

53rd Annual DPI/NGO Conference

FINAL REPORT

Global Solidarity:
The Way to Peace and
International Cooperation

28-30 August 2000
United Nations, New York

Organized by
the United Nations Department of Public Information
in cooperation with
the NGO/DPI Executive Committee

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC INFORMATION
DPI  **NGO**
NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS

INTRODUCTION

The Department of Public Information, in cooperation with the non-governmental organizations associated with it, convened its 53rd Annual Conference, entitled “Global Solidarity: The Way to Peace and International Cooperation”, from 28 to 30 August 2000 at United Nations Headquarters. The Conference, which immediately preceded the Millennium Summit of the United Nations—the largest gathering ever of world leaders—aimed to link the aspirations of the NGO community to the historic deliberations by Member States on the future of the United Nations. This year’s Conference achieved a number of firsts:

- For the first time in its 53-year history, a sitting head of State, President Abdelaziz Bouteflika of Algeria, addressed the Conference. The President extended an invitation to host a future DPI/NGO conference in Algeria.
- An unprecedented number of Midday NGO Workshops (30) covering a range of issues on the United Nations agenda were organized by the NGOs associated with the Department.
- The NGO/DPI Executive Committee established partnerships with corporate, non-governmental and governmental organizations, which supported the funding of travel by speakers from developing countries and the underwriting of the Conference reception.
- The NGO/DPI Conference Planning Committee conducted a successful media outreach programme to promote media coverage of the Conference.
- The Conference featured a total of 120 speakers in all its plenary sessions and Midday NGO Workshops.
- For the first time, the majority of the 35 keynote and plenary speakers were women (18) and the majority of speakers were from developing countries (19).

PLANNING COMMITTEE

The Conference was organized by a 20-member DPI/NGO Conference Planning Committee, comprising the staff of the DPI/NGO Section and representatives of NGOs associated with the Department of Public Information. Dianne Dillon-Ridgley, the UN representative of the World YWCA, Geneva, chaired the Committee, which met weekly for eight months prior to the Conference. In addition, five sub-committee chairs were selected. They were: Sherrill Kazan Alvarez de Toledo, Academia Mexicana de Derecho Internacional, Fund-raising; Eileen Gallagher Labiner, International Federation for Home Economics, Media; Charmaine Crockett, Economists Allied for Arms Reduction, Midday NGO Workshops; Joan Levy, World Information Transfer, Reception; and Arlette Leoncavallo, Association of Arab University Graduates, Registration.

REGISTRATION

A total of 1,700 persons representing 465 non-governmental organizations from 58 countries attended the Conference this year. Regional representation of NGOs from developing countries in Africa, Asia and the Pacific, and Latin America and the Caribbean stood at 18 per cent. Some 2,700 NGOs registered for the Conference. In addition, the Conference had the services of some 70 volunteers and interns. Attendance was affected by the cost of travel to the United Nations for many people from the developing world who wished to participate in the Conference. As well, some NGO representatives informed the DPI/NGO Section that they had experienced difficulties in obtaining the necessary visas to come to the United States for the Conference.

PLENARY SESSIONS

Following introductory remarks by Mr. Kensaku Hogen, Under-Secretary-General for Communications and Public Information, Dr. Theo-Ben Gurirab, President of the fifty-fourth session of the General Assembly, opened the Conference, followed by Secretary-General Kofi Annan. The three keynote speakers were Hanan Ashrawi, Secretary-General of the Palestinian Initiative for the Promotion of Global Dialogue and Democracy; Governor Jaime Lerner of the State of Paraná, Brazil; and Hanna Suchocka, Member of Parliament and former Prime Minister of Poland. At the closing ses-

sion, President Abdelaziz Bouteflika of Algeria led the proceedings, followed by Malia Craver, an indigenous leader from Hawaii, and Ralph Nader, Founder of Public Citizen. These principal speakers joined an array of distinguished international figures representing the United Nations, Governments and civil society who participated in the Conference.

In the five plenary sessions, expert panellists examined the working partnerships between civil society, Governments and the United Nations system and explored concrete ways to implement the action plans adopted at the major United Nations conferences of the 1990s. Themes for the five panels were: “The 1990s: Action Not Promises”; “The New Democratic Diplomacy: Civil Society as Partner with the United Nations and Governments”; “Humanitarian Intervention: Roles for Civil Society”; “Best Practices: Advancing Our Shared Agenda”; and “An Economic Vision That Works: A Dialogue”.

Panellists, who were leading experts in the thematic issues of the Conference, identified cross-sectoral campaigns that can mobilize political leaders into action for achieving sustainable development and ensuring human security, and discussed the reorientation of economic policies towards equitable sustainable development. They also examined civil society’s participation in the decision-making processes that lead to humanitarian intervention and considered ways to work in partnership with Governments to monitor implementation of action plans adopted at United Nations conferences.

MIDDAY NGO WORKSHOPS

There were 30 Midday NGO Workshops, which featured a total of 75 speakers. From 40 to 120 NGO representatives attended each of these Workshops, which discussed a spectrum of United Nations issues. These included gender equality, the Secretary-General’s Global Compact, human rights, humanitarian intervention, peace and security, roles for civil society in international cooperation, social and economic development, ageing, indigenous people and youth (see Midday NGO Workshops Summaries insert).

CORPORATE , NGO AND GOVERNMENT COOPERATION

In a precedent-setting partnership, the NGO/DPI Planning Committee secured generous support from the CeleXx Corporation, the World Family Organization, a Paris-based NGO, the Permanent Mission of Finland to the United Nations and the International Photographic Council. These contributions defrayed the costs of the reception and helped underwrite the costs of travel for 14 speakers, including several speakers from developing regions. The participation of speakers from developing countries was a key objective of Conference organizers.

HOSTING OF FEMALE SPEAKERS , CONFERENCE RECEPTION

On the first day of the Conference, Mrs. Nane Annan, wife of the Secretary-General, hosted a luncheon for the female speakers at the Conference at her Manhattan residence. On the second day, a gala Conference reception, organized by the NGO/DPI Executive Committee, was held at Cipriani, one of New York’s premiere reception centres. The Secretary-General, the Deputy Secretary-General and the Presidents of the fifty-fourth and fifty-fifth sessions of the General Assembly, as well as a number of high-level United Nations officials, Conference speakers and some 600 NGO representatives, attended the reception. The Secretary-General and the President of the fifty-fifth session of the General Assembly, Mr. Harri Holkeri, made brief statements.

MEDIA OUTREACH

The media programme organized by the Planning Committee represented the most intensive outreach effort in the Conference’s history and included outreach through regular media channels as well as new media. To take advantage of the worldwide audience available over the Internet, live Web-casts of the opening and closing sessions were arranged.

The media sub-committee took an active, hands-on, in-person approach to promoting the Conference to a broad range of target audiences. Focusing on the special skills of Conference speakers and on the high-interest thematic issues dealt with by the panels, media sub-committee members approached United Nations publications, radio and television; daily and weekly New York media; national media, wire services and syndicates; press, radio and TV; and ethnic media and social publications, as well as the newsletters of NGOs associated with the Department of Public Information.

These activities resulted in several requests for interviews with keynote speakers, NGO representatives and the Chief of the DPI/NGO Section, and a strong media presence at each plenary session (see full media report in Annex 1).

VIDEOCONFERENCING AND PARALLEL NGO FORUMS

Several United Nations Information Centres organized parallel conferences, seminars and other events in support of the Annual Conference. United Nations Information Centres in Brussels, Buenos Aires, Mexico City and Port of Spain and United Nations Information Services in Vienna and Geneva made arrangements for live videoconferencing of the opening session on 28 August.

In conjunction with the live videoconference from Headquarters, UNIC Mexico City organized a forum for 50 NGO representatives. A follow-up session to discuss the issues raised at the Conference was held on 27 September. UNIC Buenos Aires in cooperation with the School of International Relations at the University of Belgrana invited 35 NGO representatives, UN system partners and local government officials to the opening ceremony. UNIC Port of Spain invited 54 representatives of NGOs and of the international community to the videoconferenced opening ceremony and presented them with information kits about the Conference.

To promote the DPI/NGO Conference, UNIC Brussels organized a special NGO Workshop to prepare for the Millennium Assembly. Some 26 national and international NGO representatives from Belgium, the Netherlands and Luxembourg participated in the Workshop, which focused on roles for NGOs in the United Nations events and conferences in the year 2001. As a result, NGOs interacted with government representatives and together decided to further coordinate the 2001 events.

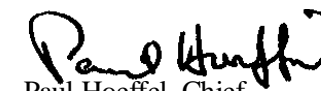
UNIC Islamabad organized a one-day forum, in cooperation with the World Muslim Congress, on 30 August. Participants debated the issues presented at the Conference and adopted a statement reiterating their support for the work the United Nations. On 31 August, UNIC New Delhi organized a one-day seminar for 100 NGO representatives. The seminar, which was attended by senior Indian dignitaries and the press, replicated the DPI/NGO Conference plenaries.

SURVEY

Twenty five per cent of attendees responded to the DPI/NGO Conference survey. The Monitoring and Evaluation Unit of the DPI Communications and Coordination Service examined responses to the survey. Results show that participants were generally satisfied with the Conference. Of the 284 completed questionnaires received, 45 per cent of the respondents gave the Conference top marks, saying it covered the subject matter “very well”. Almost as many respondents (40 per cent) said the subject matter was covered “fairly well” by the Conference.

(See survey results in Annex II.)

Further information, including the Conference programme, available texts of speeches, photos and press releases, may be obtained at the Web site of the DPI/NGO Section (www.un.org/dpi/ngo-section) or from the DPI/NGO Resource Centre, Room L-1B-31 at UN Headquarters, in New York.



Paul Hoeffel, Chief
Non-Governmental Organizations Section
Department of Public Information

CONFERENCE PROGRAMME

Monday, 28 August 2000

Opening Session General Assembly Hall



Opening session of the Conference: Kofi Annan, United Nations Secretary-General, Kensaku Hogen, Under-Secretary-General for Communications and Public Information and Theo-Ben Gurirab, President of the fifty-fourth session of the General Assembly

- Introduction :** Kensaku Hogen+, Under-Secretary-General for Communications and Public Information, United Nations
- Addresses :** Theo-Ben Gurirab+, President of the fifty-fourth session of the General Assembly
Kofi Annan*, Secretary-General of the United Nations
- Keynote Addresses :** Hanna Suchocka+, Member of Parliament, Poland
Jaime Lerner+, Governor of the State of Paraná, Brazil
Hanan Ashrawi*, Secretary-General, Palestinian Initiative for the Promotion of Global Dialogue and Democracy
- NGO Welcome:** Elaine Valdov+, Chair, NGO/DPI Executive Committee
Dianne Dillon-Ridgley, Chair, NGO/DPI Planning Committee
Afaf Mahfouz+, President, Conference of NGOs in Consultative Relationship with the United Nations (CONGO)

Afternoon Session

The 1990s: Action Not Promises

This panel focused on the implementation of the action plans of the major United Nations and NGO conferences of the 1990s. The tasks are enormous, diverse and interlinked. It is a key responsibility for NGOs to monitor the implementation of these action plans and identify ways in which they can work in partnership with the United Nations and Governments in achieving sustainable development for all. The panel discussed how NGOs can work in cross-sectoral civil society campaigns to mobilize the necessary political will and financial resources. How do we set priorities for these campaigns and how do we carry them out?

