

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 or www.isleofavalon.co.uk/manytomany.html or www.angelfire.com/journal/brooke2000/
Email optubrookiana@xtra.co.nz

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I. Poverty

The images of homeless people living in squalor on barren land, and the sunken, pleading, eyes of starving children, have finally stirred the world community to move the issue of poverty to the top of the global agenda.

We are at last realizing that poverty is casting its shadow over and affecting all human affairs. And, although being more familiar with the eye-opening statistics on the obscene and absurd divide between rich and poor, we are also becoming increasingly aware of a truer and fuller picture which shows that poverty cannot be explained or remedied by money or lack thereof alone.

The inherited systemic and systematic devaluation of life and the learnt dehumanization of people who are seen as enemies or obstacles to personal or national prosperity, are beginning to lose their power to persuade and corrupt in today's interconnected world. Globalisation has brought with it the opportunity – the necessity even – to restore and revive a value system that will benefit everyone.

The UN Millennium Summit has proved to us all that in the 21st century, the world community is ready to see the connection between physical, emotional, mental and spiritual poverty and how all of these have allowed selfishness, greed, and lust for power to dominate and impoverish relationships within the circumference of our global home.

Since then real and genuine efforts have been made to tackle all these levels of poverty and replace the outdated and debilitating value system with a new more enlightened one. Building upon the vision in the Preamble of the UN Charter and acting upon the hopes and aspirations of humanity, expressed in innumerable documents, resolutions and plans for action within as well as outside the United Nations system, people everywhere and within all walks of life are working to restore physical and spiritual health and prosperity to the world.

In the 2005 Report to the UN Secretary-General, entitled ***Investing in Development – A Practical Plan to Achieve the Millennium Development Goals***, the Director Jeffrey Sachs mentions the rare opportunity of this Millennium Project to help 'give voice to the hopes, aspirations, and vital needs of the world's poorest and most voiceless people' and tells of the countless 'heroes and heroines of development' that the Project team met in villages and slums throughout the developing world: '*We have seen people preserving their spirit, integrity, commitment, and hope for the future even when they have little else, when tragic circumstances have left them bereft of health, education, possessions, and a means of livelihood*'.

Article 1 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights makes the confirmation that: "*All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights. They are endowed with reason and conscience and should act towards one another in a spirit of brotherhood*".

Together we can free ourselves and the world of the long shadow of poverty in all its forms. Free and equal, endowed with reason and conscience, life has given us all it takes to build a friendly, fair, prosperous and beautiful global community.

II. United Nations 2005 DPI/NGO Conference– Report

Meeting from 7-9 September 2005, more than 2,700 Non-Governmental Organization (NGO) representatives of civil society from more than 1,160 organizations in 124 countries came together at United Nations Headquarters in New York to make their voices heard on implementation of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), peace and security, human rights and strengthening the United Nations. The Annual DPI/NGO Conference, entitled *Our Challenge: Voices for Peace, Partnerships and Renewal*, hosting more than 45 featured speakers, for the first time in its 58-year history brought together representatives of Member States and national parliaments to interact with NGOs and civil society. In addition, this was the last chance for civil society voices to consult formally with Member states before the 2005 World Summit, the largest ever assembly of world leaders, who would meet the following week with their response to the Secretary General's report, *In Larger Freedom*. Up till now, as they made preparations for the Summit, Member States had been caught in a quagmire of bureaucracy characterized by national interests, stubborn will, and seemingly were about to squander an opportunity, which was of potentially tremendous consequence for all people, in all countries. Thus, building on the momentum of the NGO/DPI June 2005 Millennium +5Network Report, it became apparent that the NGO participants attending this Conference were determined to “spare no effort” so that EVERY VOICE COUNTS—to make the most of this remarkable and unprecedented opportunity for multi-level partnerships, reform and revitalization at the UN, compliance regarding the pledged MDGs—and see to it that this prospect would not be lost, but would continue on as a “call to action”.

While the Conference was closed to the general public, an interactive web site allowed for worldwide participation and encouraged NGOs, youth, the media and the general public to join the discussions before, during and after the Conference. The web site: <http://www.undpingoconference.org> also offered links to related documents, along with the ability to view live webcasts of the panel discussions.

