



# The Bulletin

of the Australian World Citizens Association

<http://www.worldcitizens.org.au>

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## President's Column: Copenhagen

The big issue of recent times has been the Copenhagen meeting on climate change. The resulting fiasco only illustrates once again our central thesis: we need a better system of *democratic global governance* to deal with major global issues like this.

Nearly all the world's nations were represented at the UN-sponsored meeting, including more than 100 heads of government, our own Kevin Rudd among them. Long and fierce discussions went on for two weeks, but nothing of substance emerged, except for a vague declaration that we should aim to limit global warming to two degrees. No binding treaties were agreed, no binding targets were set. It is generally thought that the participants had not done enough preparatory work to achieve agreement on the substantive issues. It has all been put off into the future, while the carbon dioxide levels continue to rise inexorably. There was widespread disappointment at the outcome.

It is always going to be desperately difficult to get 192 sovereign nations to agree on anything, let alone a difficult issue like this, which will involve serious effort and serious expenditure to fix the problem. Different groups have different agendas, difficult to reconcile. Small island nations like Tuvalu demanded a limit of 1.5 degrees warming, to save them from inundation by the ocean; but unfortunately this is probably already impractical. The less-developed countries demanded that the developed world fix the...

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## Local News

**Jim Page**, our Queensland Branch President, has named the World Citizens Association as an NGO partner on an ARC Linkage grant application entitled 'Exploring Peace Education'. Let's hope the application is successful!

**David Lankshear** has put together a really useful website on world governance – see [eclipsenow.wordpress.com](http://eclipsenow.wordpress.com) and click on 'Reform Global Government'. The website has free Flyers & Posters to edit for your group or website, thoughts on peak oil, sustainability, and political reform for Australia.

Congratulations to **Brett Samuel**, our Secretary/Editor, who has just recently been married. Best wishes for the future!



**Lyndon Storey** of the Human Union has published an article in "On Line opinion", an Australian online journal. The article puts the case for human union. It makes the argument from the Australian perspective in light of the debate in Australia about asylum seekers arriving by sea - see <http://www.onlineopinion.com.au/view.asp?article=9822> ■

problem which they created; but the developed world refuses to do anything unless developing nations like China and India also reduce their emissions. And so nothing is done.

Even Ross Garnaut, the government's chief adviser on climate change policy, concluded [SMH, 26/1/10] that "complex decisions cannot be made through open forums requiring unanimous support from all nations. ... it [Copenhagen] did not lead to binding commitments from all substantial countries. Such an agreement was never a practical possibility. We will have to design international mitigation policies around this reality."

How much easier it would be, one might ask, if there existed a global parliament empowered to deal with issues such as these? The members could sit down to consider what needs to be done, and then simply make the appropriate laws and regulations, applicable equally to everyone.

Meanwhile, the climate sceptics have been furiously muddying the waters, in a way very reminiscent of the way in which the tobacco lobby tried for many years to deny that there was any link between smoking cigarettes and an increased risk of lung cancer. In this case, the energy lobby is trying to deny that global warming is occurring, or if it is occurring, that human actions are responsible. The science of climate change is in fact quite clear and quite simple. Elsewhere in this issue I have put together a 'Fact Sheet' on climate change which tries to summarize the basic facts. It might come in useful in an argument!

## Upcoming Events

### Screening of the documentary "World Vote Now" on 23 February 2010

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Graham Watson MEP, Club of Rome EU Chapter and the Campaign for a UN Parliament will jointly host a public screening of the documentary "World Vote Now" on 23 February 2010 at the European Parliament in Brussels. The screening will be followed by a panel discussion on global democracy. More details in the invitation at [www.unpacampaign.org/documents/201002brussels.pdf](http://www.unpacampaign.org/documents/201002brussels.pdf) or at: <http://tinyurl.com/yz6g48c>.

### 3-14 May: Governance of the Global Commons by the People

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There will be a lobby of the United Nations from **3-14 May**. The objective is to demonstrate that it is imperative that certain aspects of life be stewarded for the good of both humanity and the planet as a whole. These include hazardous waste, transport, and mining - topics which will be discussed by the UN at that time - as well as the economy, air, water, soils, biodiversity, human rights and more. Since all of these issues (and others) share similar needs for governance and value production, they constitute our Global Commons. The Lobby will be accompanied by a Forum whereby participants will work on a book together, using wiki-type technology. This initiative began with discussions between the Global Commons Trust and the All-Win Network. All organizations and individuals participate on a basis of equality.

