



Edward Peters

President Sahnoun's vision for CAUX centre

In view of the challenges facing our humankind, my conviction and vision is that Caux, the international conference centre of *Initiatives of Change* in Switzerland, should become even more of a platform for dialogue and peace, bringing 'human security' where it is lacking.

We have to break down the walls of misunderstanding, prejudice and, above all, fear. All too often we are hostages to the systems of thinking into which we are born and educated.

But other paths are entirely possible.

For peace to become operative, deep change is needed in oneself and the other person. This is where *Initiatives of Change* can help to make in-depth conflict transformation possible.

A hallmark of Caux is the opportunity to meet informally with people from many backgrounds, countries and cultures, decision-makers and actors from civil society. Here we can learn from one another, gaining a deeper understanding and appreciation of the causes of insecurity and hopelessness. We can look into attitudes, beliefs and cultures as a way of understanding our own mindset and that of others.

As we change ourselves, we can create an environment of peace.

Mohamed Sahnoun

President, *Initiatives of Change International*

Served as Special Adviser to UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan on the Horn of Africa region.

About Initiatives of Change

Initiatives of Change (IoC) is a diverse, global network committed to building trust across the world's divides. Active in over 60 countries, it comprises people of many cultures, nations, beliefs and backgrounds transforming society through changes in individuals and relationships, starting in their own lives.

In 1938 as Europe prepared for war Frank Buchman, its originator, launched a campaign for 'moral and spiritual re-armament' as the way to build a 'hate-free, fear-free, greed-free world'.

Following World War II, Moral Re-Armament (MRA), as it became known, worked for reconciliation between France and Germany, and between Japan and some of its Asian neighbours. It was involved in the process of decolonisation, and in forging industrial teamwork and harmonious race relations. It was also active in inter-religious relations and in the struggle for the rights of indigenous peoples.

In all these cases, what made the difference was the reality that each person, whatever their situation, has a role to play. Through changes in behaviour and mindsets, individuals and groups in conflict found a way to bridge their divides. Change isn't easy and a spiritual dynamic is required to overcome inertia. Daily quiet times to seek inner inspiration and a commitment to ethical practice can provide that dynamic.

Aims

As a diverse global network, IoC initiates programmes aimed at:

- Healing the wounds of history that sustain cycles of revenge, especially where cultures and civilizations meet.
- Strengthening the moral and spiritual dimensions of democracy, so challenging selfish interests and corruption.
- Helping individuals and families to counter the climate of blame and selfishness with a culture of care and personal responsibility.
- Strengthening the motivation of care and moral commitment in economic life and thinking, in order to create jobs, correct economic and environmental imbalance, and tackle the root causes of poverty.
- Rebuilding a sense of community and hope in cities and tackling the causes of racial and communal discrimination.
- Forging networks among people from different cultures and faiths based on a shared commitment to work for reconciliation, justice, and peace.

Initiatives of Change International

Initiatives of Change International is the umbrella body federating the national legal bodies of *Initiatives of Change*. It seeks to make their



CAUX CONFERENCE CENTRE
SWITZERLAND

www.caux.ch

experience and knowledge available to the United Nations and other international institutions. National societies in 39 countries are independent but may affiliate to *Initiatives of Change International*.

Based in Caux, Switzerland, and with its main office in Geneva, *Initiatives of Change International* is an NGO in Special Consultative Status with the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations (ECOSOC), and Participatory Status at the Council of Europe in Strasbourg.

Funding sources

Initiatives of Change is financed by a combination of individual contributions, its own activities, grants from corporations, foundations and governments, and income from invested funds, mostly received from bequests.

Its major conference centre, owned and managed by the Swiss foundation *CAUX-Initiatives of Change*, is funded in like manner and by the lease of the Caux facility to a hotel management school for ten months of the year. The Asian Centre in India runs on fee-based training programmes and contributions of conference participants.

Full-time workers receive minimal salaries or modest allowances and in-kind support. Part-time volunteers make significant contributions of their time and skills. Accounts of national societies are audited annually and are available on request.

Initiatives of Change International receives grants for specific projects from governments and private foundations, and is supported by contributions from individuals and its 21 member national societies.

