

The Second Annual

CAUX FORUM
for **HUMAN SECURITY**

A Conversation in Caux, Switzerland
17-22 July 2009

COMPILATION OF MEDIA COVERAGE

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Dawn — the main English-language newspaper of Pakistan

THE CAUX DREAM

29 July 2009 - **Zubeida Mustafa** staff reporter

media coverage

‘Nearly 30 delegates from all walks of life — activists in their own way — from India and Pakistan got together to talk about issues that have divided their two countries. The experts who spoke were extremely candid as they were not adopting official positions. There was talk of building bridges of trade and organising nucleus groups in both countries. Television should be engaged. Indians should raise resources for the IDPs in Pakistan and win the hearts and minds of people. It clearly emerged that quite a number of people are convinced that the survival of India and Pakistan depends on their mending fences.’

India-Pakistan relations do not move in a straight line. They zigzag from crisis to crisis.

In the interregnum the two countries either engage in negotiations or struggle to revive an interrupted dialogue. This is not something new. It has always been the case.

This pattern veils a strange paradox. Behind all the polemical exchanges the reserve of goodwill between the people of the two countries has continued to grow. This was manifest in abundance at Caux (Switzerland) on the sidelines of the Forum for Human Security last week.

Nearly 30 delegates from all walks of life — activists in their own way — from India and Pakistan got together to talk about various issues that have divided their two countries. This meeting was the brainchild of Rajmohan Gandhi, the grandson of Mahatma Gandhi, that great apostle of non-violence.

A scholar, author and peace activist in his own right, Rajmohan is the president of Initiatives of Change, International, an independent, privately funded foundation designed to promote peace, trust and inter-cultural dialogue to prevent conflicts.

Having been associated with the organisation for over 50 years and given his unlimited passion for peace, he has left no stone unturned to tear down the barriers that have kept the two countries apart.

Caux, where the Mountain House conference centre provides an idyllic setting for peace ventures, proved to be an ideal choice for our tête-à-tête. Adopting the Chatham House rules — no one can be cited by name without his/her permission — the participants could speak freely. And

voilà! What emerged was a wealth of information which is considered too sensitive to be shared at public forums. Hence the need to protect the anonymity of the speakers.

A number of issues were discussed — some with the idea of creating a better understanding of what is happening on the ground and others to unravel the knots that have made disputes between the two countries so intractable. Of course, the ubiquitous Kashmir dispute was brought up as were the water issue, terrorism in Fata, trade and extremism in India.

The experts who spoke on these subjects and answered questions were extremely candid as they were not adopting official positions and had no constituency back home to be mindful of. That raised hopes all around that disputes could be resolved. Given this euphoria, the suggestions that followed in the closing session were ambitious — in some cases they even appeared too utopian.

There was talk of building bridges of trade and organising nucleus groups in both countries to facilitate businessmen and traders. One suggestion was for both sides to lobby jointly for the abolition of the death penalty which has often vitiated relations between the two countries. Another asked for the Indian consulate in Karachi to be reopened and the Khokhrapar-Munabao rail route to be revived.

Other recommendations that have a better chance of producing results focused on what the participants could organise at different levels. They were primarily designed to build a climate of opinion in favour of peace between the two countries. Thus it was suggested that the media, especially television, should be engaged in support of the Caux initiative. Cultural exchanges involving youth should

be promoted. Politicians, legislators and policymakers in both countries should be approached. The Indians should raise resources for the IDPs in Pakistan and win the hearts and minds of people.

Thus it was hoped that civil society in India and Pakistan would generate pressure on the two governments and compel them to address these issues.

But will the governments oblige? Only last week *The New York Times* reported that Pakistan had objected to expanded American combat operations in Afghanistan saying that it would force militants across the border into the troubled province of Balochistan and the Pakistan Army did not have enough troops to open a new front with the Taliban 'without denuding its border with its arch-enemy, India.'

Earlier, writing in *The New Yorker*, Steve Coll had warned, 'The danger of open war between India and Pakistan has not passed. As recently as Dec 26, Pakistani intelligence officials concluded that Indian warplanes were being positioned for an air raid.' Only US intervention had dissipated the war clouds.

