

# UN Special



A HISTORIC PEACE AGREEMENT

# Colombia



N°763 – OCTOBRE 2016

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**ALEXANDER MEJIA**

Rédacteur en chef / Editor-in-chief

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3 This edition of the *UN Special* is indeed special. Colombia has been suffering an internal conflict for more than five decades, and there is finally light at the end of the tunnel. At the United Nations, we have been diplomatically engaged with this conflict from afar, and at the same time, working on the front lines with Colombia's government while helping its displaced population. I served as a diplomat in this beautiful country at the end of the '90s and bore witness to one of the bloodiest parts of its history, when an ideologically-driven guerrilla army embraced indiscriminate terror, kidnapping and narco-trafficking. This edition offers a brief overview of the conflict and its DDR component (Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration), as well as views from Colombians living abroad and an interview with a former Colombian ambassador living in Geneva. We are sure you will enjoy reading these different perspectives.

In addition, we have interesting articles on day-to-day life at UNOG and WHO, covering issues of recruitment, cost of living, internships, tobacco control and other matters that could affect our jobs and our work-life balance. You will also enjoy another travel special by our regular contributor Claude Maillard, whose work has graced our pages for a long time, and who this month offers us an outstanding pictorial description of Chad. Last but not least, you will discover in these pages just a few of the many exhibitions, musical performances, architectural masterpieces, and other artistic enterprises recently or currently on display across International Geneva.

We sincerely hope you enjoy this October edition. ■

**La revue officielle des fonctionnaires internationaux des Nations Unies à Genève et de l'Organisation mondiale de la Santé**

Ce numéro du *UN Special* est en effet spécial. La Colombie a souffert d'un conflit interne pendant plus de cinq décennies et entrevoit enfin la lumière au bout du tunnel. L'ONU a été impliquée à distance sur le terrain diplomatique, parallèlement à son travail sur la ligne de front avec le gouvernement colombien et à son soutien aux populations déplacées. J'ai été diplomate dans ce beau pays à la fin des années 90 et témoin de l'une des pages les plus sanglantes de son histoire, quand une guérilla motivée par des considérations idéologiques a semé une terreur aveugle et s'est livrée à des enlèvements et au trafic de stupéfiants. Ce numéro se penche notamment sur le processus de DDR (désarmement, démobilisation et réintégration), permet de saisir le point de vue de Colombiens vivant à l'étranger et relate l'entretien conduit avec un ancien ambassadeur colombien vivant à Genève.

Ce numéro contient aussi des articles intéressants sur la vie quotidienne à l'ONUG et à l'OMS, relatifs au recrutement, au coût de la vie, aux stages, au contrôle du tabac et à d'autres questions pouvant impacter nos emplois et l'équilibre vie professionnelle/privée. Vous apprécierez également le récit du voyage de notre collègue Claude Maillard, dont le travail honore nos pages depuis longtemps, offrant une description picturale exceptionnelle du Tchad. Enfin, vous découvrirez quelques-uns des nombreux spectacles musicaux, chefs-d'œuvre architecturaux, expositions et autres manifestations artistiques à l'affiche dans la Genève internationale.

Nous espérons sincèrement que vous apprécierez ce numéro d'octobre. ■

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# War and peace in Colombia

## Five decades on

*An overview of the Colombian conflict in light of the historic peace accords reached this August.*



**JESSICA HANEY, UNITAR**

“The war is over.” Just over one month ago, Chief Government negotiator Humberto de la Calle made this pronouncement from Havana, declaring an end to the longest-running war in the Western hemisphere. After 52 brutal years, 220,000 people killed, 25,000 disappeared, and 5.7 million displaced, the Government of Colombia and the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia, or FARC, have officially decreed *No Más*.

It’s been a long time coming. This half-century-long conflict was itself a product of the period known in Colombia as *La Violencia*, which lasted from 1948–1958, and was essentially a civil war between the nation’s Liberal and Conservative parties. The official end to this conflict left many communist groups with their demands still unmet, and left the rural poor still neglected and impoverished. As a result, when *La Violencia* drew to a close, Marxist-Leninist

revolutionary groups spawned during the conflict retreated to the countryside, and continued to operate in the name of the nation’s long-oppressed agrarian majority.

One such group was led by Manuel Marulanda, himself then a member of the Colombian Communist Party (PCC). He led his band of rebels to settle in the town of Marquetalia, seeking to create a society that met the needs of poor farmers. Marulanda’s group and those like it decried the concentration of land ownership in the hands of a wealthy few, and professed other Marxist and Bolivarian-inspired goals. In 1964, 350 of these fighters came together for the First Guerilla Conference, officially calling for improved conditions for poor farmers and for land reform. The group named itself the Southern Bloc, and, while armed, operated mainly as a defensive force. That same year in Marquetalia, this small band of rebels led by Marulanda had

its first military confrontation with the Colombian government, and the 52-year-old war was launched.

Within a few years, the group undertook a shift in strategy. Instead of simply defending its rural communities from government attacks, the group began to actively train soldiers for combat and to carry out attacks of its own. In addition, it began to offer civil and social services in these communities, becoming the main source of such infrastructure in those areas, and thereby further intertwining itself with the civilian population. It was only two years after its founding, in 1966, that the Southern Bloc was rechristened *las Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia*.

In 1972, Marulanda started to establish fully-fledged training camps for guerrillas. To fund its increasing array of both military and civilian activities, the FARC often kidnapped for





Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon meets with Juan Manuel Santos Calderón, President of Colombia, in Cartagena, 26 September 2016



Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon addresses attendees at the signing of the Colombia Peace Agreements, in Cartagena

ransom, targeting politicians and elites. However, the boom in illicit drug trafficking in the late 1970s opened another door of opportunity. Cocaine trafficking grew to become one of the group's primary activities, to the extent that many outside groups and governments classify the FARC as a drug cartel. Money from this business, as well as from continued kidnapping and extortion, powered the group's massive growth over the ensuing decades. All of these activities were carried out against a backdrop of crippling rural poverty across the country, further enhancing the FARC's appeal and ability to recruit new followers.

Multiple peace talks have been initiated over the course of the decades. The first began in 1982, under the auspices of President Belisario Betancur, and resulted two years later in the Uribe Accords. The parties managed to maintain a bilateral ceasefire from 1984 to 1987, enabling the FARC to co-found a legitimate political party, the Patriotic Union (UP) in 1985. The UP had wide success in elections, but was soon undermined by the re-eruption of violence, in which many UP leaders were assassinated or disappeared. As a result, the FARC withdrew from legalized politics

and the peace process was left in tatters.

The tenure of President Andrés Pastrana also saw new efforts at peace. In 1998, President Pastrana surrendered a huge swathe of territory to FARC control, meant to function as a de-militarized zone and safe haven, and as prelude to a new round of peace talks. Those talks extended from 1999 to 2002; but by the end, the FARC had effectively turned the DMZ – an area approximately the size of Switzerland – not into a refuge, but into its own miniature, violence-filled narco-state.

By the early 2000s, the FARC was at the peak of its power. Its number of fighters had grown from only 6,000 in 1982 to nearly 20,000 at the turn of the century. In 2006, a United States Justice Department indictment estimated that the FARC alone supplied over half the world's total cocaine. The group was officially classified as a terrorist organization by both the United States and the European Union, and its activities in child-soldier kidnapping, sexual violence, landmine use, extortion of local communities and elites, forced displacement, and of course drug trafficking continued to terrorize the Colombian populace.

The weakening of the FARC in recent years is widely attributed to President Álvaro Uribe, who was elected in 2002 on the platform of a promised military crackdown. Over the course of his eight-year tenure, he delivered on this promise, presiding over an unprecedented military offensive against FARC. The government's new resolve was backed by a controversial aid package from the United States military, dubbed Plan Colombia; it was initiated in 2000 by then-President Pastrana, and eventually helped finance the crackdown to the tune of \$10 billion. Many observers believe the current peace talks would have been impossible without President Uribe's efforts, which drastically weakened the FARC's fighting capacity, creating the conditions on the ground that would lead them to the table.

Current President Juan Manuel Santos was elected in this context. He initiated the fourth and final round of peace talks in 2012, and, four grueling years later, was just able to announce to his country "the beginning of the end of the suffering, the pain, and the tragedy of war." The sweeping and (some would say) miraculous accord was signed in Havana on August 24, 2016.

Over the course of the past four years, government and FARC negotiators have laboured tirelessly around five critical issues. The first addresses the immediate disarmament and ultimate reintegration of some 7,000 FARC soldiers, plus an undetermined number of militiamen. In the coming months, these combatants are slated to gather in 31 designated locations around the country, where they will turn in their arms to a UN monitoring commission. UNICEF will also play a critical role in the reintegration of child soldiers into civilian life, many of whom were abducted when they were small, and have known nothing but jungle warfare.

Equally critical will be the eradication of drug crops and the FARC's trafficking network, which has fueled the violence; the government and the FARC have agreed on a roadmap in which they will work in tandem to dismantle the illicit drug trade. Thirdly, the government has committed itself to invest in rural development, and in other programmes to address economic inequality: the backdrop for this conflict from its earliest days.

The accord also stipulates measures for the transformation of FARC soldiers into



legitimate political actors, promising them the ability to form a political party, and thus a means to address their grievances non-violently. And finally, the accord provides the framework for a transitional justice system that prioritizes reparation and reconciliation. Under the auspices of a special tribunal, FARC members who make a full confession to atrocities will not serve jail time; instead, they will be tasked with community service and other acts of reparation. The tribunal will consist of both Colombian and international judges, and is set to open with over 32,000 cases.

August 24 was a watershed moment and a victory for peace, to say the least; nevertheless, the hard-won provisions in the accord are far from a done deal. The peace agreement will be subject to a nationwide up-or-down

referendum on October 2, shortly after this article goes to press. Overall public opinion is presently hard to gauge, but most observers agree that President Santos has a critical role to play in selling the deal to the Colombian populace. Former President Uribe has long been critical of this latest peace process, and now leads a campaign to reject the accords entirely. He and his allies see the deal as akin to amnesty for terrorists and war criminals, and maintain that at least some FARC leaders must face jail time and bans from political office. In his strident criticism of President Santos, Uribe suggests that reparation and reconciliation are not sufficient, and that the only just peace must be bought at the hands of a full military conquest. On this question, the Colombian public will make its views known shortly, and their

word will be the final one on the adoption of these accords.

Should this question of political will be surmounted, many questions of implementation will still abound. First and foremost, can the FARC leadership ensure that all fighters actually hand over their weapons? For example, can soldiers who were kidnapped as children, and who have known no other life, be expected to accept and to keep to such a deal, in practice? In addition, while disarmament is key, dismantling the lucrative drug trade which fuels the violence is just as crucial. If the government and the FARC are not able to work together to curtail this financial incentive, any peace deal risks collapse. Finally, the Colombian government must be able to quickly and effectively fill the vacuum that will be left by the FARC in rural areas, especially where

the FARC provided critical social and civil services. The success of rural economic development remains, as it has been throughout this long war, the only long-term guarantor of peace.

Should these hard-won accords pass muster on October 2, the nation of Colombia will be set to embark on its most promising path to real peace in over half a century. Such a declaration of peace is already a triumph, and bodes well for the long, hard work that will come next: taking those accords to ground level, and building each of their promises into the everyday lives of all Colombians. ■



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# Interview with former Ambassador Claudia Uribe

## A Colombian living in Geneva

INTERVIEW BY UN SPECIAL

### How would you describe the Colombian conflict?

This sad period of our history began as a reaction to the inequality that our country lived through in the 50s and 60s. Unfortunately, we have always had a vast majority of poor people in our population and a small group of rich and privileged. To that you have to add the ideological component that led the guerrillas to occupy geographical spaces – in an attempt to impose the Marxist model – where the Colombian State was absent. It has been sixty years of an internal war that brought violence and devastation to many rural towns but also bombs and terror to the cities. Our agricultural and industrial sectors were negatively affected at the same time that narco-trafficking became the main activity of the FARC guerrilla in the conflict region. The war also destroyed the soul of our nation and the values and principles of the young people fighting on both sides. The response of the government in the last decade was to successfully escalate the war with a stronger army, but that success came at a high cost. The military expenditure in 2015 amounted to 3.5% of GDP. The biggest military in the world, the USA, spends 3.3% of its GDP. A paradox indeed.

### After the cease-fire and the peace agreement, what is the expected impact of the referendum scheduled for early October?

It is no surprise that some Colombians are not happy with what has transpired so far. There are loud voices claiming that the peace negotiation has conceded too much to the insurgents at the same time that it has failed to protect and do justice to the people that have suffered from their actions. However, a good negotiation does not depend only on 'how good' the negotiators are but on 'how much' both parties are willing to concede to reach common ground. This agreement is not perfect but is indeed a lot better than the status quo.

The government negotiators did their best, and both parties have given concessions to reach a deal, so we must appreciate the effort and remember that six decades of destruction should not be prolonged. How could we continue to live in fear? I sincerely hope that on 2 October we vote for a resounding YES to the peace agreement and finally move on as a country, towards the demobilization and reconciliation phase. The impact of a lasting peace will be tangible, as we will be in a position to decrease military spending and increase investments in health, education and infrastructure. We will be saying YES to peace and human rights. Peace will usher in an economic boost, more employment and a higher minimum wage: A Colombia that is more egalitarian today and with less inequality in its future.

### Why does Geneva need to know more about this peace process?

Geneva is – par excellence – the City of Peace. It is in Switzerland, the only country in the world with a constitutional mandate to foster peace around the globe. We have here a high concentration of peace organizations and observatories, peace actors and experts working in the 'Geneva International' cluster, and most important, a peace machinery at the United Nations that does not exist in any other city of the world. Colombia has a lot to tell the world, but the war has shadowed its discourse and its regional leadership. Now is the time to engage more with Geneva-based opinion-leaders during this peace process to share our expertise with the rest of the world. We should enhance our engagement here also to debate drug legalization and small-arm disarmament. Geneva is the place to be for these type of dialogues.


