



## World Federalist Movement – Institute for Global Policy

**To: WFM Council**  
**From: WFM International Secretariat**  
**Date: October 23-24, 2004**  
**Re: Other Programmatic Areas**

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### Report on WFM's international secretariat's activities within the following program areas:

- Strengthening and Democratizing the United Nations
- International Democracy and Democratization of Multilateral Institutions
- Global Environmental Governance and Sustainable Development
- Promoting Federalism and Constitutional Democracy

### CURRENT ACTIVITIES AND PROJECTS

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#### **Primacy of the General Assembly - GA Reform**

During the 58<sup>th</sup> session of the General Assembly (GA) under the Presidency of Julian Hunt, Santa Lucia, reforming the GA has been seriously debated and resulted in two resolutions on the revitalization of the GA (A/RES/58/126 and A/RES/58/316). The International Secretariat (IS) has monitored this process and is currently following the 59<sup>th</sup> session in its efforts of implementing these resolutions.

#### **Security Council Reform**

With the establishment of a working group on Security Council reform at the 58<sup>th</sup> session of the GA and the upcoming report by the High-Level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change established by Secretary General Annan, the issue of Security Council reform has been given a lot of attention in the UN corridors - latest with the claim for permanent seats by Brazil, Germany, India and Japan. WFM IS is monitoring this development and is awaiting the report by the High-Level Panel which is expected in December 2004.

#### **Expanding Citizens' Rights**

On June 21<sup>st</sup> 2004, the Panel of Eminent Persons on UN-Civil Society Relations released their report with 30 recommendations for enhancement of civil society participation in the UN. It is a comprehensive and in many ways controversial report, that potentially could undermine the rights and privileges that NGOs currently enjoy with regards to UN participation. The IS performed a comprehensive analysis of the report and has participated in the subsequent debate in both NGO forums and UN meetings. In addition, the IS has hosted a series of meetings of substantive and strategic discussions with a small group of NGOs. Subsequently, the IS wrote to the UN Secretary-General sharing our support and concerns with the report of the Eminent Persons' Panel, particularly urging for an inclusive follow-up process with mechanisms for NGO inputs and participation (This letter is posted on the WFM website).

In September 2004, the Secretary-General released his response to the report of the Panel of Eminent Persons, which was submitted to the UN GA for their considerations under agenda item 'Strengthening the UN'. The IS monitored the GA's deliberations on October 4 and 5, where both support and opposition to the reports were expressed. The President of the GA concluded the debate by announcing that he would hold further consultations with delegations on the issues and report to the Assembly at a later date. The IS will continue to follow the process and lobby governments to avoid the deterioration of the current situation and ensure progress on the proposals for beneficial change.

Recently, the IS sent a letter in cooperation with the Global Policy Forum to Secretary General Annan expressing our great concern with the current situation of the UN Non-Governmental Liaison Service (NGLS). Awaiting the outcome of the debate on the two reports, many NGLS donors are suspending their financial support leaving NGLS with an unstable basis of funding and thus a decreased ability to provide services. The IS is committed to support the NGLS in its request for intermediate funds while awaiting the resolution of the GA debate.

### **Official Document System**

In December 2003, the General Assembly adopted a new biennial budget that funded the necessary computer hardware for the implementation of free NGO online access to the UN Official Documents System, as previously called for by the IS. As a follow up of the implementation of this decision, the IS, in cooperation with the Global Policy Forum, is in continual contact with the responsible counterpart in the UN to ensure that this access is made available within the promised timeframe.

### **Global Levies or Taxes**

With the General Assembly's decision in December 2003 to consider possible innovative sources of financing for development in its 59<sup>th</sup> session, the political climate for global taxation of currency transactions is taking shape. Recently, the Secretary General submitted a report on the issue to the 59<sup>th</sup> session of the GA based on a UNU-Wider study entitled '*New Sources of Development Finance*'. In addition, many Member-States have taken up the issue on a bilateral or national level, most noticeably the initiative by the Presidents of Brazil, France, Chile and Spain of an action program aimed at identifying innovative sources of financing. A technical group produced a report on new sources such as taxation on arms, financial transactions and environmental taxations, which formed the basis of a high-level meeting in New York on September 20<sup>th</sup> 2004.

The IS is monitoring these processes and is currently drafting a position paper on innovative sources for independent financing of multilateral institutions, mainly addressing the political aspects of the implementation of a taxation of currency transactions.

### **International Conference on New and Restored Democracies**

In following up on the IS involvement in the previous International Conference for New and Restored Democracies in Mongolia in 2002, we are monitoring the preparatory process for the next conference in Qatar, 2006. The IS is planning to engage actively in the NGO preparatory process.

Concurrently, we monitor the Communities of Democracies and their latest efforts for the establishment of an informal Democracy Caucus in the UN. The Communities of Democracies is very exclusive with regards to membership of countries and have taken upon themselves to classify and declassify governments on the basis of their democratic performance. Accordingly, the IS follows this process with great attention.

### **Parliamentary Assembly at the UN**

With the recent paper *Developing International Democracy - For a Parliamentary Assembly in the UN* by Andreas Bummel, Committee for a Democratic UN, the IS has initiated the revival of the debate and hopes to mobilize broad interest in the issue. Specifically, we presented the paper to the Permanent Observer of the Inter-Parliamentary Union Ambassador Anda Filip.

### **Revision of WFM Website**

Within the framework of promoting federalism by providing information of WFM's vision, positions and programs, the IS is currently revising and redesigning the WFM website. This entails a revision of the above programs' interrelations, their contents and descriptions.

### **Addressing public expenditure**

The IS will compare the level and priorities of public expenditure globally and produce a folder with illustrative comparisons of public expenditure – with special focus on the expenditure of money on arms and militarization. This folder is intended to highlight that there can be no sincere efforts on sustainable development and elimination of poverty without addressing the direct link and detrimental effects of the worldwide arms trade and investment in militarization. This illustrative folder will serve as a tool for advocacy.

### **WFM promotional material**

The IS plans on producing new promotional materials about the work of WFM, to draw the links within its programmatic areas and World Federalism. The IS will also produce fact sheets on 'Federalism', which could be used as educational material by all World Federalists.