



NGO Committee on Spirituality, Values and Global Concerns
a Committee of the 'Conference Of NGOs in consultative relationship with the United Nations'
CoNGO
AT THE UNITED NATIONS GENEVA

Activities and Events of the NGO Committee on "Spirituality, Values and Global Concerns"

From 2003 onwards

2003

- **"Faith in Diplomacy: The United Nations and the Challenges of the 21st Century"** *Conference* co-organised with Caux Initiatives of Change. *Keynote speaker:* former British diplomat Archie Mackenzie, former United Kingdom Ambassador, Assistant to Edward Heath in the Brandt North-South Commission and Vice-President of the UN Educational Trust for Scotland
- **Daily Circle for Peace - Cercle pour la Paix**, United Nations Geneva, Room No. 2064-66 Time: 6-6:30 PM - every day during the 59th Commission on Human Rights (17 March-24 April 2003)
- **"Paths to Health: Traditional Medicine and the Spiritual Dimension in Health"** *Panel discussion.*
Guest Speakers:
 - Dr. Ravi Narayan, Bangalore; Global Coordinator of the People's Movement
 - Karin Maria Hennings; Executive Director, Sri Sri Ayurveda Europeco-sponsored with the Working Group on Health and Human Rights of the NGO Committee on the Status of Women.
- **"On the Spiritual Dimension of Human Development"** at Hotel Beau-Rivage Event organised by Deva Kaur
- **"Dialogue with Religious and Spiritual Leaders"** at Hotel Beau-Rivage - Event organised by Deva Kaur
 - Acharya Meenakshi Devi, Hindu development leader,
- **"Development Work in India"** – 11 September 2003 - at Hotel Beau-Rivage - co-sponsored event
 - His Holiness XIIth Gyalwang Drukpa
- **"Beyond Fear"** - 11 September 2003 - at Hotel Beau-Rivage - Event organised by Deva Kaur
 - Sardarni Sahiba Sat-Kaur Khalsa, Secretary Religion Sikh Dharma of the Western Hemisphere
- **"The Spirit of Human Security"** November 2003 at UNDPI , UN New York

2004

- **Establishment of the New York NGO Committee on Spirituality, Values and Global Concerns - CSVGC-NY on 25 March 2004** at the UN NY – Elections were held on May 27, 2004
- **"Philosophical and Spiritual Perspectives on the Decent Work Agenda and other UN Instruments"**
29 March 2004. Speakers:
 - Dr Dominique Peccoud, Special Adviser to the Director-General of ILO for Socio-Religious Affairs.
 - Moderators: Helen Sayers, Brahma Kumaris, World Spiritual University and Dr Astrid Stuckelberger

- Moderator: Dr Astrid Stuckelberger

- **“Our Contribution to the Work of the UN”** – 21 April 2004 – Speakers:
 - Tim Murithi, Programme Officer, Programme in Peacemaking and Preventive Diplomacy, UN Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR);
 - Conchita Poncini, IFUW and chairperson of the NGO Committee on the Status of Women;
 - Moderator: Werner Peter Luedemann
- **World Health Assembly : “Paths to Health: The Spiritual Dimension in Health”**- 20 May 2004 - Speakers:
 - Shekhar Dutt, Secretary Department Ayurveda – Ministry of Health, India;
 - Dr Devender Kr Triguna, Board of Ayurvedic and Unani Systems of Medicine, Delhi;
 - Kirit Parikh, Vice President ZANDU, Mumbai;
 - Dr Manoj Kurian, World Council of Churches/Health and Healing;
 - Moderator: Werner Peter Luedemann

2005

- **Appeal: Call for the Spiritual Empowerment of the UN:** Translated into [English](#), [French](#) and [Spanish](#)
- **Circles for Peace:** A monthly silent meditation for Peace and for the Empowerment of the UN
- **Creation of the CSVGC–Geneva website:** www.csvgc-geneva.org – sponsored by the Foundation for Gaia