**Please contact Chris if you are interested in attending.**

### 6-10 July: International Peace Research Association (IPRA) Conference

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IPRA will hold its annual conference at the University of Sydney, 6-10 July. The deadline for submission of papers is February 26. **Chris Hamer** has volunteered to act as convener for a Working Group on *World Governance and Peace*.

**Support from any of our members would be welcome!**

### 5-8 October: Campaign for the Establishment of a United Nations Parliamentary Assembly

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A CEUNPA meeting will take place on 4 October in Buenos Aires, Argentina. From 5-8 the annual Council Meeting of the World Federalist Movement will take place in Buenos Aires so that both can be attended.

## Related Organizations News

### Peoples Congress 2010 Elections

2010 is the year of the partial replacement of the Peoples Congress. The Peoples Congress is renewable per third every three years mandate. In 2010 a second third of the Peoples Congress will be renewed. During this election 15 new candidates will be elected for a period of 9 years.

The conditions to become a candidate are: to be registered as a world citizen, to be more than 18 years old, to be active in a "mundialist" association since at least two years and to sign the candidates engagement agreement at <http://recim.org/kdp/an3-an.htm>. A candidacy file must be presented by the candidate to the election control committee and it should include: a letter of candidacy, an ID photograph, a CV in relation with the humanist and "mundialist" action (10 lines maximum), a declaration of intent (20 lines maximum) and a signed engagement agreement from the candidate. For more information and to mail your file, please write to [B10@peoplescongress.org](mailto:B10@peoplescongress.org) or by post : Henri Cainaud, 4 rue de l'Artois, 21121 FONTAINE LES DIJON

The list of the validated candidatures <<http://recim.org/B10/index.htm>> will be announced in the city of Brasilia (Brazil) by TV-SUPREN, on World citizen day <<http://recim.org/ascop/pr08-an.htm>>, March 20, 2010,

The balloting will be closed on the International Day of Peace, on September 21, 2010. The count of the votes will take place on September 22, 2010. A plenary session of the Peoples Congress will be organized on November from 6 to 11 in Zagora (Moroko). ■

## World News

### World Alliance to Transform the United Nations (WATUN)

WATUN held a meeting in Mexico, and developed an ambitious program of action:

- A) Developing an Action Course on Transforming the UN and other international institutions
- B) Developing a campaign to support and promote the Global Referendum on establishing a democratically elected World Parliament
- C) Further developing our Campaign calling for the UN to organize and hold a UN Charter Review Conference and Process
- D) Organizing a Model UN Charter Review Conference in San Francisco in June (linked with the 65th Anniversary of the signing of the UN Charter there in 1945)
- E) Drafting a Citizens Global Climate Agreement, in collaboration with the World Parliament Experiment and all other interested organizations, which will be presented to the governments, media, and people of the world during the climate negotiations in Bonn in May and/or Mexico City in December, 2010
- F) Organizing a Conference in Mexico City during the COP16 Climate Negotiations focusing on the need to create a more democratic and effective system of global governance, and global environmental governance, in order to more adequately address climate change, the need to protect and restore the natural environment, and ensure that all people's basic human rights and needs can be met.

**Rob Wheeler** ([rob@watun.org](mailto:rob@watun.org))

*Chair of WATUN's Executive Committee and Council* ■

### Caritas in Veritate'

The papal encyclical 'Caritas in Veritate' ("Love in Truth") includes a call for an establishment of an effective global authority "to manage the global economy; to revive economies hit by the crisis; to avoid any deterioration of the present crisis and the greater imbalances that would result." This follows the earlier call of Pope John XXIII in his 1963 encyclical 'Pacem in Terris' (Peace on Earth), which called for a 'supranational organization' to promote 'the universal common good'. The text in detail:





*"In the face of the unrelenting growth of global interdependence, there is a strongly felt need, even in the midst of a global recession, for a reform of the United Nations Organization, and likewise of economic institutions and international finance, so that the concept of the family of nations can acquire real teeth. One also senses the urgent need to find innovative ways of implementing the principle of the responsibility to protect and of giving poorer nations an effective voice in shared decision-making.*

