



The official magazine of international civil servants
La revue officielle des fonctionnaires internationaux

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”Progression”, “development”, and “evolution” are all popular terms in the world of work. It is natural for employees to want clear benchmarks, that everyone can agree to, for what facilitates or obstructs career advancement. But is it really possible to reach a consensus on this point in an intergovernmental organisation like the UN, where many factors are involved?



« Avancement », « progression », « évolution » de carrière sont tous des termes en vogue dans le monde du travail. Il est normal que les employés souhaitent que ce qui favorise ou au contraire entrave l'ascension de carrière fasse l'objet de critères clairs auxquels tout le monde puisse adhérer. Mais est-il vraiment possible de parvenir à un consensus à ce sujet dans une organisation intergouvernementale comme l'ONU où beaucoup de facteurs s'entremêlent ?

One thing is certain: the UN does put in place a range of tools which are designed to enable the career development of its staff. However, the key question is whether these tools are sufficient to guarantee the advancement which all staff members logically aim for. There are several objective reasons to answer negatively. The first reason is the pyramid structure of the organisation, which means that the higher up the ladder you go, the more difficult it is to find a job. It is therefore not easy, rather nigh impossible, for all officials to be promoted to a higher grade. In addition, this pyramid structure is also unfortunately compounded in some cases by favouritism and political influence.

Une chose est certaine : l'ONU met en place une panoplie d'outils pour permettre le développement de carrière de son personnel. Mais la question qui se pose est de savoir si ces outils suffisent pour garantir l'avancement auquel aspirent logiquement tous les fonctionnaires. Plusieurs raisons objectives amènent à répondre par la négative. La première tient à la structure pyramidale de l'Organisation qui fait que plus on gravit les échelons, plus les postes sont rares. Il est par conséquent difficile, voire impossible, que tous les fonctionnaires aient la possibilité d'être promu à un grade supérieur. A cette structure pyramidale s'ajoutent hélas, dans certains cas, le favoritisme et les pressions politiques.

However, the picture is not all bad, except for those who believe that career development can only be talked about in terms of ‘promotion’. Indeed, the organisation offers countless opportunities to develop and grow in the workplace. For example, geographical and functional mobility within the Organisation, or between organisations of the common system, offers exciting opportunities to explore with very diverse and enriching experiences for those who are prepared. So, while working to clarify the criteria for promotion, let us grasp what is within our reach and remain proud to work for an organisation like the United Nations, which we join first and foremost out of a commitment to its values and mission.

Cela dit, le tableau n'est pas noir pour autant, sauf pour ceux qui considèrent que l'on ne peut parler de développement de carrière qu'en termes de promotion. En effet, l'Organisation offre d'innombrables possibilités de se développer et s'épanouir sur le lieu de travail. Il s'agit par exemple de la mobilité géographique et fonctionnelle au sein de l'Organisation ou entre organisations du système commun qui offre des opportunités passionnantes de se confronter à des situations très diverses et enrichissantes pour ceux et celles qui sont preneurs. Alors, tout en œuvrant pour clarifier les critères à la base des promotions, ayons à cœur de saisir ce qui est à notre portée et restons fiers de travailler pour une Organisation comme l'ONU que nous rejoignons avant tout par attachement à ses valeurs et sa mission.

Prisca Chaoui

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Editorial's note / Éditorial	3
Table of contents / Sommaire	4

FOCUS ON | GROS PLAN SUR

Career support at the United Nations: A focus on satisfaction	6
Why do only some staff break the UN glass ceiling	10
My skills and my value in the private sector	14
It is time to move forward in my career!	16

GLOBAL AFFAIRS | AFFAIRES MONDIALES

The art of harmonising varied economies	20
Qui est Agnès Callamard, la nouvelle secrétaire générale d'Amnesty ?	22
International day of awareness of food loss and waste	24
Celebrating thriving deaf communities to sign for Human Rights	26
Dandy's: A men's business founded by a woman who means business	28

3 QUESTIONS | 3 QUESTIONS

Les organisations internationales font partie de l'ADN de Genève	30
--	----

INSIDE VIEW | VU DE L'INTÉRIEUR

Independence for the UN Dispute and Appeals Tribunals	32
A new face for the Division of Conference Management at UNOG	36

DIPLOMACY | DIPLOMATIE

Leopold-Ismaël Samba, doyen du groupe des Ambassadeurs africains	38
--	----

UN MEMORIES | MÉMOIRES DE L'ONU

Les batailles d'un fonctionnaire international	40
--	----

CULTURE | CULTURE

Le MEG, un musée en pleine évolution	42
Can art and connection save the world?	44
100 ans + 1 de vie internationale: une région transformée	46

HEALTH | SANTÉ

Quand on prend soin des onusiens	48
A strong word called "cancer" needs a stronger word called "support"	50

LEISURE | LOISIRS

50km of wellness bicycle tour through Aargau	52
--	----

LIFESTYLE | VIE PRATIQUE

Les SIG ont-ils la clé du bonheur ?	54
-------------------------------------	----

OTHER | DIVERS

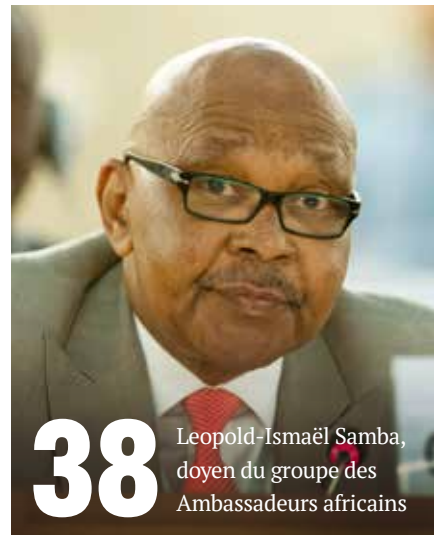
Une rentrée spécialisée	56
-------------------------	----



10 Why do only some staff break the UN glass ceiling



16 It is time to move forward in my career!



38 Leopold-Ismaël Samba, doyen du groupe des Ambassadeurs africains



40 Les batailles d'un fonctionnaire international



52 50km of wellness bicycle tour through Aargau



Mentoring programmes are in use at many organizations in the public and private sectors

Career support at the United Nations: A focus on satisfaction

A panoramic review of the tools and initiatives put in place

Kathleen Doyle *

Generally, the UN doesn't have well-defined, linear or predictable progressions within established structures. As in more and more organizations nowadays, there are no career ladders through regular promotions over prescribed periods of time in the United Nations Secretariat.

Instead, staff craft their very own career paths. It is the prerogative of each staff member - and their responsibility - to define what a satisfying career looks like and how to achieve it. That said, the

Organization provides meaningful opportunities for staff to achieve career satisfaction.

Before reviewing the programmes on offer, let's consider the many ways to achieve career satisfaction. For some, it is all about depth in a given field – honing our expertise. It means enjoying the fulfilment that excellence brings by continually helping and guiding our colleagues and our larger network in that field. For others, satisfaction is derived from moving within or across job networks; breadth and variety is more important.

This can mean mastering political or peacekeeping knowledge about various regions or achieving a well-rounded administrative background across human resources, finance and procurement. For these staff, the wide range of job types in our Organization is a major driver of satisfaction.

The focus on upward progression or promotions through post levels will remain important to some staff. This is also a valid source of satisfaction – the chance to be continually challenged with new levels of decision-making that make an impact through leading larger teams. This desire is common and natural in many ways. When it becomes a singular focus, however, it can become problematic – especially in an Organization where fewer posts are available at the higher levels.

Some staff look forward to the possibility of serving at locations across the globe. The Organization offers this to an unparalleled degree with an astonishing number and type of duty station contexts. The chance to serve across continents and thereby learn about new cultures, perspectives and languages is key to long-term job satisfaction for some.

It is also important to acknowledge the career satisfaction we can derive from relationships with our colleagues. This can be a driving force behind fulfilment – either leading a team or contributing to a team in a meaningful way each day through conversations, helping one another and working steadily and successfully toward common goals.

It is impossible to credibly discuss career satisfaction without touching on one major driver: the influence of our personal circumstances on our career choices. We all need to take an honest look at our needs, desires and expectations with regard to our families, caring obligations and social and economic circumstances. When we craft our career paths, we need to recognize how our personal lives and the well-being of those that we deeply care about affect our decisions. If we try to brush these aside, we may end up frustrated with our career choices further down the road.

Professional satisfaction means feeling proud, valued and engaged. As staff members, we must identify which sources of career satisfaction are most important to us at any given point in our careers. For most, it will be a combination of all these sources – depth of experience, breadth of experience, the chance to move upward,

connections with colleagues and accommodation of personal circumstances. Underlying all these sources is the satisfaction that comes from serving the peoples of the world through our unique and vital Organization.

Services and tools available

The Organization facilitates several types of career support services which provide opportunities for staff to deepen their professional capability, broaden their horizons and acquire and develop the future-oriented, transferable skills they need to deliver the Organization's mandates, while advancing their career plans.

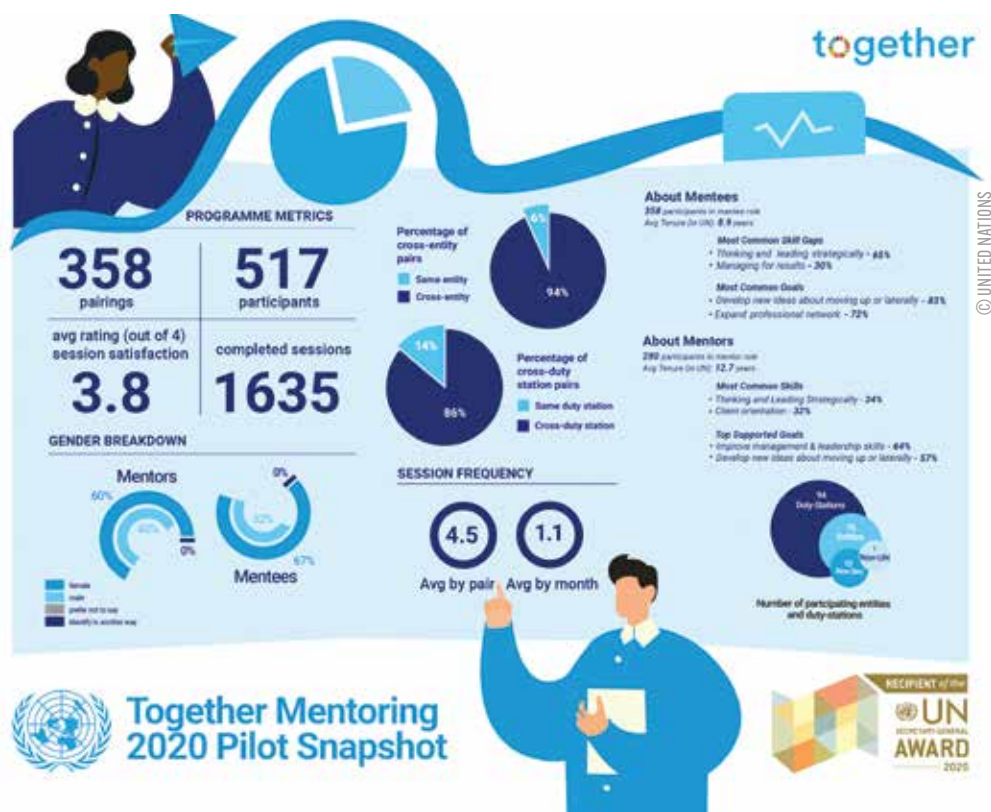
For example, a new mobility programme is being launched which will provide staff in the Professional and higher categories, as well as Field Service staff, with opportunities for learning and skill development on the job through service in different entities and duty stations. It is expected to be fully operational by the end of 2022.

There are also short-term opportunities which facilitate the rapid acquisition and application of skills on the job. They are often demand-driven, arising when an entity is experiencing a temporary skill gap, and thus have budgetary implications. They include temporary job openings, job shadowing, job exchange and cross-training opportunities and volunteering initiatives such as those publicized through Conecta.

The Secretariat's award-winning Together Mentoring programme offers mentors and mentees the opportunity to reflect and discuss career planning, achievements, challenges and lessons learned. Inclusion is at the heart of the mentoring programme, with mentors and mentees paired across job families and categories, duty stations and entity types.

A coaching programme helps staff gain an outside career perspective and is targeted at various groups including colleagues in offices in transition, downsizing or closure. It also helps staff process and deal with other challenges such as work-life balance and interpersonal conflicts in a team. Staff hold sessions with external professional coaches who help them explore and address their short and long-term career needs.

Lastly, career labs take place on demand with smaller groups of staff or wider audiences. They have various formats such as webinars,



Together Mentoring 2020 Pilot Snapshot

information sessions, or structured training programmes.

Equal opportunities for all

All the services mentioned and many of the learning programmes listed on the HR Portal are available to staff in all duty stations. Some duty stations or entities have their own budgets for learning and career development and may offer additional services.

The Organization aims to ensure that core programmes like mentoring and coaching are available to all staff. It is also developing a Career Centre on the Knowledge Gateway, a new one-stop resource on career development guidance, self-help tools and links to previously recorded events on career topics, which will be accessible across duty stations.

The Office of Human Resources also works closely with counterparts in learning at other entities and duty stations on the career development portfolio. Increasingly, these partners will develop products which will then be shared globally. Collectively, the Office and its partners will focus more and more on career programmes and products that can reach the widest audience

possible and move away from supporting programmes that benefit smaller groups.

Handling career plateaus

Career plateaus are common at the United Nations - as they are at all organizations. While promotions will remain important to some, staff should remember that they can also develop through lateral moves. These may be temporary or long-term; in both cases they require a person to learn new skills, adapt to the working style and personalities of different colleagues and a new manager and solve problems in a different context.

The Together Mentoring programme was created in part to address this issue. For mentees, connecting with a colleague in a different location or entity or occupational group can result in new perspectives, renewed career satisfaction and can also spark career planning actions. Serving as a mentor can similarly energize experienced colleagues. Many participants have reported that they see their current positions and experience in a new light after mentoring other staff. ▶

* Kathleen Doyle is Team Lead, Career Support, Office of Human Resources at UN New York.



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Many UN staff members face a glass ceiling during their career

Why do only some staff break the UN glass ceiling

A staff perspective regarding the career prospects at the United Nations Secretariat

Prisca Chaoui and Ian Richards *

Why does career development work for some, but not for others? How much lobbying is required in order to move up? These are questions most staff are asking themselves.

