



Citizens assemblies on the way

CITIZENS ASSEMBLIES COORDINATORS MEETING
May 2010 - Paris

Report



Table of Contents

1. Goal of the Meeting	3
2. Reporting Method	3
3. In Search of New Pillars for World Governance	5
3.1 Assemblies and Citizens Alternatives: Initial Debate and Explorations (discussion)	7
4. The regional assembly processes: events, developments and progress	12
4.1 From the 2007 China-India Forum to the 2010 Asian Citizens Assembly	12
4.2 Travelling Caravans and the Sahel-Saharan Citizens Assembly	16
4.3 Constructing Mali with Local Building Blocks	18
4.4 On the Road to the Iquique Regional Citizens Assembly – Southern Cone	21
4.5 Building a Mediterranean People’s Community	25
4.6 Crossing Oceania: on the Road to a Citizens Assembly for the Liquid Continent	27
4.7 Citizens for Europe: Linking Up Citizen Initiatives and Proposals	29
5. Beyond the Single Model: the Art of Building Links, New Balances and Paths between Unity and Diversity (cross-cutting monitoring)	30
6. Preparing for the 2010 Assemblies	36
6.1 Asia: the road to the August 2010 Assembly and beyond	36
6.2 Hui and the IUCN Conference in Oceania	39
6.3 Citizen Dialogues in Valencia: the First Mediterranean Assembly	41
6.4 Iquique Regional Citizens Assembly – Southern Cone	42
6.5 Sahel Sahara: Citizen Caravans at the Ayoun Assembly	44
6.6 Mali Assembly: from Local to Regional and National Stages	46
7. Contribution to a New Phase in Building Human Responsibilities	47
7.1 Drafting Ethical Charters, Ties Between Assemblies and Perspectives for the Future (discussion)	50
8. Appendices	53
8.1 Programme and invitation	53
8.2 Participants	56

1. Goal of the Meeting

This second meeting of Citizens Assembly coordinators aimed to examine the framework, progress and prospects for the Citizens Assemblies underway in the Southern Cone, Mediterranean, Asia, Oceania, Sahel Sahara, Mali and Europe.

The idea was to take a new look at the Citizens Assembly concept by asking how **the Assemblies contribute to and strengthen the diversity of citizen and popular movements in the second decade of the 21st century**. The meeting aimed to bring out the historical significance of the concept, its position and importance in the current context of globalization. The initial founding meeting took place only two years ago in 2008, but the world has not stopped changing ever since. The financial and economic crisis erupted just after the June 2008 meeting, and the idea of Citizens Assemblies became even more pertinent.

Another aim of the meeting was to produce an update on the **preparations for the meetings planned for the second half of 2010**. The wish to broaden the ties established between Assembly organizers to other similar initiatives implies progressing towards an overall vision and strategy as well an outline of post- 2010 prospects.

The meeting took place over **two days**: participants spent the first day **getting to know each other again and getting back up to speed**; the second day was spent on **preparations for meetings in the second half of 2010 and post-2010 prospects**.

2. Reporting Method

The two working days produced a number of communications, incorporating both **accounts of the progress of the different initiatives** as well as **summaries, analyses, debates and personal comments** that provided more detail on each initiative. Condensing this diversity of expression directly into summaries would have resulted in the dialogue being misrepresented and some of the richness of the contributions being lost. The decision was therefore taken to remain **faithful** to the initial content of communications by using video recordings (a total of 8 hours) supplemented by note taking.

The meeting allowed participants to explore, in a non-directive manner, **each initiative's path and construction process**, with the added help of debates and explanations. This meant that the reporting process is more similar to **initiative capitalisation** rather than simply reproducing discussions. Several coordinators also stressed the need to give the **paths taken** and micro-processes at work in the Assemblies a higher profile and **visible trace**.

Transcriptions of communications were based on François Soulard's **video recordings** (using the speakers' original languages) and notes taken by Germà Pelayo. Most contributions to the debates have been rearranged to improve the description of the corresponding Assembly process.

The following open source software was used to create the support materials and report: Open Office, Scribus, Gimp, Kino, Kdenlive and Gwenview.

Illustrations and texts are licensed under a Creative commons 2.0 by-nc licence.



3. In Search of New Pillars for World Governance

Gustavo Marin – Two years ago, in June 2008, in this very same room at the Charles Léopold Mayer Foundation, we said: “Let’s get this idea of Citizens Assemblies going in different regions of the world.” In the meantime, if we look at how the world has evolved since 2008, the least we can say is that **the world has changed rapidly and profoundly**. We could already see the crisis—and the crises—coming; however, the economic and financial crisis actually broke out in September 2008. In countries such as India and other southern countries where social shock absorbers are more substantial, the crisis was not felt as strongly as in the so-called advanced countries: Europe, the USA and Japan, which are suffering from an economic and financial crisis unprecedented in the history of capitalism. Some claim this crisis is as severe as the depression of the 1930s and 1940s. It has hit everyone, especially the poorest sectors. It is estimated that 100 million new poor people have appeared in the planet’s most vulnerable countries.

Back in 2008, as we talked about the current situation and the Citizens Assembly foundations, the crisis had already struck. Even before that, prior to September 2008, the crisis had already begun. Some historians and geo-politicians think of this as one element of a **wider, underlying upheaval**. Deep-reaching changes are taking place in relationships between women and men, between humans and the biosphere and, above all, between societies themselves. Some say that this complex interweaving of crises is essentially symptomatic of a **crisis of civilization**, and that it goes further than simply a crisis of capitalism. It is clear that we are not dealing with purely economic and political changes. **Ethical changes, major alterations in the relationships between human beings and systemic changes are key issues**.

Some speak of the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989 as a major historical turning point; others evoke the end of apartheid and Mandela’s presidential election in South Africa in 1994. For Americans, it is the attacks in New York in 2001 that left their mark on society. For the Chileans, the date that changed our lives and, in a way, the lives of a whole population, was 11 September 1973. Further back, Antonio Gramsci, imprisoned by the Italian Fascist regime between the two World Wars, wrote in his prison notebooks: “The old world is dying away, and the new world struggles to come forth: now is the time of monsters.” We could pick up on the very same idea today. We are going through a zone of turbulence and rapid change, within a **long period of transitions and deep-reaching transformations**, which will last several decades.

Are we, then, aboard the Titanic? If so, the question is knowing whether we have already hit the iceberg or are inexorably approaching it. Regardless of the image, what is key here is seeing that Citizens Assemblies have a wider-reaching ambition. In these **long transition processes** where we find ourselves, we must invent **a new economy, a new political system and a new way of living together**. This outlook coincides with that of the Charles Léopold Mayer Foundation, whose main objective is to conceive of, search for and implement the **conditions for building a global community**. Citizens can see that the current foundations of world governance are not bearing up. The architecture built three centuries ago is, to say the least, unable to adapt to the challenges of today’s world. The three-way structure formed by the nation-state, relations between states and the United Nations is powerless. The UN

Secretariat is noticeably absent in the face of the current economic and financial crisis. The system based on states and political parties is certainly ineffective, but it remains meaningful and central. States have tried to re-organize, moving from G7 to G8, and then from G8 to G20, but not even the G20 has managed to deal with the changes. Therefore, we can clearly see that **we must redesign the architecture of power and governance on the national, regional and global scale.**

We have been living in this transition period for about twenty years: certain analysts point to the 1999 Seattle demonstrations, others, the Zapatista uprising in 1994, and others the World Social Forums launched in 2001. We are seeing **the emergence of networks, organizations and citizen alliances** that are trying to regain power over today's issues and their collective destiny. However, even though the initiatives and social movements are powerful, they remain dispersed and scattered, creating occasional events which are effective, **but not continuous or consistent enough.** It was precisely this context which led to the idea of a Citizens Assembly. Its birth goes back to 1992 and 1993, when the platform for a united and responsible world was launched at preliminary meetings in Santiago de Chile, Montreal, Athens, Ouagadougou and Shekou—a fast-growing Chinese city across from Hong-Kong, where Deng Xiaoping introduced the slogan: “People of China, some must get rich first! ... No matter whether it is a white cat or a black cat; as long as it can catch mice, it is a good cat.” Then in 1995, during the Social Summit in Copenhagen, we organized meetings in Peking, Rio, Paris and Cape Town, South Africa. It was here that a World Alliance against Social Apartheid was born. In 1997, seven continental meetings were organized: in Bangalore, Algiers, Barcelona, Kigali and Beirut, ending in a major meeting in Sao Paulo, Brazil, in December 1997. Two of the World Social Forum organizers, Candido Grysowski and Chico Whitaker, organized workshops as well. Then, later, in June 2001, we organized four continental meetings in Romania, Lebanon, Bangalore and Quito, prior to the World Citizens Assembly in Lille in December 2001. The **organization of regional Citizens Assemblies** was proposed at the end of the Assembly. The proposal went hand in hand with the call to create citizen alliances, socio-professional networks, and society-to-society dialogue processes as well as the international promotion of a Charter of Human Responsibilities.

It was not until some years later that we were able answer the call to organize Citizens Assemblies. The Assemblies were born **as a result of the process that is taking place in various regions of the world.** They are ongoing, solid and stable meetings of citizens, rooted in territories which are beyond state borders, built around essential regional themes and with a mainly multi-professional approach, that is to say, with a great diversity of stakeholders (peasants, the military, researchers, businesses, trade unions, women, young people, NGOs, etc.). They constitute attempts to **root the construction of a new world governance architecture** in new foundations, bringing together citizens, networks and concepts for a new global governance. We can of course discuss the name the process has been given: citizens assembly, popular assembly or social assembly...little does it matter. Yet one thing is certain: we must invent and create—as of now—**new, solid, secure spaces where citizens can find their strength.**

This idea of Citizens Assemblies has been up and running for two years now. It is not an exclusive process, far from it. All those who want to get people to follow them or adhere to the same model are on the wrong track. Even the organizers of the World Social Forum admit that the social forum is just one of the ways that the new social dynamics are expressed. There is and there will be **a diversity of social dynamics with different dimensions and rhythms.** It is important to ensure that they take form. So, how far are we going to go with the Citizens Assemblies? It is essential to **continue on our journey** ... knowing that the future will differ from how we imagine it today. The future *is* unpredictable, but our adventure is meaningful. At this moment in time when we are lucky enough to be living our lives and surviving, we cannot

know when the current world power structure will come to an end, and what happens afterwards will certainly be different from how we imagine it today. However, together with those who continue to search for a humanist globalization, we **take on the responsibility** of starting right now to build another world: a fairer, more responsible, plural and united world.

3.1 ASSEMBLIES AND CITIZENS ALTERNATIVES: INITIAL DEBATE AND EXPLORATIONS (DISCUSSION)

Ben Quinones – The Asian Forum for Solidarity Economy is a platform for dialogue wherein the solidarity economy is conceived of and approached as a real alternative to the liberal economy. We have come to understand that **the economy is inseparable from governance**. It is essentially the set of regulations for managing resources and our common home, a definition that leads us directly to an examination of governance.

The second Asian Forum for Solidarity Economy was organized in Japan in November 2009. South Korea took a very active role and Japan declared the concept of solidarity economy to be an alternative to the neoliberal economy. Following this second forum, each country felt the need to organize its own forum at the national level. Indonesia therefore organized a forum held on 19 and 20 May 2010, Malaysia's forum will take place in mid-August just before the Asian Assembly, and Singapore is organizing a forum for December 2010. The Philippines plans to hold a national forum every three months. The next Asian forum will be held in Malaysia in November 2011.

Presidential elections were held in the Philippines on 10 May 2010. Our proposal was adapted by one of the country's political movements, Bayan Philippines (*Go Ahead Philippines*). Activists recognized that the militant campaign was reaching its limits and therefore felt it would be more strategic to **bring together the different stakeholders within an assembly**, with the aim of **creating a third pillar of society**, independent from government and the private sector.

Mamadou Niang – The world has offered global ideological answers that **run contrary to the complexity of the problems and the search for consensual solutions**. "Universal" thinking is no longer applicable. But the world is moving forwards because some people dare take risks. From this viewpoint, Citizens Assemblies represent an extraordinary innovation. The first reaction when we meet the political authorities is **adherence**. The Citizens Assembly is a very **relevant concept**, part of a **dynamic movement**. For example, citizen coalitions will be standing at the Senegalese elections, with the involvement of religious leaders, singers such as Youssou N'Dour, a dismissed former minister, etc. Our challenge is to work out **how to bring together stakeholders who are closed off from each other** and can't manage to reach an understanding. How can we unite these stakeholders within a cross-cutting process? Ever since states were created in the Sahelian region, most dialogue mechanisms have been blocked by the administrative apparatus. **Citizens have also been blocked by this approach**. One example we have seen is ENDA (*Environment and Development Action in the Third World*), an NGO whose work spans borders.

Pierre Vuarin – I would like to offer a quick overview of the alternatives that are up and running so as to stimulate debate and examine possible overlaps with the Assemblies and regional questions.

- On the topic of **harnessing and overexploiting natural resources**, a coalition based on the *Association des populations de montagne du monde (World Mountain People Association)* is currently extending to the international level.
- On the **issue of land ownership** and its monopoly by multinationals or states, a set of initiatives is currently making progress with the support of the not-for-profit organization AGTER (*Améliorer la gouvernance de la Terre, de l'Eau et des Ressources naturelles – Improving the Governance of Land, Water and Natural Resources*).
- On the topic of **collective catering**, we support an international process that seeks to change catering mechanisms, which remain under the responsibility of local and national authorities.
- The *Terre Citoyenne* international university is currently launching training modules with other organizations (The Urban University, training centres for social leaders) on the topics of **fishing**, the WTO and **international regulations, tackling complexity**, conflict management and plankton.
- On the issue of **food sovereignty**, we are working on the creation of an international food convention. We are also working on the creation of sustainable supply chains, particularly contracts that bring together sector stakeholders, both companies and producers (World Banana Forum).
- On the fishing theme, an **international label for small-scale fishing** is being created to recognize the products of small-scale fishing, which remain highly isolated and vulnerable in many of the world's regions.
- We are trying to raise the profile of **plankton**, a very important issue.

One of the major challenges in tackling the complexity of situations is creating **multi-stakeholder processes that involve** civil society, politicians and businesses. One of the main flaws of the social forums is that businesses are not represented, despite the fact that they have a vital role to play. What links do they have with the Assemblies?

On the issue of methodology, how can we manage to work collectively at the international level? How can we create **multi-stakeholder processes** and **processes that are genuinely rooted in dialogue**?

John Anugraha - The 2001 World Citizens Assembly was, in some ways, an introductory phase. We are now **in the regional arena alongside other civil society movements**.