### Can you name some countries that have supported the peace process?

The international community has been very much involved in this process and many nations have shown tangible solidarity, so I believe it would be difficult to name countries. This being said, Norway

and Cuba must be at the top of the list, as they hosted the peace dialogues and were directly involved in organizing the most difficult part of the process: the convening of actors, the logistics of the dialogues, and the thematic components covered. Switzerland and the European Union were also great contributors, as well as neighbouring countries like Ecuador, Peru, Brazil, Venezuela and Panama. Colombia will remain grateful for years to come.

### What would be the role of the United Nations in the implementation of the peace agreement?

The UN has been a crucial actor in this process. The organization has been in Colombia from its beginnings given that our country has faced many challenges since



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the UN was created in 1945. Not many people know, but Colombia is the country with the highest number of UN agencies and UN personnel in Latin America. As soon as this agreement goes into force the UN will begin to implement what is perhaps its most critical task: it will oversee (and guarantee) the demobilization of guerrilla fighters, who will turn in their weapons in specially designated camps around the country. This process is part of the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration phase, or Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration (DDR), that has been

a central component of UN post-conflict peace consolidation efforts around the globe. At the same time, all UN agencies in the country will continue their work with women, youth, children, the disadvantaged and the elderly. A special focus is given to the IDP or Internally Displaced Population, as millions have left their rural communities throughout the war years to resettle in urban areas, especially in the capital, Bogota, now a city of 7 million inhabitants. IDPs in Colombia represent almost 20% of the country, a number equal to the total population of Switzerland. The UN knows well that Colombia's problems are not just military and economic: the situation is multifaceted and requires the support of the UN and all its multilateral architecture.

#### What is your opinion of the Geneva life?

I arrived in this beautiful city in 2004 as the Colombian ambassador to the WTO. In 2009 I moved on to the International Trade Center, and I have been working there since. It has been 12 years, and I can only say that I have integrated fully to the international community here. I

have got to know the many facets of this multi-cultural, cosmopolitan city that I enjoy every day. I especially admire that Switzerland empowers its citizens and any citizen living in its territory. Here the citizen is important and the state serves him or her. The administrative, legislative and legal systems work, public services are efficient, health and education are of the highest qualities. Geneva is an inspiration that must motivate us to promote convivial community-living in the countries where we come from. Here you have respect and order. I dream of the day when I can implement what I have learnt here in my beloved Colombia. I do... ■

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# Colombians abroad and the plebiscite for peace



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*599,026 Colombians abroad are eligible to vote in the plebiscite for peace this October 2nd. What are the challenges to their participation?*

**CAROLINA ESCOBAR-BLANCO**  
(EXTERNAL CONTRIBUTOR)

Colombia has reached a truly historic moment. After four years of negotiations to end the more than 50-year armed conflict, the government of President Juan Manuel Santos and the delegation of the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC), on 24 August, reached a final and definitive Agreement for the Termination of Conflict and the Construction of a Stable and Lasting Peace in Colombia. On 2 October, a plebiscite will be held, in which the President seeks popular ratification of this agreement. As determined by the Constitutional Court on July 19, a minimum of 13% of the electorate – that is to say, 4.5 million people – must vote YES in order for the accords to be approved.

The country is now immersed in a flood of campaigns for both YES and NO. The Colombian population living abroad is also bound up in this great

social and political debate, of course. However, for Colombians abroad, participation poses serious challenges.

According to UNHCR data from 2015, the Colombian population living abroad is about 4.7 million people and constitutes nearly 7.5% of the total population. Of this number, about 400,000 people have or are applying for refugee status, and are spread across 45 countries. While most have had mainly economic reasons to emigrate, there are sometimes other factors as well, such as the security situation or family relationships, among others.

Therefore, the armed conflict is present with varying levels of intensity for Colombians living outside the country. In the migration stories of some, it may have been the trigger for leaving, and/or the reason for being unable to return. As a result, the current peace process is a collective challenge

of crucial importance to promote the active participation of Colombians living abroad.

Forums and workshops organized by social groups and NGOs, in cities like New York, London, Paris, Madrid, and Barcelona, have been key not only in providing spaces to share information on the Havana talks, but also in insisting that victims abroad are very much part of the peace process.

In getting recognition for victims abroad, these organizations have come a long way. For example, in 2010, backed by the Law 1448 of 2011 and Regulatory Decree (4800, 2011), the Ministry of Foreign Affairs was granted the responsibility to guide citizens abroad on their rights, on the measures and the resources to which they have access, and to receive requests to be included in the National Register of Victims (RUV). Through the consulates, *la Ruta de Atención, Asistencia y Reparación Integral* for victims abroad was launched, which, according to the Unit for Victims, has received to date 5,347 applications for registration in the RUV. Most of these applications were received in Ecuador (1223), Canada (948), the United States (884), Venezuela (686), and Spain (510).

While progress has been made in this work, further resources from the Colombian government are needed to effectively raise awareness about the law of victims abroad, to support the reconstruction of historical memory, and to support the organizations of Colombians

abroad that have taken similar work upon themselves. However, the Colombian government's recognition of citizens abroad has evolved significantly, by considering them not simply as economic agents, but as political and social actors as well.

Thus, the statutory law (Articles 2 and 5) regulating the October 2 referendum states that the government should encourage the participation of the Colombian diaspora. In accordance with Article 2, which allows Colombians living abroad to vote, the National Electoral Council recalled that the current electoral census of this population is 599,026 people. It also established that voting will be carried out only that day from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m., according to the respective schedule of each country, and will comprise 1,372 polling stations in 203 electoral districts, across 64 countries.

However, as specified in statutory law, the participation of the Colombian diaspora in the plebiscite is not limited to mere voting. Such voting should also be exercised with full knowledge and discussion of the contents of the agreements. Thus, Article 5, related to the disclosure of the final agreement, determines that the national government has the responsibility to publish and disseminate the final agreement, and is responsible for designing a communication strategy that ensures thorough knowledge of the agreements, with the purpose of generating a broad and sufficient debate. Under paragraph 2 of this article,



March for Peace by Colombians in Geneva.

the foreign resident population should be taken into account in the design and implementation of this strategy, especially the victims of armed conflict, through Colombian embassies and consulates.

However, with regard to effective participation of Colombians abroad in the plebiscite of

October 2, two points should be noted. First, elections abroad have historically been characterized by a low participation rate (20% in the presidential elections 2014, second round), due largely to the high cost involved in voting (in terms of travel time and economic investment), and to a general Colombian disinterest in

political activity (as seen in the approximately 53% abstention in Colombia).

This latter aspect is reinforced by the perception of distant political institutions, represented only by consulates and embassies. These representations have historically focused mainly on the operation of consular procedures, without convening nationals to address their concerns regarding labour, or family and personal needs. Thus, it will be important to bring the management of Colombian consulates closer to Colombians abroad, and in the case of election days, to increase the number and geographic extent of polling stations, and to facilitate access to them. Such programmes, in addition to mobile consulates, and the fostering of closer links within and among the Colombian diaspora, would be welcome steps.

Second, and closely related to the previous point: it is crucial that the government disseminate the content of the agreements, and that its dissemination strategy is not limited to only the major cities of Colombian migration. Rather, this work must unfold across all territory under the consulate or embassy purview. These representations have a duty to lead the process, and to enable our opportunity to collectively discuss the post-conflict social construction of a genuine, stable, and lasting peace. Overcoming these challenges would help integrate all victims into the peace process. It is important to promote the active participation of the entire Colombian population abroad, not only in the plebiscite, but also in this historic moment for Colombian society. ■

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# Recidivism of former FARC fighters in Colombia

*Evidence from the Colombian Agency for the Reintegration of Individuals and Armed Groups (ACR) shows that a decrease in recidivism is linked to the existence of a strong family network. On the other hand, when a former fighter's social network is composed only of fellow veterans, recidivism rates increase.*



DAVID GUTIÉRREZ GARAY<sup>1</sup>  
OSKAR GUTIÉRREZ GARAY<sup>2</sup>

On 2 October 2016, Colombia will hold a nation-wide plebiscite, asking: “Do you support the final agreement for the termination of the conflict and building a stable and lasting peace?” The fate of the agreement will decide the future of hostilities with the FARC.

There are only two possible answers: YES or NO. For nearly 60 years, Colombia has suffered an ongoing armed, civil and social conflict, whose damages to the general population are evident. The Colombian government has taken dissuasive measures, among them the implementation of a reintegration programme, based on processes of Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration (DDR<sup>3</sup>). These DDR activities are currently led by the Colombian Agency for the Reintegration of People and Armed groups (ACR), and their main objective is to help individuals voluntarily disassociate from illegal armed groups, providing them with monetary and legal benefits to ease their integration into society.

Unfortunately, there have been difficulties in the programme's implementation and development, related in part to the diversity

of individuals who take the programme, and also to these individuals' social instability, which makes them liable to re-commit their crimes.

This phenomenon of recidivism for a demobilized population has been extensively studied across different disciplines, including psychology, economics and sociology. The nature of conflict is multifaceted and complex; thus, it is important to approach demobilization and recidivism from a variety of disciplines and backgrounds.

Studies<sup>4</sup> have identified problems such as security threats, poverty and limited political participation as inducements to a fighter to return to illegal activities. It is clear that peace will not come only with the surrender of weapons, nor just with citizen approval of the peace agreement. Building peace can only begin with the effective implementation of the Havana agreement: most especially, in its provisions for limiting recidivism, and the psychological risks to society entailed by it.

As demonstrated in socioeconomic models of crime, individuals can rationally choose to engage or not to engage in illegal activity, and will often make the decision that

maximizes their economic benefit. There are multiple factors that can facilitate criminal recidivism, such as age, gender, which armed group the person formerly belonged to, low family cohesion, weak support networks, lack of expectations and low job prospects.

One aspect that the government could strengthen would be to expand job opportunities and job training for former combatants. Theories of criminology indicate that by providing these opportunities, it is possible to reaffirm an ex-combatant's decision to continue the reintegration process.

Criminality may increase if former combatants have difficulty finding legal work, whether due to a high unemployment rate or because they have not developed the psychosocial, relational and subordination skills required for legal employment. It is therefore important to create public policies that encourage employment, rather than to provide direct monetary handouts, which could cause an ex-combatant to become dependent on welfare. However, the design of job creation policies should be done carefully, and must be accompanied by clear guidelines for social, political and psychological inclusion; social prejudice can lead

to the phenomenon of racial externalities, as studied by Masahisa Fujita.

The political participation of former combatants, one of the most sensitive issues of the Colombian peace talks, is extremely important. It provides ex-combatants with legitimate and non-violent ways to express opinions and interests.

The ability to participate politically helps to strengthen an ex-soldier's decision to remain demobilized. The demobilization of the armed group M-19 provides an example: the rate of recidivism was very low, and several of its ex-members played a role in the construction of the 1991 Constitution. Ex-combatants from M-19 also had access to elected office, and are now senators, councillors, governors and mayors.

DDR programmes of the United Nations have become very important at the end of a war: perhaps even more important than the surrender of the weapons themselves, since DDR deals directly with the satisfaction of basic needs, and ensures the sustainability of the agreement over time. The process of reintegration into civilian life should help build up the skills of former combatants, enabling them to overcome all the forces that would threaten their successful reintegration. DDR programmes should also directly address the contributing factors of war, such as social inequality, lack of opportunities in education and employment, access to health, and low quality of life.

Acts of kindness and peace must always be consistent. They must recognize the human condition of the enemy, allowing one to overcome the desire for revenge: one of our biggest challenges and dilemmas as a country. Should the nation vote YES in the referendum, we must still respect and defend the integrity of those who say NO. In doing so, we would prove ourselves truly up to the challenge of peace, and ultimately closer to making the Havana agreement a reality. ■

- 1 Economist at the Central University, Master in Economics from Universidad Javeriana. Professor of economics at the Central University.
- 2 Psychologist of the University Santo Tomas, Master in Literature from Universidad Javeriana. PhD in complex thought of the Real World Multiversity, Mexico. Professor of psychology at the University Manuela Beltran and the National Pedagogical University.
- 3 This DDR programmes are developed globally by the United Nations and the first one was carried out in El Salvador during the 90's (DDR, 2011).
- 4 Studies such as those of Bøas and Hatløy in 2008



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Credit: Colombian Reintegration Agency

# Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration: Implementing peace in Colombia

**SARAH BENCHERIF, UNITAR**

Since the early 2000s, Colombia has conducted an innovative and complex Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration (DDR) process.

However, the lack of practices and structures to facilitate communication in non-institutional contexts can limit the effectiveness of these processes. As a result, countries carrying out DDR processes need to build and fortify such mechanisms, and thereby foster effective exchange of information. To this end, the Colombian government has been implementing a DDR policy based on experiences from around the world.

## Milestones of Reintegration

The origins of DDR in Colombia go back to the Programme for Reintegration in Civilian Life (PRVC), operated by the Ministry of Interior and Justice between 2003 and 2006. The PRVC was a reintegration programme that focused on the individual, and which aimed to prepare and reform demobilized people through psychosocial care, academic training, and access to the national health system, in addition to providing them with a monthly stipend.

In the beginning, the demobilized population was relatively small, and so providing such services did not pose a problem. However, once the rate of collective and individual demobilizations grew, the PRVC became overcrowded, and faced administrative and operational difficulties.

As a result, the High Presidential Council for Reintegration was created in September 2006.

