

UN Special

Sustainable Transport?

FROM A DARK SPOT TO SOMEWHERE BETTER...

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ALEXANDER MEJIA

Rédacteur en chef / Editor-in-chief

This edition is dedicated to an issue that is central to the overall achievement of the 2030 Agenda: sustainable transport. The future of our transport systems continues to be shaped by fascinating trends around the globe. Whether it is the long-awaited advent of self-driving cars on our roads, the continued success of ride-hailing services, or the appearance of electric scooters on our cities' sidewalks, sustainable transport affects each and every one of us.

This edition's first articles dive deeper into this captivating issue. Among other things, you will learn why truly sustainable transport must also be concerned with social inclusion, and you will read about the history of mobility in cities that have led us to where we are now. Taking a local perspective, we look closer at a major project that will affect the greater Geneva area: the new rail network connecting Cornavin, Eaux-Vives, and Annemasse (CEVA). In this context, we are very pleased to offer you an interview with the Mayor of Annemasse, Mr. Christian Dupessey. Finally, on page 14, you are cordially invited to the International Forum on Sustainable Mobility that will take place from 15–16 November in Geneva and Annemasse.

In the rest of this edition, we are pleased to offer you perspectives on a wide range of topics, including an interview with the Ambassador of Ecuador to UNOG on human rights, thoughts from the Executive Secretary of the Basel, Rotterdam, and Stockholm (BRS) Conventions on the challenge of chemicals and waste, and a discussion with the Executive Director of the Arab Gulf Programme for Development on the need for financial inclusion.

Finally, and with an eye on the coming colder weather, we are highlighting several cultural events in and around Geneva. ■

Cette édition est consacrée à une question centrale pour la réalisation globale de l'Agenda 2030: le transport durable.

Qu'il s'agisse de l'arrivée tant attendue des voitures autonomes sur nos routes, du succès continu des services mobiles de véhicules avec chauffeur ou de l'apparition des scooters électriques sur les trottoirs de nos villes: le transport durable touche chacun d'entre nous.

Les premiers articles de cette édition se penchent sur cette question captivante.

Vous apprendrez, entre autres, les raisons pour lesquelles les transports véritablement durables doivent également se préoccuper de l'inclusion sociale ainsi que l'histoire de la mobilité dans les villes qui a permis de nous conduire là où nous sommes aujourd'hui. Dans une perspective locale, nous allons examiner de plus près un projet majeur qui affectera l'agglomération du Grand Genève: le nouveau réseau reliant Cornavin, Eaux-Vives et Annemasse (CEVA). Dans ce contexte, nous avons le plaisir de vous proposer un entretien avec le maire d'Annemasse, Monsieur Christian Dupessey.

Enfin, à la page 14, vous êtes cordialement invités au Forum international sur la mobilité durable qui se tiendra les 15 et 16 novembre à Genève et Annemasse.

Dans la suite de ce numéro, nous avons le plaisir de vous offrir un large éventail de sujets, y compris un entretien avec l'Ambassadeur de l'Équateur auprès de l'ONUG sur les droits de l'homme, les réflexions du Secrétaire exécutif des Conventions de Bâle, Rotterdam et Stockholm (BRS) sur le défi des produits chimiques et des déchets, et une discussion avec le Directeur exécutif du Programme du Golfe arabe du développement sur la nécessité de l'inclusion financière. Finalement, en prévision de l'hiver qui s'approche, nous mettons en avant plusieurs événements culturels à Genève et ses environs. ■

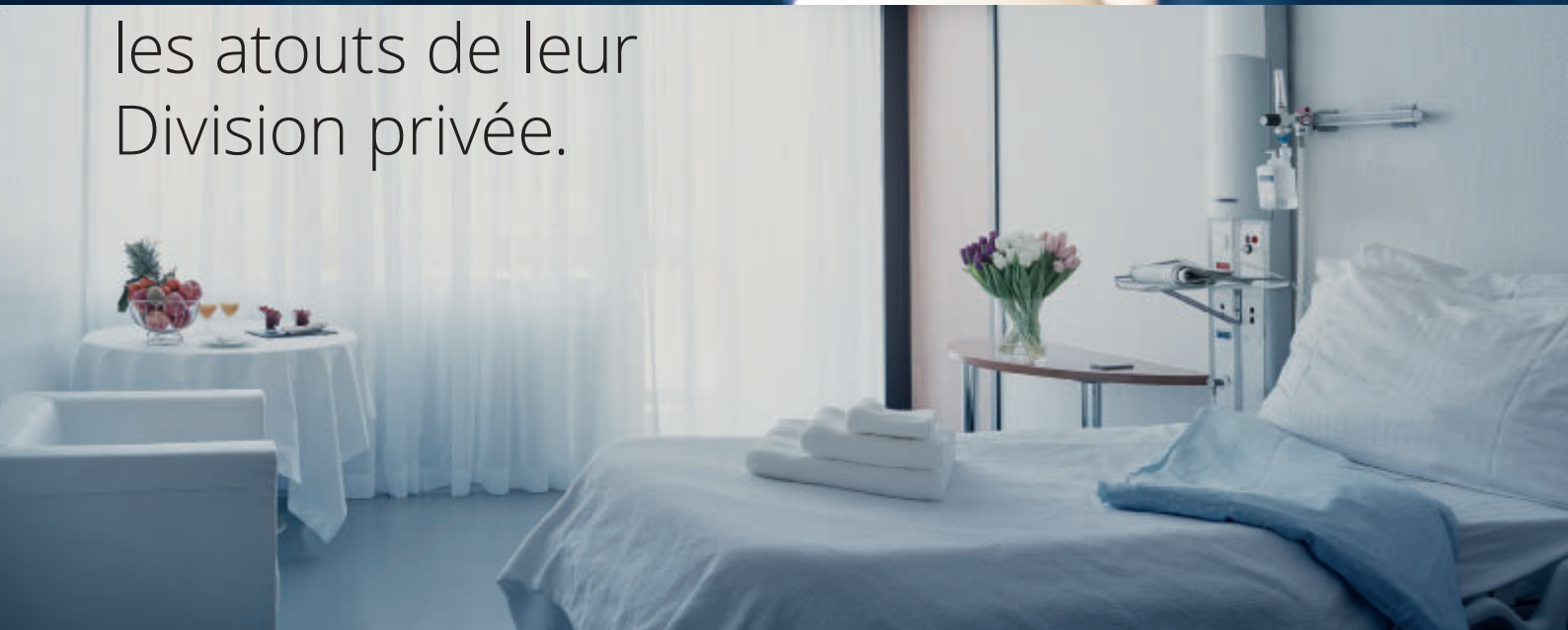
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Inclusive transport is a powerful tool for connecting separated communities.

Inclusive sustainable transport and the unlikely story of a city in the Andes

To be sustainable in the truest sense of the word, mobility must be more than green. It must also be inclusive.

SEBASTIAN HOFBAUER, UNITAR

Society's lifeblood

Depending on who you ask to speak about transport, they might tell you about global supply chains, trucks on the road, or simply the time they wasted in traffic coming to the office this morning. Whether it is on a grand scale or at a personal level: transport affects all of us. Some readers might be familiar with an incident that led to global headlines some weeks ago. A young student walked 30 kms, eight hours, in the middle of the night to arrive in time for his new job the next morning.

To large media attention, the dedicated man was subsequently rewarded with a car by his new boss.

While the above case is an extreme example, it showcases how important effective means of transportation are. And it is this very personal dimension of transport that is all too easily overlooked. To really grasp how sustainable transport may be achieved, we need to understand that transport is not an end in itself but rather a means for people to access what they need: jobs, markets and goods, education, social interaction, and a large range of other services from basic to luxurious.

Inclusive transport

On the other hand, the negative effects of (unsustainable)

transport can be as significant as its benefits. Immediately, health issues resulting from bad air, or road crashes come to mind. Much like the benefits, these negative effects often happen behind the scenes, at a social and personal level, with far reaching implications.

Transportation has a humongous impact on society, on the quality of life of its citizens and, as importantly, on the economic productivity of a nation. The largest study on traffic impact was recently conducted by consulting firm INRIX and gathered five terabytes of data from more than 1,300 cities in 38 countries. It found that in the U.S. alone, society lost \$305 billion in 2016. The loss of productivity comes from the hours workers spend sitting in traffic, the wasted fuel, the increased



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Medellín, Colombia – An innovative programme, involving cable cars connecting different communities, has reshaped this city's face

freight cost, and several other factors that reduce competitiveness. But perhaps the most negative effect happens in human health and well-being. The case of Los Angeles is the most severe, where the typical driver spent 102 hours sitting in traffic that year. You can imagine how unhappy those drivers are when they arrive at their homes or their offices.

All too often the most vulnerable groups in our society are also the ones most physically disconnected from the rest of society. With that in mind, it is easy to understand why

sustainable transport is one of the paramount issues surrounding sustainable development as a whole. Most of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals are directly or indirectly influenced by it. Indeed, the issue of transport and sustainability goes far beyond the CO₂ emissions of cars and planes. To be sustainable, in the truest sense of the word, transport must not only be green. It must also be socially inclusive.

The city of eternal spring

Medellín is a Colombian city in the Andes and lies embedded in green mountain ranges of

the South American Andes. It is also called *the city of the eternal spring*, conjuring up images of a paradise far away. Up until recently, however, it had another nickname: *the most dangerous city in the world*. In the 1980s and 1990s, Medellín indeed was synonymous with violence and gangsters, partly associated with the almost mythical figure of drug baron Pablo Escobar.

Today, visitors to the city will most certainly be surprised at what they find. In recent years, Medellín has been witness to several positive trends, some

of which can serve as an example of sustainable development and quality of life improvement. Compared to the most violent times, Medellín's homicide rate has decreased by 95% and extreme poverty by 66%.

Social inclusion through transport

Medellín is the second largest metropolitan area in Colombia. With more than 3.5 million people, it is one of the strongest economic regions in the country. As in any large city, transport is a monumental task. In this particular case, the issue is further aggravated by



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the city's location in the Andes' Aburrá Valley. The cityscape is dominated by hilly terrain with steep gradients and unstable soils slashed by the abundant creeks feeding the Medellín River.

It is in this rough terrain that informal settlements have developed since the 1950s. They swiftly became the city's densest residential areas and home to a large proportion of its inhabitants. As is often the case in spontaneous land invasions and irregular sub-divisions, infrastructure is scarce and often precarious. As a result, the comunas remained virtually disconnected from other parts of the city and, in turn, were largely forgotten by authorities and the general public.

The socio-economic effects of this disconnect have been severe and have left their marks

on the city and its communities. In response, Medellín became the first city in the world to use ski-slope technology as a means of public transportation. The first line connected the low income, and previously unreachable, north-eastern district of Medellín to the main metro line. As part of comprehensive programmes surrounding this move, the local community was able to express its wishes and become actively involved in municipal upgrading efforts.

This intervention helped increase not only the accessibility, but also the inclusion of marginalized residents and their settlements in the socio-economic development of the city, a first and necessary step towards concerted actions to reduce poverty. Arguably, it led to an urban development story that stands

exemplary for the world and helped Medellín earn yet another title: *the most innovative city in the world*.

One size fits all?

Will cable cars then solve the issues surrounding sustainable urban transport? I can assure you that when we talk about sustainable transport or sustainable mobility, a cable car doesn't come to your mind as the most obvious solution. However, this city in the Andes has demonstrated that creativity and sustainable transportation go hand-in-hand.

A great deal of the appeal of aerial cable-cars as a transport solution for dense and hilly urban areas arises from its novelty, its relative low cost, minimum disruption to the existing urban fabric and low levels of particulate emissions. They are increasingly being installed in

other cities in Colombia and elsewhere around the world.

The lesson from Medellín, however, is seemingly a different one. Rather than teaching us about one specific technology, it is a lesson on the nature and societal impact of technological innovations on a grander scale. Innovative and inclusive approaches are needed to address deep-seated urban, social, and political problems that are part of the sustainability of transport. Indeed, the future of sustainable, inclusive transport depends not only on the technologies that are available. More than that, it hinges on how we make use of them. ■

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Les élus français et suisses réunis pour la pose du 1^{er} rail du tram Annemasse-Genève, le 9 octobre 2018. © Annemasse Agglo

La mobilité durable au-delà des frontières

Entretien avec M. Christian Dupessey, Président d'Annemasse Agglo et Maire d'Annemasse

Avec plusieurs projets d'envergure en préparation, le Grand Genève donne un véritable exemple de coopération transfrontalière innovante en matière de mobilité durable. Nous avons rencontré M. Dupessey, président de Annemasse Agglo et maire de la ville d'Annemasse, pour nous en dire plus sur ces projets et cette coopération exemplaire.



SARAH BENCHERIF, UNITAR

Pouvez-vous nous parler de l'importance d'Annemasse et son agglomération, en Haute-Savoie et dans l'agglomération genevoise?

C. DUPESSEY: Annemasse et son agglomération sont aujourd'hui au cœur de ce que l'on appelle le Grand Genève. Annemasse est de par sa population la 2^e ville de Haute-Savoie, l'agglomération d'Annemasse a près de 100000 habitants et nous constituons un pôle urbain majeur. Nous sommes en quelque sorte la capitale française du Grand Genève.

La ville d'Annemasse n'a bien sûr pas la taille de la ville de Genève mais connaît une croissance très rapide. Quelles sont les tendances démographiques pour votre ville? Est-ce que vous pouvez nous présenter les caractéristiques de votre ville et de votre agglomération?

La croissance démographique de cette agglomération est une des plus fortes de France, voire d'Europe, puisque nous sommes à près de 2,5% d'augmentation de la population par an, ce qui est assez exceptionnel. Ce qui montre d'une part l'attractivité de ce territoire avec une locomotive économique qui est évidemment Genève, mais avec une région française qui par elle-même est attractive. Prenant en compte ces deux éléments, il est logique que beaucoup de monde ait envie de venir sur ce territoire. Mais cela entraîne aussi de nombreux besoins nouveaux en services à la population, plus particulièrement les écoles, en matière de culture, de mobilité. C'est une région qui est en plein développement et notre objectif est de ne pas arrêter ce développement mais de mieux le maîtriser de manière à garantir et à maintenir une qualité de vie qui est assez exceptionnelle sur ce territoire.

Et du coup, vous avez parlé dans les besoins nouveaux de la question de la mobilité.

Comment cette agglomération travaille-t-elle en matière de mobilité et justement en matière de mobilité durable? Et comment tout cela peut contribuer à l'amélioration de vie des citoyens?

