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TRUST AND INTEGRITY FOR A SUSTAINABLE WORLD



INTERNATIONAL CAUX CONFERENCES 2009 **REPORT**



Initiatives of Change



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In 1946, the former Caux-Palace Hotel in the Swiss village of Caux opened its doors to the world as an international conference centre for Initiatives of Change (then known as Moral Re-Armament). Sixty-three years on, the Caux assembly drew 1246 people from 71 countries, from all walks of life and cultural backgrounds.

The 2009 Caux programme consisted of a series of conferences and workshops, each covered in this report:

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BECOMING MORE ENGAGED CITIZENS OF THE PLANET

by **Rajmohan Gandhi**
President: *Initiatives of Change International*

Since 1946, every summer and many a winter has seen conferences and dialogues in Caux which restore trust and goodwill between divided camps, and strengthen the integrity of individuals and institutions. At times it happened that a reconciliation in Caux between two estranged individuals became the foundation for the building of national or even regional unity.

Built in 1902 to cater to the rich and famous, only to fall bankrupt during the Great Depression, the Second World War saw the former Caux-Palace Hotel sheltering internees and refugees. The building was acquired after the war by Swiss, active in what is now *Initiatives of Change*, to serve as a venue for conferences and dialogues that might help bring peace to our world.

At the heart of these meetings was a simple idea: that people should be willing to look at their own hearts to see if any prejudice or resentment or greed lurking there was making them part of the world's problems, rather than making them part of a solution. This looking in also has a corollary: to be ready to reach out, including to a seeming enemy.

Today we are living in an over-loaded, abused, and kicked-around planet. Much of the world's population faces hardship and insecurity as a result of the economic plunge, environmental degradation, violence and intimidation, or combinations of all these factors. In parts of the world there are countless women, men and children, trapped between insurgents and armies, who fear what the next hour or the next minute might bring.

We don't nurse the illusion that these Caux conferences will, by themselves, make a significant dent on our world's violence, corruption, or poverty. But we know that among the participants were individuals bold enough to search for fresh approaches. Through the experiences shared and the time spent in quiet reflection, helped by the unique landscape and atmosphere of Caux, I hope that these individuals may have been encouraged or even inspired.

Some may be in a position to influence governments. Most of us can only influence ourselves. That, however, is not such a poor start, for we now live in the age of the citizen. Our encounters in Caux encourage us to become more engaged citizens of the planet and remind us:

- that we are all the same underneath,
- that no nation or race in the world is superior and none inferior,
- that we must never allow ourselves to blame a people, any people, for the problems we face,
- that the world's weak, vulnerable, kicked-around and abused people have to be our first concern,
- that our rivers, trees, and snow caps are appealing to us, and
- that citizens united across boundaries can make a difference.

Many wrong things happen in the world, but some right things happen too. Any of us can do or say something that triggers an unexpected initiative – perhaps to bring people together or turn a politician into a statesman. An inspired thought that is shared may influence the story of our times.

CAUX FORUM for HUMAN SECURITY

TOWARDS A GLOBAL COALITION OF CONSCIENCE


Conference:
Caux Forum for Human Security
17-22 July, 2009
Report by Mary Lean, UK

As Sudan's first woman Governor, her people's security is a daily concern for Jemma Kumba. Her state, Western Equatoria, suffers constant incursions from the Ugandan rebel group, the Lord's Resistance Army, which have displaced thousands and disrupted relief operations. Kumba grapples daily with the wider challenges posed by poverty, environmental degradation, intercommunal relations and good governance – the issues behind the concept of 'human security', which sees peace as much more than the absence of conflict.

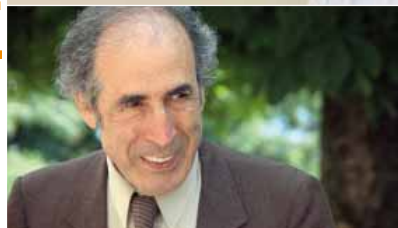
Kumba was one of a group of nine politicians from Southern Sudan, led by Vice-President Riek Machar Teny Dhourgon, who took part in the Caux Forum for Human Security in July. They joined politicians, officials of international agencies, academics and activists from other countries in five days of panel discussions, workshops and presentations aimed, in the words of a Pakistani federal minister, at forging a 'global coalition of conscience'.

The Forum offered myriad opportunities for cross-sectoral exchanges – as climate experts talked to peace workers, politicians from crisis areas met European business leaders, students met elder statesmen. Alongside the main programme, a group of 50 from India and Pakistan met for frank, and private, exchanges about the issues dividing their countries, as did a small high-level group from Israel and Palestine.

Caux's beautiful setting made it the perfect place, according to the Executive Director of the National Peace Council of Sri Lanka, Jehan Perera, 'for participants to reflect on weighty issues, and yet find peace of mind'. This was certainly the case for Kumba, who told the final meeting, 'I leave Caux with a



*Governor Kumba from Sudan:
'My trauma has been reduced...
I leave Caux with a new thinking,
a new mind, new ideas.'*



*Sahnoun: 'This crisis is a wake-up
call to all of us'*



*Teenagers organizing to
fight climate change*

new thinking, a new mind, new ideas. As a person who has been traumatized by conflict throughout my life, the level of my trauma has been reduced because I met a friend who listened to my story.'

The Forum was opened by Prince Hassan of Jordan, who in his keynote speech described 2009 as the 'cusp for changing our mindset' (see page 6). Mohamed Sahnoun, initiator of the Caux Forums for Human Security, said that participants had left the first Forum, last year, 'with great hope'. Then the financial crisis had erupted, underlining the urgency of the debate. The resulting rise in food prices had plunged an additional 75 million people beneath the hunger threshold.

'The link between international security and global poverty is quite obvious,' said Sahnoun. 'We need to go to the heart of the question of how to revive and extend multilateral solidarity in a globalizing world. This crisis is a wake-up call to all of us, with the hope that hard times can become spiritually good times. We need to reassess our premises and revisit our values as members of the human family.'

