisions in all fields of human activity, even in fields that were hitherto removed from such speculation, such as education, culture, social services and health. On the other side are those who strive to achieve a more equitable distribution of wealth in order to cover the needs of all human beings in a sustainable way which also takes into account the well-being of all kingdoms of nature.

Our monetary system is widening the gap between rich and poor. By exacerbating the extremes, it actually increases poverty at both ends. At one end, inner poverty in those who live in luxury and idleness, who have lost all contact with their inner wealth and creativity, and developed unhealthy habits and relationships with themselves, their fellow beings and the environment. At the other end, the outer poverty and misery of those who are unable to satisfy the most basic material needs for food, water, shelter, personal safety and health. Our society is losing sight of the middle path that could lead to happiness and spiritual development of all, to a healthy way of life, a caring attitude towards others and the environment, and the possibility to unfold our inner creativity through a meaningful and useful activity.

You can't have a war against terrorism without becoming a terrorist yourself. All over we see that terrorism is the war of the poor and war is the terrorism of the rich, so really there is no difference between the two

Sir Peter Ustinov

Humanity could return to a more natural economic order, such as already existed in the past, for example for a certain period in Germany, in the Middle Ages. Money could be restored to its rightful role of a means of exchange. A stable economic order could be established, which would ensure a decent standard of living for all human beings on Earth, without extremes of luxury and misery, in which all human beings could have a constructive activity and receive equitable remuneration for their contribution to the community, in which money would be free to flow wherever it was needed.

For us to return to this more natural economic order, several steps are needed. First of all, it must become clear for all of us that our present monetary system has derailed and has the main responsibility for the economic, social and ecological crisis the world is going through today. Our international lawyers and economists could demonstrate how undemocratic it is, how it violates the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, for example. They could develop the necessary legislation to make accountable all those who profit by this system with disregard for human rights, labour law, environmental protection

and conservation, and even a common sense of decency and proportion.

Another aspect that urgently needs to be addressed is the arms race. More money is spent every year in armaments than would be necessary to meet the basic needs of the entire population on Earth, including education and health. This is just another result of the basic fear fostered by the forces of materialism. In a world where money would be free to flow, where land and resources would be equitably distributed, where people would not need to fear for their lives or for their accumulated wealth, arms would not sell so well, and no amount of war propaganda could convince people that their security is best served by waging war on other nations.

To bring the present world situation to a very short formula: We are in a battlefield of SHORTSIGHTED PROFITMAKING and ETERNAL ETHICS. WHO WILL BE THE WINNER? GUESS! So every adult on this planet is NOW challenged to take his or her position.

IPS GENEVA GROUP

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Remember the law of gravitation and counteraction. Steadfastness issues from gravitation, and tension from counteraction. Gravitation along the line of Hierarchy leads to Me, and counteraction from the enemy to glorification. Thus the Teacher and the enemy are cornerstones.

The trainer of beasts first excites their rage in order later to demonstrate their taming. No motion can be produced without tension; therefore each progressive Teaching is in need of enemies and of a Teacher. One must remember the physical law in order to understand the immutability of the law of the spirit. I ordain that the significance of the Teacher and the need of enemies be understood. Certainly, only the Teacher will lead the enemy to madness. The full measure of evil must be manifested in order that one rise regenerated out of the flames of wrath. It is impossible to avoid the knots of the path, but know that no tension will remain without its usefulness. Perhaps it will serve entire nations.

If a hermit is able with his thought alone to destroy the stronghold of evil, then the tensivity which is permitted by the Higher Forces will be like a battering ram against the hostile forces. Agni Yoga, paragraph 656

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GROUP MEDITATIONS

FULL MOON MEDITATIONS

Gemini Full Moon meditation with Ankh Foundation, Kiev
 Cancer and Leo Full Moon meditations with Arcane School Group Geneva
 Leo Full Moon meditation with study group in Windhoek, Namibia

UNITED NATIONS STAFF PEACE MEDITATION GROUP (Tuesdays at 12:30 at the U.N. Office in Geneva)

07.05.2002	Light and joy throughout all kingdoms	25.06.2002	Angels and Guardian Angels – Peace and Love
14.05.2002	Gemini: the beginning of the phase of distribution	02.07.2002	Etheric cleaning of the organs
21.05.2002	Helping and cooperating with the angels to spread golden light into humanity	09.07.2002	Leo and its relationship to fire and psychic energy
04.06.2002	The Universal Soul	16.07.2002	The Big Picture: the Ages of Pisces and Aquarius
11.06.2002	Golden Yellow Light of Love for Humankind	23.07.2002	On group sharing
18.06.2002	The True Leaders of Humankind	30.07.2002	Our inner light, a spark of the eternal flame

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GROUP MEETINGS AND ACTIVITIES

8 May 2002 – Reflections and evaluations of recent UN meetings

The Special NGO Committee on Development (c/o Franciscans International, P.O.Box 104, CH-1211 Geneva 20, Switzerland, tel. +41 22 919 40 10, fax 740 24 33, e-mail: duckett@fiop.org) organised this seminar consisting of three panels:

1) Commission on Human Rights 2002 with Mr Bertrand Ramcharan, Deputy High Commissioner for Human Rights; Ms. Alessandra Aula, Franciscans International and Dominicans for Justice and Peace; Mr Antoine Madelin, International Federation of Human Rights Leagues;

2) World Assembly on Ageing, Madrid 2002, with Ms Danielle Bridel, Zonta International; Ms Astrid Stuckelberger, Society for Psychological Study of Social Issues;

3) International Conference on Financing for Development, Monterrey 2002, with H.E. Archbishop Diarmuid Martin, Apostolic Nuncio of the Holy See to the UN in Geneva; and Mr Rio Hada, Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights.

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Meetings and activities with the Spiritual Caucus in Geneva

The Spiritual Caucus is a group of non-governmental organisations that aims at promoting spirituality within the United Nations. In Geneva, it meets regularly to plan its activities, which, from May to August 2002, consisted of:

17 May 2002 – “The Spiritual Dimension in Health”: brainstorming and sharing of experiences on the effects of spirituality on body, emotion, mind, during the General Assembly of the World Health Organisation. Moderated by Dr Astrid Stuckelberger and Werner Peter Luedemann.

17 July – Panel on “Religion, Spirituality and the Environment - A Key Component for Johannesburg (WSSD)?” during the World Civil Society Forum, Geneva

The panelists in this Forum organised by the Spiritual Caucus were Eugenio Poma-Anaguaya, Secretary for Indigenous People Issues, World Council of Churches; Gonzalo Oviedo, World Commission on Protected Areas, Task Force on Non-Material Values of Protected Areas; Alfredo Sfeir-Younis, special representative of the World Bank to the UN and WTO (environment specialist); Diane Williams, representative of the Temple of Understanding at the UN, and Rudolf Schneider, representative of the IPS at the UN. The panel was chaired by Astrid Stuckelberger, of the Spiritual Caucus.

18 July – Panel on “Intergenerational Cooperation: Vital Backbone for Our Future” during the World Civil Society Forum, with Gonsar Rimpoché,

Tibetan Buddhist Master, Danielle Bridel, NGO Committee on Ageing, a spokesperson for the Youth Forum of Civil Society, Alfredo Sfeir-Younis, special representative of the World Bank to the UN and WTO, and Kumi Naidoo, from CIVICUS association. The panel was chaired by Ms. Astrid Stuckelberger.

The Spiritual Caucus has produced booklets on these events. They can be ordered at info@spiritualcaucus.org, tel. +41-22-738 28 88 or fax +41 22 738 28 89.

Events during the World Summit for Sustainable Development:

A Sacred Site was created at the Ubuntu Village in Johannesburg by the organisers of the NGO Forum and Tribal Link Foundation. The site was open to all the participants of the WSSD and other guests of the village. Surrounded by an open space for sacred ceremonies and rituals, South Africa's traditional communities created a tribal link of indigenous dwellings to be used for quiet reflection, meditation, prayer and other appropriate programs. Spiritual and religious leaders and indigenous people were especially encouraged to utilize this space to create sacred and transformative experiences to build unity, community and commitments among the participants. Members of the Spiritual Caucus actively participated in daily meditations at 10 a.m. and 5 p.m for the duration of the Summit.

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9 May 2002 – Seven rays course in Lucern, Switzerland

This monthly course is organised by the Foundation Unity of all life and facilitated by Rudolf Schneider of the IPS Geneva.

16 May 2002 Conference-debate with Mr. Sergei Ordzhonikidze, new Director-General of UNOGE, organised by the Forum Suisse de Politique Internationale, P.O.Box 135, CH-1211 Geneva 12, tel. +41 22 311 24 24, fax +41 22 311 25 56, e-mail FSPI@bluewin.ch, http://www.geneve.ch/chancellerie/protocole/news/fs_pi.html.

25 May 2002 - 25th General Assembly of Anthrosana, Rheinau, Switzerland

Anthrosana (Johannes-Kepler-Strasse 56, D-75378 Bad Liebenzell, Germany, tel. +49 7052 9301-0, fax +49 7052 9301-10, e-mail verein@heilwesen.de, <http://www.heilwesen.de>) is the association for anthroposophical medicine. Its leitmotiv is that medicine should become again focused on the human being and health, instead of on disease. The General Assembly was held at the Fintan Foundation (Fintan Project, Markus Sieber, Klosterplatz, CH-8462 Rheinau, Switzerland, tel. +41 52 304 91 91, fax +41 52 304 91 95, e-mail: fintan@fintan.ch, <http://www.fintan.ch>), a former convent which is now run as a biodynamic farm, including the marketing of

organic seeds, a social therapy centre for the handi-capped and other marginalised persons and a training centre for the arts.