Chacun sait qu'il est difficile de se déplacer aujourd'hui sur le Grand Genève en voiture. Les embouteillages le matin et le soir sont considérables, on perd beaucoup de temps dans la voiture et, en plus, tout cela n'améliore pas la qualité de l'air et donc les élus français et suisses ont fait des choix très forts, très lourds en matière d'investissements, d'infrastructures. Aujourd'hui nous allons voir la concrétisation de ces choix. Il fallait anticiper. Depuis près de 15 ans nous avons un programme d'infrastructures. C'est ainsi que l'année 2019 va voir d'une part l'arrivée du Léman Express, qui va desservir Annemasse et Genève

toutes les 10 minutes, mais qui va aussi irriguer toute la Haute-Savoie en direction d'Evian, Saint-Gervais, Annecy et, bien sûr, la Suisse Romande en direction de Coppet, Nyon et Lausanne. Dans le même temps, nous aurons un tram qui va dépasser la frontière. Le tram va relier Annemasse et Genève, comme il le faisait il y a 60 ans. On peut aussi citer tous les efforts faits en matière de déplacements doux et notamment avec les véloroutes: la voie verte du Grand Genève a été inaugurée l'an dernier, et est aujourd'hui très prisée par la population, au-dessus de l'infrastructure CEVA. On y ajoute aussi les efforts faits en matière de covoiturage sur le territoire, comme par exemple les dispositifs mis en place par l'ATMB. Nous sommes en train de vivre une vraie révolution de la mobilité sur ce territoire.

Dans toutes ses structures vous avez bien sûr cité le Léman Express qui va être un des sujets importants de notre forum. En quoi ce projet de Léman Express est-il un exemple de coopération transfrontalière?

C'est un exemple de coopération transfrontalière parce que c'est la plus grande infrastructure ferroviaire qui touche deux pays et qui est donc cofinancé par deux pays en Europe depuis de longues années. La coopération s'est faite d'abord sur un point fort: il fallait être d'accord sur cette infrastructure et ensuite chacun payait la part de ce qui était dans son pays. Les Suisses ont payé la partie suisse et les Français, la partie française. Pour financer la partie française il faut, en France on fait toujours comme ça, un tour de table et associer l'État, la Région, le Département, les collectivités locales pour arriver à un financement qui aujourd'hui est bouclé et qui permet donc d'attendre avec impatience le Ceva pour le 15 décembre 2019, date du premier train qui reliera Annemasse à Genève et qui ira encore une fois aux quatre coins de la Haute-Savoie et de la Suisse Romande.

En conclusion, pourriez-vous nous expliquer comment est né ce forum de la mobilité durable en partenariat avec l'UNITAR?

Depuis plusieurs années notre agglomération a la volonté de s'ouvrir vers l'international en s'appuyant sur la Genève internationale. Il y a trois ans nous avons travaillé avec l'UNITAR pour mettre en place un forum sur les partenariats publics/privés pour le développement durable dans le cadre des objectifs de développement

durable (les ODD). C'est une coopération extrêmement importante soutenue par le Ministère des Affaires Etrangères. Une coopération que nous apprécions et que nous voulons poursuivre dans les années qui vont suivre, en fait une coopération que nous voudrions pérenne. Il est très important pour notre territoire que le drapeau de l'ONU flotte sur une manifestation de cette importance à Annemasse. C'est une reconnaissance de la part de l'ONU, et c'est le sens de ce forum, qu'il se passe des choses ici extrêmement intéressantes et qui peuvent intéresser tous les pays du monde. La révolution de la mobilité sur ce territoire est en effet un élément exceptionnel qui s'inscrit, s'il fallait le réaffirmer encore une

fois, dans une démarche forte de développement durable puisqu'en dehors du fait de faciliter la vie des gens c'est aussi une des conditions pour mieux respirer sur le territoire. Donc avec tous ses éléments, nous nous sommes mis au travail les uns et les autres et nous sommes très heureux aujourd'hui l'Unitar, Annemasse Agglomération et ses partenaires, le cluster CARA en particulier, le Ministère des Affaires Etrangères français et nos cofinanceurs, de proposer ce deuxième forum pour les partenariats pour le développement des territoires avec une thématique qui est aujourd'hui la thématique de ce territoire: la mobilité durable. ■



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Chantier pour les travaux du CEVA au lieu-dit Val d'Arve.

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Le CEVA, un renouvellement urbain colossal

Le CEVA est le chantier ferroviaire le plus important d'Europe, non en termes de transports, mais aussi dans sa dimension de renouvellement urbain. Celui-ci est colossal. Le projet arrive à son terme. Il aura un impact profond sur le territoire.

GABRIEL DOUBLET¹

Un effort énorme

Le CEVA est le chantier ferroviaire transfrontalier le plus important d'Europe. Il s'agit d'un projet de grande ampleur. Tant en termes de transports que dans sa dimension de renouvellement urbain. Le projet CEVA arrive à son terme et il aura un profond impact sur le territoire régional.

Il s'agit avant tout d'un réseau express régional qui desservira tout le Genevois depuis Annemasse. Le cadencement sera particulièrement soutenu et il y aura de ce fait de très nombreux trains aux heures de pointe. La fréquentation est estimée aux alentours de 50 000 voyageurs par jour. Toutefois cela reste des prévisions préliminaires qui pourraient tout à fait s'avérer être supérieures aux estimations.

D'innombrables avantages

Les personnes qui aujourd'hui mettent plus d'une heure pour se rendre à leur travail depuis ma commune mettront désormais 40 minutes. Cela aura un impact sur leur qualité de vie qui s'en verra grandement améliorée. Un maillage de transport est développé en parallèle afin de limiter l'usage de la voiture. En effet le CEVA va de pair avec le prolongement des lignes de tram, la mise en place de parkings relais et de bus avec un haut niveau de services, l'aménagement des gares etc.

Annemasse, une ville transformée

Celles-ci vont connaître d'énormes changements d'échelle: Annemasse, par exemple, va devenir la 5^e gare française, avec 4 millions de passagers contre 450 000

actuellement. Les communes comme Machilly ou Bons-en-Chablais connaissent notamment des restructurations urbaines majeures. De nouvelles zones, commerces et services sont développées et dopent l'attractivité et la démographie de ces communes.

Le CEVA révolutionne les villes, villages et quartiers. À Genève, aux Eaux-Vives, des bâtiments et des infrastructures sortent de terre. La physionomie du quartier va profondément évoluer. Avec le CEVA, le rapport à la ville et à la mobilité se transforme. Il a aussi un impact au niveau des paysages et de l'urbanisme. Dans sa portion genevoise le CEVA est largement sous-terrain. Côté français, il a notamment permis l'aménagement d'une voie verte qui rencontre un succès phénoménal.

L'impact économique attendu est aussi très positif. De nouveaux habitants viennent s'installer sur les territoires qui de ce fait gagnent en attractivité. Toutefois cela aboutit aussi à une pression sur les prix des logements et la production de logements sociaux devra suivre afin de trouver un équilibre.

L'enjeu est aussi celui des tarifs qui devront nécessairement être compétitifs. Cette question importante est actuellement en train d'être discutée. Il existe en effet quelques problématiques qu'il faut régler afin de connecter les réseaux et harmoniser les politiques tarifaires sans encombre. À terme, notre territoire pourra être fier d'assumer sa modernité, son côté urbain et métropolitain et son caractère transfrontalier.

Le Léman Express, colonne vertébrale du Grand Genève

La ligne CEVA n'est pas une fin en soi: elle est un trait d'union, le chaînon manquant qui reliera les réseaux suisse et français.

Lorsque le projet CEVA sera achevé, ce seront plus de 230 km de lignes et 45 gares qui seront ainsi reliées au sein du réseau Léman Express.

Dès le 15 décembre 2019, le Léman Express circulera sur la nouvelle ligne CEVA (ligne Cornavin-Eaux-Vives-Annemasse). Cela simplifiera la mobilité de plus d'un million d'habitants. Le Léman Express accueillera chaque jour 50 000 voyageurs sur les 240 trains qui circuleront dans les cantons de Vaud et de Genève ainsi qu'en Région Auvergne-Rhône-Alpes, dans l'Ain et la Haute-Savoie.

Une nouvelle flotte franco-suisse

La flotte du Léman Express sera composée de 23 rames FLIRT du constructeur suisse Stadler et de 17 rames Régiolis du constructeur français Alstom. Ces 40 trains seront compatibles avec les réseaux suisses et français permettant de voyager depuis Coppet jusqu'à Evian-Les Bains, Annecy, St-Gervais et Annemasse, sans changer de train. La future flotte Léman Express sera habillée d'un pelliculage unique, décliné sur l'ensemble des rames. Les trains seront facilement identifiables grâce à leur emblème commun, le ruban de Möbius.

Cette flotte neuve offrira un grand confort avec un espace climatisé, de grandes tablettes en 1^{re} classe, des prises électriques en 1^{re} et 2^e classes et un accès plain-pied tout au long de

la rame. Les nouveaux trains FLIRT Léman Express ont été introduits progressivement en 2018 côté suisse. Les premiers essais des trains Régiolis Léman Express eurent lieu lors du 1^{er} semestre 2018. Ceux-ci seront livrés d'ici à l'été 2019 en prévision de la mise en service intégrale du réseau en décembre 2019.

Un financement franco-suisse

Côté suisse, les CFF financent les 23 FLIRT à hauteur de 236 millions de CHF. Côté français, c'est la Région Auvergne-Rhône-Alpes qui finance les 17 Régiolis à hauteur de 210 millions d'euros. L'amplitude horaire des trains sera de 5 h à 00 h 30 en semaine entre Genève Cornavin et Annemasse, et jusqu'à 6 trains par heure dans les deux sens, y compris les RegioExpress des CFF qui seront prolongés jusqu'à Annemasse.

Sur le reste du réseau transfrontalier il y aura un minimum de 2 rotation par heure, aux heures de pointe, en complémentarité avec les TER de la SNCF. Des connexions multimodales avec les transports publics régionaux (tram, bus, car) seront mise en place afin d'optimiser les déplacements. Les voyageurs du Léman Express pourront aussi directement rejoindre l'aéroport ainsi que les trains nationaux et internationaux sans avoir recours à leurs voitures. ■

1 Gabriel Doublet est Premier vice-président d'Annemasse Agglo, Maire de Saint-Cergues.



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Urban Mobility: then and now

A brief history of transportation within our cities

Over the last century, transportation has shaped and transformed the ways our cities and societies function, with good and bad results. In a current world characterized by the omnipresence of urban congestion and pollution, is it too late to reverse the tendencies and mitigate the bad effects of our previous planning decisions?

MARIE-EVE ASSUNCAO-DENIS¹

Cities are vibrant entities that keep evolving and adapting to society's changes, and this phenomenon has been accentuated by rapid urbanization over the past decades. While 55% of the world's population currently lives in urban areas, this number is expected to rise to 68% by 2050, according to the United Nations (2018). In the field, this translates to 2.5 billion more people living in urban areas around the world, 90% of which will be located in Asian and African countries.

This large increase in population will add to the pressure cities already face when it comes to their land and infrastructure. Transportation, among others, is a sector which will face a tremendous increase in demand. Over the last century, transportation infrastructures and services have shaped cities and transformed them from compact, human-scale environments to extended, car-centric metropolises with

suburban neighbourhoods, difficult-to-reach by any other mean of transportation than the individual automobile. The supremacy of cars during the second half of the 20th century, backed by urban planning tendencies and public figures such as New York's infamous urban planner Robert Moses, led to the advent of a car-dependent lifestyle, which acts now as a major obstacle to the spread of more sustainable planning practices.

The turn of the century brought with it the beginning of a shift towards more environment-friendly transportation modes and practices. The increase in congestion in cities worldwide, coupled with severely underfunded, neglected and inefficient public transit services – compared to levels that were seen at the beginning of the 20th century – demands reform of the way transportation and cities are perceived and managed. While car lobbyists



Bike-sharing systems are bringing bicycles back onto the streets of many cities.

almost killed streetcars in the first half of the last century, it is now time for sustainable mobility options to take away the car's top spot on the list of favourite transportation modes. In order to decongest our streets, cities have to attract people towards public transit and active transportation.

The development of new technologies has allowed tremendous changes in the field of urban transportation in the last two decades. Shared mobility has taken city streets by storm, with ride-hailing services like Uber or Lyft bringing upfront the potential of mobility apps. While not contributing to a decrease in the number of cars on the streets, these services have definitely impacted people's transportation experience and mobility options in our cities. Bike-sharing systems, on the other hand, have increased cycling visibility considerably in urban areas, bringing bicycles back onto the streets of cities that until then had not

been considered bike-friendly, such as New York or Mexico City. The cycling boom seen in some cities led the authorities to engage in building cycling infrastructure to accommodate the increasing demand for safer cycling conditions. The perception of cycling slowly started to change, and it is now more and more considered as a transportation and commuting option, and not just a mere sport or leisure activity.

Similarly, cyclists' voices have grown more prominent in the public arena. The rise of micro-mobility options such as dockless bike-sharing systems and e-scooters, which have mushroomed in urban settings, also contributed to the prominence of active transportation as a major mobility component in cities. These technologies, on the other hand, have brought their fair amount of challenges (such as market saturation, illegal parking and wrong use of public spaces) and called for better legislation and important

reforms in the way our streets and collective spaces are shared and managed in cities around the world.

Other emerging technologies, such as autonomous and electric vehicles, have also started to shape the urban landscape, pushing cities to prepare for the upcoming challenges that these new technologies will bring. The sector of urban freight is also affected by societal changes, new technologies and an increase in population and consumption. While shopping malls and small shop retailers are still omnipresent and part of most cultures, more and more people shop online and get their products delivered at home, which affects the distribution of goods and the amount of trips and delivery vehicles within cities. While these freight-related phenomena usually get less public

attention than those related to passenger transportation, their impacts in cities are considerable and should be addressed by authorities.

Many cities in developing countries have been extremely proactive in addressing issues related to transportation and urban planning on their territories. For instance, many cities in Latin America and China have received much praise for their high-capacity, lower-budget mass transit options. In Colombia, Bogota's TransMilenio has gained fame around the world for being one of the first bus-rapid transit systems on the continent, and since its inauguration in 2000, similar projects have sprung up in metropolises around the world. In the Brazilian city Curitiba, mixed, dense high-rise zones were implemented along the city's mass transit corridors as early as the

1970s, using earlier versions of land-use development concepts like transit-oriented development to counter urban sprawl and congestion. As for Medellin, in Colombia, the city has attracted worldwide attention for its successful transportation and urban renewal projects in low-income neighbourhoods that were prone to high levels of violence and criminality. The city's cable-car transit system, which is used to reach steep, hilly parts of the city, has, since its inception, been replicated in several metropolises in Latin America.