Can we allow ourselves to stray off the beaten path for a moment? Having seen the film *Titanic* several times, I think I can say that we are living at a time when there are not necessarily any icebergs. We continue to believe that the ocean contains icebergs, but are they really there? We are facing challenges without knowing who is at the helm.

On the issue of regional challenges in Asia, we need to concentrate on a minimum number of questions to avoid getting lost by going off in too many directions. The Asian Assembly has chosen to focus on five key themes: **education, equality, economy of solidarity, ecology and ethics**. Ethics is a vital theme that needs tackling in Asia, since the continent is undergoing a deep-reaching ethical crisis. Concrete examples of solutions to this crisis are

being devised, including in the private sector and via projects working on climate change and the solidarity economy that have proved successful in mobilizing businesses.

Ben Quinones – How can we organize the majority, in other words, the working masses in developing countries? People tend to identify themselves individually with their respective professional families. However, they belong to the same family: the **consumer** family. I feel it is important to reverse this paradigm, to switch from a paradigm whereby everyone remains locked into their professional sector and divided into small fragments to **one where all stakeholders come together**. If the Citizens Assemblies are organized on the basis of questions that are too specific, reproducing the compartmentalization of social sectors, we will not achieve unity and our energy will be dissipated. This is the paradigm we have to reform. It is possible to initiate economic alternatives **rooted in the diversity of stakeholders** by asking ourselves which partnerships we need to build. The issues of education, environment and ecology will arise naturally if we tackle aspects that relate to people's daily lives.

In the past, businesses were, in a way, the dictators of history. As a result, the proletariat became the main force for emancipation. Then the 20th century created mass markets which turned the economy into mass consumption markets, which in turn **turned citizens into mass consumers**. Power has entrenched itself based on the weakness the neoliberal market has produced in citizens. In the Philippines, for example, urban households spend 150 to 200 euros on average a month, with rural households spending around half that amount. These households could succeed in appropriating power if they invested 100 euros a month in something else, and if they were capable of organizing themselves. Today, it is almost exclusively businesses that tap into this power. But poor and modest people have a major asset: their power to organize. We need to consider them as active consumers, characterized by the capacity to take initiative and organize themselves. **If we can help citizens to recognize that power is within their reach and that they can transform politics and the economy**, then it becomes possible to mobilize them by means of a Citizens Assembly. We have to recognize that citizens will be no more than surprised and admiring if we only talk to them about fine ideas without giving them the chance to take alternative action. Globalization means that developing countries have almost no power to compete against foreign imports. If 60% of the poor, among the 80 million Filipinos, were to pool some of their revenue, they would be able to mobilize backers, work with producers and find simple ways to create solidarity-based circuits.

Ambroise Dakouo – In Mali, highly important elements are emerging as the Assembly process unfolds and contact is established with the populations. People say to us “**this is where you have to start**: come and ask us about the values and challenges most important to us.” Yet this is far from the approach adopted when creating institutions and orienting public policies, as citizens rightly point out.

The **electoral question** is one of the major challenges. The population continues to keep away from elections, even though campaigns are funded by increasingly amounts of money and civil stakeholders are increasingly capable of organizing. In addition, citizens are tending to organize themselves based on a small group of figures whom they **trust and whose legitimacy they recognize**. The real actors in the political process, which should be the political parties, have become to some extent a shadow of their former selves. They do enjoy a certain degree of legality, but their legitimacy is in question given that electors opt to identify with other figures. We can also see that everything is defined based on a handful of figures within the parties. Since 2007, independent candidates have emerged with increasing impact and success. When we look at the process for reforming Mali's institutions, which will result in

a constitutional referendum before the end of 2010, we can see that the proposed methodology does not enable any real contact with the people. Reforms tend to be top down. In general, mechanisms for contact-making, participation and joint elaboration do not exist in Mali. This is why the **bottom up proposal for the Malian Assembly is very popular**. It starts with the grassroots and includes a broad diversity of stakeholders with the aim of **renewing governance mechanisms from the local to national level**.

Betsan Martin – It is essential to recognize **the increase in poverty and disparities** around the world. These phenomena are leading to the emergence of new symptoms such as social violence, violence towards women and high levels of disease. This links into our active engagement with civil society and the importance of remembering that there are millions of citizens who are still too disadvantaged to be able to take part in this type of engagement. Their energy is all spent on the work that takes up nearly all their time. They live in conditions that prevent them from participating. How many individuals are thus left on the margins of the discussions we are generating as part of the Assembly process? I believe that there is an enormous challenge in creating solidarity between the rich and the poor and making sure that **vulnerable and excluded sectors of society can be included and heard**.

On the subject of businesses, during our first Assembly, held in New Zealand in September 2009, we brought together stakeholders from different professional sectors and different disciplines, including participants from the private sector. The two-day meeting saw the emergence of different positions and conflicts. This is what we wanted, but it made us realize to what extent the **tensions that are produced can only be regulated with the right sort of organization, energy and attitude**. Nevertheless, most participants shared the same values and vision of the state of the world and environment. The dialogue process called for a **real capacity to manage tensions without falling into the trap of excluding or alienating certain participants**.

Charles Kleinermann - We need to be aware of the difficulty that everyone encounters in their socio-professional environment when trying to drive change and exert pressure. Which is why I feel that it is useful to bring together the people driving change within the Assembly process. One of the challenges in the Euro-Mediterranean region is precisely to **succeed in bringing together people from radically different socio-professional backgrounds**, who can **commit themselves as individuals** and who are willing to lay aside their institutional identity and **share their experiences**.

Civil society and citizens cover a very wide spectrum: unions, business people, politicians, rural and agricultural organizations, etc. The Assemblies should not constitute political alternatives, in so far as they must retain the capacity to represent the diversity of citizens who are working together to create a **political proposal**. **The number of citizens involved and their level of participation are therefore important**.

Representative and participative democracy exists: for now, it's a good method for managing our societies. We mustn't throw the baby out with the bath water. It is important that **the political systems in place can take part in the Assemblies**. For example, by seizing the opportunity to collect a million signatures, regardless of the topics being addressed, and to carry out a sort of lobbying campaign targeting institutions. The Treaty of Lisbon provides the citizens' initiative system: the European Commission is obliged to examine an issue when a million signatures raising it have been received.

How can we develop a **joint and global plan for the Assemblies**? It is not just about regional initiatives; the citizens of different continents have something in common, i.e. an underlying

vision of society, a shared outlook. What is this shared outlook?

Gustavo Marin – Links between the topics and aspects addressed by the Citizens Assemblies are vital. Once stable foundations have been built, we need to establish ties between them to create platforms which will bind them together.

The new citizenship must start with the poorest and most vulnerable members of society, but it must not remain compartmentalized within socio-professional, territorial or theme-based categories. It is essential that **theme-based alliances be rooted in territories**.

It's true, we mustn't throw the baby of democracy out with the bath water, but be open to **questioning the nature, goals and methods** of democracy in Africa, for example.

4. The regional assembly processes: events, developments and progress

4.1 FROM THE 2007 CHINA-INDIA FORUM TO THE 2010 ASIAN CITIZENS ASSEMBLY

*“No president, no leader, no king,
no emperor...
nobody's going to change this,
except the people!”
Lenny Kravitz.*



- The **China-India Forum in August 2007 served as the springboard**. A great many initiatives to promote and establish dialogue already existed in China and India. They tend to be led by civil society, which operates very differently in each country: rooted in a communist structure on one side, and in a social-democratic structure on the other. The establishment of dialogue between these two worlds was extremely fruitful and led to the wish to extend the experience to Asia as a whole.
- **In 2008, the process of broadening dialogue** required setting up a facilitation and organization team which could operate throughout Asia, beyond the frontiers of India and China. During **preparations for the Conference of the Parties on Climate Change (COP+15)** in Potsdam, the issue of climate change served as a unifying theme that drew new countries into the process. A second event took place in 2007 in India on **the question of intergenerational links** (60% of the planet's young people live in Asia). The event proposed focusing on links between generations, and not only on the 'usual' partnership with young people. The idea of an Asian network of young people working on climate change thus emerged in response to COP+15 and the relative lack of links between Asian countries on this question.
- In **July 2008, South Korea** joined India, China and Japan in the process. A meeting was organized with the South Korean section of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP Korea), then with the MIZY Seoul Youth Cultural Exchange Center, run by the

Korean National Commission for UNESCO under the auspices of the Seoul Metropolitan Government. The meeting led to the idea of an **India-Korea Forum**, with the first event to be held in August 2010.

- The G8 summit in Japan and Global Youth Summit produced fresh opportunities to meet further civil society partners, in Japan this time, and to test out the idea of a “**multi-stakeholder assembly**”. A number of **new partners** joined the initiative, including the Asia-Pacific Culture Centre for UNESCO, United Nations University, Action for Solidarity, Equality, Environment and Development in Japan (A Seed Japan), Team Peace Challenge and the Asia Pacific Resource Center.
- In August 2008, contact was made with a key partner, **Zheng Rugang** (former Chinese deputy minister for the environment) at the Global Water Partnership in Stockholm, and took a keen interest in China-India dialogue. Next came the meeting at Japan’s Waseda University which brought together the Charter of Human Responsibilities and solidarity economy networks. Teams from UN agencies played a key role in the forum process. Subsequently, during the World Peace Congress in February 2009, discussions with Siddharta and Pipal Tree, which had co-organized the Bangalore continental meeting in 2001, further developed the **first proposal for an Asian Citizens Assembly**.
- **The question of religion** is central in Asia (India and Indonesia are home to the planet’s largest Muslim populations). It was therefore felt necessary to link the process up with **Iran** and **Indonesia**. This gave rise to the partnership with Behrouz in Iran, which gradually brought together around thirty Iranian stakeholders, following John Anugraha’s 2-week trip to Iran with an Indonesian colleague. Subsequently, a group of young Iranian leaders selected the team set to participate in the August 2010 Assembly.

New key partners were then identified in Indonesia as part of missions that ran in March and July 2009 then April 2010. These partners include the alternative Green School in Bali and the former Indonesian minister for tourism, set to take part in the Bangalore Assembly in 2010 with a contribution on the subject of ethics.

- In **2009**, the **Asian Forum for Cross Cultural Dialogues** brought together participants from five continents, thanks to Zhao Baisheng who helped extend the web of contacts to the international level. Eco-ethics was the proposed theme, with the simultaneous creation of the World Ecoculture Organization (WEO), aiming primarily to broaden theoretical work in the academic world.



- Japan hosted the **second Asian Forum for Solidarity Economy** in November 2009. Ben Quinones ran the Forum, which closely mirrored the Assembly process. Ben Quinones

identified the context and founding principles. “The economy operates without governance. The world is governed by the marginalization of majorities and the monopolization of resources by a minority. The forum’s goal is to create a framework for organizing the marginalized majorities and incorporate the different initiatives into the process for transforming the international economic system. **The emergence of a vision is essential**, otherwise there is no way out. We need to transform a global vision into a **long-term process that can be applied to a local environment and adapted to suit each context**. Since 2007, the Forum has been focusing on four categories of stakeholders in the economic system: producers, retailers, distributors and consumers. Consumers do not usually have any direct influence over producers and retailers, which gradually produces monopolies and confusion over price regulation. This cannot be changed without entering into the sphere of governance and democratic participation. I see that the Intercontinental Network for the Promotion of the Social Solidarity Economy (RIPESS) is getting bogged down in things that are too specific. What we need is a **systemic vision** created in cooperation with, and rooted in, society. Hence the complementarity with the Asian Citizens Assembly, which combines leadership, political action, mobilization of people and organizations, and promotion of dialogue. The Forum and the Assembly ask the two following questions. 1. What are **citizens’ aims in terms of the economy**? 2. **What vision of governance emerges** from the process of reorganizing the economy?”

- The idea of the **We Build 2010** project (to be proposed at the August 2010 Assembly) emerged from the China-India-Japan Forum in July 2008 and John Anugraha’s experiences during the UN Habitat summits. The principle is based on young people taking action rooted in solidarity to build houses for families with no means of support. The underlying philosophy is to give the dialogue and discussions that take place at the meetings concrete form as useful and collective actions.
- The **Malhar Festival** in 2009 followed on from an initiative headed by Nina Gregg (Responsibilities Charter network in the USA) based on organizing a cinema festival on water and climate change in collaboration with ten North American universities (Kentucky, New York, New Jersey, Harvard, etc.). The aim was to open dialogue between the West and the East. The success of this experience led to a new event, a **Sports and Environmental Education Festival**. It will be based on a football tournament and rainwater harvesting during the period just before the August 2010 Assembly (the rainy season in India).
- **The 2010 schedule is the fruit of the contacts, networks and questions that emerged in 2008 and 2009**. The goal is to **create convergences** based on a **bilateral or trilateral dialogue process** within a group of countries that differ enormously. The Assembly can therefore be perceived as one tool among many. If 47 Asian countries are not yet ready to get involved, there is no reason why a small group of countries cannot forge ahead and open up a new path. The Assembly is now supported by **international partnerships** that extend beyond the Asian continent: Japan, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Australia, Indonesia, Turkey, Germany, the Philippines, South Korea, Singapore, Iran, Spain, Malaysia, Vietnam, the USA, India and China.
- The **Assembly’s key participants** include civil society (religious leaders, women, young people, intergenerational communities and peasants), universities, the private sector and businesses, UN agencies and governments.
- The Assembly is rooted in a theme-based formula comprising the **five “E”s—ethics, ecology, economy of solidarity, education and equality**—and works towards peace and sustainable development.

Alihuen Antileo – Several demonstrations and violent confrontations have taken place in Ecuador and Chile against the exploitation of natural mining resources in the Amazon forest, exported to the Asian mass market. This is a fundamental question. How **can we open up for debate the effects and impacts of the mass economy within the Assemblies?**

Ricardo Jimenez – There is very strong **resistance to profit making**. The UN is part and parcel of the crisis. It functions in a hypocritical and undemocratic manner, with an assembly where five votes make the decisions in the name of two hundred members. And these five members are the biggest arms producers in the world. Simon Bolivar declared in Jamaica: “The new is endlessly being born and the old refuses to die.” India and Brazil want to join the UN Security Council. Should the Assemblies question this and look at the respective responsibilities? The approach is the same with transnational companies that occasionally resort to using paramilitary groups to protect their interests.

John Anugraha – The experts agree that the UN has failed to set up a world governance system. These institutions are indeed refusing to die or undergo change.

For us, citizenship is synonymous with involvement in a social and political community. The question posed to the new generations is whether they feel that they belong to the community. From our point of view, the Assemblies are an **instrument for mobilization and transformation, a new model for cultural diplomacy whose development is driven by bilateral and trilateral relations.**

4.2 TRAVELLING CARAVANS AND THE SAHEL-SAHARAN CITIZENS ASSEMBLY

“The Assembly provides a process without any finished products. But it also needs to be able to make progress on these topics, to set out priorities and identify alternatives. It is clear that the region cannot develop if approaches and solutions are not integrated.”



