

UN Special

N° 691 - Janvier 2010



- The UN dual career
- WHO Afghanistan and Somalia
- Interview d'un anonyme

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UN Special

N° 691 - Janvier 2010



CHRISTIAN DAVID
rédacteur en chef

L'ANNÉE DU RIRE ET DU SOURIRE

2009 a été l'année des fibres naturelles et de l'astronomie, 2010 sera consacrée comme l'année de la biodiversité et du rapprochement des cultures. Et comment rapprocher les cultures? Peut être en utilisant le réflexe universel, inscrit dans les gènes de l'humanité depuis sa création, qui permet à l'homme, toutes ethnies confondues, de surmonter ses épreuves: le rire.

Je propose donc humblement que l'année 2010 devienne l'année du rire, au moins pour notre magazine et pas pour me moquer, ce n'est pas mon genre! Bien sûr! Rétorquerez-vous, il n'est pas possible de rire de tout. Au niveau de notre quotidien, comment réagir face à ce diktat des media qui nous obligerait presque, si nous n'étions pas *UN Special*, à consacrer des pages et des pages sur la grippe ou sur Copenhague alors que tout a été écrit. Comment ne pas rire devant ceux qui essaient avec insistance, de nous forcer à passer une information vitale

sur leur parcours professionnel, leur œuvre impérissable. Comment, de manière plus générale, ne pas s'esclaffer devant la préoccupation principale de l'*homo sapiens* et de son descendant l'*homo industrialis* pour acquérir le pouvoir, la promotion, la richesse et croiser, y compris dans nos cercles immédiats, les mêmes comportements. Après tout, et même si c'est difficile dans notre monde actuel gangrené par les conflits, la faim, les maladies, ni les épidémiologistes, ni les gouvernants, ni les banquiers, ni même les militaires n'ont, depuis des millénaires, jamais trouvé de meilleur soulagement immédiat à la souffrance ni un meilleur dopant pour stimuler les neurones. L'autre particularité du rire, est qu'il ne peut ni être taxé, ni récupéré, ni même contrôlé par aucune structure et qu'il constitue ainsi la liberté suprême.

Bref, nos sincères vœux de bonne année (du rire) à toutes et à tous de la part du comité de rédaction. ■

THE YEAR OF LAUGHTER AND SMILES

2009 was the year for natural fibres and astronomy. 2010 will be the year of biodiversity and the meeting of cultures. How can cultures meet each other? Why, by using the universal reflex inscribed in the genes of humanity since its creation, that grants us its favour, wherever we are from, when facing obstacles: the laugh!

I therefore humbly request that 2010 become the year of laughter, at least for our magazine, and I'm not making fun of myself. It's not my style. Of course, you reply, it is not possible to laugh at everything. As far as our magazine is concerned, how can we react to the media that oblige us to allot pages to the flu or the meeting in Copenhagen when everything has already been said? Why not laugh of those who want to force

us to publish information vital to their professional lives, their immortal achievement? How can we not laugh at the major concerns of the human race and its descendent, the Industrial Humanoid, who covet power, promotion, wealth and seek the same traits in their closest friends? After all, even if it is hard to do in this world plagued by conflicts, famine, diseases, neither the epidemiologists, governments, bankers nor the military have found a better way to lessen suffering or to stimulate our neurons. Another special feature of laughter is that it cannot be taxed, recuperated, or even assessed by anybody; it is our most essential liberty.

So accept our best wishes for a Happy New Year (of laughter) from all of us at the *UN Special* editorial board! ■

SOMMAIRE

ÉDITORIAL 3

GENÈVE INTERNATIONALE

THE ID- The Graduate Institute	18
Dix bougies PNUE/GEN	22
Kiosque - Programme de janvier 2010	35

WHO/OMS

Afghanistan	12
Somalia	14
Solidarity Fair - Philippines	31

PAGE CENTRALE

Hawaii	24
--------	----

STAFF/PERSONNEL

LESA launch event	5
Fonds 1%	9
Hommage à Cheick Touré	21
Staff Representatives' corner	30
UN Staff Party	41

ONU/UN

Indonesian earthquake	16
Droits de l'enfant	28
Bazaar 2009	40

SOCIÉTÉ

Interview d'un naïf anonyme	10
UNFCU/Education	20
Remembering the Holocaust	32
Tapori aux Nations Unies	36

LOISIRS

Hawaii, vagues de feu	26
Expo - Scènes de vie	38
Une journée à Marseille	42
Randonnée - La pointe d'Arvoine	44
La voiture à air comprimé	46

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THE GENEVA LESA LAUNCH EVENT, AN AFTERNOON FOR SPOUSES AND PARTNERS



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FILIP BORKOWY, CEB

On Wednesday December 2nd, over two hundred people filled Room II of the International Labour Organization (ILO) to capacity. The event had been heavily marketed, via broadcast emails and a two-week flyer campaign in the cafeterias of the numerous international organizations with a presence in Geneva, and any doubts that staff members might not pass the word onto their spouses/partners were proved wrong.

The podium was occupied by M. Christian Dunant (former Swiss Ambassador and Director, Geneva Welcome Centre), Ms. Jan Beagle (Deputy Executive Director, UNAIDS) and Ms. Telma Viale (Director of Human Resources, ILO), an illustrious group of people. But the strength of the LESA initiative lies in its “grassroots” approach, so the large number of spouses/partners who attended were both audience and guests of honour.

After a warm welcome from the ILO Director of Human Resources, Ms Telma Viale, Ambassador Dunant expressed his support for the Geneva LESA, a much appreciated complement to the range of services offered by “Geneve Internationale”. As a key figure in the establishment of the Swiss (“Ci”) work permit for spouses/partners of diplomatic and international organization staff, M. Dun-

ant underlined the increasing recognition given to spousal employment by both host countries and international organizations and diplomatic services.

Deputy Executive Director of UNAIDS Ms. Jan Beagle signalled strong backing for the initiative from the highest echelons of the UN system management, saying that “the LESA is a tangible example of the organizations recognizing and valuing the contribution of spouses and families to a staff member’s career. As such it increases a staff member’s identification and engagement with his or her organization. This is a sound return on investment”. Furthermore Ms. Beagle noted the large proportion of gentlemen in the audience, a sign of increasing gender balance in the UN system and of the need to support female staff members by supporting accompanying male husbands and partners, who are statistically more likely to seek employment. The full text of Ms. Beagle’s speech is available by visiting the “Switzerland” pages of the programme global website <http://www.unstaffmobility.org>

Chairperson of the ILO Staff Union Committee and President of the Coordinating Committee for International Staff Unions and Associations (CCISUA) Mr. Chris Land-

Kazlauskas reminded the audience that increased mobility requirements should go hand-in-hand with increased support for mobility, the Geneva LESA being an excellent example of the latter. Chris received the loudest applause of the evening for his idea to provide on-site childcare for the event, an initiative which allowed for the attendance of those with childcare responsibilities and was much appreciated.

The speech which attracted much interest was that of Ms. Elodie Cantier-Aristide, spouse of an UNHCR staff member and a member of the Geneva LESA initiative committee, a group of spouses/partners who are setting up the LESA with the logistical support of the UN Dual Career and Staff Mobility programme. Elodie spoke for many spouses/partners when she said: “we do not expect jobs in the UN, but are motivated by the legitimate desire and need to fulfill ourselves and continue growing professionally, no matter what our field of expertise and experience”. Elodie proposed a plan of activities for the Geneva LESA in 2010, which can be read and discussed by accessing the “Switzerland” pages of the programme global website <http://www.unstaffmobility.org>

A short (some say too short) panel discussion took place with representatives of the Geneva LESA initiative committee, DC&SM staff, Staff Unions and the Geneva University allowed for interaction with the audience and generated a lively debate on employment and support in the Geneva area. This was followed by a drinks reception, where your author (also a panellist and DC&SM staff member) was surprised at the number of questions on work and residence permits: an indication that there is further work to do in this area, and of the incredible feedback potential of the Geneva LESA! ■

To read the latest on the Geneva LESA, including listings of upcoming events, please see the “Switzerland” pages of the programme global website <http://www.unstaffmobility.org>

THE UNLESA GENEVA

FROM CONCEPT TO LAUNCH IN 2009



© Richard Maciver

The UNLESA Geneva Launch was an important moment for the spouses and partners as the number of persons who were present for the Launch and the questions raised during the panel discussion demonstrated how critical employment is for many spouses and partners of UN staff members in Geneva. Here are just a few comments from spouses and partners who attended the Launch:

CRISTIAN LAZAR

"In June 2007 when my wife was appointed to Geneva I was looking at the UN Staff Mobility website and sadly found out that there is no LESA in Geneva... I thought that I'd have to find my own way to manage my career transition and try to get support from the very few people I know in Geneva... It was extremely difficult... especially during the first six or ten months..."

But in the afternoon and evening of 2nd December the big surprise came: a lot of people showed up at the Launch event... the number of people present was almost double the expectations. Very lively, very interactive, a lot of people shared their stories during the informal part and for the first

time in two years and a half in Geneva I felt like I was in a "community"... of like-minded people, of peers with similar concerns, similar hopes and somehow already supporting each other even before we had the chance to know each other..."

MARKETA VON HAGEN

"The number of male and female participants at the UNLESA launch in Geneva on 2nd December 2009 was overwhelming and showed how important this step is. I only got off a plane at 9 a.m. that same morning arriving from a mission but I could not miss the launch. It was so good to see that organizations and Human Resources Departments seem to finally have understood the importance of a work-life balance and the vital role that partners play in terms of mobility of staff. The UNLESA will definitely be of great importance to UN spouses in Geneva!"

ELIECER RAMOS PRIETO

"Nice seeing so much diversity and talented people together for a main goal! How can we live in Geneva a multicultural city without having LESA to represent the interest of all of

us. Thank you very much to LESA team for all the hard work and dedication to this great project. Looking forward to the next steps."

KAY XUEREB, GENEVA LESA INITIATIVE COMMITTEE

"We have a highly skilled pool of professional spouses and partners who want to use their international qualifications, skills and experience to make a meaningful difference through their own careers while they are stationed here in Geneva. We have much to offer!"

Building on the positive start of the UNLESA Geneva Launch we will hold our Constituent General Assembly at UNHCR on 17th December. With the elected members of our Executive Board and active participation in thematic working groups we can then begin to develop links inside and outside the UN to promote the employment of spouses and partners".

ELKA PARVERA-KERN, GENEVA LESA INITIATIVE COMMITTEE

"We will be proposing to develop a database of our members' bio sketches and actively engage with colleagues in the human resources departments so they are aware of the expertise that could be available to meet their possible needs. At the same time, we would start sourcing job opportunities in the private sector in Geneva and neighbouring France. We would also like to develop an on-line information package for our members including work-related information, links to other web sites and organisations facilitating installation upon arrival and educational opportunities for spouses and partners".

So, please, do support us to promote a better work/life balance in Geneva for geographically mobile staff members and families. If you would like to be part of the UNLESA Geneva and you are a spouse or partner of a UN staff member please contact genevalesa@yahoo.com for further information. Meanwhile, we wish you all a year 2010 rich in positive professional developments as well as personal and family happiness! ■

INTERVIEW WITH Ms. PETRA TEN HOOPE-BENDER, CEB SECRETARIAT

THE UN DUAL CAREER & STAFF MOBILITY PROGRAMME



Petra ten Hoop-Bender is HR Programme Coordinator for Staff Mobility and Staff Wellbeing at the secretariat of the UN System Chief Executives Board for Coordination, an inter-agency body whose Geneva office is responsible for management issues. She heads up the UN Dual Career and Staff Mobility (DC&SM) programme, which she discusses here with DC&SM colleague Filip Borkowy.

You are coordinator of the UN Dual Career and Staff Mobility Programme: what are the aims of this programme?

Organizations of the UN system had for many years recognized that inadequate support to UN families, particularly those in so-called “dual career” situations, where both spouses/partners wish to pursue a ca-

reer, was becoming an impediment to staff mobility.

The UN Dual Career and Staff Mobility Programme (DC&SM) takes its mandate from the UN Development Group's (UNDG) 2004 Joint Guidance Note on the Employment of Expatriate Spouses. While employ-



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ment is the largest focus area, DC&SM's aims are in fact wider: to address the hindrance to the UN system's ability to recruit and retain the highest qualified specialists for overseas assignments, particularly women.

Geographical mobility is a big issue in the UN system nowadays. What do you see as the "hindrances" to this type of mobility?

The issue of most concern is the potential for disruption to "dual career" couples, which is a way of life for a large and increasing number of UN personnel and their families. When a staff member moves to another country the family often feels it must make a choice between staying together on one hand and maintaining two careers on the other.

Other disincentives are unrelated to employment and involve the ability to "settle in" to a new place. A lack of timely information on issues such as school enrolment deadlines or the availability of treatment for ongoing medical conditions can easily cause a negative experience of transition.

How does the programme propose to achieve its aims?

We are currently working in three broad areas. Firstly, we aim to provide UN families with good information early in the decision-making process around new assignments. How many of us who moved for the UN appreciate the "welcome packs" we receive on arrival but wish we had the information much earlier? We are working to make the best parts of organizations' welcome packs comparable and put them online.

Secondly, we are working to improve access to work permits so that spouses/partners of UN staff are able to work in the local economy at a new duty station. In this we are playing catch-up with national diplomatic services: for example the US State Department has work permit agreements allowing diplomatic spouses to work in nearly all countries of the world.

Thirdly, and perhaps most importantly, we assist with the establishment of Local Expatriate Spouse Associations (LESA) around the world, which give a voice to the spouses/partners of mobile UN staff.

How many organizations take part in the programme?

DC&SM is a new programme and we are still in the early stages. An important step was the programme's relocation to the CEB secretariat in Geneva in mid-2008, which has given us more exposure at the inter-agency level. This move also coincided with an increase in the number of participating organizations from eight to fourteen. In 2009 we welcomed the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and the International Organization for Migration (IOM), bringing the total to sixteen.

Local Expatriate Spouse Associations: what are they and why does the UN system need them?

The idea of establishing a network of Local Expatriate Spouse Associations (LESA) around the world is found in the UNDG Joint Guidance Note. Organizations felt it necessary to have a source of feedback on the strategies adopted to assist UN families. LESAs provide this feedback to manage-

ment via the DC&SM secretariat and, in the field, to the UN Country Teams (UNCTs). The associations, which benefit from official recognition by the UN system, often also do much more than this: for example the Panama LESA was instrumental in securing a change to the law facilitating access to work permits for UN families. In other countries LESAs focus on issues such as childcare, education, training and networking.

What does the future hold for the Geneva LESA?

As the duty station with the world's largest number of expatriate personnel, Geneva is very important to us. The launch event proved that there is interest and a need for such an association, as well as the overwhelming support both of management and the cantonal authorities. We wish the Geneva LESA the very best, and look forward to continued dialogue with the association to achieve our common interests in promoting the highest standards of well-being for UN system personnel and their families. ■

UNLESA partnership:

ILO, IOM, UNAIDS, UNDP, UNEP, UNESCO, UNFPA, UNICEF, UNHCR, UNOPS, UNRWA, UN Secretariat, UNWTO, WFP, WORLD BANK.