- Moderator :** Anwarul Karim Chowdhury+, Permanent Representative of Bangladesh to the United Nations
- Panellists :** Nitin Desai, Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs, United Nations
Ann Pettifor, Director, Jubilee 2000 Coalition UK
Anne Walker, Executive Director, International Women's Tribune Centre
Eimi Watanabe, Assistant Administrator and Director, Bureau for Development Policy, United Nations Development Programme

* Speech available on www.un.org/dpi/ngosection

+ Copy of speech available upon request

Tuesday, 29 August 2000

Morning Session

The New Democratic Diplomacy: Civil Society as Partner with the United Nations and Governments

This panel discussed practical application of the New Democratic Diplomacy referring to the working partnership between Governments, the United Nations and civil society. Success requires the close collaboration of all three actors. The New Democratic Diplomacy recognizes that when Governments alone negotiate problems, voices of civil society are rarely heard and the desired results are not often achieved. In recent years, it has been demonstrated that international negotiations can be greatly facilitated by the inclusion of civil society partners. For example, the Advisory Opinion on the Illegality of Nuclear Weapons handed down by the International Court of Justice is the result of civil society bringing the issue of nuclear weapons to Governments.

Moderator : Jayantha Dhanapala*, Under-Secretary-General for Disarmament Affairs, United Nations

Panellists : Alejandro Bendaña*, Director, Centro de Estudios Internacionales
Betty Murungi+, Member, International Federation of Women Lawyers—Kenya Chapter
Indira Rosenthal*, Counsel, Human Rights Watch
Pierre Schori*, Permanent Representative of Sweden to the United Nations

Afternoon Session

Humanitarian Intervention: Roles for Civil Society

This panel focused on the policy of humanitarian intervention as it relates to NGOs and their interaction with decision-making bodies of the international community, particularly the United Nations. In Iraq, in Kosovo and in other conflict areas, the international community has intervened militarily in the face of threats or incidents of massive human rights violations, in the context of the evolving redefinition of national sovereignty. It is recognized that civil society should play a greater role in early warning and preventive diplomacy to avoid large-scale human rights violations and interventions. In the event of intervention, some argue for a stronger role for civil society in the decision-making processes regarding intervention and its aftermath.

Moderator : Gert Rosenthal, Permanent Representative of Guatemala to the United Nations

Panellists : Holly Burkhalter, Advocacy Director, Physicians for Human Rights
Patricia Durrant+, Permanent Representative of Jamaica to the United Nations
Hibaaq Osman+, President, Center for the Strategic Initiatives of Women

Wednesday, 30 August 2000

Morning Session

Best Practices: Advancing Our Shared Agenda

After a great deal of trial and error, many development programmes and civil society initiatives have produced desired results: real progress towards sustainable development and human security based on respect for human rights. What works? What is common to organizing campaigns around landmines or debt cancellation? What are the factors that contribute to successful negotiations regarding global warming and international laws? What are the elements of development policies that produce successful change in rural areas? What policies enable multi-ethnic societies to overcome fratricidal conflicts? What allows women to participate in community decision-making for the first time?

Moderator : Yoriko Meguro+, Professor, Department of Sociology, Sophia University

Panellists : Arnold Hiatt*, Chairman, Business for Social Responsibility
Mats Karlsson*, Vice President for External Affairs and United Nations Affairs, World Bank
Motarilavao Hilda Lini, Director, Pacific Concerns Resource Centre
Kumi Naidoo, Secretary-General, CIVICUS: World Alliance for Citizen Participation

Afternoon Session

An Economic Vision That Works: A Dialogue

The implementation of the action plans of the 1990s requires economies that support and promote sustainable development on a global basis. Current economic paradigms have not been able to eradicate poverty; indeed, some assert that they frequently foment conflict and demand a level of growth that will eventually consume the planet. This panel provides a discussion regarding our options and explores the economic initiatives that might be undertaken at the regional, national and international levels to reorient economic policies towards equitable sustainable development. How do we address the seemingly unbridgeable gap between North and South? How do we manage the undesirable elements of globalization?

Moderator : Jacqueline Grapin, President, The European Institute

Panellists : Carlos Fortin, Deputy Secretary-General, United Nations Conference on Trade and Development
Khadija Haq+, President, Mahbub ul Haq Human Development Centre
Arthur Mbanefo, Chairman, Group of 77 Developing Countries and China

Closing Session

New Responsibilities for Civil Society

Speakers : Abdelaziz Bouteflika*, President of Algeria
Malia Craver*, Kupuna for Queen Lili'uokalani Children's Centre
Ralph Nader*, Founder, Public Citizen

*Speech available on www.un.org/dpi/ngosection

+Copy of speech available upon request

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PRÉCIS OF PRESENTATIONS:

Global Solidarity: The Way to Peace and International Cooperation

28 August 2000



Millennium Assembly President, Harri Holkeri, Conference Chair Dianne Dillon-Ridgley and Secretary-General Kofi Annan

OPENING ADDRESSES

KENSAKU HOGEN, Under-Secretary-General for Communications and Public Information, welcomed participants for the fifty-third annual DPI/NGO Conference, which he hoped would reflect the most experienced and diverse voices of the United Nations community, national and local governments and civil society activists. He said that their perspectives are connected to a deep commitment to the notion of partnership and that participants will explore ways to move such partnerships from rhetoric to practice, which is currently one of the challenges before the United Nations.

THEO-BEN GURIRAB, President of the fifty-fourth session of the General Assembly, said that the theme of this year's Conference—"Global Solidarity: The Way to Peace and International Cooperation"—focuses on making growing partnerships between the United Nations and civil society a living reality. It will be a challenge over the next three days to discuss all aspects of that topic and make suggestions for consideration and implementation by Member States as well as by business, labour and others in civil society. He said that at the moment there is a growing spirit of inclusion. Many Governments and world leaders have realized that NGOs must be active players for the achievement of goals on sustainable peace and development. Speaking to a gathering of 1,700 representatives of over 400 NGOs, he said, "This Organization, quite simply, needs you and your innovative ideas, and all of us have come to see that we have shared agendas that require concerted efforts to advance." At the conclusion of the upcoming Millennium Summit on 8 September, he said, world leaders are expected to adopt an outcome document complete with a renewed and collective commitment to, and a road map for, moving the United Nations towards realizing its goals of peace, human security, cooperation, poverty eradication and sustainable development. While that Declaration is addressed to Governments, NGOs must work to ensure its implementation. Another area, he said, where NGOs play a key role is in the ratification of many outstanding treaties and conventions that have been adopted over the years. "I look to you to do what you do well: galvanize the Governments into action." At the beginning of

his Presidency, he had highlighted a number of pressing issues he believes the international community needs to address urgently, such as globalization, armed conflicts, gender equality, children affected by wars, the refugee crisis and the HIV/AIDS pandemic. All of them pose tremendous challenges for both Governments and civil society alike and require collaboration on finding concrete solutions. In conclusion, he said that the United Nations belongs to all its Member States, including the NGOs. "There is no escaping the fact that we are linked together on this ship of life," he said. "As such we will sink or swim together."

KOFI ANNAN, Secretary-General of the United Nations, felt that the beginning of the new millennium is the time to give real meaning to the concept of political will. He gave the example of a gathering of NGOs at the Millennium Forum in May last year and the kind of leadership that is needed in global partnerships. The result of that meeting was a Declaration and Plan of Action, which spoke of the biggest challenges of the times. Not only was it a resounding expression of support for the United Nations from the peoples of the world, but it also spelled out an agenda very close to the set of objectives he would pose for consideration at the Millennium Summit. Within the Declaration, NGOs have serious concerns about globalization's negative aspects. He said that arguing against globalization is like arguing against the law of gravity. However, it did not mean that it should be accepted as a law that allows only heavyweights to survive. On the contrary, it should be made into an engine that lifts people out of hardship and misery, and not a force that holds them down. He went on to say that strong partnerships must be forged to help manage the world economy in the global mission to reduce poverty. It also means asking "all our partners to be transparent, so that the world can see that they are playing their part in full". He also said that NGOs are the United Nations' best defence against complacency, the bravest campaigners for honesty and the boldest crusaders for change.

Kofi Annan

for change. He acknowledged that the relationship between the United Nations and civil society can never be measured merely by the numbers of NGOs attending global conferences or participating in meetings at UN Headquarters, saying, “what matters even more is what happens out there in the world and on the ground”. Whatever their main activity, NGOs have shown time and again a courage, a character and a vision that should be the envy of all nations.

HANNA SUCHOCKA, Member of Parliament of Poland, outlining the societal and political transformation of her country, said its emerging civil society is determined to function in the situation that exists within the State. At the time of partitions, independent social ties had served to offset the hardships of the system and it was believed that a person must organize against the State. At the same time, in countries in the West, the essence of a civil society had not been opposition towards but rather independence from the State. It did not emerge to fight the State, but to complement

The continuing discussion in Poland on the role of NGOs has concentrated on concrete organizational problems and legislative proposals. It does not have an ideological or philosophical character and takes place in an atmosphere of complete affirmation of NGOs as democracy-expanding factors.

Hanna Suchocka

and support it in areas where it was less effective. During Poland’s political transformation in the last decade, that difference had influenced the genesis of NGOs there. She said that a number of activists in the non-governmental sector are dissatisfied with the current legal system. In Poland, consequent discussion on the role of NGOs has concentrated on concrete organizational problems and legislative proposals. That dialogue does not have an ideological or philosophical character and takes place in an atmosphere of complete affirmation of NGOs as instruments to expand democracy. She said that the recent World Trade Organization meeting in Seattle has gone unnoticed by NGOs in Poland. However, the condition of the Polish non-governmental community does not reflect the popularity of liberal conceptions as a strong backlash to communism. She continued to state that Polish reformers, and the architects of the country’s political transformation, acknowledge the role of the non-profit sector in the development and stabilization of democracy. However, the priority has been decentralization; tasks have been transferred to local governments and social care has been commercialized. Furthermore, 10 years after its political transformation, the Polish political elite still treats NGOs as significant but less important partners in public life. Therefore, to achieve the position they deserve within the Polish State, NGOs will have to raise their level of professionalism and prove their integ-

ity by increasing the transparency of their endeavours.