30 May 30 - 1 June 2002, Kiev, Ukraine - Second International Conference "On the Threshold of the New World: New Approaches to Education and Health", within the framework of a Festival "Family of the New Millennium", around the International Day for the protection of children

This annual conference was initiated and organised by six Ukrainian NGOs in cooperation with the IPS. The idea of regular meetings of people of goodwill has arisen during Rudolf Schneider's last year visit to Ukraine. Then, after numerous meetings and debates with local communities, it became clear, that the need for such events is really great and that thanks to cooperation with IPS Kiev has the possibility to be involved in the worldwide activities of the New Group of World Servers.

This year, more than 140 teachers, educators, physicians, researchers, representatives of international organisations and local public at large from different regions of Ukraine, as well as Russia, USA, Great Britain, Canada took part in plenary and sectoral sessions of the conference. Rudolf Schneider made the opening remarks and also presented the substantial report during the plenary session: Being Human in the Present Times - What Values do we expect?

The plenary meetings were dedicated to conceptual approaches to problems of education, public health services, "shifts" of civilisation in our dramatically changing world. These were the subjects of the plenary meetings:

- the future of civilization: role of education and health care;
- holistic approach to the human being: new paradigms of education and health;
- health, ecology, ethics - integrated approach.

In the sectoral sessions, debates were held on

Section 1: Harmony of family: Spiritual aspects of childbirth.

Section 2: Modern ideas in education.

Section 3: The time of global information: the problem of safety and responsibility

Section 4: Modern bioethics: new paradigm of health.

Section 5: Spiritual healing as co-creativity.

The conference had a broad resonance, thanks to the Ukrainian mass media.

Exchange of information, sharing of ideas and, pleasure of dialogue with like-minded people, meetings and meditations with Rudolf Schneider, opened the possibility to introduce changes in education, public health services, public life. The Kiev conference created a special atmosphere of a spiritual holiday of people of good will. Another important factor that contributed to this atmosphere was the fact that the conference took place on the grounds of St. Sophia, a XI century cathedral which is one of

greatest centres of spiritual power in the East-Slavonic region.

6-9 June 2002 Conference: Seeds of Wholeness, Science, Systems, Spirit, Boekestejn Manor, 2'-Graveland, the Netherlands.

This conference was initiated by the Center for Environmental Consciousness (Stichting Milieubewustzijn). Here is a personal view by Lisinka Ulatowska, co-convenor.

Seeds of Wholeness: Science, Systems, Spirit, exceeded expectations. Transcending boundaries was the challenge we set ourselves. The communication was so complete that the initial 42 projects from quite different disciplines were transformed into one mutually empowering all-encompassing project: Education for Earth Citizenship. This achievement was all the more impressive, since the around 50 participants came from diverse national, cultural and educational backgrounds and in some cases had no common language. Fourteen friends and co-workers created a caring nourishing container within which hearts could be touched by new fields, cultures and ways of perceiving and co-creation could flourish. After the conference communication continues via the Email list seeds@topica.com (for which participants can register) and the web site <http://www.seeds-of-wholeness.org>. The outcome: A conference process, suited to globalization, mega seeds, Education for Earth Citizenship, and shared communication networks, which include Radio for Peace International (which publicized all aspects of the Conference), the UN, UNESCO and diverse Internet networks. To me the most important aspect was the Conference process itself.

The three keynoters, Dr. Elisabet Sahtouris (evolutionary theory), Professor Beverly Rubik (energy theory) and Professor Ralph Abraham (complex and chaos theory), together with sixteen other talented professionals (including Sister Jayanti of the Brahma Kumaris, Dr. Saskia Bosman, Ir. Hans Andeweg) each showed how systems thinking and spiritual openness disclose our deeper connections.

"It was the process you proposed for the conference which prompted me to accept your invitation", said Professor Ralph Abraham. The systems process was applied to every facet of the conference: Registrants were welcomed with gifts by our very own court jester, Wim Bosch, before being asked for personal details and fees. Participants contributed as much to the learning process, as the keynoters and other presenters. Intuitive, experiential, artistic and conceptual learning were applied to practical projects. The type, quality and presentation of food, the atmosphere, the beautiful natural surroundings worked together to enhance the systems approach. A film showing how 8000 computers communicating randomly eventually came into sync presaged how the conference participants would watch their "seeds of wholeness" germinate and flower into one mega seed. Keynoters agreed that the innovative conference methodology is well suited to dealing holisti-

cally with the complex interrelationships of globalization.

A participant wrote: When I arrived, I had an idea for "my" seed. I became a part of a group, developing a group seed, which included kernels of "my (original)" seed. We nurtured our combined seeds into a very exciting new seed: a hybrid of the first order!! Eventually, I was able to "let go" of "my" idea into two wholes: a very gratifying chaos-to-order process. I have deep thankfulness for the rich soil which was available for this planting, watering, growing, producing and distributing into a world which is hungering for these foods!!

Here are some of the megaseeds, parts of Education for Earth Citizenship.

