

58th United Nations' DPI/NGO Conference 7- 9 September 2005:

Our Challenge: Voices for Peace, Partnership and Renewal

S.E.R. Foundations': Midday Interactive Workshop on September 8, 2005

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Your Excellencies,
Members of the Diplomatic Corps,
Distinguish NGO Representatives,
Friends, Ladies and Gentlemen,

The Foundation of Subjective Experience and Research of Germany, Netherlands and Switzerland, including its affiliated organizations, are here to make a modest proposal.

A proposal, which we would like this esteem Assembly, to seriously ponder and consider.

We propose a New Magnanimous Approach in dealing with global conflicts and problems besetting the Community of Nations today.

For the call for a collective action is not a summon for arms or patriotic fervour. It is a call address to the magnanimity of the human mind to assert its sovereign power to lead and pursue the ultimate human vision: Peace and Freedom, Equality and Dignity.

Indeed, the United Nations itself was organized precisely for this reason: to eliminates war, inhuman atrocity and depravity; to build a world community where men and nations can live and enjoy life in its vibrant fullness.

Today, as answer to current global problems, UN Millennium Development Goal Program is before us. It is, without doubt, one of the milestones of this Age.

But how can we mobilize the sterling potentials of men and nations to effectively and collectively answer this summon?

UN Secretary General Kofi Annan called for organic structural reforms designed to strengthen the UN in coping with its global functions and projects.

The UN SG made the call for Civil Society to take action. A call that is not only addressed upon sovereign member states but an all organized institutions and associations the world over.

Now, how shall this Conference respond?

The better part of reason dictates that this Conference should demonstrate the same vigour and fervour, as the UN SG, in translating the UN Millennium Development Goals into beautiful working reality.

Our proposal envisions the mobilization of the NGOs around the world as bridge between the UN and the simple citizens of the world.

The NGOs should mobilize in forming an ideal global consensus upon which mediatory terms for peacekeeping negotiation efforts will be pursued. The NGOs, who are humanistic and charitable oriented, should be harnessed in tackling ethnic and tribal struggles, myopic political ideologies and economic selfishness or greed, war and attrition.

These are the same old evil problems besetting humanity. They continue, then and now, to rear their ugly heads in the conduct of human affairs.

What was lacking?

It is the irony and tragedy of our time that despite the advance of knowledge, science and technology that stupidity and irrationality continue to dominate certain human activities in every nooks and corners of the globe.

With that call for civil action, the Men and Women of all civil societies are called upon to marshal goodwill and goodness; to rally behind the consensus directed against the tyranny of exploitation and manipulation, violence and fear, threat and machination, hunger and disease.

Mediation and Negotiation has been, and continue to be, effective peacekeeping methods.

But to give it lasting effects and enduring results, mediation and negotiation should be based on hallowed ground: understanding and friendship, which reconciliation is.

Ladies and Gentlemen, Fellow NGO representatives, the Foundation of Subjective Experience and Research, hereby propose that in the implementation of the UN-MDG Program, it should be for the cause of Global Reconciliation, under the motto: One World, one Soul as guiding light.

We call upon this Conference to implore the UN SG to call for a UN World Reconciliation Week.

We propose the Conference the foregoing resolution:

A Resolution imploring the United Nations thru Sec. Gen. Kofi Annan to declare the last week of April of each year as UN WORLD RECONCILIATION WEEK.

WHEREAS, the major task of the United Nations is to promote and safeguard peace and order, security and equality, human rights and dignity.

WHEREAS, to fulfil this vision demands the refocusing of world consciousness in seeking means and ways of mitigating confrontations and conflicts in sensitive areas such as economic, political, social, culture and religion.

WHEREAS, Reconciliation as cornerstone for peace will uplift the human mind to

reach out and build structures that will foster mutual interaction and responsorial dialogue as shown by various inter-religious rites and traditions practiced around the world.

NOW, THEREFORE, the 58th UNDP/NGO Conference does hereby, and by virtue of this resolution, implores the United Nation thru Sec. Gen., the Honourable Kofi Annan, to designate and declare the last week of April of each year as UN WORLD RECONCILIATION WEEK.

The S.E.R. Foundations have invoked the Reconciliation Week for the first time this year in the last week of April. We watched, with fascination and even amazement, how our call, which was directed only to a limited circle this year, inspired and moved people from different societal branches, both in the country and abroad, to engage in a variety of activities. Projects carried out during the first Reconciliation Week at the end of April, 2005, in North America, Asia, Australia, Africa and Europe allowed people, through their reconciliatory attitude, to create new impulses for civil, collective action in their environmental problems, cultural conflicts and political confrontations.

One of the workshops that took place during that week was carried out by Bimkom, an NGO from Israel with the topic: Principles of Cosmopolitan Development in Multicultural Cities. Its aim is to strengthen awareness in urban planning inspired by Reconciliation principle, under Jerusalem multicultural setting. Another NGO, Vie Nouvelle pour la Reconciliation from Burundi, an African multicultural state devastated by civil strife, carried out a one-week long student project with the topic: Let us reconcile today for a broader life tomorrow. The organization reported: It was so interesting to see how the young people positively responded to the call of reconciliation throughout the entire week of our project. It started with 70 students and expanded to 200, and toward the end they were joined by the members of the community as well as a group of orphan children.

We would also like to mention projects carried out in the U.S. for example, the one in New Mexico, where meditation evenings with prisoners allow for reconciliation with one-self and the one in North Carolina, which is initiated by lawyers and is geared towards reconciliation between victims and offenders. In the Netherlands, a new healing method for therapists was introduced during this week. The so-called Ergosom Method, a complementary and supportive healing art to the classical methods of healing. And this also constitutes reconciliation, in this case, for health care!

A Global Reconciliation Congress that was organized in Switzerland where local political and civic leaders, social workers and educators, the Union of NGOs for Developmental Aid, as well as a Unicef-Award winning project: Children Counselling Children was a success. The Congress presented the opportunity for discussions about reconciliation from different point of views and various areas of activity. The subsequent workshop, joined by children, with ages ranging from 7 to 12, inspired by the theme reconciliation, allowed a search for ways in implementing MDGs, from the point of view of the children. Many other wonderful projects took place with the same direction triggering new impulses for magnanimous civil actions. We would like to pass these experiences on to you, and we would love to hear your ideas and inspiration towards this topic. In your range of activity, you do a great deal for the people in your countries on a daily basis. You know the needs, you see them

instantaneously, and at the same time you are connected with the United Nations and with its vision.

In this subsequent interactive part of the workshop, we would like to gather your ideas. We would like to ask you to get together in groups of 3 or 4, to discuss this question for the next 15 minutes, to write down the ideas of your workgroup, and to turn in your notes to us. We will then put your ideas together and hopefully report on them during tomorrow's plenary session. In addition, anyone who would like to can put their email address on the piece of paper which we will be passing out shortly. We will send you the summary of the gathered ideas shortly. The question is: What can Reconciliation mean for the field of work of your organization, and what result could be reached if the civil societies and other organizations were inspired by it.

(Group work)

At this time, we would like to ask you to finish your work?

(Collection of the papers).

We would be grateful if you could share the results of your group's work with everyone, as long as the time allow.

(Groups' statements)

Thank you so much for sharing your wonderful ideas with us! We hope that the adoption of the Reconciliation Week will trigger new, creative impulses for the NGOs and the civil society for new frontiers in wresting global human conflicts.

Thank you for your kind attention.