LE FONDS 1% ET L'ÉCOLE HOA SUA AU VIÊT-NAM

Comment, avec 1% de son salaire, il est possible de contribuer à une incroyable «success story»!

SILVIE PICHELIN

En 1994, lorsque les membres du comité d'évaluation du Fonds 1% pour le Développement de Genève décident de soutenir un centre de formation en boulangerie-pâtisserie pour jeunes défavorisés à Hanoï (Viêt-nam), ils devinent bien sûr le potentiel d'un tel projet, mais ne se doutent pas encore que l'école HOA SUA (Fleur de lait) allait devenir quelques années plus tard, une chaîne de boulangeries-restaurants et une école hôtelière renommée, avec près de quatre mille jeunes gens formés.

En 2005, l'école HOA SUA fut même récompensée par la Commission nationale consultative des droits de l'homme de la République française pour ses efforts réalisés dans la lutte contre le travail des enfants et ses établissements sont aujourd'hui recommandés par le *guide du routard* du Viêt-nam. Plusieurs membres du Fonds 1%, ainsi que leurs amis ou leur famille, ont rendu visite aux établissements HOA SUA lors de voyages au Viêt-nam et peuvent témoigner de la qualité et de la diversité des mets ainsi que de l'accueil que l'on trouve dans ces restaurants. Le projet HOA SUA, qui a pu démarrer grâce à une aide ponctuelle de 17 500 francs suisses, illustre ainsi parfaitement la philosophie du Fonds 1% et l'effet «boule de neige» qu'il recherche en accordant un soutien aux projets qui lui sont présentés.

HOA SUA peut donc être considéré comme un élève modèle, sans doute un exemple à suivre pour les autres projets qui ont pu voir le jour grâce à ce 1% du salaire d'un fonctionnaire travaillant à Genève, soit l'équivalent d'environ un café par jour pour la personne qui contribue à ce mouvement de générosité créé il y a plus de trente ans. Mais il y a de nombreux autres exemples dans le monde, peut-être plus modestes, où l'argent du Fonds 1% est redistribué à travers des projets de développement communautaire,

démultiplié en quelque sorte grâce au travail de petites ONG ou associations locales, en contact direct avec la population, qui est toujours la principale bénéficiaire de l'argent récolté à Genève.

1% c'est peu et c'est beaucoup à la fois. C'est surtout 100% d'espoir pour les exclus de la mondialisation et des grands projets de développement économique. Comme

dit le proverbe, les petits ruisseaux font les grandes rivières... ■

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INTERVIEW D'UN GRAND NAÏF ANONYME

LE CIEL VA NOUS TOMBER SUR LA TÊTE!

JEAN MICHEL JAKOBOWICZ

Pourquoi vous considérez-vous comme un naïf?

Tout simplement parce que je crois que je ne comprends rien à rien!

Mais encore?

Ce qui se passe dans le monde me dépasse. Prenez l'exemple du réchauffement climatique et tout le battage qui est fait autour! Je comprends parfaitement le processus de l'effet de serre, mais là où je ne suis plus certain de comprendre c'est que, d'après les scientifiques seul 15% du réchauffement serait dû à l'activité humaine. Donc même si nous arrêtons de respirer pendant trois mois par an, le climat va quand même changer. De plus, le climat a de tout temps changé peut-être pas aussi rapidement que maintenant, mais il a tout de même changé. Le pompon c'est que certains spécialistes, peut-être par peur d'être au chômage, nous annoncent déjà que ce réchauffement sera inéluctablement suivi d'un refroidissement. Ce qui est incroyable c'est que personne ne parle de l'économie d'énergie et de l'accroissement de la production agricole que le réchauffement de la planète va permettre.

Donc pour vous on doit continuer à polluer!

Pas du tout! Il faut effectivement arrêter le type de surconsommation auquel nous assistons. Recycler, économiser, limiter notre consommation de matière première, tout cela est essentiel, mais ce que j'aimerais, c'est que l'on cesse de prendre les naïfs comme moi pour des imbéciles. Quand vous voyez que dans certains pays on met des bonbonnes sur les vaches pour récupérer leurs flatulences, là je crois que l'on atteint le niveau zéro de l'absurdité... Mais rassurez-vous, mon ignorance ne s'arrête pas au changement climatique. Si vous prenez le problème des virus.

Là vous ne pouvez pas dire le contraire, ils existent bel et bien!

Tout à fait, ils existent, mais moi pauvre

ignare je n'y comprends plus rien. En 2002, apparaît le SRAS, les autorités sanitaires du monde entier se mobilisent, certains pays sont même interdits. Et puis tout à coup le SRAS ne fait plus la manchette des journaux, il a disparu. Au total sur les six milliards d'habitants de la planète moins d'un million sont morts à cause du SRAS, alors que 24 000 personnes meurent de faim chaque jour dans le monde, soit une toutes les quatre secondes. Deux ans plus tard c'est le virus H5N1 qui fait son apparition, la grippe aviaire, là aussi branle-bas de combat, résultats: à nouveau peu de victimes. En 2009, H1N1 rebelote, on vaccine tout le monde, on éternue dans sa manche et on se lave les mains avec un désinfectant. Résultat, en France début décembre il y avait trois cents décès contre quatre à six mille par an pour la grippe saisonnière «normale».

Mais n'est-ce pas dû aux précautions qui sont prises si les victimes sont peu nombreuses?

A nouveau, je ne dis pas qu'il ne faut rien faire, qu'il ne faut pas se vacciner mais franchement je trouve disproportionné le vent de panique qui accompagne ces pseudo-pandémies. Mais la peur que l'on nous distille chaque jour ne s'arrête pas là! L'an dernier il y a eu la crise financière!

Vous ne pouvez nier qu'elle ait eu lieu!

Je ne le nie pas, mais avouez qu'un an plus tard, les banques et les financiers ont recommencé leurs mêmes bêtises comme si de rien n'était. Certes le système économique était sans doute menacé en 2008, nous avons frôlé la catastrophe, mais aujourd'hui tout est oublié et les politiques n'ont rien fait pour éviter que cela ne recommence. Sauf que les moins riches paient les pots cassés avec un chômage grandissant et les banquiers touchent toujours leurs bonus mirifiques. À nouveau, je n'y comprends rien. L'humanité me fait penser dans ce cas là à un troupeau de vaches qui au moindre coup de feu s'enfuit en courant mais qui une demi-heure plus tard revient paître au même endroit.

Qu'est-ce que vous essayez de montrer?

Simplement que depuis le bug de l'an 2000 qui devait semer la désolation sur la planète, je me méfie de tous ces mouvements de paniques qui semblent orchestrés avec minutie.

Je sens que vous allez montrer la presse et les médias du doigt?

Il est évident qu'ils ont une responsabilité dans ces élans de paniques, mais ils ne sont pas les seuls, les politiques exploitent largement ces peurs pour se faire «mousser». Mais surtout ce sont des arbres qui cachent la forêt. Qui parle encore des inégalités sur la planète? Qui parle encore du SIDA? Ces sujets sont devenus des classiques qui n'intéressent plus grand monde!

Et l'ONU dans tout ça?

Une partie du système surfe sur la vague quand au reste il boit la tasse. Périodiquement l'OMS fait la une des journaux, mais il n'est pas certain qu'à force de crier au loup une fois tous les deux ans, elle ne finisse pas par perdre un peu de sa crédibilité. Quant à la crise financière, les Etats membres la trouvent trop sérieuse pour être confiée aux Nations Unies, ils préfèrent traiter avec le FMI. Les seuls dans le système qui ont le vent en poupe ce sont ceux qui s'occupent du climat, pour le reste c'est la chute libre. Qui parle encore du développement? Personne!

Mais est-ce que ça n'a pas toujours été comme ça?

Dans les années 50 ou 60 il y avait un réel danger sous forme d'un bouton rouge sur lequel il suffisait à un homme éméché d'appuyer pour déclencher une guerre nucléaire qui aurait détruit l'humanité. On dirait que depuis que ce danger a disparu les hommes ont besoin de se faire des peurs réelles ou imaginaires. Tout le monde sourit en pensant à ces malheureux gaulois qui avaient peur que le ciel ne leur tombe sur la tête, mais je ne suis pas sûr que deux mille ans plus tard nous soyons si éloignés que ça d'Astérix et d'Obélix! ■

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Medical aesthetics, a far cry from its media-exaggerated image, is a subtle, yet extremely efficient

discipline which brings tangible and non-invasive solutions to restore youth and harmony to the face. This new speciality aims to correct certain physical flaws and enhance general beauty using gentle techniques. Why refrain ourselves from an injection to reshape a nose, smoothen wrinkles or lighten dark circles around the eyes? What about trying a laser session to erase unsightly spots or scars?

Since its debut in the seventies, medical aesthetics has immensely progressed and witnessed an

incredible leap forward with the introduction of Botox®, non-permanent fillers and Fraxel® lasers. The techniques have constantly evolved to become more refined and diversified, offering ever more efficient, natural and individualised results. Nowadays, the approach has shifted from a single surgical act to a combination of complementary procedures viewed as part of a personalised program to regain self-confidence and control over one's appearance. The doctors at Forever Laser Institut are specialised in various injection and laser techniques and master the art of adapting their treatments to each unique face and body.

Dr Luigi L. Polla, followed by his team of specialists, has selected, tested and validated the latest techniques in medical aesthetics, thus elaborating a palette of the best treatments, including the state-of-the-art **Magic Triangle**: Botox®, hyaluronic acid and Fraxel® lasers. Botox® illuminates the eye contour area and relaxes expressions of the face by balancing-out the strength of its muscles. Hyaluronic acid amplifies this effect by restoring volumes and redefining contours. Fraxel® lasers allow skin regeneration and the elimination of all types of skin imperfections.

These procedures are gentle, quick, with no social eviction or risk of complications. The results are just spectacular! They can shed 10 years of a face while respecting its natural expressivity. Simple gestures and light interventions mastered by competent doctors.

There is a real craze for medical aesthetics expressed by all social categories. In this hype movement, Dr. Polla and his team's mission is to always offer an appropriate, reasonable and individualised approach. The desire of each client will receive a tailored response. As the famous Henri Matisse so rightly stated: "we cannot avoid aging, but we can avoid becoming old".

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INSECURITY, FLU THREATS ADD TO AFGHANISTAN HUMANITARIAN CRISIS



people with underlying health conditions and pregnant women are at much greater risk. Afghanistan is home to one of the world's most serious humanitarian crises, where infants, children aged under five years and mothers are more at risk of dying than almost anywhere else in the world.

Afghanistan is one of twelve countries identified in the CAP 2010 as needing financial support to respond to its multiple humanitarian emergencies. Health providers in Afghanistan have requested US\$ 10 million as part of the CAP to conduct a range of life-saving health interventions.

Although insecurity remains the biggest threat to the delivery of basic health care in Afghanistan, severe weather conditions, widespread poverty and the emergence of new diseases, including H1N1 influenza, are adding additional pressure to the country's health system. Despite progress made since 2001, Afghanistan continues to have some of the most alarming health indicators in the world as a result of decades of isolation and conflict. Due to the insecurity, approximately 15% of the population has no access to the most basic health services, leaving four to five million people extremely vulnerable.

And as Afghanistan is prone to natural disasters, such as earthquakes, drought, floods and disease outbreaks, the Health Cluster is working to develop the health sector's capacity for coordinated response and post-disaster recovery.

With winter descending on Afghanistan, a new threat is putting the health of war-weary Afghans at risk. A sharp rise in the number of respiratory infections, in part linked to the emergence of the pandemic H1N1 2009 influenza virus, is adding to the humanitarian crisis that is already well established in the country.

PAUL GARWOOD, WHO

This additional health challenge for the Afghan people, and their country's weak health system, has been highlighted by the international humanitarian community within the Consolidated Appeals Process (CAP) for 2010. "Increasing numbers of cases of the pandemic (H1N1) 2009 influenza virus compound the country's already precarious health status," states the main CAP 2010 document which was launched last month in Geneva.

In December 2009, health authorities had recorded a 60% increase in the number of acute respiratory infections across Afghanistan compared to the same period in 2008. Among these had been at least 850 cases of the H1N1 virus, with transmission of the new influenza recorded in at least fifteen provinces.

While H1N1 has been shown to have mild effects on many people who contract it,



“Maternal, infant and under-five mortality, polio and malnutrition are among just a few of the key health challenges that threaten Afghans and require intensive support for health authorities and international and local health providers,” said WHO Country Representative Peter Graaff.

“Every hour at least two Afghan women die from obstetric complications due in part to the lack of health services. Of every thousand live births, at least 125 infants die, and one in five children die from mostly preventable diseases before their fifth birthday.”

“Now we see rising numbers of influenza cases across the country. Instead of letting the health system succumb to these multiple threats, we need to react to the obvious health challenges facing Afghanistan and support those trying to save lives and reduce sickness across the country.”

WHO is leading the Health Cluster response to the emergency, which has brought UN and NGO health providers together to better assess and respond to the health needs of Afghans. The cluster has been a critical link between humanitarian aid providers and Afghan authorities in their efforts to bring relief to those in greatest need.

WHO is supporting efforts by Afghanistan’s Ministry of Public Health to respond to the H1N1 pandemic. WHO is providing vac-

cines to the country while at the same time providing information and guidance on ways to reduce the spread of the disease. Also, WHO helped Afghan authorities develop a proposal that aims to secure international financial support to improve the country’s ability to respond to the outbreak. The Government of Norway in December provided US\$1.2 million to support efforts to respond to the H1N1 pandemic.

The Afghanistan Health Cluster is coordinating emergency health activities and pooling the resources of many health providers in order to support the Ministry of Public Health’s response to the crisis. One person who is playing a crucial role in the overall health response is Dr Maria Luiza Galer, the Health Cluster Coordinator in Afghanistan. “As Health Cluster lead agency, WHO is mobilizing health supplies to respond to the harsh winter conditions and the continuing conflict,” Dr Galer said. “The Health Cluster and WHO have a crucial role to play in advocating for the protection of health workers and patients from the consequences of military operations.”

There is a clear link between the intensification of the conflict in Afghanistan and a worsening health situation. Decreasing accessibility to basic healthcare, especially for women and children, has led to an increase in easily preventable diseases like polio (with confirmed cases rising from 17 in 2007 to 31 in 2008). Diarrhoea and acute



respiratory infections increased by 25% and 16% respectively in the two years ending in March 2009. Emergency medical teams often have difficulty accessing insecure areas, while patients struggle to reach the nearest health facility.

Insecurity directly affects the willingness of qualified health workers to work in remote and rural areas. Additionally, there is a chronic shortage of local health workers in southern Afghanistan where much of the violence is centered. In the southern provinces, roughly 80% of health workers are recruited from other regions or abroad.