Jan Egeland, UN Under-Secretary General for Humanitarian Affairs and UN Emergency Relief Coordinator was one of two keynote speakers who opened the Conference. Noting that technologically we have achieved much in terms of our ability to meet the huge humanitarian and development challenges of our day, he added that this is not enough. “We need to wake up public opinion and wake up decision makers throughout the world... We need to match this technical revolution with a similar moral and political revolution so that these resources can reach everyone—all those who suffer, all those in need.”

The second keynote speaker of the opening session, Wahu Kaara, Ecumenical Program Coordinator for the MDGs at the Africa Council of Churches, based in Nairobi, and one of the founders of the Global Call to Action against Poverty (comprising some 15,000 organizations), clarified the task ahead: “It is obvious that we as a civilization are at a critical juncture that calls upon us to rethink our destiny.... We must wake up to poverty because there will be no excuse by 2015.... The world is a shared heritage.... The time has come when *we have to free ourselves.*” Identifying poverty as a ‘created scarcity’, she pointed out that it couldn't be eradicated without a comprehensive

development program. Development can only come from society and has to be sustainable economic and social development. She ended by saying that it's important to acknowledge that we created poverty and realize that we have a choice to shift from this paradigm and create plenty for all! Joseph Donnelly, Chair of the 58th Annual DPI/NGO Conference spoke from his heart when he said, "This Conference is not about us...(it) is about acknowledging, uplifting, sustaining and investing further in the awesome capacities of others...the countless others...peoples, nations, villages, cities, families, communities and more.... We must be the peace we seek. We must be the partners we seek. We must be the renewal we promote.... Our answers must be at least as great in actions as our questions and challenges to governments and the UN itself."

In our current world of shared threats and opportunities, everyone has a vested interest in overcoming obstacles to security, human rights and development, thus global cooperation among all States is crucial to ensure that people everywhere enjoy freedom from want, freedom from fear and freedom to live in dignity. The first panel session *In Larger Freedom: The Challenge of Partnerships* looked at the efforts of governments, global corporations, and civil society to build capacity in developing countries, promote political stability and good governance, and encourage innovative solutions to common problems.

The distinguished Anwarul Chowdhury, UN High Representative for Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Least Developed Countries & Small Island Developing States, moderated another panel, *A Focus on Human Development: Implementing the MDGs*, which focused on respect for human rights as the driving force behind peace, security and development. It highlighted the role of NGOs in implementing the MDGs at the national and international level. Diana Medman, Founder and Chairperson of the Russian Women's Microfinance Network (RWMN) and Co-founder and Director of AO Bioprocess in Russia explained how in contrast to charity, microfinance proved to be a qualitative leap, as it introduced a totally different mentality, one that brings about motivation and initiative, stimulating people to self-development, creativity and entrepreneurship. RWMN is proof that micro-lending and social, as well as environmental, responsibility work in the business place to reduce poverty. Over the last 6 years, by official government statistics, the number of Russians below the poverty level dropped from 60% to 40%.

A Dialogue: The Future of the United Nations was followed by three roundtables on envisioning a secure world, eradicating poverty, and the United Nations and civil society. Referring to a statement made by the chief scientific adviser to the British Prime Minister that 'climate change is a greater threat to humanity than terrorism, and no less urgent', Felicity Hill of Greenpeace International made the point that the real question is whether political change can keep up with the pace of climate change fast enough to protect the security of our planet. Identifying the development and existence of nuclear weapons as the 'ultimate insecurity' and 'an embarrassing lapse in human evolution that threatens our very existence', she also pointed out that the Security Council had yet to fulfill a job it was given 60 years ago; that 'the real MDG' is in a forgotten part of the UN Charter—Article 26, which requires that the Security Council develop a plan for the least diversion of human and economic resources to armaments. To the contrary, the Security Council permanent members have been a part of arms races and weapons profiteering. Ms. Hill emphasized that Article 26 is the best development and conflict prevention mechanism ever devised. Because *it can be done* [nuclear disarmament, and slowing down climate change] and because there are opportunities for change today that won't exist tomorrow, she advised that we *get on with it!*

Speaking on "Poverty and Conflict: Our Collective Responsibility in a Global Village" Anne O'Mahony of Concern Worldwide said, "The link between poverty and violence is a given. The root causes lie in inequality and the absence or abuse of human rights. Violence has a synergistic effect

on poverty. Not only is violence a result of poverty, but absolute poverty creates a sense of hopelessness which in turn creates an environment which is conducive to a growth in violence.”