JAIME LERNER, Governor of the State of Paraná in Brazil, stated that poverty, ignorance and the significant environmental problems affecting many people are unacceptable debts that can never be settled if a global, strategic effort is not put in place. To achieve peace, ways to distribute wealth and knowledge must be created more rapidly through the participation of people of all nations. So far, he said, solidarity has been just a remedial measure that has failed to produce long-lasting results. It is therefore necessary, he explained, to begin practicing solidarity as a preventive effort. That will generate better opportunities for everyone. The best solutions will grow from shared interests, such as the environment and market issues. The rich, he stated, have con-



tracted a large debt with the environment by depleting natural resources and producing pollution. Meanwhile, people in poorer countries can only resort to nature for food and are

I propose the creation of a United Nations “Solidarity Bonus”. It would be a compensation instrument among nations. Any country preserving the environment would issue an environmental bond to be exchanged for a social bond, receivable either in the form of a financial debt rebate or as direct social investment.

Jaime Lerner

also owed a greater social debt—unfortunately, enormous financial debts hinder their development. In other words, everyone is a debtor—which calls for an all-encompassing settlement of accounts. Therefore, he continued, while compensation involving environmental currency is already being practised, such action should also be extended and implemented to be of greater social value. He suggested that the United Nations should create a “Solidarity Bonus”, whereby any country preserving the environment will issue an environmental bond to be exchanged for a social bond. These bonds will be receivable either in the form of a financial debt rebate or as direct social investment. That proposal

can greatly reduce world poverty. It is a fast relief formula to alleviate the suffering of the poor, and the rich will experience environmental gain and economic profit.

HANAN ASHRAWI, Secretary-General, Palestinian Initiative for the Promotion of Global Dialogue and Democracy, said that during the intifada, individuals made a decision to take risks at a cost to their own life and stand up collectively to injustice, thus upsetting the power equilibrium. She said her people “articulated a new discourse—the language of the disempowered, which was always excluded from polite and official discourse”. In this way, prevailing stereotypes and labels are destroyed and internal solidarity is established. Popular committees and neighbourhood communities are a unique experience of Palestinians under occupation, and in a way that means no centralized government. She said that



the ongoing peace process represents an even greater risk than resisting military occupation and oppression. “Ours was an agenda of comprehensive peace, a just peace with a constituency. Therefore we needed to legitimize that peace process. And despite all its current flaws, at least there was a distinctive paradigm shift, particularly in perceptions and in relations between victim and oppressor. And that major transformation creates a global solidarity for peace.” She emphasized that there should be a willingness to step out of the safe havens of familiarity and beyond language characterized by platitudes. She asked, “How can globalization be imbued with human values and how can civil society intervene in the process? How can systems of accountability be set up and a moral code of ethics be established to govern globalization? Since there are now new definitions of power, authority and leadership means that mobilization and intervention are possible. The exploitation of people’s ignorance is no longer viable, because of access to information and technology.” She said the energy and power in the room today has to be mobi-

lized so that people are actively included in history. Speed, efficiency and timely intervention are now widely available and open the door to effective integration and participation. She also believed that all sorts of simplistic definitions are being challenged by globalization, and concepts such as territory, geography and sovereignty have opened up widely. The other side of globalization is the celebration of pluralism and cultural diversification. Globalization can exist only if there is genuine respect for unique identity. Also, new systems of accountability and intervention must be looked at. The system of government responsibility must be redefined. The road to peace must always precede the outbreak of conflict and violence. She said it is not enough to say what is wrong with the status quo, but it is also necessary to have viable alternatives.

We must not discount the will to step outside the constraints of the moment, the safe havens of the familiar image and the redundant or repetitive pattern of the closed language of formulaic jargon.

Hanan Ashrawi

Additionally, a definitive stance is needed to combat discrimination and injustice. There is a commitment to justice, since that is an area in which one could be neutral. Civil society has been the first to talk of human rights. It can cut across traditional defining boundaries and even territorial ones. Palestinians are now striving for the legitimization of two cultures: one of democracy and one of peace. Issues are the rule of law, democracy, human rights, institutions and peacemaking based on justice and parity. Even though Palestine is not a State it must be recognized as an equal among nations, she stressed.

ELAINE VALDOV, Chair, NGO/DPI Executive Committee, expressed concern about the level of communication maintained with NGOs that do not have a presence at the United Nations Headquarters. She said that the Executive Committee is working to heighten partnerships between those NGOs and the United Nations in order to strengthen outreach to more people around the world. The convening of the Conference can be considered a celebration, because it demonstrated a cooperative effort to create global solidarity through the creation of a new diplomacy between civil society, Governments and the United Nations and because of the joint efforts of the NGO community to accomplish goals of the past decade’s UN World Summits and the NGO Conferences of the Millennium. One future vision points to a world of widespread prosperity, peace and stability resulting from economic reform, technological innovation and the integration of developing regions into the global economy. On the other hand, the future may be a fortress world in which the rich become richer, leaving a large number of humanity behind. Or, as a third example, she described a transformed world,

where social and political change can lead to widespread sharing of power and prosperity and markets can serve social, environmental and economic goals. She went on to say that while no one can predict the future, a major global trend that may tip the balance is the rapidly growing movement of people working to create a world they want to live in.

DIANNE DILLON-RIDGLEY, Chair, NGO/DPI Planning Committee, said that the Conference intends to focus on the world community. As the final bridge to the Millennium Summit, NGOs realize that international cooperation, the political focus of that event, is broader than the United Nations itself. She said that this cooperation should also actively incorporate NGOs and civil society, including religious and spiritual associations, in re-examining and restarting a new global vision. To that end, a self-conscious society exemplified by the global meetings of the past decade should be created. While the forces of globalization can be very rough in 2000, enough should be learned from them to embrace the importance of human nature.

AFAF MAHFOUZ, President, Conference of NGOs in Consultative Relationship with the United Nations (CONGO), stated that the work of NGOs is helping to change the face of societies, in particular the way the public and private sector entities function. Another important indication of the change is that at least two important heads of State are individuals with former NGO experience, individuals for whom such organizations had campaigned actively while they themselves were imprisoned. In addition, academic institutions in North America and in Europe have included the work of NGOs in their curricula.

She said there is a need to help strengthen the solidarity of NGOs at the regional and local levels. That realization emerged from an Africa-wide consultation of NGOs held in 1998. Strong regional networks will facilitate communication all the way from local levels to global decision-making processes. The NGOs themselves have a responsibility to strengthen their working relationship in order to ensure more effective solidarity regionally, nationally and internationally. The discussions to be undertaken in the next few days would provide insight on future effective actions to reach an ultimate goal of true international peace.



Opening session in the General Assembly Hall: Afaf Mahfouz, Hanan Ashrawi, Hanna Suchocka, Nane Annan and Governor Jaime Lerner

PANEL: THE 1990s: ACTION NOT PROMISES

ANWARUL KARIM CHO WDHURY, Ambassador, Permanent Representative of the People's Republic of Bangladesh to the UN, said that the United Nations Charter

Four elements are critical for reflecting the aspirations of NGOs. They need to have recourse to better advocacy, more energy to build informed constituencies, more networking skills and partnerships for effective implementation of action.

Anwarul Karim Chowdhury

reflects the spirit of NGOs through the use of the words "we the peoples". NGOs are becoming a stronger force through the spread of democracy, advances of technology and the interconnective forces of globalization. The role of States as actors has changed to that of providers in a global world. Currently, there is a need for stronger States, so that effective partnerships with civil society can be built. The United Nations has continued to build its partnerships with NGOs, and the Organization has realized that NGO skills are required so that all can live in greater freedom. The Conferences that were held during the last decade were indicative of that realization, and their fulfilment can thus begin with a coordinated and integrated approach, with NGOs functioning as partners and advocates. The question is how that partnership can be institutionalized at the international level. He said that there should be full and formal representation of NGOs within the United Nations. NGOs have a wealth of information gathered from years of experience on the ground, and their advocacy and coalitions are also necessary for encouraging adherence to international and legal instruments and treaties, such as the Statute of the International Criminal Court. Furthermore, four elements are critical for reflecting the aspirations of NGOs: they need to have recourse to better advocacy, more energy to build informed constituencies, more networking skills and partnerships for effective implementation of action.

NTIN DESAI, Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, said that perhaps one of the most important things to happen in the 1990s was the tremendous increase in involvement by NGOs, not only in the United Nations but also internationally. The 1990s were qualitatively and quantitatively different from what had been experienced in the past. A new dimension has been brought into international relations that was missing from prior approaches: that of groups examining problems not from national interest but from issue-based perspectives. That new element, he continued, has had a profound effect on the conference process and is clearly one of the most important outcomes of the 1990s. The subsequent changes have modified the ways in which international poli-

tics functions. NGOs, for example, are largely responsible for the landmines treaty. Today, the fact that debt relief is on the agenda of the highest forums is due, in no small part, to the efforts of coalitions of NGOs. He also cited the coalitions behind the International Criminal Court and the issue of child soldiers. He said that while the 1980s had no real time for poverty eradication or debt relief, and the advancement of women was always treated as a subsidiary issue, all that changed enormously in the 1990s when the Conferences succeeded in raising the level at which certain key issues are examined. Those same issues are now receiving attention at the level of heads of State. International organizations now have a clear agenda to pursue. Those, however, he explained, are some of the gains. Addressing the shortfalls, he said each Conference is not just looking to place issues at the top of the policy agenda. There is an additional purpose: to link issues with the mainstream of development policy. New ideas are expected to re-energize the mechanics of development assistance and other related areas. He cautioned, however, against insisting on action and arguing that getting agreements in words is not enough. Values are important, and so, by extension, are shared values articulated in words.

ANN PETTIFOR, Director, Jubilee 2000 Coalition UK, said that

processes of globalization involve the flow of finance. If limits are not set for the flow, catastrophe will be the result, particularly in the area of debt. At the moment, there is a grievous gap in relations between inter-

national creditors and national debtors. To close that gap, a new process incorporating justice and forgiveness is needed. She insisted that the authorities of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) play a major role in that process. The IMF has so

The International Monetary Fund (IMF) has so far played the role of witness, plaintiff, judge and jury in the court of international finance, leading to reckless lending and borrowing. An independent person must be appointed to oversee the levels of indebtedness, determine priorities and impose and monitor conditions for debt cancellation.

Ann Pettifor



far played the role of witness, plaintiff, judge and jury in the court of international finance, leading to reckless lending and borrowing. She quoted the Secretary-General's Millennium Report proposal for a new approach to be considered in the future, in the form of a

debt arbitration process to balance the role of sovereign creditors and national debtors. However, a number of NGOs, including the one she represents, usually encounter extreme bureaucratic procedures in their relations with the United Nations. She cited the example of her own organization, which found it difficult to acquire accreditation with the Economic and Social Council. While the United Nations can play a pivotal role in implementing the Secretary-General's proposal, there is no time for debate on the issue when countries are disintegrating into insolvency. She suggested that an independent person be appointed to oversee the levels of indebtedness, determine priorities and impose and monitor conditions for debt cancellation. The United Nations can provide the framework for the process with the involvement of NGOs.

