

# *Many to Many*

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*“Many to Many” under the aegis of Operation Peace Through Unity is a communicating link between “we, the peoples” of all nations, races, creeds and ideologies offering in the spirit of the preamble of the United Nations Charter an instrument for the furthering of better relationships based on deepening mutual understanding and the aspiration to promote unity and cooperation beyond all differences.*

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Anthony Brooke & Gita Brooke, co-founders Te Rangi, 4 Allison Street, Wanganui 5001, New Zealand PHONE/FAX: 64-6-345-5714  
Website: [www.peacethroughunity.info](http://www.peacethroughunity.info) Email [optubrookiana@xtra.co.nz](mailto:optubrookiana@xtra.co.nz)

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## ***I. Global Health***

The advancement of global health will be the focus for the 2010 United Nations Department of Public Information's annual NGO conference, which will take place in Melbourne, Australia, 30 August – 1 September. Global health is understood to be a cornerstone for the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

As in previous years people will gather from all walks of life and from all UN member states and make sure that the theme for the year is discussed and looked at from every possible angle and with input from grassroots constituencies, media, academia, civil society members, Youth, NGOs, as well as UN representatives and government officials.

The issue of health and healing itself, whether on personal or global level, is presently fraught with contradictions and shortcomings, and in their search for cures to the many ills of the world, scientists can lose sight of the whole picture. But this conference will provide a real opportunity for humanity to meet and together look for and contemplate the underlying causes to the distress and dis-ease experienced by ourselves and by all other lives within and upon the living evolving entity we call Planet Earth.

The inner drive for perfection, or completeness, seems inherent within all kingdoms of nature, and even the planet itself. Despite all differentiations and conditions we are journeying together toward the same goal driven by the longing to become complete; for the time when each unit of life relates, interacts and functions as one healthy and harmonious whole.

The MDGs are a solemn pledge made in year 2000 by 189 UN member states, with specific steps agreed upon to heal the different ills and deficiencies besetting the world community and our natural environment. The MDGs demonstrate that humanity is seeing itself as one, albeit dysfunctional, family, who needs to work together to sort out its problems. And the conference's keynote indicates that we need to extend the concept of health to include the welfare of all life within the global environment. It is in this atmosphere of inclusiveness that 'we, the peoples of the UN' are asked to consider how we can help reduce child mortality and child abuse; improve the welfare of women and promote their inclusion as equal partners in all world affairs; ensure that every need of every human being, and every other living being, is being met. We have been given the opportunity to confirm and consolidate our common goal beyond all differences and to form new working relationships.

The old mindset, weakened and partly incapacitated by confusion and reluctance to change, cannot be expected to lead the way toward recovery. It too needs the healing and cleansing touch of common sense – of heart sense. It is the multitude of heart-thinking human beings to be found everywhere throughout the world, who will be healing the world and, breathing new life into our communities and the environment, making them – us – whole and healthy.

In the final paragraph of the UN Millennium Declaration (A/RES/55/2, 8 September 2000) the UN member nations state: *"We solemnly reaffirm, on this historic occasion, that the United Nations is the indispensable common house of the entire human family, through which we will seek to realize our universal aspirations for peace, cooperation and development. We therefore pledge our unstinting support for these common objectives and our determination to achieve them."* Let us, 'we the people of the United Nations', help our governments keep their pledge. Because: together, we are the UN.

## **II. “We Can End Poverty: The Millennium Development Goals at Ten”**

*Report by Sharon Deep from UN Briefing on MDGs, 21 May 2010*

The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) calls for halving the proportion of people who suffer from hunger by 2015. It was reported yesterday that, "the number of hungry people rose from 842 million in 1990-1992 to 1.02 billion in 2009." The speaker from the UN Millennium Campaign, Sering Falu Njie, told us that the number of people in extreme poverty has risen to 1.4 billion and the number of people without basic needs is 2.5 billion. The various aspects of crisis stiffen our challenge.

The speaker from Millennium Promise (the millennium development villages) spoke of how everyone needs to be engaged. He told us that there are three main things that civil society can be engaged in to help support the effort: advocacy (education on the UN, the MDG's, ....); fund raising; and implementation (engaging our local communities in action).

He gave an example of how in a community in Tanzania, people are being trained as community helpers and health workers. He told us of how people are being trained to do rapid diagnostics and treatments of certain diseases. They are learning to leverage skills and to re-skill in very short order. The plan of action is coming from the people within the community.