On the topic of UN reform, many Conference participants suggested that there appeared to be a gap in the collective memory regarding the premise on which the UN was first built. Ms. O’Mahony alluded to this as well: “The UN was founded on the determination of nations to save succeeding generations from war, to advance human rights and equality, and to paraphrase the Secretary General, to promote better standards of life in larger freedom.... The reforms are a holistic package. They are based on the recognition that without development there will be no security, without security there will be no development, and without respect for human rights there will be neither.” The establishment of a Peacebuilding Commission and the proposed smaller Human Rights Council to replace the existing Commission of Human Rights are key points of importance. She closed by urging small nations to stand together to prevent the dominance by a few (also emphasized by several other speakers at the conference) and to ‘be a positive influence, to enable the global good to take precedence over perceived national interests’.

In addition to the 7 plenary sessions and 3 roundtables, there were 30 Midday Interactive Workshops sponsored by NGO partnerships and coalitions from around the world with participation by governments, intergovernmental organizations and civil society representatives. The themes of the workshops focused on four sectors of the Secretary-General’s Report: Freedom from Want (two sessions), Freedom from Fear, Freedom to Live in Dignity, and Strengthening the United Nations. The Conference also provided thematic networking sessions for NGO representatives.

Underscoring the need for partnership at the UN was a statement in the Conference program by Secretary-General Kofi Annan, “Civil society is the world’s superpower. Partnership between the United Nations and civil society is not an option, but a necessity.” In light of the General Assembly Informal Hearings with Civil Society in June, as well as the Millennium +5 NGO Network of NGOs formally associated with the United Nations, the Conference provided a platform for NGOs to contribute to the 2005 World Summit and beyond. In an unusual effort on behalf of the participants of the this Conference to make sure every voice was heard, the Conference attendees put forth the following “Call to Action” which was delivered to the Member States on the eve of the World Summit:

We, the hundreds of NGOs meeting at the UN today, urge at this crucial time in the world’s need for security, peace and development, that you embrace the larger vision of the UN to benefit all the people of the world. We urge you to yield narrow interests and to work with each other for real change, expressed in concrete terms in the 2005 World Summit Outcomes Document. Please do not squander this important opportunity.

Speaking to NGO representatives and civil society members in a room, which was so silent you could hear a pin drop, the Secretary General closed the conference by expressing gratitude, “You and they may never be fully of one mind, and that’s probably as it should be. But at least you are beginning to hear, understand and appreciate each other better, and that is no small thing. We must continue this dialogue.... You all have a key role to play. You must make yourselves the guardians of the reform of the international system... What really matters is what happens out there, in the world and on the ground...you give true meaning to the phrase *we the peoples*.... I count on your support in the crucial time ahead.”

For further information on the 58th Annual DPI/NGO Conference, please visit <http://unngodpiconference.org/>.

Iris Spellings, OPTU Representative to the UN NGO/DPI

(Note: Information from UN press releases was used in this article.)

Technological development has altered the basis for diplomatic action. Just as the diplomat of today must rule out war as an instrument of policy, so he must recognize that in the new state of interdependence between nations, war anywhere becomes the concern of all. The intricate web of relationships which now exist have as part of their basis the new means of communication which have overnight made our world so much smaller than it was in previous generations. News also reaches us from all corners of the globe almost as quickly as if we were eyewitnesses. We are parties to an action practically at the very moment it is undertaken. The nerve signals from a wound are felt at once through the body of mankind.

Dag Hammarskjöld, October 1953 (quote from *UN Chronicle*, No 12 2005) website; www.un.org/Pubs/chronicle/2005/alert/103005_un60.html

III. Water For Life 2005 – 2015

On World Water Day, 22 March 2005, the International Decade for Action, Water for Life 2005-2010, was launched in accordance with the UN General Assembly resolution A/RES/58/217. The Assembly called for the highest priority to be given to freshwater problems facing many regions. One fifth of the world's people still do not have access to safe drinking water. It is estimated that by 2025 two thirds of humanity will face water shortages.

The United Nations University's International Network on Water, Environment and Health (UNU/INWEH) was created in 1996 with core funding from the Canadian Government.

UNU/INWEH works with developing countries to strengthen the knowledge, local know-how and institutional capacity needed to improve access to safe water.

