



## Initiatives of Change

**South African  
Newsletter  
May/June 2016**

### ***Initiatives of Change - South Africa revamp***

Reg Barry (Chairman) and Anthony Duigan (Deputy Chairman) report:

As historian Arnold Toynbee once noted: New challenges demand new responses. And if one keeps making the same old response in the face of new situations, failure inevitably follows. And so with Initiatives of Change (IofC).

About 18 months ago, IofC South Africa grasped the nettle of radical change and took a long hard look at itself. "We realised that our financial situation was becoming precarious - bearing in mind the expenditure over the years on local and international conferences, Workshop for Africa (2013) and ongoing programmes like Creators of Peace, Change in Progress and a new programme, Caux Initiatives for Business," said one of the members of the Council of Management. "We saw this pending crisis as a good motivation to review how we operate and what we needed to change in that area. At the same time, the five people who had committed themselves to IofC in the 1970s (then Moral Rearmament) without any salary were getting older and needed the chance to step back a little from the frontline."

Three principles were then laid down by the Council of Management to chart the way forward:

1. Given the financial constraints, administration had to be streamlined and costs cut. This led to the decision to sell the four IofC homes - two in Cape Town and one each in Pretoria and Johannesburg.
2. The five members who have given the last 40 to 50 years to IofC without salary - Pieter and Meryl Horn, Jackie Euvrard, Vilma Maritz and Sam Pono - should be looked after in the years ahead. Since none have been able to afford a home outside of what IofC has provided, it has been necessary to structure gratuities and a monthly stipend for each of them.
3. Younger, committed members who are

prepared to take the organisation forward need to be taken on as paid staff with the accountability and good governance this demands. Cleo Mohlaodi was appointed as National Coordinator late last year and Portia Mosia as Programmes Manager earlier this year. A Management Committee is in place to provide guidance and support.

The two Gauteng homes have been sold and Jackie is already in her flat in a retirement village close to Johannesburg. Pieter and Meryl will be moving shortly to a rental home in Centurion, Pretoria. Both Sam and Vilma are keen to purchase their homes in Cape Town, Sam already owning almost 42% of his home, thanks to the generosity of the IofC team worldwide. The IofC team that has been spearheading the restructuring is looking at possible mechanisms that could allow such purchases over a defined period. In addition, the restructuring team is investigating the possibility of turning a trust fund left by the late Margaret Drury to benefit fulltime workers, into a medical aid scheme for all fulltime workers.

In the interests of good governance, all fulltime workers (FTWs), being beneficiaries, resigned from the Council of Management (CoM) last year. The exception was Cleo, an ex officio member as the National Coordinator. A new body was created, the Advisory Forum, which includes all FTWs and is open to associate members of IofC as well. Its role is to be the planning and "ideas factory" for IofC SA. The advice and decisions of the Advisory Forum are then used by the CoM in its deliberations.

With the two Gauteng homes now sold, IofC no longer has an office. So, as of 1 July an office has been rented in the heart of Johannesburg - 609 Klamson Towers, corner of Von Wielligh and Commissioner Streets. This will be the head office of IofC SA from where Cleo and Portia will work and the Council of Management hold its meetings. IofC has also changed its registered legal address from 227 Loveday Street, Pretoria, to 7 Pam Street, Morningside, Sandton, 2196 (address of the IofC auditors) The postal address

is: P O Box 48572, Roosevelt Park,  
Johannesburg, 2129.

The restructuring journey is well underway but the destination is still a long way off! Your continued prayers and support will be much appreciated.

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## *A century of dialogue & peace?*



**Kiran Gandhi, who serves on the International Council of Initiatives of Change (IofC) International, is a human resource consultant to several small, medium and large companies in India. Previously, he worked as Head, Human Resources at**

**three global Indian companies and the training head of Tata Motors, Jamshedpur. Kiran had a part in leadership training with Workshop for Africa three years ago in South Africa. In the last three years Kiran has conducted two Heart of Effective Leadership workshops at IofC's Switzerland centre in Caux and one in the 'Tools for Change' conference in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.**

### **Kiran writes:**

The Dalai Lama has frequently expressed the vision that if the 20<sup>th</sup> century was a century of conflict and war, the 21<sup>st</sup> century could be a century of dialogue and peace. What we see happening now, however, is quite the opposite. Television channels feed us with a daily dose of scenes of violent acts and outraged responses. The world is becoming more and more fear-filled and polarised, fueled by anger, hatred and acts of terror.