Panel Discussion organised during the 61st UN Commission on Human Rights, Palais des Nations, Geneva

• **“27 Demilitarised States in the World: Utopia or Reality for the Right to Development with Peace and Security?”** - 14 April 2004 – Speakers:

- Christophe Barbey - APRED Ass. for Non-Militarisation and Demilitarisation, author (of book of same title)
- Conchita Poncini - IFUW Int. Fed. of University Women, Former Chair of Committee on the Status of Women, Convenor of the Working Group on Women's Employment and Economic Development

• **Establishment of Planned CSVGC Working Groups:**

'Spiritual and Values Education' - Chairs Trevor Davies and Elly Pradervand

'Youth and Globalisation' - Chair Rudolf Schneider

Towards a Spiritual Forum at the UN' - Chairs to be appointed

'Sacred Traditions and Sacred Sites' - Chair Vita de Waal

'Common Denominators in Religions and Beliefs' - Chair Rudolf Schneider

'Science and Ethics' - Chair Astrid Stückelberger

2006

• **A New Science of Peace: Creating Coherent International Consciousness – the Effect of Group Meditation on prevention of Crime, Violence and International Consciousness** – 14 February 2006 – Hotel Metropole

* Dr John Hagelin – Harvard-trained quantum physicist; candidate for US presidency; Natural Law Party; Director, Global Union of Scientists for Peace; Director of the Institute of Science, Technology and public Policy - ([PDF](#))

• **Economic Ethos: would a Universal Basic Income for All be sufficient?** - a panel - 29 June 2006 at the International Labour Organisation - ILO, Geneva

- Lisinka Ulatowska – Ph. D, Association of World Citizens, Author of *'A Self-financing World Marshall Plan'*

- Jean Laville – Deputy Director of the Ethos Foundation, <http://www.ethosfund.ch>

- Dominique Pecoud – Special Adviser for Socio-Religious Affairs, International Labour Office

- Very Rev. William McComish, Emmaüs Foundation, Chair of the Geneva Spiritual Appeal Group

- Augusto Lopez-Claros, Chief Economist and Director, Global Competitiveness Network, World Economic Forum

Moderator: Astrid Stuckelberger

Rapporteur: Elly Pradervand

This panel will elaborate recommendations that will be addressed to the High-level segment ECOSOC meeting at the United Nations in Geneva to be held in July 2006

* Participation at the **Civil Society Development Forum** organised by CoNGO at the International Labour Organisation-ILO in Geneva, 3-6 July 2006

Subcommittees/Working Groups established by the AGM

- **Towards a Spiritual Forum at the UN**, Co- Chairs Astrid Stückelberger, John Taylor, Charles Graves
- **Sacred Traditions and Sacred Sites**, Chair: Vita de Waal. This group has held several meetings

2007

- **Human Rights' Council** - Attendance at the HRC at all its meetings
- **ECOSOC High Level Meeting** -attendance of the Meeting and of the Committee itself
- **New York High Level Meeting at the General Assembly on Inter-Faith and Inter-Cultural Dialogue and Cooperation for Peace** - Discussions with the President of CONGO and her active involvement in securing the attendance of Dr John Taylor to represent CONGO and the CSVGC at the meeting.
- **Discussions with the Partnership Committee and the WCC** on the upcoming Meeting in January, co-sponsored by CONGO with the CSVGC and the World Council of Churches.
- **A Human Right to Peace** – a presentation by David Fernandez Puyana (aididh) www.aididh.org
- **Islamic Values and Globalisation** - Special event in October 2007
- **Proposal for a UN Decade on Inter-Faith and Inter-Cultural Dialogue and Cooperation for Peace** - Ongoing discussions with Ambassadors on the, UN Decade project, including the President of the Human Rights Council. As part of the preparation for January some 15 Permanent delegations were visited.

