Our Common Peacebuilding Challenge: the Contribution of ‘International Geneva’

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BIographies of Moderators and Speakers

Arnauld A. Akodjenou is Director of the Division of Operational Services, Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). Prior to this, he was Director of the Emergency and Security Service. From 2000 to 2003, he served as UNHCR Representative in Sierra Leone, and then as Regional Coordinator in Ghana, for the Liberia and Cote d’Ivoire crises. Mr. Akodjenou joined UNHCR in 1986, and has held a number of different posts at Headquarters in Geneva and in the field, including in Djibouti, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Mali, where he served as UNHCR representative from 1997 to 2000. Mr. Akodjenou holds an MA in History and Geography from the University of Benin, an MA in International Relations and Political Science from the Graduate Institute of International Studies (HEI), Geneva, as well as a doctorate in Political Science from HEI.

David Atwood is Director of the Quaker United Nations Office (QUNO) in Geneva, where he also serves (since 1995) as Representative for Disarmament and Peace. In his programme of work at QUNO, he has specialized in arms control and security-related issues and is a co-founder of the Geneva Forum, a partnership project with the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research and the Graduate Institute of International Studies Programme on Strategic and International Security Studies. Formerly, he was General Secretary of the International Fellowship of Reconciliation, based in the Netherlands from 1988-1994, and before that he was Tutor in Peace Studies at Woodbrooke College in Birmingham, UK. He received his PhD in 1982 from the University of North Carolina.

Marek Belka has served as Executive Secretary of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe since December 2005. Prior to joining the United Nations, Mr. Belka was Prime Minister of Poland from May 2004 to November 2005. He was previously Poland’s Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Finance, and has served as Chief Economic Adviser to the President of Poland. Mr. Belka has also been an adviser and consultant to the Ministry of Finance and the Ministry of Ownership Transformations and Central Office of Planning, and worked as a Consultant to the World Bank. Likewise, he has served as Adviser to the Prime Minister of Albania and Senior Adviser to JP Morgan for Central and Eastern Europe. Mr. Belka has published extensively on socio-economic issues. He holds an M.A. (economics of foreign trade), a Ph.D. in economics and a Ph.D. (“habilitation” in economics) from the University of Łódź.

Sally Fegan-Wyles has been Director of the United Nations Development Group Office (UNDGO) since 2001. An Irish National and economist by training, she has over 25 years experience of United Nations fieldwork for UNICEF and UNDP, mainly in Africa. Her latest post before the UNDGO was as United Nations Resident Coordinator and UNDP Resident Representative in Tanzania. Before that she was UNICEF Representative for six years in Uganda in the immediate post-Amin period, and UNICEF Representative in Zimbabwe during the 1991-92 drought. As Director of the UNDGO, she supports the Chair of the United Nations Development Group in guiding the development agencies through UN Reform, towards providing more effective efficient support to
partners at the country level. Ms. Fegan-Wyles holds a BSc from Trinity College, Dublin (1975) and an MSc from the London School of Economics (1978).

Jean Feyder is Permanent Representative of the Great Duchy of Luxembourg to the United Nations Office at Geneva. Prior to his appointment to Geneva, Mr. Feyder served as Director for Cooperation for Development at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. From 1993 to 1998, he was Director for Political Affairs at the Ministry, and from 1987 to 1992 Permanent Representative of Luxembourg to United Nations Headquarters in New York. From 1983 to 1987, Mr. Feyder served as Luxembourg’s Deputy Permanent Representative to the European Communities. He holds a PhD in Law, and a degree in applied economic science.

Martin Griffiths is Director of the Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue. A lawyer by training, Mr. Griffiths has worked for UNICEF in Asia, in the British Diplomatic Service, and in British NGOs, latterly as Chief Executive of ActionAid. In 1994, he rejoined the United Nations as Director of the Department of Humanitarian Affairs (which became OCHA) in Geneva, and then from 1998 to his departure for the HD Centre as Deputy to the United Nations Emergency Relief Coordinator in New York. During this period, he also served as United Nations Regional Humanitarian Coordinator for the Great Lakes (1996-97) and United Nations Regional Coordinator in the Balkans (1999) with the rank of United Nations Assistant Secretary-General.

Marion S. Kappeyne van de Coppello has been Deputy Permanent Representative of The Netherlands to the United Nations Office and other International Organizations in Geneva since 2006. She entered The Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs in 1978, and has held a number of different positions both in political affairs and in development cooperation. In 1996, Ms. Kappeyne was appointed Director for Conflict Management and Humanitarian Assistance and, after the merger of this department with the Human Rights Department in 1999, she was Director for Human Rights and Peacebuilding, including Humanitarian Assistance. From July 2002 and until her appointment to Geneva, she served as Director for the Western Hemisphere (The Americas). Ms. Kappeyne holds an MA in International Law from Leiden University, The Netherlands, and an MA and a BA from University of Rochester, USA.

