

Global assembly 2013 Omnia Marzouk

Welcome – to everyone.

Won't cover all points but will just pick out, some:

- **Visits to members – trip to SEA and taking part in APRG in Indonesia where we were magnificently looked after by this young vibrant team, understanding the work in this region, demonstrable leadership and impact the APRG have had in nurturing young new teams.**
- **Visit to USA in Memphis – public event, some of those who I meet there came to the healing memory conference in Caux as part of the large USA delegation.**
- **Supporting Caux conference – planning in February, usual presence at official open day as well as speaking at three opening conferences of the summer.**
- **External links: developed through work of Rainer Gude and Cornelio's introductions in Geneva visit in January meeting a number of international agents and diplomats. Visits in each of Indonesia, Taiwan and Korea built on their partnerships and organizations. Will be attending the Sant'Egidio meeting in Rome in September.**
- **In Lebanon we held a gathering of 25 representatives from 6 Arab countries – agreed shared vision for IofC work in the Arab world, focus on trust building generally and working with young people as priority. Established an Arab regional coordination group, which is developing its first shared project across national boundaries.**
- **In tomorrow's session will update more on learning from the past process.**

It continues to be a real privilege and pleasure to serve as President, connect more with IofC national teams, and present what IofC is doing to outside agencies that continue to respond positively to our relevant approach to issues of common interest.

I wanted to present some reflections on positive developments and challenges that I see from my vantage point. This is not meant to be a comprehensive list but just some pointers. I will start with some of the challenges to end on the positives I have noticed in the last 12 months.

Challenges

- 1) **Finding a dual approach within our own work and teams that enables the life changing experience that is at the heart of what we do to sit happily with a more project orientated, outcome based**

approach. This is not just a theoretical issue, or about being able to do this to generate outside funding vital for our long-term financial sustainability. It is vital to combine both these approaches to enable a younger generation engage with us and to ensure a healthy transition of our work to younger generations that will keep the life changing experience that is at the heart of IofC but do things in different ways.

- 2) Reflect good practice which is consistent with our own values in our internal governance systems – with more transparency in our operations, adopting policies and best practices as well as a culture of evaluation and learning which will also enable an easier transition to younger people to take responsibility,**
- 3) It is sadly a reality that personal divisions still hamper creative teamwork and continue to cause deep divisions in a number of our teams. If I think of our international work as a forest with many national trees of different shapes and sizes; the branches of even one national tree are unique but they are still nourished by the same root. We need to be able to acknowledge in more creative ways our differences and ways of partnering internally that enable these divisions to be overcome.**

Opportunities and positives.

- 4) The work we all did last year, ending in the GA that clarified our mission, vision, focus areas and strategic plan has paid huge dividends from my vantage point. It enables a clear consistent and concise picture of what is about and what it does. It enables others to understand what we are doing and how their organizations share intersection points. My 50 copies of the strategic plan have gone to the four corners of the earth.**
- 5) The three focus areas of Trust building, ethical leadership and sustainable living have enabled us within IofC to more consciously seek synergy points and cross boundary working. This was beginning to happen anyway but seems to have been accelerated.**
- 6) Across our work we are more consciously seeking outside partners both at national level and in our conferences. We are also more intentionally seeing Caux and Asia Plateau as stepping-stones on common themes. In both our conference centers we are more obviously reaching to out to both grass roots work and policy makers with the same message of a value based approach and personal change. It has been interesting to see in each of the conferences this summer in Caux senior policy makers, leaders in different fields all stress the importance of value based approach and personal change in dealing with wider world issues.**

7) Young people are increasingly captivated by their initial encounters with IofC and want to engage with us and find entry points to do more.

I am confident that we can overcome our challenges to seize the ever-increasing opportunities that are presenting for us to answer world needs starting with ourselves.