- The **process** began at a meeting organized in Nouakchott, Mauritania, attended by academics, women and young people. Gustavo Marin had asked participants to give their opinion on the future of the Sahel-Saharan region. Their responses revealed a strong nostalgia for the fertile Sahara of long ago and a **contrast** with the current situation of poverty, desertification and increased water scarcity. The Assembly began by focusing on three of the region’s countries: **Mauritania, Mali and Senegal**. The Sahel-Saharan region forms a vast livestock-breeding and farming area characterized by the desert’s advance and high levels of interpenetration and movement among nomad populations. New living spaces are emerging and being shared, with the emergence of conflicts between livestock breeders and farmers.
- **Travelling caravans** were launched in June 2008 with the idea of reviving the spirit of desert crossings. The first caravans set off from Nouakchott in Mauritania, linking up the six south eastern Mauritanian regions, including the towns of Ayoun (a town that became Malian in 1944), Kaédi, Kifa and Aleg. Subsequent caravans linked up the north of Senegal and the towns of Saint-Louis, Podor, Bakel and Matam. The next caravan will set off in July 2010 to the north of Mali to reach the towns of Kidal, Mopti, Gao and Timbuktu which are marked by the same Sahelian realities as the other two countries.
- **Debate took place in town neighbourhoods** in the presence of young people, women, teachers, civil servants, local elected representatives and religious and traditional leaders. “Initiating debate with local people began with the presentation of the Assembly’s values, the challenge of **reformulating citizenship**, governance and development, and **citizens’ role in these changes**,” explained Mamadou Niang.
- The caravan experiment proved to be a **highly fruitful experience**. According to Mamadou Niang, “the Assembly is seen as an **innovative initiative**, opening up of the world of unions and NGOs to the rest of the society.” The Assembly process expresses a message of confidence and faith in **people’s potential to renew their own governance and development in collaboration with neighbouring countries**. Initial concerns that emerged from the caravans concerned the broken promises of political leaders, the role of women in social change (men’s nomadic lifestyle has meant that women have traditionally had a significant degree of power in family and local life, and that they tend to increasingly

take an active role in economic life), schooling difficulties, access to credit, and migration due in particular to the Senegal River drying up in the Bakel border area (the NGO ENDA is running some very interesting initiatives in the area).

- A group of **key contacts** for the Assembly was created and met for the first time in Nouakchott in late 2009. These key contacts are **local intermediaries and facilitators** who were identified during the travelling caravans. The meeting's goal was to take stock of the different areas of progress made and define priorities for work strategies. "All the challenges find an expression in the Sahel Sahara and it is necessary to **choose a relevant set of priorities**," Mamadou Niang pointed out.
- **Six themes will be proposed in October 2010 at the Assembly in the Mauritanian town of Ayoun.** 1. Democracy, citizenship and governance. 2. Renewable energies (low-cost access to energy is necessary to the region's development, based on farming and livestock breeding. The project for a solar power plant in the Sahara, which would supply 25% of European needs, clearly raises questions about sharing resources, cooperation and governance). 3. Young people and the suitability of elementary and higher education (the education proposed by the school system does not on the whole suit local needs). 4. Women's role in social change. 5. The role of religious and spiritual leaders in education. 6. Traditional communication as a factor in integration.
- **The Assembly is entering a phase of diagnosis and observation.** It has already created **interest** in the follow-up of the process and possible launching of projects. Mamadou Niang recounted the story of NGO organizers meeting in Matam, Senegal, who sought to understand the Assembly's human affinities approach from a project management standpoint. He feels that "The Assembly provides a **process** without any finished products. But it also needs to be able to make progress on these topics, to set out priorities and identify alternatives. It is clear that the region cannot develop if **approaches and solutions are not integrated**. Cross-border dynamics are therefore to be encouraged. The project to develop the Senegal River, including a hydro farming section and a caravan combating malaria, is an excellent example."



4.3 CONSTRUCTING MALI WITH LOCAL BUILDING BLOCKS

“We can certainly give serious consideration to international and global questions at the local level. There is a gap between the signature of international agreements and the capacity to implement them locally the world over. We therefore need local solutions to local issues. On that basis, we can then forge links between our vision and that of other countries and pool our efforts.”



- Governance in Mali is characterized by **multiple crises**. People either **steer clear of collective management** or **avoid the electoral processes**. Following Malian independence, institutions and public policies were set up at great speed, without reflecting citizens' values or involving local people in their design. The Assembly is rooted in the idea of **addressing the crises** and coming up with some answers. “On the fiftieth anniversary of independence, the goal is encourage the emergence of a **shared vision** of the crises that are impeding Mali's development and **proposals for change** based locally and in the various socio-professional sectors.” The people gave the process a very favourable reception.
- **The Assembly** is being organized by the **Centre Djoliba** (a body set up by the Catholic Church in 1991 at the dawn of Malian democracy) which enjoys a **strong degree of legitimacy** and many **branches** in Malian municipalities and regions. *L'Alliance pour refonder la gouvernance en Afrique (Alliance to Reform Governance in Africa)* provides the Assembly with permanent **methodological support**. Other stakeholders involved include Ousmane Sy, the former minister of decentralization and member of the Assembly's pilot committee, civil society and technical and financial partners.
- A **four-phase methodology** has been adopted, which remains flexible so that it can adapt to changes in the process:
 - An **initial phase** of local Assemblies, bringing together participants from a cross-section of the **social, ethnic and professional diversity** encountered at the Commune and Cercle levels. Dialogue with participants is established without pre-defined themes and based on **four areas of discussion**: values, challenges, commitments and proposals. Themes expressing local priorities are emerging from these discussions and from each Assembly.
 - A regional Assembly will constitute the **second phase**, attended by local delegates chosen in line with the themes emerging from the different regions. In the Kayes sector, for example, themes focus on mining resources and migration, whereas in Kidal in the

north priorities centre more on the rebels and constructing a democratic state.

- The **third and national phase** will bring together delegates and key contacts on the basis of the identified themes. It consists of intersecting the full range of visions and contributions and drawing up a national document entitled **Proposals as the Building Blocks for Constructing Mali**.
- The **fourth phase** will consist of reporting the work from the previous phases to the local populations and participants then looking at the areas of convergence with local authorities.
- The **local phase is currently being finalized**, with one region in the north of Mali not yet covered. A total of 48 Communes and 22 Cercles have been selected from the 703 Communes and 46 Cercles defined as part of Malian decentralization. The sample of communes is based on the country's geo-cultural diversity. A thousand delegates took part in the 24 Commune Assemblies and 12 Cercle Assemblies. Stakeholders comprised traditional and religious authorities, elected representatives, trade associations, young people and women.
- An **initial analysis** of the themes that emerged from the local Assemblies reveals two types of values. 1. **Citizen values**, reflecting the way in which citizens are actively involved in their community's development and governance. 2. **Social values**, indicating in what way the local authority deals with managing the system as a whole. The main challenges concern the **approach adopted to elaborating public policies and the direction they take**, the **delivery of public services**, and agriculture and livestock breeding. Participation shows that citizens want to get involved in the governance of their community based on mutual aid and solidarity.
- The **new challenge** now posed by the process is knowing how to encourage the authorities and political leaders to **consider the proposals** issued by the grassroots communities. How can we help people to **maintain a forward-moving process and continue to push their proposal** without any current support from leaders? "We will need to **give the Malian Assembly a future** by setting up a cross-cutting network at governance levels, and encourage citizens to form groups **beyond the communal level**. We can certainly give serious consideration to international and global questions at the local level. There is a gap between the signature of international agreements and the capacity to implement them locally the world over. We therefore need local solutions to local issues. On that basis, we can then forge links between our vision and that of other countries and pool our efforts," stressed Ambroise Dakouo.

Gustavo Marin – We can clearly see that **there is no one form of Citizen Assembly**. We need to explore two or three initiatives so we can get a feeling for their structure and diversity. John Anugraha and Ben Quinones' method is to use **triangular and quadrangular dialogue** with young people and socio-professional stakeholders. Mamadou Niang is proposing a **cross-border process and regional approach**. Ambroise Dakouo has described a process adopted nationally with the aim of lobbying the state and local authorities. Different processes are at work within the general framework of Citizens Assemblies.

François Soulard – Analogies are emerging between the Asian and African initiatives. Both adopt a **wide-ranging approach** which invites a hugely diverse range of stakeholders from society to establish dialogue and run specific **lobbying** campaigns at the national level to

promote proposals for change.



4.4 ON THE ROAD TO THE IQUIQUE REGIONAL CITIZENS ASSEMBLY – SOUTHERN CONE

“The Assembly highlights a doctrine of peaceful conflict resolution and integration of peoples. It believes in citizens’ commonsense and their wish for peace and construction. [...] Where minority and hegemonic interests want to create division, we, on the other hand, wish to create friendship, reconciliation, fraternity and convergence.”



- The Assembly is part of the multi-faceted movement working towards a **deep-reaching reform of the social and ethical contract**. It seeks to **strengthen this movement** and **find solutions to the different crises** that are encompassed by the same crisis of civilisation. Most of the problems in Latin America should be **addressable at the regional level**. The Assembly highlights a doctrine of peaceful conflict resolution and integration of peoples. It believes in citizens’ commonsense and their wish for peace and construction. “Political, financial and military interests are the primary generators of artificial conflicts. Where minority and hegemonic interests want to create division, we, on the other hand, wish to **create friendship, reconciliation, fraternity and convergence**. Naturally, institutions have a role to play; it is possible to work with them. But the key lies in **strengthening civil society**. The idea should not be to criticize how political parties operate or define ourselves in terms of our supposed enemies,” underlined Alihuen Antileo.
- The **Assembly is coordinated** by a **general coordination team** made up of three people involved in the initiative from the start. A **national coordinator** is active in each of the four countries. Young people and François Soulard manage the **communications tools** (website, mailing list and videos).
- The process’ **methodology** is being enhanced and improved as it progresses. It seeks to provide a **facilitation** method that **pays attention to diversity**, so as to highlight **the areas of convergence between questions and stakeholders**, without denying and excluding differences. “To some extent, the Assembly takes the form of the object it wishes to listen to and facilitates the **creation of ties**. We don’t invent anything, we are part of the people’s movement,” explained Ricardo Jimenez. Several **theme-based working areas** have been gradually established and have led to a series of meetings.
 - Focusing on the key question of the **military’s role in peace and democracy**, ideas and proposals emerged from the second meeting in April 2009 of serving and retired military personnel and civil society specialists (participation of a Brazilian admiral in charge of the officer training school for the Brazilian army, General Roble, who played a major role against Fujimori’s dictatorship in Peru, and a Bolivian colonel). A meeting then took place

in April 2010 on the theme of **human security** in the presence of representatives from the police force, local authorities, specialists and community leaders.

- On the issue of **indigenous peoples**, a historical meeting has just taken place between Lonco Catillanca, the Mapuche leader from the Chilean south, and Americo Cabecilla, the Peruvian Ashaninka indigenous leader who led campaigns against Asian multinationals responsible for much damage to the ecosystems and indigenous communities in Peru. The Metropolitan University of Educational Sciences in Santiago de Chile provided support for the meeting, which was followed by a public debate with around 150 participants.
- The issue of **regional integration** overlaps with almost all questions of governance in the region, particularly those concerning migration, health, security and the economy. But it does not feature in the education provided by the academic world or in social movements, which are mostly formed based on information and news flows. A bridge has therefore been created between the academic world and social movements with the creation of **courses on regional integration** proposed to students and social leaders. Two course cycles have been organized with the support of the San Marcos University in Lima and sponsorship from the Peruvian Coca Producers Movement (40 students signed up for the second cycle). A compilation of course materials, articles and debates that took place during the course was published under the title **Integration Yatiris** (*Integration Magicians*). The book tackles subjects such as the setting up of the Southern Bank (the new financial instrument established by the region's countries to finance their development), the Initiative for the Integration of Regional Infrastructure in South America (IIRSA) and coca production.



- **Migrants and migration phenomena** constitute a theme that questions the link between local and global, citizenship, nationality, regional integration, state sovereignty and word governance. It lies **on the margins of governance**, in a diffuse area that clearly reveals the current governance system's inadequacy, but also the **possibilities for reinvention**. An international link has been established with the World Migrants charter project. At the national and regional levels, the theme has been tackled by several activities and discussions, always in partnership with other organizations including:
 1. Participation in a two-year **mediation** programme in a migrants' neighbourhood in Santiago.
 2. Presentation of an **audiovisual documentary** on migrations made by young participants at the Assembly. The video was projected in the presence of Peruvian and Chilean migration specialists (it is a highly sensitive topic in both countries, marked as

they are by two centuries of relations rooted in deep-seated resentment). The discussions helped to highlight opportunities for **overcoming resentment** and establishing new relations between Peru and Chile.

3. Co-organization of the fifth **national migrants meeting** in Chile in cooperation with the Chilean Ministry of Home Affairs and migrants communities in Bolivia and Peru. This conference has gradually succeeded in introducing **reforms to the legal frameworks** in Chile.

4. Creation of a **teaching module** dedicated to South American history and intended for migrants' schools in Santiago. The module seeks to overcome discrimination and lack of understanding by focusing on the **history shared** by Southern Cone countries and communities. The school reference text is currently being finalized and the module will be **available** to all schools that want to use it. The initiative has been run in close cooperation with the Ministry of Education.

- The issue of **women** is explored via a cycle of meetings initially organized in Peru, Bolivia, Argentina and Chile, then at the regional level with a regional meeting of Southern Cone women.
- In terms of **responsibility and the environment**, the **International Conference of Young People on the planet** played a linking role. Young people from the Southern Cone's four countries took action starting in their schools, then at the national level. Delegations from 60 countries met up in June 2010 to draw up the **world charter of young people, "Let's take care of the planet."** In Chile, the action helped to develop intergenerational relations, an opening up and very strong sense of protagonism in the young as well as the capacity to build up knowledge on working themes. The second meeting on **popular ecology** in April 2010 sought to establish bridges between popular cultures and the environmental theme which too often remains marginalized.
- The review *Pensamiento Propio* seeks to **take a more in-depth conceptual look** at the limits of governance and development of new ideas on the Latin American level and other continents (the review's 4th and 5th editions include an article by Pierre Calame and South Africa's Paul Graham respectively). The **Ressentiment and World Governance Proposal Paper** resulting from the Iquique seminar in December 2008 focused on the theme of resentment, mutual hatred, and tensions and divisions between communities. The Paper was launched at a public event in partnership with the Chilean edition of *Le Monde diplomatique* and Peruvian participants.
- The Assembly process was troubled by the **earthquake and tsunami** in March 2010 in Chile. Since the state was not capable of tackling the disaster, young participants in the Assembly organized a day of solidarity in Valparaiso with the slogan "**The people help the people**" then offered their help to affected sites.
- **Invitations to the Iquique Assembly**, to be held on **5, 6 and 7 November 2010**, are currently being sent out. Output from the meetings in terms of discussions and proposals are **systematized** and will be **fed into discussions at the Iquique Assembly**.
- The main challenges facing the Assembly as indicated by Ricardo Jimenez are: 1. **Raise the profile** of the process as a whole as well as proposals and actions that are not yet sufficiently made known and circulated. 2. **Increase cooperation and ties** created between stakeholders and between the other Assemblies at the international level. 3. **Strengthen logistics and financial resources**. The Assembly currently supports its own initiatives, providing a minimal contribution to the organizers, who are responsible for finding additional resources. New financial partners are being sought for the future.