To respond to these health challenges, the Health Cluster has identified key areas where humanitarian will focus. Key goals include improving access to quality health services for vulnerable people in insecure and underserved areas, particularly in primary health care, vaccination and reproductive health services.

“Above all, the main driver of the humanitarian crisis is the ongoing climate of insecurity,” said WHO’s Peter Graaff. “We need to keep promoting humanitarian principles, including the neutrality and impartiality of health facilities and workers. To do this, we must use outreach and advocacy that is based on evidence that shows the direct link between insecurity and the health and welfare of Afghans.” ■

For further information

- WHO Afghanistan:
<http://www.emro.who.int/afghanistan/>
- Consolidated Appeals Process 2010:
<http://ochaonline.un.org/humanitarianappeal/webpage.asp?Page=1820>

HEALTH PROVIDERS STEP UP TRAINING, SUPPORT FOR BETTER SOMALI CARE



Amid incessant violence and intensified humanitarian crisis, health providers in Somalia are striving to help the country's government save lives and reduce illness.

PAUL GARWOOD, WHO

Amid incessant violence and intensified humanitarian crisis, health providers in Somalia are striving to help the country's government save lives and reduce illness. Last month's Mogadishu attack that killed Somalia officials and graduating medical students was a reminder of the challenges faced by a country whose population today is suffering more than at any time in the past nineteen years.

While much is being done to alleviate a crisis in which 3.6 million people (almost half the country's population) need humanitarian assistance, the international community has called for urgent financial support to prevent a further decline in conditions for the country's long-suffering women, men and children.

"The challenges we face are shrinking humanitarian space, the chronic emergency

situation that seems to worsen by the day, insecurity, the lack of properly trained health personnel and the operational challenges to get supplies in place," said Marthe Everard, the representative of the World Health Organization to Somalia. "But we keep committed because we are here to help the Somali population."

In 2009, the ratio of children suffering from acute malnutrition increased from one in six at the start of the year to one in five by the end. Measles coverage in South Central Somalia is 26%. The number of children killed and maimed as a result of fighting continues to rise. Violence in 2009 has displaced thousands of people, adding to the number of Somalis already forced from their homes by conflict. Currently, 1.55 million Somalis are displaced, including more than 500,000 who are now living in temporary shelters in the

Afgooye Corridor, the 30-kilometre stretch of road west of the Somali capital, Mogadishu, which is the most densely populated settlement in the world.

One way to improve the lives and wellbeing of Somalis is through better medical care. WHO and its health partners are working on multiple fronts to do this. Immunization campaigns, training of health workers, establishing mobile health facilities, monitoring for and responding to disease outbreaks, and delivering essential medicines and equipment are among key ways that WHO and its Health Cluster partners are trying to meet health needs.

With large sections of Somalia embroiled in conflict, health providers face increased challenges to provide care to affected people. To achieve this, WHO staff and health cluster partners coordinate closely with community leaders to secure the safety of service providers and beneficiaries.

One such service has been the training of Somalia doctors in life-saving surgical techniques. In the South-Central region of the country, where insecurity is high, surgeons from WHO's Somalia office have recently provided surgical training to thirty-six health workers, including four doctors, in the town of Buale, where for more than thirty years the local population had been without access to such care. In operating theatres equipped by WHO, procedures were demonstrated on how to carry out essential emergency procedures for children, men and women.

"Every day the field hospital was able to treat people with a range of conditions including, tumours, trauma, bullet removal, abscesses, neglected fractures and advanced tuberculosis cases in the hip, spine or neck," said Dr. Omar Saleh, the WHO surgeon who conducted the Buale training. "We started by showing the doctors how to perform the surgery, then slowly allowing them to take

over the procedures and proceeded to the point where they were able to perform the surgery themselves. We hope this service will be able to continue.”

Training local staff is an important part of the plan to improve health care in Somalia. Medical students are graduating from their WHO-supported university studies in Somalia with the aim to help their people. The 3 December attack on a graduation ceremony that killed students, along with three government ministers, including Minister of Health Qamr Aden Ali, has not shaken the resolve of the government and WHO to keep working to provide better health care in Somalia.

“This attack serves only to reinforce WHO’s commitment to alleviating the country’s health crisis and supporting those people who are determined to improve health care,” WHO said in a statement issued following the attack.

A major factor that threatens the continuation of life-saving care for Somalis is the lack of funding support being provided for humanitarian activities in the areas of health, nutrition and water and sanitation. WHO and health providers, for example, have received less than 40% of the funding requested to support health projects in 2009. For 2010, health providers are urging the international community to take note of the humanitarian challenges facing Somalia and, in turn, fund health activities announced for Somalia in the Consolidated Appeals Process (CAP) for 2010.

WHO Assistant Director-General for Health Action in Crises, Dr. Eric Laroche, told the attendees of the CAP launch in Geneva last month that if UN agencies and NGOs are not adequately funded to provide health care, people will keep dying. “How can NGOs do their work if they are not being properly funded? How can WHO lead the Health Cluster properly if it is not receiving the required resources? How can we adequately alleviate this massive humanitarian suffering in Somalia without the needed support,” Dr. Laroche said later.

But even with modest amounts of support, millions of Somalis have been able to receive vital health care via humanitarian aid

providers. UNICEF, WHO and the Somali Red Crescent regularly conduct Child Health Days that immunize millions of children and provide health interventions to hundreds of thousands of women. WHO and UNFPA work closely on maternal and reproductive health and delivering emergency obstetric care. WHO disease surveillance officers work in every district of the country, monitoring for outbreaks of new diseases and taking note of other health threats. Malaria among users of nets fell from 17% to 6.9%. More than 900,000 people were provided access to safe water in 2009.

“This work needs to continue and to expand if we are going to protect the health of Somalis and help alleviate their suffering,” Dr. Laroche said. ■

For more information

- WHO Somalia:
<http://www.emro.who.int/somalia/>
- Consolidated Appeals Process 2010 document:
<http://ochaonline.un.org/humanitarianappeal/webpage.asp?Page=1827>



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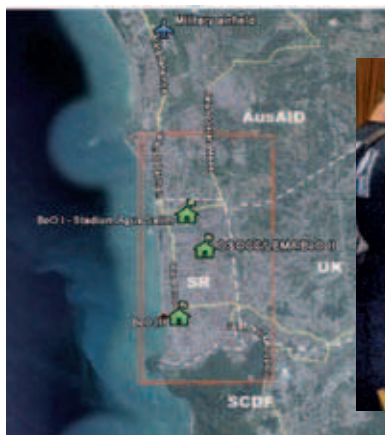
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INDONESIAN EARTHQUAKE: A GLOBAL HUMANITARIAN RESPONSE TO A FRIEND IN NEED



WINSTON CHANG, OCHA GENEVA

First 24 hours

On 30 September 2009 at 17:16(GMT+7), a 7.6 magnitude earthquake, followed by a 6.2 magnitude earthquake, struck off the coast of Padang city, the capital of West Sumatra Province in Indonesia. The next day, another earthquake of 7.0 magnitude struck Jambi Province. The sudden earthquakes resulted in numerous buildings collapsing, burying scores of people alive, and triggering landslides in many areas that obliterated villages and made roads inaccessible. The President of Indonesia has welcomed international assistance. Meanwhile, international urban search and rescue (USAR) teams were already busy mobilizing and planning to respond.

Day 2 – Global Life Saving and Humanitarian Response

Within hours, the first United Nations Disaster Assessment and Coordination (UNDAC*) team member departed from Zurich, Swit-

zerland together with the Swiss Rescue advanced party team of 7 in a Canadair “Challenger” aircraft. The team arrived in Padang 13 hours later to support the national authorities in paving the way for an expected huge international response particularly in urban search and rescue (USAR) assistance. In total 21 countries and organisations comprising 668 emergency responders and 67 search dogs responded and worked around the clock conducting life saving USAR and humanitarian operations in and around Padang under difficult and challenging conditions.

Parallel humanitarian activities were also in full throttle, with over 200 NGOs from national and international organisations, and 11 UN agencies, divided into 10 clusters, primed for assessment and coordination work. 9 UNDAC members with co-opted experts from the EU Civil Protection Team, International Humanitarian Partnership (IHP), MapAction, DHL and Télécom Sans Frontière swiftly deployed to support the

national coordination structures at all levels, and assisted the National Disaster Management Agency (BNPB) in coordinating international USAR teams and strengthening the UN Country Team. Already joint rapid needs assessments have been initiated based on which further humanitarian response planning will take place.

Key UNDAC/INSARAG** coordination mechanisms were well functioning from the Reception and Departure Centres (RDC) established at the Minangkabau international airport, to the On Site Operations Coordination Centre (OSOCC), operationalised alongside the national authorities, in the Governor's house. The UNDAC team worked jointly with the authorities in assessments and deployment of the USAR teams, including overall management of the teams (i.e. securing bases of operations, logistical, safety and security issues) facilitating daily USAR Team Leaders' meetings and providing key inputs into the OCHA sitreps in accordance with the INSARAG Guide-

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lines. The time tested standardised procedures in past earthquake response, averted duplicative efforts and translated to a well integrated international response that augmented local capacities and morale in all sectors of operations.

The first 24 hours saw the majority of USAR teams arriving, and 70% of mainly large multi-story collapsed buildings in the city searched.

Day 3 – Ongoing USAR life-saving operations, announcement of adequate international USAR assistance

On 3 Oct 09 at 19:37, after consultations with the national authorities and USAR team leaders and when the scale of the disaster became clearer, an announcement was made in the VOSOCC*** that further international USAR teams were not required.

Day 4 – Expanded USAR operations beyond Padang City

After 48 hours from the start of international USAR operations 100% of collapsed buildings in the city had been searched. The situation North, South and East of the city was also assessed. In those areas there are mainly smaller one-story residential buildings and landslides. INSARAG heavy classified teams were put in charge of the identified sectors, and they led the way; collaborating with other USAR teams and synergized USAR efforts.

Collapsed buildings were found twisted into a carcass of impossible angles making it impossible for anyone to be found alive, while tragic landslides buried entire villages. Nonetheless, the unyielding spirit to search for life victims persevered through with teams sending search dogs with their highly developed sense of smell,

scouring the debris and mud pile, coupled with highly sensitive seismic, acoustic and optical fiberscope detectors, hoping for a glimmer of life, but unfortunately this was not to be.

Day 5 – No further complex USAR operations expected

In the morning of 5th October, after discussions between the national authorities, international teams and UNDAC, it was unanimously agreed that national teams are now fully engaged in all sectors and there were no more further complex USAR operations assistance required of international USAR teams.

The national USAR teams with the support from the international teams, having conducted over 80 hours of non stop extensive USAR operations, have come to the conclusion that the requirement for further assistance from the foreign teams in the area of complex operations utilising additional heavy specialised equipment and technical search capability will cease.

Changing roles

Many teams then transitioned from searching mud and debris, to helping the affected population recover in tangible ways, for instance, retrieving bodies for grieving families to connect and facilitate emotional closure, demolishing unstable structures, building temporary shelters and providing medical care to affected victims in remote villages.

Conclusion

Any government would be overwhelmed with a disaster of this magnitude, with national response capacities obviously overstretched. In this earthquake response, national and international response capacities

have been untiring and unrelenting in the effort to save lives. There has been excellent teamwork and integration, between responders at all levels.

From the start, the United Nations worked hand in glove with the authorities in a strategic, coordinated, effective and prioritized way surmounting a multitude of challenges. The demonstration of solidarity and responding swiftly as one big global family to a friend in need was what the world witnessed – as good friends would indeed. ■

* UNDACTeam – A pool of diverse emergency response experts from Member States and humanitarian agencies that can respond at a moment's notice to support the authorities of the affected country, during a sudden onset emergency requiring international humanitarian response.

** INSARAG – Mandated by GA 57/150 of 16 December 2002, the International Search and Rescue Advisory group (INSARAG) is a global network of more than 80 countries and organizations focusing on urban search and rescue (USAR) related issues that meet regularly for training and exercises based on the globally-accepted INSARAG Guidelines as reference.

*** Virtual OSOCC (<http://www.ocha.unog.ch/virtualososcc>), an information-sharing portal of OCHA – UN INSARAG Secretariat was able to monitor and update international USAR teams with crucial information as the situation unfolded, and important information such as announcing that there were adequate USAR teams on site, close of the life-saving USAR phase, and other requests were well communicated to the global USAR community.



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IHEID – THE GRADUATE INSTITUTE, GENEVA

The Graduate Institute, Geneva wishes to arm young professionals in world affairs for the “war for talents”.

JASMINE CHAMPENOIS

The most important corporate resource over the next twenty years will be talent. It is also the resource in shortest supply. This is particularly true in the field of high tech and finance but also in the field of policy-making at the highest level of world affairs, such as in international organisations. Jasmine Champenois, from the Executive Education Department of the Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies, offers some analysis.

In this time of high uncertainty on the international job market, what is the “war for talents”?

The “war for talents” is a term coined by headhunting companies to describe the shortage of qualified human resources forecasted in the next decade. Organisations, not only in the corporate sector but also on the market of governmental and non-governmental organisations will have to fight to attract the best talented individuals and develop their skills. Talent is difficult to define. In the current economic context, new competences are clearly needed and it is necessary to build skills such as leadership, innovative and critical thinking.

Which skills do you think are important for a young professional in the world of global governance?

When we reflect on the cluster of skills needed by participants in our executive programmes, we come up with an endless list. What really matters, therefore, is for each individual to have a clear vision of where to find the information he needs, and not to be overloaded by it. For example, if one is looking to sell more milk in a new market or develop a local-governance project, what type of information should they be looking for? An efficient professional needs to build a framework for

analysis and action based on expert knowledge, available global information and most importantly, what we term “innovative thinking”. This is very often the missing skill that participants are seeking when they turn to our programmes. It is this asset that gives any organisation a comparative advantage in the world today.

The Graduate Institute launches a battery of executive education programmes for professionals with high potential: how do these fit in the context of the war for talents?

It is while analysing these new trends that the Graduate Institute created its new Executive Master in International Negotiation and Policy-Making programme. It is a part-time programme centered on the analysis of global governance, international negotiation and decision-making in the public and private sectors. As the Graduate Institute is ideally located at the heart of international Geneva, this programme enables professionals to refine their skills while working. Each year, about 30 professionals with high potential reflect upon key scenarios of evolution of the international arena. This programme aims at equipping professionals with the new skills that are critical to world affairs today.

What category of participants usually attends this Executive Master in International Negotiation ?

Participants have between 3 to 10 years’ professional experience in both private and public sectors. They are usually well equipped in terms of professional expertise (engineering, administration, finance, communication, banking) but also wish to develop a set of new skills such as intercultural leadership and negotiation. The core of our participants is drawn from international or-

ganisations in Geneva such as UN agencies. Field workers, programme officers, public relations managers of these organisations have well understood that a traditional MBA is not appropriate for their career needs. They join our programme since it deals closely with what they face daily at work.