It clearly emerged from the exercise at Caux that there are quite a number of people who are genuinely convinced that the survival of India and Pakistan depends on their mending fences. The resistance comes from the establishment. Even public opinion can be easily mobilised to recognise the need to change swords into ploughshares.

The hawks can be expected to strive hard to retain control.

This was confirmed by some participants who had held high official position on both sides and knew very well how the state machinery works. From them we learnt how peace efforts are sabotaged in Islamabad and New Delhi.

One can quite believe this after reading 'How serial war became the American way of life' by David Bromwich in *The Huffington Post* which shows how the defence establishment has drilled the inevitability of war into the American psyche. Similarly, there are vested interests in India and Pakistan who feel they stand to gain by continued tensions between the two. They ensure that peace deals are scuttled.

I asked Rajmohan Gandhi how he felt about the outcome of this exercise. He was initially cautious as he said he didn't wish to raise false hopes. But then the peace instinct in this quiet unassuming man took over and he added, 'This group is actually representative of a larger stirring. The peace constituency is much larger than what it is given credit for. But it is still too early to say if there is evidence of solid changes taking place in the popular mind. We can now hope that confidence will replace the distrust of yesteryear.'

As one participant so rightly observed, 'Before you start working for a goal, you have to begin by dreaming about it.' There were plenty of dreams at Caux.

This article available at:

<http://www.dawn.com/wps/wcm/connect/dawn-content-library/dawn/news/pakistan/14-the-caux-dream-zj-02>

Washington Post (website) USA

HUMAN-LAND SECURITY

Prof Katherine Marshall Georgetown University, USA

media coverage

‘The Swiss village of Caux has become a watchword for reconciliation across the fiercest kinds of bitterness and hatred. It was at Caux that French and German leaders warily came together after World War II and emerged with a sense that human beings, not monsters, were their neighbors. Today, Pakistanis and Indians, Israelis and Palestinians, Sudanese and warring groups from many parts of Africa and Asia come to the Mountain House in Caux, perched high above Lake Geneva, searching for a similar understanding.’

The Swiss village of Caux has become a watchword for reconciliation across the fiercest kinds of bitterness and hatred. It was at Caux that French and German leaders warily came together after World War II and emerged with a sense that human beings, not monsters, were their neighbors. Today, Pakistanis and Indians, Israelis and Palestinians, Sudanese and warring groups from many parts of Africa and Asia come to the Mountain House in Caux, perched high above Lake Geneva, searching for a similar understanding.

Now the leaders of Initiatives of Change, successor organization to a movement born in the 1930s in Oxford, England, that came to be known as Moral Rearmament, are hoping for something bigger -- a global coalition that will work for human security. Caux is their head-quarters and I was part of a Human Security Forum aimed at translating that idea into action.

Prince Hassan bin Talal, for many years Crown Prince of Jordan, today roams the world speaking out in an inimitable style on hard truths (who else would refer to the ‘Futile Crescent’ in the Middle East and assert that our failure to respond to climate change shows we are all ‘lobotomized?’). He was in high form as the Forum’s keynote speaker, calling on the gathering to build a movement founded on a global ethic that draws the best from all faith traditions.

Human security means different things to different people, but at its heart is an effort to breach some of the disciplinary walls that keep the ‘security’ people separate from those concerned about other issues. As Cornelio Somaruga, former president of Initiatives of Change, said the dual goals of freedom from want and freedom from fear are the essence of human security. They are intricately linked: poverty, conflict and terrorism feed one another. Add to that what Rajmohan

Gandhi called the peril to our ‘overcrowded, abused, and kicked-around planet’ and you have four imperatives: fighting poverty, reconciliation and conflict prevention, addressing climate change, and just governance.

Depending on where you sit, the threats to human security look rather different. Several Africans argued that hunger takes precedence over climate change, and peace seemed to many far more urgent than democracy. Two stars of the event were Ruthie Gopin and Felix Finkbeiner, all of 13 and 12 years old respectively. For them, climate change is the central challenge because of its potentially devastating impact for their generation. Their messages were crystal clear: the facts about urgent dangers ahead can’t be denied, and individuals have both the power and obligation to act. Ruthie has started an organization (Carbon Free Kids), focused on personal responsibility for reducing carbon footprints. Felix, inspired by Wangari Matthai, has launched Trees for Climate Justice and urges all citizens, young and old, powerful and less so, to ‘stop talking and start acting’.