1. An All-Win Solution to land use: a cooperative project between Ir. Pim van Monsjou, Dr. Jaap van Bruchem and a group of innovative farmers. This megaseed consists of communities of 500 people, designed for max. independence of fossil fuel and optimal community integration; architectural design, whereby houses form an integral whole within the natural environment; farming techniques whereby nutrients are included in feed to produce optimum manure, land, crops and feed are enriched, producing happier, healthier animals and dairy products and better quality meat. All this to be combined on a tract of land by a group of innovative farmers.
2. The Synchronicity Game: Find the treasures within. This board game in which players cooperate in an adventure story works with the seven chakras. Coloured cards suggest ways of dealing with challenges in your life. It invites you to create, experience, and observe your own physical, mental, emotional and spiritual principles, feel self empowered through the development of connection with the source of synchronicity and answered wishes. Make coincidences happen!
3. Follow-up conferences in Germany, Norway and Russia.
4. A global standardization of oaths by civil servants to national Governments.
5. Further research of the Bovis scale of measurement, used with a pendulum.
6. A diagram showing how communication with the Source produces clarity.
7. Education for Earth Citizenship, rooted in invisible and all-win values. *Individual courses* include: Women's and child education; education for inner harmony; Pamela's peace point project for spiritual health; learning to see the divine in one another; a curriculum from kindergarten through University, nurturing of thought-feeling-intuition-body-interaction; finding a balance between the silence within and outer activity; nurturing of cosmic consciousness (including Robert Muller's curriculum); learning to listen and to be changed by what you hear; peaceful conflict resolution; courses to nudge the old paradigm in science and health toward a more holistic and spiritual one; intercultural communication; a clarification in Russian and one in Spanish, so that people understand the new terms; how to relate to

structure and process of the UN and help to ground the process in spirit, while providing the UN System with a thinktank for all-win problem solving. The Synchronicity Game fits in beautifully here.

18 June 2002 - NGO Committee on Freedom of Religion and Belief, Geneva. This Committee of the Conference of Non-Governmental Organisation with consultative status with the United Nations (CONGO) meets regularly to discuss issues related to freedom of religion and belief.

29 June 2002 - Annual General Assembly of Alcor Institute, Geneva

During this year's general assembly of Alcor Institute, its present and planned activities were presented, such as publication of a newsletter, teaching groups on the science of the soul, energetic psychomorphology and astrology of the soul (all starting at the end 2002), and research groups on the seven rays, innovating fraternity and vital energy. Marie-Agnès Frémont gave a talk on forgiveness and its power to heal cleavages and separativity, when it is correctly understood and applied. In the afternoon, Roger Durand and Christian Post talked about forgiveness for healing the planet and reconciling the kingdoms of nature, which are now quite sick because of the activities of the human kingdom. The text of all these talks has been published (in French) in the newsletter of Alcor Institute, which can be ordered at the following addresses: Institut Alcor, B.P. 50182, F-63174 Aubière Cedex, France, or 5 chemin Pré de Lug, CH-1258 Certoux/Geneva, Switzerland, e-mail institut.alcor@free.fr, <http://institut.alcor.free.fr>.

30 June 2002 - GDV International; workshop on Kirlian photography with Roberto Boschi, Lucern GDV (*Gas-Entladungs-Visualisierung-Technik*, gas discharge visualisation technique) is a scientific development of Kirlian photography. Prof. Konstantin Korotkov, professor of physics in St. Petersburg, developed this technique, which is the most recent and simple method to make visible the human biofield. Dr. Roberto Boschi (director of GDV International in Switzerland) gave an introduction to this method, which makes possible a real time analysis of the changes in the human energy field. He presented the basics of the analysis of a human biofield, the different types of biograms (GDV finger images) and their meaning; the separation between the physical and the physio-psychological parts; the influence of mental processes; the potential of the GDV method; and GDV hardware and software. For further information on GDV, contact GDV International, Dr. Roberto Boschi, Im Rosenhof, CH-8342 Wernetshausen, tel./fax +41-1-937 46 37, e-mail: gdvinternational@hotmail.com.

1-14 July 2002 – Festival on National University of Civil Culture, Ulyanovsk, Russia

This festival was organised by the International Association of Education "Education for Life" (Isakovsciy street 33 – 2nd floor 212, Moscow, tel. +7 095 757 72 69, e-mail: shar_2@ufacom.ru) with rep-

representatives of four countries, Russia, Belarus, Ukraine and Kazakhstan. The festival focused on the family as the genetic and parental essence of the nation and discussed social, psychological and ecological problems affecting the family.

8 July 2002 - Seminar on "Could World Poverty Ever Be Eliminated? New Instruments, New Strategies" organised by the World Bank Group Office in Geneva with Mr. John Page, Director of the Poverty Reduction Group of the World Bank

In December 1999, the Board of the World Bank approved a new approach to the challenge of reducing poverty in low-income countries based on country-owned Poverty Reduction Strategies, expected to be country-driven, results-oriented, comprehensive and long-term in perspective. They were embodied in Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSP). The PRSP process is intended to be open and participatory and to include all major stakeholders, including civil society organisations (CSO) – even those that may be out of favour with the government – private sector representatives, trade unions, women's groups, direct representatives of the poor, and donors. Special efforts may be needed to reach traditionally marginalised groups.