These successful examples show that it is possible, with the political will, expertise and finance, to change transportation norms in cities and provide better commuting conditions for all citizens, no matter their age, location or financial resources. Now is the time for

cities' administrations to give the streets back to people, to make cities greener, more child-friendly and equitable, and to diminish the impact of transport on the environment and people's health. People are rallying for new opportunities and better transportation options for everyone. Studies have shown the benefits of active and public transportation on cities' economies, societies and environments, so there is no need to wait any longer. It's time we got going. ■

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Reference: Revision of World Urbanization Prospects (UN DESA, 2018)



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The International Forum on Sustainable Mobility

Sustainable cities 2030

Since antiquity, cities have been at the apex of our social ecosystem. They are cultural, economic, and political centres and constantly evolving. Since 2018, more people live in cities than in rural areas.



Raphaël Domjan, one of the conference speakers, is known for innovative mobility projects, including solar boats and planes.

LUIS ARAGON, UNITAR

This trend is bound to continue, with an estimated 68% of the world population living in cities by the year 2050. Now, more than ever before, it is becoming urgent to re-think how we organize the world's urban centres if we are to meet the Sustainable Development Goals set out in the 2030 Agenda.

Today, the most urbanized regions include Northern America (with 82% of its population living in urban areas in 2018), Latin America and the Caribbean (81%), Europe (74%) and Oceania (68%). The level of urbanization in Asia is now approximating 50%. In contrast, Africa remains mostly rural, with 43% of its population living in urban areas, according to the UN's Department of Economic and Social Affairs. At the core of this global urbanization trend,

lays the subject of **Sustainable Mobility**, which aims to optimize the development and maintenance of transportation networks that manage the flow of people throughout urban centres, whilst minimizing and eventually eliminating any adverse environmental impacts. At a deeper level, communities pursuing comprehensive **Sustainable Mobility** systems, must address multiple dimensions simultaneously such as: universal access, efficiency, safety, and green mobility. Doing so, often demands a long-term vision as well as a robust understanding of the needs of the local community in question.

Sustainable Mobility is becoming an increasingly relevant issue, which requires open dialogue and constant communication among multiple stakeholders. Ranging from

massive infrastructure projects – such as deep tunnels and cross-border rail networks – down to more bicycle-friendly streets and carpooling incentives, policy-makers and elected representatives would greatly benefit from learning more on the tools, experiences and new developments populating the horizons.

This November will witness the **International Forum on Sustainable Mobility** taking place in Annemasse, Haute-Savoie across the border from Geneva. This event is derived from the UN PPP (Public Private Partnerships) initiative and is organized in conjunction with UNITAR, the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs, genevois français, Annemasse Agglo, and European Cluster for Mobility Solutions. It is a continuation of a previous Forum organized with the United Nations on the

theme of Public Private Partnerships, held in Annemasse in 2015, which brought together 600 participants from 29 countries around the world, including 27% from international organizations.

This edition is free and takes place on 15 and 16 November. It presents a remarkable opportunity to address the main topics concerning the mobility of tomorrow. Given the symbiotic relationship Geneva and Annemasse have shared for well over two centuries, it will be particularly interesting to see how mobility in a cross-border setting has evolved through the presentation of an update on the *Leman-Express transfrontalier*. It will also offer a fantastic opportunity to examine the different challenges of urbanization on a global scale, challenges which are exacerbated when mega cities are concerned. These are cities with 10 million or more inhabitants, which are increasing in number annually. Simultaneously, smaller cities are growing as demographics evolve and universal standards of living increase.

It should be emphasized that the fact populations are rising in cities is not necessarily either a positive or negative phenomenon, but that instead, any chances for a successful outcome are directly linked to how mobility is envisioned and managed for any given city. It



is also important to note how local level development operates in an inherently dynamic context. Those who attend the Forum will get a chance to hear first-hand testimonies of experimental trials from the private sector, academia, and civil servants across different sites.

Sustainable urbanization is key to successful development, and **Sustainable Mobility** is a critical component of successful urbanization. If urban centres grow uncontrollably, the issues their populations are destined to face are not just annoying, but downright dangerous. The recent crisis in Johannesburg

with water rationing, or Mexico City, with sinking structures, are just some examples of urbanization outpacing its local constraints. Likewise, attempting to address mobility issues is inevitably more expensive once a given community is chronically suffering from them. It is preferable to anticipate and implement measures that minimize or avoid mobility issues altogether.

One thing is clear, there is no overnight solution to Sustainable Mobility. This issue is as complex and diverse as the environments, topographies, populations, and cultures

of the world's different cities. When it comes to mobility issues, local authorities are often the best-informed stakeholders; national actors tend to have the best access to investment mechanisms, whilst the private sector tends to bring innovation to the table. The best tool in the hands of international civil servants is their in-depth knowledge of the subject-at-hand.

The International Forum on Sustainable Mobility in Annemasse will also provide a fertile environment in which to further analyse any gaps, as well as the key items surrounding 21st century mobility including autonomous vehicles, drone delivery systems, green building requirements, smart electrical grids, electromagnetic inductive-charged (wireless) buses, and all the regulation accompanying these technological breakthroughs.

And while we are on the subject of revolutionizing transportation, one could cite the example of the Great London Panic of 1894, when, because of an extreme influx of people arriving in the city as a result of the industrial revolution, there was also an extreme influx of horse manure covering central London's streets! But no one saw a new technology coming that would completely obliterate those concerns: the automobile. Overnight the manure problem vanished. ■

For all the details regarding the Forum, including registration, please visit: <http://un-ppp.org/>

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To solve the problems with chemicals and waste, working at the policy level is of critical importance.

Making the invisible, visible: working for a clean planet and healthy people

Interview with Rolph Payet, Executive Secretary of the Basel, Rotterdam, and Stockholm (BRS) Conventions.



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Rolph Payet's interview with UN Special magazine – October 5, 2018

ALEX MEJÍA, EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

Dr. Rolph Payet has a 26 year career spanning academia, government, NGOs, politics and international governance. He has received numerous international awards and recognition for his work on islands, oceans, climate change, tertiary education and biodiversity. He was the first President and Vice-Chancellor of the University of Seychelles, and Minister of Environment and Energy in the Cabinet of Seychelles from 2012 to 2014. He was appointed in October 2014 by the UN Secretary-General to lead the Secretariat of the three principle multilateral agreements on chemicals and waste.

A. MEJÍA: When one thinks of environmental issues and global

challenges, chemicals and waste do not necessarily come immediately to mind, and yet we all inherently understand that hazardous and toxic substances are a threat to human health and environment. How can you overcome this, essentially to make the invisible, visible, in order to mobilize attention and efforts at the international level?

ROLPH PAYET: This a daunting challenge, because chemicals and wastes are not something that people immediately relate to. However, when you talk about mobile phones, cars, furniture, food, they relate to this. They think of chemicals as someone in a lab-coat – a scientist. So that is the first problem. The second problem is, when you talk about waste, people think it is not their issue – this is an issue for the garbage collectors! Waste is something people, even politicians, don't usually want to talk about, and in some cultures waste is seen as taboo. So, you

have this double complexity there. The challenge, therefore is how you convert this narrative, into real life stories... connecting the intangible with tangibles, things around us. So, how chemicals are connected to food, connected to your mobile phone, and so on... Most dramatic is how chemicals are connected to your life. Newborns are important to mothers and fathers alike, we pay so much attention to childcare, so when we advocate breastfeeding, of course the milk needs to be healthy and not contain toxic chemicals. With this narrative, mothers become more concerned about what they are consuming, what they are eating, what they are being exposed to, and through the Stockholm Convention's Global Monitoring Plan we have discovered that in many countries the level of toxic chemicals in breast milk is a cause for concern. In using a human story of a mother and a child we can

communicate to society in a more helpful manner. So, focusing on human stories has been our strategy to raise awareness, even among policy makers.

Yes, make it more visible. Unless the whole of society understands, it's very difficult. One issue which is constantly in the news right now is marine litter, with almost daily images of our oceans awash with plastics, or of wildlife dying from plastic and other pollution. How do the three conventions relate to marine litter and microplastics?

You won't believe it. Scientists have been talking about this for more than 50 years, around the time I was born. When I graduated from university, and that is way back in 1992, I applied for a research grant to study plastic debris on the uninhabited outer islands of the Seychelles. Where was this plastic coming from? And then when I attended a conference in Miami, it was the

umpteenth global conference on marine debris, I shared my research and discovered that like-minded scientists were highlighting this over 30 years ago. Climate change and other global phenomena are subject to this same agnostic response despite clear scientific evidence. That said, I am indeed very motivated that we now have this opportunity to turn the tide on marine plastics so to speak.

Marine plastics might be thousands of miles away, but their origins are a result of our actions, our consumption, our shortsighted actions. However, let me be clear to say that the problem is not plastic *per se*, as plastic is often useful and indeed critical in many applications. The challenges are rather with the amount and kind of wastes we generate and in the ways we manage them, especially disposable – or single-use – plastics. In our pursuit for

development we have become a throw-away society, with little understanding that resources are limited, or indeed that waste can have monetary value.

Where do the international conventions come in? It should be obvious, as we have failed as individual nations to tackle the issue of marine plastic litter, that we need international action, and fast. The Basel Convention in its preamble already sets the stage for dealing with hazardous wastes and other wastes that move between boundaries, and in Article 15 makes explicit reference to the marine environment. So my endeavor is to work with Parties and the wider community, to put in place an action-oriented mechanism to reverse marine plastic litter. There has truly been a huge wave of commitment from all parties to the Convention, and, in fact,

last month during one of our intersessional meetings, the government of Norway tabled two proposals to concretely address the issue of marine plastics, within the Convention. Whilst there was broad support, the Parties will need to hammer out the details at our upcoming Conference of the Parties in April next year.

So, these are very concrete steps, which can be used, together with UN Environment and other actors and with other initiatives, to tangibly reverse this trend. Of concern, and this is yet to be confirmed by researchers, is the potential contamination of our food with chemicals leaching out of the degraded plastics in the environment.

Many of these potential chemicals are considered under the Stockholm Convention as being accumulative in our food web,



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The challenge is to convert the issue of chemicals and waste to stories that put the human at the center.

suffering long range transport and persisting in our ecosystem for long periods of time. Which implies we have in less than a hundred years gone full circle: our waste, and chemicals from that waste, can now be increasingly found in our food.

So, the three conventions are important.

The conventions are legally-binding, and also provide opportunities for countries and the private sector to innovate and develop sustainable green products, adopt a life-cycle approach to products, and engage in sound waste management. The overall objective remains to make our planet cleaner and our people healthier. It is never too late to do what is right, and countries know that!

This is a good moment to tell you that in the Geneva international community the BRS Secretariat has achieved a very good reputation. A very efficient, professional entity, and with a large mandate. How many people are working at the Secretariat?

Thank you, this is the result of the work of the excellent team that I have in the Secretariat, and the support of our donors and contributions of our many partners. Our staff here is between 40 and 50 dedicated professionals.

You do a lot with very few people
Aha yes. We work in a matrix environment and in many cases with established processes, and with minimum hierarchical interventions. I feel very fortunate that I can devote my focus to moving those issues forward and interacting in a proactive way with the Parties and other partners.

Congratulations, leadership is also very important. Now, the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions have 186, 160 and 182 Parties, respectively. That's almost universal coverage. How does work undertaken by Parties to implement these three conventions relate to, or underpin, the Sustainable Development Goals?
Well, we benefit from having so many governments that

are concerned about the three conventions, even though these topics are not always politically attractive. For example, at the last meetings of the conference of the parties (or COPs) in 2017, more than 100 ministers from around the world attended, sending a very strong message to my team and I. I am grateful that many of these ministers talk about SDGs and indicate how chemicals and wastes are intrinsically linked. It is an amazing prospect to have made such progress in garnering such high-level political commitment. The SDGs represent a significant opportunity for us to exploit the links, synergies, nexuses and complementarities between economic development and environment, without forgetting the social aspects. Maintaining the big picture can in the end help us to save the planet and the individual at the same time. Global agreements help us in monitoring our progress, agree on what actions to be taken and when. When we talk about chemicals and wastes, we should indeed be talking about food, water, jobs and indeed poverty alleviation! All SDG topics.

Do you also engage in the field, do your people go to the field, to see examples like the one you are telling me about?

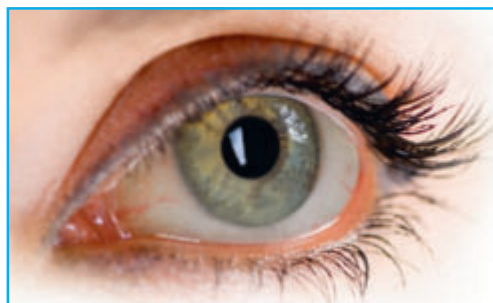
Yes, we do but in a limited way because we are a small Secretariat. However, Parties have created a global network of regional centers. There are 27 around the world – they work with counties, they are our frontline organizations and they make a big difference in

reaching local levels. They are our living “tentacles” in all countries. One of my priorities when I joined the Secretariat was to strengthen their work – because I felt this was the way to create the most impact and also to learn the most.

I am happy to hear that because as you know, at the UN, we like to create partnerships – and I am sure this leads to partnerships. Now, coming from The Seychelles, from a “Small Island Developing State”, please tell us how your career brought you here, to Geneva, to the UN, and are there advantages to being located in this city, when thinking of implementing actions around the world to protect human health and the environment?

First, when you grow up on a distant island, you feel isolated but as you become more aware you realize you are so close to the rest of the world. Take marine plastics for example. I saw it firsthand on my islands and found out it came from Africa and from Asia, transported across the oceans for thousands of kilometers. So, we are not an island, we are part of the world! Secondly, when you live on an island, when it rains, within minutes, you see the effect on the coastal area. So, when there is pollution in the mountains, you immediately see it downstream, on the coast. These island insights have helped me to make connections between human activities and the resulting impacts.

So our people are disconnected between their actions and the



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result, and this is the problem with chemicals and waste, particularly waste. Today we generate waste and we put it in our bin in our kitchen, we put it outside and expect someone will pick it up. You know what happens to it? We don't know.

Or we don't care.