EIMI WATANABE, Assistant Administrator and Director of the Bureau for Development Policy at UNDP

explained that it is in the context of the globalization process, where actions and decisions taken outside of one's borders have negative and positive impacts within the country, that is where issue-oriented coalitions of NGOs become particularly important. She stressed the importance of having targets and goals. Specific goals that can be monitored would in turn enable a civil society to establish what goals are being achieved, identify them and attribute responsibility for what is not being done. Targets and goals not only are important in terms of national and international planning but are also important in indicating what is happening at the sub-national level in such areas as gender equality, for example. Turning to actions at the local level, she said the Conferences of the 1990s pointed to the fact that the old adage "think globally, act locally" must change to "think globally—act locally, nationally and globally". The 1992 Rio Conference was the first where development, the environment and poverty eradication came together and resulted in Agenda 21. That agenda not only is a global-level programme of action, but also encourages countries to develop local-level programmes of action. The year 2002 will bring in the 10-year review of the Earth Summit. It is important that the local-level process be put on the agenda. She said that the NGO involvement in monitoring this process is important. It not only ensures that progress is made in achieving goals, but also ascertains whether national policies are being applied. It is NGOs that ensure that national laws are being formulated in line with international commitments and verify whether Governments are revising national budgets to



reflect commitments made. Addressing the partnership between UNDP and NGOs, she said her organization sees itself as uniquely positioned because it has a global, regional and country-level role, and is very useful for partnerships with NGOs.

ANNE WALKER, Executive Director, International Women's Tribune Centre, addressing attempts by women's groups to provide information through the use of modern technology, made brief comments on an Internet project which originated from the Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing in 1995. She said that during that event it became clear that many women need a voice as well as more information on what is being done by NGOs regarding gender issues. Although it was realized that most women had no access to the Internet, a group of women had decided to use that medium with the hope of establishing a system to incorporate global and regional Web sites to continue the Beijing+5 discussion. She noted that the Web sites, which address 12 issues, are also used as a clearing house for information on United Nations plans and to discuss NGO access to the Organization's meetings. To enable women's access to the Internet, about 42 workshops and training courses are already being conducted around the world.

DISCUSSION SEGMENT

NITIN DESAI, in response to a question as to why NGOs were being ignored by several agencies and how the United Nations could be reformed to go beyond promises to action, said that NGOs would be paid close attention by the United Nations. As far as the Organization is concerned, tackling the areas of humanitarian work, advocacy, human rights and women's issues would be impossible without close collaboration with organizations involved in these activities. He said that the work of the United Nations must also influence those in power, such as the Bretton Woods institutions and major corporations. The United Nations agenda for such issues as the environment and social progress is a part of the programmes of these large corporations. While the Organization does not legislate, it shapes other legislative and executive forums.

ANN PETTIFOR, answering a question on what role Pope John Paul III and other spiritual leaders play in the cancellation of debts by financial institutions, responded that leaders of Catholic, Protestant and other faiths have played key roles in this and that these religious leaders have reasserted the primacy of moral obligations. On being asked what the Millennium Summit can do to strengthen international democratic accountability, she said that one has to go back to looking at what can be done at the national and regional levels. The issue of corruption is important in the latter regard and Washington cannot monitor events in Harare

or Kampala. Therefore, monitoring has to be done locally, and societies have to strengthen the capacity to do that.

When asked about her organization's management of funds being mobilized throughout the world and if it has developed any critical criteria for debt relief, she said that the organization had given itself a deadline of the year 2000 to perform its tasks. Its focus was first on the Millennium Summit and then on the IMF and World Bank meeting in Prague in September. She said that at first Jubilee 2000 was against conditions being imposed by creditors in return for debt relief. She cited open markets and liberalized economies as two such conditions. However, countries from the South, which want tough conditions for debt relief, have lobbied Jubilee 2000. They want the elite of their countries to come under tough controls. They want those conditions to be determined in the indebted nations themselves. They also want the conditions to become mechanisms for establishing democratic accountability, and since this will be done locally the United Nations must be engaged in overseeing the process.

EIMI WATANABE, in answer to a question on how NGOs work to help empower the poor, given that according to the "2000 Poverty Report" one of the reasons for poverty is the lack of empowerment, said that the role of the United Nations Development Programme is to strengthen NGOs that work at the national level. For instance, the agency supports the development of national laws and the creation of umbrella organizations. The job of empowerment is the responsibility of NGOs.



Millennium Assembly President Harri Holkeri, speaks at the Conference reception

ANWARUL KARIM CHO WDHURY was asked how youth groups can be more involved in United Nations proceedings, given their poor presence in past Conferences. Mr. Chowdhury, citing the example of the Habitat II Conference in Cairo, said that there were special youth forums during its proceedings. Reports from such groups were finally incorporated into larger NGO reports. When asked for advice on acquiring skills to raise money by NGOs in countries that were recently freed from communism, he said that a number of the United Nations operational bodies are working in those countries—for instance, the United Nations Development Programme, the United Nations Children's Fund and the United Nations Population Fund. Resources are being diverted through NGO programmes and they are being empowered to stand alone, advocate effectively, raise funds and create decision-making centres.

ANNE WALKER, responding to an inquiry on whether an e-mail network can be established for collaboration between the United Nations agencies and the NGO community to discuss and negotiate certain key issues, said that a network can be established, but to do so would require that a process be put in place. This has been done as part of one of the training workshops at the NGO meeting in Seoul and she can facilitate such a process for interested parties.

On being asked what is being done for indigenous women, particularly those belonging to the Chiapas tribe in Mexico, she acknowledged that indigenous women have become a powerful force, especially since the Beijing+5 Conference, and the plight of the Chiapas women in Mexico occupies a portion of her organization's agenda.

PANEL: THE NEW DEMOCRATIC DIPLOMACY : CIVIL SOCIETY AS PARTNER WITH THE UNITED NATIONS AND GOVERNMENTS

JAYANTHA DHANAPALA, Under-Secretary-General for Disarmament Affairs, said that diplomacy has ceased to be a profession practiced by an elite group, as both globalization and the revolution in information technology have made it possible for new players to enter the field. The current revolution in the field of diplomacy stems from the rise of civil society, which in turn has become a foundation of policy, an independent source of knowledge for leaders, a medium for the conduct of diplomacy and a potent force for public accountability. That revolution is evident in the success he cited of the International Campaign to Ban Landmines and the campaign to establish an International Criminal Court. There is a danger, though, that the formula might be abused. High motivation, networking and mastery of the media are all multi-purpose tools that can be used for good or bad. Therefore, diplomacy must respond to the popular will, and at the same time it must continue to advance even in the face of opposition. To ensure durability and universality, a strategic partnership between civil society and sovereign nation-States is indispensable. Genuine progress in achieving disarmament goals, including the elimination of nuclear, chemical and biological weapons, as well as reducing stocks of small arms, must rest upon a solid foundation of an informed public. One of the greatest hurdles in any effort to make the process of disarmament more democratic is the unwillingness of Governments to provide relevant information, understandably for the sake of national security. Consequently, attempts to improve transparency require persistent efforts by, and on behalf of, civil society. The concept of a “new democratic diplomacy” means the existence of a strategy, he said, and participants in democratic political systems need clear goals and carefully coordinated tactics rooted in democratic origins that reflect popular will.

Jayantha Dhanapala

ALEJANDRO BENDAÑA, Director, Centro de Estudios Internacionales, said that globalization is nothing more than the militarized process of corporate rule of the world. He said that statements he had recently read and heard disturbed him. He cited, as an example, the Secretary-General’s opening address to the Conference, in which he said that globalization is like gravity and, therefore, impossi-

ble to deny. Bendaña argued that every day people fight gravity when they get out of bed. Mark Malloch Brown, Administrator of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), had said that open markets and private enterprise are the best generators of economic growth and could reduce poverty. Many people all over the world, and particularly in Latin America, would also disagree with that. He said that the current private sector management of the global economy is fundamentally anti-developmental in nature. The United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS) had stated that the Organization is open for business, but he warned that the private sector has its own agenda and the type of business that currently is being invited into partnership with the United Nations is disquieting. Furthermore, he felt that the Global Compact, announced by the Secretary-General last June, is bad news. One, therefore, has to be clear as to the limits of partnerships and who is included in those partnerships. Corporations thought only in terms of commodities—and he affirmed, “we are not commodities”, referring to civil society.

He said NGOs are being co-opted by Governments and international institutions. They are working, but he raised the question of under whose terms they are working. The NGOs need to make up their minds about which side they are on and who will stand with them. Some have been seduced, and others are being seduced. Many NGOs are donor-dependent and supply-driven. Others thought more of supporting rural development projects rather than rural workers. The “new diplomacy” must be rooted in the principle of social alliances. Included in that are issues such as support for land reform, ending military intervention and debt forgiveness. The history of humanitarian intervention, he said, reveals that such actions are performed to conceal the interests of major powers. The NGOs need to be invigorated by a new multiracial partnership and a genuinely new diplomacy.

BETTY MUR UNGI, Member, International Federation of Women Lawyers, Kenya Chapter, said that there have been a number of initiatives to increase the level of participation of women in national peace processes and women’s organizations have taken bold steps and used effective strategies to ensure their participation. She pointed to Liberia as an example, where women have effectively organized themselves through two national networks, resulting in a long-term sustainable peace plan that includes both men and women. In

The same Governments that proclaim the virtues of soft power and New Diplomacy and are shedding crocodile tears over poverty and violence in the world are also on the executive boards of the multilaterals, defending the very policies that help produce poverty and death.

Alejandro Bendaña

addition, women in a number of other countries, including Sierra Leone, Sudan, Somalia, Rwanda, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Mali and Burundi, among others, are forming movements to promote peaceful resolutions to prevailing conflicts. She said that the Organization of African Unity (OAU) has always supported the inclusion of women’s civil society organizations in peace negotiation mechanisms, affirming their collective conviction that freedom, justice, peace, equality and dignity are legitimate aspirations of African women. Women have also participated in advocating the inclusion of gender-sensitive investigative techniques and inclusion of gender crimes in indictments that were brought to the Ad Hoc Tribunals for the Former Yugoslavia and for Rwanda. She continued that, more recently, women groups and activists have turned their attention to ongoing efforts to create an International Criminal Court, which advocates the inclusion of a gender perspective in the Statute of the Court. As a result, the Statute finally codifies as international law many of the crimes committed against women, which were previously ignored or unrecognized by the international community. The most important aspect of the negotiations is that civil society groups manage to get Governments to listen to their concerns.