*This seems necessary in order to arrive at a political, juridical and economic order which can increase and give direction to international cooperation for the development of all peoples in solidarity. To manage the global economy; to revive economies hit by the crisis; to avoid any deterioration of the present crisis and the greater imbalances that would result; to bring about integral and timely disarmament, food security and peace; to guarantee the protection of the environment and to regulate migration: for all this, there is urgent need of a true world political authority, as my predecessor Blessed John XXIII indicated some years ago.*

*Such an authority would need to be regulated by law, to observe consistently the principles of subsidiarity and solidarity, to seek to establish the common good, and to make a commitment to securing authentic integral human development inspired by the values of charity in truth.*

*Furthermore, such an authority would need to be universally recognized and to be vested with the effective power to ensure security for all, regard for justice, and respect for rights. Obviously it would have to have the authority to ensure compliance with its decisions from all parties, and also with the coordinated measures adopted in various international forums. Without this, despite the great progress accomplished in various sectors, international law would risk being conditioned by the balance of power among the strongest nations.*

*The integral development of peoples and international cooperation require the establishment of a greater degree of international ordering, marked*

*by subsidiarity, for the management of globalization. They also require the construction of a social order that at last conforms to the moral order, to the interconnection between moral and social spheres, and to the link between politics and the economic and civil spheres, as envisaged by the Charter of the United Nations."* ■

## The Lisbon Treaty

Agreed upon by EU leaders in Portugal's capital in December 2007, but only completely ratified this past October – is a tremendous step for European unity and harmony, and marks a historic, dramatic shift in European and global dynamics. The treaty created the positions of European President (that is, President of the European Council, replacing the rotating presidency) and High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, both meant to present a united EU position. The treaty also increases the use of majority voting in the Council of Ministers, and increases involvement of the democratically-elected European Parliament in the legislative process.

The new permanent EU President, currently former Belgian Prime Minister Herman van Rompuy, is appointed by the European Council for two and a half years, with maximum two terms. The first High

Representative is Baroness Catherine Ashton of the UK. The High Representative will also be supported by the European External Action Service (EEAS), the EU's collective diplomatic service.

The treaty also increases areas of "co-decision" in which the directly-elected European Parliament has an equal say with the Council of Ministers, and the Parliament will be consulted on budgetary matters and international agreements. Meanwhile the national parliaments will be able to give input at the earliest stages of the legislative procedure. The treaty also introduces "citizens' initiatives," by which citizens will be able to suggest policies to the Commission.

In the Council of Ministers, the treaty also increases areas of qualified majority voting, which will now be the main method of decision making there, reducing the

***there is a strongly felt need... for a reform of the United Nations Organization, and likewise of economic institutions and international finance, so that the concept of the family of nations can acquire real teeth***



areas requiring unanimity. Unanimity will still be necessary in areas considered crucial to member states' interests, however, such as taxes, foreign policy, defense, and social welfare.

For implementation of the EU's Common Security and Defense Policy, members agree in the treaty to provide civilian and military resources, which nevertheless remain under their control, so their use will require member states' approval.

As noted, the treaty also makes the EU's Charter of Fundamental Rights legally binding, creating an extensive set of common rights for all EU citizens. ■

## Fast Facts: Climate Change

### The Green House Effect

- Discovered by J. Fourier in 1824
- Greenhouse gases act as a 'blanket' and increase the average temperature by intercepting outgoing heat (infrared) radiation
- Arrhenius (1896) pointed out that human CO<sub>2</sub> emissions would tend to raise the average temperature
  - Global average temperature with no atmosphere: - 18 C.
  - Global average temperature with atmosphere: + 14 C.
  - Principal greenhouse gases: water vapour, methane, carbon dioxide, nitrous oxide, ozone; clouds



### Carbon emissions

- CO<sub>2</sub> is estimated as responsible for about 10% of the warming of 32 C, i.e. 3 C
- Total CO<sub>2</sub> in the atmosphere: around 2000 Gigatonnes (387 parts per million)
- CO<sub>2</sub> emissions from burning fossil fuels: 28 Gigatonnes per year (1.4%) (4 tonne per head)
- Increase in CO<sub>2</sub> concentration: 1.9 parts per million per year (0.5%)
- Since pre-industrial era 105 parts per million (40%)

### Global temperature rise

- Since 1970s: 0.60 C
- Per decade: 0.180 C
- Predicted increase by 2100 to 70 C

### IPCC predictions:

CO <sub>2</sub> PPM	Predicted Temp Inc
450	2 <sup>0</sup> C
550	3 <sup>0</sup> C
650	4 <sup>0</sup> C

