

Presidents Report, January 2026

Visit of Bob Flax to Australia



Bob Flax is a former Executive Director of Citizens for Global Solutions in the US, and a major influence within the world federalist movement generally. He is an Adjunct Full Professor of Transformative Social Change at Saybrook University in the US, an Executive Board Member of the World Federalist Movement WFM-IGP, and a former Board Member of the Dhammadharini Monastery.

Bob went on a 4-month Sabbatical tour of 6 countries in SE Asia, including 26 days of meditation at a Buddhist Monastery in Thailand. After a nightmare few days in Manila trying to get a visa to visit Australia, he finally arrived in Sydney on Thursday 15th January.

On Friday the 16th, we had some major events in Canberra.

Friday morning, 11 – 12.30 am. Barton Theatre, ANU. Presentation by Bob Flax, **“Creating a Global Democracy for a Peaceful Just and Sustainable World”**

In today's world, *our major problems have gone global*; including war, terrorism, environmental crises, economic calamities, pandemics, and social injustice. *Many of our human-made systems are global as well. However, the one significant thing that has **not** gone global is **democracy**.* Could that be the cause of our global problems? This stimulating presentation described an alternative way to govern our world, where “We the people” are in charge. Many scholars and laypeople agree that only a global democracy can meet today's toughest challenges.

Bob gave an impressive video presentation recounting the history of this idea, the movement that grew out of it, the paths to getting there, and how it might work. He discussed its successes and its current campaigns. This was followed by questions and a lively discussion.



Photo credit: Luiz Bispo

The most notable success of the movement has been the establishment of the **International Criminal Court (ICC)**, driven by a campaign led by Bill Pace, who was Executive Director of the WFM-IGP at the time..

Its current campaigns, driven by Coalitions of NGOs including WFM-IGP, include most notably:

- **Law not War. LAW not War** is a new global campaign to enhance the jurisdiction and use of the International Court of Justice (ICJ) in order to assist countries resolve international disputes peacefully rather than through recourse to the threat or use of force.
The principal objective of the campaign is to increase the number of States accepting the compulsory jurisdiction of the ICJ, with the aspiration to achieve universal acceptance of jurisdiction by 2045, the 100th anniversary of the United Nations.
- **Mobilizing an Earth Governance Alliance**(MEGA)

Friday afternoon, 2 – 3.30 pm. Barton Theatre. Presentation by Chris Hamer

“Creating a World Security Community as the Pathway to a Global Democracy”

Chris Hamer discussed one pathway for global integration, namely to copy the regional integration strategy of Jean Monnet and his ‘Action Committee for the United States of Europe’ in 1950. That is, start with a small core of member states to form a Community with limited aims, and evolve and grow from there through a series of further Treaties.



Photo credit: Luiz Bispo

The basic principles of any world federation must include *universality*, if it is to deal with global problems, and *democracy*, to prevent any possibility of the formation of a world tyranny or autocracy. But those two principles are incompatible at the moment, since about half the world’s countries are autocracies. This is the fundamental reason why no world federation is possible at this moment. It also means the core members of our initial Community must be **democracies**, following Bob’s option of Uniting the Democracies.

What should be the purpose of the new Community? Our Coalition for a World Security Community (CWSC) argues that the ongoing struggle between democracy and autocracy on the world stage implies that **security** issues should be the focus. The recent development of the ‘Coalition of the Willing’ to aid Ukraine is a possible

starting point for this process. This presentation was also followed by a lively discussion.

Friday evening, 4 – 5 pm. **Roundtable at the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT)**

On Friday evening, Bob, Chris and Luiz had a roundtable discussion with seven officers from different departments in DFAT concerning the issues discussed at our presentations earlier. The meeting was held under Chatham House rules, so we cannot publicize details of the meeting, but Bob was able to briefly summarize his presentation on the WFM-IGP, and Chris did the same regarding our CWSC. The DFAT officers gave us brief accounts of their major responsibilities. The meeting was held in a very friendly and positive atmosphere.

One fact we did learn was that DFAT now has a major focus on relations with nations in our own region of the Pacific Islands, and personnel numbers in that area have expanded greatly in recent years.

In that connection, a Joint Parliamentary Commission of Inquiry has just finished calling for submissions on the subject of “**The role of Australia's international development program in preventing conflict**”. Luiz and I have managed to put in a submission just before the deadline, arguing again for an upgrade of the Pacific Islands Forum to a Pacific Islands Community, using development funds as an instrument of political leverage. We will circulate our submission later. DFAT have also made a submission to the Inquiry.

Our roundtable discussion wasn't long enough for us to get to any of our specific queries or suggestions for DFAT, but we hope to follow up our discussions with different members of the panel on various matters of interest in the future.

Chris Hamer, 22nd January 2026