INDIRA ROSENTHAL, Counsel, Human Rights Watch, addressing negotiations on the International Criminal Court, said that when the Court is established there will be, for the first time, international legislation governing crimes against humanity. The human rights NGO community will regard this development as a potential agent of change in the area of human rights protection. It will offer victims of human rights abuses the chance to validate their stories and to see violators brought to justice. She noted that the role of civil society in the negotiations for the Court has been held up as evidence of the implementation of the new democratic diplomacy. An extraordinary coordination of NGOs from all parts of the world has been formed, and that approach has ensured that gender crimes and crimes committed against children are addressed. Civil society organizations have brought high levels of expertise and technical assistance to the negotiations, which, in turn, has helped build stronger working relationships with Governments. However, she pointed out that civil society has been excluded, if negotiations become charged, thus affecting the ability of NGOs to influence the process. Such exclusion only compounds the lack of transparency in many areas, she said, citing the push by the United States to gain exemp-

As a result of the efforts by women groups and activists from the world over, the International Criminal Court Statute now stands as a codification of international law with an unprecedented level of gender integration reflected in the substance, procedure and structure of the Court.

Betty Murungi

tion for its nationals from the jurisdiction of the Court. Seen in that light, the ease with which the new democratic diplomacy can be discarded raises concerns over future participation by civil society in other forums.

PIERRE SCHORI, Ambassador, Permanent Representative of Sweden to the UN, said that no decision that is taken at the Millennium Assembly will have any lasting effect unless



it is met with the understanding or the approval of the citizens of the participating States. For anything to last in a democratic society, it must come from within and have grass-roots support. Social cohesion is very much needed in the era of globalization. The challenge therefore consists of reducing the gap between rich and poor on both national and international levels. He hoped that when world leaders gather for the Millennium Summit, they will not only take a hard look at how the United Nations is managed and organized, but also see how their own societies are managed and organized. The positive effects of globalization must be inclusive and must benefit all, he said. He praised NGOs for working in a very flexible manner, gathering great knowledge and understanding of the areas in which they operate, and also for contributing to a much-needed transparency in negotiations, which makes them excellent partners in development cooperation. By working with NGOs, he said, international solidarity enjoys widespread popular support. Falling percentages in official development assistance (ODA), he continued, is not only a humanitarian disgrace, especially in times of unbelievable wealth creation, but also a prescription for a more unjust, unsafe, violent and ugly world. “The message is there for all of us to see: as long as there is no justice in the South, there will be no peace in the North,” he said. United Nations peacekeeping operations have become more complex and multifunctional in the post-cold-war period. However, the Organization lacks both the experience and the expertise to handle such tasks alone. What is really needed is a civilian standby force. Crisis management is not needed if violence can be prevented before it occurs, since civil society often possesses insight and knowledge of local conditions that can help give a better understanding of the root causes of conflicts. He concluded by saying that he hopes perhaps one day it will be possible to have a directly elected civil assembly attached in some form to the General Assembly—since the United Nations Charter speaks of “We the peoples” and not “We the States”.

DISCUSSION SEGMENT

PIERRE SCHORI, in response to a question on how the United Nations could strengthen accountability at all levels, considering that there are very few mechanisms to govern globalization, said that transparency and accountability begin at the national level and that transparency is one of the pillars of democracy. There is very little insight on globalization, but global impact can be used to monitor larger corporations.

JAYANTHA DHAN APALA, on being asked about the poor presence of young people at the Conference, said that the organizers would take a note of it and try to rectify the situation. Meanwhile, he explained, the United Nations itself usually encourages participation by the student community in its activities.

ALEJANDRO BENDAÑA replied to a question regarding how it can be determined that Latin America is able to repay its debt, and at what cost, by saying that many of the NGOs in the South are advocating non-payment of debts. Assuming there is a debt to be paid and if Latin American Governments should agree to pay that debt, then he proposes that the United

Nations should help assess what is the legitimate debt and how it can be repaid.

BETTY MUR UNGI commented after a suggestion that, although it had been said that information technology would bridge the communications gap by the year 2000, it does not seem to be the case in Africa. She said that a cursory glance at the problems facing the African continent will reveal that the health issue is a priority and it needs more attention than purchasing computers. The majority of the African population, she elucidated, lives below the poverty line and therefore priority must be placed on calls for debt cancellation and relief.

INDIRA ROSENTHAL, on being asked whether the establishment of the International Criminal Court is premature and how the international community can ensure that the United States participates in it, replied that it is rather late to establish the Court as some States have problems with bringing perpetrators of human rights abuses to court, among other reasons, and that in order to ensure that the United States becomes a part of the Court, people can embark on a letter-writing and advocacy campaign.

PANEL: HUMANITARIAN INTERVENTION : ROLES FOR CIVIL SOCIETY

GERT ROSENTHAL, Ambassador, Permanent Representative of Guatemala to the UN, said that humanitarian intervention was put on the front burner by Secretary-General Kofi Annan at the inauguration of the fifty-fourth session of the General Assembly last year and has also been included as part of a broader approach to conflict prevention. He cited Latin America as the receiver of several such unrequested interventions. But, during the past 10 years, it has been increasingly felt that impunity has to end, at both the national and international levels. He emphasized that the international community is not prepared to accept massive violations of human rights on the part of any Government. He noted that the problems now being faced concerned decisions to be made regarding the effectiveness and timeliness of humanitarian intervention. He asked: What does humanitarian intervention mean amid the changing concepts of sovereignty and international relations? What are its implications for the United Nations and civil society? Humanitarian intervention is certainly a concept that offers many avenues for debate.

HOLLY BURKHALTER, Advocacy Director, Physicians for Human Rights, stated that the concept of humanitarian intervention is loathed by many sectors of society in the United States. It is perceived to be a bad idea, but the reality is different. The Kosovo experience has skewed perceptions of humanitarian intervention. Many other situations, such as Rwanda and Bosnia/Herzegovina, can make the case for intervention and there are few occasions where military force is actually needed. Furthermore, the United States can make other contributions. She gave the example of how the United States can settle its financial debt with the Organization. She pointed out that, in addition to supporting the United Nations in other areas, the United States Government must be involved in, and committed to, preventing mass genocide. There will be times when an American military presence is required and intervention should not be ruled out in places where the United States has no military or other strategic interests. It is because of such policies that places like Rwanda suffered. Therefore, every occasion for intervention should be considered in the interest of stopping genocide and mass killing and thinking should be guided only by human rights pragmatism. If there is an international commitment to intervention, then there will be few occasions that require unilateral action by the United States.

PATRICIA DURRANT, Ambassador, Permanent Representative of Jamaica to the UN, said the international community is divided on the issue of whether intervention on humanitarian grounds should be accepted as a legitimate

and viable principle. She said that, during the fifty-fourth session of the General Assembly, the Secretary-General stated that the core challenge to the United Nations is to forge unity behind the principle that massive and systematic violations of human rights must not be allowed. While many welcome the views expressed by the Secretary-General, others express deep concern at the implications of any acceptance of such a principle of intervention. She said some feel international law does not provide for humanitarian intervention and it can easily be abused by States to advance narrow political interests. Those in favour of intervention argue that there is a need to protect individuals from large-scale human rights violations. Many find it important for State sovereignty to relent to the higher interest of protecting individuals under severe suffering and to place an increased emphasis on human rights. Therefore, they note that the Security Council should intervene in internal situations in order to avoid humanitarian crises. Hence, she said, the point is that while respect for sovereignty is a vital principle in international relations, it is necessary to take action in the face of massive human rights violations.

Patricia Durrant

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HIBAAQ OSMAN, President, Centre for the Strategic Initiatives of Women, stated that transparency should guide humanitarian intervention because if decisions to intervene are made purely to save human lives, then the NGO sector must be included in the process of decision-making, imple-



One of several parallel conferences organized by United Nations Information Centres; this one-day forum was organized by UNIC Islamabad, Pakistan.

mentation and follow-up activities. In countries where humanitarian interventions are undertaken, national NGOs are better informed about crises because many of those organizations deal directly with the target populations. In addition, when troops are being sent, they must be sensitized about human rights and the culture of the people of the country to which they are being sent. She said the citizens of many countries in the South have been trained to oppose colonialism and will, therefore, have questions when human rights abuses are committed by peacekeepers. During the conflict in Somalia, troops from Italy and Belgium allegedly committed atrocities against Somalis. In addition, a general of the peacekeeping force allegedly raped a 13-year-old boy. While it is important to intervene for humanitarian purposes, those persons did not have to be armed to the hilt to be able to carry out their functions. With regard to women's roles in humanitarian intervention, she said that women are not involved in such interventions except as subjects of such operations, invariably being seen as victims of conflicts and disasters and not as active and vibrant stakeholders in events. The very fact that women rarely serve in peacekeeping forces involved in such interventions illuminates the reality that women from around the globe, not just in the areas of conflict, rarely have a place at international negotiating and power brokers' forums.

For the first time in the history of the DPI/NGO Conference, the sitting President of the fifty-fifth General Assembly session, **HARRI HOLKERI**, addressed a gathering of the NGO community at an evening reception held at Cipriani on 29 August. He spoke on behalf of the **President of Finland**, **TARJA HALONEN**. Conveying the message of a significant move towards democracy and good governance in many countries, he said the participation of all citizens in the decisions that affect their lives is becoming more a rule instead of being an exception. Non-governmental organizations, and other actors of civil society, he said, have an important role to play in the work of the United Nations. Their contribution has been crucial in setting and implementing the global agenda, and in the related follow-up processes. NGOs also bring the United Nations closer to people. In the middle of summits, conferences and intergovernmental negotiations, it is forgotten at times that the Organization exists for the people, and that Governments, NGOs, the private sector and others alike should work together. He referred to the Secretary-General speaking

about "networking for change" and said that this networking must be made a success. He expressed that for the Finnish President the crucial issue is to involve civil society in all decision-making at the country level, since full opportunity must be given to NGOs and other non-State actors to have their voices heard in the future.

DISCUSSION SEGMENT

PATRICIA DURRANT, in response to a question on how it can be ensured that the Security Council will make the right decisions on humanitarian intervention, said that there are ongoing discussions in the Council on the issues of its membership and working methods and that Council members are sensitive to opinions being generated in their own countries. In that light, civil society and NGOs can play a role in Council decisions. She cited the situations in Rwanda and Sierra Leone as clear examples that public opinion had not been sensitized to what was going on in those countries. Furthermore, the actual effects of the Security Council will hinge on a number of things, such as whether new members will have the power of veto. The ongoing discussions on membership of the Council, she concluded, cannot be separated from those on its working methods.

On being asked if there is any body or entity within the United Nations system that is independent enough to guarantee the protection of civilians in armed conflict, she said that the issue is one of serious concern to members of the Council. While it is important to emphasize neutrality and impartiality, it is another thing altogether when armed groups masquerade as refugees in a refugee camp. She asked, how does a person separate innocent refugees from those who are responsible for the conflict? The United Nations peacekeepers are often faced with situations like that.

HOLLY BURKHALTER, when asked why no one had mentioned the ongoing bombing of Iraq and the death of nearly 5,000 children every month, either due to it or because of United Nations sanctions, responded by saying that the question of Iraqi sanctions is a tough one for both religious and pacifist communities in the United States who oppose force and hide behind embargoes. The Iraqi sanctions are indiscriminate, she said, and people should not automatically assume that the use of economic pressure is always preferable to military pressure in achieving an aim.