The Network brings a multidisciplinary, ecosystem-based approach to water and watershed research and management, and operates on the philosophy that four inter-related abilities are essential for sustainable stewardship: ***to educate and train; to measure and understand aquatic systems; to legislate, regulate and achieve compliance; to provide infrastructure, services and products.***

UNU/INWEH seeks partnership with individuals, agencies, institutions and enterprises with compatible interests and capabilities.

Contact: E-mail: contact@inweh.unu.edu website www.inweh.unu.edu

IV. 2006 – International Year of Deserts & Desertification

Steve Nation

A new year brings with it a new point of focus in the international calendar. During the past 12 months the United Nations has been drawing attention to three themes for the year 2005: microcredit;

physics; and sport & physical education. 2006 is to be observed as International Year of Deserts and Desertification.

The goal is to shine a light on the serious crisis of *desertification*. The dictionary tells us that this refers to the *process of making or becoming a desert* and further adds that a desert is *a dry barren often sand-covered area of land, characteristically desolate, waterless and without vegetation*. The dictionary also notes that *desertification* can refer to *an uninteresting or barren subject, period etc. (a cultural desert)*. So there is a rich field of symbolism and metaphor to be found in the theme, relating the desertification of the environment to an accompanying process of culture and of heart.

The environmental crisis of desertification is an issue that we all need to think deeply about because it is one of the clearest signs of the impact that our collective behaviour is having on the planet, as well as on the lives of people, animals and plants. One third of the planet's surface is made up of arid regions. These are to be found in over a hundred countries. In addition to deserts these lands include vast areas where soils and habitat are vulnerable, requiring great sensitivity in farming practices in order to provide food for local people. Yet growing urban populations together with global economic forces driven by export markets mean that time-honoured farming skills are being replaced by aggressive agriculture: over-grazing, bad irrigation practices, inappropriate use of chemical fertilizers. Poverty gives farmers little choice but to follow the path of unsustainable, short-term 'development' of the finely balanced fertility of the soils. This is happening at a time when climate change is causing unprecedented droughts and water shortages.

There is a clear pattern emerging – more and more of the land in arid regions is becoming desert. Over six billion hectares of agricultural land is lost to deserts each year, with farming communities losing their livelihoods – and breaking with traditions of living off the land that have sustained generations of families. In the past 50 years the Sahara has spread southwards to cover an extra 65 million hectares. In the process vulnerable soils and habitat are degraded and much of the diversity of the plants and wildlife of the region are being lost. It is a silent emergency that we all need to be more aware of so creative, positive response can be demanded and supported.

There are many success stories where desertification has been reversed, giving evidence to sustain our reserves of hope and optimism. On a global level the issue is under constant international negotiation through the UN Convention to Combat Desertification. To find out more about the Convention, and the International Year, check out the web: www.unccd.int. On the more local front you can find news of a range of positive stories at: <http://www.unccd.int/publicinfo/localcommunities/stories.php>. For added inspiration check out how the Auroville community in South India planted so many trees that they have changed the climate: <http://www.auroville.org/environment.htm>

The second theme of the Year focuses on desert environments and the peoples who live in them. We think of deserts, like the Sahara (which covers 8% of the world's land area), as being wilderness without life. They do provide precious wild spaces on the planet, where people are not so dominant. Yet we may be surprised to learn that 13% of the world's population live in deserts and that the Sahara is home to an estimated 1,200 species of plants. These figures and more are from Oxfam's excellent feature on deserts at: <http://www.oxfam.org.uk/coolplanet/ontheline/explore/nature/deserts/deserts.htm>

There is surely a link between the desertification of consciousness and culture in our time and the impact we are having on the earth, turning marginally fertile lands into desert. This bears some thought. For the desert experience plays a significant role in the literature and mythology of spirituality. In part it is recognition of an aridity of heart and of enchantment with the beauty of life which leads to the conscious choice to seek out new ways of being and transformation. Aridity leads to the quest for delight. And there is clearly a sense in which the environmental crisis is doing this for humanity – forcing us individually and collectively to dig deep into our reserves of mind and heart in search of a meaning and purpose, a love and vision that will enable us to step up to the challenge of healing of the earth. In spiritual terms this is the initiatory challenge facing our societies. It is what is driving evolution at this time, pushing us as a species to grow and be rooted in our sense of the interdependence and unity of life.