Exactly, today, some of that waste ends up in West Africa. Did you know that only about 20% of electronic wastes are documented to be recycled in proper facilities, and here we are talking about millions of tons? Do you know where your discarded mobile is? Most probably it is in the hands of a young boy in West Africa, with no job. Since mobile phones have gold and other precious metals in it, he might burn it to get the gold to sell in exchange for food. In that process he has inhaled a concoction of toxic chemicals and released other chemicals into the atmosphere,

the soil or the marine environment. What is the health cost to that boy, to that country, what is the cost to our environment?

I hadn't seen that island perspective, and it is quite unique and revealing. Now, the contrast between the beautiful Seychelles and Geneva is quite a drastic change. Do you see advantages to being in Geneva?

I was deeply influenced by Jane Goodall whom I met many years ago: she told me she spent her lifetime working with chimpanzees and at 60 she realized that by staying with them she was not going to save them. To save them she needed to engage with policy-makers at the global level. Staying on my island was not sufficient for me to change the world. Geneva is an important city because it convenes a significant proportion of the international community, including especially a host of influential organizations also working

– like the Secretariat but in differing spheres – on sound management of chemicals and waste. And indeed our host, the Swiss government, remains very committed and supportive.

We have only one planet. Lastly, what secrets to a successful international career can you pass on to young people here, or at home, who might have ambitions to work for the United Nations one day? Are there key features or motivations you would look out for, in your colleagues and in your team?

First, this is not a job, it is a passion. Yes, we have challenges as an organization, but on the flipside if we stick our necks in the sand – then who will fight for the weak, for the unspoken, for those affected by our action? Who? Who will represent the planet? I also learned a lot growing up in the Seychelles from the local people. They have so much to teach us. So,

learning is my second secret. Learning should never stop! And finally, one has to have a clear vision, be able to share that vision, and in sharing that vision bring people together to be able to bring change, that is fundamental. Along the way, perseverance is important: remember 30 years for global attention on plastics! Some say that the UN is a very slow organization, however some will tell you slow cooking is good when compared to fast food! In the UN we try to hear and to listen to everybody, so that no one is left behind. That's our calling!

Thank you for sharing this advice and wisdom with younger people. These words will resonate with them. I sincerely thank you for this interview. ■

For more on the work of the Basel, Rotterdam, and Stockholm conventions see www.brsmeas.org or follow the Secretariat's Twitter messaging on @brsmeas.



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Interview with H.E. Luis Gallegos¹

Human rights abuses by multinational corporations

SEBASTIAN HOFBAUER, UNITAR

How did your interest in human rights abuses by multinational corporations begin, and why have you invested so much time in this niche area?

I wrote my doctoral thesis in 1975 on transnational corporations. It was a new item on the international agenda and not an important subject to the UN. I became interested because the realm of business had not been considered in the human rights field before. All other areas – political and civil, economic and social, torture, women, children – are. But the issue of economic activities and the victims of economic activities – transnational or national – too often fall between the cracks of national and international legislation. Therefore, in 2014, the Mission of Ecuador took the initiative and presented a resolution on this subject to the Human Rights Council (HRC).

In 2014, the HRC approved Resolution 26/9, which resulted in the creation of an Open-Ended Intergovernmental Working Group that has met for three sessions since then. What changes have you seen in this time?

We started the process in 2011, when the guiding principles for businesses and human rights were approved by the Council. The guiding principles had up to this point been voluntary, but we believed they should take the form of a legally binding treaty, to be signed and ratified by states. In 2013, we proposed a declaration to the HRC and it was approved by 85 countries. In 2014, a working group was created with the objective of writing a treaty on transnational corporations. The first sessions involved debates and academic discussions on what should be endorsed by the treaty and why. Throughout this process, we were accompanied by 1,500 NGOs. We received a lot of input from academics and over 50 experts. These three sessions have taken us to where we are now, which is the presentation of a zero draft treaty and a zero-draft protocol, in order to address individual and collective

complaints by victims of abuses by transnational corporations.

Looking at the countries that are in favour of the Resolution (Ecuador, Indonesia, Philippines, etc.) and those that are against it (most of the EU, the US, and Japan), there seems to be a divide between developed and developing nations. Why do you think this is so?

Developed countries have been successful in keeping this subject out of International Human Rights Law. Yet, we also have to consider the role of the transnationalization of businesses. A large amount of business activities, including almost 75 per cent of world trade, is done between companies. Many countries in the global South have different transnational corporations, and it is important to note that often, these corporations are more powerful than a very substantive number of countries. Why do I think there is a need for change in international society? I think it is time for States to become conscious about the abuses of transnational activities. The French have just enacted a law on this subject, the Swiss are considering a law in their parliament, and the Germans have explained that if the voluntary guiding principles do not comply with companies, then they will legislate this subject as well. Social change is happening – just like 45 years ago when we began to talk about the environment. Today, there is no transnational company in the world that does not want to be “green”. Social change is an imperative that will happen; and as Ambassador of Ecuador, I am pushing for these future developments.

If Resolution 26/9 comes to be, how do you think multinational corporations will react to mechanisms of enforcement and how will they behave in light on this type of “imposition”?

I have talked to different CEOs from many companies and they told me: “no one has talked to me about human rights – they have talked to me about labour rights, environmental rights, other rights – but

no one has told me that we have to comply to this, and we will do it if they tell us what to do”. Therefore, I believe that as we move forward, societies will ask for this responsibility to be met.

Can you give us an overview of the top priorities of the Permanent Mission of Ecuador in Geneva?

I have had the honour of being Ambassador of Ecuador three times in Geneva. The difference between New York and Geneva is the multiplicity of thematic issues managed by the multiple organisms and agencies. Our Permanent Mission of Ecuador in Geneva deals with around 40 agencies on a wide range of issues, including human rights, climate change, trade and commerce. The Mission has accomplished a very high standard of mechanisms. We often have three or four important negotiations going on, which aim to have a positive impact on the world. Moreover, we are able to propose and defend the positions of our country, join in alliances with other groups of countries, and foster these issues in order to make them viable.

You have devoted a lot of effort to bring about the Convention of Rights of Persons with Disabilities. What is your perspective on how disabilities fit into the UN agenda as a whole?

The negotiations of the Convention for Rights of Persons with Disabilities, from 2002 to 2006, was a paradigm shift. In the early 2000s, disability was not considered an issue. Now, more than 177 countries have signed this treaty, making it the most successful treaty of the century. This is an example of an issue in which the UN has been successful. The UN can be criticized for many issues, but it is the capabilities and negotiations in the forums that allow countries to meet and advance respect for human rights. It is through the UN that we are able to advance an inclusive society: a society where differences are respected. Without the UN, that would have not been possible.



Can you tell us how important the 2030 Agenda is to you and to Ecuador? How is it being implemented in Ecuador?

Ecuador has made it a national policy to implement the 2030 Agenda and I think we will be able to meet most of it. Although it is a good objective, I don't think it's enough. We must make an effort, not only as a state or government, but as a society. We should engage the private sector; we should engage businesses who are profit-oriented and yet can actively participate to help make this Agenda a reality. If you do not

engage societies as a whole, then you tend to think that the bureaucracy will be in charge. And societies do not solve problems through bureaucracies.

What made your career successful?

Is it successful? (laughs). I have to answer this with all sincerity. My passion has been service to people. As a career member of the foreign service, the great advantage that we had was that we were not ideologically inclined; rather, we would say it as it is, and our agenda was the country. You

have a brilliant group of professionals in the foreign service who still defend those principles. Yet, I see the world entering a crisis of multilateralism, and I am concerned about what is happening. These organizations that we have created have been very effective, and should be very effective, for the benefit of the planet, but sometimes they are torpedoed by their own members.

What message do you have for young diplomats and young professionals at the UN on how to develop their careers?

You must have passion for what you do, a cause for what you do. If you have that passion and that cause, I think you will be extremely successful and enormously satisfied. The millennial world is accustomed to instant gratification, and I think these mechanisms take a lot of patience and a lot of work; therefore, they tend to be looked at as something that takes too much time and too much effort. The effort is compensated when you consider issues like the environment or disability – and many others besides – which have been addressed and have helped to make this world better for its people. ■

¹ Ambassador and permanent representative of Ecuador to UNOG

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Charles Aznavour:

the French-Armenian icon has died at the age of 94

In 2017, UN Special had the opportunity to interview the singer, songwriter, Star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame, diplomat and he who they say is the most famous Armenian of his time, the Ambassador of Armenia to the United Nations in Geneva and to Switzerland.



Charles Aznavour is also called the most famous Armenian of his time.

DR. GARRY ASLANYAN, WHO, DEPUTY EDITOR

Earlier this year, a concert took place in the Assembly Hall of the Palace of Nations in the context of the International Day of La Francophonie, with the exceptional participation of Charles Aznavour.

Charles Aznavour sold over a hundred million records worldwide and performed in the greatest concert halls. His voice tore

at the hearts of audiences in Paris, New York, London, Tokyo and Rio. He made discreet, but no less unforgettable, appearances in front of the camera for Truffaut, Chabrol, Schlöndorff, Mocky, Cocteau and Egoyan. Most of all, Charles Aznavour was the author of over eight hundred songs, written and performed from the heart. We have decided to reprint the interview and while reviewing it we noticed how excited

he was about Armenia being host to this year's 17th Summit of La Francophonie. Held in the capital of Yerevan with huge success, it was attended by the likes of President Emmanuel Macron of France and Prime Minister of Canada Justin Trudeau. La Francophonie summit honoured his legacy. He would have been very proud. ■

Interview with Charles Aznavour¹

GARRY ASLANYAN: Thank you for agreeing to give us this interview, Ambassador. You are a recognised global celebrity, but not many people know about you also being the Ambassador of Armenia to the United Nations in Geneva and to Switzerland. How did that come about?

CHARLES AZNAVOUR: I was born in Paris, but both my parents were survivors of the genocide. My father, Misha, was an Armenian from Georgia; my mother, Knar, from a family of Armenian traders from Turkey. France quickly became my country. At home we spoke both Armenian and French, and we felt both 100% French and 100% Armenian. Many Armenians in France believe that I played a certain role in the term “Armenian” being included in the French national narrative, and then, after the song “They Fell,” which I wrote in 1975, they regarded me as someone who, finally, represented them.

However, my commitment to Armenia is relatively recent. Before its independence, I went there once, in 1964, just for a concert. It was the devastating earthquake of 1988 that alerted my consciousness. In twenty-four hours, I decided to launch an association: “Aznavour for Armenia”, which for many Armenians in Armenia in those difficult times, embodied hope for the future.

The newly independent Republic of Armenia trusted me with a function that would strengthen and formalise my commitment. First, I was appointed as Armenia's Ambassador to UNESCO, and then, in 2009, President Sargsyan, who granted me the Armenian nationality, proposed that I represent Armenia in Switzerland and the United Nations in Geneva. At first I hesitated, thinking it would not be easy. Then

I thought what is important for Armenia must be important for all of us.

Armenia is a country with ancient history and culture, but its independence is recent. What has the contribution of Armenia to the United Nations family been since its independence?

For Armenians, with a history of millennia, the last quarter of the century was particularly critical. Last year, Armenia celebrated the 25th anniversary of its membership of the United Nations. Over the past years, despite a number of challenges, Armenia has become a fully-fledged and responsible member of the international community. On becoming a member of the United Nations, Armenia committed to making its own contribution to the efforts of the international community aimed at building a peaceful future based on universal values, including

respect for the principles of equal rights and the self-determination of peoples.

It is important to emphasize the participation of Armenia in a number of United Nations peacekeeping missions: from Afghanistan to Iraq, from Kosovo to Lebanon and Mali, through which Armenia contributes to the establishment of international peace and security.

Armenia is committed to contributing to the joint efforts of the international community aimed at combating terrorism and responding to the refugee crisis. Armenia is the third country in Europe in terms of hosting the largest number of refugees per capita. Twenty-two thousand refugees from Syria have found shelter in Armenia.

Since it became a member of the United Nations, Armenia has been actively engaged in the activities of the Organization and its bodies in various areas. This, in particular, relates to our commitment to the United Nations prevention agenda. In this regard, the efforts of Armenia directed towards the prevention and punishment of the crime of genocide are essential. As a nation which has survived the horror of a genocide, we feel moral responsibility to voice the importance of the prevention of genocide and crimes against humanity and to take action in this domain.

An international day of commemoration and dignity for the victims of the crime of genocide and the prevention of this crime has been officially and unanimously established by the United Nations General Assembly. At the origin of this initiative was the Human Rights Council in Geneva, through a resolution presented by Armenia. As a descendant of genocide survivors,



Final rehearsal for Edison's AVRO-programme in the Vredenburg Music Centre, Utrecht in 1980. Charles Aznavour left; presenter Willem Duys right.

and, moreover, as a public figure, I have a particular responsibility. I carry the weight of their infinite suffering. It is our task to stand for their respect and dignity, and to make sure that oblivion and denial do not kill them a second time. Those who were annihilated in 1915, 1941 and 1994, were the Armenians, the Jews, the Tutsis... not for what they had done, but for who they were. It was me, but it was you too. Because at Der Zor, Auschwitz, and Kigali their target was humanity. The barbarism that has not been eradicated resurfaces under another mask. It can be observed in the fate of the minorities in the Middle East nowadays. Impunity has set the wrong pattern.

Is there anything else you would like to add?

Yes, I was glad to know that this year, in October, the heads of states of La Francophonie decided to hold its summit in

Yerevan. This will be the largest event not only in the history of independent Armenia, but also of the Organization in the region. As a member of La Francophonie, Armenia shares its values of peace, solidarity, dialogue, the equality of peoples, human rights and cultural diversity, and will prioritize them during its presidency. The summit slogan – “Living together” reflects these humanitarian values, which, I am sure, can strengthen the cohesion of our societies and bring peace and prosperity to the francophone space. ■

1. Ambassador and Permanent Representative of the Republic of Armenia to the United Nations (excerpt, originally published in 2017)

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Health Risks **3.5** million people die prematurely due to outdoor pollution

Road Fatalities **1.24** million people die every year in road crashes



WHAT CAN WE DO?



Chile

With more than 2 million people living in rural areas, the Ministry of Transport has implemented the "Connectivity Subsidy Program", which involves free bus transport for handicapped children from remote areas throughout the country and an inclusive aquatic transport for some extremely low-populated areas of Chile.



United Kingdom

Cities in the United Kingdom have long suffered from road congestion and pollution. Cities such as Bristol and Bath have started Consolidation Centres. These centres, which involve electric buses and trucks, have reduced 78% of the delivery trips to retailers, 196 tons of carbon dioxide (CO₂), and 6 tons of nitrogen oxide (NO_x) emissions.