How do you see it makes a difference back in their working environment?

An executive education programme usually helps participants to design their own analytical framework through which to quickly and critically make sense of their global environment.

Our programmes on International negotiation offer participants a space within which to think beyond the frame of their own organisation and an opportunity to discover alternative perspectives that they might not have otherwise explored. For instance, one diplomat recently admitted that a case study that she had examined as part of our programme on international law had been spotted on! The very next day she had to adopt a multi-stakeholder approach in order to solve an issue with a business partner. She will definitely make a difference in the organisation she belongs to.

Do you think international organisations recognise that they need to equip their employees with this set of new competences?

Most organisations have realised that they are talent-constrained but have not yet defined long-term strategies for developing their competences. Without doubt, the organisations that are most likely to succeed are the ones that spend the most energy on attracting, developing, and retaining talent. Therefore, as the war for talents intensifies, training and innovative thinking will definitely widen the gap between the winners and the losers. ■

More information on the Executive Education at the Graduate Institute,
<http://graduateinstitute.ch/executive>

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EDUCATION: THE KEY TO A VIRTUOUS CYCLE

EUGENE JAMES

Education is essential to developing skills, knowledge and critical thinking. Having received an education loan through United Nations Federal Credit Union [UNFCU], I have taken a gigantic leap forward towards the fulfilment of one of my childhood dreams: the completion of a stage in university studies.. Education has served as a compass to direct my thoughts; structure my tentative answers and essentially to become aware of my ignorance and I felt compelled to tell you my story.

My belonging to a United Nations family has certainly played a tremendous role in my pursuing my education... Nowadays, one cannot treat education as a luxury. In fact as Derek Bok, the former president of Harvard University would say, "If you think education is expensive, try ignorance". However private education is not a service that any other parent can afford regardless of their determination to send their children to the best possible academic institution. In fact, it is common practice for talented students to either apply for scholarships or to work part-time to be able to pay up tuition fees.

In my particular case, I have been blessed with parents whose heart is made of gold and because they are members of UNFCU with financial advisors and financiers who are filled with knowledge and the vocation to support the aspirations of young adults. As a matter of fact, they are guarantors in financial terms, but the nature of my relationship with them has evolved to form an intricate web of trust, confidence and mutual respect. Indeed, parental support and the backing of a financial institution, such as UNFCU have provided me with moral strength and the courage necessary to undertake arduous, yet fascinating studies. Indeed, I have always wanted to be a professional journalist and education has provided me with the tools to succeed. From the very moment I was officially admitted into my

university, there never existed a moment that I doubted whether I had made the right decision. There, I began to closely associate my own personal worth with the value my parents and our financial advisors at UNFCU assigned to me to be able to recognize that I am capable of crossing the finish line.

The close association between UNFCU and the United Nations in general is apparent from the values that are embraced by the financial institution. The mission of UNFCU is notably to "serve the people who serve the world". This endeavour can only inspire a great deal of respect. These days, it can be difficult to obtain a loan from any financial institution when one considers collateral and creditworthiness that is necessary to meet eligibility requirements.. To complicate matters, hyphenate loan with student and you will probably inspire further caution in your traditional financier. Our partnership and experience with UNFCU underscored their knowledge of the UN community and its needs which is second to none. Year-to-date, UNFCU reported that booked education loans totalled \$11.4 million. The average education loan amount is 21,000 USD.

Student loans fall under a broad array of financial solutions that are provided by UNFCU that encompass savings and investment services, wealth management, retirement resources, international insurance schemes, global payment cards and mortgages available in Switzerland, France, Austria and the U.S. According to Pamela Agnone, senior vice president of Retail Services at UNFCU headquarters in New York, the institution positions itself as a "conservative and responsible lender", which constitutes a "source of financial strength and stability". In particular, the recent financial crisis did not exact a toll from the institution, which owes to a strategic choice of prudent lending. For instance the track record of the institution indicates no traces of toxic assets such as sub prime

mortgage loans. This approach reflects a high sense of responsibility and dedication to offer the most reliable products.

Furthermore, a distinctive feature is the outlook of the institution that embraces the aspirations, ideals and human values of its 86,000 members that gather people from 211 countries and territories present on all six continents. The institution serves as a catalyst agent towards various social movements through the support of civil society that exist at the level of grass-roots. A salient example is the "Kilimanjaro Initiative" in Kenya that consists of an NGO led by Timothy Challen, a UNFCU staff member, that together with UN HABITAT and other UN agencies, UNFCU and the public/private sectors are raising awareness and funds about greener, safer more sustainable cities in East Africa. The UNFCU staff members mobilize support through personal involvement at various fund raising events. For instance, UNFCU staff, management and board of directors recently took part in a 224 mile walkathon and running relay around its headquarters in Long Island City, New York to commemorate UN Day and the 64 years of its sole sponsor's existence.

Partnership with UNFCU guarantees strong member service. For instance, when a UN staff member journeys to a new duty station with his/her family, UNFCU knows the member and there is not need to re-establish oneself. In Geneva and Vienna multi-currency investment services are provided and overall some 30 languages are spoken at UNFCU. Yet, the single most important feature of UNFCU is the degree of attention customers receive. On all occasions, advisors at UNFCU are prepared to listen to our needs and wants. Their recommendations are the product of unbiased and unselfish motives with the primary aim of delivering the most suitable financial product. According to Khalid Gherzeddine, manager of the

Geneva Representative Office of UNFCU, "what makes me wake up in the morning is the knowledge that I help people". Mr. Gherzeddine walks the talk, which is a conclusion I draw from the lasting impression I have of him through various meetings I have had in the course of my studies. The environment at UNFCU is warm, friendly and exceptionally humane and this spirit is imbued in each and every staff member.

In the present, I consider that I have a great responsibility towards my fellow human beings, especially those who have not been as fortunate as me to receive an exceptional education. My relationship with UNFCU has instilled in me the same values that drive the staff members of this financial institution. In fact, I aspire to contribute one day to sending children from underprivileged backgrounds to school for them to perpetuate a virtuous cycle of learning, tolerance and understanding across society and different cultures. ■

HOMMAGE: CHEICK TOURÉ



Touré nous a quittés brutalement samedi 21 novembre 2009, à peine plus de trois ans après sa retraite de l'UNOG.

Cheik nous laisse l'image du travailleur qui ne calculait pas son temps avec l'Organisation, d'un ami loyal et dévoué, d'un collègue compétent et vigilant, celui qui n'hésitait jamais à partager son expérience et ses connaissances dans la distribution des documents et notamment au comptoir de la porte 40, dont il était incontestablement, une mémoire institutionnelle.

Nombreux sont ceux qui se souviennent de Cheick Touré, ce collègue affable dont la générosité allait droit au cœur ! Cheick


Tous ceux qui l'ont connu ou simplement rencontré gardent de lui le souvenir d'un homme doté de qualités rares. Un homme conciliant, bienveillant, d'une extrême gentillesse et tolérance. Celui qui ne cachait jamais ses larmes dans le rire et la compassion. Un homme humble et toujours prêt à rendre service à quiconque. Celui qui ne craignait pas d'être blessé parce que sa sagesse lui permettait de transcender les conflits !

Cheick nous a marqué à jamais et il restera éternellement gravé dans nos cœurs. ■

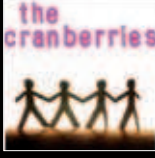
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DIX BOUGIES POUR LE RÉSEAU ENVIRONNEMENT DE GENÈVE!

La maison internationale de l'environnement avait des airs de fête... C'est en présence de trois cents invités venus des Missions permanentes, du canton, de la Fédération, des universités, Nations Unies, ONG's ou secteur privé que le Réseau Environnement de Genève (ou Geneva Environment Network – GEN) a soufflé ses dix premières bougies!



© Jikphoto

Depuis 1999, grâce au soutien permanent du gouvernement suisse, cette plate-forme, qui travaille sous la coordination du Programme Environnement des Nations Unies (PNUE), rassemble la communauté internationale de Genève autour d'un thème désormais très à la mode: l'environnement.

Le «GEN», comme l'on a coutume de l'appeler, utilise en effet chaque opportunité de l'agenda «durable» pour rassembler autour d'une même table les acteurs gouvernementaux, de la société civile, des institutions internationales et du monde du business. Les origines sont différentes mais la volonté d'une société plus respirable, efficace et durable les anime tous.

Le directeur exécutif du PNUE, Achim Steiner, a ouvert le petit déjeuner anniversaire en rappelant l'importance d'un tel réseau et la force que des partenariats «public privé» pouvait insuffler aux projets environnementaux.

Le directeur général des Nations Unies à Genève, Sergei Ordzhonikidze, a ensuite réaffirmé l'engagement du Palais

des Nations pour le combat climatique et l'exemple que l'ONU souhaite donner aux citoyens et à leurs dirigeants.

Les partenaires internationaux, nationaux et locaux du réseau, dont l'Office fédéral de l'environnement qui soutient toutes les activités du GEN, représenté par l'Ambassadeur Thomas Kolly, se sont également exprimés pendant cet événement.

Le canton de Genève, représenté par le conseiller d'Etat Laurent Moutinot, et le PNUE ont également profité de l'occasion pour signer un mémorandum tissant des liens plus étroits encore entre l'ONU et le Canton, s'engageant cette fois sur le chemin de la neutralité climatique.

L'exposition mettait en avant l'immense travail accompli par les membres du réseau. ■

“PARADISE (APPARENTLY): WELCOME TO SWITZERLAND!”

EDMUNDO MURRAY, WTO



What is the contribution of Flo Regina's “Paradise (apparently)” (author's edition, 18.90 Swiss Francs)? Perhaps the confirmation that new clichés are made of old clichés. In her case

there are so many prejudices in Italy about her

hometown and Southern Italians that it is easy to adapt them and throw them back to the Swiss.

Back in 1976, Jonathan Steinberg asked himself “why a place as idiosyncratic as Switzerland existed, and why non-Swiss should care.” He went ahead and developed a learned critique of Swiss core fea-

tures like the army, direct democracy and the institutions. **F. Regina** seems to ignore this reading (and many other good books about the Swiss), and only trusts her direct experience in Switzerland.

"You will find yourself chuckling" promises Off The Shelf bookstore "at the author's attempts to adapt to this unique place! [Switzerland]". And Mark Butcher guarantees that "this book will help you to develop [sense of humour]". I wonder why, frankly. I did not laugh, giggle or even smile reading "Paradise". Quite the opposite, I was taken aback by the abusive series of offences and mistreatments directed at Switzerland and the Swiss. It would be interesting to see the reaction of traditional Italian institutions like the Camorra, the 'Ndrangheta or the Cosa Nostra

if such insults were aimed at Italy or the Italians by a foreigner living among them.

"Paradise" is dull and boring, including too many supposedly real-life examples of what she considers strenuous relations with her neighbours and the Swiss authorities. Some expressions are bigoted and xenophobic. The language reminds me a number of 1920s-30s texts about the Jewish communities in Europe. The author does not make any effort to explain or to analyse. It suggests frustration, which is not related to her life in Switzerland but to the lack of capacity to develop a professional career and to foster social relations. And it implies a serious lack of appreciation. I wonder if she was enjoying the benefits of Swiss unemployment insurance when she wrote the book.

Revenge. That is the only contribution of "Paradise" to the literature about Switzerland and to the collaborative work of authorities, civil associations and international organisations to encourage *la Genève Internationale*. Hopefully, it will not be taken as an example. ■

¹ Off The Shelf ([http://www.offtheshelf.ch/\\$logosimages/home/authorevents_arch.html](http://www.offtheshelf.ch/$logosimages/home/authorevents_arch.html)).

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Hawaii

Vagues de feu

TEXTE ET PHOTOS CLAUDE MAILLARD, OMS

Latitude moyenne 20° nord, longitude moyenne 158° ouest. Nées du feu, sculptées par les caprices du vent et de l'eau, les îles Hawaii émergent à près de 4000 km du continent le plus proche. Ici, la nature exulte: activité volcanique majestueuse, vallées mystérieuses, végétation exubérante, océan déchaîné, magie des légendes hawaïennes... ■





HAWAII, VAGUES DE FEU



Pendant la majeure partie de leur histoire, les îles Hawaii furent gouvernées indépendamment par des monarques locaux. Après une période de conflits, le souverain de l'île principale d'Hawaii unifie en 1810 tous les royaumes insulaires de l'archipel.

TEXTE ET PHOTOS CLAUDE MAILLARD, OMS

Ce nouveau royaume ainsi constitué sera internationalement reconnu, notamment grâce à la bienveillante protection britannique. Mais ces îles lointaines excitaient également l'appétit des États-Unis, ainsi que de la Russie, de la Grande-Bretagne et de la France. Cette dernière s'y implanta à partir de 1837, mais c'est finalement l'influence prépondérante des Américains qui, après un coup d'état, instaura un gouvernement provisoire en 1893. L'année suivante fut proclamée la République de Hawaii qui sera annexée au territoire américain le 7 juillet 1898 avec le statut de «Territoire de Hawaii». Enfin, un référendum organisé le 27 juin 1959 désignera Hawaii comme le 50^e territoire des États-Unis.

Hawaii est le seul des cinquante états avec deux langues officielles: l'anglais et l'hawaïen. Mais aujourd'hui, seules les personnes âgées et les habitants de l'île privée de Niihau (deux cent trente personnes) parlent encore la langue autochtone. cent vingt deux îles constituent l'archipel d'Hawaii. En 2006, les États-Unis ont créé le «Monument national marin des îles du nord-ouest d'Hawaii», le plus vaste espace marin protégé qui s'étend sur 36 millions d'hectares. De magnifiques récifs coralliens abritent sept mille espèces marines, endémiques à 25%. Toujours dans le domaine maritime, Hawaii est également le paradis des surfeurs. Aux abords de l'île de Maui, les adeptes de ce sport peuvent profiter de la plus grosse

vague du monde qui peut atteindre jusqu'à 26 mètres de haut! Frissons garantis...