Firstly the figures. The UN has a pyramid structure and not everyone will make it up. In the Professional (P) category, P3 and P4 constitute 8,580 of the 13,412 regular budget staff, and the General Service (GS) category has a similar set up based on latest figures compiled in the Report of the Secretary-General on the composition of the Secretariat for 2020.

However, the question is why are some staff able to make it and not others?

Some staff enter at a certain grade and remain there throughout their careers despite acquiring

the experience, skills and good performance reports. Others seemingly climb the ranks in record time, without in some cases having fulfilled the requirements of the position.

There are several reasons

First of all, the internal restrictions. The first one being the obstacle to move from the General Service (GS) category to the professional one despite many having the necessary qualifications and skills. The G to P exam remains a narrow passageway, which even once passed does not guarantee selection to a P position.

Another restriction is the requirement for prior geographic mobility to reach posts at P5 and above. While this is a “healthy” requirement, the reality is that many staff aren’t always being able to secure geographic moves during the course of their career.

A new and significant obstacle stems from the gender strategy. While its objective is noble in the sense that it tries to correct the imbalances that certain female staff have suffered for decades in the system, it deprives male, particularly younger ones, from any promotion opportunities and disregards their performance.

“ Some staff enter at a certain grade and remain there ”

And then there is the obstacle, which isn't mentioned in the rules, which is that of favoritism, manifesting itself in many forms.

Although Article 101 of the Charter of the United Nations states that “The paramount consideration in the employment of the staff and in the determination of the conditions of service shall be the necessity of securing the highest standards of efficiency, competence, and integrity (...)”, favoritism exists, often leads to the selection of the person who is “wanted” by the recruiter, whether internal or external.

Some would argue that this cannot possibly happen since the selection process at the UN is subject to oversight and provides mechanisms for challenging selection decisions. However, they rarely have much effect.

Indeed, there are three oversight stages in any selection process. The first one being the oversight



Is there a real career development at the UN?

exercised by Human Resources, who first receive the case. On paper, Human Resources ensure that the selection procedures have been strictly adhered to before submitting the case to the Central review bodies (CRB). Human Resources are supposed to be neutral, and often are. However they come under pressure from hiring managers and cases of malign influence are documented.

The second oversight mechanism is the CRBs, which are mandated to review selection cases for posts from G5 onwards. The CRBs are composed of representatives of the administration and representatives of staff. That said, these organs have become, over time, rubber stamping entities since they cannot access the necessary information that allow them to make informed decisions, such as the details of the written tests and of the job interviews.

The third level of oversight and probably the most important one is the United Nations Dispute Tribunal (UNDT). The latter, set up in 2009, intervenes when the selection process is tainted by procedural flows. However, hiring managers have learned how to avoid these procedural flaws. Fewer and fewer cases now meet the admissibility criteria set up by the UNDT.

“ Hiring managers have learned how to avoid these procedural flaws ”

The selection process, especially at the P5 levels and above, can also be the subject of political intervention by member states, particularly when large financial contributions are at stake.

So how to fix this discouraging scenario?

We call for a strict implementation of the Article 101 of the Charter, regardless of any circumstances. This may sound like wishful thinking but an organization based on meritocracy remains the best option. After all, merit is the only way to ensure the capacity of the UN to deliver on the mandate that the Charter and member states have entrusted to it. ▶

* Prisca Chaoui is the Editor-in-chief of UN Today.
Ian Richards is an Economist at the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD).

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My skills and my value in the private sector

Transitioning to private sector employment seems daunting but it doesn't have to be...

Michael O'Neil *

My views onto the serene landscape of Lac Léman and the terraced vineyards of the Swiss Romande, were slowly replaced by the functional office buildings and warehouses of Swiss German. I was being driven to Zug for a job interview at Marc Rich + Co. by a headhunter who had placed several IT consultants with Rich and was now proposing me to fill a key IT role. It was 1988, a bit more than three years since I had joined the ILO after having worked at several large multinationals including IBM and, most recently, Intel. As the scenery changed, I made a mental list of Rich's possible questions and my hopefully competent replies – “hopefully” because I wondered

if my stint at the ILO, steeped in bureaucracy and with its relatively weak technical and management environments, might negatively affect my value to private companies.

Many UN staff face such a reckoning at one point or another in their career. Your post is cut. Your boss is unbearable. You find yourself in a duty station or program that is unacceptable. Or you are drawn to the private sector by its merit-based advancement and potential rewards. Whatever the reason, it is good to understand the private sector's preconceived notions of your professional worth today. To that end, I interviewed experts



Experience acquired at the UN can be very valuable for the private and public sector

from Michael Page and Robert Half recruitment agencies to identify and weigh differences they discern between UN vs private candidates and the value assigned to UN staff by the recruiters' private clients. This article will look at UN staff in terms of a) typical competencies and general marketability outside the UN, b) ways to mitigate some competency gaps and c) future trends.

“ UN employees tend to have a jump on the competition in several areas: languages... ”

Valuable outside the UN?

Common sense informs us that UN employees tend to have a jump on the competition in several areas: languages, cultural awareness and sensitivity, diplomacy, and international experience. However, what you may not have realized is that there are other arrows in your quiver. One is that relative to the private sector, the UN workers are considered to uphold higher ethical standards, and another is that UN workers are deemed as being socially open-minded.

Naturally, there is a downside too. As the experts underlined, spending a long stretch (no one quantified this) in the UN bureaucracy cocoon makes it much harder to adapt to the world of market orientation, product competition, return on investment, etc. Tied to this is the perception that UN staff workload is lighter than in private sector companies. Therefore, it is assumed that these employees would not be able to cope with the increased pressure. And finally, weighing against UN staff movement to the world of multinationals is that UN tax-free salary levels, education grants, rental subsidies, etc. are difficult for private companies to match.

Mitigation: Innovation

Aiming to hear a voice of experience, I quizzed a dear friend who has managed, in her 20-plus year career, to jump from private to the UN and then on to an international organization. We compared notes. While I turned down the Marc Rich + Co. offer (insufficient salary), she accepted the offer she received. She recommends developing a better personal interview story by doing “two things each year that make your team, department or organisation function better”. These innovations

need not be earth-shaking but they will help demonstrate to perspective employers that you have the energy and skills to identify problems and propose/drive creative solutions.

What the future may hold...

The good news is that even though some private sector organizations refuse to consider UN staff as candidates, the consensus is that the wall between public and private sector is slowly crumbling. Why? One cause is generational.

Marine Moncozet, one of Michael Page's Geneva Office Directors, observed that younger workers are shifting away from a traditional focus on KPIs (Key Performance Indicators) and deliverables to a flatter, more collaborative structure. Workforces today are mainly composed (approximately 70%) of Generation X and Millennial workers. Millennial Careers: 2020 Vision by ManpowerGroup analyzed thousands of Millennial worker attitudes in 25 countries. A relevant and enlightening conclusion was that Millennials' “top priorities when looking for a job are money (92%), security (87%), holidays/time off (86%), great people (80%), and flexible working (79%)”. Ms. Moncozet also noted an increase in the use of more modern productivity approaches within the UN. Assuming that these workplace value-shifts continue, it will arguably draw the two sectors closer together.

“ The consensus is that the wall between public and private sector is slowly crumbling ”

In a Nutshell

As a result of the gradual convergence in values of the two workplace cultures, UN staffers may be less daunted by the thought of transitioning to the private sector. UN employees may enhance their attractiveness to the private marketplace by making continuous, sincere efforts to improve themselves (further education, challenging assignments) and by positively evolving their work environment. ▶

* Michael O'Neil retired from the ILO in 2006 and is currently Adjunct Professor of HR Management at Webster University School of Business and Technology, Switzerland.

It is time to move forward in my career!

Time passes and you feel stuck in your current job. You want to do something different and move your career forward. You are not sure where you want to go

Verónica De la Fuente *

What are the benefits of being accompanied by a coach to develop your career?

Career-oriented coaching will support you by:

1. Clarifying professional objectives

A coach will invite you to visualize your desired professional situation in the future. In this future, you are operating to your full potential, satisfied and fulfilled with what you are doing, your career is challenging you and you find “purpose” in your work. Intermediate objectives will help you nourish this career vision and help you pave your career path. It is not only a job; it is a career path!

Food for thought: Where do I want to be professionally 5, 10, and 15 years from now?

2. Creating self-awareness

The coach will accompany you in your journey to recognizing your value as a professional. You will become aware of the skills, and competencies that characterize you as a professional and add value

to your work. Become aware of your strengths and weaknesses and create consciousness of the new required competencies that you will need to develop in order to achieve your desired future. Recognize what makes your professional experiences valuable and what or which one can help you in the following steps of your career path.

Food for thought: What are my skills and competencies that make me effective and successful in what I do?

3. Creating your purpose and your professional identity

Once you have set your career vision and objectives (what you want), analyzed your competencies and skills (what you have) as well as what you need to develop, you are on the right track to start thinking about your “professional purpose” by reflecting on; what I want to do (my added value offer), to whom do I want to offer my services; (which people, teams, organizations) and how do I do it (my competences, skills, and experiences).



With this purpose, which will guide you like a compass on your journey, the next step should be to build your “professional identity”. A career coach will help you understand what makes you different and unique as a professional and how your uniqueness can help you build your professional image.

“ Coaching is provoking changes by putting them in motion through concrete actions ”

An important part is to make your professional identity visible in order to connect and resonate with the people and organizations you want to work with, especially if you are thinking of developing your career outside of your current organization. A second important element is to develop and activate a professional network. If you decide to boost your career in your organization, identify the people that can help you advance there. Do you have a mentor or sponsor? If not, who in your organization could be a good mentor or sponsor?

Food for thought: What is my professional purpose that will guide me in my career path?

4. Building a roadmap and an action plan

An essential element that characterizes coaching is provoking changes by putting them in motion through concrete actions. To advance in your career you have to design and implement a “roadmap” identifying the most favorable moments to take the next step forward and the actions that will allow you to move towards your purpose.

Food for thought: What are my next steps to advance in my career?

5. Building your confidence, overcoming obstacles

After this broad outline of the stages that the coach proposes to support their clients in their career development, it is time to understand another aspect of a coach’s role in this coaching relationship.

It is common that in the development of a career some obstacles may appear, such as; limiting beliefs



Where do you see yourself in five years?

that impede progress, some habits that hinder the process of advancement, lack of self-confidence, and other factors that interfere with your path towards the goals you set in place.

“ It is not a job, is a career path! ”

The coach’s role here is to accompany you in overcoming these obstacles in order to move forward. The coach works with you to develop self-confidence and motivates and encourage you during the process, acknowledging your progress. The coach will make you see your blindspots and encourage you to be conscious, responsible and committed, and recognize what limits and struggle your actions or progress.

Last but not least, the coach is able to support you in finding your own resources, in order to create a process of growth to advance towards your objectives. ▶

* Verónica De la Fuente is an Accredited Professional Coach (PCC) by ICF.

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The art of harmonising varied economies

We met with Kristalina Georgieva, Managing Director of the International Monetary Fund. A quick snapshot of her priorities

Julián Ginzo *



Building a resilient economy - a key factor to sustain a country

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You are the first Director of the IMF who comes from an emerging economy. How has this experience influenced your understanding and action on the challenges of developing countries?

If there is one clear lesson from my experiences, it is the importance of building a resilient economy. The value of this has become even clearer in the context of the ongoing pandemic. This crisis is a reminder that we live in a more shock-prone world, and that the shocks or risks that we face continue to change. We need to think about resilience in a multidimensional way.

Many people have spent the past 18 months grappling with loss and hardship. Although our latest global growth forecast of 6 percent for 2021 is unchanged from the previous outlook, that global average masks a deeply worrying difference between countries. Countries with access to vaccines and the scope to provide policy support are bouncing back. Yet many emerging market and developing countries are falling further behind.

And with this worsening two-track recovery, the unthinkable is happening. Global extreme poverty is set to rise for the first time in 20 years. It is a human tragedy and an economic calamity, holding millions of people back.

First and foremost, we need urgent collective action. Working together, seeking and offering help, makes a huge difference in an emergency. The pandemic is a powerful reminder of the need for solidarity in an interdependent world.

Second, we don't know our own internal strength until we are hit. As the European Union's Crisis Commissioner, I saw Syrian refugees in terrible situations helping each other. We are resilient, and we are able to withstand shocks, especially

when we come together. This gives me a sense of optimism.

Third, we need the whole economic system and our planet to be resilient. It also means we need to think about the unthinkable and anticipate what will be needed when a shock hits you. Therefore, I often talk about ‘build better before’ because preparedness and prevention pay off big time.

The pandemic has triggered calls for borrowing from many developing countries; but at the same time the ability to repay high debts may become more complex. How is the IMF dealing with this delicate situation?

Public debt levels in low-income countries (LICs) were already very high before the crisis and the pandemic is pushing them to new heights. The pandemic has hurt LICs’ liquidity and solvency indicators; over 50 percent of them are now assessed to be at high risk of or in debt distress according to the joint IMF-World Bank Debt Sustainability Framework.

To alleviate financing constraints and provide breathing space, the IMF moved swiftly to provide debt service relief to its poorest members. And, together with the World Bank, we supported the G20 Debt Service Suspension Initiative (DSSI), which has been extended for another six months to later this year. For countries with higher debt vulnerabilities that may need deeper debt relief, the G20 have also pioneered the Common Framework for debt resolution. Now is the time to make the Common Framework fully operational. Three countries have already asked for debt treatment under the Common Framework—Chad, Ethiopia, and Zambia. I am encouraged that Chad received financing assurances from its G20 bilateral creditors. We now need speedy commitments, on comparable terms, by private creditors.

Whether or not countries are in debt to the IMF, do you think that stronger involvement and advice on fiscal and monetary policy management would help improve stability and thus prevent the need for borrowing?

We are seeing in advanced economies and some emerging market countries a recovery like no other, propelled by a combination of strong fiscal and monetary policy support and rapid

vaccinations; but in many other countries—particularly the poorest without access to vaccines and with surging infection rates—growth is suppressed. Urgent action is needed in three areas.

First, accelerate vaccinations: to cover at least 60 percent in all countries by mid-2022. We, together with the World Bank, WHO, and WTO, in close collaboration with ACT-A, have formed a task force to help achieve this goal. A normal return to activity everywhere could add trillions of dollars to the global economy through 2025—the US\$50 billion cost of this pandemic plan pales by comparison.

Second, implement sound macroeconomic policies: they continue to play a pivotal role in securing the recovery. Monetary policy should remain accommodative, as inflationary pressures are likely to be temporary. Central banks will need to communicate policy intentions clearly to avoid triggering adverse spillovers.