Caux is a community that prides itself on its history, its ethic, and its spirit of personal and collective responsibility. It would be a stretch to suggest the Human Security Forum launched a global movement but there’s no doubt that the different threads that it weaves together and its willingness to look facts in the face took us a few steps along that road.

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This article available at:

http://newsweek.washingtonpost.com/onfaith/georgetown/2009/07/on_human_security.html

Dawn – the main English-language newspaper of Pakistan

BEYOND THE WALLS OF HATRED

13 August, 2009 - **Jawed Naqvi** *Dawn's* correspondent in Delhi

media coverage

‘Caux is an ideal venue for parochial South Asians. They would have an opportunity to accept that Kashmir is not the only key issue. They would get a firsthand account of the current state of play in Palestine, Sudan, Jaffna, climate change, the economic challenge and generally about the rising need for a global culture of dialogue and understanding.’

Everyone, it seems, has hated the Jews at some point in history. Christians and Muslims have nurtured the prejudice with religious dogma. Rightwing Hindus, a relatively recent phenomenon, have changed their opinion like a weathercock. They first endorsed Adolf Hitler and then Ariel Sharon.

A visit to Caux in Switzerland in the company of Rajmohan Gandhi, Mahatma Gandhi's grandson, helped shed the scales from the eyes about this and other deep-rooted prejudices. Caux, a picturesque hill resort overlooking Lake Geneva, has been the venue of a landmark post-war rapprochement between the Germans and the French people. For Rajmohan Gandhi it has been a point of annual pilgrimage, first as the centre of the global moral re-armament movement and later as the headquarters of the Initiatives of Change, which he now heads.

Participants from South Asia at last month's conference on human security in Caux included Pakistan's former foreign secretary Humayun Khan, former high commissioner in India Aziz Ahmed Khan and Mani Shankar Aiyar, who flaunts more fond memories of his stint as India's consul general in Karachi than of the various portfolios he has held as minister in Prime Minister Manmohan Singh's cabinet.

Prince Hassan bin Talal of Jordan delivered the keynote address, which was roundly applauded by eminent Jewish representatives among others. Professional hate-mongers such as Jamaatud Dawa's Hafiz Saeed would wryly smile at what they would gleefully show up as another example of a 'sellout' by Arabs and Muslims to a much tom-tomed Hindu-Jewish-Christian axis against Islam. They would benefit from a visit to Caux, listening to the growing voices of moderation and reconciliation rather than pontificating on jihad or crusade.

Caux is also an ideal venue for the incorrigibly parochial South Asians. They would have an opportunity to accept for a few days, if not for ever, that Kashmir is not the

only key issue. They would get a firsthand account of the current state of play in Palestine, Sudan, Jaffna, climate change, the economic challenge and generally about the rising need for a global culture of dialogue and understanding.

Even before visiting Caux, I, like many of my generation, had several Jewish heroes, usually the non-practising variety like Harold Pinter and Noam Chomsky. A closer look offered an equally valid reason to like the more religious ones.

In fact, I strongly hold the view that an excellent candidate for the next Nobel Peace Prize is Mordechai Vanunu, the jailed Israeli whistleblower. Arab states in the Gulf as well as Iran should canvass for him. But for his bold initiative of sharing privileged secrets with a British newspaper we would never have a got clue about the depth of Israel's nuclear ambitions. Not that this has made an iota of a difference to Israel's indulgent western allies, but that is a separate issue.

I would also salute the Israeli soldiers who have taken on their government for its deliberate complicity in the recent massacre of Palestinians in Gaza. How many Vanunus can India and Pakistan boast of, I wonder. How many soldiers and serving officers have confronted their governments in these countries or elsewhere with stark truths about their government's brutal methods or even the more unacceptable advocacy of nuclear weapons as a deterrent to war? Iran's President Ahmadinejad should be made party to these discussions because he, more than anyone else, at this juncture needs to be persuaded to keep his nuclear ambitions in check.