It was conceived as a mechanism to better respond to the requirements of the demobilization, particularly in the wake of the massive demobilization of the right-wing United Self-Defense Forces of Colombia (AUC, a paramilitary group). It also sought to understand reintegration as a sustainable long-term programme. The creation of this office was a milestone in the history of DDR history in Colombia; the (short-term) reincorporation programme became long-term reintegration process, with a larger management capacity, and with better tools to accompany demobilized people.

Moreover, the implementation of DDR in Colombia stands out for being developed in the midst of an ongoing conflict. As a result,

it addresses two types of demobilizations: collective demobilization (the result of a peace agreement) and individual demobilization (based on an individual's decision). Additionally, unlike other countries, Colombia assumes complete institutional responsibility of the reintegration process.

During its five years of existence, the High Presidential Council focused on converting reintegration into a state policy. It aimed to offer opportunities to demobilized people through a customized Reintegration Plan, including psychosocial, educational and economic benefits, with the objective of allowing demobilized people to have a sustainable civil life. The High Presidential Council sought to focus not only on demobilized people themselves, but also on the families and communities that received them. This practice was driven by the concept that sustainable reintegration implies not only working with the demobilized person, but also with his/her environment.

In September 2010, the new President of the Republic, Juan Manuel Santos, designated Alejandro Eder as the High Counselor for Reintegration. His appointment replaced Frank Pearl, the first person to

occupy the position under then-President Uribe. Eder led a strategic planning process which resulted in the creation of the Colombian Agency for Reintegration (ACR) on November 3, 2011. It was designated as a Special Administration Unit with legal status and autonomous equity, affiliated with the Administrative Department of the Presidency of the Republic.

In December 2013, the ACR hosted the first Global Summit on Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration (GDDRS), inviting national and international DDR programme directors as part of a strategy for South-South cooperation. Both the International Organization for Migration (IOM) and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) collaborated with the ACR for this event, in order to expand the number of reintegration initiatives in Colombia.

The Summit comprised several objectives:

1. Facilitate the exchange of information and generate knowledge about reintegration processes and peacebuilding;
2. Build on the perspectives and expertise of directors of relevant agencies and others responsible for the implementation of DDR policies around the world;
3. Create a space for networking between DDR and peacebuilding experts,
4. Take into account the need to identify strategies for the future of Colombia's current reintegration process.

The Summit also aimed to be a space to share Colombia's successful experiences, and to consolidate the various aspects reintegration and reconciliation processes.

The ACR has played a major role in the peace-making process in Colombia. Over the past 10 years, the Agency has demonstrated the need to collaborate globally, and to share knowledge and experiences, in order to better understand possible outcomes. The Colombian government and the ACR have recognized the need to collaborate with countries that share similar challenges, such as the social reintegration of ex-combatants. Until 2009, there were very few forums that promoted the exchange of knowledge and experiences in DDR.

#### Challenges to the DDR Process

The ACR process for fully reintegrating individuals into social and economic life

is called the "reintegration route". This plan provides customized attention, based on the "life project" of the individual and their particular context.

A life project is considered essential to the plan; it assumes that the reintegration process is only sustainable if the person understands the end-goal to be the autonomous exercise of citizenship. The agreement on a work plan considers not only the demobilized person, but also the different barriers that could arise. For this purpose, it is necessary to evaluate the possible impacts on the development of an individual's or family's capabilities.

Finally, the process aims to reduce the stigma of the demobilized population in Colombian society, to achieve legal stability for demobilized people, to better distribute the process to rural areas, and to continue to innovate in the development of DDR processes. ■

For more information, please visit the official website of the Colombian Agency for Reintegration: <http://www.reintegracion.gov.co/es/Paginas/default.aspx>

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# Vers un meilleur système de recrutement et de sélection?

*Quiconque regarde l'organigramme actuel du Secrétariat de l'ONU penserait au système de classes tant décrié par Karl Marx. Les G, les P et les D se succèdent dans une suite de chiffres interminables avec des différences de rémunération et de privilèges. Le G4 aspire à devenir G5 et le P2 à être promu P3 et ainsi de suite.*

**PRISCA CHAUI, UNOG**

Aspirer à un avancement de carrière n'a rien de mal en soi, bien au contraire il s'agit d'une quête légitime de chaque employé. Toutefois, lorsque tout le monde se lance dans une course effrénée dans un système de recrutement et de sélection qui souffre lui-même de failles, cela risque de tourner à une aventure cauchemardesque pour certains et pour cause...

Toute procédure de recrutement et/ou de sélection à l'ONU requiert en premier lieu de remplir les exigences du poste telles que mentionnées dans la vacance de poste. Une fois, cette étape franchie, il faut réussir le

test écrit éventuellement prévu et par la suite l'entretien d'appréciation des compétences (Competency based interview). Pour réussir cet entretien, il faut présenter les compétences énumérées dans la vacance de poste. Le responsable du poste à pourvoir peut choisir de tester un minimum de 3 compétences et un maximum de 5. Pour passer l'entretien et être placé sur la liste des candidats présélectionnés, il faut réussir toutes les compétences; en d'autres termes le seul fait de rater une des compétences entraîne l'élimination. Le panel responsable de mener l'entretien est généralement composé de trois membres, dont le responsable du poste à pourvoir et deux autres membres ayant une expertise dans le domaine concerné. Parmi ces deux membres, il est conseillé que l'un des deux soit d'un autre Département<sup>1</sup>. Une fois les candidats mis sur la liste des candidats présélectionnés et le processus approuvé par un organe central de contrôle, ils entrent dans le cercle des «privilegiés» puisque le responsable du poste finira par choisir l'un d'entre eux.

A parcourir ces informations liminaires, l'on a l'impression que tout est pour le mieux

dans le meilleur des mondes et qu'il suffit de se présenter à un poste, de réussir les tests écrits et l'entretien pour être sélectionné. Sauf, comme dans tout il y a un mais...

En effet, il est certain que lorsqu'il n'y a qu'un poste et plusieurs candidats (ce qui est toujours le cas), un seul candidat finit par être sélectionné. Ce dernier devrait, en principe et selon les dires de l'Administration, être celui qui est le plus compétent. Or, le système de sélection mis en place fait que tout se limite à ce qui se passe lors de l'entretien. Par conséquent, si un candidat n'arrive pas à prouver suffisamment qu'il est le plus compétent lors de l'entretien fatidique, il perd ses chances d'être sélectionné. Or l'on sait très bien que certains candidats peuvent être brillants dans leur travail mais incapables de vendre leurs atouts lors de l'entretien. Dans ce cas-là, l'échec est leur devenir.

La question que l'on est en droit de se poser est la suivante: est-il juste d'écarter un candidat qui a déjà fait ses preuves pour le seul motif qu'il a échoué l'entretien? La réponse est certes non. Toutefois, c'est ce qui se passe souvent. En

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réalité, les panels sont, dans la majorité des cas, composés de personnes venant d'un même Département. Et qui dit même Département, dit connaissance de près du candidat, de ses qualités et ses défauts et par conséquent une atteinte nullement intentionnelle à l'objectivité de la décision finale. Par conséquent, les entretiens d'appréciation des compétences se transforment très souvent en un outil pour valider un choix fait au préalable. En quelque sorte, cela est compréhensible puisqu'il n'est pas logique qu'un responsable d'un poste à pourvoir choisisse de recruter ou de sélectionner un candidat s'il ne peut pas s'entendre avec lui pour une raison quelconque. En parlant d'entente, je parle de l'entente professionnelle et non de l'entente dans les couloirs ou autour d'un café, qui ne devrait être nullement prise en compte dans de telles décisions. Or l'être humain étant ce qu'il

est, les affinités personnelles jouent souvent un rôle prépondérant dans le choix d'un candidat et les compétences qui doivent être le facteur déterminant tombent dans l'oubli.

Comment améliorer cette situation? A mon avis, il faut que les Panels d'entretien soient composés de deux membres d'un même Département et obligatoirement d'un membre venant d'un autre Département. C'est ce dernier qui devra jouer le rôle de garde-fou contre toute décision subjective qui risque d'être prise au final. De plus, un poids plus important devrait être accordé au document d'évaluation et de notation (le Pas) tant défendu par notre Administration. N'est-il pas regrettable de voir un candidat brillant dans son travail ne pas être sélectionné sous prétexte qu'il n'a pas réussi l'entretien? Et que fait-on de la motivation de ce dernier lorsqu'il voit que

tous les efforts qu'il a déployés pour servir l'Organisation des années durant ont été vains? La réponse à cette dernière question ne nécessite pas une élaboration puisqu'on la voit au quotidien sur le visage de bon nombre de fonctionnaires.

Et que fait l'Organisation face à cette situation? Tout simplement rien, bien qu'il existe divers moyens de rectifier le tir mais il faut en avoir la volonté. Quant à la sélection ou au recrutement à partir de la liste de candidats présélectionnés sans organiser d'entretien, il s'agit d'une pratique fortement injuste. En effet, lorsque le responsable du poste décide de sélectionner un candidat à partir de cette liste, il prive d'autres qui, peut-être n'étaient pas éligibles au moment de la mise en place de ladite liste, de toute possibilité d'avancement de carrière.

Il est certain que le changement du système de sélection et de recrutement tel qu'il est conçu ne se fera pas du jour au lendemain. Le modifier exige un changement radical des mentalités et une contribution individuelle et collective à la construction d'un nouvel édifice dont les fondements seront faits de compétences pures et simples et non de «connaissances et d'affinités individuelles». ■

1 Si le poste est à la CNUCED par exemple, un fonctionnaire du HCDH est considéré comme venant d'un autre département.



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**Thomas NEUFING,**  
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A warm thank you to our speakers from the Swiss and French authorities, and to contributors such as AFIF-AFICS or Grey Cells. In particular I would like to thank my SDLS colleague, Ms Gillian Benfield Laporte, who has been managing this programme for several years with dedication and passion!”



**Gillian BENFIELD LAPORTE,**  
Responsable du Programme de préparation à la retraite.

«Nous veillons à ce que les participants reçoivent des informations fiables pendant les présentations et nous dédions du temps pour les questions à la fin de chaque intervention. Afin d’être aussi efficaces que possible, nous communiquons une adresse email aux participants afin qu’ils puissent envoyer leurs questions à l’avance, s’ils le souhaitent. Il est fréquent que des collègues nous disent qu’ils ont collecté, au cours de la semaine, des informations précieuses dont ils auraient aimé avoir connaissance plus tôt dans leur carrière. Nous effectuons aussi un lien avec le programme d’accueil des nouveaux arrivants (Orientation Programme) dans l’organisation en demandant à chaque préretraité(e) d’écrire de petits conseils qu’il/elle a envie de donner à un nouvel arrivant dans l’Organisation. Cette activité rencontre un grand succès, tant auprès des participants au séminaire qu’avec les nouveaux membres du personnel qui, quelques mois plus tard, découvrent ces messages avec un réel intérêt.»

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- 1 day is reserved for well-being, with speakers from

the Staff Counsellor’s Office, a panel of retirees, Medical Services, AFICS and Cité Seniors ■

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# In the house built by Le Corbusier...



Le Corbusier signing his project for UN Headquarters in 1946



The Open Hand Monument in Chandigarh – India

**EVELINA RIOUKHINA AND  
OLEKSANDR SVIRCHEVSKYY**

We do not know who the next Secretary-General will be, and the whole world is holding its breath, waiting for the nomination of the person who will hold the world in his or her hands for the next 5 or 10 years. While much of the debate focuses around the qualities the future Secretary-General should possess, or whether it should be a man or woman, we know one thing at least: where his or her future home will be. Our new Secretary-General will be living in a house built by Le Corbusier: that is to say, the building of the United Nations Headquarters, which was built according to his architectural project.

Le Corbusier is an internationally influential Swiss architect and city planner, whose designs combine the functionalism of the modern movement with a bold, sculptural expressionism. He is one of the pioneers of what is now called modern architecture. He was born Charles-Édouard Jeanneret-Gris in La Chaux-de-Fonds, canton of Neuchâtel, Switzerland on October 6, 1887. He died (suddenly, while swimming) on August 27, 1965 in Cap Martin, France. He adopted “Le Corbusier” (an altered form of his maternal grandfather’s name, Lecorbésier) as his pseudonym in 1920, while writing for a magazine, and he remains known by this name all over the world. In 1930, he acquired French citizenship, and thus today he is considered a Swiss-French architect; but he was also a designer, painter and writer. His career spanned five decades, and the houses designed by Le Corbusier were constructed throughout Europe, Asia (India), Latin America and the United States.

He left a tremendous heritage, which is still much argued about, but which undoubtedly has universal values for humanity. His early years were marked by the Villas in La Chaux-de-Fonds, Switzerland: Villa Fallet (1905-06), Villa Strotzer (1907-1908), Villa Jeanneret-Perre (1912) and Schwob (1916), Villa Le Lac, Corseaux (near Vevey),

(1928), and three villas in Paris: Villa Besnu (1922), Villa La Roche (1928), and Villa Jeanneret (1923-25).