Third, step up support to vulnerable countries. The IMF’s new SDR allocation of US\$650 billion will increase countries’ reserves, create additional space for vaccine financing, and boost confidence in the recovery. To magnify the impact of the allocation, we will explore options for economically stronger members to voluntarily use their SDRs to help poor and vulnerable countries. We are discussing with our membership ways to get this done, including through our Poverty Reduction and Growth Trust and possibly a new Resilience and Sustainability Trust.

What is the main achievement for which you would like to be remembered when you leave the IMF?

My focus is on working with colleagues, member states and global partners to help turn the two-track recovery into synchronized and sustainable growth—by acting decisively and collectively. The IMF has stepped up in an unprecedented manner by providing \$114 billion in new financing to 85 countries and debt service relief for our poorest members. When future generations look back, I hope they will recall how the global community came together to beat the pandemic and the climate crisis and the decisive role that was played by the IMF. ▀

* Julián Ginzo is the Editorial Coordinator of UN Today.



Amnesty International: une des plus importantes ONGs qui promeut la défense des droits de l'homme

Qui est Agnès Callamard, la nouvelle secrétaire générale d'Amnesty ?

Le parcours d'une experte en droits humains connue pour son courage et son franc-parler

Joachim Tapia-Almosnino *

D'où vient votre vocation pour la défense des droits humains ?

Elle est le fruit d'un ensemble d'éléments. Il y a l'éducation que j'ai reçue. Très engagée dans les questions de justice sociale et dans le combat moral, ma famille a toujours eu le sens de ce qui est juste. Cela remonte loin, puisque mon grand-père était dans la Résistance. Il a été assassiné par les nazis le 15 août 1944. Il y a le contexte : ayant grandi durant les années de la guerre froide et de l'apartheid, j'ai toujours été très intéressée par tout ce qui touche

à la question des droits humains. Il y a aussi les lectures qui m'ont beaucoup influencée et les opportunités qui se sont présentées.

Ancienne rapporteuse spéciale à l'ONU, qu'est-ce qui a motivé votre retour à la société civile ?

J'ai toujours évolué dans le cadre de la société civile. Je n'ai côtoyé le milieu universitaire et travaillé en tant que rapporteuse spéciale sur les exécutions extrajudiciaires, sommaires ou arbitraires que pendant sept ans. Cela m'a beaucoup

plu, mais a nécessité un investissement personnel important. Lorsque s'est présentée l'occasion de travailler pour Amnesty International, j'ai pesé le pour et le contre. D'un côté, il ne me restait qu'une année pour aller au bout de mon mandat ; de l'autre, une organisation non gouvernementale aussi puissante qu'Amnesty International pouvait me permettre de me battre et de changer un certain nombre de choses. J'ai décidé de postuler.

“ Je n'ai pas peur et je n'ai pas le droit d'avoir peur ”

Est-ce que vous n'aviez pas aussi envie de ne plus exercer une fonction qui vous a valu des menaces, notamment de la part d'un haut dirigeant saoudien ?

Non, ça n'est pas ce qui a motivé mon départ. En revanche, je me suis demandé si les pays qui m'avaient menacée, comme les Philippines ou l'Arabie Saoudite, suite à l'enquête que j'avais menée en 2018 sur l'assassinat du journaliste saoudien Jamal Khashoggi, allaient se sentir plus libres d'agir puisque je ne bénéficierais plus de la protection informelle que me procurait ma fonction aux Nations Unies.

Ne craignez-vous pas d'être encore plus exposée, désormais ?

Non, je n'ai pas peur. Je n'ai pas le droit d'avoir peur. Les personnes avec qui je travaille sont confrontées à la répression et prennent des risques phénoménaux. Des centaines d'entre eux ont été kidnappés, torturés ou tués. Face à cela, il est hors de question que je me laisse aller à la peur. Je ne suis pas naïve pour autant. Je prends toutes les précautions nécessaires, en particulier lors de mes déplacements.

Quels enseignements tirés de votre expérience des processus intergouvernementaux à l'ONU vont vous être utiles dans vos nouvelles fonctions ?

Mon expérience en tant que rapporteuse spéciale me permet de mieux comprendre ce qui peut être fait ou pas. Je connais bien les limites d'un point de vue stratégique et je pourrais mieux utiliser mes compétences à des fins plus concrètes. J'ai des contacts étroits avec les gouvernements.

J'ai une bonne connaissance de la manière dont fonctionnent les milieux diplomatiques à New York et à Genève. Lors de mon précédent mandat, je pense avoir apporté un nouvel élan en matière d'interprétation du droit international. J'espère donc pouvoir donner une impulsion supplémentaire à Amnesty international afin qu'elle devienne l'une des têtes pensantes d'un droit international de protection des droits humains qui serait plus en adéquation avec les transformations de notre monde. C'est très important car nous ne pouvons plus nous contenter de travailler dans le cadre actuel alors que tant de nouvelles questions se posent.

Comment analysez-vous la situation des droits humains au plan mondial ?

Elle n'a jamais été aussi grave depuis la fin de la Deuxième guerre mondiale. Plusieurs éléments s'enchevêtrent. D'un côté, nous sommes face à une refonte complète du système international dans le contexte d'une nouvelle guerre froide entre les États-Unis et la Chine. De l'autre, nous sommes confrontés à la transformation des processus de production, au changement climatique, à la montée des inégalités, au populisme qui progresse dans de nombreux pays, y compris dans les pays démocratiques. Or, nos institutions sont relativement impuissantes : le Conseil de sécurité est régulièrement bloqué et le Conseil des droits de l'homme est souvent houleux. L'environnement international est extrêmement instable.

Quel peut être votre rôle dans ce contexte ?

Les droits humains, tels que nous les connaissons aujourd'hui, datent de la période qui a suivi l'holocauste. Ils ne répondent plus à un certain nombre de préoccupations de notre époque. Les revendications de plusieurs communautés sont très fortes, qu'il s'agisse des populations autochtones, de la communauté LGBT+ ou de personnes en situation de handicap. Cela suppose une mise à jour du principe d'universalisme tel qu'il a été conceptualisé au départ et cela interpelle de façon directe et violente le principe de l'égalité entre les êtres humains. Il importe donc de réinterpréter le droit international en se montrant plus créatif. C'est un défi sans précédent pour les acteurs des droits humains. ▶

* Joachim Tapia-Almosnino est journaliste indépendant.



Zero Waste means the conservation of all resources - responsible production, consumption, reuse and recovery of all products

International day of awareness of food loss and waste

In a society addicted to over-consumption and a profligate use of precious resources, what can we do about global food loss and waste?

Michael Stopford *

Over-consumption, ravaging of natural resources, mindless materialism....and waste. Even if you don't agree with me that our society – at least in the developed world – is characterized by the first three scourges on this list, you'll probably concur that waste is just that: precious assets squandered for nothing.

In the face of overwhelming global assaults on biodiversity and the ecosphere, where species are extinguished daily and human activity decimates the rest of the natural world, it is so easy to feel helpless. How after all did we get from the green

revolution of the 1960s into a global obesity pandemic in less than half a century, as a recent Financial Times article asked? Personally I find it hard to read yet another story about the destruction of our environment – it seems so depressing and relentless. But of course as individuals we can make a difference: just think of Greta Thunberg and what a 15-year old autistic schoolgirl achieved in global awareness of climate change.

Avoiding waste is one area where we can indeed all contribute. And food waste is a particularly egregious example of resources spent with no

benefit to anyone. Food is lost and wasted at an appalling rate along the entire food and agriculture production chain, from crop cultivation down to the uneaten portions of dinner we throw into the garbage or the “insinkerator” (a perfect modern symbol of waste!) every day.

According to a mesmerizing statistic from the NGO platform The World Counts, in getting it to our plates every dinner we eat requires the use of:

- 10 kilograms of topsoil
- 1.3 litres of diesel
- 800 litres of water
- 0.3 grams of pesticides
- 3.5 kilograms of CO2-emissions.

These precious resources – or damaging inputs – are used whether the food is actually consumed or not.

Another striking statistic is that it is not the largest countries that account for the most food loss or waste per capita: sadly amongst the first eight countries on this scale, three are from sub-Saharan Africa – with Nigeria at the top of the list (Statista.com, per capita food waste). In this respect we should differentiate between food loss and food waste: the former relating to the “upstream” part of the chain, from harvest loss to the vexed issue of secure transportation and distribution to commercial food storage, the latter to the “downstream” stages from supermarkets and restaurants to our own household practices. Much of the “upstream” set of problems can be addressed by development support – for example by better transportation infrastructure so that perishable goods reach markets unspoiled – whereas the downstream directly comes down to us, consumers in the industrialized countries (and beyond).

Confronting this global challenge, at the initiative of FAO – the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations – the UN General Assembly on 19 December 2019 designated 29 September as the International Day of Awareness of Food Loss and Waste (A/RES/74/209). So the first International Day was held last year and this year – the year in which the international community hopes to emerge from the shadow of Covid-19 – will mark its second observance. This is of course primarily an exercise in awareness-raising, as is the case with all International Days and Years – but advocacy is the key to action. It also aims to

accelerate global efforts towards meeting SDG 12 (responsible consumption and production). FAO and UNEP - the UN Environment Programme - are collaborating in pushing for international observance of the Day: an apt partnership, as we strive to reach global food security, a vulnerability made particularly acute during the global pandemic, while protecting our planet’s eco-sphere.

“ Food is lost and wasted at an appalling rate along the entire food-and-ag production chain ”

When I was invited to write this article, I asked ANCORED’s data-research team to track the online discourse surrounding food loss and food waste over the past year. Their findings suggest that a large part of this conversation also discusses technology, artificial intelligence and data science. In a world where Moore’s law has proven true for the past decades, we can assume that with the help of technology we will be able increasingly to combat food loss and food waste. In this respect more support for start-ups and young entrepreneurs could accelerate the impact of innovation. For example, in Sweden a small start-up called Innoscentia is developing sensor technologies for the detection of food status and increased traceability within the supply chain – with more companies like this we can fight back against the waste our society generates.

There is clearly much we can do at the individual level, from consuming smaller and more rational portions – no more Jumbo Size Special Offers destined for the garbage! – to more careful purchases and storage, composting any waste – a more frugal approach overall. Ultimately we need a different mindset: not a Puritan, killjoy philosophy, but one which celebrates the bounty and beauty of our natural world by consciously acknowledging its fragility and determining to avoid wasting the resources on which we and all future generations will depend. ■

* Michael Stopford is a former member of the UN Secretariat and Chief of Cabinet at UNOG. He is currently Managing Partner of the data-based communications company ANCORED - www.ancored.se

Celebrating thriving deaf communities to sign for Human Rights

Every September, two global major events celebrate an often overlooked cultural and linguistic minority found in every nation on Earth

Dr Joseph Murray *

The International Week of Deaf People (IWDP) is an initiative of the World Federation of the Deaf (WFD), an international NGO with members in 130 countries. Launched in 1958, IWDP is hosted by deaf communities around the globe in the last full week of September. National, regional, and local events, conferences, commemorations, and community gatherings promote and celebrate the existence of deaf people as cultural and linguistic minorities communities within their countries, and their full inclusion in their societies.

Under the aegis of a different theme each year, the 2021 IWDP's theme is "Celebrating Thriving Deaf Communities", commemorating two centuries of deaf people creating sign language communities worldwide. Deaf communities are rich sites of unique cultural expressions in sign languages and recognition should also include promotion of this cultural identity, as outlined in the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD).

In 2017, the United Nations' General Assembly adopted the Resolution 72/161 recognising 23 September as the International Day of Sign Languages (IDSL), part of the International Week of the Deaf. The choice of the date corresponds to the foundation of the World Federation of Deaf in Rome, Italy, on 23 September 1951, following more than a century of deaf people organizing on an international level for their rights.

The 2021 IDSL theme is "We Sign For Human Rights", highlighting how each of us - deaf and hearing people around the world - can work together hand in hand to promote the recognition of our right to use sign languages in all areas of life.

The rationale of the International Day of Sign Languages is to raise awareness on the very existence of sign languages and strengthen their status as full languages globally. With more than 200 distinct sign languages around the world, they are the natural languages of more than 70 million deaf people worldwide and should be recognised as such.

Deaf people worldwide have historically faced - and continue to face - discrimination with regard to the use of their national sign languages. This discrimination encompasses the denial of receiving quality and inclusive education in the national sign language and national language, the



lack of access to information and communication in their daily lives. The COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted the dire predicament of deaf people in accessing life-saving pandemic-related information in their national sign languages, placing deaf people as second-zone citizens. This is caused by the lack of official status of national sign languages as languages.

To date, only 61 of the UN's 193 Member States have undertaken recognition of their national sign languages through a legal instrument. 66% have not done so, despite it being a legal obligation outlined in the CRPD, which is ratified by 182 UN Member States. "The legal recognition of sign languages is an important and necessary first step towards the full equality of deaf people in their national societies," says WFD President Joseph J. Murray. "Further promotion of this right by the UN and its entities will help speed recognition by national governments."