HIGHLIGHTS 2006-2007



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CAUX – ACCOMPANYING NEGOTIATIONS FOR PEACE IN BURUNDI



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PROMOTING ETHICAL GOVERNANCE IN INDIA



Kees Seelgraaf

MILITARY & POLICE TRAINING FOR DEMOCRACY IN SIERRA LEONE



David Lancaster

GRASSROOTS DIALOGUES OF CIVILIZATIONS

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Building trust across the world's divides

Initiatives of Change International



Frédéric Chauvane

Caux – accompanying negotiations for peace in Burundi

Africa's densely populated Great Lakes Region has seen some of the continent's bloodiest ethnic conflicts, including the Rwandan genocide. Since 2002 *Initiatives of Change International* has been working with leaders from the conflicting communities, to build trust and bring healing from the legacy of past traumas. As a result, three IofC representatives from the region – Michel Kipoke, Thomas Ntambu and Bonaventure Nkeshimana – were invited by the Burundian government and the rebel Palipehutu-FNL party to support the negotiations which, after three years, led to a breakthrough cease-fire agreement in September 2006. As Ntambu puts it: 'We have a moderating influence on people's passions... We help them focus on what really matters and make sure the negotiating table does not turn into a battlefield.'

In a bid to consolidate the fragile peace, 33 Burundians – including three former heads of state, representatives of former rebel groups and religious leaders – held six days of 'honest conversations' at the IofC conference centre in Caux, Switzerland, during April 2007. 'Caux has helped us to open our hearts... to each other,' said one political leader. Another added, 'If we are motivated by our fears and hurts, our country will never come out of the vicious circle of violence.' This trust-building work has been funded largely by the Swiss Federal Department of Foreign Affairs.

Military and police training for democracy in Sierra Leone

The film *Blood Diamond* shows some of the pain of Sierra Leone's recent conflict, but there is another story to be told – one of hope. **Hope Sierra Leone** (HSL) is a non-government organization affiliated to IofC working to rebuild the country's 'moral infrastructure'. A peace farm, opened in November 2006 by the Minister for Internal Affairs and the Minister for Agriculture, brings together former combatants and local civilians to grow rice. Workshops on the Moral Foundations for Democracy build trust between the army, the police and civil society.

In February 2007, HSL, in partnership with the Network on Collaborative Peacebuilding-SL, launched a **Clean Election Campaign** in the run-up to the July 2007 elections, training volunteers in voter education. The campaign's message is to avoid blame and recognize that 'if we want to clean-up the country we must start with ourselves'.



Frédéric Chauvane

Grassroots dialogues of civilizations in Europe and Asia-Pacific

A diverse multicultural and multifaith network, IofC has been actively facilitating grassroots 'dialogues of civilizations' at many different levels – from school programmes to public 'Christian-Muslim dialogues' hosted by religious leaders. In French cities, an **Initiative Dialogue** works at bridging the divides between different cultural communities. In 2007 five Lebanese, including two Christian and Muslim former militia members during Lebanon's civil war; visited France urging community leaders to overcome their prejudices. During a two-month tour of Indonesia, Australia, New Zealand and Fiji, one of Britain's senior Muslims, Imam Abduljalil Sajid, and his wife, Jamila, spoke to political and religious leaders, sharing their work of cross-cultural community building.



Nigerian imam and pastor make forgiveness real

In northern Nigeria, where ethnic and religious conflicts have killed thousands, Imam Mohammed Ashafa and Pastor James Wuye – one time leaders of opposing militias – have mediated peace agreements in several traumatized communities. Teams from the Interfaith Mediation Center they created are at work in hot spots across Nigeria.

A documentary film, *The Imam and the Pastor*, tells their remarkable story. It premiered in December 2006 at the United Nations in New York, and subsequently in Washington, London and Toronto. In February, it was shown to 400 at a 'High level Muslim-Christian dialogue' in the Capital Territory of Abuja, Nigeria. Everywhere the film challenges audiences to reach out and practise forgiveness.



Mike Brown

Training for 'change agents' around the world

Cambodian and Vietnamese youth confronting the prejudice and enmity between their nations...
Indian business executives working on ethics and social responsibility...
Indonesian 'madrasa' students exploring inter-religious tolerance...
Taiwanese housewives learning to heal dysfunctional family relationships...
Ghanaian youth researching moral values in tertiary institutions...
*Americans building partnerships across racial, economic and cultural divisions through the **Connecting Communities Fellowship Program**...*
*Civil society activists in Central and Eastern Europe conducting workshops to establish **Foundations for Freedom**...*

... the training and development programmes of *Initiatives of Change* are as diverse as its global network. Yet all have one thing in common: they take participants beyond conceptual learning to motivating change, starting with themselves, and then within their communities and professions.