I am sure that a majority of us find it difficult to comprehend how anyone can spray bullets and blow herself up as a human bomb, killing completely innocent people, including little kids. One hears a lot about radicalization of young people. But, we all know that it takes more than a match-stick to light a fire. It also takes combustible material to catch fire. So, I was trying to figure out what is 'combustible' in those getting radicalized, to make them potential recruits for acts of terror.

Adam Deen is a former extremist in his 30s who

had joined a radical Islamist group linked to many terror attacks in the UK, including the 7/7 London bombings, but who later left it disillusioned. In an interview Adam says 'Adverse economic and social conditions that disenfranchise young Muslims are contributing factors. They feel they don't have a voice. It's a journey from being angry to being a potential terrorist.'

This made me reflect on 'listening' and 'anger'. I could see that without the fuel of anger, the flame of extremism cannot so easily be lit. I realized that if I harbour anger, the seeds of extremism are in me.

I may have rarely exploded in anger, but anger has surely been present to different degrees at different stages in my life. It has been reported about several terrorists that their families, and even in some cases their neighbours, experienced them outwardly as very quiet and shy persons. I can identify with that.

As a teenager I was angry against my father because it was difficult to go against his will. As a youth I was angry against growing corruption and the greed of those in power. On being exposed to the neglect of tribal people on whose land my company had its factory, I was angry against the governance system of the country. When a promotion for which I thought I was more fit went to a colleague, I was angry at my boss.

I get angry when I feel my opinion has been brushed aside. I now see that anger arises in me each time I experience something which feels unfair or unjust to me – or when I feel I have been wronged. The tone of my voice changes, especially towards those with whom I am angry. I feel justified in hurting them. Anger has been called the most destructive of human emotions, and I can see why.

Anger, one of the roots of extremism, is in all of us to some degree. Anger can grow into hatred, hatred into violence and organized violence can take the form of terrorism. When we address anger in our own lives we contribute to the answer to extremism. By being open to listen to those we find difficult and admitting to where we may have been wrong, we can arrest the growth of anger and make radicalization more difficult.

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## ***Rooting hate out of the soil of NE India***

Around half of the 80 young people, representing six North Eastern states of India who attended a dialogue in Siloam, Meghalaya, from 10-14 June, declared their resolve to dissolve hates, resentments, grudges and bitterness that tormented their lives - by apologizing! A sure glimpse and promise of the best future anyone could want – of a pained, neglected region of India becoming a hate-free region.



The outline of this vision becomes more visible when you hear powerful decisions like:

*\* I've been a very bitter person since childhood, having been hurt by so many things done to me. From here, I've said sorry for my bitterness. And I've taken a decision that I will forgive everyone who has hurt me till now. Today, I've found this inner strength to forgive all, who have caused me so much pain. Also I see lots of weaknesses in me. I want to transform them into strengths and help people.*

*\* I need to calm the storm in my heart – and forgive my father.*

*\* My anger is gone after coming here and the first thing that I will do is to ask for forgiveness from my mother.*

*\* I want to make a promise to all of you: I have hurt my sister and I wrote a letter to her about it. Also, I've never appreciated my dad. So I called him and did that. Wherever I go, I will continue this. I have decided not to call myself an Ao, Lotha, Sema, Chang, Angami or anything for that matter, unless the situation demands. I am a Naga first and my tribe, second. It gives rise to more barriers when we insist on being hardcore ethno-centrist.*

The next Dialogue will be from 11 to 14 November. An innovative, twinned 'Buddy System' is already working with 20 groups of four participants being in touch by WhatsApp, sharing how they are actioning decisions from the Dialogue. So, the momentum of this NE Enterprise, 'Change hate, Change history' looks as if it may roll on further.