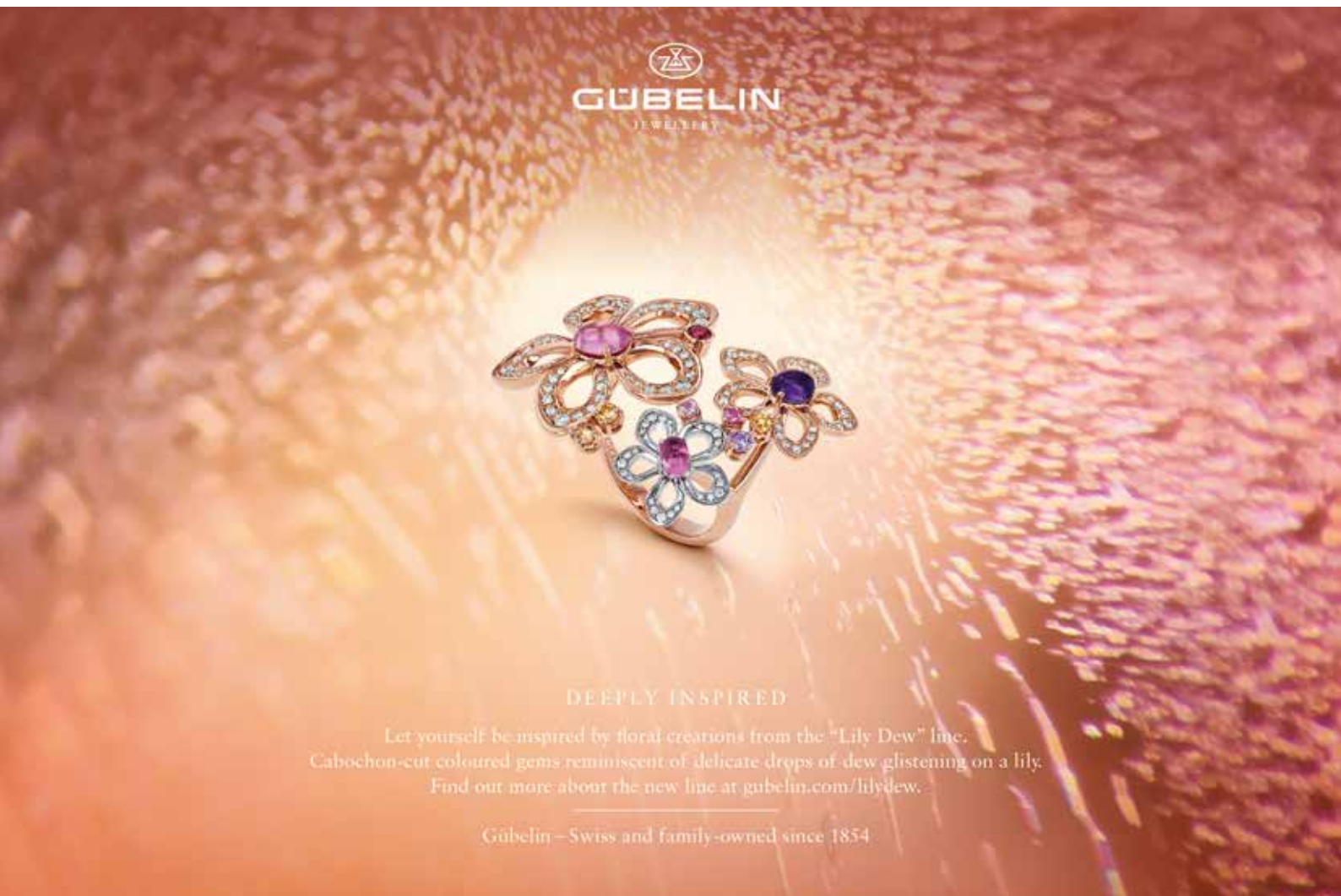
"Every human being needs a language" said Dr. Murray. Deaf communities have led the way in calling for the status for their national sign



Children say "I love you" in Sign language

languages to be equal to the other national languages." Inclusion of deaf people and their communities in their societies can only be reached by the inclusion of their national sign languages in the linguistic landscape of their countries. Dr. Murray concluded "Let's use this year's IDSL and IWDP to build back with national sign languages at the center of our communities." ▸

* Joseph Murray is President of the World Federation of the Deaf (WFD).




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World Barber's Day

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Dandy's: A men's business founded by a woman who means business

On this year's World Barber's Day, let's look at local businesses that provide personal grooming services

Anoushka Nair *

World Barber's Day is held every year on 16th of September. It is a global initiative that shines a light on a humble yet powerful business, the barbershop. For one day a year, with the help of UNICEF, barbers unite with a common goal to donate their earnings to charity. Such a day is not only significant in demonstrating how individuals can work together to help those in need but also establishes the influence of the barbering trade.

Barbershops have enjoyed a long-lasting presence amongst global societies. Personal care and social experience are just a few services they provide. Perhaps more uniquely, barbershops are traditionally a staple amongst male-identifying customers and therefore provide a comfortable space for men to socialise. Now more than ever - I speak of course with reference to the Covid-19 pandemic - people have a greater appreciation of personal care services. To show my own appreciation, I have taken some time to learn about a local barbershop owner whose business

philosophy stems from her awareness of the value of self-care.

I had the pleasure of interviewing Cristina Le Jeune, the founder of a local barbershop empire called Dandy's Barber Lounge. Formerly a Procter and Gamble brand manager, Cristina has transferred her skills to produce four barbershops, three of which are local to Geneva, as well as her own brand of Dandy products. Cristina is a significant and influential figure amongst Geneva's local barbershop owners, and demonstrates how persistence and discipline can foster great success for a woman in a male-dominated industry. She also exemplifies, through her business endeavours, that progressiveness can have a place in so-called traditional environments.

She explains that the inspiration behind the conception of her brand came from her grandfather who radiated a certain elegance and embodied an appreciation for properly presenting oneself. Whilst pregnant with her second son, Cristina left her previous job and soon decided that "it would be

nice to have a place for my boys”, and thus, Dandy’s barbershop was born.

The term ‘Dandy’, which is defined by a man’s attention to self-care, is the keyword to understanding Le Jeune’s barbershop and stylistic philosophy. She explains that the shop belongs to the Dandies, individuals who: “don’t care what people think” and who “build on the trend” because “they are the trend”. As the brand’s logo would put it, Dandy’s is a place ‘where men belong’, and by making such an ambitious statement, Cristina illustrates that men belong in a place where you can “take care of yourself on both the inside and outside”. Dandy is equally a term that when used within the context of Cristina’s business, shatters traditional, often negative, constructs of masculinity by blurring the line between what is deemed masculine and feminine. The brand simply champions the necessity for personal grooming, a service that transcends gender.

Cristina’s own inclusion within this male-driven industry is an example of a gender-redefining endeavour. Le Jeune has been transparent about some of her struggles as a woman in a business for men.

She recognizes the double standards that exist and aims to disrupt these limitations. Her shops employ predominantly male barbers, intended to create an environment where it is comfortable for men to be themselves. With her decision, comes a recognition of power struggles between herself and her staff. Fortunately, Cristina ensures that discipline is the key to maintaining her brand and makes sure that she works with people who are like-minded and share her own values. Cristina’s personal experience within this business furthers Dandy’s intentions to surpass the toxic traits of traditional gender roles, whilst also maintaining some of their more elegant values.

Dandy’s is a local example of how the barbershop trade offers a platform for empowerment that begins with the simple yet fundamental philosophy of self-care.

For more information about World Barber’s Day and how you can get involved, check out the following: worldbarberday.com ▶

* Anoushka Nair is a freelance writer.



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Olivier Coutau, délégué à la Genève internationale

Les organisations internationales font partie de l'ADN de Genève

Olivier Coutau, délégué à la Genève internationale, salue le dynamisme de cet écosystème unique et la cohabitation naturelle entre Genevois et internationaux

Muriel Scibilia *

Q u'est-ce que la présence des organisations internationales apporte à Genève ?

Elle apporte beaucoup. Pour commencer, elle confère une responsabilité hors du commun, celle de faciliter le travail de centaines d'acteurs œuvrant à la construction d'un monde plus sûr, plus juste et plus durable. Elle consolide ensuite une vocation internationale ancienne. On peut la faire remonter au 16^{ème} siècle et à l'accueil des réfugiés protestants. La présence des organisations

internationales a aussi un impact du point de vue économique. En comptant les effets indirects et induits, on estime que la Genève internationale contribue à hauteur de 14% de l'emploi et 11% du PIB du canton. Elle a également transformé le paysage urbain de Genève. Je pense ici à l'aéroport qui a accompagné l'installation de la Société des Nations il y a 100 ans, ainsi qu'à tous les bâtiments remarquables qui ont été construits autour de la Place des Nations : le Palais bien sûr, mais aussi l'Organisation mondiale de la Santé, l'Organisation

Mondiale de la Propriété Intellectuelle ou l'Organisation Météorologique Mondiale. Et ce n'est pas fini. La première pierre d'un nouveau centre destiné à sensibiliser à la science vient d'être posée au CERN. Ce Portail de la science a été conçu par le grand architecte Renzo Piano qui le présente comme un « Petit village flottant sur la route de Meyrin. » L'ouverture au public est prévue pour 2023.

On dit souvent que les internationaux et les Genevois se côtoient sans se rencontrer

C'est un cliché. La Genève internationale est née en 1863 avec la Croix-Rouge. C'est un groupe de personnalités genevoises qui en est à l'origine. Il est donc faux de considérer la Genève internationale comme un corps étranger qui serait venu se greffer artificiellement sur une Genève purement locale. Les organisations internationales font partie de l'ADN de Genève. Aujourd'hui, 40% de la population du canton est d'origine étrangère. Avec 189 nationalités, quasiment tous les pays du monde sont représentés. En ce sens, Genève est internationale par nature. L'attachement des Genevoises et des Genevois à la Genève internationale reste profond. Le récent sommet entre les présidents Biden et Poutine fut d'ailleurs un joli moment de communion et de fierté partagée. La proximité se manifeste aussi dans les urnes. Plusieurs votations, de l'installation du CERN à l'extension de l'Organisation Mondiale du Commerce (OMC), ont confirmé le soutien de la population aux organisations internationales. Les uns et les autres se retrouvent aussi lors de diverses manifestations culturelles, scolaires ou sportives, collaborent sur le plan professionnel, élaborent divers projets. Les journées portes ouvertes organisées au Palais des Nations, au CERN ou ailleurs rencontrent toujours un franc succès. Il est vrai cependant que le travail des organisations internationales est trop peu connu, ce qui, auprès de certains, peut induire une vision simpliste, voire caricaturale, le réduisant à un va-et-vient de limousines, à une succession de cocktails et de discours. Il est pourtant clair que sans l'action des organisations internationales, notre monde serait beaucoup plus chaotique et instable. Elle joue aussi un rôle dans notre quotidien. A titre d'exemple, sans les contributions du CERN, de l'Union Internationale des Télécommunications et de l'OMC, nous n'aurions pas de smartphone. Il est difficile d'imaginer comment nous pourrions nous en passer aujourd'hui. Ces dernières années, diverses initiatives ont été prises pour mieux informer sur l'importance de l'action des organisations internationales, via le recours à une

panoplie de moyens, expositions, publications ou campagnes d'information sur les réseaux sociaux. A cet égard, je relève ici le travail du Perception Change Project de l'Office des Nations Unies à Genève et celui de la Fondation pour Genève. Au niveau cantonal, nous avons développé un outil d'information qui répertorie notamment la centaine de réunions qui se tiennent chaque semaine au sein de la Genève internationale, y compris celles qui sont ouvertes au public (geneve-int.ch/fr). Une vraie réflexion reste toutefois à mener sur ce qu'il conviendrait de faire pour sensibiliser davantage aux questions de portée mondiale autrement qu'à travers la production de rapports que bien peu de citoyens lisent. L'art, sous toutes ses formes, peut notamment être un vecteur : la chaise sur la place des Nations parle des mines antipersonnel de façon percutante.

Les organisations non gouvernementales sont toujours plus nombreuses à s'installer à Genève. A quoi attribuez-vous cet engouement ?

Genève, avec New York, est l'un des épicentres de la coopération internationale. En tant que tel, elle est incontournable. Elle compte quelque 430 organisations non gouvernementales (ONG). Elles insufflent un vrai dynamisme en apportant expertise, capacité d'action ou connaissance du terrain. Le Secrétaire général de l'ONU plaide d'ailleurs en faveur d'un multilatéralisme inclusif qui s'appuie sur la société civile, les entreprises, les autorités locales et régionales et d'autres acteurs. Les ONG emploient plus de 3'000 personnes. A noter que l'emploi augmente chez elles deux fois plus vite qu'au sein des organisations internationales. Cependant, certaines de ces structures sont fragiles. Les autorités cantonales les aident en proposant aux nouveaux venus, sous conditions, des bureaux gratuits pendant deux ans. Elles soutiennent aussi des projets sur le terrain via un fonds de solidarité internationale. Le Centre d'accueil de la Genève internationale, grâce au soutien de la Confédération, du canton et de la Ville de Genève, finance par ailleurs l'hébergement des délégués de passage. Il convient également de noter que la crise sanitaire a impacté les petites entités qui ont peu de trésorerie. La crainte est que leurs bailleurs de fonds réorientent leur budget. Il est donc d'autant plus important de mettre en lumière le travail de ces organisations. ▶

* Muriel Scibilia est auteure et ancienne fonctionnaire de la Conférence des Nations Unies sur le commerce et le développement (CNUCED).



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Justice is key in an international organization like the UN

Independence for the UN Dispute and Appeals Tribunals

Judicial independence is regarded as a prerequisite for the protection of the rights of all who appear before a court or tribunal

Rowan Downing *

A tribunal must be separated from the other arms of governance, that is the legislature, as represented in the United Nations context by the General Assembly and the executive, as represented by the Secretariat. Separation must be such that the judges have security of tenure, they are free from interference, that those working for them are free and protected from pressures of the executive. The terms of engagement of judges must be certain and fixed and not subject to

interpretation or change by those in the executive. They need to have their own structure and not be treated as having a grading within a staff structure. The judiciary needs to be aware of, and be involved in the development of the budget of a tribunal. The budget of a tribunal must be separate from other administrative areas so that it cannot be the subject of redirection through administrative act. The administration of the tribunals must be, and be seen to be, structurally and physically

independent from the executive and the legislature. An administration connected to a tribunal is not independent merely because an order establishing it states that it is, in circumstances where because of primary structural issues, it is not actually possible to be independent. Unfortunately, all of these matters plague the UNDT and the UNAT. They have been raised in the Report of the Redesign Panel, the Report of the Interim Independent Assessment Panel, the Internal Justice Council annual reports and in the annual reports by the judges. They have been apparently largely ignored or rejected by both the Administration of the United Nations and subsequently, or consequently, the General Assembly.

“ They are free from interference ”

The Redesign Panel were well aware of the need for independence of the judiciary and the Tribunals. They condemned the old system, finding it “lacked independence” and that effective reform cannot happen without an efficient, independent and well resourced justice system”. The Redesign Panel made a number of recommendations, which disclose that they were directed specifically to the issue of independence. It is unfortunate that those involved in the drawing up of both the UNDT and UNAT Statutes did not include many of these specific provisions.

Independence of the UNDT and the UNAT can be achieved through amendment of their Statutes and structural and operational changes following such amendments. The General Assembly has some experience with the provision of structures ensuring independence.

In 1946, when establishing the International Court of Justice (ICJ), the General Assembly in the ICJ Statute, whilst providing that the judges would be independent, also provided that the Court would be administratively autonomous and thus independent from the Secretariat and the General Assembly. Article 21 of the ICJ Statute relevantly provides:

- Article 21**
1. ...
 2. The Court shall appoint its Registrar and may provide for the appointment of such other officers as may be necessary.

The Registrar is the administrator of the ICJ, chosen by the judges. The Registrar reports to the judges. The judges have the power to make provisions in respect of appointment of the other staff, who become staff of the United Nations.

