



**Citizens for
Global Solutions**

MINNESOTA

www.globalsolutionsmn.org

**Newsletter
November 2010**

OUR VISION:

We envision a future in which countries work together to abolish war, protect our rights and freedoms, and solve the problems facing humanity that no country can solve alone. This vision requires effective democratic global institutions that will apply the rule of law while respecting the diversity and autonomy of national and local communities.

OUR MISSION:

We are a membership organization working to build political will in the United States to achieve our vision. We do this by educating Americans about our global interdependence, communicating global concerns to public officials, and developing proposals to create, reform and strengthen international institutions such as the United Nations.

DIEZ DIAS DE DEMOCRACIA GLOBAL / TEN DAYS OF GLOBAL DEMOCRACY

Joe Schwartzberg, President

Over the week of October 3-9 I was privileged to participate in back-to-back conferences in Buenos Aires that formed part of a ten-day series of events hosted by Democracia Global, the Argentine affiliate of the World Federalist Movement. The events in question began prior to my arrival in Buenos Aires, with a two-day meeting (conducted mainly in Spanish) in the chamber of the Argentine Senate dealing with greater regional integration in Latin America and the Caribbean as well as with United Nations reform. Taking part were invited speakers; delegates from Parlatino, the newly created South American parliament; members of the national parliaments of a number of Latin American countries; members of the Steering Committee of the Campaign for a UN Parliamentary Assembly (UNPA); and interested members of the general public.

It was only natural that the ten-day series should have occurred where and when it did, given the fact that last year both houses of the Argentine Congress became the world's first national legislative bodies to go on record in support of an elected UNPA. Additionally, Parlatino became one among several regional parliaments—joining with those of the European Union, the Council of Europe, and the African Union—to register its support of the UNPA concept; and more than 800 parliamentarians from about 100 countries worldwide (though none from the USA) have individually declared their support.

The Steering Committee of the UNPA Campaign, on which I serve, had its annual meeting on October 4, also in the Senate Chamber. With few exceptions, participants came at their own expense, from places as far away as Japan, India, Cyprus, Libya, Kenya, a half-dozen Latin American nations, many countries

of Europe, Australia, Canada and, of course, the United States (8 persons). The meeting was ably chaired by Andreas Bummel, a remarkably capable German, who, on a *pro bono* basis, has probably done more than any other person to advance the cause of UNPA. Among the speakers—in addition to Bummel—were Fernando Iglesias, a member of the Argentine Congress and the spark plug in creating Democracia Global; and Olivier Giscard d'Estaing (brother of a former French Prime-Minister), President of the Committee for a World Parliament. The major outcome of the meeting was the "Draft Outcome Document," which you are encouraged to read. You may access it—in English, French, German and Spanish—at <http://en.unpacampaign.org/documents/>. This document has been sent to 145 governments and many other dignitaries. The response from former UN Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali included the following observations: "The

Declaration...reflects what we shall continue advocating until we achieve the desired results. I am particularly happy that the Secretariat of the UNPA campaign has been mandated to advocate specifically for a preparatory process towards an intergovernmental conference establishing a UN Parliamentary Assembly. This ... is a bold step which can only be applauded and encouraged.” For additional details, go to <http://en.uncampaign.org/news/537.php>.

Most of those who attended the Council meeting of the World Federalist Movement also participated in the immediately preceding UNPA meeting. The venue, however, shifted to the quarters of the Argentine Council on Foreign Relations and the agenda was substantially broadened. Excellent simultaneous translation, to and from Spanish and English, was provided throughout the program. Among the key issues discussed—with WFM CEO Bill Pace as our principal spokesperson—were the on-going campaign to broaden support for the International Criminal Court (the statute of which has now been ratified by 111 nations), to promote the fundamentally new concept of “the responsibility to protect” (unanimously endorsed by UN General Assembly in 2005, but not acted upon since). In a related vein, Don Kraus, national CEO of CGS, put forward a very well-written paper calling for P-5 voluntary acceptance of a “the responsibility not to veto” in matters entailing genocide. And I introduced the idea (proposed by some Italian international lawyers) that future Security Councils vetoes could be cast only if accompanied by a *legal*