To see deserts as part of the human ‘shadow’ would seem to be an error. For deserts play a vital role in human experience and in the life of the planet. They are to be respected. They offer some of the most challenging environments for human beings, requiring an authenticity and simplicity and a lifestyle that is intimately tied to the landscape - life cannot be lived as if the natural world were irrelevant or apart. In spirituality the desert experience is sometimes chosen because of its silence, marking a time of retreat from the human world; and because of the opportunities it provides for single-minded focus on ‘the quest’. There is, perhaps, a need to be aware of the desertification of ones inner life (and of the inner life of a culture) before there can be a genuine turning towards and choice for life, beauty, delight and diversity.

In an insightful paper *Thinking About Deserts*, Angela Lemaire writes:

The times are urgent today. We surely are in danger of dying in the wasteland. We are all in this together now, it is global, and this is a journey that humanity as a whole is undergoing. Although this is a slow process, the time is ripe today, and appropriate, to do something about the increasing desertification of the environment which so accurately reflects the inner void. There has been a growing momentum of awareness which probably began as long ago as the early twentieth century. Today there are many more people, and groups, with an enlightened consciousness with regard to our ecological responsibilities - not to mention our political and cultural ones - than there were, say fifty years ago. This must speak volumes for our inner landscape. We are addressing the outer crisis gradually, though of course, not nearly enough, and far too slowly, and yet this must be good, for it means our inner voids, our inner deserts, are beginning to bloom.

V. The International Education and Resource Network of Sierra Leone

The Sierra Leone chapter of the International Education and Resource Network (IEARN) was founded in 1999 on the initiative of Andrew Benson Greene. Since its launch IEARN Sierra Leone has become a catalyst for bringing education to the young people of the country, using information

communication technology and psychosocial rehabilitation to help restore health and hope to children whose lives have been devastated by war, in particular child soldiers.

Mr. Greene, International Programs Director of IEARN Sierra Leone and a Suave Scholar, McGill University Canada, sent Peace through Unity an article entitled *Elements of Terrorism Can be Groomed At Early Age*, and the following are some excerpts and quotes from his article:

“The recruitment of child soldiers around the world can be a breeding ground for terrorism. Whilst children are in themselves terrorized by violence, they continue to be dangerous to the lives of others when conscripted as child soldiers, and forced to even turn their guns against their very parents, families and friends upon whose survival their welfare once depended.”

“I remembered that my country was locked in the quizzical position of beauty, wealth, brutality and poverty, which existed side by side in a decade of war that has now completely ended. The sustained peaceful pace and democracy in Sierra Leone today has ushered in a new glimmer of hope to stop the drafting of children into soldiers. It is my wish that this will be a shining example in other dozens of countries around the globe today.”

“I came to North America, as a research scholar at McGill’s Scholars Program, and realized that these issues and problems affecting children used in armed conflict have not been granted the full attention it deserves in this part of the world. I knew that Canada’s strategic place in the world, its history and record of human rights and peace can be a powerful pedestal for me to launch my campaigns to calm the rough tides of warfare in which children were adrift... In my inquiry, I had the chance to speak with a group of sensitized students who believed that they can join in my efforts to help make a better place for the children of the world.”

Having seen children change dramatically for the worse and the problems of small arms readily available falling into their hands, Mr. Greene is resolved to help transform “tragedy into positive elements on which children’s lives can be made whole again”.

For children and youth who survived wars and hostilities as child soldiers, a long-term process of reinstating them into society remain a mammoth task, says Andrew Greene. Alternatives to involving children in armed conflict must be found to help them resume life in the community, by teaching them to be responsible, and discover their talents and inherent strength. “This re-integration and rehabilitation process will mean the provision of not only relief and food, but also education and training on all fronts, psycho-social support, and appropriate strategies for economic livelihood”.

This has been Mr. Green’s major pre-occupation for the last six years, using the power of educational telecommunications technology tools: “IEARN’s incredible global learning network has inspired such trans-border and trans-cultural online interaction of youth from Sierra Leone and around the world.” It is Mr. Greene’s hope that this network of young people exchanging peaceful ideas (like creating “No War Zones”) and concerns for human rights “will usher in world peace in the near future”.

“I feel strongly that all of us can help to stop the use of child soldiers and that we must no longer be silent about it, as the elements of terrorism can be groomed at such an early age.”

Andrew Greene concludes his article with a quote from an interview with a McGill University student on this subject who stated that: “If we don’t fight to stop child soldiers, we are basically promising ourselves that there will be child soldiers in the future and that will be a poor future for all of us.”