As the Forum worked through its four themes – the economic challenge, climate change, good governance and intercultural dialogue – common imperatives emerged. How to combat poverty in a world where 'greed is constantly privileged over need' and where climate change is most devastating for those who are least responsible for global warming? How to empower citizens and make governments accountable? How to use the present crisis as an opportunity to create a more equitable world rather than as an excuse to

50 from India and Pakistan:
*'The experts were extremely candid.
That raised hopes that disputes could
be resolved.'*



Israelis and Jordanians: partnership on water reclamation

fall back on narrow self-interest? How to respond to the 'time bomb' of climate change before it goes out of control?

The panel discussions offered a bracing blend of trenchant analysis and personal experience. A former cabinet minister from India attacked the West's readiness to give 'mind-boggling sums' to enable those who had created the financial crisis to regain a position from which they could 'cause the problem once again'. A former cabinet minister from Pakistan maintained that the international community was too ready to turn a blind eye to elected leaders who ignored democratic values. A Congolese politician attacked the venality of African leaders and appealed for support in strengthening the grassroots of society.

One of the speakers, Osman Jama Ali, had been a minister in the military regime of Muhammed Siad Barre, which plunged Somalia into 18 years of statelessness and un-governability. 'Although initially supported by the people, the regime became arrogant, corrupt and came to rule without the consent of the people. For my part in this, I have publicly asked forgiveness from my fellow countrymen.' He had learnt, he said, that the key to good governance was the trust of the people and had put forward a proposal for a system which he believed would encourage political stability for Somalia.

Lucy Nusseibeh, Director of Middle East Non-violence and Democracy (MEND), spoke of the trauma and polarization of Israelis and Palestinians, and of her work in Palestine. There was a problem, she said, in dwelling on wrongs and suffering. 'It is only by looking in the mirror and by awareness and

Professional hate-mongers would benefit from a visit to Caux, listening to the growing voice of moderation and reconciliation rather than pontificating on jihad or crusade. Caux is also an ideal venue for the incorrigibly parochial South Asians. They would have an opportunity to accept for a few days, if not for ever, that Kashmir is not the only issue. They would get a firsthand account of the current state of play in Palestine, Sudan, Jaffna, climate change, the economic challenge and generally about the rising need for a global culture of dialogue and understanding.

Jawed Naqvi, Dawn, Karachi

acknowledgement of our own wrongdoing, the fact that we are perpetrators as well as victims, that we can create space for deeper dialogue and true understanding and pave the way for peace.'

Others who were taking practical action included Ruthie Gopin and Felix Finkbeiner, aged 13 and 11, who had each set up organizations to encourage action to fight climate change. Aisha Khan from Pakistan told how, after 35 years as an embassy wife, she had set up an NGO which is reducing the pollution left by expeditions in the mountains of Pakistan and which has rebuilt three health centres and 18 schools destroyed by the 2005 earthquakes in Kashmir. Lior Carmieli and Kassim Dwairi, from Israel and Jordan, described their partnership to develop water reclamation schemes for Jordan, where extreme shortages have led to water rationing.

In an article for an Indian periodical, Jehan Perera described the Forum as 'a testament to the idealistic element in society that has existed down the ages, the light of a darkened world, striving for the better world that is constantly in the process of being made, and prepared for the self sacrifices this process entails. Many drop by the wayside in exhaustion, many are disheartened and wish to give up, but the majority keep to their mission.'

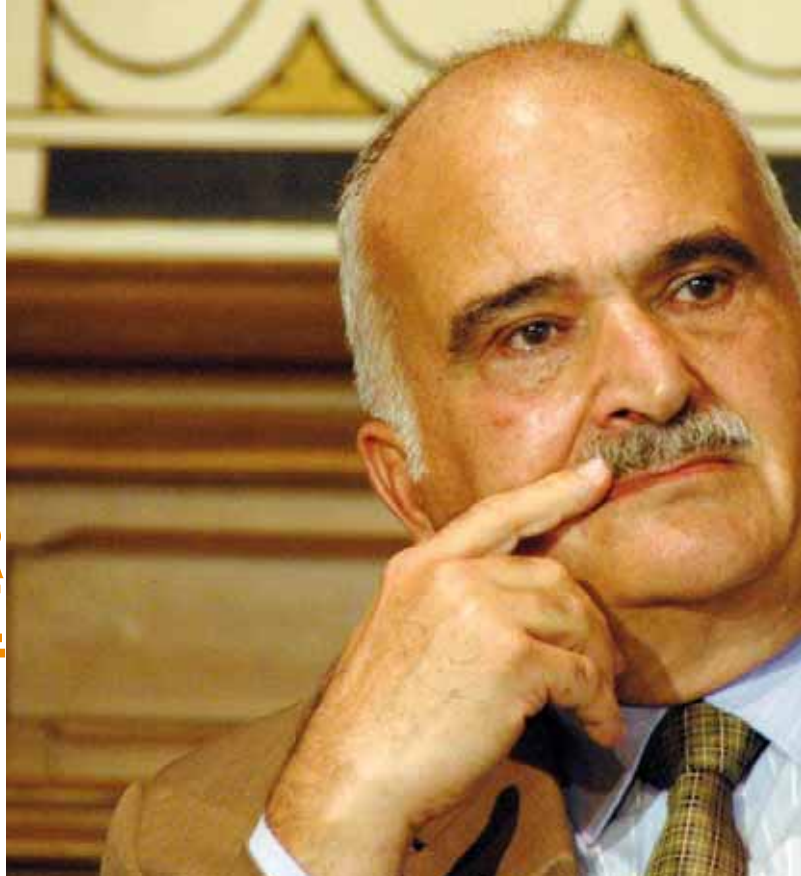
Caux, he wrote, is a 'haven' for such people.