HIBAAQ OSMAN, after being asked how many human lives are being saved by United Nations sanctions, bombings and other incidents in Iraq, replied that the actions aimed at the Iraqi Government are a separate issue from the plight of the Iraqi people. She suggested that the United Nations must revoke sanctions against the country because Iraqi people are suffering. When asked whether the United Nations should intervene in the situation in Afghanistan, she replied in the

affirmative, saying that the actions of the Taliban are in contravention to the Islamic religion and that its treatment of Afghan women is inhumane.

PANEL: BEST PRACTICES : ADVANCING OUR SHARED AGENDA

YORIKO MEGURO, Professor, Department of Sociology, Sophia University, pointed out that the empowerment of women is the key to equality, development and peace. She said it was only in the past decade that the interlinking nature of global issues, such as development, environment, population, conflict and gender equality, has been recognized. It was at this time too that emphasis was placed on the partnership between Governments and NGOs.

While it has been recognized that gender issues are relevant to human development, progress in gender equality tends to be more nominal than substantive, and in many countries the domestic agenda is gender-insensitive.

Yoriko Meguro

Efforts made in the advancement of women prove to be a good example of attempts to construct a world in which freedom and human dignity can be enjoyed. She said relevant activities for the advancement of the status of women in the past 55 years could be characterized in four stages. During the first, which was in the years before 1975, focus was placed on securing the legal rights of women and on women's roles in economic development. At that time, the alleviation of poverty was the priority issue for nation-building and for women living in developing countries. The second stage emphasized the integration of women in development, in areas like employment, health and education. The third stage, beginning in 1985, marked a turning point in the history of the United Nations for women's advancement, as the concepts of gender and empowerment became accepted as strategies for achieving equality, development and peace. The changing international environment might characterize the fourth stage, she continued. A series of United Nations world conferences was designed to discuss development issues with greater participation of non-governmental organizations (NGOs). Outstanding among those was the Beijing+5 Conference in 1995 and its resulting Platform for Action, which identified 12 areas that needed to be approached from a gender perspective. However, she added, while it has been recognized that gender issues are relevant to human development, progress in gender equality tends to be more nominal than substantive, and in many countries the domestic political agenda is still gender-insensitive.



ARNOLD HIATT, Chairman, Business for Social Responsibility, said that the behaviour of business has often been associated with the exploitation of people, of natural resources and of indigenous cultures and values. It is therefore not hard to understand why so many think of the private sector as an adversary and not as an ally. The world, however, is changing in rather dramatic and desirable ways, as

is the private sector. Today's business leaders are much less inclined to insulate themselves and their thinking from the problems of the world in which they live. Some are beginning to understand that if today's young children are to succeed later as a productive workforce and provide leadership, they need help now. Clearly, business is the most powerful force in society, especially if it is willing to accept some moral and civic as well as financial leadership. It is difficult to imagine moving towards a more just society and a more sustainable economy without engaging the private sector and transforming its behaviour. One of the most promising developments of the times is the new cross-sector collaboration that is bringing the private and voluntary sectors together to promote the public interest. He said that in Bangladesh, for instance, a major effort to end industrial child labour involves a collaboration of local companies, their North American customers, the Government, the International Labour Organization (ILO) and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF). Enhancing those efforts is a cluster of intermediaries, which are part of the business community but have been formed to promote business practices that honour ethical values and demonstrate respect for people, communities and the natural environment. The mission of Business for Social Responsibility, he said, is to help companies define and meet standards of corporate citizenship and there is no doubt that the rising levels of corporate responsibility will be greatly enhanced with the help of civil society. The NGOs are in a particularly strong position to advocate for a new focus on human values as a guiding principle behind dynamic economies and healthy communities.

Arnold Hiatt

MATS KARLSSON, Vice-President for External Affairs and United Nations Affairs, World Bank, said that poverty reduction is a multidimensional process and the World Bank alone is unable to develop a poverty reduction agenda. It needs to join multiple development actors, and civil society is therefore an ideal partner.



Civil society involvement in Bank-supported operations began about 20 years ago, and that was the first time for the establishment of a formal, global mechanism for policy dialogue with NGOs. Since then, that relationship has expanded and emerging issues of concern have created mechanisms for dialogue on issues, such as the development of a Bank Forestry Strategy. About one half of the Bank's loans currently go to NGOs. He said that poverty is beginning to be understood as being influenced by factors of income deprivation, voicelessness, powerlessness and the loss of dignity. That understanding has led to the conclusions in the Bank's forthcoming world development report. People should be viewed as assets, and their capacities for knowledge and their ability to earn more income-enhanced. They must be taught to demand their rights,

People should be viewed as assets, and their capacities for knowledge and their ability to earn more income enhanced.

Mats Karlsson

which in turn leads to an empowerment that can secure communities from crises. Those lessons have been learned through engagement with civil society, and the Bank is committed to developing future programmes and projects in an environment of openness, as a sustainable way of doing business, by dealing with Governments and the entire society, including NGOs. He continued that it is a holistic method where consultations with civil society on country assistance strategies have escalated from 20 per cent, some 10 years ago, to 100 per cent currently, in projects undertaken in such places as Honduras, Ghana, Argentina and East Timor. But, he emphasized, results in all fields will remain unrealized unless they are underpinned by global cooperation.

MOTARILAVOA HILDA LINI, Director, Pacific Concerns Resource Centre, said that the first question that should be asked is “when will we discuss how Governments and the United Nations will work with civil society and NGOs, rather than when will NGOs and civil society work with Governments and the Organization?” Those two entities have built a lot of



fences around themselves. Yet civil society has been prepared to work with them from the very beginning. She said she grew up in an indigenous society where peace and human security were the paramount principles. Belonging to a tribe, family and clan provided social security. The right to land and control

When will we discuss how Governments and the United Nations will work with civil society and NGOs, rather than when will NGOs and civil society work with Governments and the Organization? These two entities have built a lot of fences around themselves.

Motarilavoa Hilda Lini

of it provided economic sustainability. Control of lives ensured peace and sustainable development at all times. Within an indigenous society, education was for everyone to grow up and be independent and more self-reliant, like her people of Vanuatu. Yet so many nations have been colonized, westernized and globalized, she said, that they now lived with systems that did not fit in with traditional lifestyles. She felt that today the world is living with a governing system that is out of date and does not respond to the people any more. Community government must replace political parties. The present system is corrupt and is killing children and future generations, yet it is upheld. “Why are we not taking control of our lives?” she asked. Civil society puts Governments in power, the same Governments that send representatives to the United Nations, she said. Why then do Governments and the United Nations continue to divide people? Without people there is no Organization. It is up to Governments and the United Nations to change mentalities, policies and visions, or the world will perish. History shows that revolutions are fought and won by civil society in rebellion against corrupt systems. That will happen again if things do not change. Today the world is characterized by lies. Governments and the United Nations are guilty of false promises and now, more than ever, truth and justice are crucial.

KUMI NAIDOO, Secretary-General, CIVICUS: World Alliance for Citizen Participation, said civil society currently faces a number of challenges, one of them being that of accountability; increasing influence gives rise to increasing responsibility. The second challenge is to recognize the values



and expectations of their constituencies. A question that the NGO community needs to ask itself is how they represent their constituencies in their work; too many organizations see citizens as beneficiaries and frame the poor as spectators. The third is social inclusion. One of the most important socially excluded groups is young people. They occupy the majority of the global population, and the NGO community itself needs to decide on how it is preparing a new cadre of leadership for civil society work. It is scandalous, he went on to say, that at the beginning of the new millennium fewer than 10 per cent of women occupy leadership positions in government, and therefore it is necessary for civil society to work more at achieving true gender equality. The next challenge is ensuring that the contradictions in global society networks are recognized. The reality is that there is an unequal power structure. Globalization—one of today's greatest contradictions—refers to the free flow of capital. However, that reference apparently does not include the free flow of human capital. As an example, he said that many participants at the Conference from countries in the South had a difficult time obtaining visas to attend the event. He asked if civil society has a true value base, stressing that it is another challenge the community faces. Furthermore, while the global community is advancing an agenda for the marginalized, the structure of the world should be considered. Inequality is growing and the global governance institutions appear to be unable to deal with the challenges emerging from globalization.

Kumi Naidoo

One of the most important socially excluded groups is young people. They occupy the majority of the global population, and the NGO community itself needs to decide on how it is preparing a new cadre of leadership for civil society work.

DISCUSSION SEGMENT

MATS KARLSSON, when asked what he thought is the Bank's view of the debt crisis, replied that the debt crisis was foreseen in the mid-1980s, yet it was only last year that the World Bank agreed on the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) Initiative. He hoped that the initiative would be examined at the Bank's annual meeting in Prague, and that by the end of the year, 20 countries would reduce their debt burdens to what he called “sustainability levels”. He also hoped that, eventually, country after country would be able to step out of the depths of debt crisis. He mentioned that access to capital markets is not easy and countries that want money to invest need access to capital and that carelessness in restructuring debt can lead to problems in accessing capital markets.

ARNOLD HIA TT, responding to a question on whether Business for Social Responsibility monitored sweatshops, said that the organization is not in the business of proselytizing, but works with partners such as the press and NGOs, particularly when dealing with the issue of sweatshops. When the press exposed a certain brand, the owner of the company decided to remove its operations from the countries involved and his own organization had been asked to set standards for those shops, which led to the establishment of the Fair Labour Commission.

MOTARILAVOA HILDA LINI, when asked if the ideal Vanuatu society could be restored in this heavily populous age, said that each country has to review the weakness in its society and decide on the way forward; traditions that are appropriate in Vanuatu might now be irrelevant in other places. She also said that many countries of the Pacific basin, which had been colonized, were subsequently forced to accept Western values. Traditional chiefs and leaders, also affected by colonization, were subject to manipulation and bribery.

KUMI NAIDOO, in response to questions on youth participation in developing countries, said that society should revert to traditional forms of culture and recreation. There should also be an investment for access by young people in developing countries to a large gamut of resources. On being asked how the problem of violence against women and children should be tackled, he said that such issues should be handled mainly by women's and children's NGOs. However, it is not primarily an issue for women: men are also involved. Consequently, only the symptoms of the problem are being dealt with.

PANEL: AN ECONOMIC VISION THAT WORKS: A DIALOGUE

JACQUELINE GRAPIN, President, European Institute, and panel moderator, said that it is important for a discussion to take place that addresses a viable economic vision. While not everyone agrees on the causes, the facts are well known: half of the world's people live on less than two dollars a day. The gap in per capita income between the richest fifth and the poorest fifth has widened tremendously over the past decade. At present, she said, 1 billion people are chronically hungry and the illiteracy rate in developing countries includes over half the population. The world's population will almost double by 2050 and it is clear that the current system cannot support it without increasing problems. So far, she noted, poverty has not been eradicated and this problem exists in some of the richest countries as well. She cited the example of the United States, where 17 per cent of the population lives below the poverty line. She emphasized that a new model of development has to be devised to address this problem. The challenge is to learn how to deal with that new reality—and institutions, Governments, NGOs and individuals are now taking a new look at the situation. As a result, new questions are emerging, such as: What should be the role of the State? How can good governance be rewarded? How can the efforts of NGOs and other civil society institutions be expanded? How can micro-finance be expanded to empower entrepreneurs, including women? What can be done to reduce poverty and suffering with the aid of information technology? These are the many questions that Ms. Grapin asked, hoping that some would be addressed.