In 1974 the General Assembly established the International Civil Service Commission as an independent body. Importantly, by Article 20, the General Assembly made the following provisions to ensure independence:

1. The Commission shall have a staff as provided in the budget approved by the General Assembly.
2. The staff, selected in accordance with the provisions of Article 101, paragraph 3, of the Charter of the United Nations, shall be appointed by the Secretary-General after consultation with the Chairman of the Commission and, as regards senior staff, with the Administrative Committee on Coordination. All staff shall be appointed after appropriate selection procedures. In carrying out their duties, they shall be responsible to the Chairman and shall be removable only after consultation with him or her.
3. Subject to paragraph 2 above, the staff of the Commission shall be regarded for administrative purposes as officials of the United Nations, which shall provide the necessary administrative facilities for them.

4.

The appointment of the staff of the Commission is made in consultation with the Chairman of the Commission and they report to the Chairman of the Commission.

“ Independence of the UNDT and the UNAT can be achieved ”

It is suggested that the Principal Registrar should, following the ICJ structure, be appointed by the judges of the UNDT and the UNAT together, and that such person report to the President of both such Tribunals and not to any other person. The appointment should be limited to a period of time, with an exclusion of five years from working for the United Nations after such term has expired. This

would ensure independence of such person. The same arrangements as made for the appointment of staff of the ICSC should be considered for the staff of both the UNDT and the UNAT. Such would ensure that they are not subject to external pressures. The Principal Registrar would not be involved in any other administrative tasks within the Secretariat, which is not the current position. For example, giving advice to the Secretary General, the only respondent before the UNDT and the UNAT, or drafting for him reports on the administration of justice. Tribunal staff would report to the Presidents of the respective Tribunals through their registrars.

“ The Redesign Panel made a number of recommendations ”

This system is exemplified by Article 8. 1 of the ICSC Statute, providing that “The Chairman shall direct the work of the Commission and its staff.” Thus, the Commission is not subject to any direct



The judiciary should be independent

or indirect control of its staff by the Secretariat of the United Nations. This is to be contrasted with the current position where the judges of the UNDT became so concerned about directions being given to staff in respect of undertaking other work for the Secretariat that in 2017 they issued a direction under Rule 21.3 in respect of the need for the staff to advise of all directions given to undertake work other than directly for the judges. It is understood that the staff were instructed by the administration to disregard this direction by the judges; moreover, it is understood that staff were even instructed to disregard directions of the judges pertaining strictly to their work on cases.

The Presidents of the UNDT and the UNAT should provide their report directly to the General Assembly. The current arrangement whereby the Tribunals append a “letter” to a report being provided by the Secretary General - the respondent in all cases before them – shows that here is no sense of independence of the UNDT or UNAT. Moreover, the Report of the Secretary General is a report by the Secretariat to the General Assembly.

“ The budget of the Commission shall be included in the regular budget of the United Nations ”

At present there is no consultation made between the judges of the UNDT and the UNAT in respect of the budget estimates or submissions. The budget provided is mixed with OSLA and there is little, if any, transparency. A matter complained of by the judges. Article 21.2 of the ICSC Statute should be adapted and applied to the Tribunals

1....

2. The budget of the Commission shall be included in the regular budget of the United Nations. The budget estimates shall be established by the Secretary-General, after consultation with the Administrative Committee on Co-ordination on the basis of proposals by the Commission. ▶

* Rowan Downing was a judge on the UN Dispute Tribunal.



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A new face for the Division of Conference Management at UNOG

Ms. Kira Kruglikova shares her priorities and insights into the future of the Division

Garry Mullender *

You have recently been appointed Director of the Division of Conference Management (DCM) at UNOG. Could you share with us more information about your career path that made it possible for you to be selected for this important position?

I have had various roles since joining the DCM in 2007 in the Executive Office and then as Chief of PSS, mirroring perhaps my atypical background: degrees in chemistry; an MBA; a brief stint in manufacturing and a career in the U.S. Diplomatic service. I have had plenty of opportunities to develop my interests in DCM, particularly in the area of communication. When we pursue our passions, we find extra energy and enthusiasm, especially by engaging with people who share them too and can help us think creatively and find solutions. We have a lot of expertise in the Division, at UNOG and across DGACM and I regularly reach out to colleagues to deepen my understanding of issues and to refine my thinking through discussion. I have often taken on extra activities, where I could make things happen and fill an unmet need. I encourage people to

be ready to volunteer their own time, above and beyond our “day-jobs” and look at things from the point of view of conference participants and organizers. While Chief of PSS, I supported staff by following up on their interests and bringing new ideas forward. The former Director-General’s request to modernize the UNOG Annual Report into something much more appealing for a broad audience triggered an outpouring of creativity and innovation. The product won a design award and was such a success that we were asked to design the SG’s Annual Report.

You took over the Division at a time of changes for both the translators (increase in their workload) and the interpreters (the introduction of online meetings). How do you intend to implement these changes while taking into account the health and the welfare of the staff?

We saw during the first months of the pandemic how quickly the technical landscape of the tools we use shifted to meet business continuity needs. This rapid evolution will continue, bringing further improvements. Currently there is a clear problem with poor sound quality over remote simultaneous interpretation (RSI) platforms. I expect that over time, perhaps 3 or 4 years, developments in technology should resolve these issues. In the interim, we must raise participants’ awareness of what they can do to improve sound quality. The DG has urged Member-States to invest in appropriate equipment and training for remote participation; our DCM colleagues are producing communications packages to raise awareness, which I truly appreciate, and a working group, with the ASG and OICT, is providing input for the next round of procurement of remote platforms. At UNOG, we also have a platform for reporting any health issues arising from interpreting audio coming over RSIs, which I would encourage interpreters to use to capture data so it feeds into future solutions.

Ms. Kira Kruglikova, Director of the Division of Conference Management, UNOG



About translation, I would like to emphasize that the USG and ASG's engagement reflects the concern at the highest levels of management and I am confident of a positive outcome. Michelle Keating, Chief of the Languages Service, led a working group, which submitted a report to the USG, DGACM, who endorsed the recommendations. Several technical task forces have been set up to review differences between duty stations. Information about these task forces is available via Sharepoint. We are waiting to hear more about the harmonization group to which the task forces will report. Colleagues may wish to take the opportunity to engage with task force members. Now is also a good time for translators to take advantage of training opportunities. Having said that, there are clearly issues surrounding the quality of submissions and authoring which must be tackled.

Very often, when a new Director is appointed, changes are likely to be introduced. What are the changes you would like to introduce at DCM?

My core mandate is to implement the vision of the Director-General of UNOG, to whom I report, and the USG of DGACM, who sets the budget and policy for conference servicing. The SG recently referred to accelerating transformation through a Quintet of Change: better data, analysis and innovation of communications and digital transformation; strategic foresight; stronger performance and results orientation; and a work culture that reduces bureaucracy. These strategies will help us navigate the future evolution of the Division.

I see three key issues on my desk. The first is the SHP, with which I am proactively engaged to ensure business continuity throughout the project for conferencing and a modern conferencing infrastructure that meets the needs of our teams who provide services, our clients who organize conferences and our delegates and meeting participants, who benefit from our work.

Secondly, preparing for the post-COVID-19 meeting environment through building on the Conferencing Today and Tomorrow (CTT) project to capture lessons learned and identify what should be kept and how it can be done in a sustainable manner. This second phase of the CTT will help us strengthen our preparedness for and reactivity to change, which as we have learned over the past year, can be thrust upon us without warning. The first stage will start in the Fall with

the report expected at the end of this year with recommendations that can be considered in the 2023 budgetary process.

The third key issue is strengthening consonance and improving communication within DGACM and across UNOG. Information must pass in both directions, reflecting the duality of our budgetary and policy location in DGACM and our operational location in UNOG. I encourage all colleagues to take a Divisional level perspective and to see their role as a contribution to fulfilling the DCM mandate. We have a lot to gain as a Division, when colleagues join cross-cutting teams, such as the UNOG Disability Inclusion Team or the new UNOG Multilingualism Action Team. These cross-functional activities are opportunities to work on new issues and projects and expand professional networks. Seeing different perspectives can bring a true breath of fresh air into our working lives. In short, I would like to promote this sort of cross-fertilisation within the Division and beyond through much-needed "Community Service" as well as opportunities for learning and cross assignments.

The COVID-19 pandemic has changed our working methods. How do you see the future of the Division in light of the lessons learnt from the pandemic?

The future is certainly about strong connections across DGACM and UNOG, as well as other international organisations, to better support our clients and Member States in a sustainable manner. What the pandemic has shown us is how fragile our world is and how quickly longstanding practices can be upended. The Division successfully adapted and we supported each other through difficult challenges. Covid could have atomised us; broken down our interaction and relationships. Instead, we reached out through technology like Teams, which was effective, because we had resilient pre-existing networks. When we all get back to the Palais, let us focus on revitalizing our team connections and replenishing our teamwork capital. These got us through this crisis and will support us through coming changes. We know where we are heading our ship, but even the best crew cannot control the wind or the waves, so we must be ready to make adjustments to reach our goal in changing conditions. ▶

* Garry Mullender is Interpreter at Division of Conference Management (DCM) at UNOG.



L'ambassadeur de la République Centrafricaine, durant une session du Conseil des droits de l'homme

Leopold-Ismaël Samba, doyen du groupe des Ambassadeurs africains

Le diplomate centrafricain démontre que l'ancienneté constitue un atout précieux

Catherine Fiankan-Bokonga *

Réprésentant permanent de la République centrafricaine auprès des Offices européens des Nations Unies et des autres organisations internationales à Genève et à Vienne depuis janvier 2009, l'Ambassadeur Leopold-Ismaël Samba met au service de l'ensemble du corps diplomatique la large expertise qu'il a acquise en exerçant des fonctions nationales et au sein du système multilatéral. Économiste et juriste de formation, ce diplomate africain est connu pour sa maîtrise de la langue de Molière, son humour... et son couvre-chef, qui ne le quitte que rarement.

Vous êtes le représentant permanent de la République centrafricaine (RCA) auprès des Offices européens des Nations Unies et des autres organisations internationales à Genève et à Vienne, et aussi Ambassadeur auprès de la Confédération helvétique. Comment décririez-vous les relations qu'entretient votre pays avec la Suisse ?

La RCA entretient d'excellentes relations avec la Suisse. Le Conseil fédéral a reconnu l'indépendance de mon pays, le 13 août 1960, et établi des relations diplomatiques dès 1964. Des accords ont été signés

et nous coopérons dans le domaine de l'éducation et de la culture.

Quel est votre rôle en tant que Doyen du groupe des ambassadeurs africains de Genève ?

Je « parraine » les nouveaux arrivants, j'arbitre les dissensions avec des tiers et je facilite les relations avec le pays-hôte. En tant qu'ancien haut-magistrat, je veille aussi à ce que la Convention de Vienne soit respectée en matière d'immunités et de privilèges tout en arrondissant les angles, en cas de problèmes. Lorsque l'Afrique soumet la candidature d'un de ses ressortissants à un poste de direction d'une organisation internationale (comme cela a été le cas pour l'OMS et l'OMC), je coordonne certaines actions à Genève et je mobilise mes collègues Ambassadeurs.

“ La pandémie de la COVID-19 a mis en évidence la fragilité du système multilatéral ”

Vous êtes l'un des vice-présidents du Groupe des ambassadeurs francophones de Genève. Quel est votre sentiment sur l'utilisation quasi systématique de l'anglais à l'ONU ?

Cette situation handicape de nombreux États, et en particulier les francophones. Il est regrettable que les Nations Unies ne soient pas à même de diminuer le fossé entre les deux langues officielles de travail du Secrétariat que sont l'anglais et le français, sous prétexte de manque de fonds. Le cadre législatif mis en place par l'Assemblée Générale en faveur du multilinguisme est, dans la pratique, peu respecté. Une solution devrait aussi être trouvée pour éviter les coupures budgétaires dans le domaine de l'interprétation et de la traduction des documents. Ces services sont cruciaux pour les travaux de l'organisation.

Vous êtes actuellement le coordonnateur du Groupe africain auprès de l'Organisation Mondiale de la Santé (OMS). En quoi consiste votre rôle ?

Je porte la voix de l'Afrique au sein de l'OMS. La pandémie de la COVID-19 a mis en évidence la fragilité du système multilatéral pour résoudre la crise sanitaire à laquelle nous faisons face actuellement. Dans ce contexte, je partage les préoccupations des

représentants des États africains. Plus de 3,5 milliards de vaccins contre la COVID-19 ont été distribués dans le monde, mais plus de 75 % sont allés dans 10 pays. Il faut accroître l'approvisionnement en vaccins des pays à revenu faible ou intermédiaire. A l'heure actuelle, seulement 1,39 % du 1,3 milliard d'Africains sont complètement vaccinés. Le déséquilibre qui subsiste dans la distribution des vaccins est choquant. Comme l'a déclaré le chef de l'OMS, « nous vivons un apartheid vaccinal ».

En 2018, vous avez eu l'idée de créer un Examen périodique universel (EPU) pour la santé. La proposition avait été soumise à l'OMS au nom du groupe des ambassadeurs africains. Pouvez-vous nous en dire plus ?

Effectivement, j'avais été inspiré par le processus des droits de l'homme. Sous les auspices du Conseil des droits de l'homme, l'EPU consiste à passer en revue les réalisations de l'ensemble des 194 États Membres de l'ONU dans ce domaine. J'ai imaginé un mécanisme similaire pour la santé. Le Directeur général de l'OMS, le docteur Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus a évoqué ce projet dans ses allocutions d'ouverture de la 73ème Assemblée Mondiale de la Santé (mai et novembre 2020).

Quel est le but de ce mécanisme ? Où en êtes-vous actuellement ?

Cet « Examen universel de l'état de santé et de préparation » a pour but d'instaurer la confiance et la responsabilité mutuelles en matière d'action sanitaire. Les nations doivent être rassemblées autour du principe d'une approche faisant intervenir l'ensemble des pouvoirs publics pour renforcer les capacités nationales de préparation aux pandémies, instaurer la couverture sanitaire universelle et améliorer l'état de santé de toutes les populations. Je collabore en ce moment étroitement avec l'OMS sur une proposition détaillée qui sera présentée aux États Membres. L'Allemagne, le Cameroun, la France et mon pays ont convenu de collaborer avec le Secrétariat durant la phase initiale pour mettre au point et tester le dispositif.

Un dernier mot sur le rôle de la Genève Internationale ?

Plus que jamais, Genève est le lieu où bat le pouls du monde. ▶

* Catherine Fiankan-Bokonga est Vice-Présidente du Club Suisse de la Presse.



