



# GLOBAL NETWORK NEWS

A QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER FOR GROUPS ORGANISING INTERNATIONAL MEETINGS OF  
CHILDREN AND YOUTH

Vol. 3 No. 2

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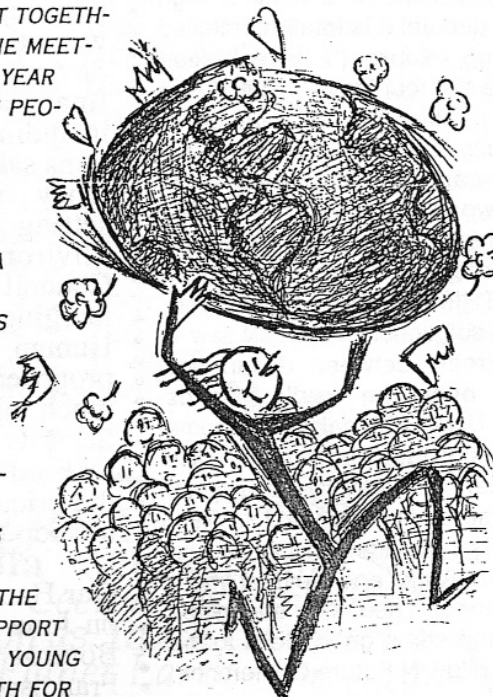
## UNITING OUR EFFORTS

HERE IT IS! THE 7TH EDITION OF GLOBAL NETWORK NEWS BURSTING WITH NEWS ABOUT DOZENS OF INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCES OF YOUNG PEOPLE. "I'D NO IDEA SO MUCH WAS GOING ON!" - WE HOPE YOU WILL SAY, THEN: "- BUT HOW SIMILAR THEY ALL ARE! - WHY DON'T THEY GET TOGETHER?" - WHICH IS EXACTLY WHAT THIS LITTLE NEWSLETTER IS ABOUT. ALL THE MEETINGS ARE DIFFERENT - SOME ARE BIG, SOME ARE SMALL; SOME ARE FOR 10 YEAR OLDS, OTHERS FOR 21-30 YEAR OLDS BUT ALL ARE ABOUT BRINGING YOUNG PEOPLE TOGETHER TO TALK ABOUT THEIR COMMON CONCERNS - TO SHOW THEM THAT THERE IS FAR MORE TO BIND US TOGETHER, THAN TO TEAR US APART.

IT IS A SHAME THAT, IN THE TEN YEARS SINCE ITS YEAR OF YOUTH, THE UN HAS BEEN UNSUCCESSFUL IN UNITING THESE EFFORTS: UNEP IS BACKING A \$5 MILLION DOLLAR SERIES OF CHILDREN'S ECO-CONFERENCES IN EASTBOURNE, ENGLAND, WHILE UNESCO IS BACKING A SIMILAR CHILDREN'S ECO-CONFERENCE IN PARIS - AND THEY DON'T EVEN KNOW ABOUT EACH OTHER! ADULT ORGANIZERS MAY FEEL COMPETITIVE: - BUT MAYBE IF THEY CAN'T GET TOGETHER, YOUNG PEOPLE COULD....?

THEY SHOULD: THINK - IF THE RESULTS OF THESE CONFERENCES WERE COMBINED INTO A SINGLE YOUNG PEOPLE'S LOBBY - A LOBBY THAT DOESN'T SIT AROUND AND WAIT FOR THE ADULTS TO ACT ON THEIR CONCERNS, BUT GETS OUT THERE AND STARTS TAKING ACTION ITSELF. WE THINK THAT WOULD BE FANTASTIC! - AND THAT IS THE GOAL OF RESCUE MISSION PLANET EARTH - THE PROJECT BEGUN HERE AT THE PEACE CHILD INTERNATIONAL CENTRE TO SUPPORT YOUNG PEOPLE TO IMPLEMENT AGENDA 21. IT IS OWNED AND OPERATED BY YOUNG PEOPLE IN PARTNERSHIP WITH ADULTS. WE BELIEVE THAT SAVING THE EARTH FOR FUTURE GENERATIONS IS NOT A COMPETITION: IT IS A COLLABORATION - BETWEEN COUNTRIES, BETWEEN GENERATIONS - AND BETWEEN YOUTH CONFERENCES! PLEASE SEND US THE RESULTS OF YOUR MEETINGS AND GIVE US YOUR IDEAS ABOUT HOW WE CAN UNITE OUR EFFORTS!