For more, see www.cauxforum.net

THE YEAR TO CHANGE OUR MINDSET

His Royal Highness, Prince El Hassan bin Talal of Jordan

The Human Security Forum was opened by Prince El Hassan bin Talal of Jordan. This is an extract:



President Obama and UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon say that 2009 is the year of climate change. I suggest that it is also the cusp for us to change our mindset.

Already 1.7 billion people are affected by water scarcity, and by 2025 this is estimated to affect up to five billion people. By 2050, the eight Nile Basin countries will require the equivalent of five full Nile Rivers, not one depleted Nile. Thinking supra-nationally and intra-independently is essential.

Our current food system is entirely dependent on finite resources, including fossil fuels for powering irrigation pumps and farm machinery. The depletion of these resources is making our food system dangerously unsustainable. While the 20 billion dollars pledged by the G8 for food security are welcome, the more pressing concern is how to innovate

more sustainable food production.

The health ramifications of global warming are staggering. Extreme air temperatures, air pollution and rises in humidity are all exacerbating respiratory and cardiovascular disease, asthma, malaria and dengue fever.

We have already had a preview of the 'climate refugee' disaster waiting in the wings. Hurricane Katrina temporarily displaced over one million people. The catastrophic monsoon floods in Bangladesh left 21 million people homeless. So too the Yangtze floods displaced 14 million people.

We Arabs straddle the strategic resources of the world. Most violent conflicts have their origins in the struggle for the control of strategic resources. There are three strong states in our region – Israel, Turkey and Iran. We Arabs are merely bystanders. Most of our countries are run by policemen and *parvenu*. In the name of the Global War on Terror many of our regimes are terrorizing their populations. The time has come to talk about democracy in terms of empowering our citizens.

In ratio to population, more Arabs are teaching in American universities than Indians or Chinese. When you ask them, 'When will you return to your country?' they say, 'Only when we can get ahead on what we know and not on who we know.'

We are hypocrites. We treat Asian workers, Sudanese workers and even Egyptian workers abominably. We meet with Israelis in UN meetings, but play Byzantine politics. We do not raise themes such as water and energy.

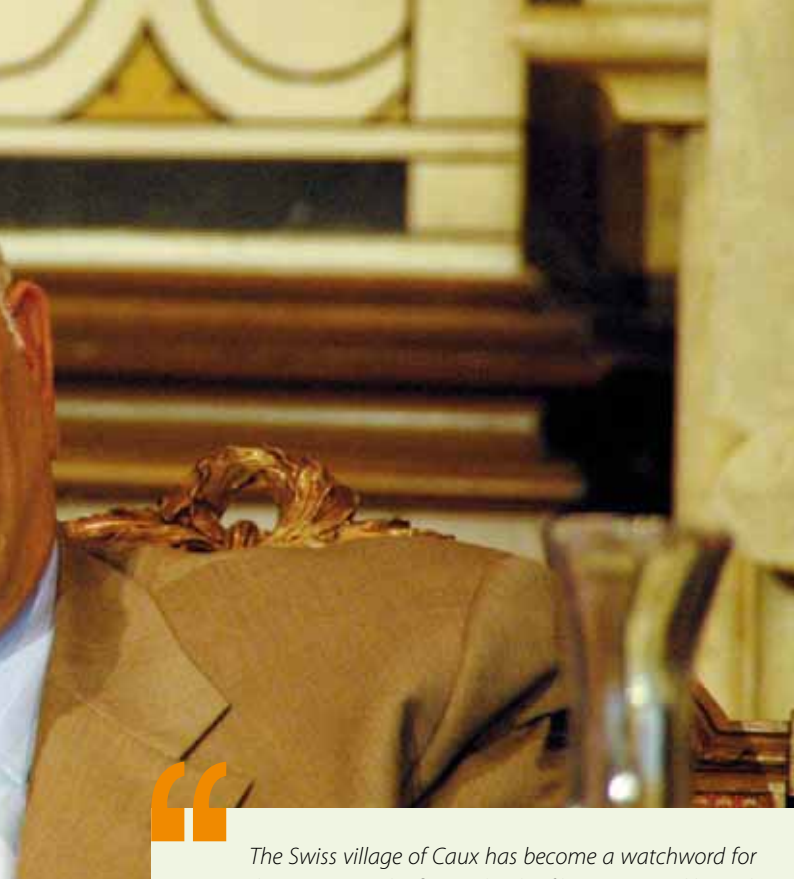
Climate change offers humanity an opportunity for a quantum leap in sustainable development and peacemaking. Scientists project that within the next 40 years, solar

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Peace cannot be imposed, it is built through public opinion. With this starting point, Israelis and Palestinians met privately in Switzerland in the context of the Caux Forum. Chaired by Ambassador Sahnoun, the exchanges were substantial, even if sometimes the views expressed were diametrically opposed. They met again in Jerusalem where the group was formalised under the title Caux Working Group for Peace and Reconciliation. Its programme is to set up workshops with broad Israeli-Palestinian participation, open also to international specialists. Borders, refugees, Jerusalem, water, settlements – all these will be on the table.

Gabriel Banon, writing in *Maroc Hebdo International*, Morocco

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The Swiss village of Caux has become a watchword for reconciliation across the fiercest kinds of bitterness and hatred. It was at Caux that French and German leaders warily came together after World War II and emerged with a sense that human beings, not monsters, were their neighbours. Today, Pakistanis and Indians, Israelis and Palestinians, Sudanese and warring groups from many parts of Africa and Asia come to Caux, searching for a similar understanding.

Katherine Marshall, Visiting Professor at Georgetown University, USA, writing on the Washington Post website

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thermal power plants could generate over half of the electricity needed for the entire region. Nobody can convince me that it is more cost-effective to dispose of uranium than to invest in solar panels. So why do we not have a demonstration plant on the Egyptian side of the Gaza border to bring clean water and energy to the people of Gaza?