Ben Quinones – This type of initiative can also be backed by organizations like the World Bank and UN. How can we make a distinction? We find ourselves competing with the existing system. The Second World Social Forum, for example, has become a brand. How can we position ourselves within the same paradigm together with the Assemblies, **differentiate ourselves** and establish an alternative label? My concern is that we remain aware that we mustn't try and run before we can walk.

Gustavo Marin – Instead of creating a new organization in the form of a super-NGO which would receive and distribute funds, the Citizens Assemblies need instead to be a **receptacle** which receives funding contributed by the various stakeholders. **Partnerships** are clearly visible in John Anugraha and Ricardo Jimenez's presentations. We can see that the Assembly has attracted the support of other stakeholders.

To the best of my knowledge, the World Bank does not support Citizens Assemblies. It does concern itself with civil society, but its policy is rooted in a neoliberal vision. In what way did the World Bank encourage the participation of the Greek people, for instance? Citizens Assemblies are not exclusive but they are **singular**. The **approach must be promoted to funding bodies** in such a way as to avoid the "you and us" approach.

Charles Kleinermann – Brands and labels are a useful way of profile-raising and **building an identity among sponsors**. It's an important question.

Arnaud Blin – The label reproduces the private enterprise model, whereas we should be promoting a **communications-based approach** and avoiding the market fundamentalism that has penetrated everywhere.

John Anugraha – The Assemblies are closer to an **open source software model** than a brand or label model.

4.5 BUILDING A MEDITERRANEAN PEOPLE'S COMMUNITY

“The challenge facing the circles will be to mobilize a high number of people over the long term, following on from the first meetings in Valencia and the launch of the first circles. They also need to attract a wide range of professions [...] it is important to show that the Mediterranean Assembly is not isolated and is part of a forward-moving process.”



- The regional context is marked by **two radically different elements**. On one side is the European region, divided into **European Union** member countries in the Mediterranean region and countries applying for EU membership with very distinct development profiles. On the other side is the **southern shore of the Mediterranean**, comprising diversified nation-states where citizens and civil society have a delicate position.
- **A great many processes are underway** at the civil and political levels. The Assembly's coordination team has undertaken initial work on identifying organizations in Brussels and other countries in the region in order to **draw up an initial overview** of initiatives. On the civil side is the **EuroMed Non-Governmental Platform**, financed by the European Commission. It was originally a forum with close to 3,000 participants, then became a platform following the creation of a permanent secretariat which in fact led to the destruction of the initiative because of conflicts surrounding the occupation of representative seats and fighting over influence and power. The coordination team also met the **Euro-Mediterranean Parliamentary Assembly**, made up of European members of parliament, two representatives of each national parliament in member countries as well as members of parliament from southern shore countries. The **Committee of Regions** launched the ARLEM network, grouping together regional authorities in the Mediterranean area, which meets every year as an assembly in the form of theme-based groups. Organizations canvassed included the **European Investment Bank** (financing programmes at the Mediterranean level), the **European Commission, Council of the European Union** and **European trade unions**. The political scene is marked by what can be called an **institutional overlap**, given the superimposing of institutions such as the Arab League, the European Union, Euro-Mediterranean Union, Arab Maghreb Union, etc.
- All these systems raise the question of **citizenship** even more insistently. “It is not linked to a passport. It is about rights, responsibilities and platforms for people to express themselves. But where is the sense if you cannot travel freely from the southern to the northern shore, despite the fact we have a Union for the Mediterranean?” underlined

Françoise Macé.

- A three-tiered **methodological process** has been implemented. 1. Creation of an Assembly **coordination team** and drawing up of the **founding charter**. 2. **Making contact with and meeting** institutions linked to the theme of citizenship throughout the Euro-Mediterranean area. 3. An **overview** of citizen initiatives. The overall goal is to succeed in **creating a process that is institutive but not institutionalized**.
- The Mediterranean Assembly initiative was born of **two developments**. 1. The FPH's policy towards the Mediterranean, which has gradually been drawn up in partnership with the *Centre d'Études Rurales et d'Agriculture Internationale* (CERAI – *Rural Studies and International Agriculture Centre*) starting in 2004. 2. The Citizens Assemblies project, part of the Alliance for a Responsible, Plural and United World, as well as other FPH projects. An **initial text calling for** the creation of a Mediterranean Assembly was debated with partners in Lebanon, Greece and Algeria during a first meeting in October 2008. Following the meeting, the project for a **founding charter** was adopted then rewritten in late 2008. The Assembly took its **first founding step** with the drafting of the charter in four languages, with an additional glossary specifying the meaning of the words in each language. The charter, produced by the coordination team, details the initiative's **values, principles, objectives** and a number of methodological aspects. The idea is for participants and partners to sign the charter, thus marking their agreement with the project. Etienne Galliard from the International Alliance of Independent Publishers proposed a first draft in the form of a **series of questions**. The definitive version was then supplemented with contributions made at the meeting.
- The initiative's **coordination team** now includes CERAI, the European Movement International (fruit of a call to build Europe in 1948), the Tirana European University (in Albania) and organizations from southern countries, including Morocco, Turkey and Egypt, which are currently getting involved (notably Egypt's Alexandria Library which has a partnership with different Arab countries and renowned thinkers.) The coordination team has held meetings in several countries in Europe and the Maghreb with civil society stakeholders to make progress on the overview and open the project up for debate.
- A **Council of Members** was created to play a consultative role on the decisions and initiatives taken as part of the Assembly process. It is made up of thinkers and known figures from both Mediterranean shores.
- **Ten citizen circles** should be in place by late 2010. The Valencia, Volos, and Tirana and Marseilles circles are already up and running. These citizen circles aim to lay down roots in the region's urban centres. They include a wide range of citizens working on a project defined by the founding charter and provide a **forum dedicated to debating and sharing issues important to citizens**. They will be used to report on the debates to the Assembly's coordination team. The coordination team has the task of **facilitating cross-cutting links** between the circles' work, particularly with the use of a website, and the grouped themes, and of looking for additional financial partners. As Charles Kleinermann sees it, "The challenge facing the circles will be to mobilize a high number of people **over the long term**, following on from the first meetings in Valencia and the launch of the first circles. They also need to attract a wide range of professions and play an active role in different countries. It is important to show that the Mediterranean Assembly is not isolated and is part of a forward-moving process." The idea of a joint charter between Assemblies has been raised.
- **An initial broader meeting will be held in Valencia, Spain, on 2, 3 and 4 July 2010** under the slogan "**Citizen dialogues: institutions and citizenship in the Mediterranean**".

It seeks to talk to the institutional world and get the process up and running. Key contacts from institutions will be asked to present their institutions' policies at the Euro-Mediterranean level then take part in the debate (posing the challenge of persuading these speakers to stay for the debates following their presentation). The meeting will focus primarily on **maximizing initiatives**. It is not intended to be either a **colloquium or a traditional seminar with a series of interventions**. Participants will get together in workshops with a moderator who will ensure that everyone gets to speak. The meeting will include **four theme-based agoras**, organized in the form of two simultaneous workshops. Each workshop will begin with a presentation by two institutional participants.

4.6 CROSSING OCEANIA: ON THE ROAD TO A CITIZENS ASSEMBLY FOR THE LIQUID CONTINENT

“How can we keep up momentum over the long term and ensure that the process has a future? One of the methodological challenges we have identified is learning to manage the diversity of stakeholders who are meeting for the first time and only have a very limited opportunity for continuing dialogue afterwards.”



- The **Oceanian continent** has a relatively small population of 40 million inhabitants, spread across a fraction of the vast Pacific Ocean which stretches from the South to the North Pole and takes up a third of the planet's surface. New Zealand is not as “clean and green” as the tourist mythology would have it, but is facing **real environmental and governance-related problems**.
- The Assembly process began with the **Watersheds and Responsible Water Governance** meeting held in November 2009 in New Zealand. It brought together a range of stakeholders from a **huge variety of different sectors and disciplines** to listen to each other's points of view and organize an **intercultural dialogue** on approaches to **managing river systems**. Participants included: 1. A **Maori leader** representing a traditional authority and an expert on questions concerning rivers and fish. 2. A **jurist** who brought up the idea of environmental democracy. 3. An environment **historian** defending the need to change development models inherited from the past. 4. A **researcher** on river ecosystems which presented an ecosystemic and holistic approach to watersheds. (He also talked about major companies' mechanisms for privatizing water.) 5. A **hydrologist** from Vanuatu who tackled the theme of climate change and local governance. 6. A **woman activist** who had mobilized local people to convince the authorities that preserving wetlands would be more beneficial in the long term (participants left the meeting venue to visit the wetland that has now been restored). 7. A **historian and poet** whose father was one of the handful of New

Zealand lawyers to defend the Maori cause and had close contact with Maori culture at an early stage.

- The meeting was formulated **jointly** with organizations pursuing the same goals of creating ties and addressing the issue of governance. The NGO **Waterscape** provided a considerable number of contacts in the engineering world. The NGO **Response** mobilized its partners in the cultural and indigenous world. (Response systematically develops partnerships with Maori indigenous communities in New Zealand). The **links between native communities and society's other groups** are rare. Betsan Martin underlined the crucial importance of **establishing good quality and warm relations with partners**. She had undertaken a huge amount of preparation with Maori stakeholders by presenting the project to them before the meeting during a shared meal and informal discussions. She feels that remote communications cannot work to create communities and mobilize people. The **methodology used to run** the meeting was based on a series of expert presentations which were then developed during the meeting. The moderator had to give way to discussions that became very lively and were continued outside of the meeting during informal discussions at mealtimes and in the evening.
- **Tensions** arose during the meeting. One of the engineers could not understand why the indigenous people refused to use water for producing energy. Certain interests are exerting pressure to install energy infrastructure projects and disregarding local traditions and authorities. "It's easy to bring together people from different worlds when you know they'll agree, but when **situations of confrontation and disagreement** arise, you need to know how to manage and regulate them. **New challenges emerge when a diversity of stakeholders find themselves** in the same room together," stressed Betsan Martin. Indigenous communities have a concept of ownership based on collective management, which clashes with New Zealand's legal framework and a scientific approach. They make use of democracy in a highly constructive manner, drawing inspiration from traditional values and endowing the environment with great **spiritual value**. This spiritual value is seen as very appealing, but it diverges from the regulation systems in place, and they cannot put it into practice.
- Questions are already being raised about the **next stage of the process**: should we continue to work with the same group of participants and try to **examine the questions in more depth**, or should we **open up the process to other partners** and other areas of the region? To what extent could partners from other regions of the Pacific be involved given the **very high cost of transport in Oceania**? How can we **keep up momentum over the long term** and ensure that the process has a future? One of the methodological challenges we have identified is learning to **manage the diversity** of stakeholders who are meeting for the first time and only have a very limited opportunity for continuing dialogue afterwards.

4.7 CITIZENS FOR EUROPE: LINKING UP CITIZEN INITIATIVES AND PROPOSALS

“The goal of the process is to provide a service linking up existing initiatives and raising their profile, without seeking to overlay them or create a separate identity. [...] The site is therefore simply a tool for use in organizing meetings and canvassing activities.”



- The **European context is very specific**. Europe is home to a wealth of citizen and civic initiatives. The challenge lies in the need to **support the processes already underway** and **linking up to political contacts** at local, regional, national and European levels. “European citizenship is something other than the sum of national citizenships. The desire for a Europe and participation in European elections should be growing, whereas the accumulation of power is intensifying and the crisis is producing a tendency towards withdrawal. It is also worth noting that the notion of citizenship varies greatly from one country to the next and that there is the problem of regionalism,” explained Charles Kleinermann. Civil society faces two problems in its relations with the European Union. 1. A **very high degree of financial dependence**. 2. The “remote control” aspect produced by **cooperation mechanisms** and criteria for attributing funds.
- The Citizens for Europe initiative seeks to **build links between projects** and give them concrete form via the **website** www.citizensforeurope.eu. The website provides a window for a process of **identification, profile-raising and communication**. The site’s goal is to bring together initiatives currently underway in Europe that are working on **formulating proposals** and organizing **campaigns and events**. The goal of the process is to provide a service linking up existing initiatives and raising their profile, without seeking to overlay them or create a separate identity. The project got underway in early 2010.
- The FPH launched the initiative following the rejection expressed during the referendum on the European constitution in 2005 and the recent European elections in 2009. The project is currently in a phase of **listening and adapting**. A great many meetings have taken place with organizations and political leaders as well as the media. The idea is also to bring together stakeholders working on **common issues** in a **physical meeting** and take their proposals to the political level using, in particular, the mechanisms set up by European treaties. The site is therefore simply a **tool** for use in organizing **meetings and canvassing** activities. The deadline of the next European elections is a priority: “Between now and late 2011 we’ll have time to see if the process works and to help ensure that the next European elections result in more of a focus on a responsible and solidarity-based Europe,” underlined Inga Wachsmann.
- The website comprises three sections:
 - **Citizen Agenda** which reports on the events and campaigns led by civil society

organizations (mainly French-speaking for now);

- **Linking Europe** which lists civil society organizations and initiatives in the form of a directory. An identification project was undertaken starting in 2009 to ask partners for their agreement to appearing on the site and to provide a description of their organization summing up their values, goals, activities, contact and a link to their own website.
- **Shaking Europe** which lists stakeholders' proposals. "Many organizations have excellent ideas and detailed reports, but they are not easily accessible to the media and political leaders," explained Inga Wachsmann. The *École de journalisme* in Brussels and European Movement International offers supporting in rewriting proposals and making them more accessible.

5. Beyond the Single Model: the Art of Building Links, New Balances and Paths between Unity and Diversity (cross-cutting monitoring)

François Soulard – Each process is **unique** in the form it takes and how it is implemented. The stages of progress vary hugely from one Assembly to another, from the embryonic or outline phase to cycles where initiatives are broadening or producing further projects.