Contact: Andrew Benson Greene, e-mail: andrewgreene_c21st@iearnsierraleone.org
Website: www.iearnsierraleone.org

VI. Re-committing to World Programme of Action for Youth

Ten years ago the UN General Assembly adopted a “World Programme of Action for Youth to the Year 2000 and Beyond” (A/RES/50/81), and in 2005 the UN has re-committed itself to continue the work specified in the resolution’s 10 priority areas: *education; employment; hunger and poverty; health; environment; drug abuse; juvenile delinquency; leisure time activities; girls and young women; and full and effective participation in society and in decision-making.*

Of the 2.8 billion young people under 25 today over 200 million are living in poverty, 130 million are illiterate, 88 million unemployed and 10 million living with HIV/AIDS.

The Outreach Division of the UN Department of Public Information and the Millennium Campaign have jointly created a new website for youth which not only provides a comprehensive source of information to youth but also includes content written by youth from around the world on actions they have taken to achieve the Millennium Development Goals. The website (accessible at www.millenniumcampaign.org/youth) aims to become a place where youth can learn about the issues that concern the world today, express their ideas, and find inspiration and encouragement for involvement in building a better local and global community.

The Outreach Division of UNDP’s main objective is to build a global online community of teachers and students, to make the issues the United Nations deals with more accessible to young people, and to provide opportunities for them to participate in finding solutions to global problems. This is done through making available materials for schools around the world about the UN, its achievements and the social issues on its agenda on www.cyberschoolbus.un.org. - or e-mail: yotive@un.org

VII. Peacebuilding: The UN, National Governments and NGOs – A Multi-layered Approach

Rene Wadlow

The French Prime Minister during the First World War, George Clemenceau, said that “War is too important to be left only to the generals.” Likewise, peacemaking is too important for it to be left only to the political leaders who had created the violence in the first place. Thus, there has to be movements and efforts beyond and outside the parties in conflict to help bring about negotiations and a climate in which peace measures are possible.

The recent United Nations Summit meeting in New York – the largest gathering of heads of state and government – had a double task. The first was to re-affirm the poverty-reduction goals that had been agreed to in September 2000 and which are generally known as the Millennium Development Goals. The basic aim is the reduction of poverty, especially through the strengthening of institutions providing a prerequisite for poverty reduction: education, health, employment, debt relief, and a healthy environment. There is a broad intellectual agreement on the aims and the methodology. This reaffirmation is contained in the “Outcome Document” but there is little sense of need for a new drive to reach these goals in all parts of the world. As with many UN statements, there is a high level of abstraction which needs to be incarnated in specific situations. Unfortunately, there was no agreement on disarmament issues, and so the draft section on disarmament and nuclear weapons was just dropped from the final document.

The second task of the Summit was to reach agreement on certain modifications of UN structures to be able to carry out better the issues assigned to the UN. The enlargement of the UN Security Council to reflect the power relations of today and the transformation of the UN Commission on Human Rights into a smaller, more effective body, a Human Rights Council, were the most widely discussed. There is, as yet, no agreement on how these reforms will be carried out.

Also proposed in the series of reforms is the creation of a Peacebuilding Commission. The idea of a Commission arises from repeated experiences underlined by the old saying “out of sight, out of mind.” Once a conflict is no longer in danger of spreading, it is taken off the “international agenda”. There is usually a short period of good will and funds for relief, but the interest of national decision-makers is displaced by another crisis. There needs to be long-term efforts and observation, for there is often fire in the embers, and conflicts can flame up again.

The Peacebuilding Commission will be an advisory body. We will have to see what structure it takes and what facilities for relations with non-governmental organizations are created.

From the quality of the governmental discussions, which are still going on, I would suggest that the creative drive of governments is limited and that now “the ball is in the court” of those of us in non-governmental organizations to find ways of being able to be active in a speedy and timely way in conflict situations, to analyze and respond to conflicts in constructive and creative ways. The NGLS Development Dossier mentioned in the last “Many to Many”, Tobi P. Dress “Designing a Peacebuilding Infrastructure” (npls@unctad.org) provides a good overview and merits close study.

Rene Wadlow is editor of the on-line journal of world politics: www.transnational-perspectives.org

VIII. Definition on Terrorism?

In order to provide the UN with ‘moral authority’ to fight against terrorism, the High-level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change has come up with a proposal to define terrorism which is as follows: ***“any action that is intended to cause death or serious bodily harm to civilians or non-combatants, when the purpose of such an act, by its nature or context, is to intimidate a population, or to compel a Government or an international organization to do or to abstain from doing any act, cannot be justified on any grounds and constitutes an act of terrorism”!*** Any other proposals for a definition on Terrorism?