L'Organisation Internationale du Travail: une lutte continue en faveur des droits des travailleurs

Les batailles d'un fonctionnaire international

Pour s'imposer, être fidèle à soi-même

Abdoullah Zouhair *

La carrière d'un fonctionnaire n'est pas toujours un long fleuve tranquille. Après avoir terminé mes études de droit et fait un stage au service juridique du BIT, cette Organisation me proposa un contrat de courte durée. C'était le début d'une carrière pleine de rebondissements et de défis, mais passionnante. Voici quelques épisodes qui l'ont marquée.

Relever le défi pour se faire une place

Après avoir enchaîné plusieurs contrats courts, je fus recruté pour remanier une étude dont la direction n'était pas satisfaite, l'un des deux rapports annuels de la Commission d'Experts chargée du contrôle de l'application des conventions de l'OIT.

J'avais deux grands défis à relever. Le premier était le « timing », cette étude devant être terminée dans un temps record pour respecter le calendrier de la Commission d'Experts. Le deuxième, était le contexte dans lequel je devais évoluer : cadre de grade P-2, je devais collaborer avec une équipe de fonctionnaires plus gradés que moi (P-4 et P-5) et qui avaient une longue expérience dans l'Organisation. L'un d'eux était une dame d'un autre département, qui ne voyait pas d'un bon œil qu'un petit fonctionnaire qui sentait encore les bancs de l'Université pilote une étude aussi importante et se réjouissait à l'avance de la « proie facile à piéger » que lui offrait le destin. Dans un tel environnement, je ne pouvais compter que sur le sentiment de

légitimité que me donnait encore ma formation universitaire !

Pendant deux mois, j'allais au bureau tous les matins à six heures, y compris les week-ends, et ne le quittais que vers 20 heures. La « grande dame », avec l'appui du chef de son département, multipliait les critiques sur mes analyses. La première version de l'étude avait été réalisée dans un climat d'opposition entre le chef de mon service et le sien.

“ Relever le défi pour se faire une place ”

Lorsque vint le jour de l'examen de l'étude par la Commission d'Experts, le chef de l'autre département était présent pour défendre sa position. C'était du « jamais vu » depuis que le Bureau réalisait ces rapports annuels, c'est-à-dire depuis plusieurs décennies. Après les discussions et les échanges de vue habituels, les membres de la Commission, éminents professeurs et magistrats, confirmèrent mon analyse. Le Directeur du département me félicita et me remercia.

Le temps de la reconnaissance

Quelques semaines plus tard, j'étais nommé au rang de juriste principal au poste de « Conseiller régional » des normes internationales du travail pour les pays arabes. C'était un poste réservé au grade P-5, qui exigeait une ancienneté d'au moins quinze ans, alors que j'avais à peine deux ans d'expérience ! Encore un défi à relever. Mon affectation coïncidait avec celle d'un nouveau Directeur régional, qui commença par refuser ma nomination et par engager le protégé d'un Ministre. Mais mon département tint bon et ma nomination fut confirmée.

Ma première activité à ce poste était l'organisation d'un séminaire en Syrie. J'avais moi-même choisi et contacté les participants, des professeurs, des magistrats, des avocats et de hauts responsables des ministères concernés. J'avais aussi invité le Directeur du service juridique de l'Organisation arabe du Travail qui, dans son intervention clôturant le séminaire déclara : « je rêvais depuis 20 ans d'organiser un séminaire de cette qualité ». Une consécration.

L'intransigeance pour la bonne cause

Le BIT organisait périodiquement, à sa charge, une formation visant à renforcer les capacités des États pour l'établissement des rapports qu'ils communiquent à l'OIT. L'objectif de l'Organisation était de permettre à ses organes de contrôle de vérifier plus efficacement l'application de ses conventions.

Le Ministère d'un pays avait proposé d'envoyer à cette formation, en accord avec le Directeur régional, un fonctionnaire qui n'avait pas le profil requis. Pour ce pays, c'était une femme qui se chargeait des rapports. C'est elle qui aurait dû participer, mais elle n'avait encore jamais eu le droit de le faire. Sachant bien que cette femme faisait l'objet de discrimination, je m'étais opposé à la proposition du Ministère en l'informant que nous ne prenions que les candidats chargés d'établir les rapports sur les conventions de l'OIT.

“ L'intransigeance pour la bonne cause ”

Furieux, le Directeur régional m'avait téléphoné et m'avait dit qu'il s'agissait d'une décision ministérielle et qu'il était « très déçu ». Je lui avais répondu qu'il ne s'agissait pas de tourisme mais de formation et que j'étais prêt à organiser un voyage d'étude pour ce candidat, dans son domaine de compétence, à la charge du Bureau. Chacun restant sur sa position, aucun représentant de ce pays n'avait participé à la formation. Depuis lors, une note est envoyée chaque année aux Bureaux régionaux pour rappeler que c'est aux juristes spécialistes (conseillers régionaux) de désigner les participants à cette formation.

Le mot de la fin

“... Un homme, après avoir balayé la poussière et les copeaux de sa vie, n'aura plus que les questions difficiles et nettes : était-ce bien ou était-ce mal ? Ai-je bien fait - ou mal fait ? ”, disait John Steinbeck.

Aujourd'hui, en jetant un coup d'œil en arrière sur mon parcours, je me dis que les difficultés rencontrées en valaient la peine, que je ne regrette pas de m'être battu pour défendre le droit et que si c'était à refaire, je le referais. ▶

* Abdoullah Zouhair est Consultant international, ancien fonctionnaire du BIT et Membre de Greycells.

Le MEG, un musée en pleine évolution

Désireux de s'adapter aux besoins de son public, le Musée d'Ethnographie de Genève redéfinit son identité de façon décoloniale, inclusive et durable

Anna Bonvin *

Lorsqu'en 2019, la Ville de Genève demande à ses institutions culturelles de définir leurs engagements futurs, le Musée Ethnographique de Genève (MEG) entame une réflexion critique sur son identité. Son premier constat est qu'avec ses 195'00 visiteurs par an, des expositions reconnues internationalement et une riche programmation événementielle, le musée situé au 65 Boulevard Carl-Vogt jouit d'un indéniable succès. Mais pour l'équipe du MEG, pas question de se reposer sur ses acquis. «Un musée doit se réinventer perpétuellement de manière critique », souligne son directeur Boris Wastiau. L'évolution est la marque de fabrique du MEG ». Profitant des longs mois de fermeture due à la crise sanitaire, l'équipe du musée a ainsi mûri sa réflexion de 2019 qui centre la nouvelle identité du musée autour de cinq substantifs clés: décolonialisme, collaboration, inclusion, numérisation et durabilité.

Le musée d'ethnographie, une espèce en voie de disparition

Un renouveau d'autant plus pressant que les musées d'ethnographie disparaissent peu à peu du panorama culturel européen. La raison? L'héritage colonial de la discipline. En effet, lorsque l'ethnographe Eugène Pittard fonde le MEG en 1901, l'ethnographie désigne une étude des populations dites « primitives », d'après une vision coloniale du 19ème siècle. «Repenser le musée de façon décoloniale, c'est expliquer le contexte d'acquisition et l'histoire des oeuvres, mais aussi

Vue extérieure du MEG



les interpréter de façon plurielle, explique Boris Wastiau. Plus seulement d'après le point de vue euro-centré de l'ethnographe donc, mais aussi d'après celui des cultures concernées ». Désireux de se dissocier d'une ère révolue, le MEG cherche d'ailleurs à se débaptiser et a récemment lancé un appel via ses réseaux sociaux permettant à tous de proposer un nouveau nom pour le musée.

“ Un musée doit se réinventer perpétuellement de manière critique ”

Collaborer, c'est la clé

Cette approche participative et collaborative est un autre élément central de l'ADN du musée. Ces dernières années, il a donc renforcé ses partenariats avec les différents acteurs de la vie genevoise, mais aussi consolidé ses relations avec les institutions de la Genève internationale. Sa conservatrice Karine Durand a ainsi mis sur pied une consultation des peuples autochtones impliqués dans les collections en partenariat avec l'Organisation Mondiale de la Propriété Intellectuelle. Transparent quant à ses pratiques, le MEG a également à cœur de consulter l'ensemble du personnel ainsi que le public avant toute prise de décision majeure.

Une offre ciblée et inclusive

Car un musée moderne se définit aussi avant tout par sa pertinence pour le public. L'ayant bien compris, le MEG s'est lancé dans une vaste enquête cherchant à mieux connaître le profil de ses visiteurs. «Chaque visiteur vient



“The Water Carries Her, She Carries the Water” par Elizabeth LaPensee, visuel de la nouvelle exposition



Boris Wastiau, directeur du MEG

au musée pour une raison différente, observe Boris Wastiau. L'enjeu est de comprendre ses motivations pour proposer une offre aussi adaptée qu'inclusive » Mais comment conserver l'équilibre entre les fonctions patrimoniales du musée (conserver et valoriser les objets) et le développement de prestations pertinentes pour le public? Selon le MEG, il s'agirait de ne plus aborder les œuvres exposées du point de vue d'une région ou culture spécifique, mais selon des problématiques globales et transverses, plus susceptibles d'intéresser un large public. Dans le même sens, il privilégie le multilinguisme afin de faciliter l'accès aux œuvres pour les visiteurs internationaux.

Une nouvelle exposition à l'image du nouveau MEG

Cette nouvelle vision du musée s'illustre dans la prochaine exposition permanente qui débutera le 24 septembre prochain. Intitulée «Injustice environnementale, Alternatives autochtones », elle aborde le sujet de l'urgence climatique selon le point de vue des peuples autochtones, particulièrement vulnérables face à ces changements de par leur proximité avec la nature. «Cette exposition remplit tous les critères, se réjouit Boris Wastiau. Essentiellement réalisée avec des matériaux recyclés, elle traite d'une question nous concernant tous en exposant le point de vue des peuples autochtones. Cette fois-ci, ce sont eux qui nous questionnent, plus nous». ▀

* Anna Bonvin est journaliste indépendante à CH Media.



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Borealis at the Adelaide Fringe Festival, Australia 2021

Can art and connection save the world?

Geneva-based international activist Dan Acher is convinced of it, and it has to do with shared emotion. Here's how it works

Sophie Mulphin *

Dan Acher uses cities the world over as playgrounds. Very big playgrounds, in which large-scale installations bring thousands of people together. His work taps deep into shared emotion, a magical space which enables all kinds of citizens to connect with each other and to engage with the key issues of our time.

The participative artworks he creates offer various levels of involvement, with virality being another

key ingredient of the process. A savvy mix, deliberately designed both to touch profoundly and to amplify messages about our collective future on this planet.

Reinventing the city

If you've visited Geneva you're bound to have enjoyed one of Happy City Lab's local productions. As founder and director, Dan is responsible for the CinéTransat free outdoor film festival, the

open pianos in the street, and the year-round, city-wide Neighbourhood Swap Boxes in which hundreds of thousands of objects and conversations are exchanged each year. Projects that started as experiments in living together in the urban environment now feature in international guidebooks and are being replicated far and wide. The Happy City Lab team has shown - with the joyful participation of the people of Geneva - that by creating the right situations, and giving citizens free access to art, we can meaningfully transform the way we live together.

Artivism: Engaging people through emotion

Art and activism have long intermingled to tackle society's big issues. More recently, the term activism has gained traction as the catchword for a form of art specifically produced to generate social change.

In his practice, Dan concentrates on the emotions he can trigger in people and the behavioural impact this can have. His immersive installations, participative events and 'new city rituals' enable people to engage differently with each other and their environment. Crucially, by transforming the emotional context of the city spaces they are accustomed to, Dan's productions allow citizens to come together beyond what might divide them. Faithful to this vision, his latest installations examine our relationship with nature and, as world citizens on a shared planet, each other.

"We Are Watching": The eyes of the world

In a bid to engage citizens with the climate crisis, by having them be symbolically present at Madrid's COP25 UN climate change conference, Dan created a giant one-world flag. It's a monumental eye made up of thousands of portraits sent in from 190 countries, bearing witness and holding decision-makers accountable at key climate events around the globe.

Participants add powerful messages to their portraits online, which can be seen on wearewatching.org. Individuals of all ages and backgrounds express hope, fear, love, and a resounding call for action. Their universal message reaches beyond borders – a common cry to save our planet.

The 10-storey-high flag first flew in Madrid and is now touring towards Glasgow for November's COP26. This year's tour started in March in Geneva, where the flag was raised to mark the opening of the 2021 FIFDH International Human Rights Film Festival.

Borealis: The northern lights on demand


Dan shifts our emotional experience of urban spaces by transforming familiar landmarks. Borealis brings the magical mystery of the Northern Lights to any city, using layers of light and particle clouds to create the illusion. Throughout the ages, we have attributed countless legends to the celestial phenomenon. Today this immersive installation inspires awe by creating something that shouldn't by all accounts be there and that is way bigger than any one of us. As we witness new and unusual natural phenomena, questions are raised: Will we soon seek to control every aspect of our environment and artificially recreate all that we need from nature – aesthetically, emotionally, or in terms of natural resources?

Scaling things up

Borealis has mesmerized audiences and the media across Australia, Europe and Japan. And while it dances in the sky, the We Are Watching flag billows and waves large. The size and beauty of these works seek to focus our gaze above and beyond our individual differences onto the same universal matters. There is both a timeless aspect and an urgency to Dan's installations; their sheer scale reminds us that we are all, indeed, in this together.

Collaboration is paramount

As the world becomes more polarised and we tackle huge challenges, Dan feels it's crucial that we reinforce our sense of shared humanity. His vision is one where government ministers, artists, scientists, activists, citizens, come together urgently and connect - locally, globally, meaningfully. He believes that accessible, universal art can bridge intellectual and political divides. That it can provoke a transformative, emotional response and raise our sense of individual and collective responsibility for our common future.

Dan's work has accompanied Australian Aboriginal ceremonies, launched art and technology centers, lit up the skies over an 11th-century fortress and its neighbouring 21st-century financial district, featured at CERN, been played with national symphony orchestras. So whoever and wherever you are in the world, look Dan up and get in touch. The magic of connection can save the world. 

* Sophie Mulphin is an international communicator, helping people to better connect.



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Divonne-Les-Bains

100 ans + 1 de vie internationale: une région transformée

Une exposition à Divonne sur un tandem pionnier qui invite à construire un multilatéralisme du 21^{ème} siècle ancré sur les territoires

Joachim Tapia-Almosnino *

Dans un monde chaque jour plus instable et interdépendant, nous avons plus que jamais besoin de coopérer sur tous les plans et entre les territoires. Si les instances des Nations Unies s'emploient à rétablir l'esprit et les pratiques du multilatéralisme, certaines collectivités territoriales, conscientes des enjeux, s'engagent elles aussi sur cette voie.