ARTHUR MBANEFO, Chairman, "Group of 77" developing countries and China, said that during the past decades the international community has been engaged in soul-searching efforts on how to build a bridge between freedom from want and freedom from fear. The treaties and conventions of the 1990s have set acceptable standards of behaviour for Governments and individuals. For instance, it is now known that poverty eradication should be the primary goal of all Governments and NGOs, that violations of human rights are no longer to be tolerated, and that impunity must be abolished. Those instruments are mainly the products of a civil society, but the goals for universal well-being are yet to be met. Poverty and disease are rife, and ignorance and super-

The first urgent task facing the international community is to invent a new multilateral financial system to restore income and to build the capacity of millions; any future economic framework must have a human face and must not ignore the mass population.

Arthur Mbanefo

stition persist. He said that the people for whom the treaties and conventions are intended are yet to be reached. How, then, can Governments and the United Nations be meaningful to those people? The Governments of developing countries lack the wherewithal to reach the masses, and most of the policy measures envisaged by the international community are predicated on outdated social and economic paradigms. As a result, the first urgent task facing the international community is to invent a new multilateral financial system to restore income and to build the capacity of millions; any future economic framework must have a human face and must not ignore the mass population. It can no longer be business as usual when millions are excluded from the new economic policies. Furthermore, the goals set for the eradication of poverty will never be attained; migration to the North, and the subsequent brain drain, will continue; and strife and conflicts will perpetuate. Developing countries wish to operate as any others in the evolving global economy, and they must be able to work as credible partners. That can be accomplished—if those States are able to utilize their natural potential.

KHADIJA HAQ, President, Mahbub ul Haq Human Development Centre, said that while economic growth is essential, it must be achieved with a human face. Public policies to enhance the lives of all people miss the link between economic growth, the environment and society. This leads to poverty and environmental degradation (among other negative outcomes) in developing countries. The challenge of reducing poverty remains the most daunting task of policy makers, particularly in South Asia, and in spite of numerous efforts by Governments and civil society, the situation is becoming worse. For example, India still has the world's largest number of people living in poverty. The United Nations has set a new time-bound target to halve the number of people below the poverty line by 2015, she continued, and, to achieve that end, focus should be placed on such factors as pro-poor growth and the reduction of unemployment. In addition, the promotion of economic growth must be integrated into all national development policies. The vast majority of the poor is still illiterate, has bad health and has no sustainable income, indicating that poverty reduction has not been enough of a priority. She said that in order for the poor to experience the positive effects of globalization, Governments in South Asia needed to work closely with civil society groups to establish sustainable economic policies and build the capabilities of people. One of the most critical links in that process is the expansion of employment opportunities. But globalization is having an opposite impact by opening job opportunities for highly skilled people in urban centres. Another link, the achievement of gender equality, should have three characteristics: regulations governing equality

should be enshrined in States' constitutions; women's capabilities must be built; and economic opportunities should be provided through quotas.

CARLOS FOR TIN, Deputy Secretary-General, United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), hoped that the kind of dialogue exchange taking place at the Conference would continue to flourish. He said that at present there are many underlying suspicions about globalization. One view is that globalization is an inevitable process and that nothing will change it. That is a serious misconception. In fact, in terms of globalization, there are two phenomena at work. The first is a process of increased interaction across borders, specifically within the economic and information field. That is inevitable.

In terms of globalization, there are two phenomena at work. The first is a process of increased interaction across borders, specifically within the economic and information field. The second is a process of policy-making, and policy-making needs to be conducive to true human development.

Carlos Fortin

The second is a process of policy-making. That is not inevitable but requires choices and needs to be influenced. Policy-making needs to be conducive to true human development, he said. Both processes tend towards inequality and asymmetry. In the technological process, returns on sales are increasing. Those who already have, will have more. As far as policy-making is concerned, that is a power process at the global level. As a result, there is a tendency for the outcome to be biased towards the powerful. The problem of asymmetry needs to be addressed. The international trade system has to take the developing world into consideration. On debt, there has to be a major move to help



highly indebted countries. One solution is a massive increase in capital flows to developing regions. If aid to Africa doubles over a period of many years, it will allow the countries of Africa to break out of the dependency trap. That is a substantial proposal, but it is the kind of bold thinking that needs to be discussed now. All of those factors make it a difficult task to steer globalization. There is an agenda and it is ambitious, and all of the stakeholders need to be involved. But most importantly, the people of the United Nations have to be brought back into the decision-making process.

DISCUSSION SEGMENT

CARLOS FOR TIN, on being asked to give examples of principles and ideas that can be followed so that NGOs can be more effective, referred to the demonstrators at the recent World Trade Organization (WTO) Conference in Seattle, saying that the protests were ineffective because they occurred at a time when policies had already been set. He suggested that they should take place in capitals, the seats of national Governments, to force policy makers to take note. Also, the only way to make the international economic system more viable, development-friendly and enduring is to enable global systems to respond to developing countries and their citizenry.

KHADIJA HAQ, responding to the question on what steps can be taken to ensure that women and girls have more access to education, said that there are a number of constraints in providing education to women and girls, and financial setbacks are more rife because certain Governments have not given priority to girls' education, resulting in the practice of gender discrimination. She noted, after being asked what the first priority is in the eradication of poverty, that the main priority for reducing poverty is the improvement of the employment situation and the earning capability of the poor. It should not be considered a social welfare issue, she said. As for increasing the productive capacity of the poor, Governments should invest in areas where they live; the poor should have a stake in economic development, she emphasized.

CLOSING ADDRESSES

PANEL: NEW RESPONSIBILITIES FOR CIVIL SOCIETY

KENSAKU HOGEN, Under-Secretary-General for Communications and Public Information, said participants had been able to address a number of important issues, both in their substantive meetings and during their midday workshops, including the highly complex issue of the role of civil society in humanitarian intervention.

ABDELAZIZ BOUTEFLIKA, President of Algeria, set a precedent by being the first sitting President of a country to address a DPI/NGO Conference. He said that the rise of the



civil movement has broadened, revitalized, strengthened and solidified the framework for goodwill. The world is now in crucial need of a new impetus, especially when unbridled materialism, strong technical progress and inequity are multiplying and infringing on people's rights. He said NGOs are ethical dimensions that represent the values of solidarity, which might be able to change the negative trends of globalization and the cult of profit. The pre-

sent world order, replete with contradictions and inequalities, generates new dangers. Never before has there been such a great gap separating men from other men, rich from

poor, and South from North. Another paradox is the alienating mechanism of debt, wherein the poor are obliged to finance the rich and that situation is one without regulations or a corrective mechanism. Malnutrition, tension and conflict also siphon off resources and provoke death and destruction. States need to obtain currency through exports, but are being constrained by external forces. In many areas, the voices and actions of NGOs stand out, since they have worked to spread the culture of peace, end apartheid and curb nuclear proliferation. In flashpoints like Rwanda and Kosovo they have

NGOs are ethical dimensions representing the values of solidarity, which may be able to change the negative trends of globalization and the cult of profit.

Abdelaziz Bouteflika

helped to renew hope and reduce suffering. The NGO entry into world affairs has shaken classic multilateral and government structures. They have also been a true and powerful reality of the times, making a unique contribution to the building of a universal conscience free from manipulation. Addressing the negative aspects of NGOs, he pointed to their mistrust and hostility towards government and their tendency to reduce the State's role, especially in countries of the developing world. He said that the obstacles to good governance in the South are not excesses of the State, but signs that it is often too weak. If the State is to withdraw, tragedy can ensue. In his own country, he said, some NGOs have even challenged the right of the State to maintain public order. He said economic and social rights, which are elementary, are being ignored and flouted by millions of people and further aggravated by the globalization process. The countries of the South had welcomed the actions of certain NGOs at the WTO Ministerial Conference in Seattle in November 1999. Saluting the campaigns undertaken by NGOs in favour of debt relief in the developing countries, he said such actions clearly strengthen the defence of human rights. In closing, he offered Algeria as a location for future NGO conferences, saying that the world, more than ever, needs NGO action, and it needs the dream of society with a human face, where fraternity and understanding among men will prevail.

MALIA CRAVER, Kupuna for Queen Lili'uokalani Children's Center, stated that mankind's existence depends on the harmony maintained through love, honour, respect and reverence for each other. Therefore, peace can be achieved if the desire exists to establish a loving relationship with family, neighbours, friends and enemies. The word aloha (love) means that differences can be transferred to uniqueness. That means that a person's uniqueness can be felt and seen even through differences. She said the ancestors of Hawaiians, a seafaring and spiritual people with a tradition of island living, travelled the Pacific with double-hulled canoes for thousands of miles, even when the rest of the world continued to believe that the world was flat. The unique island living and traditions taught the importance and value of learning to get along with each other. The whole world today is like an island, she said. Technology, air transportation and communication have brought the different cultures of the world to each other's doorsteps, though mankind still faces the challenge of spreading love and lasting peace throughout the world—but the beginning of that responsibility rests with individuals, not with the capitals of the world. Human relationships must be improved and people must feel the need to serve and give in order to help others.

RALPH NADER, Founder of Public Citizen, explained that he thought that more than a need for solutions to future problems, there is a need to take action and apply previous approaches to existing ones. He said there is too much concentration of power and wealth in the hands of a few, and that



minority also controls these solutions to global problems, technologies and propaganda. Noting that most Governments do not recognize elementary human rights, he said that the focus should be placed on democracy and the de-concentration of power and wealth, and on how freedom can be defined as participation by all in power sharing. The concept of the public citizen, in contrast to the private citizen, is a person who engages in civil society with other citizen groups to confront injustice. The purpose of democracy is to break down power so that solutions arise away from a vested way of doing things—vested capital and vested interests. He said that the multinational corporate powers, such as giant pharmaceutical companies, banks and other financial industries, use a new form of capitalism that creates massive wealth and misdirects it so that only a few control that wealth. "*BusinessWeek*," he said, "once called the new capitalism a casino economy, an economy that grows massive wealth in misdirection so that a few command it against the interest of many." This disparity evolves down to the local, national and regional levels. The theory of democracy should be applied when building civic society. "Societies that have more justice are societies that need less charity," he said. The greatest advances in social justice result from civic actions. Leaving open options for revision in the light of new facts is an instrument of democracy, and education is another instrument that

can be applied in forwarding the principles of civic action, beginning with teaching young children the skills of citizenship and the practice of democracy. Addressing the issue of globalization, he said that corporate globalization is different from civic globalization. The difference is concentrated oligarchy versus broad-based participatory democracy. Globalization puts power in the hands of large corporations,

Societies that have more justice are societies that need less charity.