However, we can already extract **priorities, trends and lessons that apply jointly** from this variety of phases, accounts and processes under construction. Gustavo Marin pointed out that it is precisely by comparing two or three Assemblies that we can get a better idea of their specific characteristics. The action of comparing and contrasting is essentially the practice of one of the Assemblies' founding principles: **reinventing the link between unity and diversity**. In other words, how does each story feed into other people's stories and contribute to the writing of a new story? In the light of this principle, I would like to propose the following **six major lines** resulting from the (subjective) comparison of contributions:

- **1. The Assemblies are part of a broader two-tiered trend for innovation and insertion in the emergence of citizen stakeholders, working towards reinventing governance and endowed with the capacity to influence the collective destiny.** This may appear obvious, but it is highly significant to see the idea reaffirmed that the Assemblies are not only the fruit of citizen initiatives that are underway, as Gustavo Marin pointed out in his introduction, but also an innovative response to the multi-faceted crises of governance. On the one hand are the processes that precede and feed into the Assemblies: the founding

Assemblies in Latin America, the emergence of citizen coalitions in Senegal, and forums and international alliances working on alternative economic models (Pierre Vuarin and Ben Quinones) and world governance (World Social Forum and Alliance 21). On the other hand, we can see that the Assemblies are new and fast-growing responses to the rut that political and militant action is in (for example, the Bayan political alliance in the Philippines and the way that the electoral processes in Mali are becoming increasingly out of sync) and to inapt institutional mechanisms (in the Mediterranean, Southern Cone and Africa). **Citizens Assemblies can only be fully meaningful and relevant if they are part of this two-tiered movement to participate in a global process and to react to these crises.** They seek to become one of the concrete mechanisms for reinventing governance from the local to the global level. It is clear that we are only at the beginning of the process and that it will be a long and exhilarating journey.

- **2. The Assemblies' agendas are not important, what counts is that they build up relations.** It is fascinating to see to what extent creating relations is at the core of the mechanisms used to build each Assembly. Instead of splits, separations and compartmentalization—very often pointed out during discussions—we can see that each process tends instead to create new links. We can try to group these links into **three families**. 1. Relations between generations (in Asia), stakeholders, theme-based questions and between a region's countries (**the three areas of diversity** relating to changes). 2. Relations between deliberation and concrete action, between the formal and informal, the specific and the general (the sphere dealing with **complexity**). 3. Relations between occasional meetings and the long term, between the instituted and the instituting, local and regional, opening up and broadening (the **organizational** sphere). The processes attempt to establish links between all these terms. They combine with each other, always in a different form from one process to the next, **building balances** that cannot be reduced to a single formula. This underscores the what extent Assemblies tend not only to be **networks of relations**, as is clearly symbolized by the Citizens for Europe European website, but also mechanisms used to **build new relations**. The Asian Assembly gives this aspect a central role with its intergenerational approach and use of five interdependent themes (the 5 Es: ecology, education, economy of solidarity, equity and ethics). It is also mirrored in Alihuen Antileo and Ricardo Jimenez's account of the historical meeting between Ashaninka and Mapuche leaders in the Southern Cone, and when they stress that "when faced with the monopolies and minority interests that fragment society, the Assembly seeks instead to create friendship, closeness, fraternity and integration, whether with the use of workshop, a dance or a cultural event." These new relations in turn point to the conditions needed for them to take shape, to the **capacity for integration** the Southern Cone refers to. In effect, the Assemblies aim to search for, experiment with and become one of those new conditions.
- **3. Approaches and methods for producing both more unity and more diversity.** The other type of relation at the heart of our initiatives is the relationship between unity and diversity. We can see that the Assemblies are building paths that lead from one to the other. Unity (or cohesion) is rooted in **agendas, rhythms, phases** (relating to meetings, annual forums, the four Assemblies in the second half of 2010), **coordination teams** and **work tools**. Diversity is found in the **socio-professional sectors, theme-based questions, challenges**, opportunities and contexts in society, whose "form the Assembly proposes to take" as underlined by Ricardo Jimenez. Betsan Martin's experience with bringing together the private sector and indigenous leaders, or debates over resentment and governance in the Southern Cone leading to new mutual recognition of communities, show that it is far from easy to work with diversity. **New tensions** arise. The challenge lies in the capacity to turn them into a **fruitful situation**. Three main strategies emerge from these paths: 1. **The**

Assemblies attach themselves to existing networks capable of mobilizing recognized and legitimate stakeholders in society, such as the Centre Djoliba in Mali, Response and Waterscape in Oceania, CERAI, the FPH and the Coordination Committee in the Mediterranean. In the Sahel Sahara are the *Centrale syndicale des enseignants mauritaniens* (group of affiliated Mauritanian teachers' unions) and network of key contacts for the Sahel-Saharan Assembly, and Global Citizens in Asia. 2. **Debates are summarized and developed at successive levels of integration.** This is clearly seen in Mali with the local, regional and national stages. In Asia, the local Assemblies and bilateral and trilateral forums are converging towards the 2010 Assembly. It can also be witnessed in the Southern Cone, with national meetings then regional women's meetings, the priority currently given to three countries and a group of theme-based questions in the Sahel Sahara. 3. **The use of methods that highlight the unity-diversity link and turn it into a concrete initiative.** This is demonstrated in the Southern Cone and Mali by the facilitation of horizontal dialogue between stakeholders, and the systemization and reporting of debates. It is also seen in the concept of meetings that combined formal dialogue, cultural activities, social interaction and solidarity-based workshops in Asia, Oceania, the Southern Cone and the Sahel Sahara. In each case, we can see as an underlying characteristic that cohesion is not being built up at the expense of diversity. Both are given equal value. John Anugraha summed it up well when he said: "everyone plays a part and carries the Assembly within them [...] regardless of our differences; long live our diversity."

- **4. Consistency is gradually built as the process develops, experiments and experiences the initial phases.** Ambroise Dakouo told us that the Malian Assembly is based on a questioning process; the topics to be addressed as well as on the method to be adopted. This **questioning process can be found in most of the initiatives.** It is amazing to see in the successive presentations how the chronological description of stages, in the form of a travel story, is well suited to the Assemblies and gives them an **overall coherence.** As a **learning process,** the next step of the journey is defined according to the previous stages which serve to broaden the circle of partners and **modify the project's dimensions.** The Asian Assembly provides us with a good example in its chronology of meetings leading up to the 2010 Assembly. In each initiative, progress happens in stages (initial canvassing, drawing up of the Mediterranean Assembly's founding charter and the Valencia meeting in July 2010, the 2007, 2008 and 2009 forums in Asia), through trial and error (the first Watersheds and Governance meeting in Oceania, travelling caravans in the Sahel Sahara, the methodological school in the Southern Cone). We are of course only just setting out on our adventure, but there is something that already reaches deeper in the sphere of ethics and perception. It could be described as the practice of **questioning and advancing, staying firm and letting go, gambling and allowing uncertainty, looking at the long term and paying attention to the present.** Ricardo Jimenez brings it to mind when he talks of the unprecedented meeting between Chilean and Peruvian indigenous leaders: "we wanted to bring about the meeting without really having any in-depth knowledge of the topic [...] in fact, we preferred not to know in advance."
- **5. The Assemblies create new levers and strategies for change, from the local to the global level.** They are not closed systems in terms of their logistical and financial resources (they are not super-NGOs), their partnerships and their links with society. They draw on the social, intellectual and financial capital of other stakeholders, by bringing together processes for change already underway or **starting to create new opportunities.** In the Southern Cone, initiatives tackle education about regional integration, teaching modules on Latin American history and participation in public reforms concerning migration. In Oceania, the Assembly will take part in a regional meeting organized by IUCN in January 2011. The Ayoun municipality in Mauritania is sponsoring the Sahel-Saharan Assembly in October

2010. In Mali, Asia and the Mediterranean, institutions have been included in dialogue with civil society from the very outset. **Lobbying** governments and political authorities is also a component of the process. We can clearly see that each Assembly, to greatly varying degrees still, is stimulated by a number of **opportunities on offer**, and contributes to new opportunities appearing at the local and regional levels. The same approach can be applied **at the global level**. John Anugraha pointed out the international partnerships created within the Asian Assembly. Ricardo Jimenez underlined the value of links created with the Forum for a New World Governance and the Conference of Children and Teenagers for the Planet. We also need to find strategies that contribute both to **linking Assemblies together** and **connecting them to other processes for change** at the global level.

- **6. A four-way challenge: decompartmentalize and link up, improve visibility, make progress with limited resources and ensure continuity.** These are the four main challenges which emerge from discussions. The need to **link up** in the early stages and **decompartmentalize the organization of stakeholders**. The **visibility-raising** challenge is to some extent a counterpart to the Assembly's development. As the process deepens, how can we make visible the progress made and the journey punctuated with a series of meetings, links and deliberations? The challenge of **limited resources** is knowing how to deal with new requests and initiatives that are forming within the Assemblies with only a limited budget. The **continuity issue** is at the heart of the process. How can we ensure that citizens appropriate and lead the process themselves over the long term? Do we need to focus on opening up or deepening? How do we move on from the first meetings and stages to a dynamic and self-producing process driven by the participants themselves?

Françoise Macé – The approach is based on the capacity to **transform a series of meetings into Assemblies**. In this area, we haven't spent much time sharing experiences of the difficulties encountered in setting up Assemblies. Do we really need to **compare the themes and proposals** that will emerge from each initiative?

Ambroise Dakouo – I feel that it is important to establish the **process of comparing themes**. They help to **link up**, for example, a Malian citizen with a citizen from another part of the world and highlight the governance crises at the local and global levels. The methodology will be built up as we go along.

Alihuen Antileo – Being a citizen does not mean the same thing from one region to another. We ask ourselves legitimate questions on the concept of **citizenship**. One region's perspective can offer useful elements to another region. Coincidentally, we're now 500 metres from the Bastille, where a **new vision of citizenship** took historical form. Maybe we should think about a meeting of specialists from different regions to compare the definitions.

Charles Kleinermann – A Citizens Assembly should be able to **link up with existing forces and powers**, including the military. We are part of a community that is **institative and not institutionalized**, rooted in standards and values that involve citizens. For coordination purposes, we could imagine a virtual meeting every two months via Skype and share our news and documents on the **website**.

John Anugraha – Bilateral and trilateral conferences are particularly valuable in coming to terms with the structures inherited from the past. Local teams feed into the regional process based on their own perspectives and problems. **The challenge lies in comparing countries, themes and socio-professional sectors.** But we will also, at some point, need to “break up” the regional level to return to **the local level.** The process of taking root is crucial. In Asia, the Silk Route Festival of Arts and Cultures is meant to symbolize this diversity, linked together by a shared path.

Would it be possible to get hold of a **video of each initiative** for those of us who won't be in Bangalore so we can present it during the Assembly?

Mamadou Niang – The **contexts and approaches are not the same.** Today we're taking stock so we can share our experiences of the past two years. This gives us a basis for identifying **areas of coherence that can be built up.** However, it seems to me that this coherence can only be built up between similar regions. Citizenship in Europe has been built up over centuries, while in Africa it is still **embryonic.** So the same strategies cannot apply. This is why it could be difficult to compare themes, or else we should simply highlight certain **shared priorities.**

Ben Quinones – The Assemblies put forward a methodology based on cross-cutting links and dialogue. They play various roles: **facilitation, linking up, consultancy, documenting and transmitting an overall vision.**

Pierre Vuarin – In terms of methodology, the States General approach tends to focus on the purpose of the process being addressed. It is therefore important to have the tools to **collect the results of all the micro-changes** generated at different levels, in the short or medium term.

Gustavo Marin – We are **only just starting out on our adventure and it will take time.** It is sometimes hard to make out what lies far ahead, and we need to be aware that **we are making progress on a daily basis** while being essentially committed to **a long journey.** The fact that there are still only a handful of budding Citizens Assemblies in certain regions of the world shows us that the journey will be very long. We could try to link up to all the citizen movements, but in several of the world's regions the new social initiatives are still very **embryonic, nonexistent and, in some cases, losing ground.** This is the case in European countries, central Asia, Asia, the Middle East, Russia, Africa and Latin America. So we still have a long way to go. We are at the beginning of our journey, and it will take another few decades until the Citizens Assembly approach really takes root.

The second point is the **redefinition of citizenship and what it means to “be a citizen.”** Our journey is not simply a phase, **it's a very deep-reaching and ambitious political exploration.** Right now, we are not far from the Place de la Bastille in Paris. In August 1789, in the Jeu de Paumes building located a thousand metres from here, a group of French revolutionaries drew up the Declaration of Human and Citizen Rights. Today, we find ourselves looking at **a radical and historical reform of the principles of citizenship for the 21st century.** World governance architecture was designed by major European philosophers, followed by American thinkers: Emmanuel Kant, Hegel on the notion of the state, Rousseau, Montesquieu, Voltaire, the French encyclopaedists, not forgetting Machiavelli. This vein of European thinking sketched out the world's architecture. The baton was then passed to the

Americans, notably Woodrow Wilson and Franklin Roosevelt, who laid the foundations of the League of Nations then the United Nations. The architecture we are now living with was designed with very concrete historical roots. In the search for a new architecture for world governance, it is up to us to **rebuild the framework**, based not only on the ancient wisdom of native peoples and the ancestors, but also **on new pillars**, anchored in the reality of the contemporary world, taking us far beyond the era of Confucius and the Indian Sanskrit writings, beyond the French revolutionaries of the Bastille, beyond the United Nations and G20. What we are talking about is clearly a **reinvention**. The task will necessarily be long and we will need to be as good, if not better, than Kant and Rousseau. Which is why we need to start on our journey now, and to give ourselves enough time...we've got at least the entire 21st century ahead of us to revolutionize world governance architecture!

6. Preparing for the 2010 Assemblies

6.1 ASIA: THE ROAD TO THE AUGUST 2010 ASSEMBLY AND BEYOND

“A citizens' assembly must be made up of everyone, including all the constituted bodies, even the military. In this way, it will be a matter of leaving out relations of power. A member of Parliament, a businessman or a housewife will stand on equal terms. Down with any differences! Long live diversity!”