Côté géologie, Hawaii est l'un des points les plus chauds de la planète et ce ne sont pas les dix-sept heures de vol, via Londres et Vancouver, qui vont effrayer tout passionné de volcans pour pouvoir approcher l'une des plus belles coulées de lave existantes. Lorsque l'on observe une carte de l'océan Pacifique, les îles de l'archipel de Hawaii semblent minuscules. En réalité, il s'agit des sommets émergés de l'extrémité sud-est de la plus grande chaîne de montagne au Monde! Elle s'étire sur 6000 kilomètres de long, se prolongeant vers le nord jusqu'au Kamchatka. Le plus haut des sommets, le Mauna Kéa situé sur Big Island, culmine à 4206 m au dessus du niveau de l'océan, mais sa base est à 5180 m sous l'eau. Avec ses 9386 m, ce volcan est en fait la plus haute montagne de la Terre! Le Mauna Kéa, tout comme le Mauna Loa, volcan voisin qui domine à 4169 m, sont des volcans boucliers (leurs dômes sont constitués d'un grand nombre de coulées de lave fluide qui se sont empilées successivement les unes sur les autres). On retrouve ce type de volcans sur d'autres planètes et c'est ainsi que l'on a découvert l'Olympus Mons sur Mars qui s'élève pour sa part à 27 km de haut! Toujours sur Big Island, le Kilauea, l'un des volcans les plus jeunes de notre planète, est certainement le plus actif. Il est hautement surveillé et étudié à cause de ses coulées de lave permanentes (dont la température avoisine les 1200°) qui s'écoulent depuis le cratère de Puu Oo. L'éruption a débuté en 1983 et le fleuve de lave qui termine sa course dans l'océan permet ainsi à l'île de s'agrandir de jour en jour. Le volcan Kilauea est un lieu essentiel dans la mythologie hawaïenne. Il est considéré par beaucoup comme la maison de Pélé, la déesse du feu et des volcans. Encore aujourd'hui, bon nombre de Hawaïens lui vouent un culte assidu.

D'île en île

Si **Big Island**, la plus grande des îles d'Hawaii (et la plus au sud puisque c'est aussi l'endroit le plus méridional des États-



Unis) se distingue surtout par ses volcans actifs, les autres îles de l'archipel ont également toutes leur originalité.

Kauai, nommée également l'Île Jardin, ressemble à un petit paradis, où il fait bon vivre, au milieu d'une végétation exubérante et colorée. C'est la plus septentrionale et la plus vieille des îles principales de l'archipel d'Hawaïi. D'une superficie de 1430 km², Kauai est l'un des endroits les plus humides sur Terre. Les chutes de pluie sur le mont Waialeale atteignent en moyenne 10 mètres par an! C'est aussi sur Kauai que se trouve le plus grand canyon du Pacifique. Avec près de 20 km de long, une largeur de 1 km et des falaises culminant à 1200 m, le canyon de Waimea est superbe. Sa beauté tient surtout aux contrastes de couleurs entre les différentes teintes de terres et de roches volcaniques qui le composent (allant du noir à l'or, en passant par le jaune, le rouge, l'ocre et le brun). Quelques bosquets d'arbres, d'un vert très vif, bordant la rivière qui serpente au fond du canyon donnent encore plus de relief au paysage.

L'île de **Molokai** reste relativement peu ouverte au tourisme. Peu peuplée (environ six mille habitants pour une surface de 680 km², Molokai a connu son heure de gloire il y a quelques décennies lorsque d'immenses cultures d'ananas recouvraient l'île. Mais la concurrence venue des marchés d'Extrême-

Orient a fait beaucoup de mal, provoquant par la même une considérable hausse du chômage local.

Au nord de l'île, la péninsule de Kalaupapa abritait auparavant une léproserie administrée par le Père Damien, un missionnaire catholique flamand qui mourut lui-même de la lèpre en 1889. Le village n'est accessible que par avion, par bateau ou à dos de mule car d'immenses falaises de plus de 1000 mètres de haut surplombent l'endroit. Ce sont d'ailleurs les plus hautes falaises du monde tombant directement dans l'eau. Du côté des records, à noter également sur Molokai la plus haute cascade d'Hawaïi (Kahiwa Falls avec une chute d'eau de 660 mètres) et la plus grande plage de sable blanc de l'archipel avec Papohaku Beach qui fait 5 km de long. Enfin, sur la côte sud se trouve la plus grande barrière corallienne des États-Unis d'une longueur de 40 km.

Avec une superficie de 1883 km², **Maui** est la deuxième plus grande île de l'archipel d'Hawaïi. Surnommée «The Valley Isle», Maui est formée de deux régions montagneuses reliées par un isthme très fertile planté de cannes à sucre. La côte ouest, aride, contraste avec la côte est, luxuriante à souhait. Le soleil, le sable et les vagues ont fait le succès de Maui, et la présence de sympathiques fous de planche à voile de toutes nationalités donne à l'île une atmosphère festive et décontractée.



Le volcan Haleakala qui domine à 3055 mètres à l'est de Maui a une histoire volcanique des plus tourmentée, avec dix éruptions durant les mille dernières années, la dernière remontant à 1790. A l'échelle de temps géologique, c'est un volcan très actif et beaucoup de scientifiques prévoient d'ailleurs une nouvelle éruption. Depuis le bord de son cratère aux dimensions impressionnantes (10 × 5 km), la vue sur le volcan est particulièrement superbe. 900 mètres en contrebas, c'est un véritable paysage minéral et lunaire qui s'offre à nous. Les formes et les couleurs sont époustouflantes. L'exploration peut commencer au milieu des cônes de cendre, seul endroit au monde où pousse la «Silversword», plante qui ne fleurit qu'une fois à l'âge de 20 ans, avant de mourir.

L'île d'**Oahu** s'est formée sous l'action conjointe des volcans Waianae et Koolau, laissant une grande vallée entre les deux. Avec ses 1231 mètres, le mont Kaala en est le plus haut sommet. C'est l'île la plus peuplée de l'archipel avec la capitale Honolulu, centre culturel, économique et politique d'Hawaïi. Oahu s'est rendue tristement célèbre le 7 décembre 1941 lorsque l'armée japonaise bombardait la base navale de Pearl Harbor, entraînant ainsi les États-Unis dans la seconde guerre mondiale. L'île est aujourd'hui très développée, avec notamment ses activités portuaires, et très touristique avec ses kilomètres de plages de sable blanc dont Sunset Beach et Waikiki Beach, au sud en direction du cratère de Diamond Head.

La côte nord, de Kahuku à Kaena Point fait rêver les surfeurs du monde entier avec ses belles vagues hivernales. Hanauma Bay, à l'est, est réputée pour ses récifs de corail et ses poissons tropicaux qui font la joie des amateurs de plongée. ■

DROITS DE L'ENFANT

VINGTIÈME ANNIVERSAIRE DE LA CONVENTION



VÉRONIQUE TAVEAU, UNICEF

Le 20 novembre 2009, la communauté internationale célébrait les 20 ans de la Convention internationale des droits de l'enfant. A Genève, dans le cadre des activités culturelles du Palais des Nations, les jeunes de l'orchestre de la Suisse romande présentaient un concert placé sous le thème de la paix et de la défense des droits des enfants.

En vingt années d'existence la Convention a transformé la perception que l'on a des enfants et la manière de les traiter. Pour

l'UNICEF, pour nos partenaires des Nations Unies, pour tous ceux qui travaillent à nos côtés, partenaires publics ou privés, pour tous les défenseurs des droits des enfants qui chaque jour œuvrent à faire que la défense des droits des enfants soient une réalité sur le terrain, ce 20^e anniversaire n'est pas seulement une date, un simple événement, il doit marquer un vrai tournant. Philip O'Brien directeur de la Division des partenariats et collectes de fonds à l'UNICEF nous explique pourquoi. ■

PHILIP D. O'BRIEN, DIRECTOR, PRIVATE FUNDRAISING AND PARTNERSHIPS UNICEF

VÉRONIQUE TAVEAU, UNICEF

Why is it important for UNICEF to make sure that the Celebration of the 20th anniversary of the Convention of the Rights of the Child needs to be more than a "one day wonder"?

The rights of children are not a one 'day wonder.' The rights of children are things that need to happen in the world, 365 days a year, every year of a child's life until they reach 18. So if we were just to acknowledge children's rights on one day of the year, we would be missing out on an awful lot. The one day celebration must be in some ways tempered a little bit by the 365 days of work that we have got to do next year to actually make sure when we come to the 21st anniversary of the Convention of the Rights of the Child, so more children are enjoying more rights than they did yesterday and today.

During the past two decades, the Convention has transformed the way children are viewed and treated throughout the world, but numerous challenges remain in realizing children's rights. In 1990 there were

12.5 million children dying before the age of 5. In 2008, that figure is down to 9 million and the trend is that it will continue. We now know that we have got 84/85% of all children in school and the number of children who are out of school in 2002, 115 million, has now fallen to just 100 million in 2007. None of this would have been possible without our partners. This is not just UNICEF, this is all about partnerships and how by working in partnerships we can actually achieve better results for children.

Just a few examples of how things work with our partners – and by partners I mean our engagement with Global Programme partnerships, the corporate sector and with civil society organizations. For example we have a long term partnership with IPU, the International Parliament Union. IPU as all your Geneva based readers know, is the oldest multilateral political organization in the world. It was established 120 years ago and we have partnered with it for many years. It is partially because of the result of that partnership that we have seen such

extraordinary strides in legislative reforms in putting protective measures into national legislation that draw on the Convention of the Rights of the Child. They have the mandate of all governments accountable to their obligations to children. Over the last six years, our joint activities with them have included a special child protection parliamentary forum on the occasion of the UN General Assembly Special Session on children and we have developed with them hand books for parliamentarians on child issues like child protection, child trafficking, juvenile justice and violence against children. This is one example.

Could you give an example where companies are assisting UNICEF in ensuring children's rights are realized?

One of our very important partnerships, not just in terms of the money generated for programmes for children but in the way it has approached the area of child protection and children's rights is our partnership with IKEA. Over the past ten years they have

committed more than \$180 million in both cash and in kind donations to UNICEF's programmes making them our largest corporate donor. But as importantly as that money, through IKEA's Social Initiative (the division within IKEA responsible for managing their commitment to investments in social programs on a global level) they have been a key supporter of work that we are doing to prevent hazardous child labour, and ensure children go to school. IKEA has joined UNICEF to tackle this issue at its root cause and in the countries where they are sourcing some of their products. They have also put in place a strong code of conduct for their suppliers and have made a public commitment to fight for and advocate for children's rights.

A number of our partners have helped us in different ways. It is not just a cash grant to do something but for example, with a number of them, we have stand by arrangements whereby they make capacity available to our organization when we are stretched and we are often nearly always stretched at the onset of an emergency. We get contributions from airlines of free flight capacity to move supplies. There is a whole variety of ways of which businesses doing their own business, and using their own expertise can actually help and respond to. So perhaps more than in the development end of our business, our partnerships with the private sector have a longer and more precise form when we talk about emergency and humanitarian response.

The private sector has become an increasingly important stakeholder in development through global partnerships for health, education and HIV and AIDS in particular.

Private sector partners have demonstrated strong support for the Convention on the Rights of the Child. The range of corporate partnerships that UNICEF has, is multiple and diverse - all to help us achieve our vision of a world where the rights of every child are realised. They range from the once in a while philanthropic donation to a bigger global partnership like for example the one we have with P&G (Procter and Gamble) and their Pampers brand. The Pampers UNICEF cause related marketing campaign aims to not just help one mother or one child the real goal of the partnership is to drive the elimination of maternal and neonatal tetanus by 2012 - that's the global goal agreed by the WHO and UNICEF - and it's a longer term commitment by Pampers and that is a different sort of budget. But I think by and large even the one off donation can also be used in such a way that it does make a substantial beneficial impact for children.

Could the current financial crisis impact on child rights?

It could, it does, and it is. There is no doubt about it. 2009 has been marked by the worst global financial crisis since the Great Depression eighty years ago. It is a combination of the financial crisis and the food crisis. And there are a number of different ways in which that is happening. First of all, there is a fair amount of evidence collected by UNICEF, showing that the food price crisis has forced an awful lot of people, an awful lot of families, into a greater degree of poverty. Children are having less access to food, and nutrition. Their nutritional state is under threat. Young girls, children whose economic activity could be beneficial to families are often pulled out of school. And that is going to continue as long as the fi-

nancial crisis does continue. And it is absolutely clear.

The international economic context is crucial for child rights because it forms an integral part of the external environment that influences the actions of all those entrusted with the care and protection of children. Strains on household, corporate and governments budgets are threatening spending on services and commodities essential to children's rights to survival, development protection and participation.

Yet our regular donors (the people who give us money every month for twelve months of the year), the numbers of those have increased over the 12-18 months, which is very good. And the amounts of money we are getting from that source, which is unrestricted money, it's money that the Organization can use as it sees fit has also increased. Not by huge amount but certainly by enough to give us a sense of confidence that this can continue over the next 12-18 months. But! We do not know, about 2010, 2010 is very uncertain from an income point of view, a very uncertain period to which we are going now. The financial and economic crisis have, I think, opened a debate on global social and economic priorities, and in the months to come, we all need to make sure that children must be at the heart of our thinking on climate change, on the food crises, and that we all need to ensure that the vision of the Convention becomes a reality for every child. ■



STAFF REPRESENTATIVES' CORNER

This section has been set up by the UNOG Staff Coordinating Council, which represents all Secretariat staff in Geneva.

IAN RICHARDS, UNOG

The big issue: Sectoral assemblies

This month *UN Special* looks at sectoral assemblies. These are staff representative bodies that tackle issues specific to your department or division. This contrasts with the Coordinating Council, which covers all UN secretariat staff in Geneva and which negotiates for them with UNOG management and with management in New York.

Sectoral assemblies are the frontline of staff representation. Unfortunately, several have not been renewed. In order to encourage staff to re-establish sectoral assemblies in their departments, two sectoral assemblies describe some of their main activities.

UNCTAD

Ian Richards, Olivier Combe, Giuseppe Di Capua, Raja Khalidi, Simonetta Zarrilli
We piloted Askmanagement, which allowed staff to pose questions to management and the replies from management to be published online, thereby creating an easily accessible depository of information for staff. Management are evaluating this to see whether they wish to continue with it.

We're also focusing on flexible working arrangements as many staff are aware they exist but aren't sure whether it's appropriate to ask for them. We've asked colleagues to fill out a survey so that we can see to what extent they're interested and if they're not interested, why not. The preliminary results are very encouraging.

We've spent a lot of time, through townhall and individual meetings, on informing colleagues on the rules and regulations that affect them and are supporting former short-term staff left in contractual limbo. Given the forthcoming mobility requirements and eventual full-blown mobility policy, we're working with management to set up a net-

work of temporary exchanges with the regional commissions.

We're also identifying practices elsewhere that could work well at UNCTAD. These include exit interviews to understand why staff leave, broadening vacancy announcements to make them less tailored (for which there has been some success) and tackling harassment.

OCHA

Claude Hilfiker, Loubna Benhayoune
The OCHA Geneva staff representative works closely with colleagues representing OCHA staff in New York and the field. The six of us meet by phone to discuss pending issues and "pick the battles" for which we want to advocate vis-à-vis our senior management. Currently the main issues under discussion are the implications of UN Secretariat contract reform and new staff selection rules for OCHA overall and related staff mobility issues between headquarters and the field.

In addition we have been:

- Identifying staff members to participate on behalf of staff representation in interviews for short-term and field positions within OCHA.
- Conducting consultations with Human Resources and Administration on generic issues pertaining to staff selection and contracting.
- Flagging recurrent staff issues to senior managers.
- Organizing town hall and individual meetings to discuss and identify solutions to such issues.
- Answering particular questions and problems of staff either by responding directly or by directing the staff members to the right persons, making sure that solutions to individual problems are addressed by

those who are responsible for it.