After these years, he began to seek out efficient ways to house large numbers of people in response to the urban housing crisis. He believed that his new, modern architectural forms would provide an organizational solution that would raise the quality of life for the middle classes. His Immeubles Villas (1922) was just such a project, calling for large blocks of cell-like individual apartments stacked one on top of the other, with plans that included a living room, bedrooms, kitchen, as well as a garden terrace. This concept was used in his famous Maison Clarté, built in 1930-1931 in Geneva. This was also the time



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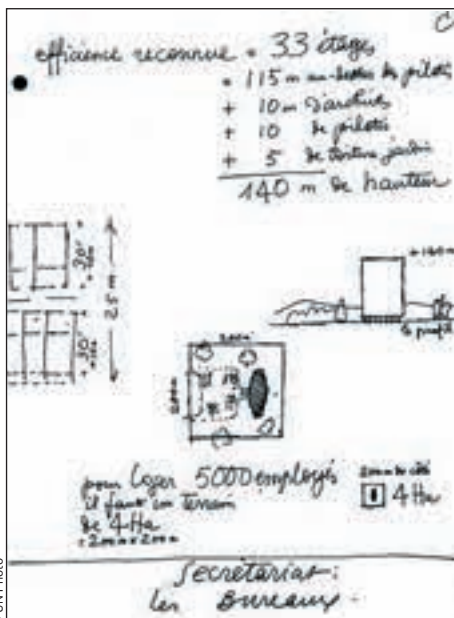
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United Nations Secretariat Building in New York

when his rational functionalism began to be balanced by a desire for expression. The end of the 1930s saw such famous projects as the masterplans for Algiers (1938–42) and Buenos Aires (1938); the extravagant building of Tsentrsoyuz, Moscow, USSR (1933); the building for the



© UN Photo

Sketch by Le Corbusier of the UN Headquarters building in 1946

Ministry of Education and Health in Rio de Janeiro (1936); and an infinitely expandable museum for Philippeville (1938), in French North Africa.

Big complexes or even entire cities fascinated Le Corbusier, and the same year

he presented his scheme for a “Contemporary City” for three million inhabitants (*Ville Contemporaine*). The centerpiece of this plan was the group of sixty-story cruciform skyscrapers, steel-framed office buildings encased in huge curtain walls of glass. Referred to as towers in a park, these skyscrapers were set within large, rectangular, park-like green spaces. At the center was a huge, multi-layer transportation hub that included depots for buses and trains, highway intersections, and, at the top, an airport. He dreamed of “cleaning and purging” the city, bringing “a calm and powerful architecture” through the use of steel, plate glass, and reinforced concrete.

His dream to construct a large complex came true in the 1950s. The French government entrusted Le Corbusier with the opportunity to construct a large housing/residential complex in Marseille that embodied his vision of a social environment. His project, *Unité d'Habitation* of Marseille, is a vertical community of 18 floors. The 1,800 inhabitants are housed in 23 types of duplex (split-level) apartments. Common services include two

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“streets” inside the building, with shops, a school, a hotel, and on the roof, a nursery, a gymnasium and an open-air theatre. The apartments are conceived as individual “villas” stacked in the concrete frame like bottles in a rack. It was completed in 1952, and two more *unités* were built at other locations in France, at Nantes and Briey, as well as others in West Berlin.

In 1951, after Le Corbusier had built several constructions in Ahmedabad, India, the Government of the Punjab named him architectural advisor for the construction of its new capital, Chandigarh. For the first time, Le Corbusier applied his principles of city

planning on a metropolitan scale. He designed the Palace of Justice, the Secretariat, and the Palace of Assembly. Unfinished concrete, with windows sheltered by enormous concrete sunshades, sculptural facades, swooping rooflines, and monumental ramps are principal elements of his architecture, which immediately influenced architects all over the world.

During the last years of his life, he built the National Museum of Western arts in Tokyo (1960), built the Carpenter Visual Art Center at Harvard University (1964), and designed an Exposition Pavilion in Zürich that was constructed posthumously (1964, completed in 1967). His last work, the Church of



Saint Pierre Church in Firminy – France.  
Palace of Assembly in Chandigarh – India (top above).

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Sant-Pierre in Firminy, France, was started in 1960 and completed posthumously in 2006, under the guidance of José Oubrière.

For their outstanding universal values and their modern architecture, 17 of his works were nominated this year to the UNESCO World Heritage list. It is not the first time that this architect's masterpieces have been considered for the list; two previous attempts were rejected, and the file was reviewed and now consists of 17 masterpieces in seven countries. The session of the UNESCO Committee was held in Istanbul this year, starting on 10 July, and the vote for Le Corbusier was scheduled to take place on Sunday the 17th.

However, due to events in Turkey, the session was suspended on the eve of the vote.

Nevertheless, the Committee still decided to hold the vote, and by noon the news was all over Twitter: Le Corbusier's 17 works officially became World Heritage sites.

The vote is significant for Switzerland, as it made the country's list of World Heritage sites longer. It also marks a special event for Geneva, as the Maison Clarté is the first building in Geneva to be listed as a World Heritage site. Maison Clarté is an apartment block, and the City has plans to buy one apartment to make into an exhibition for the general public, so that everyone can visit and feel what it's like to live in a house built by Le Corbusier. A UNESCO plate may therefore soon appear on the "rive gauche."

Incidentally, do you know that not only our New York colleagues, but all of us here

in Geneva could have lived in a house – even a Palais – built by Le Corbusier? In 1927, long before providing consultancy services for the U.N. Headquarters building in New York, Le Corbusier participated in the League of Nations competition for the design of its new centre in Geneva. He presented a project with a wall of insulating and heating glass, and this plan was to become the prototype of all future United Nations buildings. His project would probably have shared the first prize, but... it happened differently.

Today instead we have a majestic Palais, built by different architects. We are sure that one day the Palais des Nations will also be subscribed in the UNESCO World Heritage List<sup>1</sup> for the many outstanding values it represents and for the role it plays as the world centre

of peace and diplomacy. Being complemented by a new edifice within the SHP, which is already highly praised for its architectural innovations, will make it the perfect next submission!

But back to Le Corbusier: how would his Palais would have looked if he had built it? If you would like to learn more, tell us, and we will be happy to write about it in one of our future issues.

*Incidentally, even if we do not live in his house, we are still in touch with Le Corbusier every day: his image is honored on the ten-franc banknote by the National Bank of Switzerland!* ■

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	1960		1965		1970		1975		1980		1985	
GDP (current US \$, billions)	4.041		5.79		4.041		13.099		33.401		34.894	
POPULATION (millions)	16.5		19.1		22.1		25.3		27.7		31	

May 1966  
Second Guerilla  
Conference  
The Southern Bloc  
becomes the FARC

May 27, 1964  
First military confrontation  
between guerillas in  
Marquetalia and the  
Colombian government

July 20, 1964  
First Guerilla Conference  
Marulanda founds the  
Southern Bloc

1982-1986  
Peace talks  
(Betancur  
Administration)

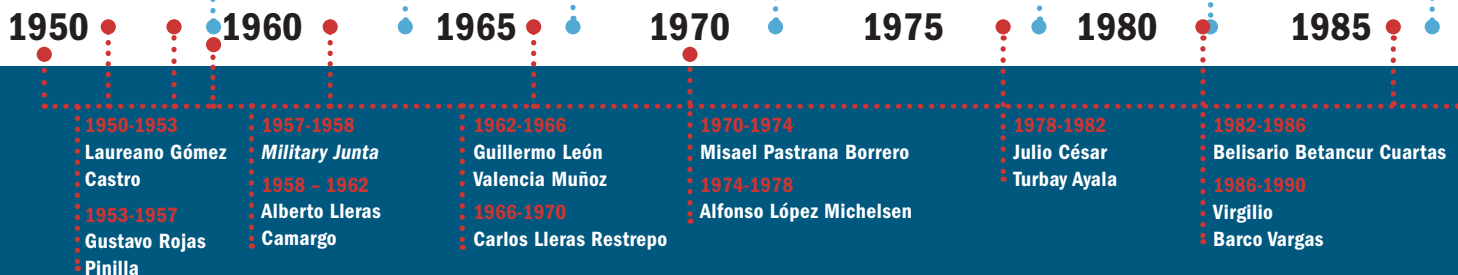
1984-1987  
Bilateral ceasefire holds  
under the Uribe Accords

1985  
Patriotic Union (UP)  
party founded

1948-1958  
La Violencia  
(Civil War)

1972  
The FARC establishes  
its first training camps  
for guerillas

Late 1970s  
The FARC begins  
cocaine trafficking



Colombian presidential administrations



## THE COLOMBIAN CONFLICT AT A GLANCE

	1964		1970		1978		1982	
APPROXIMATE NO. OF FARC SOLDIERS	50		1000		2000		6000	
MILITARY SPENDING (% of GDP)								

1990	1995	2000	2005	2010	2013	2015
40.274	92.507	99.887	146.566	287.018	380.192	292.08
34.3	34.7	40.4	43.3	45.9	47.3	48.2



February 2015

The FARC announces it will ban the recruitment of child soldiers

June 2015

The Colombian government and the FARC begin a joint landmine removal program

July 2015

The Colombian government suspends aerial bombing of FARC camps

August 2015

UN delegates meet with FARC negotiators in Havana for the first time, to discuss de-escalation measures

1999-2002

Peace talks (Pastrana Administration)

1999

13 million Colombians erupt in the "No Mas!" protests against the FARC violence

2000

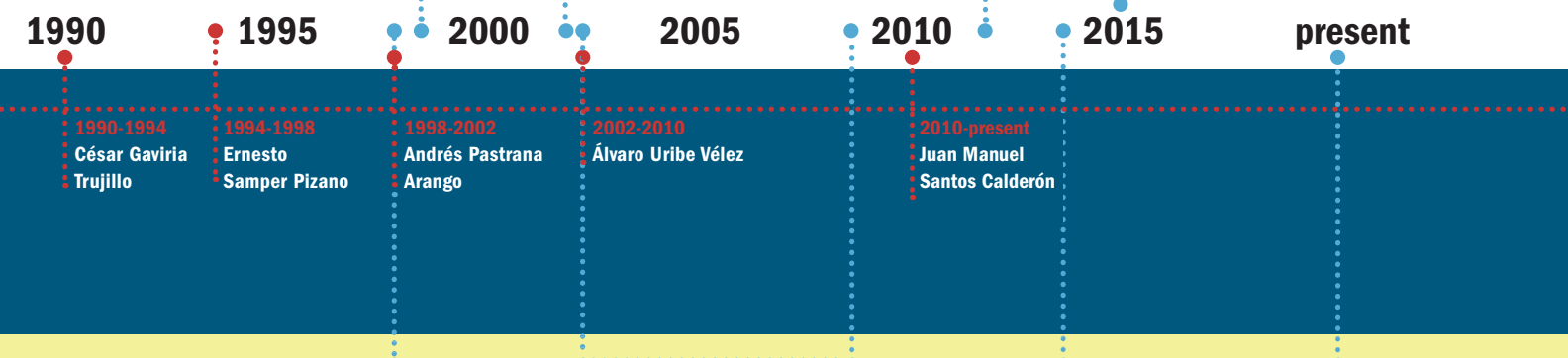
U.S. lawmakers approve Plan Colombia

2002

The Patriotic Union party loses legal status

November 2012

Peace talks begin



1998

President Pastrana cedes a DMZ to the FARC

2008

Marulanda, FARC founder, dies of a heart attack

December 2014

The FARC declares an unprecedented unilateral ceasefire

October 2, 2016

Nationwide referendum on the Peace Accords

August 24, 2016

Peace Accords reached in Havana

June 23, 2016

Bilateral ceasefire is signed

March 2016

UN SG Ban Ki-moon appoints Jean Arnault to head the new UN political mission in Colombia, slated to monitor and verify a future ceasefire

February 2016

First child soldiers are released by the FARC

January 2016

UN Security Council unanimously approves a resolution to establish a monitoring mission to verify a future ceasefire



1990	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2005	2010	2013	2015
				18000		16000					7000
2.1	2.83	4.45	2.8	3.44	3.76	3.03		3.35	3.63	3.29	3.38



# UNITAR's UNOSAT programme celebrates 15 years of operations

## From imagery to impact

*On 11 October, the UN Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR) and its Operational Satellite Applications Programme (UNOSAT) celebrate 15 years of service to the humanitarian, development and human rights communities.*

**EINAR BJORGO, UNITAR**

What started as a small project funded by the European Space Agency to explore if satellite imagery could be made more useful to the UN family and Member States, quickly grew into a fully fledged programme within UNITAR. Clearly there was a gap to be filled and UNOSAT has over these last 15 years worked tirelessly to provide timely information derived from satellite imagery to a wide range of actors.

Applications areas include rapid mapping during natural disasters to quickly provide information on the scale of the event, support to protection of refugees and Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs), ground water mapping for sustainable development, damage assessments following conflicts for reconstruction planning, support to human rights investigations and protection of cultural heritage. Being present in Geneva, the humanitarian capital of the world, has been an important element for the success of UNOSAT and has allowed the programme to cover all major natural disasters over the last 15 years with crucial information based

on satellite imagery analysis. As a programme of UNITAR, training is a key element of our activities. UNOSAT's recipe on training on what we do has proven a great success for capacity development. Knowledge is transferred from doers with practical insight, to beneficiaries that need satellite technologies for solving real work problems, such as deforestation, flood and drought management and suitable actions for local climate change adaptation. UNOSAT typically trains officials from line ministries in developing countries, as well as disaster managers in international organizations. For example, capacity development initiatives include improving resilience in East Africa in collaboration with the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD), reducing disaster risks in Asia in collaboration with the Asian Disaster Preparedness Centre (ADPC) and training government officials in Chad on the use of Geographic Information Systems (GIS) for sustainable water management. This diverse support is a good illustration of the impact satellite

imagery can have when put to use to solve real issues facing the UN family of agencies and the support we strive to provide to Member States.

Partnerships are at the core of UNOSAT. If it was not for the multiple agreements signed with UN agencies, the Red Cross Family, regional organization, Member States, academia and private partners, our impact would not be what it is today. An example of such collaboration is our long standing cooperation with CERN, the European Organization for Nuclear Research, where UNOSAT is hosted. In addition, we have presence in Chad, Nairobi, and Bangkok, the latter thanks to our partnership with UN ESCAP (Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific).