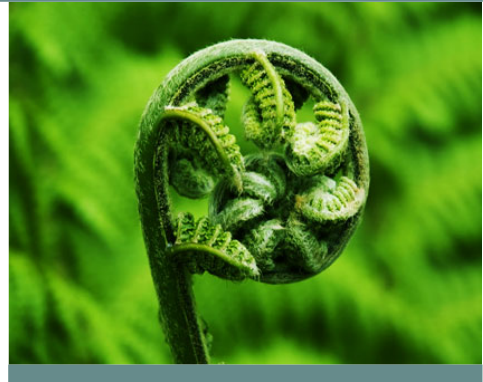
- **Mechanisms for selecting Assembly participants.** The idea is not to reinvent the wheel, given that a great many networks, organizations and people are already working on the Assembly's themes and leading initiatives that are already underway. Calling on various local networks, for example, with Ben Quinones and Pinky Cupino in the Philippines, two or three facilitators will identify the people and teams invited to take part in the Assembly. The following general criteria will be applied. 1. **Affinity and involvement with** the Assembly's themes, above and beyond the actual event. 2. **Fifty-fifty mix of women and men** in the participating teams. 3. **Intergenerational balance** between young people and adults. 4. **Regional diversity** of delegates within each country.
- **National facilitation teams** are in place in the various Asian countries (including Iran and Indonesia), working with a **central team located in India** which plays the role of **facilitator**, executive secretariat and logistics coordinator. The facilitation teams are selected according to the criteria of diversity, age (young people and adult participants) and equal numbers of women and men.
- The Assembly's **working language** will be English. Nevertheless, to avoid the danger of only attracting Anglophone partners, **local stakeholders speaking other languages will be invited** and will be able to call on the facilitation team for help with translations and dialogue.
- The **Assembly process** is built on an **intergenerational relationship**: the **Asian Youth Assembly** will be held from 18 to 19 August. This will be followed by the **Asian Intergenerational Assembly**, from 20 to 22 August 2010. The two events together constitute the **Asian Citizens Assembly**.

- **Content and dialogue methodology** are currently being defined with Ben Quinones. The main concern is to **create a shared vision, shared goals and solutions to achieve them that take into account short-term and long-term problems, challenges, responses and objectives**. John Anugraha is inspired by a vision of “social solidarity” that draws on Durckheim’s work. “As long as social solidarity has not been achieved within a community, the foundations of a social economy cannot be laid. The relative abundance of activities in the Asian Assembly corresponds to this vision: it seeks to create **the effects of social solidarity**, so that participants get to know each other naturally and informally and learn about each other **thanks to a life experience**.” According to Ben Quinones, “it is evident that the meeting will create new expectations, and that we will have to be very clear about the things that need doing immediately and in the long term.” The Assembly is not designed to be a conference where people turn up and make their contribution without entering into dialogue with the other participants. It is primarily about **creating a space and an opportunity to produce collective thought and envisage a shared destiny**.
 - 1. The **first stage** consists of **building a shared vision** concerning the improvements and changes to be made to each theme. The method will draw on each participant’s views and the meta-plan approach (each person writes, organizes and shares).
 - 2. The **second stage** aims to define the Asian Assembly’s **shared goals**, in line with the views expressed previously. This stage will serve to formulate and consolidate the directions to be taken by the stakeholders.
 - 3. The **third stage** will focus on the participants’ **commitments** within the context of these goals and will also serve to relate the question to the individual level. According to Ben Quinones, the method corresponds to a conception of ethics and governance wherein “we question ourselves on what we have to do and are capable of doing to make progress.” The panellists and different presentations aim to enrich the vision component and understanding of problems. Work on the emergence of visions is seen as a vital element (for example, in the field of the solidarity economy, where the perception of other regions around the world dominates and Asian perceptions do not yet have an impact). According to Ben Quinones, the success of the initiative in Bangalore could serve as the departure point for five networks and workgroups in Asia.
- Following the launch of the idea in 2008 with YouthBuild (*are we only going to talk together?*), the **We Build 2010** programme will be proposed to encourage participants to take concrete and collective action in the run-up to the Assembly. The programme proposes calling on volunteers (40 volunteers registered by May 2010, not just from Asia) and getting them involved in a building project that will begin a month before the Assembly and carry on right up to the event. The volunteers will be living with local inhabitants and thus **immersing themselves in Indian life in India**. They will be invited to take part in a project to **build an eco-friendly education centre**. The project is rooted in a process of exchange, building a bridge between reflection and action so as to promote intercultural learning and links between the urban and rural environments. The initiative is recognized at the academic level, since students will be able to incorporate the experience into their degree course.
- **The 2010 Malhar Festival** will be a **Sports and Environmental Festival** for young people and children. Activities will be based on harvesting rainwater (the 2010 Assembly will take place during the Indian rainy season) and a football tournament. Sport is seen as a tool for promoting peace and sustainable development. The initiative follows on from the 2007 experience during the first Indian Forum, where a game of football was organized to promote alternative forms of exchange and dialogue.

- **The Silk Route Festival of Arts and Cultures.** Several artists, members of the Indian secretariat team for the Assembly, will put on **performances** aiming to promote the convergences between different cultures and the points they have in common. It will focus on calligraphy, dance, Indian martial arts and Japanese painting.
- A **call for contributions** is being launched to collect conceptual essays and deliberations on the Assembly's various themes. The best contributions will be showcased.
- **Media** presence and coverage: around sixty press contacts have confirmed their participation in the Assembly.
- A **video competition** is being launched on subjects linked to the Assembly's themes. It will run from 1 June 2010 to mid-July 2010.
- **Three local assemblies** will take place in India in July. The first will be held in collaboration with a network of **indigenous tribes** from the Karnataka region (Bangalore Federal State). The second with **inhabitants of poor neighbourhoods**. The third with a **network of peasant farmers and producers**. The three assemblies are intended to add further elements to the Assembly's five themes; these themes are not fixed and unchanging, but aspire to respond to the concerns of local citizens.
- The **Assembly's programme** will follow the 9.00 to 18.00 format. It will open with the cultural festival's activities (from 9.00 to 10.00). They will be followed by panels and workshops (the list is currently being defined). At the panels, a speaker will be introduced followed by dialogue with participants. The panels will cover four areas. 1. Role of religions. 2. Role of the media and journalists. 3. Role of intergenerational partnerships. 4. Role of women. Another panel is being considered, with **members of parliament** and **young government officials**, as well as figures from UNESCO and UN-Habitat (government officials from Indonesia, the Philippines and India have already confirmed their participation in the Assembly).
- The Assembly will be followed by a day of work to prepare the next step of the process with the South Koreans (25 delegates), aimed at launching the India-Korea Forum in 2010 in partnership with UNESCO. Four other meeting days will be spent on the China-India-Japan-Korea Forum, which will propose a sort of travelling learning tour in India at the Pondicherry and Chenley sites in the presence of 40 delegates. A conference on the theme of sustainable development will be held, sponsored by Professor Swaminathan, recognized as the father of India's green revolution.

6.2 HUI AND THE IUCN CONFERENCE IN OCEANIA

“Diversity also results in fruitfulness [...] the most fruitful place is the one where the greatest number of different dynamics coexist. Such as, for example, the place where the earth meets the sea, with the boundary being the point where growth is strongest.”



- The Assembly or **hui**, reflecting the Maori cosmovision (the assembly concept is somewhat unfamiliar in the region) will be held in **October 2010** in New Zealand. It will be looking at taking part in the **Sharing Power** regional conference organized for **January 2011** by Maori communities, sponsored by the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN). The IUCN is the only environmental group with a seat at the UN; it promotes questions and values that reflect the Oceanian Assembly’s concerns: integrated governance, recognition of indigenous knowledge, responsibility and the environment. Following initial discussions with the IUCN, the idea will be to **take part in the regional conference** and probably benefit from **a day’s work session** the day before the conference, in order to use participants’ mobilization as a springboard, and to avoid fragmenting the two processes. Betsan Martin wanted to wait for the coordinators meeting in Paris before confirming the partnership with the IUCN. She looked to the perspectives described by John Anugraha, Ben Quinones and Françoise Macé to make sure that joining up with another organization does not necessarily entail adhering totally to its objectives and processes and losing autonomy. It represents an **opportunity to pool resources** and gain increased **power to draw people**.
- The Assembly will take the form of a **small-scale meeting in October 2010**, drawing on the projects and networks developed over the last few years as part of the Charter of Human Responsibilities and Governance. It will seek to consolidate existing links and include new stakeholders such as local, and probably national, authorities; it will not involve a broader mobilization of new stakeholders from the Pacific, other than those who live in New Zealand and therefore make it possible for travel to be funded with available resources. **The broadening process is planned for the conference in January 2011.**
- **In terms of approach**, the focus is on **proximity, a personal touch** and the **quality of ties** established with partners; the overall event is seen as a means to promote the ethics of responsibility, actively involve stakeholders and **adapt to suit each context**. According to Betsan Martin, electronic communications tools are useful when they go hand in hand with discussions in person and when solid ties are created. **Bringing people together for three days is already difficult** given that the time has to be found outside of working hours. The November 2009 meeting lasted three days and it was not easy to maintain the format.
- **Two organizational principles** were established. 1. **Gather together partners**

representing territorial and professional diversity with the aim of comparing and contrasting ideas. Priority will be given to deepening the process' complexity and strengthening engagement with the private sector due to its presence in many areas.

2. Manage diversity, differences and potential conflicts. "We need to be ready to manage multiple points of view gathered together round the same table and which can produce potential conflicts. We know that certain stakeholders do not take part because they don't want to enter into conflict, as long as the process is lacking the ability to regulate them and exploit their fertility. **Situations governed by diversity take people out of their comfort zone and disturb their beliefs.** Lawyers, scientists, government agents and artists do not necessarily share the same language, and they all have to play a role of listening and learning which runs counter to their position as experts. But diversity also **results in fruitfulness.** To draw a parallel between ecosystem and social dynamics, the most fruitful place is the one where the greatest number of different dynamics coexist. Such as, for example, the place where the earth meets the sea, with the boundary being the point where growth is strongest," Betsan Martin pointed out.

- The November 2009 meeting was organized on a site inhabited by Maori communities, near a river under strong pressure from mining and farming. The communities took part in elaborating the meeting, but no **closer contact** took place between the communities and participants. This aspect could be re-examined in the light of the other Assemblies' experiences.

Françoise Macé – This is a **real opportunity** to organize the meeting in partnership with the IUCN conference. Even if autonomy is restricted, it is certainly possible to see how they envisage dialogue and to **contribute methodological elements.** It is possible that dialogue takes a more horizontal and cross-cutting form, including within the context of the conference.

Even if there is not a unique model for Citizens Assemblies, we know that they are **neither conference, seminar nor colloquium.** They offer an **alternative way of organizing dialogue,** which tackles the difficulty of people talking to each other when they come from very different worlds. It would be interesting to present the Assembly's concept to the IUCN and tell them that a process has long been underway in Oceania.

Ben Quinones – An Assembly is different from a conference, whose goal is to **gather together expertise** and where dialogue is not the main priority. The Assemblies **engage stakeholders in a dialogue** by providing a space and opportunity to **deliberate** on joint questions and build the future. It is important to return to the roots of the process and clarify the concept in comparison to other concepts. We risk losing ourselves in the multiplication of initiatives. In Asia, **we are seeking to create an Assembly and not a plethora of activities.**

6.3 CITIZEN DIALOGUES IN VALENCIA: THE FIRST MEDITERRANEAN ASSEMBLY

“The idea is not to create a Mediterranean community of experts, but to generate food for thought by mobilizing the people who have already come up with theories about the region. More generally, the Assembly is careful not to reproduce the institutional model, in view of the multitude of political programmes that exist but do not work.”



- The Mediterranean Assembly will be held on **2, 3 and 4 July in Valencia, Spain**, on the theme **Mediterranean Dialogues: Institutions and Citizenship in the Mediterranean**. Seventy participants are expected to exchange ideas and information about the four following theme-based agoras (which contain sub-questions). 1. **Imagining the Mediterranean space**. 2. **Mediterranean citizenship: rights and responsibilities**. 3. **Building a lasting space for peace: are there prerequisites?** 4. **Current and future challenges in the Mediterranean: citizens' individual and collective responsibility**. **Three days** of working sessions are planned with an inaugural session and two agoras organized at the same time over two whole days (participants will choose their agoras in advance). The agoras will start with an institutional presentation and followed by debates. The presenters will be invited to wear their “citizen’s hat” and take part in the debates, which Charles Kleinermann says is a real challenge since it contrasts with the usual habits of official figures and members of parliament.

The meeting has three goals. 1. **Hold an Assembly** in a follow up to the creation of circles and the members' advisory council. 2. **Mobilize stakeholders** who could then set up circles in their area. The idea would be to give them an understanding of the approach and, most importantly, **experience it first-hand**. 3. **Raise the Assembly's profile among Euro-Mediterranean institutions** and NGOs encountered since 2009.

- **Institutions have been selected** during tours and prior canvassing of Euro-Mediterranean institutions, with an effort made to link them together. Guest institutions include the Arab League, the Union for the Mediterranean, the European Commission, the Committee of Regions and Euro-Mediterranean Parliamentary Assembly. The other stakeholders mobilized are members of the Assembly's advisory council and citizen circles already up and running. **Students and young people** were included in the process by mobilizing student organizations so they can contribute their vision of the world to the Assembly and their different relationship to organizational and working methods. It was hard to achieve an equal number of female and male participants.
- A **selection of reference texts** relating to the Assembly's themes has been made, with the focus on texts written by participants. “The idea is not to create a Mediterranean community of experts, but to generate food for thought by mobilizing the people who have already

come up with theories about the region. More generally, the Assembly is careful not to reproduce the institutional model, in view of the multitude of political programmes that exist but do not work,” stressed Françoise Macé.

- The process of **creating a friendly environment is integral** to the Assembly. It is proving to be a **key approach**, since it provides a methodological element that differentiates the process from other seminars and conferences, especially since most participants do not know each other and the initiative is brand new. How can we find concrete elements for **creating friendship** other than with a microphone? For example, at a meal with local products, a dance or a site visit.
- **Meeting follow-up activities** will focus on assessing the first experience and opening up citizen circles in Morocco and Egypt. The goal is to launch around **ten circles** by the end of 2010 and plan a **new Assembly in 2011**.

6.4 IQUIQUE REGIONAL CITIZENS ASSEMBLY IN THE SOUTHERN CONE

“... participants will travel to Iquique as part of a convoy of buses [...] which take a symbolic journey through the geographical, historic and social dimensions of Bolivia, Argentina, Chile and Peru and will embody the citizen process that is underway. International guests are part of a separate international convoy.”