Russia

The city of Moscow introduced a comprehensive set of measures to reduce road congestion on its streets, encouraged to increase through the addition of bicycle paths. Before 2010, 2.3 kilometres of such



Pollution
23%
on energy-related greenhouse gas emission come from transport

Negative economic impact
Road congestion is a burden for economy

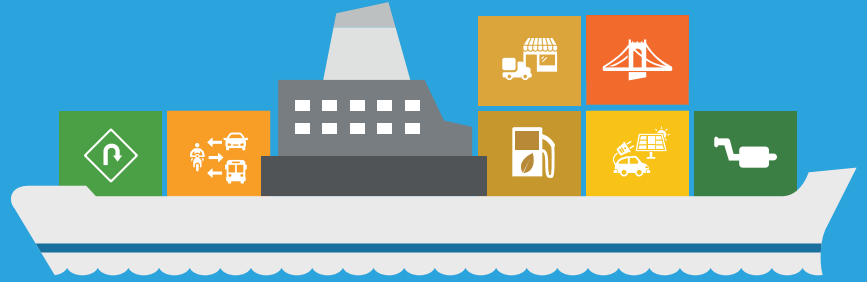


Cost in terms of ill health and lives lost
Estimation of China, India and the OECD countries air pollution costs
3.5 trillion \$↑



SDG 12: RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION

Target 12.c: Aims to encourage the rationalization of inefficient fossil-fuel subsidies

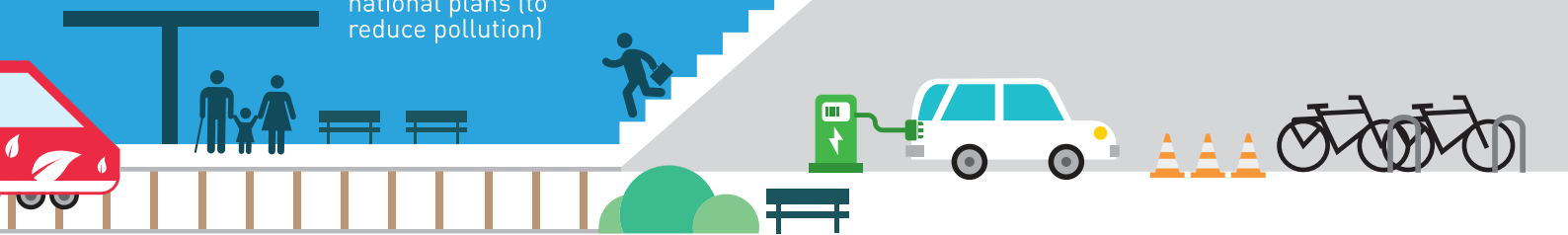


Sustainable transport is: **safe, affordable, accessible, efficient, resilient and minimizing carbon and other emissions and environmental impact**

SDG 11: SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES

Target 11.2: Focuses on expanding public transport for all people; and 11.6 aims to reduce the impact of carbon and other emissions of cities

SDG 13: CLIMATE ACTION
Target 13.2: Aims to integrate climate change measures into national plans (to reduce pollution)



Tanzania

A program has been implemented by the road safety NGO Amend to systematically assess areas around schools and improve road safety for children. Amend is targeting schools in poor and overcrowded neighbourhoods where at least 1 out of 25 children have suffered injuries on the road every year.

Brazil

The city of Joinville (560,000 inhabitants), is notable for implementing an active transport plan promoting the increased use of cycling and walking as the most sustainable urban transport modes.



Interview with Executive Director of AGFUND

Wherever the United Nations is working, we are there as well...

Our Editor-in-Chief sat down with H.E. Nasser Al-Kahtani, Executive Director of the Arab Gulf Programme for Development (AGFUND). They spoke about the AGFUND International Prize, and discussed how the organization works and its partnership with the United Nations.



H.E. Nasser Al-Kahtani

ALEX MEJÍA: I was honored to witness the award ceremony for AGFUND Prize. Please describe this initiative and why you held this initiative in Geneva this year.

We believe that being here, at the United Nations in Geneva, is a good opportunity to recognize outstanding stories of human development, and at the same time to share with the world what AGFUND does to contribute with partners in the international and regional development context. Geneva brings together people from all over the world who then go back to their governments, international organizations, or civil society entities, raising awareness about human development champions. Geneva is a global resounding board and a true multiplier of positive partnerships, unique in the world. AGFUND International Prize for Pioneering Human Development Projects is an annual prize established in 1999, with the aim of encouraging innovation and creativity in human development work.

We highlight outstanding projects who have helped to support target groups in a wide range of subjects, always in line with the priorities of the UN. The prize money was initially \$300,000 but after adoption of the MDGs, our Board increased it to \$500,000. When the Sustainable Development Goals were announced in 2015, AGFUND's Board again decided to increase the prize money, this time to \$1 Million per year. We also aligned the prize's subjects and selection criteria with the SDGs. Since then, each year the award focuses on one of the 17 Goals.

The 2018 Award Ceremony focused on Goal 4 "Quality Education." I am very happy that the prize committee chose this focus, because we believe it is fundamentally important, not just in itself, but also as an enabler of the other Goals. Without education for all, we will simply not end poverty, nor will we end hunger. I am personally very proud of the outstanding projects, that we awarded the prize. It is

important to know that the prize does not go directly to an individual or an organization but rather goes directly to a project. This fact is very significant for us, because this ensures that the award money is used to expand or replicate this successful project. This approach, of multiplying and expanding achievements, has in itself been a story of success.

Please tell our readers more about the organization behind this prize. What is AGFUND doing and how did it all begin?

AGFUND was established in 1980, upon the initiative of His Royal Highness, Prince Talal Bin Abdul Aziz Al Saud, with the support of the leaders of the Cooperation Council for the Arab States of the Gulf. HRH Prince Talal worked very closely with the late James P. Grant, former Executive Director of UNICEF to conceive a truly global initiative for the encouragement of human development champions. From the beginning, they aimed to help the disadvantaged, particularly

women and children; and with that vision they raised more than \$150 million in the 1980s for maternal health and the vaccination of children. Several decades have past and I am proud to say that we have achieved sustained growth and a positive social impact.

AGFUND wouldn't be what it is without HRH's support. Since its inception, we have been working closely with the United Nations. From the beginning, he has believed in a global partnership, in recent years, under the aegis of Goal 17 of the SDGs. Since our creation, we have never implemented a single project that we have implemented alone. There is always a partnership involved, be it with the United Nations, national governments, civil society, or the private sector. I personally believe very strongly that this approach is why we have been successful, as we have been able to support more than 1,500 projects in over 130 developing countries. We have established and operate

9 Microfinance banks in 9 developing countries jointly with donors, governments and private sector). Through our work we target the most vulnerable groups of society: women, children, youth, refugees, and people with disabilities. About 4 million people have benefited from these 9 Banks with loans disbursed of about US\$600,000,000. As of 2022, we will be disbursing US\$1 billion.

Tell us about your vision for the future of the AGFUND.

Where do you want to take the organization?

To think of the future, we should first understand our past. I joined AGFUND in 1995, and at that time, HRH Prince Talal Bin Abdul Aziz Al Saud told us to think differently: to be creative and to do something that nobody else is doing. I realized then that we needed to go

back and review everything we had done so far. Through this introspection, and by looking at the world around us, we have decided to focus on five areas that we feel are in special need of support:

1. *Early Childhood Development* – The early years of a child are the most critical. It is when the foundations are laid for the later life. Therefore, is then all the more shocking that a vast majority of children in our priority countries don't have access to pre-school education.
2. *Women's Empowerment* - AGFUND firmly believes that women are the backbone of development, and that any development plan that do not place women at the top of its priorities is deficient plan.
3. *Civil society* – We believe that people need to feel a sense of belonging to society. Everyone should understand, why

change is sometimes necessary, and how he or she can be part of it. No matter what you believe, you should be an active part of your civil society architecture and we need to spread awareness of this fact.

4. *Education* – Next to pre-school education, this is a second gap we witness in the education of the future population. The problem today in some of our priority countries, is that around 80% of youth don't have access to university after high school. Again, this is a big waste of potential and why we made education, particularly women and youth, one of our target areas.
5. *Financial inclusion* – Nothing can be achieved without the financial inclusion of vulnerable groups. It is our goal to offer them solutions, so that they too can benefit

from being part of the world economy. If they cannot have access to financial systems, their ability to develop their entrepreneurship will be lost.

Could you tell us more about this need for financial inclusion?

At its most basic definition, financial inclusion means that individuals are included in the financial system. That they can have access to financial products and services that are simple to understand and that empower them to receive funds, make payments, create savings, access credit and insurance – all of this in an easy manner and at affordable rates. We need to help people make more use of digital services and digital financing. Most of the world's low-income citizens already have a cell phone. They may not have access to

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the internet, but they do their best effort to own a cell phone. Imagine, if we could simply give aid to people in need -think refugees- via digital means, transferring their monthly stipend directly to their electronic account. This would open up a new world for them that goes far beyond money. Making digital financial services available to poor people is also a first step towards integrating them into the global financial structures with all the related opportunities that come along. It really is a tool for empowerment, particularly for women and youth.

You have mentioned the need to focus on women several times. Why do you think women are left behind, and how can we solve that?

From my perspective, I would have to say that we are confronted with the reality that the financial system and higher education are not fair enough towards women today. His Highness Prince Talal used to say: Women in the developing countries are no less creative than their counterparts in developed countries but have not given enough opportunities to prove their capabilities in the service of their society. In the light of this reality, AGFUND dedicates its efforts to women empowerment. To achieve this, the Center for Arab Women for Development and Training (CAWTAR), was established in Tunisia in partnership with UN and international organizations. In the same context, AGFUND's Banks for financial inclusion play a leading role in improving the living conditions and economic empowerment of women. Most of AGFUND banks' clients are women. Indeed, these banks have changed the conditions of numerous women. Some have become businesswomen, who open new job opportunities for many young people. The



AGFUND has set education on the top of its development agenda.

most innovative products of AGFUND's banks are the nurseries that are invented to provide working women's children with appropriate safe environment and reassure their mothers. Moreover, these nurseries, in turn provided employment opportunities for kindergarten teachers. On the other hand, the Arab Open University, one of AGFUND initiatives, currently enrolls more than 30,000 students, and I am very proud to say that most of them are women.

You have worked with the UN closely in the past. How do you see this partnership in the future?

Partnerships are, on so many levels, of critical importance for an international institution like ours. Whenever we present a new initiative or idea to our President, HRH always responds: "who is your partner? Go to the Arab League, the United Nations, the World Bank, NGOs and find the support you need to make this a success." This is the way AGFUND works and I am glad to see the rest of our Board supporting us in this approach.

We are very proud to feel we are part of the UN. Sometimes we are asked: "Why are you still

working in Yemen, why are you active in Syria?" We always respond very clearly: "Wherever the UN is working, we are there as well." One thing we learned from our experience is that we need the UN partnership, its legitimacy and mandate and the road-map that the SDGs provide. We need to continue working closely together if we want to achieve the Agenda 2030. At the same time, we can offer the UN our resources, network and experience and we can mobilize the private sector.

To conclude, please tell us a little bit about yourself. What were you doing before joining the AGFUND?

I am one son among 19 brothers and sisters. My father was illiterate, he spent part of his life in the army and went to participate in the war of 1948. When he came back to us he said: "War will not solve this conflict. Education will make the change." And he became literate, began working with the government, and later started his own business. During his adult life, he always made it a priority that his own children complete their education. He made sure that every one of us pursued a bachelor's degree at least, especially my Sisters.

That was always his dream and he supported us throughout. He passed away before the youngest three sister and brothers graduated, but his dream became a reality. Just recently, the last of my sister graduated as a Lawyer and my brother completed his PhD from UK, and our youngest brother pursue to complete his bachelor's degree in the USA. Thanks to my father I had the opportunity to graduate from University and I applied for a government scholarship to pursue my Master of Professional Accounting from University of Miami, USA. When I came back I started working in the (Institute of Public Administration) which supports the government and private sector. In 1995, I had the great honor to be appointed to AGFUND and HRH Talal Bin Abdul Aziz became my mentor.

We at the UN have many young brilliant professionals, as do you at AGFUND. Please tell them how you think they can contribute to a better world.

Be creative. Don't think the old way. A large part of our team is comprised of young professionals and they are doing great. This new generation is innovative and visionary. I see much potential in them. ■



© UNWG

October 12 2018 Children's Walk

The United Nations Women's Guild Geneva (UNWG) hosts a series of fundraising events yearly for the purpose of funding multiple projects which empower women and help children throughout the world. The Children's Walk is one of the two main events that have been taking place on the UN grounds since 2002.

NILOUFAR RAFI-KIAN BOUABID

The funds raised go towards sponsoring scholarships for disadvantaged children entering secondary school. Each grant is for a period of five or six years maximum and therefore represents a significant commitment on the part of the UNWG. Current figures show that 467 children in 21 countries have received scholarships enabling them to complete their secondary education. The walk aims to awaken the participating

children's awareness of the crucial importance for disadvantaged children to be able to attend school, something that children in Geneva might take for granted.

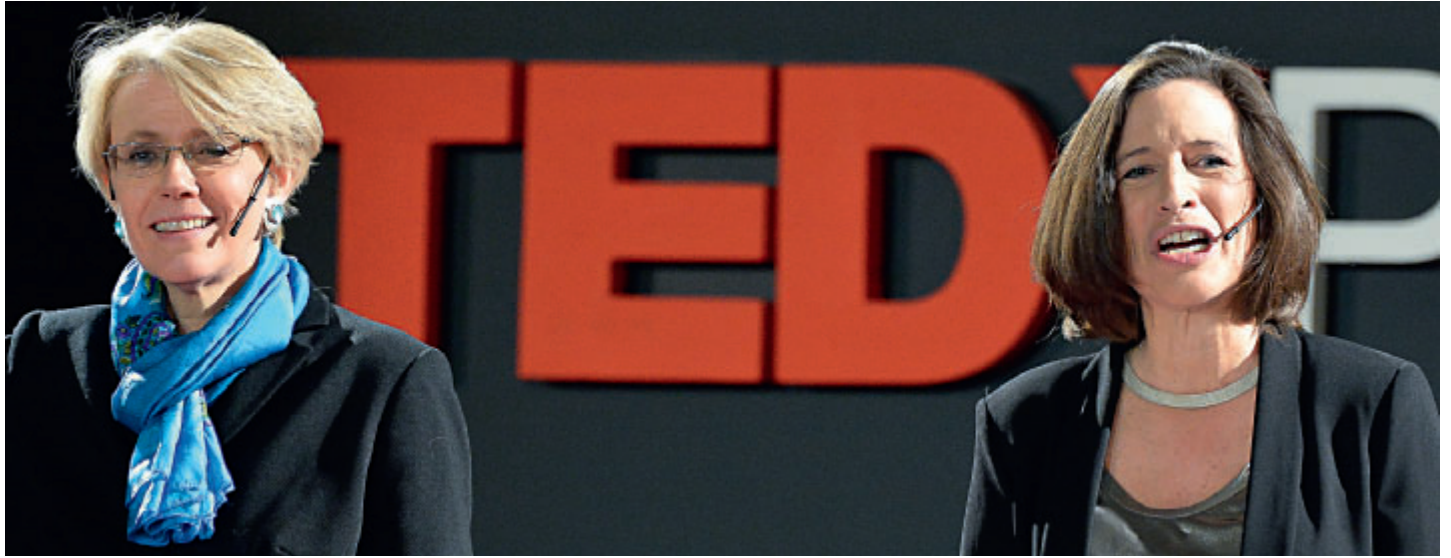
The Walk is also an educational opportunity for the children to further understand the UN's mission and programmes. A PowerPoint presentation given to the children in the General Assembly Hall prior to the walk

informs them of the purpose and destination of the funds raised.