The measured success that has been achieved on a village-by-village basis is being presented to the US Pentagon as a means to security. It does not take much to address what is being asked by communities in order to build and sustain a lasting quality of life.

Sering Falu Njie struck another note. He wanted broad policy changes. He wanted public awareness around the world. And he wanted world citizens to stand up for our rights. The ‘Stand Up for Poverty’ Campaign will be run in September this year at the time of the Summit \* (it's usually run in October). He wants to create the political pressure, or he wants the political will of the people to engage leaders to legislate around aid/debt/trade.

Vidar Ekehaug from UNICEF Voices of Youth, the global youth network, spoke of how the youth around the world want to be engaged. And they want to do something real. Our current infrastructure is not engaging them or empowering them. He spoke of how there is a negative perception of kids. We speak of stopping them from getting into trouble instead of encouraging them to do something positive. He has had success in engaging youth in the health services and in agriculture.

Zachary Bleicher from Liaison Services spoke of the Summit and how they are looking for concrete strategies for action and for accountability. The Ambassadors from Senegal and Denmark are working on a report. There will be hearings with civil society on building a better tomorrow, equal and inclusive partnerships, sustainable development, and 1600 days left.

Websites:

<http://www.un-ngls.org/mdg2010> gives information about the summit

<http://endpoverty2015.org> is an on line forum for discussion

<http://facebook.com/mcampaign> has 25000 members from 100 countries

\* The UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon has invited world leaders to attend the above-mentioned Summit in New York on 20-22 September. His report for the summit: *“Keeping the promise: a forward-looking review to promote an agreed action agenda to achieve the Millennium Development Goals by 2015”* provides a clear picture of both MDG successes and shortfalls, as well as specific recommendations for action. It also calls for a new pact to accelerate progress in achieving the Goals, and urges that *‘all stakeholders, including national Governments, donor and other supportive Governments, the business community and civil society at large, to work in concert to ensure that the MDGs are met by 2015’*.

In the report Ban Ki-moon makes numerous suggestions for round table themes to be discussed at the summit under the following main headings:

- *Poverty, hunger and gender equality;*
- *Health and education;*
- *Promoting sustainable development;*
- *Widening and strengthening partnerships;*
- *Addressing the special needs of the most vulnerable; and*
- *Addressing emerging issues and evolving approaches.*

<http://www.un.org/en/mdg/summit2010/>

### ***III. Global Alliance for Ministries and Departments of Peace At NY International “Disarm Now” Conference***

*By Anne Creter – OPTU NGO Representative & Global UN Liaison  
17 May 2010*

Diplomats from the world’s nations gathered at the United Nations throughout the month of May for the 5-year Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) Review, widely considered to be a critical point for the nuclear disarmament movement. The 2010 Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty Review International Planning Committee (comprised of NGOs from the US, Europe, Asia and the Riverside Church of NY) organized a two-day long international conference (30 April – 1 May) about **Nuclear Abolition, Peace and Disarmament** on the eve of the NPT Review Conference. NGOs from six continents sent representatives and activists to NY to influence its outcome. It was held at the famous Riverside Church, fittingly where Doctor Martin Luther King made his historic “Beyond Vietnam” speech. This gathering provided a forum to share analyses and coordinate activities with the NPT Conference. It consisted of three plenaries and numerous workshops from assorted tracks (abolition, wider peace, economic justice/human needs and environment/health). Many distinguished speakers were featured, most notable was an impassioned UN Secretary-General Ban Ki Moon, affirming his commitment to disarmament.

The **Global Alliance for Ministries and Departments of Peace** (GA) was thrilled to be among the “wider peace” workshops. It was coordinated by GA member Rob Acheson, of the Canadian Ministry of Peace Initiative, to show up as follows: **Disarmament Through Governmental Infrastructures for a Culture of Peace** -- UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon recently encouraged parliamentarians to increase practical measures for peace and disarmament, including through the establishment of “institutional infrastructures.” The Global Alliance for Ministries and Departments of Peace is a rapidly growing international movement dedicated to this “practical” means of cultivating a culture of peace.