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(Above list compiled by Trevor Davies for CoNGO 2007 Report)

2008

- **Proposal for a UN Decade on Interreligious and Intercultural Dialogue and Cooperation for Peace** - Meeting at the Ecumenical Institute, Bossey of 45 representatives of different faith groups and some 5 Permanent Missions including several ambassadors, and representatives of 4 UN Institutions resulting in the. Visits were made to over 15 missions including China. CSVGC appointed as Vice president of Provisional Steering Committee.
- Attendance at the Human Rights' Council meetings, and in cooperation with Inter Faith International the organisation of side events
- **ECOSOC High Level Meeting** - Attendance

- **Meeting on Religions and Womens' Rights** - Special event at June Human Rights Council

Speakers' Mini-Series:

- **Katrien Beeckman** - Head Principles and Humanitarian Values Department., International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies – IFRC –2008 at the WCC.

“Presenting the International Arts of Living and Association for Human Values” - 11 November 2009, at the World Council of Churches - Speaker:

- **Nathalie Schaller** - Currently based in Switzerland, Nathalie has been teaching courses for the last 12 years. To contact her: +41 (0) 78 892 17 36 – also www.iahv.org and www.artofliving.org and www.5h.org

The Association for Human Values has as its goal and mission the promotion of human values. They believe that Human Rights are a part of the head, while values are from the heart. We already have values- it is not something we need to learn. What prevents humans from manifesting these values is stress. Therefore, their main focus is eliminating the cause of stress. Breathing is a primary technique- accessing the connection of breath and emotions.

They work in 150 countries. Natalie gave the example of Morocco. After working with individuals, they felt the benefit and wanted the techniques brought to the youth. The Association worked with 200 youth in 2 training of 10 days each. The first focused on releasing their own stress (based on anger at the government, feeling helpless, and wanting things to change). The second was youth leadership training, equipping the youth to be agents of change. When they realized they could do something, they wanted to.

They use the '5 Hs': health, hygiene, harmony, homes, human diversity. Their founder, Sri Sri Shaurer, teaches that it is not enough to understand; we have to experience peace to share it. Youth, and others, need integrity.

There was some discussion after the presentation. Every religious/faith system says that peace comes from within. And that it is important to be in touch with who we are. Also, these techniques would seem to help develop community, especially in the West where the focus is on the individual. Rudolph referred to a similar method in the States called 'Meditating with Children'.

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(Above list compiled by Trevor Davies for CoNGO 2007 Report)

2009

- **Tri-Annual General Meeting, 19 March 2009** – A new Board was elected for 2009-2012

Chair: Vita de Waal (Planetary Association for Clean Energy) - Vice-Chair: Trevor Davies (Anglican Consultative Council) – Treasurer: Rudolf Schneider (Planetary Institute for Planetary Synthesis) – Secretary: rotating monthly / CSVGC members - New Board meets at the UN, Palais de Nations on March 26, 2009

- **UN Decade of Interreligious and Intercultural Dialogue:** On March 20, Trevor Davies has created an independent group outside of CSVGC known as the **Geneva Based Network for the Decade**. For any further information: daviest40@gmail.com

- A **CSVGC Postal Giro Account** has been created.

- **CSVGC-NY:** we received a letter from Diane Williams suggesting closer cooperation between our two Committees. Definitively to be followed up.

• **Collaborations:** May 2009: Meeting with NGOs based in Geneva who share our work but who are not accredited with the UN. In order to collaborate, we organise a number of meetings outside of the UN. 4 Geneva based NGOs attended in May. NGOs:
Arun Pabari introduced the **Sathya Sai Geneva Centre**, Roswitha Grass on the work of **CMDC** and Teny Pirri-Simonoain on the work of **EPIL**.

Attendance at Events:

• 20-24 April **Durban Review Conference:** (<http://www.un.org/durbanreview2009/>)

The Durban Review evaluated progress towards the goals set by the World Conference against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance in Durban, South Africa, in 2001. It served as a catalyst to fulfilling the promises of the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action agreed at the 2001 World Conference through reinvigorated actions, initiatives and practical solutions.