argument indicating why they were deemed necessary. Fergus Watt, CEO of the World Federalist Movement of Canada, led an excellent discussion of a paper calling into question the legitimacy of decisions of the self-appointed G-20; but it was noted that the ineffectuality of the UN, as it is presently constituted, provided the *raison d’être* for the G-20 approach. Additional topics addressed included making use of the power of the Internet and responding to the global financial crisis. Although there was generally agreement on the need for greater transparency and accountability among the Bretton Woods institutions and the on the need for international regulation of finances, there was no consensus on what such regulation should entail and how it should be brought about.

Apart from helping to provide participants with stimulating programs and excellent logistic support, our Argentine hosts arranged a superb banquet, a fascinating city tour, and an evening of entertainment at a tango café. Buenos Aires is a beautiful city, in many ways reminiscent of Paris, with stately boulevards, excellent restaurants, diverse neighborhoods and numerous buildings of architectural interest. But its streets are in terrible disrepair; and, as in so much of the world, there were signs everywhere of the yawning income gap between the affluent and those barely surviving on the fringes of society. That said, there seemed to be a widespread sense that the country is on the way to a brighter future. Better governance can, I believe, contribute greatly to the realization of that hope, not only for Argentina, but for the world as a whole.

REFLECTIONS ON THE ELECTIONS

Joe Schwartzberg

Most of those reading this note will, I suppose, share my disappointment with the results of this year’s mid-term elections. They indicate a decided, but not unexpected, shift to the right in American politics. The outcome was driven by frustration with the state of the economy and unrealistic expectations in respect to what the Obama administration could have achieved in a mere two years to re-

verse the economic tailspin brought on by the financial excesses promoted by the policies of previous administrations. The voting public has called resoundingly for change. But change to what is still far from clear.

While I am not optimistic about our country’s short-term political prospects, the elections just concluded have not, in any significant way, dimmed my long-term hopes and expectations in regard to creating a better world centered on a substantially reformed and strengthened Uni-

ted Nations system. There is a momentum in history pushing humankind toward ever-greater cooperation and towards devising global solutions for the growing list of global problems confronting our species. We really have no choice but to keep working to improve or create structures of democratic global governance that will enable us to pass on to our children and grandchildren a more just planet in which all persons can live with a sense of dignity and hope.

THIRD THURSDAY GLOBAL ISSUES FORUM

Free and open to the public. Come and bring a friend.

Where? Hennepin Avenue United Methodist Church,
511 Groveland Avenue, Minneapolis (at Lyndale and Hennepin). Park in church lot.

November 18, 7:00-9:00 p.m.

ISLAM, THE MIDDLE EAST AND THE MEDIA

Western perceptions of Muslims in general and of Arabs in particular have never been well informed; but, following the events of and since 9/11/2001, they have been negatively influenced to an extraordinary degree. This is due, in no small measure, to media bias or neglect. Our forum will discuss how Islam and conflicts within the Middle East and other parts of the Islamic world are reported in the U.S. and foreign media and how that reporting influences public attitudes and actions, not only in the West, but also Islamic perceptions of the West.

Presenter(s): AHMED THARWAT (and a possible second media expert, to be confirmed)

Ahmed Tharwat, is host and co-creator of *BelAhden* (tr. With Open Arms), the only Arab-American show in the Midwest. It has aired for more than ten years on Twin Cities Public Television and can be seen throughout Minnesota and western Wisconsin. Born and raised in Egypt in a family of eight children, he came to the U.S. when he was 25. He has appeared on NPR's "All Things Considered," the PBS "NewsHour" and WCCO Radio; has written for *Slate* and *Salon* magazines, the Minneapolis *StarTribune* and Saint Paul *Pioneer Press*; and has won the 2000 Community Columnist Award.

December 16, 7:00-9:00 p.m.