The room was adorned with disarmament ribbons provided by The Ribbons International NGO. The assembled panel met the “gender–age” criteria nicely, with its balanced mix of young & mature men and women. Besides the “mature” ones, Anne Creter and Rob Acheson, panelists included two youth - New Yorkers for a Department of Peace board member, Marianne H. Perez and Michael Spies, political affairs officer for Weapons of Mass Destruction Branch, UN Office for Disarmament Affairs. Mr. Acheson began by showing his adaptation of the GA power-point developed for the 2009 Costa Rica Summit. Ms. Perez then gave a rousing flip-chart presentation about *structural violence and infrastructures for peace*. Mr. Spies proceeded with an informative synopsis of his disarmament work at the UN and Ms. Creter ended with another power-point, integrating it all within the larger context of the UN Declaration and Programme of Action for a Culture of Peace (A/Res/53/243). She mentioned their work with the NGO Committee on Spirituality, Values and Global Concerns – New York (CSVGC-NY) “Culture of Peace Working Group” drafting a proposed UN Resolution calling for the creation of “peace infrastructures” within member states. Then there was a lively Q & A with an engaged audience (amused by the irony that it was the “mature ones” who chose the power-point technology). Elder Canadian GA member Eryl Court delighted the audience with her wise presence.

Two colleagues from CSVGC-NY were instrumental in contributing to the workshop’s success – Margo LeZaro and Georgina Galanis – with their gracious support. Ms. LeZaro was one of the Conference’s main organizers. Another interesting point is that Mr. Acheson’s daughter, Rachael (a leading disarmament expert at the UN) also presented a workshop entitled “*Dismantling Discourses: Nuclear Weapons and Human Security*” (economic justice / human needs track). She is director of Reaching Critical Will, a project of the Women’s International League of Peace and Freedom and is editor of *Beyond Arms Control: Challenges and Choices for Nuclear Disarmament* (2010). Unfortunately both workshops occurred at the same time so father and daughter missed each other’s performances.

The Conference concluded dramatically the following day, starting early in the morning with a poignant inter-faith nuclear disarmament convocation at the Church Center, across the street from the UN. It then moved onto a massive rally at Time Square marching to the UN, ending at the Dag Hammarskjöld Plaza with a Peace Festival. Georgina Galanis manned a table at the Festival for the GA which attracted many visitors, including U.S. Peace Alliance friends from several states. Tens of thousands of global citizens took to the streets from all over the world that day with a powerful show of forces -- particularly from Japan -- chanting “*No More Hiroshima’s, No More Nagasaki’s.*” Unfortunately, it all got upstaged by the Time Square Bomber who ironically struck at the same time. Not only did he manage to steal the headlines but this big newsworthy disarmament event received little (if ANY) media coverage at all!

Contact: Anne Creter: [Annecrets@aol.com](mailto:Annecrets@aol.com)

#### ***IV. Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) Review Conference - May 2010***

After what has been described as ‘*intense negotiations and, at times, heated controversy*’ the State parties to the NPT agreed, at the last moment, on the comprehensive text of an outcome document containing steps to help further the progress on nuclear disarmament, advance non-proliferation and work toward a nuclear-free zone in the Middle East.

The review conference resolved that Russia and the United States, together with Britain, China and France, should seek an early entry into force of the treaty they signed earlier this year to reduce their nuclear arsenals. Reaffirming that the total elimination of nuclear weapons is the only absolute guarantee against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons, the conference stressed the

vital importance of the entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty (CTBT). It also calls all states to take all possible measures to safeguard against diversion of fissile materials and to ‘detect, deter and disrupt illicit trafficking.’

The conference reaffirmed the importance of implementing the 1995 resolution on the Middle East concerning the creation of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in this region, and urged all states concerned to take relevant steps and confidence-building measures to realize the resolution objectives. To this end the conference endorsed the convening of a conference in 2012, attended by all Middle Eastern States, on the establishment of ‘*a zone free of nuclear weapons and all other weapons of mass destruction, on the basis of arrangements freely arrived at by States in the region*’.

The outcome document also strongly urged the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea to honour the commitments made in the Joint Statement, September 2005 which includes the complete and verifiable abandonment of all nuclear weapons and existing nuclear programmes.

In his statement to the conference, UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon expressed his deep appreciation of the ‘*strong spirit of compromise and cooperation*’ that had ensured this significant agreement to build a safer and more secure world.