Nine hundred and twenty-two children from international schools in and around Geneva took part in October 2018. The UNWG wishes to thank the following schools, both children and staff members, for their participation this year: British School of Geneva, Collège du Léman, Geneva English School, International School of Geneva

from campuses Pregny, Nations and La Châtaigneraie, Deux Mille Feuilles, Deutsche Schule Genf, the Swedish International School and Institut International de Lancy.

The Guild receives consistent help and support from the United Nations Organization Geneva for all of its activities and specifically for the Children's Walk. Thus, we take this opportunity to thank the Director-General Michael Møller as well as the Director of Administration Clemens Adams and all the UN staff involved. Thank you for making the dreams of so many children come true. ■



© UN Photo / Jean-Marc Ferré

TEDxPlaceDesNationsWomen's co-organizers: Corinne Momal-Vanien, Director of Conference Management at UNOG (left) and Melissa Fleming, Chief of Communications at UNHCR (right).

TEDxPlaceDesNationsWomen: Shedding light on the power of female difference-makers

In December 2018, the United Nations Office at Geneva and the UN Refugee Agency, in collaboration with seven partner organizations, will be hosting their third TEDx event, TEDxPlaceDesNationsWomen.

"Against a backdrop of widespread pessimistic narratives on the challenges the world is facing, I believe it is crucial to showcase innovative ideas and inspiring stories told by individuals who can convey hope",

— Corinne Momal-Vanien¹

TIPHAINE DI RUSCIO, UNOG

"Anything that is done here in Geneva, has a direct impact on every person on this planet in any 24-hour period", UN Geneva Director-General Michael Møller said. And yet, this idea is often hard to picture or hard to believe for most people.

TEDxPlaceDesNationsWomen, intends to change perceptions and promote the role of Geneva as a hub for a unique pool of talent and expertise that truly makes a positive difference, through the lens of inspiring and empowered women.

Ideas have the power to change attitudes, lives and, ultimately, the world. They are at the very heart of TED (Technology, Entertainment and Design), a non-profit organization devoted to "ideas worth spreading" in the form of short, powerful speeches. TEDx (with the "x" designating an independently organized TED event) is a line-up of local events that brings people together to share a TED-like experience.

Empower

With the global momentum created by the #MeToo and #TimesUp movements, 2018 has become the year for women's empowerment. This is why TEDxPlaceDesNationsWomen will focus on the theme "Empower",



TEDxPlaceDesNationsWomen speaker Jennifer Shigoli, CEO and founder of Elea Products.



TEDxPlaceDesNationsWomen speaker Mariana Costa, co-founder and CEO of Laboratoria.

Registration will be open from 5 to 19 Nov. 2018 on www.tedxplacedesnationswomen.ch where you can find more information on the lineup of speakers, registration and live webcast. Follow us on Twitter @TEDxPdNations and spread the word!

by covering a wide range of issues such as nuclear disarmament, domestic workers' rights, the importance of digital skills, and Female Genital Mutilation (FGM).

The 11 inspiring and passionate speakers from all around the world will come together to showcase the idea that when women are empowered, they do great things for their communities. They will provide concrete examples to highlight that achieving gender equality and women's empowerment is not only a moral imperative, but also a necessity which will benefit our society as a whole.

Meet two of the difference-makers

Meet TEDxPlaceDesNationsWomen speaker **Jennifer Shigoli, a Tanzania-based businesswoman, CEO and founder of Elea Products.**

"I am here to share my story of how a social enterprise could help keep girls in school", she said.

The United Nations estimates that one in ten girls drops out of school due to menstruation. Because of low incomes and costly pads, it is almost impossible for girls to afford the sanitary care they need to not miss school during their menstruation period.

Jennifer will talk to us about how entrepreneurs like her can provide simple

and cost-effective solutions to such social challenges.

Mariana Costa, is the co-founder and CEO of Laboratoria, a social enterprise which addresses economic inequalities in Latin America and empowers women in the tech industry, making sure that they are involved in creating "the apps and softwares which will shape our future".

Jennifer's and Mariana's stories are just two of the stories that illustrate how some of the most pressing challenges of our time can be solved when women's talent and ideas are unlocked.

Spread the word

TEDxPlaceDesNationsWomen is a public event, but because the number of seats is limited, registration is necessary. Several hundred people attended the talks at the Palais des Nations for the first two editions of TEDxPlaceDesNations in 2014 and 2016. Another feature of the TED experience is that participants can network during the event by meeting some of the speakers and other present, as well as taking part in various activities during the break.

TEDx events also benefit from a significant online audience. Thousands of people watched the event live in 2014 and 2016, whether individually or in viewing parties.

A number of universities, UN Information Centres and other offices successfully organized such events across the globe and viewing parties were held in Spain, the United States, Guatemala, Nigeria, Poland, Brazil, and more.

"We want the voices of our speakers to be heard beyond the walls of the Palais des Nations", Corinne Momal-Vanian explained, "the event is held in Geneva, but we will spread the word across the world". In keeping with the TEDx tradition, the videos of the talks will be made available on Youtube following the event. In 2014, two of them were posted on TED.com, where they have been watched over a million times.

Whether they are entrepreneurs, medical doctors, politicians, historians or students, women are all remarkable agents of change. The event provides a unique setting to celebrate and pay tribute to all difference-makers around the world, yesterday, today, and tomorrow. The powerful stories told by the TEDxPlaceDesNations-Women will hopefully inspire the audience to become engaged and strive for change within their communities. ■

¹ Co-organizer of the event and Director of Conference Management at UNOG.

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Blockades often entail some form of “collective punishment” with drastic consequences for the population.

Sanctions & embargoes: Should civilian populations be less protected in peacetime than in war?

As economic warfare increasingly replaces dialogue, negotiation and arbitration in the settlement of disputes between states, there is an urgent need to expand effective international protection policies to civilians in such allegedly “non-conflict” situations.

AMBASSADOR IDRIS JAZAIRY¹

Everyone remembers the catastrophic consequences on human rights of broad trade embargoes imposed under the authority of the United Nations in the 1990s, especially with respect to Iraq. This was widely documented at the time. It prompted a shift away from comprehensive to so-called ‘smart’ sanctions. The past months, unfortunately, have witnessed increased recourse to economic sanctions, some of which are clearly not ‘targeted’ nor intended to be ‘smart’ – but clearly comprehensive, as in the case of the measures re-introduced by the United States against Iran. I noticed that the US Secretary of State openly spoke of the ‘strongest sanctions in history’.

I make the point in my latest reports to the Human Rights Council and to the UN General Assembly that applying

a comprehensive sanctions regime in the form of a quasi-complete embargo, all the more when this purports to extend “extraterritorially”, that is to apply to third parties to discourage them to do business with the target country, entails effects that almost equate to those of a blockade on a foreign country, and thus qualifies as ‘economic warfare’. The potential far-reaching adverse consequences of these actions on human rights are obvious.

My findings are that embargoes of this kind violate some of the most basic rules of international humanitarian law and human rights law. One may recall that blockades in wartime may result in “collective punishment” of the populations affected, a behaviour that contradicts the internationally accepted rules of the law of armed conflict, especially the Geneva Convention relative to

the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War (Fourth Geneva Convention) of 1949.

Irrespective of whether these are applied in connexion with military operations or in peacetime, *de facto* blockades imposed as a result of measures aiming at the “economic isolation” of a target country, through restrictions or prohibitions of imports and exports abroad and transfers of goods between the target and the rest of the world, also entail some form of “collective punishment”. “Humanitarian exceptions” as practised so far get caught up in bureaucratic webs.

Therefore, what I say is basically that the requirements of the law of armed conflict (or international humanitarian law) of necessity, proportionality and discrimination (between combatants and

non-combatants, and between civilian and military objectives), should also apply in cases of economic sanctions in peacetime, irrespective of potential legal niceties about the applicability of humanitarian law only to armed conflict.

Otherwise, this would result in an absurd outcome: that civilians would be deprived in peacetime of the protection offered in wartime by international humanitarian law against the very same kinds of indiscriminate coercive measures applied by outside powers.

In that context, there appears to be no valid reason why peacetime measures having basically the same effects as wartime blockades could be considered as lawfully inducing situations of starvation or collective punishment (in addition to adversely affecting

a range of basic human rights), where such situations would have been deemed unacceptable during conflict under the rules of international humanitarian law.

Thus, I call for an immediate evaluation of *de facto* blockades against the criteria set in international humanitarian law, and for the immediate cessation of those measures found to disregard the imperatives of necessity, proportionality and discrimination. The international judiciary has an important role to play in that respect, and I have suggested that the United Nation’s General Assembly request an advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice in this regard. But other relevant bodies, such as human rights bodies of the UN, and the international community at large, should also engage in serious discussions involving all stakeholders with a view to addressing this issue.

More generally, my main concern is when unilateral sanctions – especially those purporting to have extraterritorial effect – used as a foreign policy tool, do not spare the innocent population of targeted States, on the basis of questionable ‘evidence’ or mere

suspicions or allegations that would be insufficient evidence in the court of law of a democratic country. First, this sets a poor precedent for advocates of the rule of law everywhere. Second, such action is a violation of an internationally recognized human rights tenet: that civilians should not be made to pay for the perceived misdemeanours of their government. And third, if peacetime blockades are tolerated, the very architecture of the international system based on the Charter of the United Nations and the International Bill of Rights is at risk.

The international community must react against the resulting destabilization of the rule-based international system. We appeal in particular to the main architects of the post-World War II international institutions to be true to the fundamentals of international law and to the architecture of the human rights system, whose enforcement implicitly relied and still depend on them as central framers of the present international order. ■

1 United Nations Special Rapporteur on the negative impact of unilateral coercive measures on the enjoyment of human rights

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Interview with Admiral Giuseppe De Giorgi

A new hat for the former Chief of the Italian Navy

Admiral Giuseppe De Giorgi, Chief of Staff of the Italian Navy in 2013-2016, will teach a course on International Security (INTL 5590) at Webster University Geneva¹ from January through March 2019.



GIOVANNA SCOTTON²

Admiral, you have accepted a new challenge. Congratulations. Next year, you will be Visiting Professor of International Security at Webster University. Why did you decide to start this collaboration with an American university? Can you highlight the major topics you will deal with during your course?

I met Professor Oreste Foppiani (*Head of the Department of International Relations at Webster University*), when I was Chief of Staff. His passion, competence and intellectual lucidity on maritime issues in general and maritime security in particular struck a chord. My contribution to the curriculum of the MAIR will concentrate on the renewed importance of seas and oceans vis-à-vis future peace in the world. It is my intention to offer my students the direct testimony of a man who participated in events of international significance. My students – through the analysis of case studies – will take advantage of a synthesis of the effects of political choices mediated by decisions taken in the field by military and civilian actors. Hence, they will also see lost opportunities and seized opportunities, which determined the outcome – often by chance – of many crucial events. Among the different operation theaters, we will analyze together what happened in Lebanon, Libya and the Persian Gulf.

You served your country wearing the Italian Navy uniform for over 40 years and had an adventurous life spent at sea, flying and navigating around the world. However, inside the uniform there is always a man. How was this great love for the Navy born? What were the milestones, which marked this path?

Passion for the sea, the aspiration to be part of a “band of brothers” of which to be proud, the desire for adventure, the willingness to step up your game, were and are the main reasons. I had wanted to be a sailor since I was a child. My leadership roles in the Italian Navy marked my professional life. They gave me the opportunity to participate – often as a protagonist – in crucial international events such as the Lebanese Civil War following the truce between Israel and Hezbollah in 2006, the strike on Gaddafi in 2011 and the ensuing humanitarian crisis in the Mediterranean Sea. Finally, yet importantly, the relaunch of the Italian Navy during my years as Chief of Staff of one of the 10 best navies in the world.

You are known to be the father of Operation MARE NOSTRUM, a mission that faced the migration crisis in the Southern Mediterranean Sea with a completely new approach. Could you explain to the readers of *UN Special* the most significant episodes of this mission and how it has evolved?

Operation MARE NOSTRUM was born as an answer to the carnage, which took place near Lampedusa Island on the night of October 3–4, 2013, when over 350 migrants lost their lives. This carnage epitomized the many other tragedies at sea which were happening in those days. MARE NOSTRUM was the answer to a humanitarian crisis of biblical dimensions and it became the greatest search-and-rescue (SAR) operation at sea ever implemented: we rescued 160,000 men, women and children, arrested 360 traffickers, and disposed of or confiscated numerous naval units. MARE NOSTRUM was not only a colossal rescue operation, but also a decisive operation to disrupt the trafficking in human beings (THB). In addition, it acted as a sanitary cordon, thanks to the medical personnel of the Italian Health Ministry, the Italian Red Cross and the different NGOs onboard our military ships. Let’s not forget that before MARE NOSTRUM, the surviving migrants landed directly on the Italian coasts, to then be hired by local organized crime and received no medical assistance. MARE NOSTRUM was followed by Operation MARE SICURO, which zoomed in on the control and surveillance of the sea zone right in front of the Libyan Territorial Waters to fight ISIS and protect the Italian Coast Guard naval units involved in SAR missions. On top of MARE SICURO, in 2015, came

the EU Naval Force in the Mediterranean Operation SOPHIA, which was conceived to fight THB and support the reborn Libyan Coast Guard. Notwithstanding these ambitious goals, SOPHIA did not achieve the hoped-for results because Brussels was lukewarm, as it had never given the authorization to operate within the Libyan Territorial Waters.