Alfredo Lazarte Hoyle is Director of the International Programme on Crisis Response and Reconstruction at the International Labour Organization (ILO). Mr. Lazarte Hoyle is a Peruvian economist, and has long professional experience on technical cooperation activities. Since 1991, he has worked with the ILO in such fields as microfinance, rural development and Local Economic Recovery and Development. Mr. Lazarte Hoyle has operated in more than 60 countries, mostly in special situations, such as armed conflict and peacebuilding, post-natural disaster recoveries, economic and financial downturns and difficult socio-economic transitions. He participated in the design and implementation of the ILO’s InFocus Programme on Crisis Response and Reconstruction (IFP/CRISIS), and since December 2004 he has led the transition of IFP/CRISIS to the International Programme on Crisis Response and Reconstruction (ILO/CRISIS). Mr. Lazarte Hoyle has published several articles related to microfinance, MSE development and, principally, Local Economic Development and Recovery.

Paul Mahwera is Permanent Representative of Burundi to the United Nations Office at Geneva and other International Organizations in Geneva. Prior to his appointment to Geneva in November 2006, Mr. Mahwera had been a journalist in Germany, where he served, from 1976 to 2002, as editor/writer of French language programming for Deutsche Welle (international German radio). From 1974 to 1976, he was editor/writer of Swahili programming for the same station. Previously, Mr. Mahwera had been a journalist for the national radio of Burundi, “The Voice of the Revolution”, from 1967 to 1971. From 1971 to 1974, Mr. Mahwera studied at the studio-school of the Radio Cooperation Office in Paris, where he received his professional training.
Kadija Rachida Masri is Permanent Observer of the African Union to the United Nations Office and other International Organizations in Geneva. Prior to her appointment to Geneva in March 2005, Ms. Masri had been serving in the Office of the Tunisian Secretary of State for African Affairs. From 1998 to 2001, she worked at the Tunisian Embassy in Stockholm, and from 1988 to 1992 at the Tunisian Embassy in Algiers. During her career with the Tunisian Foreign Ministry, which started in 1981, Ms. Masri has held several different posts, including Deputy Director for European and Euro-Mediterranean Organizations. She was also the Head of the Division for bilateral cooperation with North African countries, and has represented Tunisia in a number of international, regional and United Nations meetings and conferences on issues varying from human rights to the promotion of the rights of women, children and the family.

Carolyn McAskie (Canada) was appointed in May 2006 to head up the Peacebuilding Support Office of the United Nations, established to support the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC). From June 2004 to April 2006, Ms. McAskie was the Special Representative of the Secretary General and Head of the United Nations Peacekeeping Operation in Burundi. Her previous appointment (1999-2004) was as Assistant Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Deputy Emergency Relief Coordinator in New York, serving as Emergency Relief Coordinator a.i., for the period 1999 to January 2001. Ms. McAskie came to the United Nations Secretariat from a career with the Federal Government of Canada, in the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA). Her last positions were Vice-President for Africa and the Middle East Programmes and Vice-President of CIDA’s Multilateral Programmes Branch, where she held the rank of Assistant Deputy Minister (equivalent to Deputy Permanent Secretary) from 1993 until 1999. Earlier posts with CIDA include: Director-General, International Financial Institutions; Director-General, Multilateral Technical Cooperation (United Nations and Commonwealth Programmes); and in the Canadian High Commission in Kenya. She has also served in the Commonwealth Secretariat in London as Assistant Director of Finance and Personnel (1975-1980), and as Canadian High Commissioner to Sri Lanka and the Maldives (1986-1989). Ms. McAskie served as a member of the Facilitation Team of the Burundi Peace Process in Arusha (1999) under the late Julius Nyerere, the former President of the United Republic of Tanzania, and as Humanitarian Envoy of the United Nations Secretary General for the humanitarian crisis in Côte d’Ivoire (2003). She is a graduate of the University of British Columbia and a member of the boards of the University for Peace, Interpeace (International Peace Alliance) and CANADEM.

Markku Niskala is Secretary General of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies. He joined the Finnish Red Cross in 1970, and after eight years, he entered the international field, working as a representative in Zambia, Tanzania and Zimbabwe. Between 1985 and 1987, Mr. Niskala led the Federation’s Europe department in Geneva before returning to Finland as Secretary General of the Finnish Red Cross. He also served as Vice Chairman of the Institute for Development of South African Societies. From 2000 to 2001, he undertook a special mission as senior representative of the International Federation in South Africa.

Sergei A. Ordzhonikidze has been Director-General of the United Nations Office at Geneva since March 2002. He is also Secretary-General of the Conference on Disarmament and Personal Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General to the Conference. Mr. Ordzhonikidze joined the Soviet diplomatic service in 1969, holding various positions at the Permanent Mission to United Nations in New York, as well as in Moscow. From 1991 to 1996, he was Deputy Permanent Representative of the USSR, then of the Russian Federation, to the United Nations in New York. After serving as Director of the Department of International Organizations, he was appointed Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs in 1999. A graduate of the Moscow State Institute of International Relations, Mr. Ordzhonikidze has published widely on international and legal affairs.

Ramesh Rajasingham currently heads the Displacement and Protection Support Section of the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), which is responsible