Today, UNOSAT is widely recognized as the go-to-place for satellite imagery analysis in the UN system. By serving our sister agencies as well as developing countries, we are committed to contribute towards meeting the Sustainable Development Goals and continue to explore the best road from imagery to impact. ■



Gouverneurs of Ouddaï and Wadi Fira receives first ResEau Chad maps by Minister of Livestock and Water.

Photo credit: UNITAR

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# Changing the way we think about tobacco control



Dr. Vera Luiza da Costa e Silva

## SAMUEL COMPTON, WHO<sup>1</sup>

There is a sense of change in the air at the Secretariat to the UN tobacco control treaty. Based on the 6th floor of the World Health Organization's headquarters in Geneva, the small team of 16 treaty experts, public health, international relations and technical officers see the mood changing among the Parties to the treaty.

As the world's first public health treaty of the 21st century, its direction of travel is moving towards other disciplines, such as cross border trade and international development targets.

The treaty, officially known as the World Health Organization Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (WHO FCTC) has had its permanent Secretariat stationed at the WHO

headquarters since its establishment in 2007.

But this year it is not only changing priorities that keep the team busy. They are also planning the Conference of the Parties to the treaty, commencing on 7th November.

With more than a thousand delegates expected to attend the Conference in Delhi, the Head of the Convention Secretariat, Dr. Vera Luiza da Costa e Silva, says, "This year the Conference is going to be important because we expect a range of innovative tobacco control ideas that increasingly help move the world on from the primary focus on health policies. It should help pave the way for the next decade and beyond."

In the busy office of the Head of the Convention Secretariat, it is clear that many of the 180 Parties to the WHO FCTC are keen to be in touch with her and the team, as they prepare for the Conference. Dr. Vera Luiza da Costa e Silva has a clear sense of the treaty's critical role and how it fits within the UN family. "We are different from the WHO, although we value the connection, not least for the support it provides. We are in a unique position, reporting to the Conference of the Parties, with

our own workplan and budget, adopted by our governing body. This makes us a global authority on tobacco control issues." The tobacco epidemic kills nearly 6 million people each year, with 80% of the deaths occurring in low- and middle-income countries; and while the world has come together with a global response, the tobacco industry has embarked on a campaign to avoid responsibility and attract a new generation of users.

"This is the only public health treaty established under the auspices of the World Health Organization. But now it is as much to do with trade agreements, regulations and protection of vulnerable groups. Although firmly anchored in public health policy, it addresses priorities beyond health," says Dr. Carmen Aude-Lopez, Programme Manager at the Secretariat.

Plain packaging for tobacco products has been one important innovation developed under the treaty and promoted during this year's World No Tobacco Day in May. "The objective is to eliminate packaging as one of the last forms of tobacco advertisement. It is one of the tools we use to prevent

the tobacco industry recruit new smokers," adds Tibor Sziilagyi, Team Leader, Reporting and Knowledge Management. But despite interest in non-health targets, the Secretariat still sees the need to work directly with public health ministries, its main link with most Parties.

Dr. Vera Luiza da Costa e Silva adds, "It is over ten years since the treaty came into force and public health professionals around the world have the facts about the damage tobacco causes and how to counter the problem. So it is natural that attention turns to how our treaty fits with other treaties negotiated under the UN framework." The treaty has ties to most capitals, but these links now scale up complex issues such as the illicit trade in tobacco, cross-border advertising and trade disputes.

Dr. Vera Luiza da Costa e Silva reflects, "If we only focus on health, then other important issues linked to tobacco control will be missed." ■

<sup>1</sup> Samuel Compton, Media Coordinator at the Convention Secretariat to the WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control.



  
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# ICSC cost of living survey of household expenditures

## It may have an impact on your post adjustment!

*Cost-of-living surveys are carried out approximately every five years as part of the remuneration for staff in the professional and higher categories working for the United Nations and other international organizations participating in the UN Common System.*

### HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGEMENT SERVICE, DIVISION OF ADMINISTRATION, UNOG

These surveys are conducted by the International Civil Service Commission (ICSC), the UN body whose essential function is to define staff employment conditions.

During the month of October 2016, the ICSC will be conducting a cost-of-living survey, also known as the “place-to-place” survey, in Geneva.

The data collected during the 2016 round of place-to-place surveys will be used by the ICSC to update the post adjustment for Geneva and other duty stations around the world.

Post adjustment is computed on the basis of four elements: differences in prices between the duty station and United Nations Headquarters; local inflation; exchange rate of the local currency relative to the US dollar; and the average expenditure pattern of staff members at the duty station.

The ICSC will obtain the average expenditure pattern of staff members in the professional

and higher categories by requesting eligible staff at the duty station (P-1 to D-2 levels) to complete an online household expenditure questionnaire.

This questionnaire will offer staff the only opportunity during the next five years to provide detailed and precise information on the cost of living as experienced by them at the duty station which will be taken into account by the ICSC for the establishment of the post adjustment.

It should be recalled that the post adjustment can be a significant component of salary for staff in the professional and higher categories. It is therefore in the direct interest of staff concerned to complete the household expenditures questionnaire accurately and completely in order for the ICSC to calculate the post adjustment correctly. Staff should be mindful that non-participation in the survey, or a low staff participation rate, may adversely affect the calculation of our post adjustment.

If you believe that the cost of living and/or expenditure patterns of staff have changed at the Geneva duty station over the last 5 years, or if you feel that the post adjustment no longer adequately reflects the cost of living here, then please do participate in the household expenditure survey and make those changes known to the ICSC. The ICSC survey will be launched on 1 October and will close on 31 October 2016.

(Once the survey month has closed, any late questionnaires can no longer be submitted and will not be considered by the ICSC.)

The survey questionnaire, which is available in three languages (English, French and Spanish), can be completed in approximately 30 minutes time.

Eligible staff (P-1 to D-2 levels) will receive a link by email from the ICSC and will be able to respond to the online survey questionnaire directly from his or her desktop.

The ICSC has taken steps to make completing the questionnaire as uncomplicated as possible. Respondents can log into the survey site any number of times during the course of the survey month, stopping the survey and later continuing where they left off, as and when their personal time allows, eliminating the need to set aside significant blocks of time to finish the survey in one go.

It is important for staff to be assured that all information provided to the ICSC will be kept strictly confidential and used by them for statistical purposes only. In no case will any individual information be disclosed. ■

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For complete information concerning all aspects of the upcoming survey, please take a few moments to visit the survey microsite developed by the ICSC at the following address: [pp2016.commonsystem.org](http://pp2016.commonsystem.org)

## Place-to-place Survey (Enquête concernant le montant de l'ajustement de poste)

## Ce que la CFPI ne vous dit pas

YVAN POULIN, TRÉSORIER, SYNDICAT DU BIT

La Commission de la fonction publique internationale (CFPI) va mener une enquête sur le coût de la vie à Genève ainsi que dans sept autres villes-siège au mois d'octobre 2016.

Cette enquête quinquennale a pour but de réviser les indices de l'ajustement de poste et les seuils des allocations-logement, affectant ainsi le niveau de rémunération des fonctionnaires de la catégorie des services organiques et des catégories supérieures.

Il ne fait aucun doute que cette enquête 2016 sur le coût de la vie est très importante. La CFP a l'obligation statutaire d'utiliser les données qu'elle récoltera cette année pour calculer le nouvel ajustement de poste pour Genève. Il faut toutefois garder à l'esprit le contexte dans lequel s'inscrit cette enquête.

En décembre 2015, l'Assemblée Générale des Nations Unies acceptait les modifications proposées par la CFPI sur l'ensemble des prestations

offertes (compensation package). Il en découle déjà une baisse de la rémunération globale notamment pour certaines catégories de fonctionnaires telles que les familles monoparentales, qui vont voir leur revenu net baisser dès janvier 2018.

A cela s'ajoute un Franc Suisse fort qui, additionné au coût de la vie élevé à Genève, attire toute l'attention de la CFPI et des administrations sur cette enquête et laisse présager des résultats attendus.

**Le principe Noblemaire est-il en danger?**

Depuis octobre 2014 l'ajustement de poste à Genève est passé en dessous de la barre des 100 et n'est jamais remonté. Et rappelez-vous que derrière chaque question de cette enquête se cache un but et derrière chacune de vos réponses, la CFPI trouvera un moyen d'atteindre ce but.

Ainsi, lors de l'enquête précédente (2010), la CFPI avait considéré la collecte de prix en France voisine. Les prix y étant entre 10% et 40% plus bas qu'à Genève, ceci avait déjà une conséquence majeure: la baisse de l'ajustement de poste.

**Comment cela se présentera-t-il cette année?**

La première question du formulaire est parlante: Quel est le code postal de votre résidence actuelle. Nous voici au cœur du problème. Si un fort pourcentage de nos collègues domiciliés en France voisine répondent à l'enquête, la CFPI aura un jeu facile pour la prochaine enquête de justifier (encore une fois) de la collecte des prix en France. Ceci se fera évidemment au détriment de tous ceux qui vivent et consomment en Suisse et qui constituent la majorité des personnes visées par cette enquête.

La CFPI se veut toutefois rassurante: si le code postal n'est pas en Suisse (donc en France voisine), les données relatives au logement ne seraient pas considérées. Toutefois, une fois les données entrées dans le système, nous n'avons aucun moyen de vérifier si ces données seront véritablement considérées ou pas. Il est important de souligner que le lieu d'affectation dans lequel se passe l'enquête, c'est Genève. Genève est en Suisse (au cas où certains auraient un doute...). Dès lors, considérer des prix en dehors de Genève est illégal et revient à fausser le véritable coût de la vie de ce lieu

d'affectation. C'est pourquoi, pour les fonctionnaires qui vivent en France sont invités à réfléchir à l'utilité de participer à l'enquête.

Le questionnaire permet la distinction des dépenses occasionnées en dehors de la zone (Genève et Vaud jusqu'à Nyon). Y sont attendues, les dépenses que vous pourriez faire lors de vos vacances ou de bien ou services que vous ne trouveriez pas en Suisse. Toutefois la CFPI s'attend également à y retrouver les données relatives à toute résidence principale située en France voisine.

En conclusion, en tant que fonctionnaires, soyez conscients de l'importance de vos réponses et de la manière dont la CFPI pourrait en faire usage.

Il est fortement conseillé sinon obligatoire d'assister aux réunions organisées dans vos organisations respectives dans lesquelles vous obtiendrez plus d'informations. De plus, il est recommandé de contacter vos représentants du personnel qui pourront vous conseiller judicieusement sur la manière d'aborder ce questionnaire. ■

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## Beethoven, Plantu and Chappatte

# A concert in support of the Cartooning for Peace Swiss Foundation



Patrick Chapatte



© Patrick Chapatte

### SARAH JORDAN, STAFF DEVELOPMENT AND LEARNING SECTION, UNOG

Ten years after the creation of the Cartooning for Peace network in New York by Kofi Annan and a dozen international editorial cartoonists, the Cartooning for Peace Swiss Foundation organized a benefit concert on September 16, in the Victoria Hall in Geneva, in aid of cartoonists threatened all over the world for using their talent and courage in support of democracy, justice and human rights.

The *Orchestre de la Suisse Romande* (OSR) under the direction of the Dutch conductor Antony Hermus, performed Ludwig Van Beethoven's Third Symphony ('Eroica'). Chappatte and Plantu, both founding members of Cartooning for Peace, drew live during the four movements of the symphony.

The money raised will be donated in its entirety to the Swiss Foundation support fund created to help and defend

cartoonists who are prevented from practising their art in their countries, who are victims of political witch hunts, imprisonment or intimidation because they give free reign to their work. Every two years, the Foundation awards the Cartooning for Peace/Ville de Genève international prize to cartoonists around the world, not only for their talent, but also to salute their courage, in places where drawing is an act of bravery.

The OSR musicians, who are deeply attached to freedom of expression and artistic creation, offered to play for free for the Cartooning for Peace Swiss Foundation as a gesture of solidarity with the murdered Charlie Hebdo cartoonists, gunned down in Paris on January 7, 2015.

The Cartooning for Peace Swiss Foundation is a recognised non-for-profit organization. Its headquarters is at the Press Swiss Club in Geneva and Kofi Anan, holder

of the Nobel Peace Prize, is its honorary president.

Patrick Chappatte is a very busy man – contributing cartoons weekly to the International New York Times, Le Temps and the Neue Zürcher Zeitung – but he kindly met me in Geneva on the eve of his departure on vacation and gave me some further insight into just what the profession of editorial cartoonist means in today's troubled times. Here are some extracts from our discussion:

**Could you tell me about the creative process of actually producing the cartoons?**

Well, it's work and it's discipline as well – you have to work under a lot of pressure to a deadline – and in my job you cannot work two days ahead. The deadline for the New York Times is 11.30 in the morning so in order to have two creative hours, scan and submit my ideas, get feedback and then produce the cartoon of the day, I start work in my studio at 7.30. You cannot be in a thinking, creative process for a long time so I work for a 20-minute stretch then take a break to check my e-mail, have a coffee or a chocolate. Then back to work. The beginning and the end of the week are the most difficult times.

**How do you choose the themes to illustrate?**

My job is that of pictorial columnist really – and I did train as a journalist so I know about the pressures of producing written text to a deadline too. I can turn on and off with the news really easily and it's a bit of a mystery because the themes I know the best are not necessarily the ones that inspire me the most. It's all very intuitive.