One small fraction of the three trillion dollars spent on weapons could create a cohesion fund to empower the poor and pull the rug from under the feet of fanatics. And billions of dollars owned by Muslim institutions should have been put on the line to improve the human condition.

The Middle East Citizens Assembly (MECA) is an example of the trans-boundary social networking that can help to transform our human environment. Its aim is to generate a supra-national civil consciousness from Morocco to Azerbaijan. Participants work together to raise the voice of the 'silenced majority', to build solidarity and civic affinity, and to promote democracy, pluralism and transparency. Can we move towards an age of intra-dependence, multilateralism and multicultural thinking? This is the key to our future.

The full text of his speech can be found on www.cauxforum.net



WHY DIDN'T YOU ACT?

Salman Ahmad
Pakistani rock star

Founder of South Asia's longest lasting Rock Band, 'Junoon', Salman Ahmad is also a Goodwill Ambassador for UNAIDS, the United Nations programme on HIV/Aids. Caux intern Carole Khakula interviewed him:

What does your work with the UN involve?

I try to humanize the face of people living with HIV.

Besides speaking in colleges and using radio/ television, I've done a song and music video called 'Al-Vida' (Farewell), based on a true story of a woman I met living with HIV/AIDS. When people found out about her illness, the entire neighborhood threatened to send her away and burn her house and belongings. She put her foot down and said, 'No, this is my home, I belong here and so do my children.' She started a women's empowerment NGO in the area. The song's theme is women's empowerment. It topped the MTV charts.

Right now I am also working with UNHCR to put together a concert for Pakistanis who have been forced from their homes as a result of the fighting between the army and the Taliban. It's a big human catastrophe. The UN Secretary-General said that \$543 million is needed for their immediate relief. Here is an opportunity for us to show compassion.

Is this your first visit to Caux?

Yes it is. I was invited here by Rajmohan Gandhi. Hearing Caux's history, experiencing the brotherhood and unity that *Initiatives of Change* demonstrates is all addictive – and much required in our troubled planet. Caux is a great place for introspection, for people to find a space where they can just be.

Artists have a unique perspective and need a platform to speak out on social issues. I feel like, if I have airtime, I'd better use it for something meaningful. Artists working on their own need partners such as IofC and Freemuse (working to support censored musicians), to amplify important issues such as the environment, health and human security.

What do you take away from the Caux Forum?

The one thing that has stood out in all the discussions is moral responsibility. You have to look beyond politics and economics, and to think about moral responsibility, because we only have one planet. Out of six billion people, half live on less than two dollars a day, and if we don't take care of those people, future generations are going to turn around 30 years from now and ask, 'What were you thinking? Why didn't you act while you had the time to act?'

A PEOPLE-FOCUSED, SUSTAINABLE APPROACH TO GLOBALIZATION

Conference:
Trust and integrity in the Global Economy
24-29 July, 2009
by Michael Smith, UK

Deeper than the world's economic and financial crises and the threat of climate change, there is an underlying crisis of values. That was the overriding message that came through loud and clear from speakers at the fourth annual conference on 'Trust and Integrity in the Global Economy'. It was attended by 160 people from 38 countries.

In his opening keynote address, Zimbabwean George Katito, a researcher at the South African Institute of International Affairs in Johannesburg, said that 200 million people will be forced to migrate as a direct result of climate change, according to the International Organization for Migration. 'What ails our global economy may seem daunting, overwhelming and perhaps even out of our depth,' he said. 'However, if there is one clear lesson to be gleaned from the progress of human civilization through the centuries, it is that we are sufficiently equipped to inspire and effect change.'

There was no shortage of analysis of the scale of the problems. In the two decades to 2000, the poorest quarter of the world's population saw their incomes drop from 2.5 per cent to 1.2 per cent of global income; over 600 million people live in slums or shantytowns; more than a third of the world's forests have disappeared in the last 50 years. 'If the Industrial Revolution was such a resounding success, why are we in such dire social and environmental situations?' asked Justin Walford, a moderator of the young professionals work-stream, from Vancouver, Canada.

It was this inspiration to effect change – and the call for a new paradigm in thinking and living – that permeated the ethos of the conference. It was billed as a 'people-focused, sustainable approach to globalization'. Four daily discussion work-streams involved business leaders and entrepreneurs;



Katito: 'We are sufficiently equipped to inspire and effect change'



Dubey: employees planting a million trees per year

young professionals; food sustainability activists and farmers; journalists and film makers. Academics and university students joined in each of the streams.

If there was an underlying crisis of values, what should those values be? And what are the sources of inspiration that affect change?

The conference title might have been reversed: integrity and trust in the global economy. As speakers stressed, integrity, including honesty and transparency in personal and professional life and the stance against corruption, leads to trust, so sorely lacking in the global banking crisis.

Corporate lawyer Jean-Pierre Méan, Vice-President of the Swiss chapter of Transparency International, the anti-corruption body and a Council member of the Caux-Initiatives of Change Foundation, also stressed that the world's inequalities had increased. He announced the decision taken by a group of 30, meeting in the business work-stream, to promote the incorporation of the Caux Round Table's 'Principles for Business' into the curriculum of business schools worldwide. This would promote trust and integrity as core values for doing business. John Brinkman, Dean of business studies, and Donna Harper, lecturer in business, at Liverpool Hope University, UK, agreed to support this initiative as did Professor Kooi-Guan Cheah, Dean of UNITAR in Malaysia. A British social entrepreneur declared that he would incorporate the 'Principles for Business' in his company and would encourage all the people in his supply chain to follow suit.

Rajeev Dubey, a President and member of the Group Management Board of the Indian industrial giant Mahindra & Mahindra Ltd, told how the Mahindra Group is committed to 'socially responsible products and services' and 'responsible



Food and sustainability network: 'Another crisis is quietly taking place... food'



investment and employee engagement in community development.' He outlined, in his lecture on 'Transforming capitalism through trust and integrity', how the \$8 billion company, India's leading tractor manufacturer, is pioneering a range of bio-diesel and hybrid electric vehicles. It is also constructing 'green' buildings, including at its new R&D plant in Chennai. Meanwhile 25,000 employees have volunteered their time in community programmes, including planting more than a million trees across the country last year.