Action for Life, a nine-month leadership programme, sent intergenerational teams through 19 countries in Africa and Asia, learning from the 'change-makers'.

Celebrating its 60th year of international conferences, **Caux** presented a host of intercultural learning opportunities for the 1436 participants, from 80 countries, who attended in 2006.

Innovative **Tools for Change** conferences at Caux draw on a mix of IofC's training approaches and offer learning tracks on 'what it takes to build trust across cultures, races and politics'.

The **Caux Scholars Program**, conducted annually in Switzerland, gives post-graduate students an intensive course in the skills and values essential to effective peacemaking.

At the **Asia Plateau** centre, in western India, 2621 participated in seminars and workshops in the past year – including executives, rural entrepreneurs, MBA postgraduates and municipal sweepers.

Peace Circles by **Creators of Peace** are empowering women to discover their peace-making potential in communities in Colombia, Lebanon, UK, South Africa, India, Australia and Fiji.

In France, peace education workshops sensitize school students to their role in solving conflicts. 'You are responsible for the peace or the violence that surrounds you,' is their motto. And in a British schools programme, over 700 workshops have been run for sixth formers since 1995.



Karen Elliott Giesdorf Photography, 2007

Healing the legacy of the slave trade in the United States

The 200th anniversary of the ending of the slave trade between Britain, West Africa and America was marked by 5000 people attending the unveiling of a reconciliation statue in Richmond, Virginia, which matches identical statues in Liverpool and Benin. Ten years of years of coordinated efforts by teams in Richmond and Liverpool, facilitated by IofC's **Hope in the Cities** programme, have played an essential role in developing the Reconciliation Triangle project. Educators in Richmond hope that, by linking students with their peers in Benin and Liverpool, the Triangle can help to overcome one of slavery's legacies – the prevailing racial and economic separation in the region's schools.

Promoting ethical governance in India

An IofC **Centre for Governance** based in Delhi presented awards to outstanding women sarpanch (elected leaders of the village level 'panchayat' system) as part of a campaign and lecture series on 'governance and the common man'. Formed with 300 members, including an Election Commissioner and a retired Chief Justice, the Centre has engaged civil society and the media in applying recent 'Right to Information' legislation.

Training programmes for the elite Indian Administration Service (IAS) held at Asia Plateau 'brushed up the moral fibre which had gathered dust over the years' – in the words of one senior bureaucrat. Another IAS officer has instigated similar training modules for municipal officers in all 240 jurisdictions in the state of Karnataka.

Campaigning for clean elections in Africa and the Pacific

The 2007 **Clean Election Campaign** (CEC) in Sierra Leone (see page opposite) is the latest in a series of IofC-inspired campaigns which started in Taiwan 15 years ago. Hearing of their impact during the 2002 presidential elections in Kenya, Solomon Islanders asked Nairobi lawyer and IofC activist Joseph Karanja to help them set up a campaign before their 2006 national elections, the first since bloody unrest six years earlier. Teams of young people toured electorates using drama, leaflets and meetings to urge voters not to vote for those offering bribes. 'What we are telling people is you've got the power to make change,' said one of them.



Beatrix Pi Stampfli

End of term message from President Sommaruga

At this time, well into the new Millennium, uncertainty in the world's population is growing because of the missing standards of reference. Our first and most urgent task is to restore a culture based on ethical values.

The particular challenge for *Initiatives of Change International* is to serve the values of tolerance and solidarity, of reconciliation and forgiveness, to triumph over injustice and violence. We must – in and from Caux – do our utmost to foster dialogue between people of different cultures and faiths to prevent hatred from gaining the upper hand. Violence begets violence, leading to an endless spiral of retribution.

Let us join forces to promote respect and responsibility for preserving the life and dignity of all human beings, fighting market fundamentalism and the systematic destruction of the irreplaceable gift of our natural environment.

As Edward Everett Hale said, 'I am only one, but still I am one. I cannot do everything; but I will not refuse to do something that I can do.' Let us – with the help of the Almighty – act accordingly.

Cornelio Sommaruga
President, *Initiatives of Change International* 2003-2006
Former President of the International Committee of the Red Cross.