Mr Ahmadinejad would do well to get invited to Caux and to listen to Prof Marc Gopin's views on the states' culpability in arming militant groups on both sides of the equation. He would gain amazingly fresh insights from the intervention by Jakob Finci, the president of the

Jewish community in Bosnia, about the efforts of a small community of Bosnian Jews, Christians and Muslims to build a life together.

Marc Gopin, a rabbi, is the James H. Laue professor of religion, diplomacy and conflict resolution. Listen to what he says in his priceless book *To Make The Earth Whole: The Art of Diplomacy in an Age of Religious Militancy*. His belief that there is a marked tendency among the Abrahamic religions to cultivate intolerance has encouraged extremists from all sides to target him.

‘Explaining this principle of kindness and patience with enemies is where I have had the hardest time before audiences from every culture. And I have been attacked for it many times. I would say there are countless people in my community who will never forgive me for reaching out to Yasser Arafat. I can try to explain that Yasser Arafat is to Jews what every Israeli prime minister has been to Palestinians — a source of great suffering and the death of many innocents; yet they expect Arab conciliatory approaches to such prime ministers.’

Advocating that Arafat would have achieved far more for his people by accepting Gandhi’s peaceful methods than he did by flaunting a pistol, Prof Gopin says he is afraid there are fewer Israeli or Palestinian takers for that worldview today.

‘Logic has no place where wounds define personality,’ he wrote with anguish. ‘The need to demonise is so overwhelming in human nature, and the need to externalise evil in someone else is ubiquitous. I have

been amazed at how much this is consistent across audiences of enemies within the family of Abraham. It seems to be the only way to cope with a world that is supposed to be ultimately just in the Abrahamic story — but plainly is not.’

A high point of the Caux discussions was the embrace between Israel’s Lior Carmieli and his Jordanian friend Kassim Dwairi, partners in a life-saving project to provide Palestinians the right to water. Away from Caux, another campaign — one of many may I add — is underway against Ahava, an Israeli cosmetics company.

‘Using resources from the ancient waters of the Dead Sea, Ahava manufactures beauty products in an illegal Israeli settlement in Occupied Palestine. Ahava means love in Hebrew. But there’s nothing loving about profiting from occupation. There’s nothing loving about stealing resources from our neighbours,’ declares a pamphlet, in a deeply Gandhian tone.

Religious stereotypes preached by hate-mongers are beginning to wane gradually. We have to open our eyes and savour the change.

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USA Today (website) & The Huffington Post

HOW DO WE BE SAFE?

John Graham former State Department officer, USA

media coverage

‘By emphasizing the link between personal and political change, and by broadening the definition of human security to include freedom from poverty and injustice, the Caux Forums provide a practical template for solving public problems. And as the impacts of these Forums grow, so does their ability to promote public policies that can in fact provide human security because they better deal with the root causes of conflict.’

I saw the possibility of a just and peaceful world last week--at a conference on a mountain in Switzerland. The (second annual) Caux Forum on Human Security was no Davos nor G-8 Summit. No media were invited. While the 300 invitees included some global VIPS, the key criterion for being there was not celebrity, but a personal history of creativity and courage in addressing public problems. The guests were people like:

Two entrepreneurs, one Israeli, the other Jordanian, who've launched a joint project to supply new water to the West Bank, bringing Israelis and Palestinians together for the common purpose of irrigating their fields.

A French Christian couple and five Muslim friends who organize events and discussions in France to promote understanding and acceptance between the two populations, helping defuse a demographic time bomb as Muslims become a larger and larger percentage of Europe's people.

A brave imam in the UK who confronts Muslim radicals to give angry Muslim teenagers models and programs that provide real alternatives to hate and violence.

A former leader of a guerilla movement in Sudan's worst and longest war who now, as a government minister, helps bring black and Arab Sudanese together across a still dangerous racial divide.

An American political psychologist who debunks the myths and stereotypes that Christians, Jews and Muslims use to demonize one another, and suggests ways the three faiths can come together by acknowledging their common heritage.