The company sponsors a nationwide education programme for girl children from poor backgrounds. Nearly 60,000 girls, including in the slums of Mumbai and Delhi, have completed 10 years of 'quality education', Dubey said. 'Sustainability and corporate social responsibility are embedded in the group's DNA,' he claimed, emphasizing that 'a sharp focus on sustainability is in line with customer and community sensitivities across the globe.'

The Food Sustainability Network, co-chaired by Lavinia Sommaruga Bodeo, Switzerland, and Cristina Bignardi, Italy, highlighted that, behind the financial crisis, another crisis is quietly taking place: one of food. Sommaruga, from Alliance Sud, a Swiss alliance of development organizations, is responsible for development policy in the Italian part of Switzerland. She called for 'a dynamic of solidarity and not of exclusion'. Outlining her initiatives on Fair Trade, she said it 'consists of a new ethic based on principles of trust, solidarity and sharing'.

Six Swiss fair trade activists joined her on the panel, including the coordinator for Magasins du Monde, a network of fair trade shops in the Geneva/Vaud/Fribourg region.

Swedish nutritionist Ingrid Franzon, author of many health care books, outlined the health challenges facing civilization due to depletion of food minerals and the fast food culture. Add to this bio-fuels which are causing more food problems for the poor. This had a profound influence on the thinking of a young Central American who learnt about the harm

caused by ethanol made from grains and corn. Recruited as an advisor on the production of ethanol in his country, he left with the information he needed to challenge and change his country's policy and develop a healthier bio-fuel.

Journalists in the media work-stream recognised that economic challenges and new online media, including 'citizen journalism', were transforming the nature of reporting. As Mike Jempson of the MediaWise Trust in the UK said, 'Journalists quite properly question people's motives. But what can be done to reinstate altruism as a valid motivation?'

Indeed, the world needed a 'moral bailout' at a time of financial bailouts, asserted Don de Silva, director of Changeways International and a former official of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), who moderated the plenary sessions of the conference. Moral and spiritual groups across the world needed to shed their narrow perceptions and relate their beliefs to the world's critical issues. The task was to 'bring about a civilizational change in values and belief systems in economics, finance, food and sustainable development.' This was vital for human survival, he said.

Adam Foxall, student from Liverpool Hope University, UK, was surprised by the optimism of the older generation he met in Caux. 'This feeling of positivity is what will stay with me most of all from the TIGE conference,' he said. Law and theatre studies student Charlotte Sawyer observed that 'all those attending had an evident desire to generate solutions that are practical, attainable and will stand the test of real business life.' And Jonathan Harper, a media and politics student, wrote afterwards: 'Among men and women of undeniable integrity and humility, all I could often wonder was how the world or I could have ever done without such places. I mourn that so few of us show the strength to live the way we all know to be right and true, if we only dare to enquire of the depths of silence. But I am so glad, hopeful and inspired because Caux is proof that this truth is alive and well in the world.'

IGNITING DREAMS & DECISIONS

by **Mohan Bhagwandas**

International Coordinator, Caux Initiatives of Business, explains the thinking behind the conference

This year we wanted to try something different to the traditional conference. We went back to the drawing board to create a framework that would engage people's creative participation, capture new initiatives, and send them out of Caux feeling supported by new networks.

The design that emerged created four self-organizing groups or 'work-streams', dealing with the issues people felt passionate about – one for young professionals, another on the media, one for business people, and one for the Food and Sustainability Network (FSN).

In effect we had four mini-conferences under one roof. Rather than a plenary where speakers present information, we made it a reporting session. Each stream sent one or two speakers every afternoon to a panel discussion, to share with the whole conference what they were working on. It created tremendous energy. Questions and answers followed, leading to cross-pollination of ideas. Thus we had the food network, media people, young professionals and business people working out more effective ways to collaborate.

At the end of each day, we asked each of the streams to capture three or four key decisions, ideas or initiatives, and put them on a big sheet of paper in the main hallway. This created a sense of action.

People need space to experience the spiritual ambience of Caux. The day started at 7.30 am with a time of reflection,

drawing on the traditions of our different faiths. At 9.15 am a history of IofC gave context to what Caux represents. During the plenaries, five-minute 'music breaks' provided space to reflect, absorb and process. We tried to convey the message that we are all on a spiritual journey and have to deal with the economic, business and food issues as part of that journey.

On the last day we asked people to write three words expressing their most significant experience. Quite surprisingly, no-one mentioned 'economy' or 'business'. 'Friendship' was mentioned 15 times, 'community' 12 times and 'hope' several times. This was our real objective – to send people away not only economically educated, but with that unique spirit of Caux, feeling each of us can actually make a difference. The feedback from the young people was that the conference ignited their dreams, their decisions to review their careers and their lives to doing something worthwhile.

Among the outcomes, the business group undertook to promote the Caux Round Table Principles for Business (ethical norms) to every business school. The Food and Sustainability and the business groups will set up internet-based support networks. Young professionals offered to support the next TIGE conference in 2010, and a Swedish management trainer set himself the target of speaking personally to 150 business people about it.

The next conference of Caux Initiatives for Business takes place in November in India. See www.cib.iofc.org/node/43814

BUSINESS INVESTING IN 'STEWARDSHIP CAPITAL'

Caux Round Table
(10-11 July)

A new global capitalism must seek a balance between the extremes of pure market fundamentalism and government regulation, concluded business leaders meeting as part of the Caux Round Table, 12-14 July. It must address the imbalance between human wants and earth's capacity to sustain such levels of consumption, and the imbalance between the wealthy few and the many without wealth.