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***‘It is the world’s taxpayers who are funding the development of nuclear arms. Tomorrow they could be paying a different – and much higher price’***

*(statement by Ban Ki-moon at the Inter-Parliamentary Union and Parliamentarians for Nuclear Non-Proliferation and Disarmament, 6 May, 2010)*

### ***V. Zareh Seropian Family Unity Award***

This new peace award, highlighting human goodness expressed throughout a lifetime, was established in the memory of Dr. Zareh Seropian, who was seen by all those who had met and known him, as the ‘Modern Saint of Family Unity’.

Zareh Seropian was born 15 May 1945 and was Lebanese by nationality of Armenian origin. He studied at the Armenian Theological University, got a Doctor of Divinity degree and later in his life became Bishop of the first Armenian Church of the Holy Trinity. Dr. Seropian also became fluent in Arabic, English and French; secured a diploma in political studies as well as in photographic arts and painting, and subsequently worked as art director of photography and cinematography.

In 1972 Dr. Seropian married and became the loving father of four children. When his wife died he also became a wonderful mother to all the children, of which the oldest was then 16 and the youngest merely 2 years old.

Dr. Seropian became increasingly involved in numerous humanitarian causes and, as a good and dedicated teacher with deep concern for the welfare of others, he became involved with International Association of Educators for World Peace (IAEWP), an NGO with UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) accreditation, and was named the NGO’s World Peace Ambassador. Before he passed away Dr. Seropian participated in the IAEWP World Peace Congress in Malaysia.

His son, Dr. Varant Seropian, is continuing the work of his father and is currently the IAEWP National Chancellor of Lebanon, helping to implement the main goals and objectives of IAEWP, which have been summarized as:

- ! Promotion of international understanding and world peace through education;
- ! Environment protection from air and water pollution;
- ! Safeguard of human rights; and
- ! Disarmament and development of the human resources for constructive purposes.

Dr. Varan Seropian, who lives in Antelias in Lebanon, can be contacted for further information through e-mail: [iaewp-un@live.com](mailto:iaewp-un@live.com)

*(The above information was taken from a recent article by Charles Mercieca, Ph.D., President International Association of Educators for World Peace, dedicated to United Nations Goals of Peace, Education, Environmental Protection, Human Rights & Disarmament. Professor Emeritus, Alabama A&M University.)*

## ***VI. Children of Greece Peace Garden Pieria***

The National Children of Greece Peace Garden will be located in the Prefecture of Pieria and planted in the foothills of Mount Olympus and Mount Pieria – the home of the Gods.

The aim is for this garden to be seen as a legacy project of the 2004 Olympic Games in Athens, as it shares the Olympic Movement's ideals of promoting a permanent truce between nations and fostering reconciliation and peace through the youth of the world. To this end, it will be bringing young people together to build lasting partnerships through peace and environmental education. As part of their university course on peace & conflict studies, students will be offered a six months stay at the Peace Garden.

The Peace Garden aims to create a young people's centre with lecture theatre, library, cafeteria, and Internet facilities and play areas. The Peace Garden Secretariat is also exploring the idea of incorporating a Children's Trauma centre in the garden in partnership with the Hamogelo Foundation.

The initiator of the Children of Greece Peace Garden Pieria project, Prince Frederick von Saxe-Lauenberg, states emphatically that *"Wars are the stains of shame which centuries will not wash away and we cannot redress the wrongdoings of mankind, what we can do is educate those who will one day inherit the earth from us and teach them the values of peace, universal understanding and the joy of global friendship."*

The vision of this peace garden at the foot of Mount Olympus is for it one day to become the ideal place for holding World Youth peace concerts, Youth festivals and local community events. The Greek National Tourist Office and others have shown sincere interest in promoting this project.

More information at <http://www.kyazanga.org/childrenoftheworld/>  
e-mail: [president@childrenoftheworld.us](mailto:president@childrenoftheworld.us)

Making a link between the Greece Peace Garden initiative and the forthcoming Youth Forum in Costa Rica, the Forum co-chair Prince Frederick von Saxe-Lauenberg, says: *"The children of this planet have grown up with a deeper level of connectivity than any other generation. From an early age they are connected to politics, media, world events and even other children all over the world who log onto community web sites. We will have an extraordinary constellation of young people at*

*our event in Costa Rica next year who all radiate a limitless sense of energy and whose imaginations are fertile with dreams of success and prosperity but are also aware of their role in society to promote sustainability, universal friendship and caring for our environment”.*

### **The 2<sup>nd</sup> World Creative Youth Forum (WCYF 2011),**

The Forum’s 2<sup>nd</sup> gathering will take place in San Jose, Costa Rica, between 21-26 September 2011. The main theme will be Education for Sustainable Development. This theme will continue the dialogue which began already at the inaugural WCYF meeting in the Philippines, 2009.

