



OUR VISION:

We envision a future in which countries work together to abolish war, protect our rights and freedoms, and solve the problems facing humanity that no country can solve alone. This vision requires effective democratic global institutions that will apply the rule of law while respecting the diversity and autonomy of national and local communities.

OUR MISSION:

We are a membership organization working to build political will in the United States to achieve our vision. We do this by educating Americans about our global interdependence, communicating global concerns to public officials, and developing proposals to create, reform and strengthen international institutions such as the United Nations.

GIVING CIVIL SOCIETY ITS GLOBAL DUE

Joe Schwartzberg, President, Minnesota Chapter

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In the previous (March) number of this Newsletter I addressed the United Nations' profound democratic deficit, noting that it was an organization of nations, rather than of people(s). In what follows I seek to make the case that the voices of civil society also have to be systematically heard and weighed in the making of vital decisions affecting our endangered planet. The ideas expressed below are distilled from Chapter 14 of my recently completed book, *Transforming the United Nations System: Designs for a Workable World*

The tremendous increase in the number of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in the world since the end of World War II is a development of profound importance, yet one that is insufficiently appreciated by most of the world's politically engaged population. While no official count exists, there are thought to be more than a million NGOs, of which more than 250,000, designated as INGOs, operate internationally.

To their credit, the founders of the UN included in the UN Charter Article 71, which permits ECOSOC (the Economic and Social Council) to grant INGOs UN-"affiliated status." In 1996 the possibility of gaining such status was extended to NGOs working in only a single Member nation. Affiliated status is now of three types: "general," "special" and "roster." Representatives from agencies holding all three types may attend UN-sponsored conferences and meetings. Those from special and general NGOs may, additionally, circulate reports to UN agencies. Holders of general status may even propose agenda items. Over the years, the

number of affiliated agencies, has increased dramatically, from a mere 40 in 1948 to 3,187 in 2008, of which 137 were general, 2,072 special and 976 roster.

Unfortunately, the amount of paper generated by affiliated agencies is so great that it is impossible for most of the world's nations to read--much less reflect upon and react to--all that is written, even on subjects about which they are deeply concerned. Moreover, NGOs often work at cross-purposes from one another (as do, for example, pro-choice and pro-life organizations in the US). Yet another major problem is that NGOs from the global North vastly exceed those of the global South in respect to numbers, budget, and other resources. These shortcomings are correctable, as I shall seek to demonstrate in what follows.

The chief corrective mechanism that I envisage would be the creation of five "civil society coordinating councils" (CSCCs), dealing with the following broad issue clusters: peace and security, human rights, development, the

environment, and democratic governance. These five entities would become the functional interface between civil society and the UN system. To make these CSCCs possible, it would first be necessary, subject to General Assembly authorization, to have the UN Secretary General appoint high-level commissions comprised of highly qualified experts from different parts of the world to recommend the general form and mandate of each CSCC and the manner of its selection.

Below each CSCC, there would be two levels of action (see diagram on page 2). The lower of the two would be the working level of the individual NGOs. On our diagram, relating to the CSCC for Human Rights, the NGOs are grouped by issue clusters more narrowly defined than those for the CSCCs. Likely foci for issue clusters would include women's rights, the rights of labor, racial discrimination, the rights of indigenous peoples, immigrants' rights, infringement of civil liberties, the right to enjoy minimum standards of economic welfare, and so forth. The number and composition of

clusters would vary over time and the initiatives for their creation and occasional reconstitution would very likely come from leading agencies (not necessarily primarily international) such as Oxfam, Amnesty International, the ACLU, etc.

To become and remain a member of any issue cluster an NGO would have to

fulfill several obligations: to file a formal application with the appropriate CSCC, to file annual activity and financial re-ports, to agree to follow a code of ethical conduct (including non-proselytizing by faith-based entities), and to pay an annual fee based on a sliding income scale. NGOs with diverse man-dates (e.g., Avaaz) would be allowed to become

members of more than a single cluster under a given CSCC and also to function under more than a single CSCC, provided they met the membership conditions for each of the cluster coalitions in which they sought to have a voice.