**What are your feelings on recent terrorist attacks and the cartoons that have followed them?**

What happened recently in Nice is a tricky one. There are no good cartoons on a day like that. Now that such attacks are becoming so frequent, I think we should pause and think about exactly what we are doing when social media meets terrorism. After the attacks in Belgium there were cartoons on line just hours after the event and I asked myself "Is this a race to produce the first image, or what?" When something terrible happens we need to digest it. A political cartoon needs to look at things with a little distance. You need to come up with a comment that translates that distance and it is that irony which is our

added value. With Charlie Hebdo it was different because it was our profession that was attacked; we knew the victims and we wanted to express our sympathy in images that were widely shared. Those attacks on Charlie, by the way, are the reason why the Orchestre de la Suisse Romande decided to offer a concert to Cartooning for Peace, and through the Foundation, to all the people who care about freedom of expression. It's a very generous and touching gesture for which we are so grateful. Plantu and myself will be on stage, drawing to the tune of the music. Strings, wind instruments and pencils! We hope that many will join us, it will be fun. The "Eroica" symphony will be played. Our "heroes" that night will be the courageous cartoonists from Iran, Syria, Egypt, Kenya and Malaysia who have received the Cartooning for Peace/City of Geneva Prize over the last years. When you think of it, it's kind of heroic to still want to put smiles on people's faces in this sombre age...

**During your vacation are you going to turn off and take a real break?**

I should stop – and I think I will... for

a while. The past month has been very busy with my regular work and my other project, the exhibition Windows on Death Row, which I mounted in collaboration with my wife, the journalist Anne-Frederique Widmann. During my vacation, I will be in the States promoting its American tour. It presents cartoons produced by prison inmates as well as professionals and is a tool to trigger dialogue on the key themes of the capital punishment debate in the States today: justice, race, prison and class. I have also produced a cartoon strip – graphic journalism – a five-part series that has been running in The New York Times since May and has been very well-received. Cartoons can be very strong and in your face but they can also be used to raise awareness and invite people to discuss issues. This is an aspect of my work that is very close to my heart and I will be able to give it more attention during my vacation. ■

For more information on the Cartooning for Peace Foundation, the exhibition Windows on Death Row and the New York Times cartoon strip:

[www.cartooningforpeace.org](http://www.cartooningforpeace.org)

<http://www.windowsondeathrow.com/>

[www.nytimes.com/deathrow](http://www.nytimes.com/deathrow)

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Palais des Nations in Geneva, October 25th – November 11th, 2016

# Ross Rossin's exhibition

## ***"Ultimately Human: the leaders and the led"***

*"Ultimately Human: the leaders and the led" is a timely exhibition at the UN, by the Bulgarian born US artist which reminds us in these troubled times of the entitlement for all to human rights regardless of race or religion.*

**EVELYN CANTACUZENE-SPÉRANSKY<sup>1</sup>**

This principle has been the corner stone of the United Nations charter since adopted by the General Assembly on 10th December in 1948. Rossin has dedicated his life and his art to demonstrate this communality.

What does Jimmy Carter, Maya Angelo and Desmond Tuto have in common with the turbaned Man from Vrindravan and the green eyed Girl from Pushkar? They all fall under the artistic scrutiny of the Bulgarian born artist Ross Rossin, who came as an immigrant to the US in 2001 and ended up painting Presidents and the Captains of Industry.

In this exhibition, *"Ultimately Human: the Leaders and the Led"*, October 25-November 11th, at the Palais des Nations,

UN, sixteen very large hyper real, oil on canvas, portraits, will exemplify the human spirit in its various manifestations- a snap shot of humanity.

Rossin has devoted his life to uncovering the common "spirit" in each one of us, regardless of race or religion, all entitled to the same human rights with no discrimination.

*"In my work I study human nature. I'm interested in the Self Within – for the Self is Supreme, Whole and Absolute... For me the human face is a bottomless source of inspiration and is the only way to go deeper and farther into my artistic quest for answers. I'm looking for the God's particle in each and every one of us. In that sense, I think that we all are One. One, with many faces."*



Ross Rossin in his studio

Rossin's new body of work from India will exhibit alongside the portraits of great statesmen and role models such as Jimmy Carter, Desmond Tuto, Maya Angelou amongst others.

Rossin, a keen Rotarian, has also arranged for a portrait of Paul Harris, founder of Rotary International to be flown from Rotary Headquarters in Evanston to be part of this important exhibition. The portrait had been auctioned raising \$170,500 for the Rotary Foundation and Rossin was named a Paul Harris fellow and Polio Campaign Hero

Rossin's realistic, classic technique harks back to the 17th Century paintings of Velazquez and all of those depicted in the exhibition sat for the artist. The large format used in the portraits, brings the models closer under Rossin's observation, as he delves into the psyche of his sitters. This creates an immediacy and strong bond with the viewer, as each portrait holds your gaze. There is the cinematic feel of the "close up" and Rossin cites Luis Bunuel and Andrei Tarkovksy as being inspirational.

The stark, monochrome or white backgrounds, of the portraits create a powerful, monumental simplification. This differs from the Western pictorial tradition of placing an individual in a concrete setting or environment and is a result of the extensive time Rossin spent in Japan in the 1990s and his study of Japanese lithographs, specifically those of Ukiyo-e.

Rossin's work can be found in numerous public collections i.e. Smithsonian National Portrait Gallery, Washington, Center for Civil and Human Rights, Atlanta; the Baseball Hall of Fame, Cooperstown, NY; Tutu Family Foundation, Cape Town and the Vatican, as well as the private collection of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II.

In these very troubled times it is important to be reminded about the communality of Mankind.

You are cordially invited to the Vernissage at the UN, Palais des Nations, Mezzanine, Building E, 3rd Floor, Door 40 on Thursday October 27th 6:00-8:30 p.m. in the presence of Michael Moller,

Director General of the United Nations Office at Geneva, the Representative of Rotary International to UN in Geneva, Ambassador Gyger and the Artist. Please join us. ■

- 1 Evelyn Cantacuzène-Spéransky: formerly the Deputy Secretary of the Chelsea Arts Club, London, is an independent curator based in Geneva.



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# A personal reflection on the WHO internship

*I came into my WHO internship with preconceived notions of the organization and expectations of learning about the intricacies of how the organization functions and performs.*

## YIPENG GE<sup>1</sup>

I come from the perspective of a young professional interested in both clinical medicine and public health, with the intention of learning at WHO about how to juggle these interests from seasoned professionals. Unsurprisingly, it really isn't as black and white as I would like it to be. I would like to offer a few thoughts and reflections from my internship experience at WHO headquarters.

### Opportunity

The exceptional opportunity involved in an internship at any institution can include the exposure to mentorship, gaining new experiences and skills, and insight into personal and academic career paths – interning at WHO is no exception to this. However, what made this opportunity particularly rewarding for myself was to learn about the institution through first-hand interactions with supervisors, colleagues, and fellow interns. Through informal conversations and unique exposures I had at WHO, the difficulties and triumphs of working in public health at WHO are apparent. Although public health has the potential to do much good for many people, the limitations seem to arise from bureaucracy and politics. The systemic and

structural aspects of international organizations with a long list of member states, contributes to both its downfalls and its successes. The power of WHO to bring experts together to collaborate is quite remarkable, while a need to please the majority may lead to certain issues not being addressed with urgency. Nevertheless, this opportunity has taught me that public health is not a straightforward field, as many things aren't in this world. The decision to pursue a career in addressing health inequity is as much a personal one as it is a professional one.

### Challenges

Interns also face their share of challenges. I personally found it difficult to find my own stride in a fast-paced environment with such a limited amount of time. Further, it is within these busy work days and the picturesque city of Geneva, that I could lose sight of why I initially came to the institution. I came with a desire to explore how I see myself in the public health field and what the trials and tribulations are. On top of this, there is also a desire to contribute to my supervisors work, learn from and with others, meet like-minded colleagues and friends, and relax and enjoy the weekends in the

heart of Europe – quite a lot to accomplish over a span of several weeks. Additionally, the unpaid aspect of most UN agency internships makes it financially difficult to access for many young professionals, and ultimately results in a disproportionate representation of the well-educated and highly-privileged in these internship programmes.

### Privilege

I have struggled ever since the first week I arrived here in Geneva in fully grasping the consequences and realities of the privilege that comes with interning at a UN agency. Being at WHO is truly a unique opportunity that can provide young professionals with a great depth of exposures and learning in the international public health realm, but at what cost? Aside from the monetary costs an intern takes on, there is also a loss of opportunity for less privileged young professionals to be acquainted to the international public health field. Moreover, whilst living and prospering as a professional in the scenic and expensive city of Geneva, there is a looming sense of disconnect from the individuals and communities that one hopes to benefit through their work towards health equity. This however, will be a concept that will transcend



my own professional career, and I am still trying to find a means to consistently acknowledge the background I come from to inform the mindset I put forward on a daily basis.

### Moving forward

There is work being done on creating a fair internship experience for young professionals, but this needs to be able to take into consideration the various differing socioeconomic backgrounds of young people from low- or middle-income countries that seek to access these opportunities. It is also those that gain experience at this level as an intern that have an advantage when returning as staff members of a UN agency, which is ultimately meant to represent the diversity and interests of 193 member states. I think it is time to think structurally and question whether or not the approach taken to alleviate obstacles is equitable, respectful, and mindful in improving access to UN agency professional development opportunities. ■

<sup>1</sup> Yipeng Ge – Intern, Department of Prevention of Noncommunicable Diseases (PND), World Health Organization Headquarters, Geneva, Switzerland; MD Candidate, University of Ottawa, Canada; BHSoc (Honours), McMaster University, Canada

# Challenging age-stereotypes with social media

CHRISTOPHER KARL STREBEL AND MIRA

SCHNEIDERS, WHO

People worldwide are living longer. By 2020, the number of people aged 60 years and older will outnumber children younger than 5 years. And in 2050, the world's population aged 60 years and older is projected to total 2 billion, up from 900 million in 2015.

However, one of the challenges faced by an aging population is outdated and ageist stereotypes. To break down the common stereotypes that are often associated with ageing, WHO's Department of Ageing and Life Course has launched the #YearsAhead social media campaign. The campaign calls on people to share photos that challenge the negative perceptions of ageing and invites us to re-think ageing.

Since its launch in October 2015, the campaign has attracted over 1000 entries from over 30 countries and has reached more than 105 million people globally.

This is how you can also take part - Photos can be submitted on Instagram or Twitter, using the hashtag #YearsAhead, or sent to [healthyageing@who.int](mailto:healthyageing@who.int), with the subject line: YearsAhead. Each photo should include a short description, specifying where it was taken. Make sure that you have the agreement of anyone featured before you post.

Throughout life, we are bombarded with negative stereotypes about getting older – memory loss, mental and physical decline, losing our looks, frailty, dependence, “becoming a burden” – are just some of the things we are told to expect in the years ahead.

Ageism is the stereotyping and discrimination of individuals on the basis of their age. It happens across cultures and includes prejudicial attitudes, discriminatory practices and institutional policies that perpetuate stereotypical beliefs.

Ageist jokes and birthday cards, portrayals of older people in the media and on TV are all part of deeply rooted age-discrimination. While sexism and racism receive widespread attention in the media, politics and in public debate, fewer people recognise everyday ageism.

But this is likely to change. In light of a rapidly ageing population, there is growing momentum amongst politicians and the public to address the negative effects ageism has on individuals and society. In May this year, the World Health Assembly adopted the first *Global Strategy and Action Plan on Ageing and Health*, which calls specifically for action to combat ageism. Ageism may just be the next big issue!

Most people will be affected by ageism during their lifetime. They may face mandatory retirement, be excluded from opportunities for further education, or be perceived as “too old” to participate in activities and social situations.

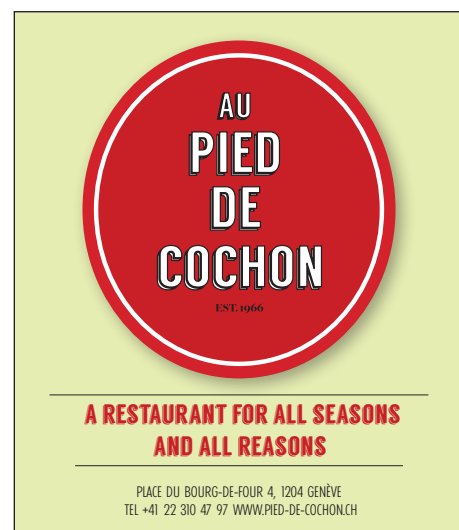
Evidence shows that the ageist stereotypes we encounter in life have detrimental effects on our health and wellbeing. As we age, discrimination and ageist stereotypes become internalised and stop us from doing the things we value. Combatting ageism is therefore critical for achieving Healthy Ageing. ■



Jumping head first from high altitudes is 90-year old Helmut Wirz's passion. The retired pharmacist discovered bungee-jumping at age 75.



Photos can help break down the negative stereotypes that we often associate with ageing





# About the 1% for Development Fund

*The 1% for Development Fund is an association of staff members of the United Nations system and other intergovernmental organizations, retired staff, and other like-minded individuals who contribute 1% of their salary to small-scale projects in developing countries.*



The first 1% Fund was set up in Geneva in 1976; others were established in Rome, New York, and Vienna. Though their objectives are the same, each 1% Fund operates independently. The last revision of the Fund statutes further opens membership to any individual who is not a staff member of a UN agency (including the public and private sectors).

The 1% Fund is officially registered with the Canton of Geneva and the Swiss Federal authorities. It is tax exempted. **Fund members contributions are tax-deductible.**

## Why 1%?

In a 1970 Resolution, the UN General Assembly set a target for official development aid of 0.7% of the GNP of developed countries. Frustrated at the inertia of most countries concerned (they now allocate on average 0.3% of their GNP), a small group of international civil servants decided in 1976 to start practicing what governments preached, by

contributing 1% of their salary to development projects.