- Organizing OCHA's end-of-year party, together with a party committee

News updates

Permanent contracts

At the time of writing, preparations were underway for the one-time review of permanent contracts. The guidelines were awaiting the final approval of the UN comptroller. Once the review gets underway, the Council will cross-check its list with that produced by management to ensure no-one slips through the net.

Continuing contracts

The award of new permanent contracts (i.e. after the one-time review mentioned above) were abolished last year during the mandate of the previous Council. The current Council is working to preserve the future of the international civil service by ensuring that continuing contracts, which are designed to replace permanent contracts, provide career security to as many staff as possible and that staff in institutions that depend to a large extent on extra-budgetary funds, such as Human Rights and OCHA, will access these contracts.

The original proposal put forward by the Secretary-General was withdrawn from the General Assembly after management could not provide member states with a workforce plan and answer questions on how continuing functions at the UN would be defined (i.e. functions that the UN reckons it will continue to need). Following this, the Coordinating Council called for an urgent staff-management meeting to resolve the issue, which will take place at the end of January. The aim is to ensure that as many staff as possible are deemed to be performing continuing functions, giving them access to continuing contracts and providing

them the privileges and security of career staff. No-one should be left out.

Mobility

The new eligibility requirements that require geographic mobility to apply for P-5, D-1 and D-2 posts have been gradually weakened by the staff unions since they were first floated by management back in May 2009. The original proposal required moves to be made prior to becoming eligible for promotion, and that from P-1 to D-2. As part of a second phase, the Council is undertaking a number of measures to further reduce the impact and scope of this policy (survey on the mobility policy, circulating a petition, cooperation with staff representatives throughout the secretariat, participating actively in the next session of the staff-management working group on this issue).

At the working group, due to meet in February, the Council will push for a policy comprising career support and placement, training, geographical balance of skills groups and posts at different levels, and appropriate transitional measures - basic elements widely practised elsewhere in the UN. It should also be noted that the implementation of a mobility policy was part of a broader SMCC agreement, whose keystone was the implementation of continuing contracts.

Justice

The Internal Justice Council came to Geneva in December to review progress on the new justice system. What's startling about this system, based on tribunals, one each in New York, Geneva and Nairobi, manned by professional judges with real courtroom experience, is the increase in cases being won by staff. The fact that the Coordinating Council tripled its legal aid budget this year may have helped, but we think it's more to do with unacceptable behaviour by certain managers finally being sanctioned. Rumours are that OHRM's Administrative Law Unit, which represents the UN against staff, is looking for better lawyers. Perhaps the Secretary-General should instead take stock of why the Organization is losing and then bring his managers into line to ensure staff aren't wronged in the first place. ■

THIS YEAR, THE WHO SOLIDARITY FAIR SHOWCASED THE PHILIPPINES



Geneva is home to a diverse international community, a melting pot of cultures where everyone is a foreigner but no one is a stranger.

MARIA DWEGGAH, WHO

Very few cities are blessed with hosting so many nationalities, where a group lunch from the four corners of the world is not unusual. This year, at the WHO Staff Association Solidarity Fair on 9 December, staff, friends and families were invited to a showcase of Philippine dances and songs.

Last year's Solidarity Fair saw the Indonesian community share their rich cultural heritage, led by no less than their Ambassador. This year is the turn of the Philippine community. Staff of WHO and UNAIDS outdid themselves in the preparations. Present to

open the ceremony was Her Excellency Mrs Erlinda F. Basillo, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of the Philippines to the United Nations and other International Organizations in Geneva. The dancers, all amateurs and our very own colleagues, had been practicing since summer to share with you some indigenous Philippine dances, such as the Singkil (coronation dance), Tinikling (bamboo dance) and Pandango sa ilaw (candle dance). Philippine celebrations are mixed with joyful singing and no celebration is complete without videoke. On this occasion there was a videoke choir as part of the entertainment.

And of course staff and their families were invited to share a meal of Filipino dishes: adobo, pansit, spring rolls and others and to choose handcrafted articles, jewelry, delicious home baked delicacies from the various stands. As per usual practice, 80% of the proceeds will go to Staff Association pre-approved Philippine charitable organizations (Damayan at Tiyaga Foundation and Ephphetha School for the Deaf, Sant Rosa City Laguna) while the rest of the 20% will go to the Staff Association's Solidarity Fund.

And next year, it will be the turn of Île Maurice to show off its rich culture, dances and exquisite food. ■

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LESSONS FROM HISTORY

TO OUR GREAT-GRANDCHILDREN OF THE 25th CENTURY

(REMEMBERING THE HOLOCAUST)

"This book was written for my children and my children's children for as long as this paper shall last this ink shall not fade. Had one of my forefathers, who lived in the time of Shakespeare, the vision to realize how desperately I wanted to know about his life, his times and thought, he would have written this book then as I am writing it now. I dedicate this volume to my great grandchildren of the 25th Century."

**Sylvan M.E. Shane, from the book "As I saw it..."
written after having visited the Nazi concentration camps**



EVELINA RIOUKHINA, UNECE

The United Nations General Assembly designated 27 January as the annual international day to commemorate the victims of the Nazi era. This date marks the anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz-Birkenau, the largest Nazi death camp, on 27 January 1945, exactly 65 years ago. For the International Holocaust Remembrance Day, on 27 January 2010 the UN family will organize events and meetings in its duty stations all over the world. The tragedy that the Nazis left the world is indescribable. I quote from one of the statements made at the first special session of the General Assembly: "During the last war, the Jewish people, experienced exceptional sorrow and suffering... It is difficult to express them in dry statistics on the Jewish victims of the fascist aggressors. The Jews in territories where the Hitlerites held sway were subjected to almost complete physical annihilation..." (*from the speech of the Soviet delegation, at the 77th plenary meeting, New York, 14 May 1947*).

In the table below, I give this "dry statistics" to show the realities in figures. These "dry statistics" tell of the loss of millions (!) of human beings, confirming the above statement of annihilation. It is difficult to believe that such a tragedy could happen again. However, it was at that very time that

some politicians insisted on the importance of including the phrase "only the complete eradication of the roots of fascist and the democratization of the countries of Western Europe can give the Jewish masses normal existence in any country" (*Documents on Israeli-Soviet Relations*, MFAs archives (1941-1953), vol. 1, docs.73,77,78). Unfortunately, the tragedy has not disappeared. Over six decades after 6 million Jews – nearly a third of the total victims – and countless other minorities were butchered by the Nazis, it is as vitally important as ever to learn from the tragedy, so as to prevent further atrocities. As Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon warned at the last year International Day of Commemoration ceremony, "We must continue to examine why the world failed to prevent the Holocaust and other atrocities since. That way, we will be better armed to defeat anti-Semitism and other forms of intolerance".

There are events when one nation tries to annihilate another nation. These events are taking place today, and they have names – genocide and racial hatred. These two ugly phenomena of the present are close to Holocaust, to what was happening to the Jews during the Second World War. Not only are these events taking place, but what is more

dangerous is that events of the past are being denied. As we know, last year the media was full of articles denying the gas chambers. Such denial is very dangerous, as it risks repeating the tragedy. It is very difficult to visit the concentration camp sites. I am sure that many of my colleagues have visited them. I have not yet found courage to do so, although my daughter has asked me to. I think these visits might be very important for our children, for our future generations to prevent this from happening again.

In almost all countries affected by the Second World War there are Holocaust museums, and I visited some of them. I will briefly share the experience of my visit to Yad Vashem museum in Jerusalem, which profoundly marked me. I am also very proud that the United Nations took active role in its inauguration in 2005. The Yad Vashem Holocaust History Museum is the largest Holocaust museum in the world. It is carved into the Mount of Remembrance and is designed to reflect the story of the European Jewish community during the Holocaust. It consists of a long corridor connected to 10 exhibition halls; each is dedicated to a different chapter of the Holocaust. At the end of the Museum is the Hall of Names, a memorial to the 6 million Jews



who perished in the Holocaust. There is a display featuring 600 photographs and fragments of the Pages of Testimony. It is difficult to describe what I felt looking into the faces and reading the fragments, written in different languages. I broke down in tears, it was so overwhelming.

Afterwards I visited Children Memorial, something I will never forget. This memorial should be visited by every person, old and young. If only when we and our children could see it and could really feel it, there might be hope that at least we would do our best to see that such things never happen again. I stood in the dark, underground, cavernous hall, lit by memorial candles that reflected infinitely, creating the impression of millions of stars shining in the firmament. I could hear the names of murdered children, their ages and countries of origin:

AGI LEBOVICS, born in 1936 UZGOROD, died in AUSCHWITZ 1944, 8 years old

MARCEL SUDWARTS, born 28/01/1936 ANTWERPEN, died AUSCHWITZ 1942, 6 years old

VIOLETTE LEVY, born in MARSEILLE, died in AUSCHWITZ 20/05/1944, 2 years old

MIKO TABOH, born in 1939 SALONIKI, died in AUSCHWITZ, 4 years old

BERNHARD ABRAHAM, born in 29/11/1940 AMSTERDAM, died in AUSCHWITZ 18/07/1942, 1 year old

CLAUDINE GUTHMANN, born in 20/09/1937 STRASBOURG, died in AUSCHWITZ 30/06/1944, 6 years old

YAKOV ERENREICH, born in 1935 KRAKOW, died in AUSCHWITZ 1941, 6 years old

GYORGY FRIEDMAN, born in 1941 SARVAR, died in AUSCHWITZ 1944, 3 years old

THEA GUTTMANN, born in 1935 BERLIN, died in AUSCHWITZ 1943, 8 years old

FANNY COGAN, born in 27/11/1937 PARIS, died in AUSCHWITZ 10/12/1943, 6 years old

LIA MUGGIA, born in 1941 ROMA, died in AUSCHWITZ 23/10/1943, 2 years old

ERNST KOHN, born in 30/1/1942 BRATISLAVA, died in AUSCHWITZ 10/1944, 2 years old

JAN KRUPP, born in 28/07/1942 OSLO, died in AUSCHWITZ 1942, 1 year old

LEANNE BOROS, born in 1934 WIEN, died in AUSCHWITZ 1943, 9 years old

1,500,000 children were murdered during Holocaust, children who were absolutely innocent and who were killed simply because they belonged to another faith. They were born in different countries, in yours, in mine: France, the Netherlands, Austria, Norway, Slovakia, Poland, the ex-USSR. They were taken away from their homes and murdered by this monstrous killing machine of Auschwitz and the other concentration camps, the cruelty of which is difficult to imagine, impossible to describe. Every one of these children is remembered, his or her name pronounced, a symbolic star-candle lit eternally for each of them.

I was also touched to learn that those non-Jews who saved Jews during the Holocaust, at personal risk, are honoured by Yad Vashem as the "Righteous among the Nations".

The epigraph at the beginning of the article is symbolically addressed to the children of the 25th century, the children of future. The future is based on the present, and the present has not always taken the The epigraph at the beginning of the article is symbolically addressed to the children of the 25th century, the children of future. The future is based on the present, and the present has not always taken the right lessons from the past. The danger is still here. We need to ask ourselves these most difficult questions: Why are we unable to change the world today? And if we don't, will our great grandchildren be able to change it? ■

Number of Jews in Europe before and after WWII ¹

Country	1939	1951	% to 1939
Soviet Union	4.700.000	1.400.00	29.8
Poland	2.000.000	35.000	1.8
Romania	500.000	190.000	38.0
Germany	193.000	20.000	10.4
Hungary	403.000	100.000	24.8
UK	400.000	400.000	100.0
Czechoslovakia	255.000	18.000	7.1
France	270.000	240.000	88.8
Austria	82.000	12.000	14.6
Holland	150.000	25.000	16.7
Greece	75.000	8.000	10.6
Yugoslavia	75.000	8.000	10.6
Belgium	90.000	35.000	38.8
Italy	57.000	32.000	56.1
Bulgaria	50.000	4.000	8.0
Turkey	50.000	30.000	60.0
All others (Switzerland, Sweden, Denmark, Spain, Portugal, Luxembourg, Finland, Norway)	150.000	151.000	100.7
Total	9.500.000	2.708.00*	28.4

* For accuracy, this figure should be complemented by the following comment: during the same period the population in Israel increased from 480,000 in 1939 (data for 1939 reflect the population of the territories of the future State of Israel) to 1,203,000 as per 31.12.1950. It is important to note that the latter includes the immigration from the countries outside Europe (after the creation of the State of Israel in 1948 to end 1950 immigration from Asia, Africa and Americas reached 336,000; details for separate countries from outside Europe can be found *ibid*, p. 75 and in other sources).

¹ Source: *Les réfugiés dans l'après-guerre*, Vernant Jacques Monaco, Edition du Rocher, 1954, p.482)

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TAPORI AUX NATIONS UNIES

C'EST EN SE RENCONTRANT QU'ON BÂTIT LE MONDE



Des enfants et des adultes s'adressent au Haut-Commissariat aux droits de l'homme et aux Nations Unies pour partager leurs efforts et leurs idées pour un monde sans misère.

XAVIER VERZAT

Ils s'appellent Julien, Laurane, Nils... ils sont venus de la Bolivie, de l'Ile Maurice, de la Suisse, des Philippines, ou de la République démocratique du Congo. Dans leur pays et ensuite pendant quatre jours en Suisse, ils ont préparé un dialogue inédit avec les Nations Unies, les 8 et 9 décembre dernier. Les groupes locaux dont ils font partie sont en lien avec Taporì, un courant mondial d'amitié entre les enfants animé par le Mouvement international ATD Quart Monde (www.taporì.org)

Quelles expériences sont venus apporter ces enfants aux Nations Unies? Julien (11 ans) de la République démocratique du Congo et Olive animatrice du groupe expliquent: «nous sommes un groupe d'en-

fants qui allons à la rencontre de ceux qui vivent des difficultés. Par exemple si un enfant est malade, nous allons lui rendre visite, et nous faisons l'amitié. Un autre enfant n'avait plus de maison, nous lui avons proposé à lui et à sa maman de les aider pour reconstruire leur maison. Et d'autres adultes nous ont aussi aidé». Ces gestes de solidarité au quotidien on peut les découvrir dans un film réalisé par Taporì à l'occasion de cette rencontre «Viens avec nous! C'est en se rencontrant qu'on bâtit le monde»: le «train de l'amitié» nous conduit de Thaïlande en Irlande, de Bolivie en Pologne à la rencontre des enfants qui ne veulent laisser aucun enfant en arrière.

En 1999, des enfants Taporì avaient ren-

contré M^{me} Robinson, haut-commissaire aux droits de l'homme, et lui avaient offert leurs messages et une sculpture, *le Cadeau des pierres*, qu'on peut admirer dans le hall principal du Palais Wilson.