• May 2009: Attendance to a meeting with Geneva based NGOs requested by the **President of the General Assembly, Father Miguel d'Escoto Brockmann**, during his visit to Geneva.

• 2-4 July 2009: **Civil Society Development Forum- CSDF***, Geneva Component, related to the MDG's on *Implementing the Internationally Agreed Goals and Commitments in regards to Global Public Health*

• 6-7 July 2009: **ECOSOC Annual Ministerial Review –AMR***

* The Civil Society Development Forums (CSDF) have been very successful and useful in generating NGO input to the ECOSOC High-Level Segment (HLS) and now to the Annual Ministerial Review (AMR). The collective NGO Committee Chairs of each of the three UN Centres have been asked to elect 2 representatives to be on the International Steering Committee.

Monthly Meetings for 2009: January 13, February 19, March 19 + 26 , April 28, May 18, June 24, September 3, October 8, November 17, December 16

Events

Panel Discussion organised during the 11th Session of the UN Human Rights Council, Palais des Nations, Geneva
“Environment and Economic, Social and Cultural Rights” – 10 June 2009 – Speakers:

- **Gonzalo Oviedo Carrillo** – Senior Social Policy Advisor at the International Union for Conservation of Nature / IUCN - Member of the Specialist Group on Cultural and Spiritual Values of Protected Areas under the World Commission of Protected Areas /WCPA
- **Beatriz Schulthess** – Senior Associate of the Conference of NGOs / CoNGO; President, Indigenous Peoples' Ancestral Spiritual Council; Co-President, World Conference of Religions for Peace
- **Alex Walker** - Director, Findhorn Foundation; Chair, Development Trusts Association Scotland
- **Franco Zunino** – General Secretary, Associazione Italiana Wilderness (AIW); Senior Adviser, Listening Point Foundation and former member of the Bear Specialist Group of the IUCN Species Survival Commission.

Moderator: **Vita de Waal** – Intl Affairs Liaison, Planetary Association for Clean Energy (PACE), Foundation for GAIA; Chair, NGO Committee on Spirituality, Values and Global Concerns, Chair, WG on Sacred Traditions and Sacred Sites; Member of the Specialist Group on Cultural and Spiritual Values of Protected Areas under the World Commission of Protected Areas /WCPA

Panel co-organised by CSVGC, WG Sacred Traditions and Sacred Sites, PACE and Foundation for GAIA.

Panel Discussion organised during the 12th Session of the UN Human Rights Council, Palais des Nations, Geneva

“Spirituality, Social Action and Human Rights” – 28 September 2009 -13h00 to 14h30 – Room XXVII

• **Swami Agnivesh:** Former Chair of the UN Trust Fund on Contemporary Forms of Slavery; Founder of Bandhua Mukti Morcha and renowned worldwide for his remarkable achievements in promoting social justice as well as a tireless Indian campaigner against child labour, bonded labour, inter-generational slaves, violence and oppression against women, female foeticide/infanticide and the burning of women on funeral pyres. With other social economists he is actively searching alternative socio-economic for development models that are fair and just. A global leader of inter-faith dialogue for peace, he is founder/ Convenor of the Sarva Dharma Sansad (Parliament of Religions). Swami Agnivesh believes that all people can engage in a life of spiritual activism in accordance with the demands of

their own lives combining compassionate action with an integrated lifestyle. He received the 2004 Right Livelihood Award (Alternative Nobel Prize) and in 1990 the Freedom and Human Rights Award and the International Anti-Slavery Award.

• **Mona Chasserio:** After a successful career in the pharma industry, and acting on a vision, she went to living for three years on the streets with homeless and battered women. After this experience she created 'Coeurs des Femmes'. It is founded on her unique philosophy of healing and self-reconstruction and of the integration of creativity with spirituality. In 2009 she created the Association 'Uniesverselles' and the 'Centre Entre Deux Rives' for Women in Dakar, Senegal, allowing immigrant women to rebuild their lives in their home country. Her work has elicited much interest among political leaders, NGOs, CSOs and spiritual communities due to its unique and unifying nature. She was made Officier de la Legion d'Honneur (2008), and awarded The Solidarity Prize of Reader's Digest (2004) and the Humanist Prize of the New Economist (2004).