Good stewardship of the earth's resources would need more than technical and administrative skills, they added. It would require a form of social capital, giving moral and ethical capacities for judgment and service and drawing upon

a commitment and a spiritual resolve which goes beyond empirical rationality. This 'stewardship capital' would need to be fostered as the foundation for a 'new leadership ethos' for those in both government and business.

The meeting was the 24th dialogue of the Caux Round Table, an international network of experienced business leaders working to design the intellectual strategies, management tools and practices to strengthen private enterprise and public governance to improve our global community. The dialogue was preceded by a one-day Scholars' Retreat, recognizing that among those responsible for the recent failure of major financial institutions were many well-educated professionals (lawyers, accountants, bankers, financial advisors, rating agency analysts, government regulators, and academics). The Retreat concluded with a signed statement calling for institutions of higher learning to go beyond a narrowly-defined focus on technical competence and to address broader issues of ethics and social responsibility. This would require not only curricular reform but also recruitment and promotion of faculty who reflect this broader emphasis.

For more, see www.cauxroundtable.org



WRESTLING WITH DIFFICULT QUESTIONS

Caux Scholars Program (10-11 July)
by Kathy Aquilina, USA

Twenty students, from five continents graduated from the 17th annual Caux Scholars Program. The four packed weeks included interactive exercises, theories of conflict analysis and prevention, individual presentations of 'Conflict where I come from' and participation in the Caux Forum on Human Security.

'It is important to know the questions on the table,' coached one of the faculty, Mohammed Abu-Nimer, who is a professor at the American University, USA, and a world-renowned mediation trainer. He urged students to ask 'Why? What? How?' while practising the skill of suspending judgment. And then to consider: 'How is it in my culture? Do we have the same behaviour or meaning?'

There were many important questions to consider. CSP's Academic Director is Barry Hart, a Professor at Eastern Mennonite University, USA, and a specialist on trauma healing, honed through many years of work in the Balkans and West Africa. He asked the class: 'In a war-torn country how do you build capacity for dignity and respect – tolerance in the best sense?'

John Katunga, Catholic Relief Services East Africa technical advisor for peace-building and justice, learned about tolerance the hard way – fleeing his country, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, because of his human rights work. As on-going war in the DRC brings terrible devastation, he probed: 'How do we activate conscience?... For without the balancing values of conscience and dignity, one can almost justify anything.' After showing a film about women in the Congo, traumatized by rape, he used the prism of restorative justice to emphasize that effective peace-building work comes from a genuine concern for others.

Michelle LeBaron, Director of the Dispute Resolution

How do we activate conscience?... For without the balancing values of conscience and dignity, one can almost justify anything.

Faculty member John Katunga, from the Democratic Republic of the Congo



Program at the University of the British Columbia Law School, encouraged personal reflection with her questions about diverse starting points: 'Are you specific or diffuse in your approach to things? Do you tend to get right down to the task at hand? Or spend time developing a relationship, going through a process?... Beginning to understand your own perspectives, and those of others on such matters, gives you the essential cultural fluency you will need if you want to be a peacemaker and work effectively across cultures.'

The students voiced their own questions:

'How do you translate theories into practice?'

'How do you work on a specific cause?'

'Can religion help establish peace?'

'How do I become a peace-builder?'

They began to find answers for themselves: 'I can begin to understand what I am like in conflict, my own part. I also realize that I can calm down and look for cooperative power,' an Iraqi student commented. 'While acknowledging the importance and necessity to continue with conflict transformation work, it remains a band-aid to a deeply infected wound' were heartfelt words from another war zone.

'I came to Caux with questions that had been nestled in my heart for some time,' concluded another. 'I leave Caux with a better understanding of where my questions fit in the larger process of peace-building.'

2010 dates: 6 July-5 August. For more, see www.csp.iofc.org

LEARNING TO BE PEACEMAKERS

Conference:
Tools for Change
9-15 August, 2009



Corcoran: 'Peace is people becoming different'



Fourie:
'Forgiveness is not only possible, but necessary'



In the fourth annual 'Tools for Change' conference, 236 people from 50 countries explored the tools needed to become change-makers.

'Our theme is learning to be peacemakers,' said programme coordinator Rob Corcoran, at the opening meeting. 'It's a big goal. A lofty idea. But,' he continued, 'peace is not just an idea. It is people becoming different. Which people? There are many movements in the world who want to bring about change. Very often they say the change has to start with the other person, the other group, the other nation, the other culture. In Caux we learn that change starts with me.'

Sixty-five young Muslims from UK, The Netherlands, Sweden, France and Germany brought energy as well as a challenge to Caux. They were there through the vision of Ajmal Masroor who directs Communities in Action in the UK (*see opposite*).

Participants were given a choice of nine parallel workshops, mostly drawn from lofC training programmes around the world. One was a Creators of Peace Circle workshop, empowering women to create peace at home, at work and in the community; another was based on the French Education for Peace programme. Others were lofC's Foundations for Freedom programme (based in Ukraine), the Heart of Effective Leadership training (India), Family Renewal (run by lofC in Taiwan) and Honest Conversations (from the US Hope in the Cities programme).

Anjum Ali, co-chair of Hope in the Cities and Erwan Floc'h, executive director of lofC France, spoke on a panel examining 'Identity: the need to belong'. Floc'h painted a picture of the new face of France, and described lofC's Initiatives Dialogue which brings together diverse groups to explore their identity and the richness of their heritage beyond skin colour, sex,

religion or profession.

Ali described her 'crisis of identity' as the daughter of Pakistani parents, born in the US, a childhood in Saudi Arabia and college educated in the US. 'The one identity I had complete liberty to choose and which gave me a sense of control was that of my faith: Islam... Clinging to Islam was also a spiritual survival. But if I am honest, I have to admit that wearing the hijab was a form of resistance... For years it became quite comfortable for me to live within my shell of Muslim identity. It was not until lofC's Connecting Community Fellowship Program in the US that I regained my sense of identity as a human that I share with all of humanity.'