A l'occasion du 20^e anniversaire de la convention relative aux Droits de l'enfant, c'est une délégation de vingt-trois enfants et seize adultes venus de tous les continents¹ qui a rencontré M^{me} Kyung-wha Kang, haut-commissaire adjointe aux droits de l'homme, et ses collaborateurs, pour un échange entre acteurs des Nations Unies.

M^{me} Kang a accueilli la délégation par ces mots: «C'est un voyage important pour vous comme pour nous parce que c'est l'occasion de nous parler à égalité, de partager nos idées et nos expériences et pour nous d'entendre ce qui vous affecte et vos espoirs pour un monde meilleur et plus juste. Nous sommes là pour apprendre de vous.»

L'école et la solidarité sont revenues avec insistance dans les interventions: «Un enfant n'apprend pas bien parce qu'il se sent rejeté, incompris dans sa douleur» (Europe), «une mère, soutenue par le voisinage, a accueilli des centaines d'enfants devant sa maison pour leur permettre d'accéder aux apprentissages de base de la pré-école.» (Caraïbes, Amérique latine).

Au cours de ce dialogue, des fonctionnaires ont réagi: «Vos apports nous don-



ment des outils pour savoir ce qui ne va toujours pas et ce qu'il nous faut dire aux gouvernements.» «Aucun enfant ne devrait être séparé de ses parents pour cause de pauvreté.» «Continuez à élever la voix pour vous-mêmes mais aussi pour les autres».

Eugen Brand, délégué général du Mouvement ATD Quart Monde a demandé que

soit sollicitée l'expertise des personnes très pauvres à égalité avec celles des experts dans le travail d'évaluation des Objectifs du Millénaire et l'élaboration de leurs suites.

M^{me} Kang a déclaré: «Le courage vient de la jeunesse. Nous avons besoin que vous nous rappeliez jour après jour qu'il faut que nous ayons ce courage pour oser briser le

silence qui entoure les violations des droits de l'homme.»

Le lendemain, une douzaine de représentants de pays étaient présents pour un dialogue avec des délégués enfants et adultes, dialogue présidé par la mission permanente des Philippines. Au cours de ces journées, les fonctionnaires, les diplomates, les enfants et les adultes ont pu apprendre les uns des autres.

Les enfants Taporé de RDC ont pu découvrir qu'en France comme chez eux, il n'est pas si facile de se solidariser avec ceux qui sont exclus dans l'école: Laurane (11 ans) a ainsi expliqué lors d'une conférence de presse, qu'elle avait fait un exposé à l'école sur son implication dans Taporé et que «tout le monde s'en fichait». Un délégué adulte du Burkina Faso a souligné dans son intervention sa surprise et sa peine de voir en Europe de nombreuses situations où les enfants sont séparés de leurs parents (placement en institution) du fait de la pauvreté de la famille. Il soulignait que c'est la transmission des valeurs qui est compromise. ■

Pour en savoir plus sur Taporé et ATD Quart Monde ou pour vous procurer le DVD du film: www.atd-quartmonde.org ou contactez Janet Nelson en écrivant à intgeneve@atd-quartmonde.org


¹ Bolivie, Burkina Faso, États-Unis, France, Haïti, Irlande, Maurice, Philippines, Pologne, République Démocratique du Congo, Suisse



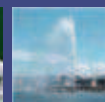


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EXPOSITION

SCÈNES DE VIE: LES GENS DANS LEUR ENVIRONNEMENT

**SERGIO DA SILVA, ONU**

Vous êtes invités à découvrir l'exposition photographique «Scènes de vie – les gens dans leur environnement» qui aura lieu du 14 janvier 2010 (date du vernissage et remise des prix à 18 heures) au 29 janvier 2010.

Lieu de l'exposition: Palais des Nations, Hall du Bar Serpent, 1^{er} étage du bâtiment E.

Tout au long de l'année, nous avons été intéressés par bon nombre de sujets, traités lors de diverses sessions théoriques et pratiques. De nouveaux projets sont venus inculquer un autre esprit à l'ensemble des passionnés de la photo. Cela a développé notre sens créatif et le travail en équipe, ce qui a apporté beaucoup plus que la simple connaissance technique de l'appareil photographique:

- Cours avec Kristian Skeie, sur la lumière, la composition et une introduction à

Lightroom.

- Cours avec Aurélien Bergot sur l'organisation de photos, le format RAW et l'utilisation de Lightroom.
- Cours théorique avec Patrick Grob au Palais des Nations, sur la photo de reportage en Irak et au Liban.
- Session portes ouvertes avec albums, photos et projection d'images.
- Visite d'une exposition avec son auteur au Palais des Nations.
- La sélection de photos et l'utilisation de plusieurs types de passe-partout par Georges Massey
- Projection et commentaires sur l'image et son impact visuel.
- Concours organisé conjointement avec le club du CERN et de l'UIT/OMPI sur le thème «Portraits of life – People in their environment».

- Sessions pratiques dans les salles de conférence du Palais des Nations et Palais Wilson dans le cadre d'une publication sur ces mêmes salles.
- Préparation d'un projet sur la biodiversité – Arbres du parc du palais – durée prévue d'une année (quatre saisons).
- Visite au Carnaval de Berne.
- Session pratique dans les bois de Versoix pour les images de l'eau en filé.
- Article dans le no. juillet-août 2009 du magazine *UNSpecial*: La numérisation.
- Création du nouveau site web du club.

Suroor Alikhan (UNRISD), Heather Wicks (UNCTAD), Erica Meltzer (UNCTAD), Aurea Fagel (OMS) et Sergio da Silva (ONU) constituent l'équipe du Club Photo International qui a permis de vous offrir ces activités. Que l'enthousiasme continue en 2010! ■

PHOTO EXHIBIT ON

PORTRAITS OF LIFE: PEOPLE IN THEIR ENVIRONMENT



SERGIO DA SILVA, UNOG

You are cordially invited to a photography exhibit on "Portraits of life: People in their environment", to be held in the Palais des Nations (Serpent Bar, 1st floor of E Building) from 14 to 29 January 2010. The exhibit – a selection of photos entered into a joint competition sponsored this fall by Club Photo International (CPI), ITU-WIPO Photo Club and Photo-Club-CERN – opens at 6 p.m. on 14 January with an awards ceremony for the top twelve photos.

CPI members have had their photographic skills honed this year by a variety of theoretical and practical sessions, and have thrown their energy into several new projects. Enhanced creativity and team spirit were among the happy results. Sessions included courses with freelance photographers on light, composition and scanning; an introduction to Lightroom; how to organize photos on the computer; and taking photos in RAW format. Other sessions were held on the following:

- Photojournalism in conflict situations
- "Open doors" session with albums, photos and slideshows

- Tour of a photographer's exhibit in the Palais, narrated by the photographer himself
- Photo selection and use of frames
- Projection of images with commentary on their visual impact

- Practical sessions in the Palais des Nations and Palais Wilson meeting rooms, to be featured in a UNOG publication
- Preparations for a yearlong photography project on biodiversity, focusing on the trees in the Palais des Nations park
- Trip to the Carnival in Bern
- Practical session in the Versoix woods on the use of bracketing
- Article in *UN Special's* July-August 2009 issue on digitalization
- Creation of a new website for the Club
- Joint photo competition with ITU-WIPO and CERN photo clubs

The events were organized by Club Committee members Suroor Alikhan (UNRISD), Aurea Fagel (WHO), Erica Meltzer (UNCTAD), Sergio da Silva (UNOG) and Heather Wicks (UNCTAD).

CPI welcomes all staff members of the UN, other international organizations, CERN and Permanent Missions. ■

clubphotointernational@unog.ch
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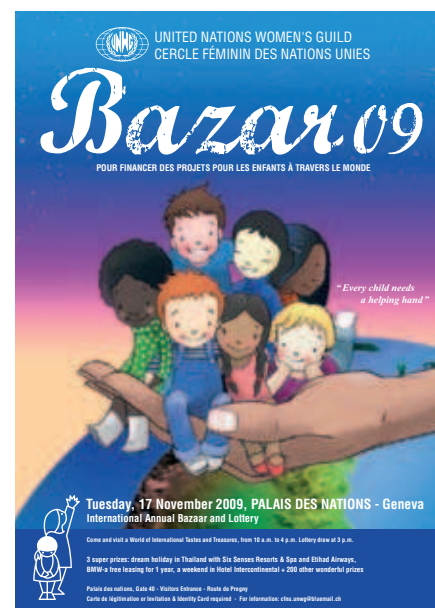
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UNITED NATIONS WOMEN'S GUILD'S BAZAAR



This year (2009) marked the United Nations Women's Guild's (UNWG) 39th year of existence as a non-profit organisation comprising mainly spouses of Ambassadors and Heads of the United Nations Office and other International Organisations based in Geneva.

DR. PERPETUA UHOMOIBHI, CHAIRWOMAN, 2009 UNWG BAZAAR COMMITTEE

Each year, the Guild organises a Bazaar event, which brings together the international community of Geneva, thus fostering a spirit of friendship and collaboration among them.

Accepting to chair the Guild's 2009 Bazaar Committee was, for me, not an easy decision. At the time the President of the Guild first broached the idea, I was already President of the African Ambassadors' Spouses Group in Geneva, and was therefore tasked with organising the African Charity Gala Night scheduled for June 2009. I must say however, that my decision was made easier by the encouragement and support of my husband, the Ambassador of Nigeria, and by the fact that the objective of the Bazaar

seemed patently just to me and therefore well worth the sacrifice.

Upon accepting the responsibility, I immediately, in consultation with the President of the Guild, assembled a team of dynamic, dedicated and experienced women to constitute the Bazaar Committee. We worked tirelessly from May 2009, individually and in subcommittees, with the singular resolve of delivering a successful Bazaar in November 2009 as scheduled. This meant that even during the summer holidays, committee members were hard at work to achieve this goal.

I must confess that the Bazaar Committee had its moments of anxiety particularly with getting attractive prizes for the lottery from our usual sponsors. However, thanks to their persistence our donors came through for us

and we were able to obtain sufficient prizes to back up our tickets sales for the lottery. Records indicate that the tickets sold were substantial, for which the lottery and distribution team deserve special commendation.

The theme chosen for the 2009 bazaar – “Every child needs a helping hand” – could not have been more appropriate. It suitably reflected both the vision and the mission of the Guild, which is mainly to reach out to the less privileged in societies, particularly children. I wish especially to commend the Publicity team for producing an excellent and timely Bazaar Brochure and posters.

A total of seventy-nine Permanent Missions participated in this year's Bazaar by having either national or restaurant stalls or both. The Guild itself, as organisers of the event, had eighteen stalls in all. In terms of guests' attendance, information available indicate that this year's Bazaar attracted record participation, including staff of the UN Office, Permanent Missions and their families and other guests. All of these attest to the fact that the interest of the Geneva international community to continue to support the Guild's Bazaar remained strong in spite of the prevailing global economic and financial situation.

As on previous occasions, the 2009 Bazaar was declared open by the Director-General

of the UN Office in Geneva, H.E. Sergei Ordzhonikidze, ably assisted by his elegant wife, Mrs Elena Ordzhonikidze. For the first time in the history of the Bazaar, the Guild was honoured with the presence of the President of the Council of State of the Canton of Geneva, Mr. David Hiler and Mrs. Hiler, as well as other high officials from the government of the Canton of Geneva.

The highlight of the day's proceedings was the lottery draw. It began promptly at 3 p.m. under the able supervision of the Lottery Chairwoman. The relevant Cantonal authorities were on hand to ensure compliance with State laws regarding lottery. The prizes on offer included two return business class tickets with Etihad Airways plus 5-nights' stay in the Soneva Kiri Resort in Thailand, a one-year free use of a BMW car plus a BMW bicycle and a weekend stay for two at the Intercontinental Hotel, Geneva, among others.

The Bazaar took place in a generally peaceful and festive atmosphere thanks to the efficiency of the UN Security Team. Equally noteworthy was the commendable role played by the Invitation and Protocol Subcommittee, which collaborated, with the UN Security Team in a sustained and regular basis to ensure a hitch-free event.

In my opinion, the Bazaar was a resounding success, judging by the numerous compliments received from different visitors to the event. The Guild certainly owes this success to the support and generosity of the Permanent Missions, the cooperation of the concerned UN staff and the contributions of our numerous donors and sponsors worldwide, for which we are grateful.

I also wish to use this opportunity to extend our appreciation to the Director-General of the UNOG, H.E. Mr Sergei Ordzhonikidze and his wife, for their cooperation and support, as well as for the tremendous support we received from our host, the Swiss Mission, represented by the wife of the Swiss Ambassador, Mrs Marie-Paule Martinelli. Lastly I am grateful to the Bazaar Committee members for their loyalty and support, which made the work of organising the Bazaar a pleasurable and rewarding experience for me. ■

UN STAFF PARTY 2009



Organized by the UNOG Staff Coordinating Council, 1,500 of you turned out to the annual staff party, which took place in the E-Building on Friday 4 December. Mazombo and Time Machine kept you going into the early hours and many were still around when the party closed its doors at 2.30 a.m.



While the party's budget was down on last year, it seems that more was done with less and the feedback has been extremely positive. ■



UNE JOURNÉE À MARSEILLE



Mes connaissances de Marseille se bornaient à mes souvenirs d'enfant. Le soleil toujours présent, de longues marches qui nous menaient à la mer, d'immenses avenues – tout paraît plus grand à 10 ans –, une plage de sable fin si doux au toucher et ces vagues qui nous surprenaient et nous coupaient le souffle. Et, surtout, cet accent chantant que nous étions fiers de prendre, de retour chez nous, afin de montrer que nous étions allés en vacances «dans le Midi».

TEXTE ET PHOTOS JOËLLE MENETREY, OMS

Puis, plus tard, je perçus la cité phocéenne à travers les images que véhiculaient les actualités, côté sombre et peu enchanteur de bagarres rivales, grèves ou manifestations. Quelle méprise. Que ne suis-je retournée plus tôt rendre une petite visite aux Marseillais! Dès l'approche de la ville, mon regard est captivé par une statue étincelante de la Vierge surplombant la cité. Construction emblématique, œuvre de Lequesne, cette sculpture haute de plus de 11 mètres réalisée en bronze doré à la feuille d'or par les ateliers Christofle fut

érigée en 1870 sur la campanile de la basilique Notre Dame de la Garde. L'édification de ce lieu de culte et de pèlerinage commença en 1853 sous la houlette de l'architecte Henri Espérandieu. Sur la colline de la Garde existait déjà une chapelle du même nom, édifiée en 1214. Centre de dévotion qui s'avéra au fil des siècles trop exigu pour les nombreux pèlerins de toutes confessions venant déposer des ex-voto, elle céda la place à la basilique, affectueusement dénommée par les Marseillais «la Bonne Mère».