- The Assembly will take place on **5, 6 and 7 November 2010 in the city of Iquique** in Chile. It is built on four pillars. 1. **Serve as a new springboard** for launching the citizen initiative and create links. 2. **Create an opportunity** for raising awareness and establishing new political, cultural and ethical values. 3. **Mark an advance in the organic process of setting up the Assembly** in the region, in line with participants' wishes and contributions. 4. **Put down roots in a local context** by encouraging joint construction with the local community rather than the passive reception of an external project. The Assembly will number around **200 participants**.
- In terms of the Assembly's **method**, participants will travel to Iquique as part of a convoy of buses (inspired by the African caravans in Sahel Sahara) which take a symbolic journey through the geographical, historic and social dimensions of Bolivia, Argentina, Chile and Peru and will embody the citizen process that is underway. **International guests** are part of

a separate international convoy. **Four buses will converge on Iquique** in northern Chile, passing through different towns in each country to bring together the delegations who will carry out their own activities during the journey.

- **Iquique** is a port city with 300,000 inhabitants, situated in the melting pot of a border zone. It is part of a natural border area, since it is literally situated between the desert and the sea. It is also at the intersection of political borders since it is close to the Chilean, Argentinean and Bolivian borders. The city is therefore seen as an **oasis in the desert**. It is also one of **Chile's most cosmopolitan cities**. It is home to Indian, Chinese, Bolivian and Peruvian communities and **mixed populations that have intermarried** with the indigenous communities who arrived over 5,000 years ago. It has seen the emergence of social movements, workers' movements, trade unions and the first progressive newspapers and ideas linked to its mining activities. The workers who emigrated there from the three bordering countries claimed citizen and economic rights. These claims led to the saltpetre workers' **historical strike** and the **massacre at the Santa Maria school**, where 3,500 workers were killed by order of the then government. The Iquique Assembly wishes to **use these historical and symbolic facts** as an anchor point for debates and a springboard for addressing the future with participants. The city of Iquique's **social structures** were asked to sponsor the event about a year ago during a series of on-site meetings. Several organizations confirmed their support: the Unitarian Workers Centre, Union for Trade, Health and Public Employment, the group comprising families of victims to the Pinochet dictatorship, survivors of the Pisagua concentration camp, the consumers association, a young people's association and a university federation. This sponsorship gives concrete form to the desire to improve visibility and **prepare the Assembly's launch in collaboration with established local actors**.
- **Eight working themes** have been selected: 1. Human rights. 2. Culture. 3. Women. 4. Migrants and migrations. 5. Communications media. 6. Popular ecology. 7. Indigenous peoples and nations 8. Integration, constituent power and bicentenaries. Theme 7 is being proposed with **additional activities**, notably with a **celebration** to be held on the theme of the sea, seen as a space enabling different peoples to come together. Bolivia has undertaken a vast process of social, political and cultural reform via a constituent assembly that has led to a radical overhaul of the Bolivian constitution which now recognizes nature's rights (this is the second legal framework to recognize this right in Latin America, following Ecuador). Bolivia sees access to the sea as an element of friendship between peoples (the 45-person Bolivian delegation will be staying 30 metres from the sea). A **closing event** for the three-day meeting will be held at the Santa Maria school, including a homage to Carlos Liberona (mural painting), the man who set the Assembly process in motion. The delegations will be taken to the former saltpetre industry offices to **give them a real sense of immersion in the place** and illustrate the challenge of productive models in building peace and links with the biosphere. The theme of human rights (theme 1) will be addressed at the **former concentration camp** used during Pinochet's regime and located in the port of Pisagua. The meeting will take place in the municipal theatre in the presence of camp survivors.
- The **delegations must embrace the greatest possible diversity of socio-professional groups that can contribute to debates on the eight defined themes**. Participants have the chance to suggest guests from other Southern Cone countries to add to the selection made by the Assembly's national coordination teams. The **logistics** have been planned on a minimal level given the funds currently available.
- A **new partnership** will be established between Chile's **antifascist war veterans associations** and the French Association des Glières, headed by General Bachelet

(previously in Yugoslavia with the UN), made up of Resistance fighters during the Nazi occupation in France. A French delegation will travel to Iquique in November 2010. These partnerships seek to promote **the strong ethical value** that inspired Resistance fighters to oppose an oppressive regime and establish a new **form of dialogue** with the military. The meeting will take place in Iquique if the local organizations confirm their agreement to open dialogue with the armed forces (in Chile, the army is not usually keen to talk to civil society, which is not the case in Bolivia and Argentina).

6.5 SAHEL SAHARA: CITIZEN CARAVANS AT THE AYOUN ASSEMBLY

“Mini-assemblies will be organized when the convoys pass through the different places so they can meet inhabitants and citizens as well as convey the Assembly’s ideas and the questions that emerged during the first travelling caravans in 2009.”



- The Assembly will be held **5, 6 and 7 October 2010** in the Mauritanian town of Ayoun-el-Atrous (سورتعلا نوي ع) at the junction of various Sahel-Saharan communities, and part of Mauritanian territory since July 1944. Local customs and lifestyles are very similar to those adopted by black Malian communities. The Assembly’s date is straight after Ramadan and the rainy season.
- The Assembly is part of a process seeking to **shape the citizens** of 2025 to 2050, based on shared values and getting **young people involved** from the start. Mamadou Niang stressed that: “the education system is at a dead end. It fails to create prospects for the job market and does not correspond to local realities, which is why it is important to involve young people and tackle the issue of education.”
- **Delegations will travel to Ayoun in convoys of buses** from northern **Senegal** and the border towns of Saint-Louis, Podor, Bakel, Matam and Kanel on the banks of the Senegal River. The Senegalese delegations from Podor and Saint Louis will meet up with the Mauritanian delegates in Rosso, Senegal, and continue their journey to Ayoun. Another convoy will leave from outlying parts of **Mauritania**, Nouakchott and other neighbouring regions, following the Road of Hope. **In northern Mali**, the areas involved will be Kayes, Gao, Timbuktu and Mopti. Travel between Mali and Mauritania has recently become difficult following a diplomatic dispute between the two states (Mali has recently negotiated an exchange of hostages with a branch of Al-Qaida established in the Maghreb). Passengers from Mali will have to stop at the border and take a Mauritanian bus. **Mini-assemblies will**

be organized when the convoys pass through the different places so they can meet inhabitants and citizens as well as convey the Assembly's ideas and the questions that emerged during the first travelling caravans in 2009.

- **Participants** include civil servants, teachers, radio and television journalists and students. A number of intermediaries and specialists will be invited to **stimulate theme-based discussions**, such as, for example, the *Organisation pour la mise en valeur du fleuve Sénégal* (*Senegal River Basin Development Authority*) on hydraulic and natural problems, and ENDA Tiers Monde. The **key contacts** identified during the travelling caravans will also take part and will be asked to **produce documents** that will also be used to follow up the process.
- **Six themes** emerged: 1. **Democracy, governance and citizen responsibility** (a cross-cutting theme addressing all stakeholders). 2. **Renewable energies, sustainable development** and impact on the industrialization of farming and livestock breeding. 3. **Women**, autonomy and access to credit and property. 4. **Young Sahel Saharans**, education adapted to suit local contexts and leading to decent employment. 5. Social changes and **roles of spiritual guides and religious schools** in urban development and the cohabitation of different populations. The religions have set up a great many schools which have played a part in intercultural education, by addressing behaviours and lifestyles and avoiding indoctrination. These schools are currently undergoing modernization with lessons in French, English and sciences. 6. **Traditional communication and the oral tradition as factors in regional integration** and a new perception of the common heritage. Not much of the cultural, social and historical heritage has been preserved in written form, which gives traditional communicators an important role in preserving and transmitting memory through oral means.
- **The programme and methodology will be organized** based on a **plenary session** followed by **workshops**. The entire event will take place in a Saharan tent, the form of local habitat where discussions usually take place. People will feel close to each other and will be able to mix in a friendly atmosphere. Cultural evening events, with traditional musical groups from the region, and dinner will also take place in the tent. Participants encountered during the first caravans will be asked ahead of the Ayoun Assembly to **report on the proposals and cross-cutting questions** relating to the seven identified themes.

6.6 MALI ASSEMBLY: FROM LOCAL TO REGIONAL AND NATIONAL STAGES

“The number of participants is not a priority in terms of our methodology. The focus is first and foremost on debate on the areas of discussion, the choice of delegates, and the reflection of local realities via the delegates involved.”



- The **Malian Assembly will take place in four phases**: 1. The local phase. 2. The regional phase, including a theme-based and multi-institutional dimension. 3. The national phase, comprising a theme-based, socio-professional, linguistic and geo-cultural dimension. 4. The **reporting** phase, when everything previously generated will be reported and, if necessary, put up for new debate. The **local phase is currently being finalized**. The last stage will take place from 25 May to 13 June 2010 in the Gao, Mopti, Timbuktu and Kidal regions of northern Mali (currently a zone of conflict in Mali).
- The **mechanism for the local Assembly** is rooted in the **Commune** and the **Cercle levels**, comprising a selection of two Communes. Thirty delegates per Commune, comprising ten women, ten men and ten young people, are being mobilized. The **Centre Djoliba** network is helping to select delegates **to reflect local dynamics**, with the support of the municipal authorities, religious and traditional authorities and national and international NGOs. Each local Assembly is held over **one day** with a **plenary session and workshops**. The organization team presents the general process during the plenary session. The session starts with everyone present giving their views in order to consider possible contributions in line with the four areas of discussion (values, challenges, commitments and proposals). Following a break, delegates meet up again in **three workshops** with separate groups of men, women and young people. Each group examines the areas of discussion in detail, one after another, then the workshops' discussions are reported and **shared at a plenary session**. “By splitting people up into workshops, we can encourage debate by **giving participants more freedom to speak**, since they sometimes feel they have to comply with the opinions expressed by the patriarch or elders. The number of participants is not a priority in terms of our methodology. The focus is first and foremost on debate on the areas of discussion, the choice of delegates, and the reflection of local realities via the delegates involved,” Ambroise Dakouo explained. Each workshop group then chooses a delegate, representing three delegates per Commune, who meet up at the Cercle Assembly. A number of specialists are also involved in the process for bringing out themes in order to **help take deliberations to a deeper level**.
- An **in-depth cross-cutting analysis** will mark the end of the local stage in late July 2010. This analysis will be used to make changes to the regional phase, whose methodology is not yet definitive, so that it **can be adapted** to reflect the needs of the process. The links established in northern Mali can be shared with the Sahel-Saharan initiative which plans to cover this region. This may result in specific support for the Malian Assembly's coordination

team. It may also be possible to **pool methodologies and themes** between the two initiatives.

7. Contribution to a New Phase in Building Human Responsibilities

A **new phase** is emerging, built around the **Charter of Human Responsibilities and the promotion of the ethics of responsibility** at the FPH. Edith Sizoo looked back at the key features of this 15-year-long process, run in collaboration with a network of partners including John Anugraha, Betsan Martin, Ben Quinones and Ricardo Jimenez. She then presented the **possible new directions**. The question that her contribution asked is: how can the Citizens Assembly process **participate in and grow from this new approach focusing on ethics and responsibility?**

Edith Sizoo – I've been involved with the FPH for around twenty years; at first I was the coordinator for the Cultures and Development network. I've been lucky enough to have lived in Asia, Africa and Latin America, and have always been faced with different cultures and multiple ways of viewing the world and of living together. Through learning languages I was confronted by the fact that **language is an expression of culture**. As a sociolinguist and anthropologist, I've often attempted to identify the common elements that exist irrespective of diversity and cultural differences. What drives us to work together? What draws us into conflict, or helps us to live together more peaceably? Step by step, I began to think about what would be the shared bases needed for the construction of a more liveable world. Working within the Alliance for a Responsible, Plural and United World, we discussed these different approaches extensively in relation to the issues of poverty, the economy, water management, governance and the like. We noted that discussions centred primarily on phenomena relating to the crisis of the environment, governance and finance, and that there were underlying elements that suggested a **crisis of values**. But this was not simply a result of the widespread impact on societies of modernization as reflected in compartmentalization and fragmentation. The issue also arose of the **absence of a shared core of ethical values** capable of informing us how far we can go, and the limits not to exceed (in terms of technologies, such as cloning living organisms). A lack of values inevitably involves an absence of self-imposed restrictions. Ethics are not something that sits above all else; on the contrary, they are the **shared foundation** that determines choices and actions to take, or to avoid.

Ethics and values can today appear to relate to vague or unrealistic concepts, whereas in fact once we formulate them in the form of simple questions they are no longer vague in the slightest. Take, for example, the current economic and financial meltdown. Even directors of banks talk of responsibility! Barack Obama stated in one of his speeches that: “we have to transform a culture of greed into a culture of responsibility.” Many people echo the idea of responsibility in their speeches and ambitious political programmes. But nobody ever takes a stand to say **who is responsible for what, and who is accountable for what, and to whom**. In this domain, matters become highly concrete. Traders, for example, answer only to themselves and not to those who have entrusted their savings to them, nor indeed to their managers or directors. It is the system that is designated as being responsible. Thus there are no limits and no self-imposed limits as there is no explicit definition of who is responsible for what.

For civil society, the question of rights has always been of central importance. This is entirely legitimate. But it is not enough to lay claim to rights and demand of others that they be responsible for solving problems when everybody has but limited capacities. For so long as there is no **reconsideration of the nature of responsibilities** at the personal and collective level, there is no possibility of breaking free from the traditional approaches that are themselves part of the problem. My question is: what is it that is different about Citizens Assemblies compared to the wonderful work done in the past under the guidance of the NGO movement? For a very long time, NGOs tended to think that they had a monopoly on what was “good” and they thus shunned politicians and multinationals, despite this being a skewed and restricting vision which limited them to rights-based activism.

Civil society must also **take a new look at what it is that can, and should, be asked of each one of us**. One significant example is the educational programmes run by Brazil’s ministries of education and the environment (one of its coordinators, Rachel Trajber, is active in the network working to promote the Charter of Human Responsibilities). One of these programmes was designed to teach schools about environmental problems. Schoolchildren are well aware of the nature and scale of the environmental predicament, but the programme generated a feeling of powerlessness among them. A change of approach was suggested, the idea being to examine the responsibilities of the various parties concerned, primarily via the **Youth Conference on the Brazilian Environment “Let’s Take Care of Brazil.”** President Lula was moved to tears as he read the charter of responsibilities drafted by 600 young Brazilians. He said that: “during my four years in office, I have received many union delegations from all over the country. But this is the first time that I have met a delegation that wishes to show me its own commitment to Brazil. And it is you, our youngsters, who have done it. Brazil will never be the same again.” The **change of approach set the tone for the process**. The same process will conclude in early June 2010 in Brasilia, led this time by 12-to-15-year-olds from sixty-odd countries worldwide. The **International Youth Charter** will be organized in three sections: **principles**, setting out the principles of responsibility; **actions**, how the principles will be put into action, the idea being to state the actions needed for any given principle to be implemented and respected, and **commitments**, expressing who is responsible and for what, and how each party must take account of their commitments.