RETHINKING IMMIGRATION: TOWARD A JUST, HUMANE AND VIABLE POLICY

Worldwide, there are some 190 million international migrants, of whom more than 40 million reside in the United States. Current debates portray immigration to the U.S. as unprecedented and unique and U.S. immigration policies as broken and in need of fixing. Exploration of the global and historical perspectives of U.S. immigration suggest why our policies, rather than providing a just, humane and viable system, often produce some of the problems they are intended to address. This forum will consider needed reforms applicable not only to our own country but to others as well.

Presenters: Professor DONNA GABACCIA and KATHLEEN MOCCIO, Attorney

Holder of the Rudolph Vecoli Chair in Immigration History Research and Director of the Immigration History Research Center at the University of Minnesota, Professor **Gabaccia** has received numerous academic awards since earning her Ph.D. at the University of Michigan in 1979. Her books include *Immigrant Lives in the US* (co-editor, 2004), *American Dreaming*, *Global Realities: Rethinking U.S. Immigration* (2006), and *Gender and Migration* (co-author, 2006).

Ms. Moccio served as Chair of the Board of Trustees of the American Immigration Law Foundation and on the Board of Directors of the Institute for New Americans. Her honors include the President's Commendation for Distinguished Service as Director for Pro Bono Development of the American Immigration Lawyers Association. She publishes, lectures and advocates extensively on behalf of asylees and refugees and teaches immigration law as an adjunct faculty member at the University of St. Thomas.

On today's agenda is not just a union of democratic states, but also a democratically organized world community. ... An awareness of the need for some kind of global government is gaining ground, one in which all members of the world community would take part. **Mikhail Gorbachev**

HAWKINSON FOUNDATION AWARDS FOR PEACE AND JUSTICE

On November 5 (the day after this Newsletter is to be printed), at the Centennial United Methodist Church in Roseville, MN, the Vincent L. Hawkinson Foundation for Peace and Justice, in collaboration with the Minnesota Alliance of Peacemakers (MAP), will present scholarships to eight college / university students from the Upper Midwest for outstanding work in promoting peace and justice. It will also honor six individuals for their long-term achievements in the same cause. We proudly note that three of those six honorees—**Verlyn Smith**, **Mary Lou Nelson** and **Deon Stuthman**—have had close ties with the Minnesota Chapter of Citizens for Global Solutions / World Federalist

Association. **Verlyn**, a retired minister, was our Chapter President for three years and has served in numerous other capacities. A peace activist since the Vietnam War, he was, from 1985 to 1992, pastor of Grace University Lutheran Church at the University of Minnesota; and in 1988 he helped found the Hawkinson Foundation in honor of his predecessor in that position. **Mary Lou**, a former school teacher and real estate broker, is known primarily for her long association with the United Nations Association—both as president of the Minnesota Chapter and as a member of the national Board—and as one of the founders of MAP. Though she never held an elected office in WFA/CGS, she was a frequent participant in our activities and served as an advisor to our Nominations Committee for several years. **Deon**, for more than 40 years, a

professor of agronomy at the University of Minnesota, died this past June and is being honored posthumously. Also, among the founders of the Hawkinson Foundation, he was its first Board Chair. Like Mary Lou, he frequently attended CGS programs.

Of the 37 honorees since the Hawkinson Awards were instituted in 1988, at least 14 have been conferred to members of WFA / CGS.

NEW WEB SITES

If you have not done so already, we urge you to examine and the newly designed web sites of CGS at both the state and national levels:

www.globalsolutionsmn.org

and <http://gobalsolutions.org>.

Your comments will be welcome.

Citizens for Global Solutions

(formerly the World Federalist Association)

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It is from numberless diverse acts of courage and belief that human history is shaped. Each time a man stands up for an ideal, or acts to improve the lot of others, or strikes out against injustice, he sends forth a tiny ripple of hope; and crossing each other from a million different centers of energy and daring, these ripples build a current which can sweep down the mightiest walls of oppression and resistance.

Robert F. Kennedy, *Make Gentle the Life of This World*