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Figure 1.1: Proposed System of Engagement of Human Rights NGOs with Major Organs of United Nations and Human Rights Engagement among Major UN Organs

United Nations Level

- ESEC:** Economic, Social and Environmental Council (proposed)
- GA:** General Assembly
- HRC:** Human Rights Council (reconstituted)
- PA:** UN Parliamentary Assembly (proposed)
- SC:** Security Council
- SECT:** Secretariat

COALITION COORDINATION LEVEL

- HRCC:** Human Rights Coordination Council

LEVEL OF AD HOC NGO COALITIONS

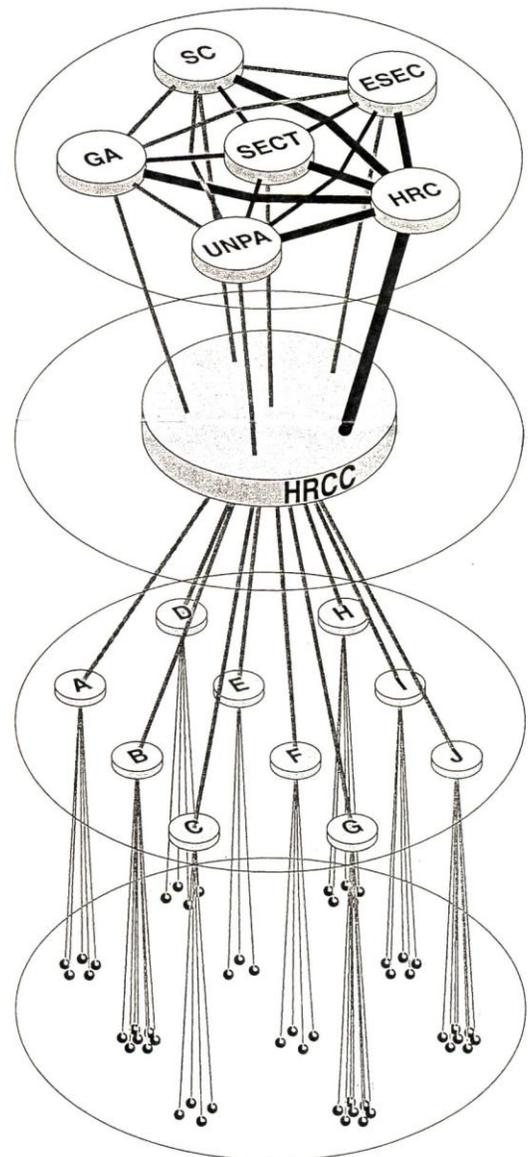
- A-J:** Ad hoc NGO coalitions: on women's rights, indigenous peoples, labor rights, etc. coalitions will fluctuate over time

LEVEL OF INDIVIDUAL NGOS

The number of participating NGOs will vary greatly from one coalition to another and will fluctuate over time. For the sake of simplicity, those depicted here are but a small fraction of the likely totals if the proposed system were in effect.

Type and Weight of Engagement:

- Both institutionalized and ad hoc linkages 
- Ad hoc linkages only 



THIRD THURSDAY GLOBAL ISSUES FORUM

Free and open to the public.

Where? Hennepin Avenue United Methodist Church,
511 Groveland Avenue, Minneapolis (at Lyndale & Hennepin). Park in church lot.

Thursday, May 17, 7:00 – 9:00 pm.

“FUTURE EARTH.” Recent research by thousands of scientists around the world have built up a body of evidence documenting that humans have become the dominant agent of global change. Global warming is but one profound manifestation of human domination of the planet we share. Many innovations are now needed to enable people to thrive on Earth. Earth, however, is now home to the wealthiest, healthiest, best educated and most innovative, creative, and interconnected cohort in history. Humans possess the means to address the planetary challenges they have set in motion. But first we need a consensus that we have crossed a threshold from being merely Earth inhabitants to becoming Earth’s leading architects and engineers. What, then, do we want our future Earth to be?