La municipalité de Divonne-les-Bains a choisi de le faire en organisant une exposition du 19 septembre au 24 octobre qui retrace la richesse des initiatives exemplaires prises en la matière dans le bassin franco-genevois ces dernières décennies.

« Pour le maire de Divonne, Vincent Scattolin, il était important de soutenir une manifestation de cette nature car elle est l'occasion de réfléchir sur ce qu'il convient de faire pour prolonger et renforcer l'évolution des relations constructives entre Divonne, le Pays de Gex et Genève », indique

John Burley, ancien haut fonctionnaire à l'ONU, et ex conseiller municipal chargé des relations transfrontalières et ex adjoint au maire de Divonne.

Cette exposition retrace l'évolution d'une longue histoire d'amour entre les Genevois et les Gessiens, des premiers travailleurs frontaliers suisses arrivés dans les fermes gessiennes à la création de l'agglomération transfrontalière du Grand Genève.

Elle permet de découvrir de nombreux faits saillants qui ont construit la coopération internationale comme le fameux déjeuner de réconciliation, en 1926, entre les ministres français et allemand dans un restaurant de Thoiry, une ville frontalière avec Meyrin. Il y sera aussi question des partages de territoires qu'il a fallu négocier pour permettre l'extension de l'aéroport de Cointrin en 1956. D'autres réalisations ont nécessité une solide coopération transfrontalière comme l'extension du CERN en territoire français en 1965, la création

du Conseil du Léman en 1987, regroupant trois cantons suisses et deux départements français, ainsi que, plus récemment, la création du Groupement local de coopération transfrontalière du Grand Genève en 2013.

Cette exposition qui aurait dû se tenir l'an dernier dans le cadre de la célébration du centenaire du multilatéralisme, et qui avait donné lieu à une série d'événements à Genève, a dû être reportée côté français en attendant un assouplissement des règles suscitées par la pandémie. D'où son nouveau titre : 100 ans + 1 de vie internationale.

Au tour du pays de Gex de fêter la coopération internationale en braquant les projecteurs sur les innovations économiques, les relations culturelles, ainsi que les transformations dans les domaines du transport ou de l'emploi entre les deux régions transfrontalières. « L'accent sera aussi mis sur les événements historiques et la participation de personnalités locales », ajoute John Burley. De nombreux documents anciens, des photos et des témoignages illustrant l'amitié entre Gessiens et Genevois ont été réunis afin de

permettre aux visiteurs de réaliser l'importance du multilatéralisme dans le monde d'aujourd'hui.

Depuis l'installation de la Société des Nations à Genève en 1920, ses institutions ont joué un rôle prépondérant dans la coopération internationale à l'origine de la création des Nations Unies. En quête constante de paix et de prévention des guerres, les États fondateurs de la Société des Nations ont développé le concept de multilatéralisme. Par opposition à l'unilatéralisme, il instaure un mode d'organisation susceptible d'instaurer un ordre mondial qui encourage des relations pacifiques entre les états. Un siècle plus tard, la cité de Calvin et sa région accueillent 38 organisations internationales et 420 organisations non gouvernementales œuvrant toujours en ce sens.

On vous donne donc rendez-vous cet automne du 29 septembre au 24 octobre, l'exposition vous réserve bien d'autres surprises, y compris pour les enfants à partir de 11 ans à qui un quiz sera proposé et qui pourront gagner des lots. ▶

* Joachim Tapia-Almosnino est journaliste indépendant.



Quand on prend soin des onusiens

Les arcanes du Palais recèlent des bons plans, même en temps de pandémie ! Rencontre avec Gabriel Stevens dont les activités ne se sont pas confinées

Muriel Scibilia *

Vous avez mal au dos, au cou, aux épaules, aux bras, aux avant-bras, aux poignets, des fourmillements dans les mains, une fatigue visuelle ! Inutile de chercher trop loin: il est probable que vous faites partie des accros aux écrans.

« Quiconque passe 8 heures chaque jour devant son ordinateur, pour le travail comme pour les loisirs, est dans la même situation qu'un sportif de haut niveau qui s'entraîne 30 heures par semaine, constate le physiothérapeute Gabriel Stevens habitué des couloirs du Palais des Nations. Les postures statiques inadaptées et l'exécution de tâches monotones répétitives provoquent des troubles musculosquelettiques qui se traduisent en général par des douleurs lancinantes, le plus souvent quotidiennes, et finissent par avoir des conséquences sur l'humeur. »

Désormais reconnus comme maladies professionnelles, ces troubles sont la première cause d'arrêts de travail dans de nombreux pays. Le personnel de l'ONU n'y échappe pas ! Or, « Une grande partie de ces maux pourraient être évités ou corrigés, affirme Gabriel Stevens. En effet, la plupart des sédentaires ont une faible musculature profonde, ce qui augmente les pressions sur les articulations et entraîne une

multitude de pathologies. Mais on peut y remédier par des exercices de renforcement musculaire, d'assouplissement et de mobilité. »

C'est ce qu'il propose au personnel de l'ONU-Genève dans le cadre du Club Santé Bien-être créé par une poignée de fonctionnaires afin de permettre au personnel de se refaire une santé ou de parfaire sa forme en pratiquant des activités aussi variées que la marche nordique, la sophrologie ou la gymnastique Pilates, sans avoir à courir à l'autre bout de la ville.

Au programme de Gabriel Stevens, des cours de Pilates et du stretching postural

La méthode Pilates est une gymnastique douce qui tonifie la musculature interne en alliant respiration profonde, exercices physiques. Elle est basée sur 8 principes : concentration, contrôle, positionnement du centre de gravité, respiration, fluidité, précision, enchaînement et isolement. Elle permet d'améliorer à la fois la force, la souplesse, la coordination et la

L'importance d'une bonne posture et de l'étirement de la colonne vertébrale



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posture. En sollicitant les muscles abdominaux, les fessiers, les muscles du dos, elle soulage entre autres les douleurs chroniques du dos.

Dérivé du yoga et du Pilates, le stretching postural permet de travailler sa posture, notamment en étirant la colonne vertébrale afin d'éviter le tassement des vertèbres, de muscler son dos, de soulager certaines pathologies, comme la scoliose ou la lombalgie, de tonifier la silhouette et de procurer une sensation de bien-être.

« Dans le cadre de ces deux activités, on considère le corps dans sa globalité, précise Gabriel Stevens. Les interconnexions musculaires sont essentielles. Si on renforce une zone au détriment d'une autre, on crée des tensions. Or, trop souvent, on se concentre sur le renforcement musculaire au détriment de la mobilité et de la souplesse. La mobilité permet d'augmenter l'amplitude d'une articulation en réduisant les stress musculaires et tendineux créés par le manque de mouvement. Lorsqu'on se contente de développer la musculature superficielle, c'est un peu comme si on posait des tuiles sur une maison sans en avoir renforcé les piliers. Il est aussi essentiel de développer la stabilité et l'équilibre. »

Fort de ces constats, il met à disposition une méthode en 12 étapes, Fundamental Training, visant à augmenter la connaissance et la conscience du schéma corporel, améliorer les positionnements du corps et l'efficacité motrice, augmenter les performances sportives, diminuer les risques de blessures et réduire les douleurs existantes.

Une méthode qui remporte un franc succès auprès du personnel des Nations Unies, d'où l'augmentation du nombre de séances proposées chaque semaine par le Club Santé Bien-être. On aurait pu penser que la crise sanitaire, qui a entraîné la fermeture du Palais des Nations, aurait interrompu les cours de Pilates et de stretching postural. C'était sans compter sur les liens noués au fil des années entre le jeune physiothérapeute et ses « élèves ». « Il est attentif à chacun d'entre nous, explique Marie. Il veille à nous donner toutes les explications nécessaires, et corrige en douceur nos mouvements. Outre les effets sur notre santé corporelle, ces cours sont aussi des moments précieux qui permettent de souffler. » Aussi, pas question d'en rester là ! En attendant que le Palais rouvre, les cours ont été dispensés via Skype et suivis avec assiduité.

De son côté, Gabriel Stevens adore travailler avec les membres du personnel de l'ONU. « Je me suis senti



Gabriel Stevens lors d'une séance d'entraînement

d'emblée accueilli, à ma place. Au fil des mois, j'ai découvert un autre monde où la plupart des gens sont bienveillants et chaleureux. Et je suis heureux de pouvoir leur transmettre ce que j'ai appris et de contribuer à améliorer leur bien-être. »

Ces compétences, Gabriel les a acquises à travers sa passion du sport : « Le sport m'a sauvé la vie », reconnaît-il. Au terme d'un parcours scolaire quelque peu chaotique du fait d'une situation familiale complexe, il rejoint une équipe de snowboard, se passionne pour les sports aquatiques, et découvre le kitesurf, le windsurf ou encore l'apnée. Suite à un accident de snowboard, il est traité à la clinique de la Tourelle à Genève. Il entame des études de physiothérapie à la Haute école de santé. Deuxième accident : il se fracture le bassin, ce qui nécessite une année de rééducation. C'est la fin de sa carrière de snowboarder. Il prend conscience qu'il aurait pu être paralysé. Ayant rejoint l'équipe de soin de la Tourelle, il travaille de plus en plus dans le domaine de la réhabilitation. La pratique puis l'enseignement du Pilates lui permettent de mieux comprendre l'importance du placement et du gainage du corps.

Il invite chacun d'entre nous, jeune ou plus âgé, sédentaire, sportif amateur ou professionnel, à suivre un programme qui associe des exercices de mobilité et d'assouplissement et renforce la stabilité et l'équilibre. Et il nous donne rendez-vous dès septembre au Palais, mais aussi par écran interposé pour tous ceux et celles qui sont en mission ou en vacances quelque part dans le monde. ▀

* Muriel Scibilia est auteure et ancienne fonctionnaire de la Conférence des Nations Unies sur le commerce et le développement (CNUCED).



The Support Care Center at Clinique de Genolier offers a 360° approach to cancer

A strong word called “cancer” needs a stronger word called “support”

It is an unresolved issue in medicine. Treatment needs constant improvement. We talked to Ms. Müller-Hafner from Clinique de Genolier

Julián Ginzo *

Can you describe the approach to cancer patient care at the Support Care Center?

All services offered in this holistic approach focus on symptom management (pain, nausea, etc.), adapted physical activity, nutrition, psychological support, coaching (work, family, social, emotional), relaxation, wellness and art, allowing patients (and their relatives, if they wish) to take an active role in their care pathway, and thus increase their confidence. Activities include: Nordic walking, yoga, dietary workshops, mindful eating, psychological support, sophrology, hypnosis, various coaching options, appointment with a social worker, massage therapy/reflexology/energy therapy, image consulting, art therapy and coffee meetings.

These outpatient services are accessible to all cancer patients (dietary, physiotherapy and psycho-oncology care is covered by the Federal

Health Insurance Act; some alternative therapies are recognized by supplementary insurance).

What sets the Center apart from similar offers at other hospitals/clinics?

Various hospitals and clinics now offer supportive care. We are fortunate to be able to do this on a very personal scale and in a welcoming and pleasant environment. Information is exchanged effectively within the experienced and well-established medical and paramedical team, which has a positive impact on the multidisciplinary care and support provided to all our cancer patients.

With the exception of those held outdoors or at the lake, all activities take place directly inside the center. Whether a group workshop or an individual session, therapists are available on site, allowing patients to combine a check-up with an art therapy class, a yoga session or a

meeting with a social worker or nurse without a change of location. Thanks to the Genolier Foundation, we are also in a position to help people who would be unable to attend our workshops for financial reasons.

Would you say that psychological support for cancer patients has changed in recent years?

Definitely. Even just hearing the word “cancer” can be stressful for the patient, who will have to learn how to manage this stress in order to engage with the treatment process as calmly as possible. Although the significant medical progress made in recent years has enabled patients to live longer, some of these “long survivors” face periods of anxiety and depression and need specific psychological support, perhaps even several years later. Our staff are trained to recognize the signs of distress. Talking about fears of relapse, loss of work, fatigue or depression is no longer taboo, and psychological care with a focus on the impact of cancer on a patient’s life is now covered by the Federal Health Insurance Act.

Do you see the holistic approach of supportive care as a significant benefit?

Yes. I believe that cancer care has two complementary threads: the therapeutic approach focuses on the specific, targeted and tailored treatment of cancer, taking the latest medical advances and research into account (through surgery, radiation therapy, medical oncology, etc.). Supportive care, developed in close collaboration with the medical team, is all about helping the patient deal with the physical, psychological, social and emotional impact of their disease.

Which soft skills are required to join the team at the Centre?

Listening, empathy, passion, understanding and a real and sincere interest in accompanying and supporting our patients and their loved ones along this winding road of oncology care. Together – to ensure that our patients get better and stay well. ▶

* Julián Ginzo is the Editorial Coordinator of UN Today.

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Woody bicycle tour with e-bike

50km of wellness bicycle tour through Aargau

A region not only famous for its carrot cake but also for its water and wellness facilities

Nick Turnell *

Purest relaxation at the Rheinfelden, Zurzach and Schinznach thermal baths does a world of good – and in hot sulphur springs, the kind you expect to find solely in Iceland, you sink into water of up to 45 degrees Celsius with Switzerland’s highest sulphur content.

Why not explore Aargau on an (e) bike tour?

This varied bike tour leads from Bad Schinznach through the hilly Jura Park to Rheinfelden. The hard

work pays off: again and again you are rewarded with the most beautiful views of the deep-blue Aare, golden autumnal forests, wildly romantic floodplains and the Rhine. The “sole uno” thermal baths are a perfect end to the 50-kilometre bicycle tour.

Along the Aare River

In the heart of idyllic parkland lies the Kurhotel Im Park with its multitude of wellness and spa facilities, including the most powerful and finely

balanced sulphur mineral spring in Switzerland. The sulphur waters are a balm to both body and soul: they relax you and lower your blood pressure.

The tour begins with a ride along the Aare River and through the vibrant autumnal colors of the forest. At Brugg, the river is left behind. It starts to become hillier as you reach the Aargau Jura.

Welcome to a lush green world

The Aargau Jura is a landscape of verdant valleys framed by mountains. Nestled between the Aare and Rhine rivers lies the largest natural recreation area between Basel and Zurich. The unique and expansive hillscape in the Jura Park invites you to get out and enjoy exploring. Autumn is particularly beautiful, with the forests, vineyards and orchards truly resplendent with colour.