## The projects

The 1% Fund provides support to underprivileged communities through groups and associations. Our focus is on communities that are directly involved in their own development endeavours. The 1% Fund provides money for projects but does not intervene in their implementation. Those submitting projects must clearly define their objectives and indicate the means needed to achieve them. They must also get from the group and/or other donors the complementary resources required for reaching their goal, such as labour, tools or raw materials. The cost per project varies, on average, between 10,000 to 15,000 CHF (the maximum is 20,000 CHF). This relatively modest amount is nevertheless sufficient for achieving a positive impact on the lives of the project beneficiaries.

## How does the 1% Fund provide support?

NGOs in developing countries (mostly groups or associations too small to interest the official aid channels or national and international NGOs representing these groups and associations) are invited to submit their projects along with a request for funds. 1% Fund volunteers (who are part of the Project Evaluation and Follow-Up Committee, or PEF Committee) study these proposals using strict evaluation criteria and rank them. The projects selected for funding are submitted for consideration to the Fund's General Assembly twice a year. Organizations that benefit from the 1% Fund financial support are required to report on results, and the PEF Committee monitors the reporting.

## What types of project are financed by the 1% Fund?

Being an organisation with limited means, and in view of the adopted goals of the 1% Fund,

we only finance projects with a clear development objective. We do not finance humanitarian or emergency projects, for which much larger resources are usually available (and needed). We cover all types of development projects that benefit small communities or groups in the areas of education/training, health, agriculture, infrastructure development, water supply and sanitation and micro and small enterprise development. The decision on whether to fund a project is based on a number of criteria adopted by the General Assembly.

Over the past few years, the 1% Fund started funding programmes made up of 3 to 4 projects (with a duration of 18 months to 2 years) for the benefit of NGOs funded a number of times in the past with very good results.

## The follow-up of projects

Once projects have been funded, members of the PEF Committee follow them up.

NGOs must fill out and submit a questionnaire to the 1% Fund on the implementation of their projects along with the original bills and photos. If needed, the members of the PEF Committee contact the NGOs for more information on progress made in implementing their projects. The full project implementation may take up to two years. We subsequently rank projects according to various criteria related to the achievement of their immediate and long-term objectives (0 for failure to 4 for full achievement of their objectives). Fund members and sympathizers visit a significant number of funded projects during official or private trips. Over the past 10 years, the average ranking is about 3.5 for a maximum of 4. **This shows that we are extremely careful when selecting NGOs and projects.**

#### Our budget: your contribution

We finance, on average, 20 to 25 projects per year (depending on the average budget of submitted projects) for a total amount of approximately 220,000 CHF. The amount per project ranges between 5,000 and 20,000 CHF (which is the maximum amount). We also finance programmes, made of three to four consecutive projects submitted by trusted NGOs that performed well in the past. Some of the programmes are co-financed by the Bureau de la Solidarité Internationale (BSI) of the Canton of Geneva and the city of Geneva (Délégation Genève Ville Solidaire).

#### What percentage of members' contributions is spent on administration?

**Actually none!** The full members' contributions are allocated to development projects. The 1% Fund incurs no administrative costs because it is fully managed by members on a voluntary basis and benefit from a free-of-charge office in the

#### Seven good reasons for joining the 1% fund

Almost 40 years of continuous existence clearly show that the 1% Fund has established a solid record, witnessed by the long-lasting support of its members. Furthermore, the success enjoyed by the 1% Fund in Geneva induced staff members in other UN cities to establish similar but independent funds: in New York, Rome and Vienna.

The 1% Fund received the full support of Secretary-General of the UN, Kofi Annan, who underlined the fact that it sets an example for Member States to follow.

While the maximum amount allocated per project (20,000 CHF) is relatively small compared to projects financed by UN agencies or bilateral donors, it has an enormous impact on the lives of project beneficiaries. The groups benefiting from the 1% Fund are those that are often by-passed by official development aid.

By allocating 1% of your salary to the 1% Fund, you will practice what governments preach while refusing up to now

to put in practice the UN resolution asking them to allocate 0.7% of their GNP to development aid.

100% of your contribution will be fully used for development projects: no administrative or other costs. The staff members of the Management Committee work as volunteers and office expenses are nil thanks to the facilities offered by the International Labour Office to the 1% Fund.

The 1% Fund database shows that the large majority of funded projects have been successfully implemented. Fund members and sympathizers have visited, at their own expense, a significant number of funded projects.

Finally, we have worked very hard to improve the management of the 1% Fund with a view to ensuring that members' contributions are put to good use.

ILO building in Geneva. A small surplus from craft sales is used for postage and our web site.

#### Message of support by former UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan

When he was Secretary-General of the United Nations, M. Kofi Annan indicated his full support to the objectives and work of the 1% for Development Fund through a letter sent to one of our members on 4 April 2006. Furthermore, during a visit to the UN Headquarters in Geneva on 26 June 2006, the Secretary-General kindly accepted to be photographed with three 1% Fund members: Sylvie Pichelin, Vice-President of the 1% Fund and Fund members Maurice Allal and Jürgen Schwettmann. The Secretary-General congratulated the 1% Fund on the occasion of its 30th Anniversary. He stated: "the 1% Fund is a unique demonstration of the commitment that United Nations Staff have to both their personal and professional cause and endeavours". He added: "The 1% Fund *deserves a much greater degree of support and attention, and ways should be found to convince more staff to participate*" because *"it sets an example not only for other staff, but to Member States as well"*. ■

Check the 1% Fund Web site if you wish to get more information on the Fund: <http://www.onepercentfund.net>

You can also contact us at the following e-mail address: [onepercent\\_fund@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:onepercent_fund@yahoo.co.uk)

You may establish a permanent order, or make a donation, for the benefit of the 1% Fund at our UBS account or at our Swiss postal account below. Please note members actually decide the amount they wish to contribute. 1% of the net salary is an average objective. Some members contribute more, others less depending on their financial situation and other commitments.

#### UBS account

Beneficiary of the permanent order: Fonds 1% pour le développement

Bank: UBS

Account number: 279-CA-100.005.0 CHF

IBAN: CH54 0027 9279 CA10 0005 0

SWIFT: UBSWCHZH80A

#### Postal account (CCP)

CCP: 10-227611-4

IBAN: CH57 0900 0000 1022 7611 4

BIC: POFICHBEXXX

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# Parking – to pay or not to pay?



**SARAH JORDAN, STAFF DEVELOPMENT AND LEARNING SECTION, UNOG**

Three years ago there was quite a stir at the Palais when staff got wind of the possible implementation of parking fees of as much as 500 CHF a year. A petition was circulated by UNECE to protest against the proposed measure and the UNOG Staff Coordinating Council made it clear to Management that they also opposed it. And so the plan was shelved... only to re-surface again today, as yet another way of cutting costs.

The Staff Development and Learning Section, perched on its hill, is frequented daily by a large number of students. Time being of the essence, a lot of them avoid walking up to the Bocage (even though it might do them good) and come to class by car. We talked about the implications of this potential change by the coffee machine the other day. Here are some of their comments which, at their request, remain anonymous:

*"I would be a bit frustrated, but if the money could be used for a charity or for a sustainable project or the environment, I would agree to contribute a proportion of my pay – but it would have to be affordable."*

*"I'd be shocked as I consider free parking to be a small*

*privilege for staff members living outside Geneva who need to come to work by car. With the introduction of fees, parking would become a "commercial" operation."*

*"I would find it inconvenient. With public transport it would take me more than three hours a day to get to and from meetings at the WTO or at my mission and make my working schedule even tighter when I have to run from meeting to meeting. Riding a bicycle could be an option, but personally, I don't feel secure because the bicycle lanes are next to normal driving roads and when I bike, I feel like racing with the cars!"*

*"I would find it normal as we need to encourage sustainable development and I would want the money to be used in order to maintain our Ariana Park in an exclusively organic way – replace pesticide with insects and/or natural products (I heard that Round-up is still in use! I hope that this is not true...). Remove those noisy tractors to mow the lawn and use sheep or let the grass grow happily, etc. Create a little garden with herbs (thyme, rosemary, etc.) that staff would be allowed to pick and use at home! Maybe we could hire more gardeners in order to implement these new ways of doing things?"*

*"I would be unhappy but not surprised as budget cuts are already hitting hard all around the UN. It would be another 100 CHF out of my pocket."*

*"I would be horrified!"*

Many expressed a desire for more efficient public or on-site transport:

*"It would be good to have a shuttle going around the UN grounds at peak times. If we had more access to showers then I would consider biking or walking."*

*"Public transport could and should be improved, particularly for those of us who come from France. I would be the first one to jump on a train or bus if there were express lines to Geneva city centre."*

*"The issue is transport inside the Palais. The Palais is huge. It takes a lot of time to get from the gate to meeting points or the Bocage. This could be improved with some free bicycles or electric bicycles available on-site."*

*"The big problem in Geneva is the traffic. Even if you had more public transport to the Palais, traffic jams would continue because not enough people practise car-sharing. That's something which would reduce traffic and costs. Why not reduce the number of parking slots and increase the e-bicycle and e-car parking areas!"*

Some work for Organizations where fees for parking are already applied – 35CHF / month at WIPO; 185CHF/month at OHCHR – Palais Wilson; 85CHF/month at ITC (with a three-year waiting list for places). At WTO and most missions, parking is free. In town, a yearly parking permit costs 200CHF, but then you have to find a parking space – not easy!

In conclusion, my impression on hearing the comments of my students from many different organizations, origins and levels in the hierarchy is that they are not opposed to making a contribution to parking costs but they would like the revenue generated to be used to improve sustainable mobility options and to maintain the natural beauty of the UN Grounds. Gustave Revillod donated the site on which UNOG is now situated to the city of Geneva in 1890 on the condition that nothing ever be built on it and no trees cut down. He would certainly support such a position if he were alive today. ■

# Broadcaster ou ne pas broadcaster? Telle est la question



## PRISCA CHAOUI, UNOG

Le personnel de l'ONUG reçoit les informations qui le concernent au travers de deux principaux moyens de communication: isseek qui est l'intranet de l'ONU et qui contient des informations sur l'ensemble du système et le Broadcast qui est un courriel envoyé à tous les fonctionnaires de l'ONUG. L'envoi du Broadcast est géré par l'Administration, c'est-à-dire que pour pouvoir envoyer un message en utilisant ce moyen, il faut d'abord avoir

l'aval de l'Administration qui se charge ensuite de la diffusion.

En réalité, je ne sais pas si le mot correct à utiliser dans ce contexte est l'aval ou la bénédiction. Je pense d'après mon expérience en tant que représentante du personnel à l'ONUG que le mot bénédiction est plus correct. En effet, je suis sidérée de voir comment cette bénédiction n'est pas accordée au Conseil de coordination du personnel de l'ONUG lorsqu'il

s'agit d'envoyer des messages qui sont loin de plaire à l'Administration onusienne comme ceux relatifs à la Caisse des pensions ou au Plan Stratégique Patrimonial qui sont deux sujets qui fâchent. Comme dans tout, la vérité blesse parfois mais cela ne signifie nullement qu'il faut la taire. Si par bonheur ce genre de broadcast finit par être diffusé, eh bien c'est après un va-et-vient qui peut durer jusqu'à deux semaines voire plus parfois, ce qui nous rappelle les négociations bien plus importantes qui sont menées sous les auspices de l'ONU sur des sujets qui déterminent parfois l'avenir du monde.

Personnellement, je n'ai jamais réussi à comprendre le pourquoi du comment de cette situation. En effet, lorsque le Conseil de coordination décide d'envoyer un broadcast, il est lui seul tenu responsable de son contenu, fort heureusement

d'ailleurs. Par conséquent, voir l'Administration le bloquer sous prétexte qu'il contient des informations à caractère inflammatoire ou autre, relève d'un empiètement sur le droit à la liberté d'expression, à un moment où l'ONUG s'enorgueillit d'être le berceau des droits de l'homme et des libertés fondamentales. Cela dit, charité bien ordonnée commence par soi-même.

Laissons le flux d'informations passer sans l'entraver pour ne pas revenir à des temps révolus qui n'ont jamais été le propre de notre Organisation.

A bon entendeur... ■

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Danseuses dans leurs plus belles tenues lors du Festival des Cultures Sahariennes

## Tchad (3<sup>e</sup> partie) Au pays des Toubous

*Malgré de violentes rafales de vent, la nuit a été bonne et réparatrice (voir le numéro précédent d'UN Special) et c'est par un sprint effréné avec des gazelles Dorca qui détalent devant nous, à près de 60 km/h, que va débiter la journée.*

**CLAUDE MAILLARD**

L'Ennedi est un désert, certes mais habité: la présence de savanes, d'oueds arborés et de sources cachées a permis le maintien d'une société pastorale semi-nomade. Appelés localement Teda ou Daza, ces fiers bergers ont gardé un tempérament indépendant qui les rend sourcilieux vis-à-vis des étrangers pénétrant sur leur territoire. Ils se disent puissants et respectés car ils appartiennent à la même tribu que le président Idriss Déby Itno originaire de Fada. Ils font partie des Toubou, groupe ethnique considéré comme l'un des plus anciens vivant actuellement au Sahara. Guerriers et pasteurs au même titre que les autres peuples sahariens, ces nomades redoutés de leurs voisins (Touareg, Peul, Kanouri, Boudouma, Bideyat, Zaghawa) doivent leur réputation à leur

légendaire capacité d'adaptation et de survie dans l'environnement particulièrement aride de la région. Dotés d'une résistance hors du commun, capables de couvrir à pied des distances considérables, ils vivent pour la plupart dans la moitié septentrionale du Tchad, mais également, en petites communautés, au Niger, en Libye et au Soudan.