A Somali activist and an American philanthropist who work tirelessly in Somalia to build trust among the warlords of that fractured country, and to press for more

informed actions from other nations who see Somalia only as the home of pirates and *Black Hawk Down*.

A guiding theme of the Caux Forums is that "human security" means far more than physically protecting people from the violence of wars and terrorist attacks. It means addressing the root causes of insecurity that are real seeds of violence. These include poverty, injustice, oppression, and the untended angers and fears generated by feuds that may have started decades or even centuries ago. The more recent pressures generated by the global economic meltdown and by the effects of global climate change have only raised the stakes and the sense of urgency.

The Forums are so "no-frills" that all the guests share in its chores. A young activist from Moldova could be chopping vegetables for lunch alongside a former US Senator. The wait staff for dinner might include a government minister from Uganda, the leader of a youth movement in Mexico and a senior professor from California. It was impossible to posture in a setting this informal. Friendships were made, trusts built, new ideas and perspectives honestly exchanged.

There were plenary sessions and workshops during the four days of the Forum, but the extraordinary impact of what takes place here stems from more than intellectual give-and-take. A core strategy at Caux is that effective political change stems from personal change. All parties to a conflict must acknowledge and take responsibility for their own failings and for the shortcomings of their own policies and actions. Most of the breakthroughs I've seen at this and previous visits to Caux have followed heart-felt mutual apologies from people who might not have been speaking to each other the week before.

At this Forum much of the "work" was done in ad hoc gatherings, over tea or on the mountain trails outside

the magnificent old hotel that is the Forum's permanent base. The Forum's strict rule against quoting anyone by name leads to an openness and vulnerability that would otherwise be impossible. A large group of Indians and Pakistanis, for example, were huddled in quiet meetings throughout the week, honestly airing their differences and building understanding and trust between two nuclear-armed nations that have already fought three wars. See this report* from a Pakistani newspaper.

Does it work? As a former US Foreign Service Officer, I know there will always be psychopaths and zealots eager to kill, motivated by their own madness. I know there are multinational corporations that will not see beyond their own greed unless they're forced to.

But I've now been to Caux three times. I've felt the power generated here to promote honest talk. I've seen the magic of the place in healing the wounds of history, a role it's been playing since 1946 when it hosted the first post-war meetings between groups of Germans and French--meetings that eventually led to the European Union.

By emphasizing the link between personal and political change, and by broadening the definition of human security to include freedom from poverty and injustice, the Caux Forums provide a wise and practical template for solving public problems. And as the impacts of these Forums grow, so does their ability to promote public policies that can in fact provide human security because they better deal with the root causes of conflict.

The wide-angle and human-centered approaches of Caux work to solve problems and resolve conflicts at any level. I've used them with good effect for years as an environmental activist in the Pacific Northwest. Twenty years ago, I wished I'd used them to deal with a teenage son.

Borrow a page from the Caux Forums and get involved in helping solve a problem you care about, at home or abroad. Start by understanding all the factors that create that problem, not just those staring you in the face. Take honest stock of your own attitudes and behavior; if they're making the problem harder to solve--change them. We all have opportunities to be peace-builders.

* <http://www.dawn.com/wps/wcm/connect/dawn-content-library/dawn/news/pakistan/14-the-caux-dream-zj-02>

This article available at:

<http://www.opednews.com/articles/How-Do-We-Be-Safe-by-John-Graham-090730-504.html>

and

http://www.huffingtonpost.com/john-graham/how-do-we-be-safe_b_248259.html

and

<http://content.usatoday.com/topics/article/Places,+Geography/Countries/Sudan/0btlfUicOnaqH/I>

and (in eight languages) at

<http://mwcnews.net/content/view/32206&Itemid=1>

Now being carried on numerous other US websites.

Toronto Star Canada

A 'WORKING VACATION', WHERE CHANGE IS AS GOOD AS REST

8 August 2009 - Prof Cleo Paskal Climate Scientist

media coverage

'The audience was made up of politicians, business leaders, academics and those who just cared. We'd come from all over the world to discuss problems and, gasp, start thinking about solutions.'

CAUX, SWITZERLAND—It was a dark and stormy night. We were in the Great Hall of an aging, elegant belle époque castle-style hotel, high up a Swiss mountainside. Lightning flashed beyond the bay window and here, inside, rows and rows of us were focused intently on what was happening at one end of the room.