Cecilia Weckström and David Woollcombe  
editors, Global Network News



### United Nations of Youth - Developing a Youth Agenda for Peace in the Caucasus.

Apologies for the report in the last GNN: this meeting *did* happen in November as planned: for 13 days, 41 young peace-builders from Georgia, Armenia, Nagorno-Karabakh, Azerbaijan, Chechnya, Ingushetia, N.Ossetia, Abkhazia, Russia and other places met in the Netherlands to discuss their region and draft an Agenda for Peace. It received much high-level support and - given the complex, deep-rooted and violent wars in this region,

this initiative is extremely important. An interesting result was that whereas the Caucasus is traditionally perceived as an area of oriental influence, all the participants expressed a wish for the Caucasus region wanted to move closer to the European Union. A Youth Information centre for the Caucasus is to be set up in Moscow in the office of the Caucasus newspaper; a Caucasian Youth Peace Congress is to be held; a Caucasus Human

Rights centre is to be opened in Tbilisi, and a Conflict Resolution Centre is Krasnodar.

Plans for this year include the long-awaited Global Alliance Youth Assembly(GAYA) and several regional meetings of UNOY-nets.

Information: UNOY, 25 Venedien, 1441 AK Purmerend, The Netherlands; Phone/FAX: (31) 2902 61877/63012

**THIMUN:**

The 26th Hague Model United Nations took place January 20-28.

Bigger, as ever! - than the last, some 3,000 people argued, cajoled, fought, lobbied and leafletted their way to some stunning solutions to global problems in a week of high energy debate. It is totally controlled by young people, ("I haven't seen my kids for four days!" wailed one teacher). They are all required to wear suits or dresses, like their adult counter-parts, and they betray some of the worst excesses. ("It's vicious and violent and scary - but I love it!" commented a newcomer) Unlike adults, THIMUN reaches some challenging solutions: this week saw a peace treaty between Japan and Russia over the kurile Islands signed. UNA-USA calculates some 100,000 kids take part in Model UNs each year: THIMUN is the biggest, and is spreading its model. Mini-THIMUNs happened in Dublin and Beijing in April, and several more are planned. Their fifth committee contributed some good ideas to the Peace Child UN Future Conference.

**Information:** THIMUN, 2e van Blankenbergstraat 119, 2517 HC The Hague, Netherlands

### PEACE CHILD INTERNATIONAL - UN FUTURE CONFERENCES:

a series of 21 regional meetings on the future of the United Nations were organised to provide material for the young people's History of the UN being prepared for the UN 50th Anniversary. Each conference involved 50-100 young people laying out their views to a panel of elder statesmen, then brainstorming ways in which the UN could become more effective. A

Plenary Conference was held in Geneva, March 17-19, where representatives of the different conferences met and reached consensus on their solutions: more strength, less bureaucracy, greater use of the International Court of Justice, and a much greater involvement of young people in everything from development and aid programmes to the policing of human rights - were the dominant outcomes. Several solutions to the UN's financial crisis were urged, including a global tax on all arms sales and a tax on all currency transfers. The idea of setting up an Economic or Environmental Security Council was discussed and a merging of all three into a Human Security Council was proposed. Though there was much talk and anger about the Security Council veto, it was realised that this was probably the price that needs to be paid to keep the USA in the UN.

The book, "A World In Our Hands", will be published on June 26th and presented to Boutros Boutros-Ghali in San Francisco on that day - the 50th Anniversary of the signing of the UN charter.

**Information:** PCI, The White House, Buntingford, Herts UK, SG9 9AH; Phone: +44 176 327 4459; Fax: +44 176 327 4460;\*

### Heal the World Foundation:

MICHAEL JACKSON'S FOUNDATION HELD A GLOBAL SUMMIT FOR 30-40 KIDS FROM 17 COUNTRIES IN LOS ANGELES IN APRIL IN CONDITIONS OF SOME SECRECY. THE DECLARATION THE CHILDREN PREPARED WILL GO FORWARD TO THE WORLD SUMMIT OF CHILDREN IN SAN FRANCISCO IN JUNE.

**INFORMATION:** FRANK MILLS, PHONE: +44 171 255 2558;



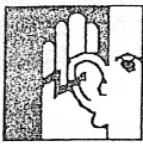
## EARTH FORCE

The big budget American kids eco-group based in Virginia has launched its first campaign: "Go Wild for Wildlife!"

It is highly youth-driven: managed by a Youth Advisory Board, the campaign theme was chosen by ballot. 145,000 kids took part and voted "protecting wildlife" is the #1 issue for kids in the USA. The campaign uses the framework developed by the Children's Earth Fund - Know it! Live it! Share it! Grow it! Push It! Earth Force has sent its "Go Wild for Wildlife" Guides to 2.5 million kids and 48,000 teachers across the USA, and had it included in the National Geographic's World magazine. It is also supporting it through a series of Town Meetings, TV shows, including Nickleodeon's Big Help campaign, and store displays. One of these is called a "Noodle Kidoodle" - an experimental Earth Force interactive booth developed with funding from Kodak. Earth Force hopes to go international soon, but wisely is trying to establish strong roots in the USA before moving out.