What is the current situation in the Mediterranean and which geopolitical scenarios do you foresee, including the role of Italy in Libya and all the other actors in the field?

The United States' disengagement in the Mediterranean, reborn Russian expansionism, the divisions between Sunnis and Shiites, the failed Libyan State, the Iranian presence in Syria and the EU crisis, together with African migration, are only some of the destabilizing elements in a region that only 20 years ago seemed destined to become a tranquil sea under the American aegis. To worsen the situation, there is the reborn contrast between France and Italy. The latter is the object of the Hexagon's aggressive shopping campaign among the Belpaese's last industrial jewels in the crown. One must also point out the fact that Italy is in a phase of marginalization in the Libyan theater. Italy, without the protection of its traditional and most important ally, the United States, and without the support of the now BREXIT-driven United Kingdom to differ from France, reveals all its weaknesses in the international arena. Rome, accustomed to camouflaging itself as a chameleon within the jungle of multilateralism, is struggling to position itself as a sovereign country with its own long-term strategy to pursue the national interest.

What role do you see for the Italian Navy in the so-called "Enlarged Mediterranean" and in the future EU armed forces?

The "Enlarged Mediterranean" is of paramount importance for Italy and its significance has been politically underestimated. It is a vast area, full of opportunities, but also full of threats. Italy, being the link between Europe and the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region, can put itself in the picture as the natural reference for MENA countries willing to work with Europe. The Peninsula can also become extremely relevant, acting as the validating EU and NATO partner, to cooperate with the Southern Mediterranean countries. Only by assuming this responsibility, will

Italy be able to obtain from Brussels a strategy which can give to the Mediterranean its deserved priority and centrality in political choices. The latter should include both security and economic development as far as the protection of the environment and the sustainable use of the energy and food resources of the seas are concerned. At the same time, to support a convincing Mediterranean foreign policy, Italy must equip itself with a military instrument able to work in peacetime as well as during war. It plays a primary role in the security of the region through constant presence, surveillance, deterrence and the projection of force in both the Mediterranean Sea and the "Enlarged Mediterranean." Keeping this in mind, the relevance of the

Italian Navy is evident, because it is the first implementation tool to maintain balance in the Mediterranean, to protect regional stability and the defense of human rights, as well as Italy's vital national interests. The hypothesis of an EU Navy is instead subordinated to the transformation of the EU from a mere economic entity to a sovereign federation of states, not nations, but regions with an autonomy limited to domestic policies. How much and when this perspective could materialize depends on whether or not populist nationalism will intensify from its current success not only in Europe, but also in the Americas. ■

1 www.webster.ch

2 Italian Navy Selected Reserve journalist.

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SDG portal: using data to achieve Agenda 2030 in Brazil

The global development agenda promises to “leave no one behind.” It creates proper conditions for communities to be able to use their potential, mobilizing local and external capacities and resources that promote economic dynamism, together with the improvement of people’s quality of life, with respect to the environment. Quite a challenge.

JOSÉ ANTONIO FARES¹

This challenge requires the convergence of social actors around established priorities, thus guaranteeing the necessary political support in the coordination of forces aimed at transforming the desired reality. It also requires access and the ability to analyze information about the local reality, so that the choices are well founded and consistent.

The Fiep System, which represents and supports the industries in the state of Paraná, Brazil, recognizes the importance of the private sector for the country’s development and has been carrying out intense work in favor of global development agendas since 2004. The work is based on two axes: the dissemination of information and the mobilization of companies, universities, governments and other institutions, in order to encourage their commitment to the achievement of the established objectives.

With this understanding, the Fiep System presents the SDG Portal (www.portalods.com.br), with reference to the success of the MDG Portal in supporting the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals in Brazil, as evidenced by more than 22 million page views and more than 2.5 million accesses since its launch in 2009.

The SDG Portal provides information on SDG indicators from all 27 states and 5,570 municipalities in Brazil, with the objective of strengthening local efforts towards achieving SDGs in the country, promoting the empowerment of private, public and social leaders, through:

- disseminating information that fosters the production of knowledge;
- stimulating a critical analysis of the reality;
- strengthening local capacities;
- establishing policies, programs and projects according to the needs.

Therefore, the information is presented in a simple way – with maps, graphs and explanatory texts, allowing for easy monitoring by any interested person – extracted from a database that is structured in a set of indicators that contemplate demographic, economic, social and environmental aspects. The database is updated with secondary data produced by recognized official bodies and care is always taken as to the reliability of its content to ensure that it is used in a safe way.

Thus, it will be possible to have an overview of Brazilian states and municipalities, based on indicators related to ODS (SDGs in Portuguese), as well as complementary analyzes, such as, for example, verifying, based

on the age pyramid, the fertility rate and the life expectancy of the population in the locality, comparable with Brazil, states and other municipalities. Another example would be the analysis of the percentage of people living on the poverty line, in association with the Gini Index, to see if progress in reducing poverty is accompanied by the reduction of inequality, since economic growth does not always promote equity.

Another good example is the possibility of checking whether progress has been made or not at educational levels, access to drinking water, sewage and waste collection, which are essential for the health and well-being of communities, or to verify the presence of women in education, but not so much in politics or in companies.

Knowing the local reality will also allow companies to better assess their externalities, understanding at the strategic level how their activities translate into economic, environmental and social impacts so that they can thus explore and define ways that will intensify the positive impacts and mitigate the negatives.

This cohesive set of interrelated themes, based on careful analysis, can guide decisions in line with what must be done to

promote sustainable development. It can be done both by companies, in terms of business definitions or social investment, as well as by governments, in defining their policies, programs and projects, or even by civil society organizations in developing their work plans.

The ODS Portal, by disseminating information in a way that is easily understandable to all people – information that might initially seem very complex – generates more knowledge about the local reality, contributing to the effective exercise of citizenship. In this way, information is democratized, actors are mobilized and trained, encouraging initiatives and decision-making in line with local possibilities and needs, in a strategic and consistent action to achieve the desired results.

The information is organized and disseminated in an innovative and user-friendly way which makes the SDG Portal unique, making a real contribution to the new global development agenda, the Sustainable Development Goals (ODS). ■

Learn more on www.portalods.com.br

¹ Superintendent of Sesi PR and IEL PR, Regional Director of Senai PR, Executive Director of CIFAL Curitiba



© UNWG



UNOG Director-General Mr. Michael Møller during the opening of last year's edition of the Bazaar, with Mr François Longchamp, former President of the Conseil d'Etat de Genève.

UNWG International Bazaar 2018

For "Genève internationale", November in Geneva is a month synonymous with one of the main events celebrated at UNOG every year: the International Bazaar, hosted by the United Nations Women's Guild (UNWG).

NILOUFAR RAFI-KIAN BOUABID

In keeping with its goal of empowering women and extending a helping hand to children, regardless of physical boundaries, race or religion, the UNWG will take you on a voyage through continents on which you will discover faraway lands, the ancient cultures of Asia, the bazaars of the Middle East, the souks of Africa, the markets of Europe, and the diversity of the American continent.

With the active participation of many diplomatic missions in Geneva, the goodwill of an army of volunteers and the valuable support and generosity of UNOG, you will have an opportunity to enjoy a moment of culture, savouring exotic cuisine and knowing that you have made a meaningful

contribution towards charitable projects and scholarships, so valuable to the cause of underprivileged children entering secondary school.

All projects sponsored by UNWG members are combed through by our experts and identified as valuable causes, which the UNWG then funds. The execution of a project is thoroughly examined, monitored and documented by the UNWG.

So please join us on the day of the Bazaar, November 20, 2018, from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. at Door 40 and in Hall 14 and celebrate with us this charitable and festive occasion. We join hands to thank you for your genuine and consistent support. And above all, the children thank you! ■

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FILMAR 20

The most prominent festival of Latin American films in Switzerland comes of age

The Festival will take place in Geneva and neighbouring France from 16 November – 2 December.

*An interview with Vania Aillon,
Director of FILMAR.*



Vania Aillon in the Jardin Botanique

© Erika Irmier / FILMAR

**SARAH JORDAN, DEPUTY EDITOR,
UNOG**

S. JORDAN: Twenty years is quite a milestone. In what ways is the Festival the same as in its infancy and in what ways is it different?

VANIA AILLON: Some things have changed; others have remained the same. A group of young students at the IUED, known today as the Graduate Institute, founded the Festival at the end of the 90s. Latin America was rife with dictatorships, resistance and militants. In the last 20 years, the continent has developed – politically and economically – and its cinema has developed too. Some of the themes we presented in our selection “Au Front” (On the front-line) remain – indigenous people, minorities, women’s rights, the environment – but there are some new ones too – gender and climate change, for example. Recognition for Latin American films has grown as a result of different festivals worldwide and through a bigger audience for Hispanic literature, with films based on

works by writers such as Nobel Prize winner Gabriel Garcia Márquez, sparking European interest. A new generation of filmmakers has come to the fore with documentaries and works of fiction that have won prizes in Cannes or Berlin. FILMAR now boasts 17 to 20 thousand festival-goers. Many of those who supported us at the beginning are still with us and it is to them in particular that we dedicate this 20th edition.

FILMAR awards two prizes annually. Could you tell me some more about them?

The *Prix du Jury des Jeunes* (The young persons’ jury prize) commends a new filmmaker’s *Opera Prima* (first work). Eight films are in competition in this category, from eight different Latin American countries. The jury is made up of young Spanish speakers from different state and private schools in Geneva. Under the mentorship of Jorge Cadena, an award winning filmmaker from the younger generation, films are approached from different

angles – historical, social or political – and evaluated cinematographically. Through critical thinking, discussion and debate jury members work together to make their choice. A first film, like a first novel, has a certain urgency and communicates emotions. Often, the filmmakers come to the Festival to present their films. All of this is very formative for the young people involved. This year for the 20th anniversary, we also plan a round table, at which producers, filmmakers and other personalities will meet and exchange.

Our second prize, the *Prix du Public*, as its name suggests, is awarded to the public’s favourite film in the *Focus Sud* (Focus on the south) category. Eight new films – often never before screened – are presented. For most of them, it is unlikely that they will be distributed in Switzerland. These are films that can only be seen at festivals – it’s also an opportunity to choose one that may go on to have a brilliant career.



© FILMAR



Twenty years after its inception, FILMAR now boasts 17 to 20 thousand festival-goers.

You are screening 77 films in total. What are the other categories?

Well there are all the films that are not in competition, but we also have some other selections. For example, this year, to thank our loyal public and to celebrate our 20 years of existence, we will also screen a retrospective of seven films chosen by our Committee as representative of FILMAR's journey. I've mentioned the close relationship FILMAR has with young people through its Jury Prize, but we are close to children too and have a special selection for them called FILMARcito. A full length animated film that children from the age of six upwards can enjoy this year as an *avant première* is "Pachamama" – by the Argentinian filmmaker, Juan Antin. And there are two other sections with short films for young audiences: *Au Boulot* (At work), on how children perceive the world of work and *Ciné Musiques*, which includes some silent films and some live performances from Colombian musicians.

Where will the films be screened this year?

In Geneva the Grütli Cinemas and Fonction:Cinéma are our main venues and we will also be screening films at the Bio in Carouge, Cinélux in St Georges and one in Plan-les-Ouates,

with the support of the *Bureau de l'Intégration des Etrangers* of the Canton of Geneva. Across the border, there will be projections in Ferney-Voltaire, Pays de Gex, Annemasse and St Julien. Throughout the duration of the Festival there will also be an exhibition of artistically significant film posters at the Grütli. Five of them are selected from a Carte blanche given to the Director of the Grütli Cinemas, Edouard Waintrop. Since 2012, this expert on Latin American films has directed the Directors' Fortnight, a parallel selection at the Cannes Film Festival. The other five posters were selected by myself and the FILMAR team.

Are there any events of particular interest to la Genève Internationale and readers of this magazine?

There are two that come to mind. On Monday 19 November we will screen "Chicago Boys", a Chilean film directed by Carola Fuentes and Rafael Valdeavellano at the Maison de la Paix. This film tells the story of economist Milton Friedman's disciples, who, backed by a military dictatorship, turned Chile into an extreme neoliberal country. As FILMAR was founded by students at what it is now the Graduate Institute 20 years ago, we felt this was a very fitting choice. And on Tuesday 13 November, last year's

Prix du Public winner, "Jericó, el infinito vuelo de los dias", a Colombian film directed by Catalina Mesa, will be screened at the United Nations. Both these events will include presentations of the films and, for the former, a panel discussion.

We are also delighted that for our opening ceremony on 16 November at the newly renovated Espace Ardit, not only will Sami Kanaan, the Mayor of Geneva be present, but also Michelle Bachelet, the new High Commissioner for Human Rights. Formerly, she served two terms as President of Chile and then went on to lead UN Women as Executive Director. As a Chilean and a woman, the fact that she accepted our invitation to this event is of huge personal significance to me and an honour for the Festival.

The closing ceremony will take place on Sunday 2 December at the Alhambra in Geneva.

And where can our readers keen to discover or re-discover FILMAR find further details?

Our website www.filmar.ch has full details of the programme and you can also follow us on Facebook and Instagram. ■

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Théâtre Forum Meyrin

Winter is coming... take refuge at the theatre!

After an amazing Indian summer that has favoured outdoor activities, the clocks have now gone back and the nights are drawing in... Autumn and winter are great seasons to discover or re-discover the rich cultural life on offer in Geneva. This month, I'm focusing on the Théâtre Forum Meyrin (TFM), and in coming issues I will suggest other venues at which to spend your evenings.



Normal

© Gregory Bataillon

SARAH JORDAN, DEPUTY EDITOR

What is good about TFM is that it caters for all the family. Not just in terms of the shows programmed – there really is something for everybody – but also in terms of its pricing and dining options. Check out the family pass! It's also easy to get to by public transport (tram 14) and easy to park if you go by car. The season runs until mid-May.

These performances are just a taste of what is on offer at TFM. The full, downloadable programme is available on the TFM website. ■

1 For dates and further info: <http://www.forum-meyrin.ch>

Here are a few suggestions¹

Normal

Is the new creation of the independent contemporary dance company Alias. An allegory of life in constant movement, it takes its inspiration from the Japanese proverb "fall seven times; get up eight times". These words remind me of a song made popular by Frank Sinatra "pick yourself up, dust yourself off and start all over again" – this is a message that we can all relate to, from east to west!

Trio Joubran

21st century oud (oriental lute) – this three-brother trio received a glowing review in The Guardian in October, in which they were described as "the world's best-known Palestinian musicians". In this set, they blend

ancestral melodies with contemporary sounds.