Presenter: Patrick Hamilton. Patrick is the Director of Global Change Initiatives at the Science Museum of Minnesota, is a Principle Investigator with the University of Minnesota’s National Center for Earth-surface Dynamics and a Fellow of the University’s Institute on the Environment. He has been producing museum exhibits and programs about environmental topics for 28 years. Recent projects have included “Water,” an international traveling exhibition developed with the American Museum of Natural History; “The Big Back Yard,” the Museum’s environmental science park; and “Science House,” the Museum’s solar-powered, zero-emissions building. Patrick’s current focus is the “Future Earth Initiative,” exploring the implications of humans as the dominant agent of change on Earth.

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The five CSCCs would assign each NGO within their respective purviews a weighted vote. The weights would be in points in respect to the NGO’s budget, the number of countries in which it operates, and its UN affiliation status. (Regrettably, space constraints preclude the provision of additional details.) NGO weights would count in the election of CSCC members and in deliberation of policies at levels above those of the individual agencies.

Between the level of the individual NGOs and that of the CSCCs there would be a level of NGO coalitions whose main function would be to harmonize the concerns of the individual NGOs and prepare a set of recommendations to be passed upward to the relevant CSCC. The CSCC, in turn, would seek to harmonize and prioritize the concerns of the individual coalitions and send its consolidated set of recommendations to the most appropriate core agencies within the UN system with the

expectation that the report would have a bearing in the formation of policy.

Thus, the Peace and Security CSCC would report to the Security Council; the Human Rights CSCC would report to the Human Rights Council (presently under the General Assembly, but hopefully an independent organ in the not-distant future); the Democratic Governance CSCC would report to both the General Assembly (UNGA) and also, should it come into existence, to the UN Parliamentary Assembly (UNPA) and both the Development and Environment CSCCs to the UNGA, UNPA and ECOSOC.

The regional composition of the CSCCs poses a major problem given the aforementioned gap between the resources of the global North and the global South. A way of mitigating this problem would be to allocate membership by regions using the formula: $C = (P + N) / 2$, where C = the percentage of CSCC members for a given region, P = the region’s percent-

age of the total world population, and N = the point total of the region’s NGOs as a percent-age of the point total for all of the NGOs grouped under the CSCC.

Based on this formula and extrapolations of growth of both NGOs and population by region, I estimated the following mean percentages of CSCC councilors as of the year 2025:

Africa South of the Sahara	9
East Asia	14
Europe	21
Latin America and the Caribbean	7-8
Middle East and North Africa	7
North America	17-18
Northern Eurasia (mainly Russia)	2-3
South Asia	14-15
Southeast Asia and the Pacific	7

These percentages, however, would vary somewhat, from one CSCC to another.

At the level of the UN itself, the agency/agencies receiving CSCC reports would,
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after appropriate analysis, comment critically on them and forward them, with their comments, to other components of the UN system, including the Secretariat, which would translate the reports into all six of the UN's official languages. Additionally, it would provide feedback to the CSCC, which would, in turn, make that feedback available to lower level coalitions and NGOs.

To conclude, there is ample reason to enhance and regularize the role of NGOs in the decision-making processes of the UN system, even if only in an advisory capacity. A great many NGOs possess knowledge, skills and resources that the world sorely needs and that cannot normally be obtained through customary forms of reliance on relationships within the diplomatic community.

WFM CONGRESS IN WINNIPEG

PARTICIPANTS WANTED

The World Federalist Movement, of which Citizens for Global Solutions is the US national affiliate, will be having its annual Congress in Winnipeg, Manitoba on July 9-13. Our Chapter hopes to send a group of members and guests (i.e. non-CGS members) to participate in the large number of events that will be open to the public. We hope to leave the Twin Cities early on the 9th and return on the 14th, traveling by a rented minivan, carrying seven people. If more wish to come, we'll make additional arrangements.