The vaulted ceiling of the hall in the former Caux Palace Hotel framed the stage set up in front of the massive stone fireplace. The people on that stage weren't trying to do anything appropriately atmospheric, such as animate Frankenstein's monster; they were trying to do something much more difficult, they were trying to animate hope. The momentum had been building all night.

And now, on that stage was Prince El-Hassan bin Talal of Jordan. He was telling us a story.

This was the first night of what was to be a five-day retreat on human security. The audience was made up of politicians, business leaders, academics and those who just cared.

We'd come from all over the world to discuss problems and, gasp, start thinking about solutions. It wasn't as delusional as it sounds.

This hotel had been the site of remarkable events for decades. After being a haven for Jewish refugees during World War II, it was bought by an influential and sometimes controversial Christian movement that had gone under the name Oxford Group and then became known as Moral Re-Armament (MRA).

The Oxford Group philosophy played an important role in the formation of Alcoholics Anonymous and, with MRA as hosts, this same hotel was where postwar French-German talks were held that sped the way towards reconstruction. Sometimes, solutions can be found.

Eventually, MRA morphed into Initiatives of Change, a self-proclaimed transtheological, transcultural, transnational NGO dedicated to "building trust across world divides."

And now, every summer in this castle-hotel, Initiatives of Change runs retreats on everything from sustainability to trust to capacity building. Anyone can apply to attend.

It is to learning vacations what grad school is to summer camp. There are plenaries, like this one with Prince Hassan, but most of the day is taken up with smaller discussion groups on specific topics, such as governance or climate change — or, if it all gets a bit much, rambling strolls through the Swiss mountains to do something a little less obviously productive, such as count cows.

While playing hooky is allowed (especially if, conveniently, it just happens to be part of your spiritual reawakening), participation in the group is encouraged. That extends to chipping in with daily chores, such as serving tea in the dining room, or peeling carrots for lunch. Everyone does it, even the current president of Initiatives of Change International, Dr. Rajmohan Gandhi, grandson of the Mahatma. From where I was sitting in the Great Hall, I could see him, up near the prince. He was listening as intently as the rest of us.

Outside the *sturm und drang* raged. Inside, Prince Hassan offered a metaphoric umbrella for those wanting to find a way through the equally stormy world of geopolitics and geoeconomics. He spoke eloquently and passionately about taking responsibility rather than apportioning blame. About building on commonalities rather than reinforcing divides. About doing, rather than talking.

Coming from an earnest undergraduate, it might have sounded naïve but, geopolitically, Prince Hassan has been there, done that. He knows how things work. And how they can work. His comments are well reasoned, challenging and thought-provoking.

The prince's talk was punctuated by personal anecdotes. Describing a discussion with a well-known Israeli politician he said the Israeli told him "we are surrounded by enemies." "You think that's bad," the Prince countered, "we are surrounded by friends!"

The room laughs. For a moment we are not labels. We are not "the politician from Sudan," "the media baron from Pakistan," "the journalist from Canada".

We are just people, laughing. And that's when you know solutions are possible.

Disha magazine India

HAVENS FOR THOSE WHO REMAIN STEADFAST

Jehan Perera Executive Director, National Peace Council of Sri Lanka

media coverage

‘The gathering was testament to the idealistic element in society, striving for the better world and prepared for the self sacrifices this process entails. Many drop by the wayside in exhaustion, many are disheartened and wish to give up, but the majority keep to their mission encouraged by those who remain steadfast to the cause. Caux and Panchgani are two of their havens.’

Today the concept of human security has taken on a broader connotation than the more traditional view that security for a country or its people is to be found through military means. The second annual Caux Forum for Human Security held at Caux, Switzerland, and organized by Initiatives of Change in mid July 2009 expanded on the broader interpretations of human security. The topics that were discussed were the global economic challenge, the global climate change challenge, fundamental conditions of good governance and cultural dialogue and understanding.