À un endroit du début

Germaine Acogny, now in her 70s, is the mother of contemporary dance in Africa and founder of L'Ecole des Sables in Senegal. Mikaël Serre uses texts, dance, video and music to trace her rich life history. Germaine dances in this show and will exchange with the audience after the performance.

Tamao

Cinema/concert for children of four and upwards. This promises to be fun for all the family! On the screen, a film – the colourful story of Tamao the turtle on a journey back to its spawning ground. On the stage, two

fun-loving actors, a ukulele, a piano and assorted props to draw the audience into the action. A great opportunity to initiate your children to the performing arts – the show is at 4 p.m. on a Wednesday and only lasts 40 minutes – perfect for their concentration span! With the family pass, a free meal is also included.

25 ans de hip-hop

This is for your older children – and maybe for you too! The Suresnes Cités Danses Festival, founded in the suburbs of Paris, celebrates 25 years of hip-hop with this retrospective in which three generations of men and women pay tribute to dance without borders to a very eclectic musical score.

The Prisoner

The TFM describes this play directed by the acclaimed 93-year-old Englishman Peter Brook as "the quintessence of theatre". The text, written with Marie-Hélène Estienne, is a parable, simple and complex, raising thought-provoking and profound questions about guilt, justice, redemption and what freedom means. This play, performed at the Edinburgh International Festival last summer, is in English with French subtitles and certainly has something to say to those living and working here in Geneva, at the hub of world peace.



© Antoine Tempe

À un endroit du début



Trio Joubran

© Myriam Bouleis



The Prisoner

© Simon Armand



© Patrice Normand

Tamao



© Agathe Poupeney

25 ans de hip-hop

From Palais des Nations to an island in the north

SARAH BENCHERIF, UNITAR

Amateur photographer and musician, Luca Solari is the son of a Peruvian diplomat and an Italian sculptress. He is a retired sound engineer, who used to work at the Palais des Nations in Geneva, and lives near Lausanne, Switzerland. Thanks to his Dutch wife, who wanted to explore the northern reaches of her country, he discovered the Wadden archipelago in 2009. The beauty and authenticity of Schiermonnikoog, its smallest inhabited island (17 km long, 4 km wide, 987 inhabitants), immediately captivated him. The island is a protected breeding and hibernation ground for up to 12 million birds annually, and the local residents fiercely protect its natural heritage. Schiermonnikoog is also inextricably linked to the world of the sea and has a rich maritime history. For centuries, Dutch skippers and captains received their training from the island's Maritime Academy. Luca Solari regularly returns there for short periods, most often in winter, to enjoy the particular light and calmness of that time of year.

Another highlight of the island is the billiards tournament that takes place there every winter. It is an important event for the locals since the island is home to a surprising ten billiards clubs. Worthy of note is that it brings together both young and old players and fans. During one edition of the tournament, Luca Solari befriended Tiny Dijkhuizen, an elderly lady who is one of the billiards players. Through her, he managed

to gain the trust of the players and befriended them, becoming the unofficial tournament photographer.

In addition to the portraits of the billiards players, Luca Solari captures the soul of Schiermonnikoog, as well as its beauty and authenticity. His pictures reveal a striking timelessness and show the recurring seasons unfolding over the small island. They consist of breathtaking black and white compositions and seem to play with shadows, light and contrast.

For the past nine years, Luca Solari has been busy working on a photobook and a photography exhibition about the island. The idea came, after Tiny Dijkhuizen and other locals asked him to exhibit his work. When Leeuwarden, the provincial capital and seat of the State of Friesland, was named the Cultural Capital of Europe in 2018, Schiermonnikoog was asked to join the events. Luca Solari was nominated to represent the islands, giving him another good incentive to publish his work in book form.

His photobook, *Schiermonnikoog – The Fortress*, was produced in collaboration with Mathijs Deen, who writes novels, stories and cultural-historical books and produces documentaries for radio, and with Eric Bos, a visual artist, writer, poet, art critic and art organizer. The foreword is written by Eric Bos and the texts are by Mathijs Deen. The book has been edited in English, Dutch and French, and was published



© Luca Solari

independently and printed in Italy. It is divided into seven themes: 1. Nature, 2. Traces, 3. Triptych, 4. People, 5. Village, 6. History, and 7. Billiards.

The photo exhibition accompanying the book's release was inaugurated in Leeuwarden in April 2018. Luca Solari will release his book and exhibit his work in Geneva as of 22 November at la Librairie de l'Île. We look forward to seeing you there from 6 p.m. ■

More information: <http://lucasolari.ch/>



© Luca Solari



© Luca Solari



Le régional Romain Rocher sur son Abarth SP 2000.

La montée des légendes

Course de côte automobile de La Faucille

En ce temps-là, après l'arrêt du Grand Prix de Formule 1 des Nations disputé à Genève, la course de côte internationale de La Faucille réunissait les plus grands pilotes du moment et était l'épreuve phare de la région.

CLAUDE MAILLARD

Nous étions en 1953; trois ans plus tôt, l'Alfa Romeo 158 du quintuple champion du monde Jean Manuel Fangio avait franchi en vainqueur la ligne d'arrivée du Grand Prix des Nations. Tracé entre le lac Léman et la Place des Nations, le circuit avoisinait les 4 km. Malheureusement, lors de l'épreuve, la Ferrari 125 de Luigi Villorosi quittait la piste et fauchait plusieurs spectateurs, dont trois trouvèrent la mort. C'en était fini du Grand Prix de Formule 1 des Nations.

Déjà au début du siècle passé...

La course de côte de La Faucille a vu le jour en 1907 sur les pentes du Jura français, au-dessus de Gex. C'était l'époque des voitures perchées sur leurs hautes roues en bois, ou à rayons, et chaussées de pneus pleins. Les moteurs

pétaradants, dégageant un parfum d'huile de ricin, avaient bien du mal à trimbaler châssis, carrosseries et conducteurs.

Sur une route en terre battue longue de 10,6 km, le Bugiste Joseph Collomb réalisait la meilleure performance au volant de son automobile Pilain 24 hp. Reconduite l'année suivante, l'épreuve verra Georges Deydier l'emporter aux commandes de sa Cottin & Desgouttes 50 hp. Il faudra alors attendre 14 années avant que la manifestation soit à nouveau organisée. Jules Foresti (Ballot) et Georges Beck (Bugatti) gagnaient respectivement en 1922 et 1923. Deux années plus tard, la course aura lieu pour la première fois sous les règlements de l'Automobile Club de France et les résultats seront homologués. Sur Bugatti 1,5 L, Mario Lepori deviendra



Le Genevois Romain Grosjean, champion de Formule 1, aux côtés du pilote Fabien Bourgeon, 5^e au classement général.



Auteur du meilleur chrono sur Norma M20, l'Italien Simone Faggioli devance Sébastien Petit et Diego De Gasperi.

alors le premier recordman de «La Faucille» en avalant le parcours en 8'51". Mais la course disparaîtra à nouveau pendant 28 ans. L'année 1953 verra sa réapparition grâce à une poignée de passionnés du Pays de Gex, dont le pilote Jean Rocher qui courait sous le pseudonyme de «Thiam». Ouverte aux voitures de sport et de tourisme, l'épreuve connaîtra très vite un vif succès auprès du public. De grands noms du sport automobile allaient alors s'illustrer sur les plus légendaires voitures de l'époque; Alfa Romeo, Maserati, Porsche et Ferrari se taillaient ainsi une belle part du gâteau. En 1959, le premier vainqueur sur monoplace sera Harry Schell qui réalisera un temps de 6 minutes sur sa Cooper Climax. Deux années plus tard, la course de côte de La Faucille compte pour le championnat d'Europe de la montagne et c'est le fameux Maurice Trintignant qui s'impose aux commandes d'une Cooper Maserati. Pierre Maublanc (Chevron B 40 Ford), Alain Finkel (Abarth 2000), Daniel Rouveyran (March F1), Hervé Bayard (F1 Surtess Cosworth), Guy Fréquelin (Grac MT 14 Ford) et bien d'autres as

du volant marqueront de leurs empreintes le tracé du parcours qui bien entendu avait été goudronné depuis. Avant que la compétition s'arrête une fois de plus en 1972, le Lyonnais Jimmy Mieusset remporte les deux dernières éditions au volant de sa monoplace March 722 Ford. Il est par ailleurs le recordman de la course avec un chrono de 4'55"6".

Le 23 septembre dernier, près d'un demi-siècle après la victoire de Jimmy Mieusset, une pléiade de champions se sont donné rendez-vous à Gex pour gravir à nouveau les lacets de la course de côte de La Faucille, rebaptisée pour l'occasion «La montée des légendes». Tout le long du parcours, réduit à 6,4 km, 20000 spectateurs ont pu admirer les prouesses d'une quarantaine de pilotes venus disputer une épreuve inspirée de la fameuse course de côte Pikes Peak organisée outre-Atlantique dans les montagnes du Colorado.

Après moult interruptions «La Faucille» ressuscite

En ce temps-là, votre humble serviteur, qui vous fait voyager depuis une douzaine d'années

en relatant ses aventures vécues aux quatre coins du monde, faisait ses premiers pas dans le monde du journalisme. Nous étions en 1969 et cela se passait précisément à la course de côte de La Faucille...

Pendant une vingtaine d'années, passionné de sport mécanique, une place privilégiée de correspondant pour les revues spécialisées *Échappement* et *Auto-Hebdo* en poche, il allait pouvoir graviter dans ce milieu et vivre son rêve de gosse.

Alors, lorsque 46 années plus tard allait renaître la course de côte de La Faucille, il allait de soit qu'il ne pouvait pas rater cet événement et se devait de vous le faire partager.

Depuis le début du siècle passé, les temps ont bien changé. Il y a bien longtemps que la manivelle pour lancer la mécanique a fait place à un bouton-poussoir. D'une simple pression, l'électronique d'à présent permet à un moteur aseptisé d'émettre un doux ronronnement qui, une fois la pédale d'accélérateur enfoncée, va bien vite se transformer en une véritable bête de course

rugissante qui va libérer toute sa cavalerie pour avaler en un temps record les lacets du parcours. De quelques dizaines de chevaux, la puissance de ces «fusées» avoisine maintenant le millier. Et pour transmettre toute cette énergie au sol, des roues à la largeur surdimensionnée chaussées de pneus à taille basse vont permettre aux pilotes d'exploiter au mieux les performances de leurs bolides.

Les as du volant, les anciens comme les nouveaux, ont tous répondu présent aux organisateurs de cette première édition de «La montée des légendes».



Sébastien Loeb, nonuple champion du monde des rallyes, en vedette avec sa Peugeot 208 T16 victorieuse de la Pikes Peak.



Devant la Porsche 935, aux côtés de votre serveur, les multi-champions d'Europe Jean-Marie Alméras et Catherine Sinopoli.



Ainsi se retrouvaient trois vainqueurs de la Pikes Peak: le nonuple champion du monde des rallyes Sébastien Loeb (Peugeot 208 T16), le double vainqueur des 24 H du Mans Romain Dumas (Porsche 911 GT3 RS) et le Finlandais Ari Vatanen (BMW M3), lui aussi champion du monde des rallyes en 1981. Face à eux, le pilote de Formule 1 genevois Romain Grosjean qui avait pour l'occasion délaissé sa Haas au profit d'une Lancia Delta S4, voiture qui a longtemps dominé le championnat du monde des rallyes. Fréguelin (Porsche 991 GT3 RS), Duby (Peugeot 205 T16), Rigollet (Radical SXC), Bourgeon (Tracking RC), Prost (Alpine A 110) et bien d'autres grands champions aux palmarès élogieux comme l'Italien Faggioli et le Français Petit (tous deux sur prototypes Norma M20) allaient faire le show.

Au dire de nombreux pilotes, dont Jean-Marie Alméras, multi-champion d'Europe de la montagne au volant de sa Porsche 935, le tracé de la course de côte de La Faucille est l'un des plus beaux qui puisse exister. Et sur cette route

qu'il connaît bien, le Gessien Romain Rocher allait briller au volant d'une Abarth SP 2000 et d'une Porsche 906 Carrera 6, voitures sur lesquelles son père s'était déjà distingué ici même il y a tout juste 50 ans lorsqu'il avait décroché la 7^e place au championnat de France.

Le record du jour reviendra à Simone Faggioli qui s'imposera en 2'30"345, à la vitesse moyenne de 153,25 km/h. Il devance l'autre prototype Norma de Sébastien Petit de près de 3 secondes, Diego De Gasperi complétant le podium au volant de son Osella FA 30. Derrière, la monoplace Dallara F312 Mercedes de David Guillaumard prend l'avantage sur Fabien Bourgeon, très spectaculaire et efficace aux commandes de son Tracking, voiture de course très originale animée par un moteur de moto Suzuki GSXR 1000, conçue dans les ateliers «Bourgeon Concept» dirigés par son père Dan, ancien pilote automobile.

Plus qu'une compétition, même si les concurrents étaient chronométrés, «La montée des légendes» a été avant tout une grande fête du sport automobile

disputée aux portes de Genève. Et on ne peut qu'espérer que cette réussite puisse être reconduite les années à venir. ■

Message du rédacteur en chef

Vous aimeriez partager votre opinion sur le magazine et son contenu ?

N'hésitez plus et écrivez-nous !

Nous serions heureux de recevoir votre avis. Les plus pertinents, les plus intéressants, les plus originaux seront publiés dans le magazine.

Si vous souhaitez proposer un article, n'hésitez pas à me contacter à tout moment.

Et maintenant, à vos plumes !

Adressez vos commentaires à :

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Message from the editor-in-chief

Would you like to share your opinion about *UN Special* and its contents ?

Write to us!

We will be glad to hear from you. The most interesting, relevant, or even ingenious responses will be published in the magazine.

Should you wish to submit an article, please do not hesitate to contact me at any time.

Now, put pen to paper!

Send your thoughts to:

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Disclaimer

Due to an editing error (absence of inverted commas), the article on "Casual sexism" which appeared in our October issue led some readers to believe that the testimonials quoted were those of the authors. This is not the case.

The testimonials were given by a source who prefers to remain anonymous.

UN Special apologises for any confusion caused.

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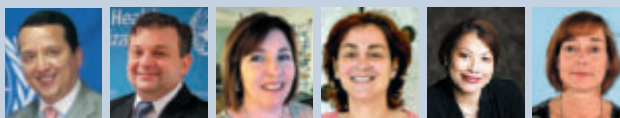
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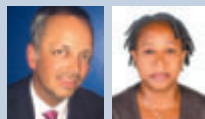
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