The Forum will concentrate on the critical issue of humanity’s common future and the various workshop presenters, among them Dr. Jane Goodall, will highlight some possible solutions, based on the particular expertise and understanding of each workshop holder.

The underlying vision of WCYF is to overcome the barriers which separate people through ‘strengthening conscious community action’, and applying such values as accountability; transparency; integrity and civic responsibility, as well as ‘shared solutions’.

Among the Forum’s objectives are listed:

- presenting existing working models from worldwide communities and gathering a wide variety of global participant under the umbrella of ‘education for sustainable development’;
- giving field experience to participants by introducing them to working models; and
- interacting with local schools and educational institutions to include children and young people in the building of their future communities.

More information can be obtained on website:

<http://www.kyazanga.org/childrenoftheworld/WCYF11.htm>

### ***VII. Oneness Day***

The Humanity’s Team, together with supporters, have been gathering over 50 000 signatures from 168 countries on a petition asking for a UN-approved Oneness Day, in which humanity can celebrate and demonstrate in practical ways ‘*unity, diversity, harmony and compassion on a shared date*’ .

On 20 May, this petition was handed over to Ambassador Anwarul Chowdhury, former Under-Secretary-General and High Representative of the UN - and also the leading emissary of the UN Culture of Peace initiative - by Steve Farrell, the Humanity’s Team Worldwide Coordinating Director, at a ceremony held in front of the Chagall Peace Window at the UN Headquarters in New York.

The Ambassador, deeply touched on receiving the petition, stressed that ‘*unless we have that sense of solidarity among the peoples of the world, all our efforts of peace and security will go nowhere*’. Anwarul Chowdhury also expressed his firm belief that the public support for Oneness Day would ‘*grow every year – by millions*’ Let us make it so.

The full text of the Oneness Day Petition is as follows:



## ***I declare***

- 1. That the message We Are All One, inter-related, inter-connected and inter-dependent, with God/Life/One-another, is the one spiritual message that the world has been waiting for to bring about loving and sustainable answers to humanity's challenges.*
- 2. That the world does not have to be the way it is – and that individual people can change it, using the power of spiritual citizenship.*
- 3. That humanity is good and has unlimited potential, and that social transformation starts with personal transformation. I therefore recognize the importance of connecting with my divine essence and inner wisdom throughout my life's journey; allowing the finest and the highest levels of human potential to flourish for the benefit of all.*
- 4. My aspirations to support spiritual principles, global ethics, and universal values such as respect, justice, peace, dignity, freedom, responsibility and cooperation, that underlie the declaration.*
- 5. That human beings need each other to survive on this planet. I recognize that we are all in this together and that community flourishes as we learn about each other and revel in the wonder and beauty of our diversities. I declare that I am playing my part to help to bring about a culture in which we, the peoples of the world, can address our common global concerns in a holistic, positive and transforming way and live together in peace with one another*
- 6. That Oneness contains All of life- also the parts that we regard as the "other". I realize that wholeness and togetherness can only be experience through the recognition of the uniqueness, beauty and purpose of all aspects of life, and that this recognition starts with my Self.*
- 7. That I am part of the emerging consciousness that promotes a spirit of openness, enquiry, connection and relationship with myself and the entire universe, and who continues to recognize the wonder, beauty and mystery of it all.*
- 8. I declare that the time for change is now, and I declare the importance of a day set aside for all of humanity to come together as one human family, to discuss, celebrate and experience Oneness.*

This petition can be signed on <http://www.humanitysteam.org/>

See also this website for further information on Humanity's Team

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## ***VIII. A Global Community Project The Leeds Pyramid***

Started just over a year ago, the Leeds Pyramid is an inspirational and ambitious project. It has been set up by the Ward family from Leeds, West Yorkshire, UK (hence the name) and thus far has attracted interest from a range of countries, organisations and Nobel Laureates.