A break at the famous Linn lime tree (Linner Linde)

The wonderful view from the lime trees invites visitors to linger a while. Under the shade of these majestic trees stop to savor some regional delicacies while enjoying the view. The large-leaved lime tree, which is some 800 years old, is considered to be the biggest tree in Aargau. This unique natural power spot recharges our energy reserves for the rest of the tour.

The path passes by the Linn Waterfall, the tallest in Aargau, as you climb up and down the hills of the Jura Park. The Aargau villages that we pass by are all different one from the next. The landscape becomes steadily less hilly until you finally catch a glimpse of the sparkling blue Rhine near Stein. The route now follows the river, passing through ranges of golden forests along the way. This brings us close to our destination of Rheinfelden, where relaxation awaits.

Destination “wellness” reached

Since the 19th century, sole uno in Rheinfelden has held the power of the sea. Guests can lose themselves in bubbling outdoor pools, relax in the spacious indoor pool, float weightlessly in the intensive saltwater pool or work up a sweat in the sauna.

The Rheinfelder Natursole is one of the most powerful saltwater springs in Europe. The water flows up from a depth of 200 metres through the salt and is piped directly into the Parkresort spa. The water is mixed with Rheinfelden drinking water and heated to between 33 and 36°C to release its health benefits.

Beautiful oldtown of Rheinfelden

The tour continues from Rheinfelden along the river Rhine. Along the way you pass through a myriad of small towns that invite visitors to linger a while. The end of our trip is Bad Zurzach, which boasts the largest open-air thermal bath in Switzerland. The sodium sulphate spring waters in the thermal bath work their revitalising magic. At a lovely 39.9°C, the waters flow up from 430 metres underground to the surface where they then flow directly into the pool. The restorative and relaxing effect of the waters can be experienced at first hand here.

Where to rent a bike?

Obviously at rentabike.ch. Rent a bike offers uncomplicated e-bike and bike rentals at almost every major swiss train station.

Wellness Pass

Well-being, enjoyment and relaxation – the Wellness Pass grants you access to the three wellness and thermal baths in Bad Schinznach, Rheinfelden and Zurzach. The wellness pass is available at Aargau Tourism.

aargautourismus.ch/geniessen

Why not stop at one of the many beautiful castles in Aargau?

- **Wildegge**: Nestled between Aarau and Brugg and visible for miles around, Wildegge Castle was built by the Habsburgs in the first half of the 13th century. The baroque working farm and pleasure gardens are located on a terrace in the middle of vineyards and are home to nearly 300 ancient crop varieties.

- **Lenzburg**: Once upon a time a dragon lived on the hill. It was slain by two noble knights, Wolfram and Guntram, who henceforth were allowed to live on Dragon Mountain. Legend has it, that this is how Lenzburg Castle, one of the most important hilltop castles in Switzerland, came to be.

- **Habsburg**: From a distance the term “double castle” makes little sense, but as soon as you stand on the grounds of the Habsburg Castle all becomes clear: Only the foundations of the front castle, which was built around 1000 years ago, still stand - while at the rear you spy a whole castle royally perched on the hill at the height of Bad Schinznach. ▶

* Nick Turnell is Project Manager, Market Switzerland at Switzerland Tourism.



GeniLac est une solution thermique innovante, 100% renouvelable

Les SIG ont-ils la clé du bonheur ?

Du traitement d'eaux usées au sauvetage de la planète, il n'y a qu'un pas que les SIG cherchent à franchir. Rencontre avec ce pionnier quasi centenaire

Laetitia Fabre *

Vous avez, à coup sûr, déjà entendu parler des Services Industriels de Genève (SIG). Eau potable, eaux usées, gaz, électricité, télécom, valorisation des déchets, les SIG sont derrière la prise et derrière le robinet. Leurs services, assurés par 145 métiers et 1700 employés, garantissent le confort des citoyens et du tissu énergétique genevois. Mais pas que.

Quand le secrétaire général de l'ONU Antonio Guterres, enjoint tous les gouvernements à déclarer l'état d'urgence climatique en 2020, c'est tout un symbole. Mais le canton de Genève l'a fait dès 2019.

Très investis dans la transition écologique, les SIG mettent tout en œuvre pour tenir et dépasser les objectifs. Conscients que l'enjeu est mondial, ils doivent l'appréhender à leur niveau : une entreprise de proximité. En 2007, les SIG ont lancé « Eco21 », un programme d'accompagnement pour aider les habitants du bassin genevois à réduire leur consommation d'énergie et d'émissions de CO₂. Le gaz et l'électricité de la gamme Vitale permettent à chacun de contribuer au développement et au maintien d'énergies locales et vertes. Tous peuvent aussi acquérir des parts de centrales solaires grâce à l'initiative « Mon m² solaire ». Six ans après

les Accords de Paris, les résultats sont là. Depuis le début d'Eco21, c'est près de 220GWh par an qui ne sont pas consommés. L'équivalent de la consommation annuelle du tiers des ménages genevois. Encourageant, mais pas suffisant !

“ Aujourd’hui c’est la chaleur renouvelable qui est au cœur des enjeux ”

« Aujourd’hui, la chaleur renouvelable est au cœur des enjeux. C’est ce défi que nous devons relever », explique Christian Brunier, directeur général des SIG. Clé de voûte de la stratégie énergétique genevoise dont les SIG sont le bras industriel, cette ambition clame haut et fort qu’il y a bel et bien le feu au lac. Les SIG misent sur la géothermie et « GeniLac ». Ce projet hors-norme vise à étendre un premier réseau hydrothermal assurant déjà le rafraîchissement de bâtiments dont l’ONU, le HCR, le CICR ou le CICG. Élégante et propre, cette technologie, qui séduit de nombreux clients et institutions, consiste à puiser l’eau du lac à 45m de profondeur afin de fournir froid et chaleur par l’entremise de stations de pompage et d’échangeurs, puis à la faire circuler dans plus de 80km de conduites souterraines. Les travaux de GeniLac devraient s’échelonner jusqu’en 2035. En parallèle, « GEothermie » s’emploiera dès septembre à cartographier les sous-sols du canton afin d’en confirmer le potentiel et rendre Genève moins dépendante de l’importation d’énergies. « Nous sommes pionniers dans bien des domaines, parce que nous croyons en la force de l’exemple et que nous voulons créer le mouvement le plus large possible », souligne Christian Brunier.

Dans l’intervalle, d’autres chantiers sont en cours. Ils impliquent la notion de partenariat. « On ne réussit pas la transition écologique sans une large adhésion au sein du tissu économique du canton. Nous devons convaincre et agir vite pour créer ce grand élan collectif dont nous avons besoin », ajoute le directeur.

Sponsor de nombreuses manifestations culturelles ou sportives telles que la Fête de la Musique, Geneva Lux Festival, Les Créatives, la Course de l’Escalade ou Handisport Genève, les SIG se font mission de rassembler. La plateforme de financement participatif « SIG-Impact » soutient des projets locaux en lien avec la transition

écologique. Avec un objectif de financement atteint à 177%, les Bains des Pâquis ont ainsi échappé à la noyade lors de la crise sanitaire. Et monsieur Brunier de souligner que « la transition écologique n’a pas qu’une dimension éthique, c’est également un formidable levier économique pour de nombreuses entreprises de la place. »

Depuis 1931, ils sont ancrés dans la vie genevoise, même là où on ne les soupçonne pas. Que serait Genève sans son emblématique Jet d’eau ? En 1886, quand les employés de l’usine hydraulique de la Coulouvrenière se précipitent chaque soir pour fermer les pompes victimes de surpressions à l’arrêt des machines, l’idée jaillit d’installer une vanne pour évacuer l’eau vers le ciel. Ce premier jet mesure 30m. Pour atteindre ses 140m actuels, il aura fallu l’intervention conjointe des SIG et du Conseil administratif de Genève qui décident, dans les années 1930, de créer une station de pompage indépendante. Son fonctionnement est depuis assuré par des retraités SIG.

“ La transition écologique est un formidable levier économique ”

A l’instar du Jet d’eau, plusieurs lieux symboliques de Genève sont empreints de l’histoire des SIG. Au fil du temps, diverses installations ont été désaffectées au profit de structures modernes situées aux abords de la ville. Parmi elles, la centrale électrique de Vessy accueille désormais expositions, animations et activités pédagogiques dans la « Maison du Futur » et la rue du Stand, où siégeait l’entreprise avant de déménager au Lignon, a fait place au site culturel d’Artamis puis à l’éco-quartier actuel. Sans oublier le Bâtiment des Forces Motrices ou le pont de la Machine devenu hôte de l’espace Quartier Libre qui accueille jusqu’en octobre une exposition immersive sur le « bonheur durable ».

Grâce à une multitude d’initiatives, les SIG amassent goutte après goutte, auprès des petits comme des grands acteurs genevois, les ingrédients d’une transition réussie et on ose presque déjà croire que le bonheur puisse être durable. ▶

* Laetitia Fabre est rédactrice indépendante, chef de projet et entrepreneur.



Le système scolaire en Suisse propose une éducation inclusive

Une rentrée spécialisée

Une rentrée scolaire, ça se prépare. Surtout quand les élèves ont besoin d'un soutien pédagogique adapté

Cíntia Cardoso *

L'enseignement spécialisé accueille des élèves de 4 à 20 ans. Il s'adresse aux enfants, adolescents et jeunes adultes en situation de handicap nécessitant une assistance éducative particulière ou présentant des difficultés d'apprentissage.

Les prestations s'adaptent aux différents besoins et se déclinent dans le cadre de classes intégrées à des écoles classiques, d'écoles de pédagogie spécialisée, d'écoles de formation professionnelle, d'écoles d'orientation et de formation pratique ou d'enseignements spécialisés.

Besoins croissants, offre améliorée

À Genève, 2000 élèves sont inscrits dans l'enseignement spécialisé. Selon M. Pierre-Antoine Preti, chargé de communication au Département d'Instruction publique, de la formation et de la jeunesse du Canton de Genève, cet effectif tend à augmenter. Depuis 2011, explique M. Preti, la majorité des cantons suisses proposent une même offre de formation et de prise en charge des enfants et des jeunes aux besoins éducatifs particuliers ou handicapés. À Genève, cela s'est traduit par le déploiement de nouvelles prestations qui visent, avec le soutien de professionnels spécialisés, au

maintien des élèves concernés dans les écoles de quartier. Les autorités cantonales veillent à réévaluer chaque année la situation des élèves concernés par la pédagogie spécialisée. Des soins de logopédie, de psychomotricité, entre autres, sont ainsi accessibles aux élèves scolarisés dans le système public genevois.

Cette offre est récente. Très longtemps, les parents d'enfants ayant besoin d'une pédagogie spéciale ont dû suivre un véritable « parcours du combattant » pour trouver des solutions adaptées.

Mère d'un jeune autiste, Marie-Jeanne Accietto est également enseignante en éducation spécialisée. En réaction au manque d'institutions adaptées, elle a participé à la fondation de l'association Autisme Genève en 2007, pour aider les familles dans des situations similaires. Mme Accietto estime que le système éducatif de la Suisse Romande a fait de gros progrès au cours des dernières années, en particulier à Genève, et que les services essentiels y sont de plus en plus performants. Genève dispose par exemple de plusieurs centres d'intervention précoce pour l'autisme.

Investir dans la formation

Mme Accietto est également formatrice et consultante en autisme et troubles associés. Elle estime que tous les enfants devraient avoir la possibilité d'être dans un milieu scolaire ordinaire, et qu'il faudrait pour cela investir davantage dans la formation. Les enseignants du milieu scolaire ordinaire sont peu formés, regrette Mme. Accietto. M. Preti pense également qu'il reste des progrès à faire et que les défis des prochaines années seront de développer une collaboration pluridisciplinaire au sein des établissements scolaires généraux et spécialisés entre tous les professionnels et de faire évoluer la formation initiale et continue dans ce sens.

Rentrée, mode d'emploi

Que doivent faire les parents dont les enfants ont des besoins spécifiques ? Le principal conseil à leur donner est de s'adresser précocement aux services d'éducation. S'ils constatent des difficultés d'apprentissage ou des troubles psychologiques, précise M. Preti, ils peuvent se tourner vers l'enseignant ou la direction de l'établissement, qui les accompagnera dans les démarches à



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SWISS MEDICAL NETWORK MEMBER



Les élèves de 0 à 20 ans ont droit à un soutien pédagogique spécialisé

entreprendre. Pour les enfants scolarisés dans le système privé, on contactera également la direction de l'école pour trouver la solution pédagogique la mieux adaptée. Dans le canton, on peut bénéficier jusqu'à l'âge de 20 ans de prestations de pédagogie spécialisée. Celles-ci seront dispensées au sein de

l'école publique ou dans des écoles spécialisées privées subventionnées.

Aider les expatriés

Pour les familles d'expatriés, il est conseillé de s'adresser aux autorités cantonales pour inscrire son enfant à l'école. En Suisse, l'enseignement est obligatoire dès l'âge de 4 ans. La demande d'inscription devra être effectuée dans un délai de 3 jours à compter de l'arrivée dans le canton. Lors de l'accueil de parents arrivant de l'étranger ou ne parlant pas le français, dit M. Preti, les autorités essaient dans la mesure du possible de trouver des professionnels parlant la langue d'origine de la famille, ou font appel à un service d'interprètes lors des entretiens.

Une mère de famille originaire d'Espagne, Eva Zanquini Chiavaretto, témoigne de cet accueil. Lorsqu'elle a contacté les autorités dès son arrivée dans le canton de Vaud, en 2019, ni elle ni sa fille ne parlaient le français. Sa fille avait en outre de grosses difficultés d'apprentissage. À présent, l'adolescente de 13 ans fréquente un établissement scolaire spécialisé. Elle a également accès à des activités extra-scolaires. Sa mère constate qu'elle est très bien prise en charge et qu'elle bénéficie d'un excellent support pédagogique. Même si elle a dû faire de nombreuses démarches administratives, elle est satisfaite de voir son enfant s'épanouir à l'école. ▀

LIENS UTILES

CANTON DE GENÈVE

Les informations générales

ge.ch/organisation/secretariat-pedagogie-specialisee.

Des renseignements

sur l'enseignement spécialisé

ge.ch/enseignement-specialise

Pour un conseil, une évaluation ou un suivi thérapeutique

- ge.ch/consultations-troubles-psychologiques-du-developpement-apprentissages
- autisme-ge.ch

CANTON DE VAUD

Les informations plus générales et les formulaires sont accessibles ici

- vd.ch/themes/formation/pedagogie-specialisee/enseignement-specialise/#c2031278
- info-handicap.ch

* Cíntia Cardoso est employée au Centre du Commerce International en tant qu'assistante en communication.

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