Ethics and responsibility, far from being abstract concepts, are a **substrate that binds diversities together**. The Charles Léopold Mayer Foundation seeks to build a cohesive underpinning for ethics and responsibility in its various initiatives. We presented a project for a Charter of Human Responsibilities at the Lille World Citizens Assembly in 2001. This charter

has since been translated into twenty-five languages, adapted to suit different cultural contexts and debated as a discussion document in around twenty countries. **An initiative has grown up around the charter.** It came up against resistance on occasion, a phenomenon that is stronger in the west than in Asia and Africa. The idea that the Universal Declaration of Human Rights needs to be balanced by a Declaration of Human Responsibilities is something that many support. Indeed, **other groups and initiatives have created and produced charters** dealing with the idea of responsibility. We know that the 21st century poses challenges that can only be tackled from a standpoint founded upon rights. Could we not now come up with a **new international reference document** indicating the principles of responsibility that make sense in an international context? Remember that the Universal Declaration of Human Rights is just that: a declaration; it is not a treaty or convention. As it states in its introduction, it is more of a statement of intent... that does nothing to prevent continuing violations of human rights. However, this reference document does exist, and has proved to be extremely useful. When we cast our minds back to the last G20 summit in London, where the financial crisis was the subject of talks, was it not the case that the politicians, after attempting to protect their own national interests, started to talk of a reference text that would set out certain global responsibilities?

The idea is to **continue working on this imperative to counterbalance rights with the ethics, principles and cultures of responsibility.** In order to move towards the creation of a new text, the current project is to ask twenty-five socio-professional networks to reflect on the concrete meaning of responsibility and the principles of responsibility, to compare their results and to produce a document that will be called *Réflexions pour agir* (*Thoughts for Taking Action*). These networks work on issues such as environmental governance, youth education, the solidarity economy, university education, sciences and democracy, the military, human rights and responsibilities, community organization, independent publishing, ethics and business, journalism, etc. In 2012, a conference will be held so that the networks and other participants can pool their work and build the next stage in the process. Regional stakeholders will be involved, possibly businesses too, along with governmental and institutional representatives (for example, Tokyo University, which has offered to run a workshop for Japanese UN representatives).

What is important is that emphasis is placed on the **process** rather than on the result, on the **discussions and deliberations that will result in the drafting of a charter.** Not unlike this poem about travel and the island of Ithaca, which says:

When you set sail for Ithaca, wish for the road to be long, [...] but do not hurry the voyage at all. It is better for it to last many years, and when old to rest in the island, rich with all you have gained on the way.

7.1 DRAFTING ETHICAL CHARTERS, TIES BETWEEN ASSEMBLIES AND PERSPECTIVES FOR THE FUTURE (DISCUSSION)

Gustavo Marin – So, the idea is that citizens, acting through Citizens Assemblies, draft their **own ethical charter or manifesto**. We thus have the opportunity for mutual support and assistance for this new project that centres on ethics and responsibility. One of the results of the meetings held during the second half of the year could be a **cross-cutting analysis of the basic texts** that the Assemblies will produce (the Citizens Charter for the Southern Cone, Asia, Sahel Sahara, Mediterranean, Oceania, etc.), with the proviso that these texts are not rushed out at the last minute, i.e. that they **form part of the Assembly process itself**. The charters, if that is indeed the name chosen, will be the first elements documenting the process, and will constitute one of the written records of the process.

Second are the **visual traces**. Feel free to imagine a shape, languages and colours inspired by your own that might serve to promote the process, with our backing and expertise from François Soulard.

The third aspect to consider is that, during the coming six months and beyond into 2011-2012, we need to **facilitate interaction** between you and other partners who have not been able to attend due to the constraints of intercontinental travel. In the future, we need to be able to call on the services of a **hundred or so facilitators**, not ten or twenty, if we are to drive the project forward in a lasting manner. It might be a good idea for three or four delegates — balanced by gender and age — to visit Asia, the Mediterranean, Oceania and Africa.

Ambroise Dakouo – Returning to the importance of the paths taken, I'd like to stress the fact that the Malian Assembly is felt to be a **process**. NGOs mostly work on a project-oriented basis, with a set budget and timetable. In the Malian process, local projects were organized in various communes as a way of initiating debate about the project. The **cornerstone** that is the Assembly makes the organization and logistics easier. The challenge is to ensure that by 2020, citizens self-organize, that the **process becomes durable** and that it becomes a sort of reflex for multi-stakeholder, inter-communal exchanges that extend to the national level and connect with citizen movements.

I think it would be very valuable to create a charter that would constitute a sort of **identity card** for the various Assemblies, their processes and objectives, then to make a comparative analysis in order to highlight different populations' shared purposes. The charter must reflect the values of the people who participated. This is a good starting point for formulating it. I think that a list or inventory of responsibilities is dangerous as there is an automatic tendency to come up with instant answers and thus to ignore the new mechanisms for finding solutions to the challenges. We are not talking about grievances, but about **inventing new ways of providing answers**. Problems and challenges will always evolve as a function of the context.

Ben Quinones – Funders have developed a paradigm based on rights whereby citizens become dependent for access to power and resources. Indeed, NGOs talk of **empowerment** when referring to that which we discuss in terms of the responsibility paradigm. I think that responsibility means **engagement**. We don't necessarily need to include the formulation of a formal charter. By taking stock of the problems identified by partners and of the necessary

resources, we can then move on to the question of how to go about solving them.

Charles Kleinermann – We must avoid bringing the Assemblies into competition with NGOs, which are very often busy defending their own particular interests. I think it would be a good idea to have a website along the lines of Citizens for Europe for Africa, Asia, the Mediterranean, etc., to provide a space for sharing information and experiences. Regarding citizenship, the core question is the balance between rights and duties. There is a **lack of individual and collective responsibility** that has to be at the centre of governance.

Mamadou Niang – I think that we first need to **commit to a new model for understanding** and explore how to put this model into action. I hope that the world's citizens in 2021 will not be submissive and that they will seek to take a lead in making their choices. The new configuration for citizenship must include this. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights did not include any coercive elements; it exists to create clear consciences. We need to **cultivate and stimulate a great number of commitments**, ensure that future generations make these their own and that they re-engineer world governance.

Ricardo Jimenez – Hitherto unimagined events have occurred, and humanity is slow to notice, as if it were difficult for us to comprehend what is happening. For the first time in two thousand years, a constitutional document recognizes **nature's rights**. Sanctions could be applied under the terms of laws currently being debated in Ecuador and Bolivia. Yet everything continues as if this were unimportant. Perhaps the same thing happened with human rights. **Change takes time.** I'm reminded of the **story** of Francisco de Miranda, a sort of 18th Che Guevara and the only Latin American whose name is engraved on the Arc de Triomphe in Paris. At a time when he was locked in combat with the colonial Venezuelan fleet, six or seven years prior to independence, he asked that a call for independence be affixed onto every house in the port where the fighting was taking place. One of his soldiers asked him: "Why post a call for independence if the people know neither how to read nor write?" Miranda answered: "History knows." And he was right; independence was a necessity and a response to the crisis of governance afflicting the continent. **The very act of writing the charter is not a minor event**, the journey and the attempt are very much worth it. This is something that we must accomplish. **The quality of the deliberations will depend on the quality of the collective process.** The Assembly seeks to gather the opinions of indigenous peoples, migrants, women, youth, etc.; all these stakeholders will express their needs. The Assembly's purpose is to give these needs a form.

Betsan Martin – The **universal declaration of indigenous people's rights** is also an interesting model that could be useful for finding ideas. I don't think that a charter can in itself serve as a goal for our process, but it could pull together a number of elements in order to revitalize cohabitation with the Maori people.

John Anugraha – Drawing up a charter takes time. They do appeal, but **the essence of debates can easily be lost on the way.** The Asian Assembly's workshops were designed to think up solutions and alternatives. The Assemblies' approach is interdisciplinary, particularly in Asia. If we take the economy as an example, we are talking simultaneously about ethics, ecology and equality. All these point are **inter-related**. We need to **stick to this interdisciplinary approach** by making we sure we do not focus exclusively on one or two

themes. The theme of education, for example, arises in the Asian, African and Southern Cone Assemblies.

8. Appendices

8.1 PROGRAMME AND INVITATION

Dear all,

In just two weeks we will meet in Paris. After reading your messages twice, here is the program that we propose. Please, excuse the length of this message – which is a little too long (about three pages) – but it includes the complete timetable for the meeting. We also want to introduce, duly in advance, the development of the two-day program, thus hoping to be able to coordinate with all of you.

The first day includes two phases: **a rediscovery and an update**; and the second day also has two parts: **present times and perspectives**. How to go beyond 2010 ?

1. We will start with a brief introduction, through which we can take up again **the global framework of the idea of Citizens Assemblies**. This entails shaping the historical meaning of this idea, its place and significance in today's globalization context. Only two years have passed since our founding meeting in June 2008, but the world has kept on changing since then – and it has changed a lot! The world's financial and economic crisis broke out right after that meeting in June 2008, and the idea of the Citizens' Assembly doubles down its pertinence. Luckily, we have made our way more solidly, and we have been articulated, but this is still the beginning of our adventure. The next 5 to 10 years will be crucial.

2. We will continue with a **mutual update**, to tell each other what we have been doing during the past two years: how we have moved forward, what the difficulties are, how much we have learned. We need to have time to listen to each other and to exchange information. We need to go past the mere passing on of information, so that each presentation may become an enriching exchange occasion. We need to allow, with the given time, for exchanges / questions / answers after each intervention in order to re-dynamize, deepen, and associate with those who have different viewpoints.

3. On the second day, we will look into the **preparation work for the meetings during the second semester in 2010**. We are aware that not all assemblies share the same level of preparations – some are far from the dates, but they have very detailed travel logs.

4. **Continuation**: How to go beyond 2010 ?

We should try to get done with the first two phases on the first day. This will be hard work; however, should something be left for the second day, we run the risk of being up against the clock. We'll see...

If we begin the introduction rounds and presentations, with a first exchange, on Tuesday May, 11 at 9.15 a.m., we should be done by 11 a.m. Then, after a short break, we will move on to

the reports by the following Assemblies :

- Asia
- Sahel-Sahara and Mali
- Southern Cone
- Mediterranean
- Oceania
- Europe
- Cross-section follow-up

How can we organize time so as to fit 7 presentations between 11.15 a.m. and 6 p.m., knowing that we also need time for lunch and breaks ?

Here is one possible organization :

- 11.15 a.m. – 12 p.m. Asia
- 12 - 12.45 p.m. Sahel – Sahara
- Lunch break until 2.15 p.m.
- 2.15 – 3 p.m. Southern Cone
- 3 - 3.45 p.m. Mediterranean
- Break until 4 p.m.
- 4 - 4.30 p.m. Oceania
- 4.30 – 5 p.m. Europe
- 5 – 5.30 p.m. Cross-section follow-up
- 5.30 – 6 p.m. Group exchange. (Tired) Quick round to note down the first things we learn together.

This is a little tight; however, if each presentation takes 20 minutes, we will have 25 minutes left for the exchange about each Citizens Assembly... We will have quick relaxing breaks as well...

On the following day, Wednesday the 12, we should be able to go through both of the following phases. In order to do this, we first need to start by remembering the pooling together from the previous day. This will take place between 9.15 and 10.15 a.m. We will have rested the night before so as to make the best of the conclusions reached.

After 10.15 a.m. and until lunchtime at 12.45 p.m., we will look into the preparation work of the four on-going assemblies, i.e. Asia, Sahel-Sahara, Southern Cone and Oceania. The Mediterranean team is getting ready a meeting for July.

This session will also be very dynamic, and we will see whether we need a break. We have two and a half hours. We can spend 30 minutes on Asia, 30 minutes on the Sahel-Sahara and

30 minutes on the Southern Cone. The hour we have left we will use for Oceania and the Mediterranean.

Lunch break (like on day 1): from 12.45 p.m. to 2.15 p.m.

During the afternoon we will deal with what happens after 2010. This prospective reflection should be flexible. It will provide us with the necessary air to breathe without feeling suffocated by the 2010 meetings. Looking further away not only gives us courage but also – and above all – the necessary calmness to correctly place the current effort within a long-term road. The “logistic and financial details” of the on-going works will take a simpler dimension. We will see that the road is still long, but beautiful.

This afternoon, we will spend a good hour and a half on a joined articulation, on how to set updated and study the way to **get stronger together**, beyond the trans-assembly trips. The desire to set up and widen the links that we started with each other and, above all, with other similar initiatives, is very strong. We need to get ready for a vision in common and for a shared, **global strategy**. The key question is: **how can citizens assemblies take part in and strengthen the diversity of the citizen and popular dynamics going on during the second decade of the 21st Century?**

The assemblies propose a profound renewal of the social contract through the debate on values on the proposals to overcome the current crises. The **Ethical Charters** turn into an answer which is, at the same time, immediate and sustainable. This also means that we need to remember and re-study some of the objectives of the assemblies in relation to this context. For

example, we can think about the fact that the assemblies are unprecedented occasions to make solidarity statements in the face of the current changes and crises, and the citizens’ and popular ethical charters. Together we will think about the chance to do this, guarding the respect for diversity in each process of each region.

We need to think about **how we can concretely apply the commitment and capacity to do things together**, in spite of the distances, which could in turn strengthen the collective utopia being built. We can think about making videos and compiling, by the end of 2010, what has been produced, which we could call valorization and which would help us become aware of the fact that everything is actually there, palpable, and already begun.

See you soon,

With warm regards,

Gustavo

8.2 PARTICIPANTS



- **Alihuen Antileo** – Southern Cone Regional Citizens Assembly
- **Ambroise Dakouo** - Alliance to Reform Governance in Africa, Mali Citizens Assembly
- **Arnaud Blin** - Forum for a new World Governance
- **Ben Quinones** – Asian Forum for Solidarity Economy
- **Betsan Martin** – Response, Oceania Citizens Assembly
- **Charles Kleinermann** – European Movement International, Mediterranean Citizens Assembly
- **Elisabeth Dau** – Institute of Research and Debate on Governance
- **François Soulard** – Traversées
- **Françoise Macé** - Charles Léopold Mayer Foundation – Mediterranean Programme
- **Germà Pelayo** - Respolis
- **Gustavo Marin** - Charles Léopold Mayer Foundation
- **Inga Wachsmann** – Citizens for Europe, Charles Léopold Mayer Foundation
- **John Anugraha** – Asian Citizens Assembly
- **Mamadou Niang** – Sahel-Saharan Citizens Assembly
- **Pierre Vuarin** - Charles Léopold Mayer Foundation, Terre citoyenne
- **Ricardo Jimenez** – Southern Cone Regional Citizens Assembly