Un petit train bleu partant du Vieux Port nous emmène, longeant la rade où se mirent le Château d'If et les îles du Frioul, dépassant l'Abbaye de Saint-Victor où dorment Victor et ses compagnons, les premiers martyrs de Marseille. Il grimpe allègrement la colline, nous laissant admirer le plus ancien jardin public de la ville, le parc Pierre Puget, que garde jalousement la statue du sculpteur et architecte marseillais. Au détour d'un virage le proche passé nous rejoint: le char Jeanne d'Arc témoigne de la libération de Notre Dame de la Garde le 25 août 1944. Mais bien vite ces souvenirs dramatiques s'estompent, car nous atteignons les vestiges du fort construit en 1524 sous les ordres de François 1^{er}, assise de la basilique actuelle, où l'on retrouve au-dessus du porche nord la signature du Roi: une salamandre. Au pied du grand escalier qui monte à Notre Dame, nous nous laissons envahir par ce sentiment de protection ressenti par chaque visiteur de la Bonne Mère. Subjuguée par l'impressionnant panorama, je découvre, du haut des 162 m de dénivelé, la ville, sa rade, son Vieux Port et son quartier historique, le Panier.

Le nom de ce quartier aurait pour origine l'enseigne d'une auberge du XVII^e siècle, «Le Logis du Panier». C'est un véritable village dans la cité, avec ces ruelles pavées destinées aux promeneurs amusés par leurs noms pittoresques – les Belles-Ecuelles, les Muettes, rue du Petit Puits – ou aux Marseillais installés là par amour pour son côté typique. Un parcours a été tracé, ponctué de petits tableaux pour les visiteurs soucieux de plonger au cœur de son histoire. Il débute devant la Vieille Charité qui abrite maintenant des expositions occasionnelles,



des musées comme celui des Arts africains, océaniques et amérindiens et autres structures culturelles. C'est en 1671 qu'est posée la première pierre de cet édifice, l'une des plus belles réalisations de Pierre Puget, natif du Panier, qui s'était vu confier par le Conseil des Echevins un projet d'hôpital général afin de satisfaire à la politique royale de «renfermer dans un lieu propre et choisir les pauvres natifs de Marseille». Tour à tour hôpital, hospice réservé aux vieillards et aux enfants, abri pour l'armée en 1905 puis refuge pour les plus démunis, la Charité fut classée monument historique en 1951.

Relais entre la Vieille Charité et le Préau des Accoules, le bar des Treize Cantons, sur la place du même nom, permet au promeneur d'étancher sa soif, tandis que l'ancienne auberge où Casanova a séjourné le plonge dans un passé sulfureux.

La montée des Accoules, ruelle étroite et très pentue, séparée par des mains courantes en fer et un caniveau, conduit au Préau des Accoules. De première vocation observatoire astronomique des Jésuites puis Académie des Sciences, Arts et Belles Lettres de Marseille, c'est aujourd'hui un musée dédié entièrement aux enfants.

La place des Moulins octroie une petite halte très agréable, à l'ombre des platanes. C'est un coin où l'on se sent protégé, abrité du Mistral et des bruits de la ville. Son ter-

rain de pétanque et ses bancs renvoient vraiment l'image du sud. Il ne manque que le pastis! Point culminant de la vieille ville, elle joua un rôle primordial, des canons protégeant des agressions terrestres et maritimes. Au XVI^e siècle, on y dénombrait quinze moulins. Seules les bases de trois de ces dompteurs de vent subsistent encore.

A la rue du Petit Puits, nous découvrons une échoppe «72% Pétanque», dédiée à ce produit qui instinctivement nous relie au nom de Marseille – le savon. Je ne connaissais que ce cube très parfumé, opaque, brun ou beige, aux inscriptions énigmatiques. Quelle surprise de découvrir toutes ces formes, toutes ces couleurs, et même ces parfums! Il se vend en barres, aussi. Mais point de «vrai» savon ici; celui de mon enfance n'est pas à vendre; il est devenu pièce de collection.

De retour sur le Vieux Port, nous déambulons parmi les étals pleins de crustacés désireux de prendre la poudre d'escampette et de poissons luisants, découvrons des escargots confortablement installés dans un landau d'enfant qu'une vieille femme propose à la criée. Nous reconnaissons la «bonne bouille» d'un Marseillais très occupé à bavarder avec un auditeur attentif et nous écoutons quelques instants, au risque de paraître indiscrets, leur langage si ensoleillé, si imagé.

Le Vieux Port est aujourd'hui principalement port de plaisance et point de départ pour

le Château d'If, les îles du Frioul et les calanques de Marseille. Mais son histoire fut tourmentée. Dès le X^e siècle sont installés des chantiers de charpentes et de constructions navales sur les marais asséchés de la rive Est du port. Des cordiers travaillent le chanvre, *canebe* en provençal, qui donnera le nom de la Canebière. Les quais sont édifiés entre le XV^e siècle et le XVII^e siècle; la ville s'étend sur les rives. Jusqu'au XX^e siècle, de petites embarcations transportent les passagers d'une rive à l'autre à la rame. Puis en 1905 un pont transbordeur est construit, facilitant la traversée à hauteur des forts Saint-Jean et Saint-Nicolas. Il sera détruit en 1944. Le port connut des revers tragiques durant la Seconde Guerre mondiale. Le vieux quartier sur la rive nord fut dynamité maison par maison par les occupants nazis avec l'aide de la police française durant la «rafle de Marseille». Il n'en restera qu'un champ de ruines. Sa reconstruction en 1948 par l'architecte Fernand Pouillon mettra au jour des *dolia* datant de l'époque romaine qui sont exposés *in situ* au Musée des Docks romains.

Nous clôturons ce petit tour de ville en poussant notre promenade jusqu'à la maison diamantée, construction du XVI^e siècle exceptionnelle par le décor de bossages en pointe de diamants de sa façade et son escalier à caissons, unique à Marseille. Tout d'abord demeure de riches commanditaires d'origine espagnole et italienne, elle sera morcelée à la Révolution. A la fin du XIX^e siècle, elle sert d'abri aux travailleurs du port et aux immigrants italiens. Classée monument historique en 1925, elle échappe à la destruction de 1943, devenant ainsi le symbole de la ville ancienne disparue. Le Musée du Vieux Marseille trouva tout naturellement sa place en ses murs en 1967. Une autochtone me raconta qu'elle avait assisté au déplacement entier de cette bâtisse lors du réaménagement de l'ensemble des bâtiments de l'Hôtel de Ville, dans le quartier du Vieux Port.

Frédéric Mistral a conté dans *Calendal* l'origine de cette cité, née de l'amour de Protis de Phocée et de Gypsis, fille du roi du peuple salyen. Réalité ou légende plaisante, la plus ancienne ville de France, Massalia (son nom grec) tire de ce passé cette vocation d'accueil, de partage et de mixité des peuples de la Méditerranée. ■

POURQUOI NE PAS LE FAIRE?

LA POINTE D'ARVOIN



Je vous propose des petites balades à des degrés de difficulté différents, pour vous changer les idées, vous oxygéner et vous déstresser. N'oubliez pas: ne rien faire nuit à votre santé.

Je vous souhaite des journées de marche et de détente agréables et ensoleillées.

TEXTE ET PHOTOS ANDRÉ ROTACH

Prendre la D1005 direction Thonon-les-Bains, et arrivé au centre de Thonon, suivre la D 902 Morzine, Châtel. Arrivé à un rond-point, suivre Vallée d'Abondance par la D22 et aller jusqu'à Chapelle d'Abondance. A la sortie du village prendre à gauche direction Lac d'Arvoin, et après 6 kilomètres sur une route bitumée, se garer sur le bord de la route au point «Sevan devant 1590 mètres» point de départ.

Prendre la direction du lac d'Arvoin, passages aux points Le Trondy 1600 mètres, Sevan derrière 1625 mètres, lac d'Arvoin 1663 mètres, chalet d'Arvoin 1720 mètres. A

cet endroit suivre sur la droite la direction du col de Salavenaz sur un chemin étroit pentu. Arrivé à une bifurcation (balisage inexistant) prendre sur la gauche, pour passer au col de Savalène 1862 mètres (deux orthographes différentes pour ce lieu). Ce col délimite la frontière avec la Suisse, borne de 1891. Continuer sur la gauche pour monter à la pointe d'Arvoin. Montée en deux heures, retour par le même chemin en une heure soit au total trois heures pour un dénivelé de 431 mètres.

Pour plus de détails, voir: *Alpes magazine, spécial rando 2008.*

Indispensable: une carte IGN pour la France 3528 et Morzine

Ne pas oublier de vous équiper de bonnes chaussures de marche et de vêtements adaptés à l'altitude et à la saison.

BONNE PROMENADE.
ET (S)PORTEZ-VOUS BIEN! ■

WHY NOT DO IT?

LA POINTE D'ARVOIN



I am proposing a few small hikes of varying degrees of difficulty, to let you see new things, get some fresh air and relax a bit.

Don't forget: doing nothing is bad for your health. Here's hoping you have fun hiking in pleasant and sunny weather.

ANDRÉ ROTACH

(English translation by David Winch)

Take the D1005 road towards Thonon-les-Bains, and once you reach the centre of Thonon, take the D902 towards Morzine, until Châtel. Once you arrive at a roundabout, follow the directions to Vallée d'Abondance along the D22 and continue to the Chapelle d'Abondance. On leaving the village, go left towards Lac d'Arvoin. After

6 kilometres on a paved road, park on the side of the road at the point "Sevan devant 1590 mètres"; this is the starting-point.

Head towards Lac d'Arvoin, passing by route points Le Trondy (1,600 metres), Sevan derrière (1,625 m), Lac d'Arvoin (1,663 m) and Châlet d'Arvoin (1,720 m). At this point, go to the right towards Col de Salavenaz along a narrow and steep path. At the fork in the path (no markers), head left towards Col

de Savalène at 1,862 metres (there are two different spellings for this place name). This ridge marks the border with Switzerland, as demarcated in 1891. Continue to the left up the peak of Arvoin. You can go up in two hours, then return by the same path in an hour, for a total hike of three hours and a change in altitude of 431 metres.

For more details, see *Alpes magazine*, "spécial rando 2008".

Indispensable: an IGN map of France 3528 et Morzine

Don't forget to wear good hiking boots and weather-suitable clothing.

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LA VOITURE À AIR COMPRIMÉ ARRIVE EN SUISSE



Dans notre numéro de mars 2009, nous vous présentions les voitures fonctionnant à air comprimé imaginées par le français Guy Nègre. Une année après, sa société MDI (Motor Development International) qui commercialise ces véhicules a continué sur sa lancée et la petite voiture écologique va bientôt circuler en Suisse.

TEXTE CLAUDE MAILLARD, PHOTOS MDI

Construire des véhicules zéro pollution, Guy Nègre et son équipe se sont penchés sur ce projet depuis très longtemps, mais l'ingénieur français voulait aller encore plus loin. A quoi bon vouloir protéger la couche d'ozone en fabriquant des voitures conçues dans ce but s'il faut des moyens de transport polluants pour les acheminer vers leurs différents lieux d'utilisation! Contrairement aux grandes usines d'assemblage conventionnelles situées à un endroit spécifique, le concept MDI est basé sur de nombreuses petites usines de production répandues à travers le monde. Tous les achats sont gérés à partir de la centrale d'achat MDI basée près de Nice, mais 80% des pièces de la voiture sont fabriquées localement pour être ensuite vendue sur place.

Autre avantage, et pas des moindres de nos jours, la richesse produite sur chaque lieu de fabrication contribue localement

au tissu économique et social en créant des emplois. C'est ce que Henri-Philippe Sambuc va mettre en place au travers de sa société Catecar qui va produire la voiture à air comprimé en Suisse. Pour l'instant, seuls les modèles AirPod et OneFlowAir sortiront des chaînes de montage de son usine de Reconvilier, dans le Jura bernois.

L'AirPod, petite, compacte, trois places, destinée surtout au milieu urbain avec sa vitesse maximum de 70 km/h a une autonomie de 200 km. Quant à la OneFlowAir, «méhari» des temps modernes qui peut accueillir jusqu'à cinq personnes, elle est prévue pour parcourir 800 km à 110 km/h. La recharge en air comprimé demande trois minutes et son coût est vraiment dérisoire.

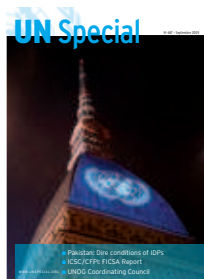
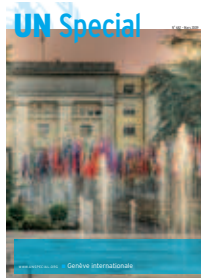
Henri-Philippe Sambuc pense pouvoir commencer la production de ces voitures dès mars 2010 dans son usine qui emploiera cent

vingt personnes. En cinq ans, quarante mille véhicules devraient sortir de ses ateliers, mais il faudra également créer un réseau de deux cents garages équipés de compresseurs qui permettront de couvrir la Suisse.

L'École polytechnique fédérale de lausanne (EPFL) croit au potentiel de l'air comprimé et vient de signer un accord de coopération avec la société MDI. Le professeur Alfred Rufer qui dirige le laboratoire d'électronique industrielle de la célèbre université vaudoise a confirmé que des études vont être entreprises pour, entre autres, améliorer la production et le stockage de l'air comprimé dans les stations de recharge.

Vu les succès que l'EPFL a déjà connus ces dernières années avec Ernesto Bertarelli et Alinghi (double vainqueur de la Coupe America), avec l'Hydroptère (trimaran volant détenteur du record absolu de vitesse à la voile) et avec Bertrand Piccard (qui a fait le tour du monde sans escale en ballon et dont l'avion Solar Impulse fonctionnant à l'énergie solaire devrait réaliser le tour du monde en 2011), on imagine que sa collaboration avec MDI devrait faire parler d'elle très bientôt. ■

MDI, c'est bien entendu Guy Nègre, mais aussi une équipe de collaborateurs passionnés et performants. Lors du salon de l'automobile de Genève, nous avons rencontré Sébastien Braud, chargé de la communication au sein du groupe depuis dix ans. Après avoir soutenu activement le projet de la voiture à air comprimé en Espagne (pays qu'il affectionnait tout particulièrement), Sébastien travaillait au siège de l'usine près de Nice. Le personnage était passionnant et très attachant. Malheureusement, un stupide accident de la circulation nous l'a enlevé et il nous manquera beaucoup.



UN Special

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perfection is our nature

High voltage photography of fingertips

From the time the patient enters the Clinic, the Clinique Générale-Beaulieu's care policy translates into a constant effort to listen and provide top-quality care. Our Guest Relations department and the entire nursing staff interact thoughtfully with the clients. The teams in our eight specialized centers are made up of well-known, experienced professionals who provide advanced care under the safest of conditions. The Clinic's maternity unit and the surgical suite have the most modern equipment. Well-known licensed physicians and a high-quality environment ensure that the patient will receive care meeting his or her expectations.

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