COSTS: The shared costs of transportation should come to roughly \$150 per person. Rooms in hotels near the Congress venue would probably run to \$80-120 per night

(half that if shared, though the Congress organizers are working on discounted rates) and it is also likely that University dorm lodging will be available. Congress registration (up to June 9) is \$250.

Plenary sessions and commissions will address a wide range of topics: a UN Parliamentary Assembly; International Justice, the Rule of Law and Human Rights; Peace and Conflict Prevention; UN Reform and Federalism at Regional and Global Levels; Environmental and economic Governance and the Global Commons; etc.

Winnipeg is a very cosmopolitan city, with good restaurants and lots to see and do, especially in summer. Organized excursions will be available on July 13.

If you are interested in coming, call Joe at 651-429-9562 or 612-625-5578 or use schwa004umn.edu.

Citizens for Global Solutions
(formerly the World Federalist Association)
17350 West 67th Street Circle
Eden Prairie, MN 55346

www.globalsolutionsmn.org

Mark the Date!

June 21

C.G.S. Annual Dinner

Keynote Speaker
Professor, Author,
and Media Personality,
DAVID SCHULTZ
“Wealth vs. Democracy:
The Battle for America’s
Political Soul”

A strong civil society promotes responsible citizenship and makes democratic forms of government possible. A weak civil society supports authoritarian rule, which keeps society weak.

Kofi Annan

CGS MN ANNUAL MEETING INVITATION

Thursday evening, June 21, 2012, 6:00 - 9:00 p.m.
Social Hall, Hennepin Avenue United Methodist Church
511 Groveland Avenue, Minneapolis

ABUNDANT FREE PARKING IN CHURCH PARKING LOT

SCHEDULE: 6:00 Social Hour; 6:30 Served Dinner (vegetarian option available);
7:15 Program; 9:00 Adjournment.

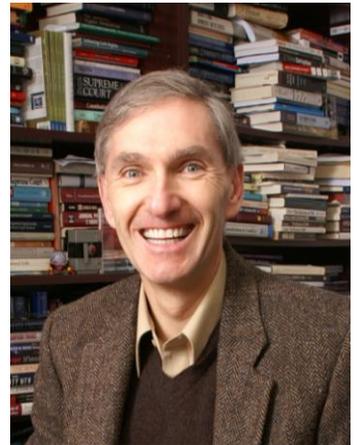
COST: \$30 per person; \$15 for students and those with limited income.
Reservations should be made by June 15. **QUESTIONS?** Call Joe at 612-625-5578.

Keynote Speaker: Professor DAVID SCHULTZ

WEALTH VS. DEMOCRACY: THE BATTLE FOR AMERICA'S POLITICAL SOUL

David Schultz, a Hamline University professor in the School of Business is the author or editor of more than 25 books and 90 articles on American politics, campaigns and elections, media and politics, and election law. He is frequently interviewed by local, national and international media on these subjects. His most recent book is *Politainment: The Ten Rules of Contemporary Politics*.

Occupy Wall Street brought renewed focus to the growing gap between the rich and poor and the power of wealth in the United States. The battle is not simply one between the haves and have nots, but over the political soul and future viability of American democracy. At a time when progressive groups are fragmented and solutions for reform are scattered, this talk describes both what is politically viable and imperative for the people to create a "Second Progressive Era" to restore democracy.



MEETING RESERVATION FORM AND BALLOT

RESERVATION: Please reserve _____ places for (indicates names of those who will attend):

_____ My check for \$ _____ is enclosed.

VOLUNTARY DONATION: I would also like to contribute \$ _____ to promote the work of the Minnesota Chapter of Citizens for Global Solutions. A check is enclosed.

**Please send checks, payable to "CGSMN," to Hossein Akhavi-pour,
321 Wyndham Circle East, New Brighton, MN 55112.**

BALLOT (for CGS members only): Check the following spaces as you wish. I hereby cast my ballot for:

_____ all the candidates listed for the officers' posts and Board of Directors (see list on reverse of this page):

_____ all of the candidates except for the following: _____

_____ the following write-in candidates (please state position): _____

CANDIDATES FOR OFFICERS AND BOARD OF CGS, MN CHAPTER

N.B. One must be a member to vote, but does not have to attend the dinner to do so. Ballots appear at the bottom of reverse side of this page and should be sent to Hossein Akhavi-pour, 321 Wyndham Circle, New Brighton, MN 5512.