### **So what is it all about?**

Well, to put it simply, the idea behind the project is to create a large, global time-capsule which every country of the world can help to create.

Inspired in part by the 2012 London Olympic bid, the project aims to get the whole world working together and in doing so create opportunities for geographical, technological, industrial, educational, sociological and anthropological discussion, debate and research. Every country, irrespective of their size or wealth will have an equal opportunity to participate.

The principle idea is that by pledging their commitment to the project, countries will agree to fill 3 time capsules, providing a snap shot of life in the 21<sup>st</sup> century and in insight into the lives of our peoples; our world leaders, schools and every day ordinary families.

Since it began, letters have been written to every country as well as to other individuals and organisations who may wish to offer their support. With 7% of the world's countries involved already and with a growing group of supporters it seems that despite its huge ambitions, the project has begun to capture peoples' imagination.

As Steve Ward said:

“Although the basic concept is simple, it's the scale of the project that people find difficult to grasp. We are trying to do something that has never been attempted before in human history. At the moment most of the activity has been on a small scale, with friends and family helping out but just consider the possibilities if the project had more support.”

### **But why a Pyramid?**

Why not! Pyramids have been a source of fascination for more than a thousand years and have proven themselves to be feats of engineering that can withstand the test of time. The parallels with the treasure-trove within the time-capsule are obvious but further still the structure itself provides a point of interest and support from around the globe.

How would you build it? What materials would you use? Where would it be built?

For architects, engineers, builders, stone-masons and academics the project offers the chance to be involved in a global building project the likes of which have not previously been attempted.

### **Who is already supporting the project?**

From the 1000 letters the Ward Family has written over the past 12 months, 18 countries have pledged their support including Australia, Madagascar, Ecuador, Cyprus and Timor-Leste.

Nobel Peace Laureate President Jose Ramos-Horta of Timor-Leste met the Ward Family at the Leeds Peace Jam in February 2010 and is closely following its progress. They have also received a letter of support from Archbishop Desmond Tutu that has been a fantastic and inspirational boost to the project.

### **A project for the future**

The project has definitely captured children's imagination. 12 year old Tia Ward thought it would be a good idea if every child in the world had a chance to participate and where even those with very little has the opportunity to be part of something where their opinions really matter. Rather than future generations learning about our time through formally record history it will give them a chance to learn about it through the words of ordinary people. As such the voice of children becomes part of the foundation stones of the structure.

Educationally, this aspect of the project lends itself to almost every part of the school curriculum and with a dedicated school's website in development, the project hopes to harness the power of modern technology.

The project aims to build bonds between people, giving them the chance to connect with their fellow human beings despite geographical, economical or cultural differences.

## Next steps

The project needs support and despite a strong start it is keen to maintain its momentum and continue to gain support from countries. But the project has become something bigger than a family project; it is developing into a truly global project and as such now needs to look at formalising itself.

There will never be an ideal time for countries to get involved, governments will always have conflicting agendas and homeland issues but to get them to participate in this project, in the spirit in which it is intended is Steve Ward's greatest aspiration. He believes it is up to ordinary people to attempt to build this structure and prove that the world can successfully work together can think on a global scale and build history.

“Just because no one's tried it, doesn't mean it can't be done”.

By Carmel Gallagher – Friend of the Leeds Pyramid Project  
[www.leedspyramid.com](http://www.leedspyramid.com)

## ***IX. “In a world in crisis, what about Human Rights?”***

“In a world in crisis, what about Human Rights” is the striking title of the 4<sup>th</sup> World Forum on Human Rights, taking place in Nantes, France, from Monday 28 June to Thursday 1 July, 2010.

The Nantes Forum, created under the aegis of UNESCO, has since 2004 been bringing together, on an equal footing, all individuals and organizations that work to defend human rights; it has sought to develop a novel approach that combines both theory and practice, which in the past ‘*often tended to ignore and conflict with each other.*’ The objective is not to adopt resolutions or make declarations but to provide a venue for ‘*broad thinking and intensive discussion on human rights issues, and for above all promoting best practices towards advancing human rights.*’

The 2010 World Forum on Human Rights will this year examine the impact that the financial, economic, social, moral, political and environmental crises have had on human rights throughout the world, and focus in particular on four key issues:

**Labour in a globalized world:** ‘*Defending and strengthening labour law despite the crisis*’.

According to UN statistics about 60 million people lost their jobs in 2009 and this number is expected to rise to 240 million unemployed worldwide. The globalization of trade has tended to put workers from the North in competition with those in the developing countries, resulting in deteriorating labour conditions in the Northern countries while increasing the exploitation of those in the South. This situation could lead to forced labour, trafficking in human beings and even slavery ‘which is no more humane today than it was in the past in any of its forms’.