• **Rama Mani:** Member of the World Future Council, Convenor of Justice Unlimited, Director of the Project: Ending Mass Atrocities: Echoes in Southern cultures, Senior Research Associate of the Centre for International Studies, Oxford University. Formerly Director of the Global Peace and Security Course at the Geneva Centre for Security Policy (GCSP) and Executive Director of the International Centre for Ethnic Studies, Colombo, Sri Lanka.

Moderator: Vita de Waal: Chair, NGO Committee on Spirituality, Values and Global Concerns, Director Foundation for GAIA, Vice-President Institute for Planetary Synthesis, Member Specialist Group IUCN-WCPA-CSVPA, Intl. Liaison Planetary Association for Clean Energy.

Panel co-organised by CSVGC, WG Sacred Traditions and Sacred Sites, PACE and Foundation for GAIA.

Speakers' Mini-Series:

"The Work of the Kennedy Center for International Studies at Brigham University" – 28 April 2009

at the CoNGO Conference Room – A Presentation - Speakers:

• **George and Kathryn Jarvis:** George and Kathryn Jarvis presented the work of the Kennedy Center for International Studies at Brigham University: George gave a historical and practical introduction to David M. Kennedy, for whom the Kennedy Center is named, The Church of the Latter Day Saints, Brigham University, and the work of the Center, and Kathryn focused on its motivation and spiritual underpinnings.

Brigham Young University was founded in 1875 and the Center in 1983- it was accredited with ECOSOC in 1999. The International Relations Program includes a UN program and many programs offered offer students the opportunity to volunteer and offer service in the world while still a student, which is often a life-changing, formative experience. The motto of the university is "enter to learn, go forth to serve".

George and Kathryn's work at the UN is a part of the outreach program, which does some work to support Human Rights defenders and contribute to the UPR but is in a learning and growing phase. Promoting freedom of choice, particularly in relation to religious affiliation, is a priority and the Center is committed to defending freedom of religion and belief. They also believe education is at the heart of making wise, informed choices, and so support education, formal and non-formal, for both members of the church of all ages and others in the community. In recent years- George and Kathryn reported in the question time- the church's vision for partnerships with people of other faiths has been increasing and successful joint projects have been done for political actions and community renewal efforts.

"Womens' Rights and Human Rights in Islam" – 24 June 2009 – at the CoNGO Conference Room

• **Fawzia Al-Ashmawi – Egyptian Novelist;** since 1979 lecturer of Arabic Language and Islamic Civilisation at the University of Geneva; former senior researcher for UNESCO, the European Commission and ESESCO; founder of the European Forum for Muslim Women. In 2008 President Mubarak awarded Dr. Fawzia Al Ashmawi the Egyptian Prize for Literature and Arts for her publications and studies in Islamic field. [Please go to Events for the Report](#)

"The Salvation Army" – October 8, 2009 at the CoNGO Conference Centre

• **Sylvette Huguenin:** Major of the Salvation Army, President of the Geneva SA Work Group, medically trained nurse, former Territorial Secretary for Congo of the Medical Group of the Salvation Army, certified General Mediator, in 2008 she joined the International Social Justice Commission (ISJC) and has since been asked to represent her organization at the United Nations in Geneva. [Please go to Events > Speakers' Mini Series for the Report \(in French\)](#)

- **Katherine Carré** – November 2009 at the CoNGO Conference Centre

Subcommittees/Working Groups established by the AGM

- **Sacred Traditions and Sacred Sites**, Chair: Vita de Waal. This group has held several meetings and reported to the Committee on 28 April, May 18, June 24,