Presenting the last of this year's Caux Lectures was Ginn Fourie, whose daughter was killed in a Cape Town massacre during the time of apartheid. She told how she forgave Letlapa Mphahlele, the commander of the liberation army who ordered the attack. She felt that forgiveness was not only possible but necessary to be able to deal with her daughter's death. 'In today's world, we gave up giving forgiveness to the justice system,' which was given the sole right to take revenge, she said. She understands that the process of forgiveness is long and difficult. Today she works for reconciliation with Letlapa Mphahlele. Together they founded the Lyndi Fourie Foundation (LFF) in memory of Ginn's daughter, which raises funds for a farm for ex-combatants suffering from post-traumatic stress disorder, substance abuse and family dysfunction.

At the conclusion of the conference, many of the young Muslims spoke of being challenged by new ideas. 'I have spent the last days completely out of my comfort zone,' said one. 'I hope that I can have quiet times every day!'



Imam Masroor (centre) aims to train 1000 young Muslims as peacemakers

YOUNG EUROPEAN MUSLIMS AT 'GROUNDBREAKING' SESSION

Two years ago a British Imam, Ajmal Masroor, took part in a Tools for Change conference. It led to 'a profound change in my thinking,' says Masroor. He says young Muslims need support in understanding their own faith tradition and in how to become involved constructively in their communities. He has formed a vision to train one thousand young European Muslims as peacemakers.

As a result, 65 young Muslims came from across Europe for a special five-day programme on 'Learning to be peacemakers' in August, and then stayed on to participate in Tools for Change. Described by the BBC's Christopher Landau as 'groundbreaking,' in his report for the BBC news website, the programme was the result of collaboration between four NGOs in Britain, Switzerland and Sweden: Communities in Action Enterprises, Caux-Initiatives of Change, Sensus and Ibn Rushd.

The following is drawn from Landau's BBC report:

'We're faced with a need to redefine what it means to be European,' says Peter Riddell, one of the organizers. 'In many ways you could say that European culture has defined itself in opposition to Islam. So now the challenge is whether we're going to embrace a European culture which includes a substantial component of Muslims, or whether we're going to reject that.'

Participants come from a range of African, Middle Eastern and Asian family backgrounds. One of the visiting scholars, Shaykh Ibrahim Mogra, says the event provides an important opportunity for European Muslims to recognize their own diversity. Many are students; others are in full-time work,

often with charities or voluntary organizations. They bring with them stories of how different European countries deal with their Muslim minorities. Participants from France speak of the controversy over how Muslim women cover their heads; the British discuss their irritation at the frequent popular association of Islam with terrorism.

The conference is about exploring the connections between faith and European identity, explains Ajmal Masroor... 'We're finding a common thread that binds them. Every one of them is very happy to be a European citizen – a citizen of their own country – but to remain a good and loyal Muslim.' He encourages them to engage in charitable or political work in their local communities. 'Go back and revive and reclaim the culture of peace which has been the foundation of our faith,' he tells them.

During one debate, delegates were encouraged to consider all points of view in some of the arguments about what constitutes European identity. Discussing the freedoms afforded to Muslim women, and the compatibility of democracy and Islam, they explored areas of tension between some interpretations of Islam and prevailing European attitudes. Another session, on the search for inner peace, saw delegates sitting in a circle and being invited to share with others their own personal barriers to living a peaceful life.

After spending time discussing issues specific to the Muslim communities, the participants joined 150 of other faith traditions and none, in the fourth 'Tools for Change' conference, which aims to equip participants with the skills and attitudes to be effective change-makers.

Full report on <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/europe/8195574.stm>



LEARNING TO LIVE IN A MULTICULTURAL WORLD

Friedman (left) and Labidi (right) stand up for Jewish-Muslim dialogue in Europe

Conference: 9-15 July, 2009
by Angela Mattli

Intercultural dialogue is not the domain of a minority of idealistic do-gooders, it is something which concerns us all! From the start of this conference, these words made their mark. For six days 120 participants – a diverse mix of experts, students, NGO representatives and interested parties – looked into the cracks and tensions which run through society, and tried to develop tools to overcome them. Central to the debates were intercultural education, migration, basic rights, post-colonialism and managing diversity in the economy.

Considering the rise of European far-right parties which play on popular fears about immigration, it is clear that intercultural dialogue is more necessary than ever. This means taking active responsibility: thoughtful work in place of damaging slogans. The conference attempted to define key areas of action.

Ruth Friedman, who coordinates the European Platform for Jewish-Muslim cooperation, observed that those who are prepared to dialogue are often viewed with suspicion by their own people. 'It is important that dialogue takes place not only between communities but also within one's own community,' she said. External events can have a great impact on the readiness for dialogue. Meherzia Labidi from the World Conference of Religions for Peace noted that, despite the escalating tensions between Israel and Hamas, throughout this time dialogue did not cease. Unfortunately this is ignored by the media, again and again.

Several speakers addressed the tension between human rights, culture and religion. Political scientist Elham Manea, originally from Yemen, now living in Switzerland, spoke of her life between two cultures. 'I feel at home wherever my rights

are respected! She warned against false tolerance: 'Human rights and equality between the sexes are not negotiable.'

Presenting her book *Breaking the wave of silence*, she called for a humanistic Islam without prohibitions on particular areas of thought, and which accepts freedom of choice as fundamental for theology. This led to a vigorous debate, showing the controversial nature of Manea's advocacy of breaking taboos. Living with diversity means engaging with such controversies, and having the courage to do this in public.

An honest intercultural dialogue is only possible if minorities are guaranteed economic integration. This means participation. Discrimination because of place of origin, religion, gender or sexual orientation should be avoided through raising awareness but also through clear statutory penalties. Maurad Cheurf, co-founder of France's Diversity Forum, described strategies for managing greater diversity at all levels of an organization. 'At the beginning this process is not without costs, but the investment will soon pay off.' He quoted studies which show that diversity opens new markets, encourages innovation, and benefits the brand image.

