

2003 has been both an exciting and challenging year for the World Federalist Association. One obvious external challenge is the political environment in the United States with a President and right of center Congress in power and standing strongly against all that we envision and seek in the world. A significant internal challenge is our relatively small size as an organization, and a membership that is increasing in age and decreasing in activity as a result.

These two challenges, and many others, were in mind at the beginning of 2003 when the volunteer Board of Directors and the staff of WFA and our longtime sister organization (and WFM Associated Organization) – the Campaign for U.N. Reform – started to explore together a strategic partnership between our two organizations, with the education and local outreach work of WFA combined logically and strategically with the political and electoral actions of CUNR.

After a nearly unanimous vote of support by WFA's members in March during a National Council meeting, the Boards and staff have moved forward in designing a plan for organizational unity. The work has been carried out over the past several months, and the final proposal for the unified organization, which will operate under a new name, will be voted on by the members at a meeting in early November.

To develop the governance models and the proposed name and key messages, we sought the input of hundreds of members from both organizations as well as the expert professional assistance of consultants who work with non-profit organizations on these endeavors. We also systematically surveyed the reactions of potential non-members and important audiences, including foundation officers, members of the media, the staff of elected officials, etc.

Even in the United States, where we operate under a federalist system of government, the lack of understanding about the term "world federalism" poses a challenge for including that term in our organization's name. While those of us who are already members and supporters are very clear about the meaning of "world federalism" when we talk about it, we have learned that we are often unable to educate even those people who are sympathetic and supportive of our vision when they are confronted at the outset by a name that confuses and/or alienates them. Therefore, to improve our educational efforts and build a larger and stronger movement for our work, this new name for the unified organization will be voted upon at the upcoming assembly: Citizens for Global Solutions. In addition, to strengthen the intellectual base of our work in the U.S. regarding proposals for democratic world federation, we are also launching a World Federalist Institute to support the work of, for example, Dr. Joseph Schwartzberg and his proposal for weighted voting in the United Nations.

The key actions, activities and program areas of WFA align very closely with those of WFM. Our most significant program is on the International Criminal Court, where we partner with WFM on an ongoing basis. Our work, of course, focuses on the policies of

the U.S. government and the attitudes of Americans toward the ICC. WFA coordinates the Washington Working Group on the ICC, a coalition of Washington, DC-based groups who support the ICC., and we are currently carrying out an education and advocacy effort called the “Victims Trust Fund Campaign,” which has garnered the support of celebrities like Martin Sheen, Susan Sarandon and dozens of other concerned citizens. We regularly provide analysis and critiques of the U.S. government policies to the media, including being interviewed about the exemptions that were sought by the U.S. in the U.N. Security Council, as well as the pressure being brought by the U.S. against other nations as President Bush seeks to secure Bilateral Immunity Agreements that further undermine the jurisdiction of the court. We are pleased to report that WFA recently received a significant two-year grant from the Ford Foundation to support this work on the ICC.

WFA also has a programmatic focus on effective U.N. peacekeeping, working closely with CUNR in the Partnership for Effective Peacekeeping (which WFA helped launch in 2001). We support the creation of rapidly deployable peacekeeping forces, and together with CUNR we promote and monitor legislation and U.S. policies on this issue and others. We have also recently partnered with Oxfam America in co-organizing with them a special conference on Global Democracy that will take place in December. And our communications and media efforts have expanded significantly over the past year, with regular press releases, e-mail advocacy, improved media relations and an enhanced website.

Local activities are being carried out on an ongoing basis by volunteers in approximately 30 chapters and community groups around the U.S. In total, WFA currently has approximately 14,000 members, which is both large in contrast to the membership of other organizations involved in WFM, but very small in terms of being able to create change in the U.S. and the world toward achieving our vision. The reason our membership is as large as it currently is depends significantly on the financial investment made by the organization in recruiting and renewing the support of individuals. Each year WFA spends nearly 25% of its total expense budget on membership recruitment and renewals, and this generates approximately 50% of our income from these individual contributions. The WFA annual budget is approximately \$1 million, and we have 9 full-time professional staff working out of our Washington, D.C. headquarters. There are also volunteer and paid professionals staff members in 5 other cities around the U.S. In addition, each year 10-15 student interns work out of our National Office for 3 to 6 months.

With the cooperation and partnership between WFA, CUNR and WFM already strong, the staff of all three organizations knows that there are ways to even more significantly coordinate and reinforce each other’s work. That is why we are planning a 1-2 day retreat with key WFM, WFA and CUNR staff within the next few months to enhance the close working relationship we already have.

For more information about WFA, CUNR and our projects, please visit:

www.wfa.org <<http://www.wfa.org/>>

www.cunr.org <<http://www.cunr.org/>>

www.victimstrustfund.org <<http://www.victimstrustfund.org/>>