In the past two and a half years, very good progress has been made in the process and content of the PSPs. There is a broad agreement among low-income countries, the civil society, international organisations and donors that the objectives of such an approach can be fully reached through a solid partnership guided by the principles of ownership. This seminar with Mr. John Page was an occasion to show how countries, in cooperation with the World Bank and other institutions, will move from mere policy commitments to actions, and offered a way to debate the catalytic role of civil society organisations in attaining the commonly shared poverty reduction objectives.

**14-20 July 2002
World Civil Society Forum, Geneva**

This report has been written by Ms Karin Leonhardt, from Paris (former Head of Information and Documentation for the Parliamentary Assembly of the Western European Union) who was CAMDUN's registered representative at the Forum (CAMDUN is the Conference on A More Democratic United Nations), and Jeffrey Segall from London representing UNGA-Link UK. Rudolf Schneider represented the Institute for Planetary Synthesis, Geneva.

The World Civil Society Forum (WCSF) was in session from 14 to 19 July, but together with parallel activities the event took place on 8-20 July 2002. It was held in the International Conference Centre of Geneva with some sessions at other venues.

The stated purpose of WCSF is "to promote the role of civil society in international cooperation", not to be politically prescriptive. The parallel activities included

practical training sessions, for example in journalism and internet access, particularly for delegates from the developing world. There was also a Youth Forum. Rightly, Geneva's *Le Courier* headed its report on the event as "Un forum plus pragmatique qu'utopiste".

Support for the Forum from the UN was spelt out in a message from Secretary-General Kofi Annan which was presented in the Opening Session (15 July) by Sergei Ordzhonikidze, Director of the UN in Geneva: "Civil society organizations are vital partners of the United Nations, indispensable allies in pursuing our common agenda for peace and development...set out in the Millennium Declaration...I know that at this Forum you will be looking for ways to make that partnership as fruitful and effective as possible, and I hope that many more will follow your example".

Sergei Ordzhonikidze also spoke in the Welcome Ceremony on 14 July. Other plenary speakers included Dr Boutros Boutros-Ghali (UN Secretary-General 1992-1996 and now Secretary-General of the International Organization of the Francophonie); UNCTAD Secretary-General Rubens Ricupero; the President of the Republic and Canton of Geneva; Ambassador Walter Fust (Director of the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation) whose contribution included the comment that "to be considered as partners, NGOs should fulfill the conditions of legitimacy, transparency, complementarity and efficiency".

The keynote speech was given by Dr Boutros Boutros-Ghali, who emphasized that the role of civil society has become crucial, particularly in the context of globalization, calling for a re-think on civil society ties between local and global, and on how to achieve a civil society body which is representative and has a balance of North and South. He hoped that WCSF would open the way to the participation in international cooperation of civil society as a whole.

The Forum was conducted in three languages – French, English and Spanish – the simultaneous interpretations being provided mainly by Geneva's International Conference Volunteers. The core programme was composed of eight sessions held by each of 10 Working Groups, together covering the main themes of world concern: information society; cooperation between civil society and international organisations; health promotion; environment, trade and sustainable development; indigenous peoples, women and development; human rights and humanitarian law; the right of peoples to self-determination in the prevention of conflicts; civil society - private sector; peace and disarmament; track on human development (through the other working groups). There were also information-discussion sessions, workshops and round-table groups. In all there were nearly 200 sessions with about 300 presenters.

The Working Group on Civil Society Cooperation with the UN and other International Organizations adopted seven recommendations. One of these was for the Forum's participating organizations to reach out to government, locally and nationally, to "promote transparency and democracy in decision-making processes following the example of the Swiss system of direct and participatory democracy". Three other recommendations were based on proposals of UNGA-Link UK (a network of 40 organisations which includes CAMDUN). These proposals are:

(1) *A World Civil Society Liaison Body* should be set up by international civil society structures concerned with global governance, such as the Geneva WCSF, Association of World Citizens/World Citizens Assembly, CIVICUS, CONGO (Conference of Consultative UN-NGOs), Forum for World Peace, Millennium/Global Peoples Assembly, Montreal International Forum, The Peoples' UN, Ubuntu, WANGO (World Association of NGOs), World Federalist Movement, WFUNA (World Federation of UN Associations), World Social Forum.

(2) WCSF and other such international civil society structures as mentioned above should seek *observer presence at the UN General Assembly and its Main Committees of accredited representatives*, to monitor progress in implementation of the commitments in the Millennium Summit Declaration, and for reporting this back to civil society through their respective networks. Observer presence status could eventually lead to the representatives being constituted as a subsidiary organ of the General Assembly under Article 22 of the UN Charter. (The historical background to this proposal, going back to 1945 and including the work of CAMDUN, was presented in a WCSF Workshop on Local and Global Governance.)