Mountain House, where the conference took place, is the main conference centre of Initiatives of Change in Europe. It is located in the Swiss mountains, a little over an hour away by road or train from the international city of Geneva. The scenery is beautiful and there are forest tracks for hiking. The conference centre was originally constructed at the turn of the previous century, and meant to be one of the best hotels in the world. It has a capacity of over 400 guests. This could have been no better place for as many conference participants to reflect on weighty issues, and yet find peace of mind.

The challenges facing the world at the present time are enormous, and daunting. The global financial crisis has left virtually no country unscathed. The confidence that people had in the integrity of financial institutions, and in their future, has been shattered together with the livelihoods of many. The ecological crisis in which global warming is melting the polar icecaps and changing weather patterns threatens the survival of all life forms on the planet. The values of religion and problem solving are necessary if these challenges are to be addressed.

The conference in Caux brought together people from all over the world who are contributing in some way to be part of the solution to global problems. There were people of different ages, some planning out lives of service, others reflecting on experiences and wanting to share them

from different walks of life, from business, media, politics and religion, to mention just a few. As the conference was held in the middle of Europe it was appropriate, and to be expected, that most of the participants would be from Europe. But there were also sizeable representations from other parts of the world, especially South Asia.

The large South Asian participation was due in large measure to the spirit that Initiatives of Change seeks to impart to all those who come its way. The spirit is that of motivating personal change in the world within to enable the accomplishment of macro level changes in the world without. This personal change takes place by living according to a standard of values and heeding the inner voice. This was the formula that Frank Buchman, the founder of the Oxford Movement in the 1930s, developed as the agent of change. Later as the movement expanded throughout the world it became known as Moral Re-Armament, and now it is called Initiatives of Change.

It was as Moral Re-Armament that I first came across the movement in the 1990s when it was led by Rajmohan Gandhi in India. The South Asian centre of the movement is also located in the mountains, in Panchgani, about six hours by road from the commercial capital of Mumbai. My memory of Panchgani is of a level of inter-personal sharing and revelation that is the wellspring of inspiration and motivation, and which I have not encountered with such depth anywhere else. Maybe my relative youth at that time contributed to that feeling which I may never again recapture, but the memory still lives.

Today Rajmohan Gandhi is the International President of Initiatives of Change, with its headquarters in Caux, which brings together national bodies of Initiatives of Change and inspires acts of sacrificial leadership. My participation at the conference in Caux, and the participation of many of the other South Asians, was in large part due to the generosity of a member of the Panchgani team, Suresh

Vazirani, now also successful multinational businessman. Sharing of resources is a way of expressing commitment to a vision and an ideal that has provided the guidance and direction to a new life.

The South Asian group of about thirty participants worked intensively as a group, meeting every afternoon for four consecutive days. They organized a series of discussions that explored the roots of conflicts in the region, especially in Afghanistan, India-Pakistan and Sri Lanka. There was a high degree of transparency and sharing of information which gave the participants an insight that few other educational programmes could achieve. Perhaps to be seen in this frank exchange of views was the awakening

of a larger constituency for peace and reconciliation that will replace the distrust that has existed in the past.

The gathering at Caux was that of a core group, large for a conference, and small for a movement. It was a testament to the idealistic element in society that has existed down the ages, the light of a darkened world, striving for the better world that is constantly in the process of being made, and prepared for the self sacrifices this process entails. Many drop by the wayside in exhaustion, many are disheartened and wish to give up, but the majority keep to their mission encouraged by those who remain steadfast to the cause. Caux and Panchgani are two of their havens.

Maroc-Hebdo International newsweekly
Rabat, Morocco 10 September 2009

media coverage

Groupe de travail de Caux pour la Paix et la Réconciliation
LES CHEMINS DE LA PAIX par **Gabriel Banon**

www.maroc-hebdo.com

‘Peace cannot be imposed, it is built through public opinion. Two delegations, one Israeli and the other Palestinian, met privately in the context of the Caux Forum. Ambassador Sahnoun chaired the discussions. The exchanges were substantial, even if sometimes views were diametrically opposed. At the end of the gathering, they decided to meet again in Jerusalem for a further working session. That took place and the group was formalized [as the] Caux Working Group for Peace and Reconciliation. On its programme is to set up workshops with broad Israeli-Palestinian participation, open also to international specialists. Borders, refugees, Jerusalem, water, settlements – all these and other problems will be on the table.’