Among the suggested sub-themes for round table discussions are: ‘*slavery yesterday and today – can we build a universal conscience?*’; ‘*economic crisis and the corporate social responsibility*’; ‘*how globalization and ‘offshoring’ are threatening union rights*’.

## **Defending freedom of expression and opinion: ‘a constant battle’.**

The freedoms of expression, conscience and conviction, go hand-in-hand with democracy and are fundamental rights recognized by the UN Charter, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and numerous other documents. So, in a world in crisis, what is the best way of defending fundamental freedoms, and prohibiting expressions that encourage hatred and violence?

Among suggested sub-themes for round-table discussions are: *‘religions, democracy and freedom of expression’*; *‘limits to freedom of expression in democratic society’*; *‘freedom of expression and the rise of new media’*.

## **Identities issues: ‘identities and minorities – living and acting together, in diversity’.**

As the globalization of the world’s economy and migrations bring together peoples of very different origins and lifestyles, we need to learn how to reconcile the goal of equality for all human beings with the need to respect multiple, and sometimes contradictory, cultural and personal identities. A recent survey by the European Fundamental Rights Agency (FRA) on discrimination and racist crimes against immigrants and ethnic minorities show that discrimination, harassment and violence of a racial nature is much more common than official statistics suggest. (See <http://fra.europa.eu/eu-midis/>). Reconciling human diversity with the universality of human rights is a major challenge.

Among suggested sub-themes for round-table discussions are: *‘immigration, diversity and citizenship’*; *‘identity and diversity – developing citizenship in countries with high ethnic diversity’*; *‘the right of indigenous peoples and ethnic minorities to cultural diversity’*.

## **The right to food: ‘From Soil to Plate / From Values to Rules’.**

This particular theme is the title of a colloquium, hosted by the 4<sup>th</sup> World Forum on Human Rights, which will be open to the public 28-29 June at no extra cost. The Forum will be developing a special work project in partnership with the European LASCAUX programme, entitled “The Law, Food and the Earth”.

The Lascaux programme aims to ensure that ***“law serves the cause of the sustainable and equitable development of farming and the food industry in both poor and rich countries.”***

The Lascaux team is composed of some 80 researchers from around the world, mostly from the legal profession but including also economists, sociologists and anthropologists, and headed by Francois Collart-Dutilleul, professor of private law at the University of Nantes and member of the University Institute of France.

Human rights seems on the whole to serve more as guidelines for action than as solutions in themselves: *“Human rights do not appear to be of much use in stopping global speculation on agricultural commodities, illegal deforestation, the brutal impact of global trade on the most vulnerable populations, the lack of agrarian reform, global warming, and the selfishness of all those who place their personal interest above the common good”*. The Lascaux team suggests that no real solution is possible without a legal approach, *‘because the law is the only means of regulating relationships and trade between human beings that is considered legitimate by all citizens and which take the common good into account.’*

*“If we sincerely want to help the hundreds of millions of people who are caught in the iron grip of hunger and malnutrition, we must succeed in combining political action, trade, social cohesion and law-based regulation into a coherent whole”.* (<http://www.droit-aliments-terre.eu/>)

The World Forum on Human Rights is organized by International Permanent Secretariat on Human Rights and Local Governments, a not-for-profit association based in Nantes. In 2008 the Forum brought together over 2,500 speakers and participants representing some 100 different nationalities. ([www.spidh.org](http://www.spidh.org))

***“We all have a part to play in making the enjoyment of all human rights a reality for all”***

*(Sergio Vieira de Mello, former UN High Commissioner for Human Rights,  
killed in a terrorist attack in Baghdad, Iraq, 19 August, 2003)*

## **X. UN Global Compact Leaders Summit**

*New York, 24-25 June 2010*

The theme for the 2010 Summit will be ***“Building a New Era of Sustainability”*** – an era in which *‘environmental, social and governance (ESG) issues are deeply integrated into business based on both material and ethical rationales’*. Over 1000 global leaders are expected to attend the Summit which is hosted by the United Nations and believed to become *‘the most important UN-business event ever held’*. It will be providing the platform for business leaders and organizations to tackle priority areas which are central to corporate leadership and *‘essential for the transformation to sustainable market and the achievement of societal goals’*.