(3) WCSF should initiate inter-sectoral discussions on forming a *Global Policy Network on the prevention of armed conflict*. (Such Networks are described by the UN Secretary-General as "coalitions for change" which bring together "international organizations, civil society and private sector organizations, and national governments in pursuit of common goals").

In the Concluding Plenary Session, the principle that WCSF should become a Permanent (or Continuing) Forum was agreed by a large majority in a ballot. It was also agreed that the WCSF Steering Committee should be replaced by a larger representative Coordinating Council, and that "strengthening and democratization of the United Nations system" should be a main theme of the next Forum.

A full report on the Forum is available at <http://www.worldcivilsociety.org>.

25 July 2000 - Celebration of the international day of the world's indigenous peoples, Palais des Nations, Geneva, with statements by Sergei Ordzhonikidze, Director-General of the United Na-

tions Office in Geneva, Mary Robinson, High Commissioner for Human Rights, and the chairperson of the Working Group on Indigenous Peoples, followed by cultural performances by different indigenous groups.

4 August 2002 - Talk followed by an exchange of ideas on "Individual Cooperation and Responsibility for the Plan" between Rudolf Schneider, of the IPS Geneva, and the Chiemsee-Insel-Kreis (Chiem Lake Island Group) in Bavaria, Germany, introduced by the Harmonics Chorus of Chiem Lake. Organised by Mr Franz-Georg Eck, Lindenstraße 5d, D-83339 Chieming, e-mail: eckzellent@t-online.de, Fax: 08664 927475, Tel.: 08664 927477.

August 2002 – Sixth Annual Festival in Odessa, Ukraine; personal impressions of Lida Shkorina, Interregional Association for Education and IPS Moscow

More than 160 people took part in this festival. The majority of participants were from different regions of Ukraine, a group of persons were from Russia (Moscow and the Urals), one person was from Germany. The programme was not fixed beforehand, it was very flexible. The participants defined every evening the topics for discussion for the next day. The programme was focused mainly on:

- cosmic, divine and human laws;
- principles of living: cooperation, non-violence;
- relationship between teacher-pupil-family; teacher's mission.

The positive aspects of the Festival were:

1. self-organisation of the participants;
2. accepting the situation (the place foreseen for the festival was refused at the last moment, when the participants had already arrived, so we camped in tents and all meetings were held in the open air);
3. great progress in the participants' consciousness: the names of Blavatsky, Roerich, Agni-Yoga, and the Mayan calendar were mentioned very often. People had read the books and knew the topics;
4. great interest in alternative systems (such as the Danish system of education);
5. creativity. Many participants presented their own poems, etc.
6. search for spiritual knowledge.

Of course, there was a fire with songs and dances, watching the sun rise etc. A very good experience for all of us.

10-24 August 2002 - Group meetings in Namibia

For two weeks, invited by Ms. Hilka Sentefol, we stayed in Namibia, visiting the country and meeting various persons and groups interested in the spiritual teachings and their application to daily life. Rudolf Schneider facilitated a week-end seminar on values in Windhoek, at the home of Ms. Sentefol, in which about 20 persons participated, and gave an evening talk on the same theme in Swakopmund. We visited Mount Etjo Safari Lodge, where elephants, rhinoceros, lions, antelopes, kudus, giraffes, warthogs and many other African wild animals can

be observed. On the way to Swakopmund, we spent one night at Weissenfels Farm, where the Vortex Wellness Center is located. The owners, Rosi and Winston, offer therapeutic massages, Reiki and Saydana monochord healing sessions and workshops. They started building a labyrinth, the first in Namibia. Weissenfels Farm includes 10,000 hectares of pristine nature, hiking and horse trails, as well as the first Nooitgedachter stud in Namibia. The Nooitgedachter is a good natured South African horse, fond of people and intelligent. Here is the address: Weissenfels Guest Farm, P.O.Box 2907, Windhoek, Namibia, tel. +264-62-572112, e-mail: rowins@iafrica.com.na, <http://www.orusovo.com/weissenfels>.

**24 August – 4 September 2002
World Summit on Sustainable Development,
Johannesburg, South Africa**

Rudolf Schneider represented the IPS at the World Summit on Sustainable Development. His focus during the Summit was the Sacred Site, where meditations were held every day to help shed light onto the summit.

About 20,000 people participated, including government delegations, NGO representatives, business leaders and the media. Three different sites were prepared for the Summit: the Sandton conference centre for the intergovernmental conference, Nasdek for the NGO Forum, and the business community. Midway between these three centres was the Ubuntu Village, which acted as a "common ground" for the WSSD and was the ideal platform for networking amongst all stakeholders where people united to stimulate dialogue and maximise partnership opportunities. Ubuntu literally means "humanity". Although the Summit did not lead to many positive results, because of the strong opposition to global agreements and standards on the part of those who represent private interests (mainly in the U.S. and a few other developed nations), it was an important event to assess the implementation of Agenda 21 and other commitments made at the Rio Summit of 92. The following article gives a very good overview of all the issues covered at the summit and its outcome. Another excellent resource on the Summit is the website created by the Heinrich Böll Foundation (<http://www.worldsummit2002.org>).