Beside the plenary discussions, participants worked in small groups looking at practical applications. At the end of the conference ideas and planned actions were compiled and evaluated before being presented to the Council of Europe.

For more, see www.caux.ch

FEEDBACK WELCOME:

Having read this Report, we the editors would appreciate your comments on its contents and presentation.

Email to: laurence.galopin@iofc.org

LEADING CHANGE FOR A SUSTAINABLE WORLD

Conference: 9-15 July
by Antoine Jaulmes

DeAngelis and
Gilchrist workshop
conflict resolution



Has humankind reached its level of incompetence? Pondered Lebanese-born author Amin Maalouf, earlier in the year. Convinced that Caux has an important contribution towards making a sustainable world, young adults from Australia, Brazil, Britain, Egypt, France, Germany, Latvia, Mexico, Russia, Switzerland and Ukraine who wanted to face their responsibilities, took part.

The format was innovative with lots of interactive workshops, activities and evening communities. Each day, world issues were studied and discussed with a panel of distinguished experts, alongside hopeful initiatives presented by activists and concerned citizens.

Rajmohan Gandhi and Keltoum Boumedjane spoke about identity and the answer to humiliation. Cornelio Sommaruga and Vera Schoelmerich, from the Global Poverty Project, addressed peace and development. Raymond Baker and Jean-Pierre Méan from Transparency International tackled corruption and the need to bring ethics into the economy. Ian Roderick from The Schumacher Society and Converging World spoke about concretely fighting global warming.

Ukrainians, Mykola and Oksana Swarnyk, talked about citizens' initiatives; Jens Wilhelmsen, Mohamed Sahnoun and Alice Cardel, about international initiatives; Christina DeAngelis and Laura Gilchrist, on conflict resolution; and Lena

Kashkarova and Zoryana Borbulevich addressed sustainable leadership, based on lofC's Foundations for Freedom programme.

Throughout, two professional British coaches trained participants to carefully consider and undertake the hero's journey – their own project! As one Russian participant said: 'My project probably won't affect the whole world, but the conference helped me to understand that, if I can bring positive change anywhere, I should do it.'

Ideas and decisions were refined in Open Space Technology workshops, which allowed participants to meet like-minded people and work on projects together: Ethiopians deciding to engage with lofC's Harambee training programme; a Swiss man dedicating a year to development aid; Ukrainians with Foundations for Freedom forming new partnerships; British participants bridging the divides in their city. Several committed themselves to helping NGOs working on development or environmental issues. A Ukrainian, struck by the large number of new initiatives created, described the conference as 'unique' in his experience.

The organizers, a young team of 12 people, have decided to renew the same experience next year for more participants. The main themes will be 'mastering climate change' and 'ending poverty'.

A BILLION THINGS TO DO

Caux Interns Programme (6 July-15 August)

Behind the functioning of Mountain House, the international conference centre at Caux, is the hard work of many, most of whom are volunteers. This year they included 64 interns from 20 countries. While serving in the different departments, they also take part in the conferences and engage in workshops/discussions specifically for the interns.

The significance of the programme lay not so much in a particular workshop or conference, says coordinator Rob Lancaster from Australia, but in 'something slightly more intangible that emerged from the experience as a whole'. As one intern put it, the internship demonstrated 'the true meaning of sharing, service and devotion'. Or as another wrote, 'Just by being here and having the Caux spirit, we all come one step closer to the world we want to see.'

Egyptian intern, Naila Waked, came for a second time: 'I wanted to be here to help,' she said. 'lofC stands for something I grew up believing in – being actively part of the change and not just hoping that someone else will be it.'

The internship programme 'has been great. I have met inspiring people and I am in awe of what they have accomplished in their lives,' Naila continued. The downside was that Caux is 'real busy and stressful. There are always a billion things to do... We interns would love to be (at the conference sessions), but due to the structure of our work we can't always be. Yet what I've learned here is to be patient even when am struggling with impatience!'

Enquiries about the Interns Programme can be emailed to interns@caux.ch

CAUX 2010

INTERNATIONAL SUMMER CONFERENCE IN CAUX

■ 2 – 7 July

Learning to Live in a Multicultural World
empowering people to commit to action

■ 9 – 16 July

The third annual Caux Forum for Human Security
Caux as a resource for the world's peace-makers

■ 26 July – 2 August

Everybody Counts
a dialogue across generations and cultures

■ 4 – 10 August

Leading Change for a Sustainable World
initiatives to end poverty and to curb global warming

■ 4 – 10 August

International Training sessions
the skills of leading and managing change in the world

■ 12 – 17 August

Trust and Integrity in the Global Economy
ways to help create a more equitable global economy

What is Initiatives of Change?

Initiatives of Change (IoC) is a diverse, global network building trust across the world's divides. It comprises people of many cultures, beliefs and backgrounds, committed to transforming society through changes in individuals and relationships, starting in their own lives.

www.iofc.org

Initiatives of Change International (IoC International) is a non-governmental organization (NGO) with special consultative status with the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations (ECOSOC). Based in Caux, Switzerland, *IoC International* was founded in 2002 as an association bringing together the autonomous national bodies of the *Initiatives of Change* movement.

www.iofc.org/international

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At the heart of these meetings in Caux was a simple idea: that people should be willing to look at their own hearts to see if any prejudice or resentment or greed lurking there was making them part of the world's problems, rather than making them part of a solution. This looking in also has a corollary: to be ready to reach out, including to a seeming enemy.

Rajmohan Gandhi,
President of IoC International

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For further information, please see our website...

www.caux.ch



CAUX-Initiatives of Change is a charitable Swiss Foundation. In addition to sharing the aims of the IoC network, it owns and manages the conference centre in Caux.

www.caux.ch

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