### **Festival International des Cultures Sahariennes.**

Chef-lieu de la région de l'Ennedi, Fada est une petite oasis tranquille, nichée dans une palmeraie verdoyante qui survit grâce à la présence d'une garnison de militaires. L'architecture caractéristique du style soudanien de ses habitations en terre, sa place vide et immense ainsi que ses larges allées de sable bordées de palmiers dégagent une atmosphère



© Claude Maillard

de ville fantôme. C'est pourtant là, loin de tout, que s'est déroulé pour la seconde fois le Festival International des Cultures Sahariennes. Cet événement permet aux différentes tribus de nomades éparpillées dans le désert de se rencontrer, d'échanger dans un esprit de respect, de partager leurs savoir-faire et aussi de se confronter dans diverses manifestations sportives et culturelles. Cela donne également l'occasion aux très rares touristes présents sur place de découvrir les coutumes de ces peuplades qui, pour l'occasion, ont revêtu leurs plus belles tenues, typiques, parfois surprenantes et de façon générale très colorées. Au programme de ces cinq jours de festivités, chants, danses, contes et légendes nomades, concours

gastronomique, courses de dromadaires et marathon remporté par le champion national Valentin Betoudji, très sympathique et attachant coureur. Une tempête de sable s'est levée, le ciel s'obscurcit, le soleil se voile il est temps de quitter Fada pour retrouver la quiétude du désert, l'un des plus beaux au monde.

#### **Guelta d'Archeï, une oasis dans un océan de sable**

Quelque part dans l'Ennedi, labyrinthe minéral à l'écart du monde connu, se dissimule un trésor, une source exceptionnelle et unique à des centaines de kilomètres à la ronde. Ce petit paradis caché, c'est l'un des endroits les plus méconnus du Sahara, l'un des plus inaccessibles, l'un des plus envoûtants. C'est le point

d'orgue de notre Aventure. Ce lieu, c'est la Guelta d'Archeï. Tous les matins, dès l'aube, la même scène biblique se joue ici, au pied de gigantesques murailles de grès qui semblent la protéger de toute menace extérieure. Depuis le haut de la falaise la vue sur cet endroit magique est des plus remarquables. Cent mètres en dessous, des centaines de dromadaires s'abreuvent et se baignent, tout en blâtant. Leurs cris résonnent entre les rochers, donnant au tableau encore plus d'émotions. Ici, l'eau est présente toute l'année, comme par miracle. En pleine saison sèche, quand les puits du désert sont taris, la source d'Archeï est la seule chance, le seul espoir pour tous ceux qui ont soif. Encore plus énigmatique que cette eau

qui surgit inexplicablement en plein milieu du Sahara, des crocodiles sortis tout droit du Jurassique vivent totalement isolés dans cet endroit. Théodore Monod, le plus grand explorateur saharien du XX<sup>e</sup> siècle, avait attesté la présence de ces véritables fossiles vivants lors de sa venue ici. Il y a des milliers d'années, l'eau s'est retirée du Sahara, emportant avec elle vers le Nil tous les crocodiles, sauf quelques spécimens. Ils ne sont plus que sept aujourd'hui, les seuls crocodiles sahariens qui existent encore, trop peu nombreux désormais pour assurer la continuité de l'espèce. Craintifs et inoffensifs, ces sauriens ont su s'adapter à un régime alimentaire réduit, se contentant de quelques petits poissons et des excréments des dromadaires. Du bas, au niveau





© Claude Maillard

de l'eau, le spectacle est tout aussi saisissant. C'est là que, regroupée au pied de la falaise, une famille venue tout spécialement de N'Djamena pour renouer avec leurs ancêtres natifs du village d'Archéï nous accueille chaleureusement. Après le thé de bienvenue et un agréable moment passé auprès d'elle, il nous sera impossible de la quitter sans accepter un présent, un mouton qui améliorera notre quotidien des jours à venir.

#### **Musées de la préhistoire à ciel ouvert**

L'Ennedi regorge de sites de peintures rupestres qui témoignent de la vie des nomades. Les artistes utilisaient une palette de couleurs variant de l'ocre (obtenu à partir de poudre de grès) au blanc du kaolin, mélangées avec un fixateur à base de gomme arabique et de caséine de lait. Proche de la Guelta d'Archéï, derrière une dune, une cavité perchée dans un piton rocheux attire notre attention. C'est la grotte de Manda Guéli, l'un des plus beaux sites de la région, qui abrite des peintures rupestres de la période cameline datant du IV<sup>e</sup> millénaire avant J.-C. Des hommes, dont des cavaliers armés, des femmes, des enfants et également des dromadaires et des bovins sont représentés sur les parois. Quelques kilomètres plus au sud, près de la monumentale arche de l'Eléphant, une profonde galerie formée de plusieurs grottes s'enfonce dans le rocher de Terkeï jusqu'à le



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(ci-dessus): Comment ne pas tomber amoureux du Tchad ?

(ci-contre): Fier et indépendant, le berger Toubou et son inséparable dromadaire.





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L'impressionnante arche de l'Éléphant

traverser. Dans l'une d'entre elles, le plafond est tapissé d'une étonnante vache géante attestant que dans un passé pas si lointain, l'Ennedi était une terre plus tempérée, moins hostile à la vie. On estime en effet la date des peintures de Terkeï à seulement 2000 à 500 ans avant J.-C.

Il faut bien nous rendre à l'évidence, notre périple dans l'Ennedi va sur sa fin. Bientôt, la piste qui mène à Abéché, deuxième plus grande ville du Tchad, va se transformer en une route asphaltée, la seule du pays, qui rejoint N'Djamena au Soudan. Mais 800 kilomètres nous séparent encore de la

capitale tchadienne. Qualifiée par certains de «porte de l'Orient», Abéché, capitale de la région du Quaddaï, n'est qu'à quelques encablures de la province occidentale soudanaise du Darfour. Riche de son passé précolonial, elle est depuis les années 1960 le principal épicentre des secousses qui n'ont cessé d'affecter le Tchad. Même la crise du Darfour ne l'a pas épargnée. Aujourd'hui, la ville est surtout un lieu qui essaie de trouver ses marques entre les organisations humanitaires et la vie universitaire. Parmi les échoppes de bric et de broc qui bordent une avenue terreuse, le restaurant «L'ombre d'Afrique»

tombe à point nommé pour nous refaire une petite santé après 17 jours de bivouac. Un miroir placé à l'entrée nous renvoie une image que nous n'avions pas vue depuis bien longtemps: celle des membres de l'expédition crasseux, éreintés, amaigris mais les yeux remplis de beaux clichés, de beaux souvenirs, de belles rencontres emmagasinés tout au long du parcours. ■



# Focus sur le Club de théâtre de l'ONU

**AGNÈS COLLARDEAU-ANGLEYS,  
PRÉSIDENTE DU CLUB DE THÉÂTRE**

**Questions à Cécile Bellet<sup>1</sup> et  
Rachid Bouhia<sup>2</sup>**

**Qu'est-ce qui pour toi est essentiel dans ton enseignement de l'impro au sein du groupe du club de théâtre de l'ONU?**

**C.B.:** Donner du plaisir aux participants et qu'ils repartent du cours en se sentant détendus et heureux.

J'aime l'idée de réunir les gens autour d'un moment, d'une parenthèse au milieu de leur tracas du quotidien et du rythme endiablé de leur journées de travail, leur apprendre le lâcher prise et les

faire se révéler là où on ne les attend pas.

L'atelier de théâtre de début d'année se métamorphose en une vraie troupe et voir l'évolution de chacun jusqu'à la scène est pour moi la meilleure des récompenses!

**Pourquoi aimes-tu faire partie du Club de théâtre de l'ONU?**

**R.B.:** J'ai été ravi de découvrir l'existence du groupe théâtre à l'ONU. C'est tout simplement un pur bonheur de retrouver le groupe tous les mardis soir pour une bonne séance d'improvisation ou pour répéter des textes que nous avons collectivement choisis. L'ambiance y est très détendue, on rigole

beaucoup. Toutefois les vraies raisons de ma présence sont les suivantes:

1. La gastronomie: il y a toujours un petit buffet sympa avant les répétitions.
2. Les chorégraphies: avant les séances d'impros on s'échauffe toujours sur les derniers hits. Succès garanti dans les discothèques de Genève!
3. Et surtout l'interculturalité: Univers variés, accents colorés... pour les découvrir, rendez-vous au Club de théâtre!

**Le Club de théâtre de l'ONU c'est:**

8 années d'existence 8 spectacles 26 extraits de pièces ou pièce de théâtre joués en



spectacle 75 acteurs au cours des 8 années 1 spectacle d'improvisation chaque année 2 ou 3 représentations d'une pièce de théâtre chaque année Des centaines de spectateurs enthousiastes

#### **Le Club de théâtre de l'ONU on y fait Quoi?**

On y rit beaucoup, on danse, on chante... mais aussi: des exercices et travail corporel (respiration, déplacements, voix)

De l'improvisation de septembre à mi-janvier: sketches d'improvisation et un spectacle d'improvisation.

Une pièce de théâtre de mi-janvier à juin: mise en scène et plusieurs représentations en public.

#### **Pour Qui?**

Tout le monde! Ouvert à tous les fonctionnaires de l'ONU et tous autres amateurs de théâtre aimant la langue française avec ou sans accent.

#### **Quand?**

Cours une fois par semaine tous les mardis de 19h à 22h, dès le 20 septembre 2016

Rythme un peu plus intense à l'approche des spectacles (quelques demi-journées et soirées)

#### **Où?**

Répétitions au Palais des Nations Bâtiment E Service des visites porte 39

Spectacles dans un théâtre et/ou au Palais des Nations. ■

1 Cécile Bellet, formateur théâtre d'improvisation pour le club de théâtre de l'ONU – Ecole Stand'impro Genève

2 Rachid Bouhia, économiste à la CNUCED, acteur du Club de théâtre de l'ONU

#### **Rejoignez ce dynamique Club de théâtre de l'ONU!**

Renseignements:  
theatreaupalais@gmail.com

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# Boarding school in Tennessee – what we were looking for!

#### **JENNIFER MUNGAI**

The decision of where and how to educate your child can be overwhelming with all of the options available today! Often, the choice is determined by academic challenge, cost, value system, safety, location, and learning environment.

My husband and I were searching a school for our son which could meet his academic challenges for senior high school. We came across The King's Academy in Seymour, Tennessee<sup>1</sup>, through a relative in USA. TKA is a 135-year-old boarding school in scenic East Tennessee, USA.

We liked what we saw, but we

had mixed feelings. He had just finished the International General Certificate of Secondary Education (IGCSE) and enrolling in TKA would mean he would have to change learning systems. After a Skype interview with the Admission Director, Guidance Counsellor and the Boarding Director, we were convinced that The King's Academy would offer what we were looking for. In addition, being a Christian boarding school, we were sure he would grow spiritually – an added value which was important to us. Plus, the academy has a history of serving international students since 1935. Over 1,000 international students from over 100 nations

have studied there. Transition from the British system to the American system presented some problems. But the school's support programme helped the transition go smoothly especially in areas of special needs. Biology, chemistry and mathematics were the most challenging subjects. The school has a rigorous academic track. However they tailored a programme targeting specific weak areas for him with a specialized mentor who oversaw his progress. To us this was the greatest help because not only did he improve, but he also gained confidence in himself. Interestingly, they have a programme called Back Work – at the end

of the day's lessons the teachers stay behind for an hour to help students who didn't understand the lessons in class. This helped our son greatly.

The learning environment is friendly and safe. Guidance Counsellor and tutors work with students preparing them for university or college life. The boarding staff were friendly and caring, always assuring me of his comfort and wellbeing. This gave me peace to know that his being far away from home was as good as him being with me in Geneva. ■

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1 <https://www.thekingsacademy.net/>

# In person or virtually you are always most welcome!



## IRINA GERASSIMOVA

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are also welcome to make their proposals. Unfortunately, only a limited amount of academic books is available in electronic form, our customers often prefer print to digital formats for reading. The former head of the BNF, Bruno Racine, in his recent article in *Le Monde* noted that the "book has a bright future" and the print and electronic formats will remain complementary, and we fully agree with that!

As in all national or academic libraries, in our library reference and selected recent materials are available on open shelves. Other books, journals or official publications are kept in the closed stacks; however they can be ordered using our online catalogue. Delivery is made 4 times a day, either the respective offices of staff members or to the reading rooms. The majority of these collections, except reference material or textbooks, is available for loan for staff and diplomats. Since we do not hold multiple copies, the loan period for books from the reading rooms is limited to two weeks.

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## Message du rédacteur en chef

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

### N'hésitez plus et écrivez-nous !

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

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

### Et maintenant, à vos plumes !

#### Adressez vos commentaires à :

Alex Mejia, rédacteur en chef – UN Special  
Palais des Nations, CH-1211 Genève 10, Suisse  
Par courrier électronique: alex.mejia@unitar.org

## Message from the editor-in-chief

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

### Write to us!

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

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

### Now, put pen to paper!

#### Send your thoughts to:

Alex Mejia, Editor-in-chief – UN Special  
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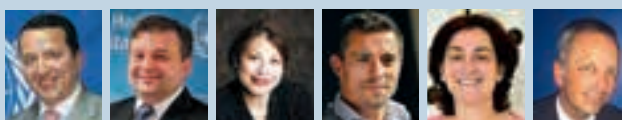
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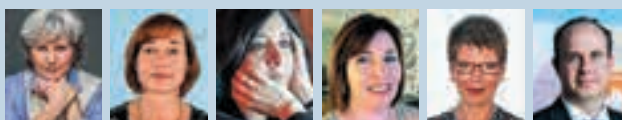
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