Ralph Nader

which are merging into larger entities. Those powerful bodies confront Governments with ultimatums such as loss of access because of their debt problems. Global corporations now pose a major threat to democratic processes in the world. The extremism and radicalism of the commercial environmental ventures are proceeding at an accelerated rate, as is technology whose ambition is to change the nature of nature. Those actions challenge the meanings of democracy, accountability and decision-making. He proposed that international trade agreements must also be renegotiated. It must be ensured that health safety becomes paramount due to international trade. He also spoke against corporate globalization, saying it is destructive to childhood, as it has become a homogenized mélange of pornography through advertisements and the sale of products. The world must declare itself in an emergency status, because it is currently spending billions of dollars on arms while watching thousands of children die each day from preventable causes. He said the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank are suffering from excessive hubris because they believe they can improve economic development by recognizing corporate entities and, at the same time, advance the interests of people. Furthermore, he asked, what it is about the media, about conferences and academia that they do not advance the genius of indigenous cultures in finding fundamental solutions to the problems humanity faces?

53RD ANNUAL DPI/NGO CONFERENCE PLANNING COMMITTEE

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Lyutha Al-Mughairy, Chief, Public Liaison Service

Non-Governmental Organizations Section:

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Rapporteurs, De Paul University, Midday NGO Workshops:

Instructor : Patricia Szczerba
Martin Buck
Laura Ehrke
Marla Gordon
Kelly Kelbel
Kathy Kirk
Lena Marusiak
Liliana Rojas
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Photographs by DPI Photo Unit and NGO Section

ANNEX 1 MEDIA REPORT

The 53rd Annual DPI/NGO Conference achieved local, national and international media attention. The Department of Public Information's press section covered plenary sessions in English and French with daily press releases. On 3 September, *The New York Times* carried a front-page story that made reference to the Conference and quoted from the Secretary-General's statement at the opening session. The New York Times Syndicate published this article worldwide in the *International Herald Tribune*, and in several local papers nationally in the United States. In addition, the National Public Radio network carried a news item from the press release issued by the NGO Section, on news broadcasts on 28 August. Agence France Presse filed three stories about the Conference, and Interpress Service, Knight Ridder/Tribune News Services, PAP Newswire, Reuters and AP Worldstream all distributed articles about the Conference.

Stories about the Conference appeared before, during and after the Conference. Pre-Conference publicity coverage appeared in *ICC Monitor*, June 2000; *Honolulu Star Bulletin*, 9 August; *La Presse*, Tunis, 18 August; *Journal*, 22-25 August; *Semanário*, Portugal, 25 August; *IPS TerraViva*, 25 August; and *UN/Pakistan News*, 29 August. UN-TV, Kenya TV and NHK-TV, Japan, covered the opening session. UN Radio and *Earth Times* ran items on the opening. *TV Cultura*, Brazil Public Television and Bloomberg TV, Latin America Bureau, covered Governor Lerner's keynote address. UN Radio, Portuguese Unit, and the youth represen-

tative of *Foreign Media Affairs* of Amsterdam also interviewed the Governor. The producer of the UN Radio documentary *Perspective* prepared a 15-minute programme on the Conference for broadcast in October; UN Radio, Arabic Unit, and Reuters News Agency covered Hanan Ashrawi's keynote address. Polish American Press News Wire interviewed Hanna Suchocka. In addition, the opening session was Web-cast live, and was audible to millions of viewers worldwide on the Internet.

PALOMA TV, Paris, which covered the panel on humanitarian intervention, also covered the plenary sessions on the second day. UN Radio, Latin American Unit, interviewed Alejandro Bendaña. *Earth Times* covered the Midday NGO Workshop on the Global Compact. *Africa Recovery* interviewed Betty Murungi and Hibaaq Osman. *World Peace News* covered the panel on the New Democratic Diplomacy.

Plenaries on the third day were covered by UN-TV and UN Radio, which ran a news item on the Conference. UN Radio, Arabic Unit, also covered the statement of President Bouteflika. Algerian National TV covered President Bouteflika and interviewed the Chief of the DPI/NGO Section and delegates from the Algerian Mission. *The New Statesman* covered President Bouteflika. *Earth Times* covered the panel on Best Practices and the closing statements, in particular Ralph Nader. *Madagascar Magazine* did photo coverage and WRPI Radio of Albany, New York, interviewed NGO representatives for the programme "Planet Update".

SUMMARY OF PRINT COVERAGE (CONT'D)

Agence France Presse, 29 August	Algerian president in New York for Conference
Agence France Presse, 29 August	Annan says NGOs Essential to Work of UN
Knight Ridder/Tribune News Service, 29 August	The United Nations' Radical Millennium: byline column by Robert Maginnis
PAP News Wire, 29 August	Suchocka: NGOs Have a Long Tradition in Poland
UNIC Islamabad, 30 August	NGOs Affiliated with the UN, Meeting in Islamabad, Pledge Support to Promote Peace and Global Understanding
<i>AP Worldstream</i> , 30 August	Nader Lashes Out at Corporations at UN Meeting
<i>The National Herald</i> , India, 4 September	Photo and deep caption of Attorney General addressing seminar on global solidarity
<i>The New York Times</i> , 3 September	Globalization Tops 3-Day UN Agenda for World Leaders: byline by Barbara Crossette, UN Correspondent
<i>International Herald Tribune (Neuilly-sur-Seine, France)</i> , 4 September	Globalization Battle Moves to UN; Summit Aims to Focus on Poverty and Peace: byline by Barbara Crossette, UN Correspondent
<i>The Deseret News</i> , Salt Lake City, Utah, 4 September	Globalization Tops 3-Day UN Agenda for World Leaders: byline by Barbara Crossette
<i>Earth Times</i> , 5 September	Civil Groups Demand Larger UN Role
<i>The Times of India</i> , 6 September	Human Rights is not Monopoly of States: Soli
<i>Secretariat News</i> , August/September issue	DPI/NGO Conference raises NGO profile

SUMMARY OF PRINT COVERAGE

<i>ICC Monitor</i>	Upcoming Events: DPI/NGO Conference
<i>Honolulu Star Bulletin</i> , 9 August	Aunty Malia to address United Nations Conference
<i>La Presse</i> , Tunis, 18 August	Editorial: Solidarité internationale
<i>Journal</i> , 22-25 August	Conference notice
DPI press release, 24 August	Fifty-third Annual DPI/NGO Conference to Open Monday, 28 August (backgrounder)
<i>Semanário</i> , Portugal, 25 August	ONMG apostam na informação e cooperação internacional
IPS <i>TerraViva</i> , 25 August	Sitting Head of State to Address DPI/NGO Conference
Xinhua General News Service, China, 28 August	Role of Civic Groups Hailed at Nongovernmental Organizations Conference
Reuters, 28 August	Hanan Ashrawi
Agence France Presse, 8 August	AFP News Agenda: Three-day Conference organized for NGOs by UN

DPI PRESS RELEASES ISSUED DURING THE CONFERENCE

Serial Number	Title and date of press release
PI/1267 NGO/371:	Fifty-third Annual DPI/NGO Conference to open at Headquarters, 28 to 30 August. [21 August 2000]
NGO/372 PI/1269:	Fifty-third Annual DPI/NGO Conference to open Monday, 28 August. [24 August 2000]
NGO/373 PI/1272:	Secretary-General, General Assembly President, Under-Secretary-General Hogen deliver opening remarks as Fifty-third Annual DPI/NGO Conference opens. [28 August 2000]
GA/SM/186 PI/1274:	Assembly President addressing Fifty-third Annual DPI/NGO Conference calls for global solidarity between United Nations partners. [28 August 2000]
SG/SM/7517 PI/1273:	Global networks “the most promising partnerships of our globalizing age”, the Secretary-General tells Fifty-third Annual DPI/NGO Conference. [28 August 2000]
NGO/376 PI/1275:	DPI/NGO Conference hears panel discussion on implementation of action plans of major 1990s United Nations and NGO conferences. [28 August 2000]
NGO/378 PI/1277:	Role of civil society in humanitarian intervention subject of DPI/NGO Conference panel discussion. [29 August 2000]
NGO/377 PI/1276:	Discussing “New Democratic Diplomacy”, DPI/NGO Conference exchanges views on civil society partnership with States. [29 August 2000]
NGO/379 PI/1278:	Evolving views expressed by banking, business worlds, civil society as DPI/NGO Conference holds third panel discussion. [30 August 2000]
NGO/380 PI/1279:	Fifty-third Annual DPI/NGO Conference concludes at Headquarters. [30 August 2000]

ANNEX 2

PRELIMINARY SURVEY RESULTS

The Monitoring and Evaluation Unit of the DPI Communications and Coordination Service has examined the responses to the survey conducted at the 53rd Annual DPI/NGO Conference that took place from 28 to 30 August at United Nations Headquarters in New York. Preliminary results show that participants were generally satisfied with the Conference this year, entitled “Global Solidarity: The Way to Peace and International Cooperation”.

- Of the 284 completed questionnaires received, 45 per cent of respondents gave the Conference top marks, saying it covered the subject matter “very well”. Almost as many respondents (40 per cent) said the subject matter was covered “fairly well” by the Conference.
- With regard to the information presented in the panels, respondents generally rated Monday and Tuesday’s sessions higher than the Wednesday sessions, with some 80 per cent of respondents rating the information presented during the first two days either “very useful” or “useful”.
- Respondents indicated that too little time was provided for networking and interaction among participants (49 per cent), while 40.5 per cent said that enough time was provided.
- Regarding the Midday NGO Workshops, 64.8 per cent of respondents said enough time was available, while 3.9 per

cent said too much time and 21.8 per cent said too little time was spent on panels. The scheduling for the panels received the highest rating, with 72.3 per cent of all respondents saying enough time was available for that activity.

- The logistical Conference arrangements were also surveyed. Some 76 per cent of respondents said the registration process was “very satisfactory”, while 19 per cent said “fairly satisfactory”. The directions provided were not rated as highly; still, 59.5 per cent of respondents rated them as “very satisfactory”, while 26.1 per cent said “fairly satisfactory”.
- The materials in the Conference kit were rated “very useful” by a majority of respondents.
- Over 50 per cent of respondents said they did not access the Conference information on the DPI/NGO Section’s Web site, while the remaining 38 per cent found the information on the Web site either “very useful” or “useful”. A follow-up question for next year’s survey would clarify the reasons for non-access (e.g., lack of awareness/promotion or lack of access to the Internet).
- The majority of respondents (some 60 per cent) said they were attending the Conference for the first (32.4 per cent), second (14.4 per cent) or third (12.3 per cent) time. About 19 per cent of respondents said they had attended five or more Conferences.