**From Rio to Johannesburg and Beyond:
Assessing the Summit
by Hilary French**

WASHINGTON, DC October 15, 2002 - Compared to the 1992 Earth Summit in Rio, this summer's World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) in Johannesburg was bound to be somewhat disappointing. The negotiations leading up to Johannesburg had not provided any reason to expect dramatic breakthroughs, and there were none. After the meeting, many non-governmental organizations (NGOs) denounced the WSSD as a failure. Even seasoned U.N. officials, while relieved that the Summit had not broken down completely, were rather muted in their responses.

But it would be a mistake to brand Johannesburg a failure merely because it lacked some of the excitement and energy of the Rio Summit. Negotiating new agreements, the main task at Rio, is a far easier job than actually putting them into practice in the farms, fields, and factories that form the backbone of the world economy. If Rio was a coming-of-age party for environmental issues on the global stage, Johannesburg was more like a mid-life birthday party, where the optimism of youth has been tempered by the realities of hard-won experience.

At a minimum, the World Summit was a valuable opportunity to assess progress, or the lack thereof, in the decade since the Earth Summit first put sustainable development onto the international map.

The news was not good. In the aftermath of the 1992 Rio Summit, diplomats and NGOs alike had high hopes for the several landmark agreements reached there, including international treaties on climate change and on the loss of biological diversity, and a voluminous action plan for sustainable development called Agenda 21. But in Johannesburg, delegates knew that global environmental trends for the most part deteriorated markedly in the subsequent decade. On the social front, some important indicators improved, such as school enrollment and illiteracy rates, but others threats worsened substantially, such as the HIV/AIDS epidemic. And poverty rates remain stubbornly high, with 2.8 billion people - nearly half of humanity - living on less than \$2 per day.

Although little forward movement was discernable on the sustainable development agenda in the decade following Rio, this does not mean that the world stood still. To the contrary, powerful forces of globalization were unleashed in the decade following the Earth Summit that posed major new challenges, as well as some new opportunities, for sustainable development.

Critics of globalization maintain that many of the noble paper achievements of the Rio conference were subsequently undermined just a few years later by the agreement on a package of new trade accords at Marrakech in 1994 under the aegis of the newly created World Trade Organization (WTO). Many of the WTO's provisions contradicted the spirit, and in some cases arguably even the letter, of the Rio accords. And new dispute resolution procedures adopted as part of the Marrakech package gave the new WTO rules teeth by

authorizing the imposition of trade sanctions to punish violators, in contrast to the far less binding nature of international environmental and social treaties.

The Johannesburg Summit offered the possibility of a change in course that would rebalance today's emerging structures of global governance away from a single-minded focus on freeing international commerce and towards a broader conception of progress that takes environmental and social sustainability into account. But did Johannesburg deliver?

Targets and Timetables

Unlike at the Rio Earth Summit, there were no major treaties up for negotiation in the run-up to Johannesburg. The most extensive document agreed to by governments in Johannesburg was a 54-page paper called the "World Summit on Sustainable Development Plan of Implementation". In addition, the 100 world leaders who gathered there adopted a short "Johannesburg Declaration on Sustainable Development." (These documents and many others can be downloaded from <http://www.johannesburgsummit.org>.)

Many governments pushed for the inclusion in the Plan of Implementation of new targets and timetables related to sustainable development that would complement and build upon the Millennium Development Goals adopted by nearly 200 heads of state in 2000. Among other targets, the Millennium Development Goals call for, by 2015, reducing by half the share of the world's people living in extreme poverty as well as those suffering from hunger and those lacking access to clean drinking water; cutting infant mortality rates by two-thirds; and ensuring that all children are enrolled in primary school. The Millennium Development Goals, while laudable in their own right, were weak on environmental protection and sustainable development, and many people hoped that the World Summit would fill in the gaps.

Several of the targets discussed during the negotiations were eventually either eliminated or weakened substantially. In one particular disappointment, a proposal by the European Union, Brazil, and other Latin American countries to adopt a numerical goal for the amount of energy to be obtained from renewable sources was strongly opposed by oil-exporting countries with a strong assist from the United States. In the end, the fossil fuel defenders won: the final compromise, although it endorsed increased reliance on renewables, did not set a specific target. Nonetheless, the fact that the debate got as far as it did was an indication that renewables are coming of age internationally, with a number of countries subsequently announcing plans to join together in a "coalition of the willing" that will meet in Bonn, Germany, next year to develop a concrete action plan for pushing renewable energy forward.

Despite its shortcomings, the WSSD Plan of Implementation does include some time-bound targets, including halving the proportion of people without access to basic sanitation by 2015, restoring fisheries to their maximum sustainable yields by 2015, eliminating destructive fishing practices and establishing a representative network of marine protected areas by 2012, reducing biodiversity loss by 2010, and aiming by 2020 to use and produce chemicals in ways that do not harm human health and the environment. Although many of these targets are rather vague, at least they provide benchmarks against which future trends can be measured.