## Bangladesh Project – Progress Report

Bangladesh is a land of rivers, including the delta region of the mighty Ganges. Another such river is the Jamuna, which starts up in India at the base of the Himalayan Mountains as the Brahmaputra, and flows through northern Bangladesh until it joins with the Ganges. The river is vital in maintaining the fertility of the surrounding lands. However, in recent decades, this river has become a major cause of misery for the hundreds of thousands of families residing within a few kilometers of the river bank. While during summers the rivers lack water, during the rainy seasons there is an enormous flood of water from up in the Himalayas in India. As a consequence, the river banks erode rapidly resulting in the complete destruction of farm lands and homes, leaving thousands of families with minimal means, if any, for survival. These worsening effects are very likely associated with climate change.

The river erosion has devastating consequences. Most of these families become displaced, forced to exist in huts on the slopes beside public roads, where they don't have proper cooking facilities, drinking water or toilet and sanitation facilities. Many of the families will have total property of less than A\$300.00 with a monthly income of less than \$40.00 for a family of 5-10 members. In addition, yearly flooding damages the crops if they can make any, and overflows their little huts. A vast majority of the affected families do not have any land to build their homes, or for farming, their traditional livelihood.



Children suffer from extreme poverty, malnutrition, and have no facilities for their education. Young adults lack in training in professional skills, life-related knowledge and education and therefore are unable to become income generating and resourceful members of the community. The young women will find no financial means to marry in order to start their own family, leaving them in a very vulnerable situation for abuse which has various debilitating social consequences. Elderly people can't earn, have no savings, and suffer from ill health as a result of old age. Furthermore, premature death is common due to a lack of medical facilities. Screening for major diseases such as diabetes, high blood pressure and heart diseases are not available. Many members of these families might have no opportunities to see a qualified doctor. These groups of people are generally left alone without much support from government and non-government organizations. This is particularly because they live in the remote areas far away from the administrative districts; they do not have a strong voice that can be heard by others including the politicians.

One major concern has been the lack of education and vocational skill training facilities for young children. Many children do not have the opportunity to go to school. Therefore the children when grown up can't become income generating and resourceful members of the community. This keeps the families in a vicious cycle of illiteracy, unemployment and poverty.

During my recent visits in the Upazila Sonatola and Shariakandi in the district of Bogra and Upazila Shaghata and Fulsori in the district Gaibandah it has been my observation that although the problems appear enormous, the potentials are also very high. The people are enthusiastic, honest, quick learners and above all, very hardworking. They are keen to change their conditions and improve their lifestyles. In view of my experience, I strongly feel that any help for these people will surely improve their situations and certainly they deserve support. Undertaking appropriate projects for welfare of these poorest of the poor is strongly recommended.

### **Scholarships for school going students:**

Scholarships were provided to 32 (thirty two) children and young adults to continue their education. Each scholarship amounted to on average \$30 for one year. The scholarships were greatly appreciated, without which many would have dropped out of the education system. Requests for further scholarships for these students continue.

### **Establishment of a Primary School**

A school has been established where there were no education facilities for the children, in a district called Char Khabulia ('char' refers to a new area of flood plain left behind after the river retreats). This is the first school in the area. Currently the number of enrolled students is 120. They are studying under the supervision of 5 teachers. There are 80 more children waiting for enrolment.



These students study free of cost and their education materials including books are provided. The teachers are paid a minimum salary, originally \$40 per month.

We need to build the school house and create proper education facilities including seating arrangements. It is also planned that vocational training facilities would be created for young adults to become productive community members. This may also help them to become employed and start their own family lives.

### **Establishment of a Foundation to support the School:**

The Wajifa Noor Ashmatia Foundation has been set up to manage the finances and oversee the running of the school. So far a sum of approximately \$3000 has been channeled to the Foundation from the WCA Aid Project Fund. Overall, the project is an extraordinarily effective and efficient use of funds.

December 8, 2009, **Dr. Abul F. M. Wali Ul Islam**

*Project Director* ■







Figure 1 Headmaster Addresses his Students

## Join the World Citizens of Australia

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Occupation: \_\_\_\_\_

Postal Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Subscription Rates: Full	\$30
Students, seniors, unwaged	\$6

Please complete this form and send together with your cheque made out to 'World Citizens Association (Australia)' to:

Michelle Cavanagh  
Treasurer, World Citizens Association (Australia),  
14 Alderson Ave.,  
NORTH ROCKS NSW 2151