**Information:** Marla Romash, Earth Force, 1501 Wilson Boulevard, Arlington VA 22209, USA. Phone: +1 703 243 7400; Fax: +1 703 243 7066;





# RAISED VOICES & CHILDREN'S NEWS:

Richard Keefe and UNICEF have teamed up to produce more of these loosely linked to Rescue Mission and Agenda 21. Young people take Hi-8mm video cameras and report on UNICEF projects for young people as they see them.

**Information:** North-South Productions, 1 Woburn Walk, London WC1H 0JJ, UK; Phone: +44 171 388 0351; Fax: +44 171 388 2398;

## CSD

### Youth Intersessional:

Rescue Mission presented a detailed proposal for this to the UN Steering Committee, June 6th 1995. The strategy now is to invite young people to monitor several key "indicators" to answer the question: have we moved forwards or backwards since Rio? 10 Regional Focal Points will be set up to distribute "Sustainable Indicator Packs" to interested youth groups, schools and individuals. Regional

Meetings in Jan./Feb. 1996 will review results and draft a report to the Final Youth Intersessional Meeting to be held in the UK at which a draft report will be prepared. This report, plus a strategy for future action to implement the recommendations of Agenda 21 will be presented to CSD '96 in New York.

**Information:** Rescue Mission, The White House, Buntingford, Herts UK, SG9 9AH; Phone: +44 176 327 4459; Fax: +44 176 327 4460;



## INTERVIEW

### with Cecilia Weckström:

On 5th May, Cecilia Weckström took up her position as Youth Co-director of Rescue Mission Planet Earth - the organisation set up to empower young people to assist in the implementation of Agenda 21. To give young people genuine 50/50 ownership of the organisation, Cecilia shares control with the adult project director, David Woollcombe. Aged 19, from Finland, she answered questions about her new role:



*How does it feel to share power equally with someone twice your age?*

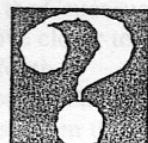
Rephrase the question: share responsibility. In my opinion that is the essence of what we are doing and it feels good. All the life experience and wisdom acquired during those years is there to help and support young people who might have brilliant ideas and visions but do not know yet how to implement them.

*How much was it a goal for you to see people and adults in equal control when you started out on this?*

Not at all. I belonged to the big crowd of cynical youth who didn't believe that young people could be given an equal role. Before Peace Child, youth involvement to me meant going out to shake a can for UNICEF. My life really fell on its head when I came to the White House. Here were kids sitting up in the office and working as equal partners with the Project Coordinator and the President himself. Finally I



with my talents. That equal partnership was always a fundamental goal of Peace Child. My goal now is to get this idea down on paper and to develop it even more.



*How do you prevent young people becoming "peace Monsters"?*

There isn't an automatic mechanism to prevent this, is there? For me, the way to fight it is a deep respect, a sense of humbleness, and being forever grateful to those who took the risk of believing in you and your capa-

bilities when you were just one kid in a crowd. Also, it's vital to have communication relentlessly between adult and youth so that a Peace Monster-scenario can be spotted and dealt with before damaging the spirit of Team-Play which is at the core of our work.



*How do you prevent young people being exploited by adults in this role?*

That's the other side of the Peace Monster scenario. There is a danger this can happen. One has to speak out clearly. Sometimes you might have to explode to shake the adults up from their subconscious way of behaving. There is value in trying to make them see things from your perspective sometimes: they have a lot to learn too.

*Seriously, what role can young people play in international governance?*



Young people are not yet tainted by experience. They question everything around them and it wouldn't hurt if this was done in the fields of governance. Nothing is more hazardous for the sound development of a society than the assumption that things couldn't be done any better in another way.

Young people have a positive vision of the future. They want to do something to

achieve it. After many setbacks, adults begin to lose that vision, seeing it as a childish delusion. Interaction between youths and adults can breathe energy and inspiration into their vision and let their creativity flourish as it used to do when they were kids.



*Should young people be burdened with this stuff? - shouldn't they be allowed to have fun?*

Let's face it: there will always be those who think that we shouldn't concern ourselves with this silly Save the World-stuff and go make money. There are others who feel that our future rests on fragile ground. It is those kids we want

to reach, give opportunities for their voice to be heard, give opportunities to do something and thereby prevent them from falling into the ever-growing lot of passive and depressed youth starting to give up on life.

*Would you like to see a world ruled by young people?*

No - young people are as vulnerable to the corrupting effect of absolute power as adults! Only equal partnership between youth and adults can bring about sustainable decision-making for we constantly remind adults of the long-term implications of their decisions.

## Rescue Mission Headquarters

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