Partnerships

One area in which Johannesburg differed markedly from Rio was the introduction of roughly 280 "partnership initiatives", agreements among national governments, international institutions, the business community, labor groups, non-governmental organizations, and other actors to carry out sustainable development activities.

These partnership initiatives are a significant departure from earlier approaches, where the emphasis has been on accords among nation states. Illustrative examples include a partnership for cleaner fuels and vehicles announced at the Summit that will involve the U.N., national governments, NGOs, and the private sector and a European Union "Water for Life" initiative that will harness diverse partners to help provide clean water and adequate sanitation in Africa and Central Asia. (For a list of partnership initiatives linked with the Summit, see http://www.johannesburgsummit.org/html/sustainable_dev/type2_part.html.)

The hope is that the partnerships will help to ensure that the targets agreed to in Johannesburg are in fact met. But it is not yet clear how successful the numerous partnerships announced at the Summit will be in reversing today's deteriorating environmental and social trends. Not all of the announced initiatives were entirely new. Criteria for partnerships and procedures for monitoring and assessing them were discussed in the course of the Summit preparations, but watered down substantially in the end. And while some of these partnerships may accomplish worthwhile results, they are still no substitute for binding commitments from governments.

Strengthening the U.N.'s Sustainable Development Machinery

A key to ensuring that the various commitments made in Johannesburg actually happen will be continuing international oversight and monitoring. The Johannesburg Plan of Implementation gives the U.N. Commission on Sustainable Development a major hand in this task, including a mandate to track implementation of the Summit's partnership initiatives. The Plan of Implementation also endorsed a decision earlier this year to strengthen the U.N. Environment Programme and to provide for more effective environmental coordination

for the U.N. system at large. But there was no decision made in Johannesburg to create a World Environment Organization on a par with the WTO, as has been advocated by a growing number of scholars and NGOs in recent years, as well as by some governments.

The WSSD Plan of Implementation does call for more cooperation between the United Nations and the international financial institutions that are most closely identified with globalization - the WTO, the World Bank, and the IMF. But it remains unclear exactly how this new collaboration will be brought about and what its practical implications might be. On the hotly contested question of clarifying the relationship between environmental treaties and global trade rules, the final agreement reasserts the importance of both bodies of international law, but fails to provide clear guidance for what to do in cases where they clash.

Broadening Participation

One of the lasting legacies of the Rio Earth Summit was a heightened level of involvement of NGOs and representatives of other major groups (such as farmers, local officials, and labor representatives) in U.N. environment and sustainable development deliberations. The organizers of the World Summit aspired to build upon this tradition and take it to new levels.

Over 8,000 civil society participants were officially accredited to the Summit. In addition to civil society participation in official summit meetings, there was a broad range of parallel events, such as meetings of parliamentarians, Supreme Court justices, local government officials, and trade unionists. There was also action in the streets: an estimated 20,000 people representing landless peoples and other social movements marched from one of Johannesburg's poorest areas to the glistening convention center on August 31st in protest of what they saw as the conference's lack of meaningful attention to their plight.

The business community was also out in force in Johannesburg. According to Business Action for Sustainable Development, the organization that coordinated business input into the Summit, an estimated 1,000 business representatives participated in the Summit, 120 of them CEOs, Board Chairman, or those of similar rank. In comparison, there were 100 world leaders in attendance. The extensive industry involvement in the Summit met with a decidedly mixed response, with some viewing it as positive sign of growing engagement by the business community in issues of sustainable development, while others saw it as a worrisome sign of growing corporate influence at the U.N.

On the critical issue of citizens' rights, the World Summit made little official progress. The Rio Earth Summit set the standard with the path breaking Principle 10 of the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development, which affirmed that individuals should have access to environmental information, the opportunity to participate in decision making, and effective access to judicial and administrative proceedings. The WSSD Plan of Implementation speaks of furthering Principle 10, but then proceeds to give it only a qualified endorsement. And an earlier proposal for global guidelines to promote broader public participation was left on the cutting room floor.

Although many governments remain wary of citizen scrutiny of their decision making, civil society is beginning to take matters into its own hands. In one particularly promising initiative, the Washington, D.C.-based World Resources Institute launched a "Partnership for Principle 10" initiative that encourages national governments, international institutions, and NGOs to make commitments of their own aimed at putting Principle 10 into widespread practice. (For more information, see www.pp10.org.)

So was it all worth it? Only time will tell, as we see what concrete action flows from the commitments made in the World Summit's Plan of Implementation and through the multitude of associated partnership agreements and other initiatives. Although there can be no illusion that forging a sustainable development path will be easy, the task is becoming ever more urgent as the human costs of environmental degradation and social despair continue to mount.

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ENCLOSURES

Calendar of World Celebrations 2003
Calendar of Forthcoming Group Activities
Invitation to 17th Annual International Conference "Science and The Soul", Seven Ray Institute