IX. PEOPLE'S SUMMIT FOR DEPARTMENTS OF PEACE London, United Kingdom – 18 and 19 October, 2005

This first People's Summit for Departments of Peace was organized and sponsored by:

1. The UK based *ministry for peace (mfp)*, whose motto is "Putting Power into Peace – Peace into Power". mfp was launched in the House of Commons on 1st July 2003, and in October the same year Labour MP John McDonnell introduced a Ten-Minute Rule Bill for the creation of a Ministry for Peace in government. The Bill was passed unopposed but fell due to lack of time at the end of the Parliamentary session. mfp has since its launch held sixteen public meetings; it is managed by a National Coordinating Committee and has an increasing membership throughout the country. In its Manifesto for Peace mfp identifies three main aspects of violence: direct violence is the physical or verbal violence most people recognize; structural violence refers to political, social and economic structures that repress, harm or kill (dictatorship, racial discrimination, poverty..); cultural violence is the type of violence normalized by religions or ideologies.. (www.ministryforpeace.org.uk)
2. The Canadian *Working Group for a Federal Department of Peace*, also founded in 2003, is gaining increasing support from prominent Canadian leaders, academics and NGOs as well as from the rank-and-file of Canadians throughout the country. The main aim of such a department would be to work for the implementation of the UN Declaration and Programme of Action for a Culture of Peace. (www.departmentofpeacecanada.com)
3. *The Peace Alliance Foundation*, USA aims 'to reveal and foster an expanded awareness of humanity's interconnectedness manifesting our culture of peace'. Thousands of citizens in 43 states with over 230 congressional district team leaders are working together to build support for a federal cabinet-level Department of Peace, which would serve to strengthen and support non-violent solutions to domestic and international conflicts by addressing the underlying root causes of violence in society. It would also work towards the establishment of a national peace academy. (www.peacealliancefound.org)

The sponsors stated in their invitation to the People's Peace Summit that the meeting would be held 'in the spirit of the United Nations General Assembly's Declaration and Programme of Action on a Culture of Peace (A/RES/52/13)' and its main aim be to 'strengthen and grow the international movement for a culture of peace and for government departments of peace and ministries for peace through:

- *Building a global network of, and a sense of community among, country-level campaigns*
- *Developing coordinated strategies for strengthening and financing country-level campaigns and for encouraging the establishment of campaigns in other countries.'*

Forty people from twelve countries attended the UK People's Peace Summit, who also participated in the 2-day training which included insights into the latest methodologies

and developments on conflict transformation and peacebuilding. Both the Summit and the training programme were facilitated by Kai Frithjof Brand-Jacobsen, founder and director of the Peace Action, Training and Research Institute of Romania (PATRIR) and co-director of Transcend. (<http://www.transcend.org/>)

The Summit deliberations resulted in the launch of an ongoing partnership for global action, the People's Initiative for Departments of Peace, and ended with a public meeting in the Grand Committee Room in the Houses of Parliament, where a Declaration was presented to Labour MP John McDonnell, with the following text:

First People's Summit for Departments of Peace.

London, 19 October 2005

Today, we announce the launch of an international initiative for the creation of Departments of Peace in governments throughout the world.

Violence of all kinds is increasing.

There is an urgent need to find responsible solutions, expanding on past and present peace-building successes.

This international initiative will both provide resources and support for existing national Department of Peace campaigns, and assist new ones as they appear in other countries:

To foster a culture of peace;

To research, articulate and help bring about non-violent solutions to conflicts at all levels;
and

To provide resources for training in peace-building and conflict transformation to people everywhere.

We, the undersigned, joyfully vow to support and encourage each other, to share information, to enrich each other's experience, to listen to one another and to celebrate our commonalities and differences in our journey together towards a culture of peace.

Department of Peace, Australia.