PRESIDENT: JOE SCHWARTZBERG (incumbent). A life-long peace and justice activist, Joe has served thirteen years as President of the Minnesota Chapter of the World Federalist Association / Citizens for Global Solutions. He is a “Distinguished International Emeritus Professor” at the University of Minnesota and publishes and lectures extensively on UN reform and peacemaking (especially in Kashmir). His academic specialties are South Asia, political geography and the history of cartography. He is on the [Int’l] Council of the World Federalist Movement.

VICE-PRESIDENT: GAIL HUGHES (incumbent). Gail’s background is eclectic. She currently teaches and advises doctoral candidates in education at Capella University. Over the past decade she has taught courses in global studies, sociology, and interdisciplinary social science at St. Cloud State University. In earlier years she was a Program Evaluator for the Minnesota Community Colleges. She taught English as a Peace Corps volunteer in Lesotho and development studies as an independent volunteer in Botswana.

SECRETARY: BARBARA GERTEN (incumbent). After moving from her home state, Montana, Barbara graduated from the University of Minnesota’s Carlson School of Management. She worked as a certified public accountant for 10 years before switching to “human services.” She was a co-founder of the Minnesota Restorative Services Coalition and of the Partnership for Education of Children in Afghanistan (which she visited in 2003); and has served on the planning committee for a conference: Nonviolence in Islamic Traditions.

TREASURER: DENNIS DILLON (incumbent). Retired after 38 years of work on educational testing and survey research and a co-founder of two companies, Dennis is active in peace, justice and sustainability pursuits for the Basilica parish, the Minnesota Alliance of Peacemakers (directing Peace Island project) and the Minnesota Peace Project and People of Faith Peacemakers.

NEW BOARD MEMBERS:

JIM ALLEN: Jim received his M.S. degree in mathematics (with a minor in statistics) from North Dakota State University, and subsequently taught mathematics and science in both public and religious high schools. His specializations were with modeling and simulation. He has also been a computer programmer for IBM and worked in management science for Pillsbury, retiring in 2000. A Navy veteran, he is an active member of Veterans for Peace.

ANDREA LEWIS: Andrea is a 2007 graduate from Mankato State University, where she majored in Non-Profit Management and Urban and Regional Studies. She has since worked for the YMCA in South Minneapolis, mainly in operations, but also in international work and in many local initiatives. She has studied Spanish in Ecuador and was chosen by the Youth Peace Network to attend an international camp on youth leadership in British Columbia.

MARIAM MOHAMED: Mariam’s degrees include a B.S. in agronomy, earned in Somalia; and two M.S. degrees: in environmental science & forestry and in agriculture, earned in the US. After leading a development program funded by the UN and World Bank in Somalia, she came to the US. Here she has been a Program Director for Workforce Development, Executive Director of the Somali Parent Teacher Association, Children and Family Program Officer for the McKnight Foundation, and a program consultant/facilitator for numerous philanthropic organizations.

LARS JORGEN ROED: Lars, who hails from Horten, Norway, is a Program Associate at the Oslo Center for Peace and Human Rights and also serves on the Student Advisory Board of the Human Rights Program at the University of Minnesota. He has been involved for with International Model UN programs since his 15th year and this year helped with the Nobel Peace Prize Forum. His interests include political psychology and Russian.

CONTINUING BOARD MEMBERS:

HOSSEIN AKHAVI-POUR, DICK BERNARD, LYLE CHRISTIANSON, JASON JOHNSON, BHARAT PAREKH, and JUNE PARROT.

Thanks to **OUTGOING BOARD MEMBERS:** Jim Nelson, Charmagne Campbell-Patton, Rosa María de la Cueva Peterson, Hector Garcia, Ted Richter, Adepeju Solarin and Soren Sorenson