Peace cannot be imposed, it is built through public opinion. Since the first Oslo accords, Israeli-Palestinian negotiations have been conducted by the leaders of the two peoples, sometimes with the assistance of the USA, but always at a distance from their public opinion. This public opinion, worked on by extremist movements, under-informed by the negotiators who cultivate the discretion that they associate with effectiveness, waits, gets impatient, and does not contribute to the construction of peace. It becomes a brake on the process.

Conceiving peace requires a peaceful environment. The citizens on both sides have to be involved by participating in study groups on the problems which face the negotiators. As they bring their common contribution to the process, they make possible the inevitable compromises.

Taking this observation as a starting point, two delegations, one Israeli, led by Brigadier General and former minister Éphraïm Sneh, and the other Palestinian, led by Ambassador Hassan Abdel Rahman, met privately in Switzerland, in the context of the Caux Forum last July. Ambassador Sahnoun, President of the Caux Forum, chaired the discussions as the host.

The exchanges were substantial, even if sometimes the views expressed were diametrically opposed. It was encouraging to see Israelis and Palestinians together focusing on what divides them and what unites them as they searched for solutions that they will have to report

to their respective governments. Showing respect and consideration for each other, the discussions were without no-go areas or bitterness.

At the end of the gathering, they decided to meet again in Jerusalem on 16th August for a further working session. That took place and the group was formalised under the title Caux Working Group for Peace and Reconciliation.

It is now co-chaired by Ambassador Hassan Abdel Rahman for the Palestinian side and Ambassador Colette Avital for the Israeli side. On its programme is to set up workshops with broad Israeli-Palestinian participation, open also to international specialists. Borders, refugees, Jerusalem, water, settlements – all these and other problems will be on the table. The first workshop regarding Jerusalem, initially planned for Istanbul, will take place in November in Austria. Holding it elsewhere than in the Middle East, away from media and local political pressures, will ensure a more serene environment.

The outcomes of these workshops, apart from being reported to the respective governments, will also be made public in order to keep each people informed. It is by keeping them informed of the evolution of the problems and their possible solutions, that the two peoples will be helped to greater understanding and respect for each other. Hate will only reduce through information and example. It is longterm work, essential, if the next official negotiations are to succeed.

The terms of the debate are moving. Construction in settlements is, in practice, frozen. For the last three months, no authorisation has been granted for building in the settlements. Forty-six Israeli army check-points on the West Bank have been removed. Security is being efficiently enforced by the Palestinian Authority security services. Checking at the demarcation lines between Israel and the West Bank has also been greatly relaxed. Also, under the leadership of Mahmoud Abbas, the Palestinian economy has clearly improved. Construction is in full flow, apartment blocks, offices and individual houses spring from the land. It is the best response to the

‘autism’ of Hamas in Gaza.

No foreign government, however powerful, even American, can impose peace. It is the public opinion of the two peoples, properly informed, which can impose it. It is the two peoples, reconciled with each other, who can build it. It is when these two cousins get together to build, that peace will become possible. It is the road towards peace that has just been started on.

(Translation: Peter Riddell)

<http://www.maroc-hebdo.com>



INTERVIEWS WITH HRH PRINCE EL HASSAN BIN TALAL
following his keynote address at the opening of the 2009 Caux Forum

Le Temps Switzerland

**LE MONDE ARABE EST PIÉGÉ PAR LE LIEN
ENTRE ETAT ET RELIGION**

Richard Werly European Affairs Correspondent

‘Prince Hassan of Jordan defended the concept of a ‘meeting ground’ which he believes is the only way to deal with the so-called ‘clash of civilizations’.’

La Croix France

**HASSAN DE JORDANIE : « CHRÉTIENS,
MUSULMANS, JUIFS SONT APPELÉS À VIVRE ENSEMBLE »**

François d’Alançon Senior Foreign Correspondent

‘Prince Hassan: Christians, Muslims and Jews are all human beings called to live together. This does not mean that we need to agree on everything; rather we need to establish a civilized framework for our disagreements.’

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