Working Group for a Federal Department of Peace, Canada
ministry for peace, United Kingdom

The Peace Alliance, Campaigning for a US Department of Peace, United States of America
Delegation from Israel

Binnie D'egli Innocenti, WWGHM, Italy

Federation of Damanhur, Italy

Global Peace Campaign, Working for a Ministry of Peace in Japan

Ank Mesritz, House of Peace, Netherlands

Paul van Tongeren, European Centre for Conflict Prevention, Netherlands

Zoughbi Zoughbi, WI'AM, Palestinian Conflict Resolution Centre, Palestine

Romanian Department of Peace Initiative

Jo Berry, Building Bridges for Peace, United Kingdom

Rolf C. Carriere
Simonetta Costanzo Pittalug

The Second People's Peace Summit for Departments of Peace will take place in Canada, hosted by the Working Group for a Federal Department of Peace, 21-22 June 2006, in Victoria, British Columbia, immediately prior to the World Peace Forum in Vancouver.

X. 2004 State of the Future – the Millennium Project Report

In 1996 the American Council for the United Nations University (AC/UNU) established the Millennium Project, for the purpose of serving as “*an international utility to assist in organizing futures research by continuously updating and improving humanity's thinking about the future and making that thinking available for feedback as a geographically and institutionally dispersed think tank.*”

Through regional “Nodes” (each consisting of groups of individuals and institutions) – 25 in all – scholars, futurists, business planners, scientists, and decision makers who work for governments, private corporations, NGOs, universities, and international organizations are brought together from around the world to identify the issues, opportunities and challenges of the world, the result of which is subsequently published in a yearly report.

The 2004 State of the Future report, launched in August this year, has identified 15 Global Challenges facing the world in the 21st century:

1. *How can sustainable development be achieved for all?*
2. *How can everyone have sufficient clean water without conflict?*
3. *How can population growth and resources be brought into balance?*
4. *How can genuine democracy emerge from authoritarian regimes?*
5. *How can policymaking be made more sensitive to global long-term perspectives?*
6. *How can the global convergence of information and communication technologies work for everyone?*
7. *How can ethical market economies be encouraged to help reduce the gap between rich and poor?*
8. *How can the threat of new and re-emerging diseases and immune micro-organisms be reduced?*
9. *How can the capacity to decide be improved as the nature of work and institutions change?*
10. *How can shared values and new security strategies reduce ethnic conflicts, terrorism, and the use of weapons of mass destruction?*
11. *How can the changing status of women help improve the human condition?*

12. *How can transnational organized crime networks be stopped from becoming more powerful and sophisticated global enterprises?*
13. *How can growing energy demands be met safely and efficiently?*
14. *How can scientific and technological breakthroughs be accelerated to improve the human condition?*
15. *How can ethical considerations become more routinely incorporated into global decisions?*

The executive summary of the report points out that although these challenges are transnational in nature and transinstitutional in solution, and will require ‘collaborative action among governments, international organizations, corporations, universities, and NGOs’, such transinstitutional mechanisms to focus these global actors are missing. The report stresses that the Challenges are interdependent: an improvement in one makes it easier to address others; deterioration in one makes it harder to address others, and underscores this point by saying that: “***Arguing whether one is more important than another is like arguing that the human nervous system is more important than the respiratory system.*** “

Among the issues explored in the report are:

- The worldwide race to connect everything not yet connected is just beginning
- The sheer number and intricacy of choices seems to be growing beyond our abilities to analyze and make decisions in the old ways
- The annual gross income of organized crime is more than twice that of all military expenditure worldwide
- As science and technology are growing so rapidly along several fronts, the possibility of them growing beyond human control must now be taken seriously
- Improving the status of women is one of the most cost effective ways of addressing global challenges discussed in the report.

More information on the State of the Future, and on the CD, containing a comprehensive overview of each of the Global Challenges, regional views and other relevant information are available at www.acunu.org/millennium/lookout.html .

XI. The Great Invocation in English & Maori

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.

TE INOINGA NUI

Na te maramatanga kei te
Ngakau o Te Atua
Kia koha te maramatanga ki te
Ngakau o te tangata
Kia koha te maramatanga ki te ao

Na te aroha kei te ngakau
O Te Atua
Ki horapa te aroha ki te
Ngakau o te tangata
Kia hoki mai ano te Karaiti
Ki te ao

Na te mauri o Te Atua
Kia marama te haere a te tangata
I te huarahi o Te Atua

Na roto mai I te Tangata
Ma te maramatanga me te aroha
Tatau e arahi
A ma tenei e pa kuaha ki te Kino

Ma te Maramatanga,
Ma te Aroha,
Ma te Kaha e whakau
Te whakaaro nui te ao