Acknowledging that the world is at a critical juncture, the Summit ‘Overview’ makes it clear that *‘advances in global integration, poverty reduction, protection of our planet, and, ultimately, peace, critically depend on our ability to collectively address the most pressing global challenges’*. The multiple crises we face together – from financial market break down to environmental degradation – are interconnected; *‘putting long-term sustainability, comprehensive risk management and ethics at the top of the corporate agenda must be a priority for business everywhere’*.

The Summit will be divided into 3 parts:

- 1. Setting the Sustainability Agenda: our globalised marketplace requires a stronger ethical orientation, better caretaking of the common good, and more comprehensive management of risks;*
- 2. Leading the Change: corporate sustainability leadership calls for a sophisticated and comprehensive approach to integrating environmental, social and governance (ESG) issues across the organization – from the Board, down through the organization and subsidiaries, and out into the supply chain.*
- 3. Achieving Development: 2010 will mark a decade since world leaders committed to reduce extreme poverty and set out the MDGs to be achieved by 2015. Much remains to be done – especially with negative impacts from climate change, food crises and the global economic downturn. Poverty is a profound threat to global security, interdependence and building strong markets. Business can and must strengthen its role in finding strategic and effective solutions to combat global poverty, hunger and disease.*

The UN Global Compact is the world’s largest corporate citizenship initiative, with 7,000 signatures in 135 countries. Since its inception 10 years ago the Compact’s vision remains the same: for companies everywhere to integrate universal principles into their strategies, operations

and culture, thereby having a profound effect on United Nations goals, particularly the Millennium Development Goals.

[www.unglobalcompact.org](http://www.unglobalcompact.org)

## ***XI. The Significance of a Footprint***

Another round of Climate Change talks will take place in Bonn from 31 May to 11 June. Over 4,500 people, including representatives from 182 governments will attend the meeting, which is designed ‘*to pave the way for full implementation of climate change action across the globe*’.

Yvo de Boer, UN top climate change official, expresses a shade of hope that the climate negotiations over the next two weeks will be on track, provided ‘*they keep focused on a common way forward towards a concrete and realistic goal in Cancun*’, adding ‘*there is a growing consensus on what the goal for Cancun can be – namely, a full, operational architecture to implement effective, collective climate action*’. (The Cancun UN Climate Change Conference will take place 29 November – 10 December).

Meanwhile the United Nations system – the world’s biggest international body – has embarked upon the quest of achieving climate neutrality.

In an article by Ivar A. Baste, Director, Environment Management Group (EMG) Secretariat, UNEP (April 2010), he explains why a carbon footprint of 1.7 million tones of carbon dioxide matters, even if it represent merely 3.3 per cent of that produced by New York City: it matters first and foremost because it signifies that the UN system is determined to lead by example and be part of the climate solution. It also shows what can be achieved through cooperation between nearly 50 UN and Bretton Woods entities with diverse expertise and perspectives – yet a shared vision to achieve climate neutrality. A common methodology for calculating GHG emissions had to be agreed, says the article, as well as developing benchmarks for emission reductions and offsets.

Ivar Baste believes that: “*respect, trust, due process, information technology and economy of scale are core ingredients in the recipe for crosscutting cooperation. Applied in the right mix, they can help generate the institutional efficiency, resilience, innovation and adaptability required to address environmental change*”.

Let us trust that the outcome of Bonn Climate Change Talks will reflect this spirit of cooperation. (<http://www.un.org/wcm/content/site/climatechange/gateway>)

## *XI. THE GREAT INVOCATION*

From the point of Light within the Mind of God  
Let light stream forth into the minds of men.  
Let Light descend on Earth.

From the point of Love within the Heart of God  
Let love stream forth into the hearts of men  
May Christ return to Earth.

From the centre where the Will of God is known  
Let purpose guide the little wills of men –  
The purpose which the Masters know and serve.

From the centre which we call the race of men  
Let the Plan of Love and Light work out  
And may it seal the door where evil dwells.

Let Light and Love and Power restore the plan on Earth.