

CAUX CONSULTATION REPORT AUGUST 6-7, 2001 New Name for Moral Re-Armament

After some years of searching and much international dialogue, Moral Re-Armament has decided to adopt a new operating name for use around the world. The change is prompted by the reality that in a great many cultures where teams are active, our name no longer reflects adequately who we are and what we offer, or captures the interest of people as it once did.

Through a two-year-long, open and inclusive process culminating in this Consultation in Caux, consensus was reached that *Initiatives of Change* best captures what we offer the world today. National MRA bodies and teams will take an independent decision about whether to keep and use the old name as well, but are encouraged to use the new name as widely as possible. We hope to advance rapidly towards a logo and design package.

Initiatives of Change was decided upon during a two-day reconvened session, in Caux, of the March global Consultation. Forty people took part in the deliberations, including ten replacing participants in the March Consultation, and seven added to the group to give better representation to Asia, Africa and Eastern Europe. The decision will be announced publicly by Cornelio Sommaruga and Rajmohan Gandhi on August 14th at the beginning of the second Agenda for Reconciliation conference. A press release will be issued to the international press at the same time and is attached to this report.

Announcing the new name at the opening of the Life, Faith and Fellowship session, Rajmohan Gandhi, on behalf of the Consultation, said, 'The new name describes what MRA is. It points at various initiatives we are part of around the world, and it will help to generate new ones.'

During the Consultation *Initiatives of Change* was described as a name which is 'democratic', 'has the smell of freedom', 'reaches out to people' and 'provokes conversation'. As the Consultation convened, Ailsa Hamilton reminded participants that we were seeking not 'unanimity', but rather 'consensus under the eye of God that would release all of our energies and thought for the next phase'.

Clarifying the context of our decision, K Haridas, from Malaysia, quoted Rabindranath Tagore: 'Man has to be born twice - first in his own community and then, in order to reach personal fulfillment, in the wider world.'

Addressing the issue of continuity, James Hore-Ruthven offered several recommendations by the International Council. The IC recognizes that some countries will want to continue to use Moral Re-Armament, or MRA, as a banner name, but requests that they add the new name and logo to writing paper, web pages and published documents. Each country can decide how best to combine the new name with Moral Re-Armament or MRA.

The Consultation participants passed a resolution suggesting that the International Association of MRA legal bodies, which is in the process of being established, give consideration to incorporating 'change international' in its full name.

The Richmond Affirmations, which restate our core principles, were reviewed in the light of suggestions made since March, and were endorsed again with a few specific amendments.

BACKGROUND OF THE NAME ISSUE

The issue of a name change was first put on the agenda eight years ago at the Cyprus Consultation. An e-mail exchange, led by John Bond from Australia, carried forward the discussion for several years, with numerous suggestions made.

In November 1999 the IC decided that the discussion should be widened and brought to a conclusion. They initiated a formal process, through which over 100 suggestions were

reduced to a few clear front-runners, of which the IC recommended *Initiatives of Change*.

The selection of a new name was a major item on the agenda of the March Consultation, where this name was considered along with a number of others. Participants reached a clear consensus that the name Moral Re-Armament should be changed, but were unable to reach final consensus between the two front-runners, *Change International* and *Initiatives of Change*. Given the seriousness of the issue, a decision was taken to reconvene the Consultation in Caux in August to consider these two names, plus any others that in the meantime had gained significant support.

PROCESS OF THE CONSULTATION

We devoted two days and 16 hours to discussions about the new name and the affirmations. Discussion began with two basic questions – whom do we want to reach and what do we want to say.

We agreed that we were looking for an operating name, which is not overloaded with meaning but rather evokes a response as would the title of a book or a headline of an article. We would like to reach people who do not know MRA but who would like to work with us, and we would like this name to be helpful for our team around the world.

In addition to the two names selected by the March Consultation, 16 names were proposed. The creativity of the new suggestions and the amount of thought put into the discussion around the world were greatly appreciated. Each of the new suggestions was considered one by one. It became apparent that a number, while excellent in English, had to be put aside because of difficulties with translation or cultural context. In the end, five names which had received the support of at least a third of those present were carried forward.

Discussion and voting on the morning of the second day left us with a list of two names, the same two that received most support in Richmond - *Change International* and *Initiatives of Change*.

Discussion of these two was followed by a vote, the results of which brought silence to the room: 20 votes for each name. The thoughtful conversation which followed sought answers to the question, 'What is God trying to say to us?' Many echoed the thought that God may be less concerned with the name finally chosen than that we live out our calling with faith and passion. Ultimately, the decision taken needed to be more than a democratic vote, but rather one that grew from a search to be God-led.

Most then indicated that though they might support one name, they would accept the other. A final vote indicated a shift towards *Initiatives of Change*. At that point, we moved to seek consensus, giving those who were not at peace with this choice the chance to express their views.

With the last doubts heard, a final consensus was reached. The Consultation ended with a strong sense of gratitude that we had been able to bring this demanding eight-year process to a conclusion and start a new phase for our global work.

Participants: **Africa** - Jackie Euvrard and Pieter Horn, South Africa; Ashwin Patel, Kenya; Fessaha Fre Weri, Eritrea/Canada; **The Americas** - Aurora Barragan, Mexico; Ismar Villavicencio, Honduras; Kathy Beenen, Audrey Burton, Randy Ruffin, Dick Ruffin, USA; Laurent Gagnon, Anne Hartnell, Raymond Vanasse, Canada; **Asia** - Rajmohan Gandhi and Bhanu Kale, India; Grace Liu, Taiwan; Kiyoshi Nagano, Japan; K. Haridas, Malaysia; **Australia/Pacific** - Mike Brown and Peter Thwaites, Australia; Fiona Leggat, New Zealand/UK; **Middle East** - Ramez Salamé, Lebanon; **Europe** - Nathalie Chavanne and Anne-Marie Tate, France, Ailsa Hamilton, James Hore-Ruthven, Mike Lowe, Krish Raval, Laura Trevelyan, UK, Helga Landmark, Norway; Birgitta Samnegård, Sweden; David Forbes-Jaeger, Marianne Spreng, Andrew Stallybrass, Switzerland; Nicole Thieke, Germany; Lotty Wolverkamp, Netherlands; Marta Dabrowska, Poland; Vladimir Devakov, Ukraine; Oleg Ermurati, Moldova; Inese Voika, Latvia.