## ***Eyewitness to the Impossible***

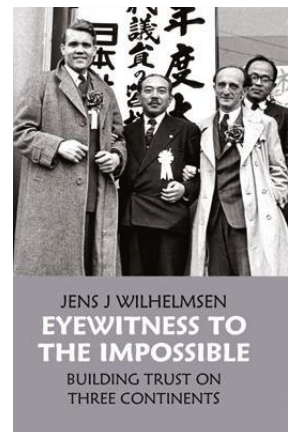
Making history is not the monopoly of the rich and powerful,' asserts Jens Jonathan Wilhelmsen. His new book, *Eyewitness to the Impossible: building trust on three continents*, draws on a lifetime working for change.



The book is a gripping combination of

Wilhelmsen's experiences in post-war Germany and Japan – sleeping on chairs in miners' living rooms and learning the etiquette of chopsticks and Japanese baths – and his reflections on the ideas which have shaped the world in the last 70 years. He confronts such issues as the demonisation of nations and groups, the reconciliation of past enemies and how to respond to extremist ideologies.

He draws on experiences in South Africa, Burundi and Congo to reflect on the bitter legacy of Europe's colonial past. Three months in South Africa under apartheid showed him how heartless that rule could be. While at the same time contacts with one of apartheid's opponents, Nobel peace prize winner Albert Luthuli, showed him one of the finest qualities of Africa's people: The ability to forgive.



He describes his part in a bid to resolve trade conflict between Japan and the West in the 1980s; explores the challenges facing Europe in the 21<sup>st</sup> century; and asserts his conviction that IofC's values are as relevant today as they ever were.

The English translation, *Eyewitness to the Impossible*, is published by Caux Books, and can be bought [online](#), price £14 plus postage. Or you can order it from 24 Greencoat Place, London SW1E 5JF.

*Excerpts from review written by author, Mary Lean*

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## ***In Memory***



Bukiwe Princess Maseko from Soweto, South Africa sadly passed away at the Maseko family home at the age of 52 on June 3rd after a short but courageous fight with cancer.

Bukiwe became involved with Initiatives of Change in 1987. She served on the Initiatives of Change South Africa Board since 1998 and held the position of Treasurer from 2004 until her death.

She worked in the hotel industry for many years before trying her hand at various business projects. Her passion was to serve the community wherever she could and was involved in a number of initiatives. Bukiwe made a point of getting to know people on every side of the spectrum. Her leadership skills and sound values brought her respect wherever she was. She was fully involved with the Creators of Peace programme as a facilitator, mentor and facilitator trainer. Bukiwe also worked closely to help initiate Caux Initiatives for Business (CIB) in South Africa last year.

For the last 6 years Bukiwe headed up the Housekeeping department in Caux, Switzerland. In an interview in Caux 2015, Bukiwe said, 'I always had that dream of serving the world.....Coming to Caux is an achievement in my life journey, because it fulfils my passion of caring for people, of having more understanding for the world, different cultures and religions, and the political standards of other countries. I'm not here for any financial profit, but for the fulfillment that fills my spirit, my soul, and my heart. You have time to listen to one another and to experience the spirit of real teamwork. Above all, you get that fulfillment of caring for people. Because that is what the world needs. We need to care for one another. And here you get the chance to do that.'

At the funeral service two of her friends, among others, paid tribute: Nompumelelo Vundla said, "There are three descriptive words that I can use to describe Bukiwe. She was an honest person in the way she carried the finances of IofC and

being accountable for every cent spent. She was also reliable. When she said she will be there she would come, irrespective of what time of the day, and no matter the cost."

Nonhlanhla Mhlongo and Bukiwe met Moral Re-Armament, now Initiatives of Change at the same time in the 80s. Meeting IofC was a turning point for Bukiwe when she began to apply what she had learnt in bringing reconciliation between herself and her father. She then became convinced that people's hearts and motives can change.

Nonhlanhla shared: "This beautiful woman, inside and out, was a wonderful person. She had a gentle and caring nature. One of her beliefs in life was the importance of being authentic with people. I always admired how she never judged or forced her opinions on anyone, but offered valuable and truthful advice that I will surely miss."

Bukiwe will be greatly missed by her family and all her friends and colleagues in South Africa and around the world from where messages of sympathy have poured in.

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**As from 15<sup>th</sup> July, the telephone number, 012 3431674 will not be operational. A new number and connection for Pieter and Meryl Horn is still to be issued.**