

Launching the World Wisdom Alliance

By David Woolfson © 2006

Everything that is created in the world begins with an idea. Almost all ideas, however, are built upon the work of the many who have previously set the foundations. Accordingly, most 'new' ideas can be more accurately viewed as creative innovations of existing concepts presented in a new way or with new elements. They are often a synergistic extension of one or many ideas that have come before.

That is certainly the case with the concept for the World Wisdom Alliance. The core idea was first conceived in an email dialogue that I had last year with Dr. Ervin Laszlo, Founder of The Club of Budapest International, and world artist Peter Gabriel in relation to the World Wisdom Council. As detailed in the previous issue of Kosmos Journal, the World Wisdom Council is a global 'think/action tank' dedicated to the advancement and application of wisdom in the world.

My relationship with Dr. Laszlo and The Club of Budapest began in 2000 when I undertook to produce a worldwide event marking the first spring/autumn day of the new Millennium as the first 'World Day of Planetary Consciousness'. We called the event 'Planetary Vision Festival 2001' and sunrise ceremonies were held in 28 cities around the globe from New Zealand to Samoa on March 20, 2001.

A documentary program was subsequently made from the world event which also featured numerous Honorary Members of the Club of Budapest including Peter Gabriel and music from his Millennium show 'Ovo'. At the taping in Toronto, Peter remarked that Native American tribes made decisions through an Elder's council which considered the impact of their decisions into the future to the Seventh Generation.

We talked briefly after the taping and Peter mentioned that he had been contemplating the creation of such an Elders council on a global level. At the time I had also been thinking of a comparable concept - a think-tank of leaders with both a futures and a global perspective. I replied that I would present an idea to Dr. Laszlo for the Club of Budapest which I did in 2003, along with colleague Gregorio Rivera. (The Club of Budapest International convened the World Wisdom Council in 2004, in association with the World Commission of Global Consciousness & Spirituality.)

When Peter Gabriel and I were next in touch, he advised that he was developing a distinct Global Elders initiative with various partners. Many people share a similar broad goal or mission but often differ when it comes to specific concepts or initiatives. That is a major reason why there are hundreds of thousands of groups in the world addressing issues of environment, peace, poverty, etc. instead of a few very large ones.

This realization led to the consideration of further questions; "How can the many diverse but like-minded 'better world' initiatives be linked?" and "How can we connect, share information and collaborate to a greater voice and impact in the world at this critical evolutionary moment in human history?"

The answer seemed clear - a mega-network with the primary vehicle to connect being the Internet. Thus the concept of the World Wisdom Alliance was conceived as a network of like-minded groups and individuals and as an 'on-line community'. Unity in Diversity in action!

A major step in the development of the Alliance concept took place in conjunction with the Goi Peace Foundation's "Forum 2005: Creating a New Civilization" last November in Tokyo. The Forum featured the participation of 14 like-minded organizations including the Club of Budapest, Club of Rome, Institute of Noetic Sciences, Pathways to Peace, World Wisdom Council in the spirit of cooperation and collaboration. Featured speakers included Hon. Mikhail Gorbachev, Dr. Kazuo Murakami, Dr. Ervin Laszlo and members of the World Wisdom Council.

Foundation President Hiroo Saionji closed the Forum saying; "If we hold a global consciousness then we will achieve a global civilization....We can work together to expand the network."

I attended the Forum and the related World Wisdom Council meeting in my capacity as Co-coordinator of the Council. That historic gathering inspired me to consider in a very real way what concrete steps I and my colleagues could take to assist in the great and urgent task of creating a new civilization as a new 'world community'. The 'mega-network' idea remained foremost in my mind in that regard.

The World Wisdom Council met next in Arosa, Switzerland last January within the World Spirit Forum. The consensus of the Council, the World Spirit Forum participants and the speakers in Arosa was that humanity has, at best, a 10 year 'window of opportunity' for a massive evolutionary shift in human consciousness and behaviour. Without such sweeping change in thought and action we can anticipate widespread societal collapse and face the potential end of humanity as a viable species on this planet.

The interconnected threats of war, weapons of mass destruction, global warming, ecosystem destruction, resource depletion, poverty, pandemics, food and water shortages continue to grow while our ability to manage the planet in a nation/state framework is diminishing. At the same time the unprecedented potential of the 21st Century features new scientific understandings of the natural world and the Cosmos, deeper spiritual understanding of ourselves and each other and incredible new 'globalized' tools including: global communications and information exchange, alternative energy sources and sustainable technologies.

It is apparent then that today's growing global crisis has a 'flip side' which provides us with a corresponding opportunity. It is the opportunity to trigger an evolutionary transformation of humanity and our values, systems and structures to the 'Global' level based upon our new understandings and tools.

Accordingly, the major question of our time has now become: *“Will we be overwhelmed by the growing global challenges confronting us or will we overcome them through wise leadership and collective action to enter a new ‘global era’ of peaceful and sustainable human development?”*

This bottom-line ‘breakdown or breakthrough’ scenario reinforced my personal commitment to take appropriate action. In that regard, I and two colleagues presented the concept of the “World Wisdom Alliance” to the World Wisdom Council members meeting in Arosa. The Council enthusiastically endorsed the Alliance as a key ‘wisdom-in-action’ initiative fully aligned with the shared mission. The announced plan was to launch the Alliance in Toronto, Canada in July 2006, as time was surely of the essence!

After months of planning and hard work by our organizing team, the World Wisdom Alliance was officially launched in Toronto from July 26 to 28, 2006.

Nearly 200 people from various parts of the world came together to participate in the launch as the founding members and partners. The gathering was hosted by The Club of Budapest Canada, the Canadian non-profit organization formally chartered last April which is the entity initiating and administering the Alliance. (Special thanks to the organizing committee; Del Andison, Kimberly Curry, Martin Robertson, David Woolfson; Kelly Burnett and our many volunteers; facilitators Duncan Holmes and Heather Ramsey.)

Participants and supporters included members of the World Wisdom Council and Kosmos Journal. WWC members participating were Ervin Laszlo, Ashok Gangadean, Elisabet Sahtouris, Audrey Kitigawa, Lybert ‘Uncle’ Angaangaq, Michael Laitman, Jonathan Granoff together with Ambassadors Hiroo Saionji and Nancy Roof.

Many other participants were associated with like-minded groups such as the Campaign for Departments of Peace, Global Marshall Plan USA, InterSpiritual Dialogue Network, Children of the Earth, World Spirit Forum and Ecologos Institute.

The Alliance is intended as a ‘mega-network’ of like-minded organizations, groups, businesses and individuals actively addressing our shared societal and environmental challenges and opportunities - both globally and locally. It will bring together all sectors of society and cultures as well as ecological groups, peace groups, development groups, poverty groups, etc. working for a better world, through a multi-faceted Web community.

Once created our ‘on-line community’ will empower Alliance members to have a ‘global voice’ for a better world and positive future and enable them to more effectively address our shared challenges and opportunities. It is both a ‘grassroots’ initiative and one that can harness the power of our numbers worldwide.

WWA core concepts include: ‘Consciousness, Connection, Communication and Collaboration toward World Community’. Core principles include: inclusivity, mutual member support and active engagement within the community.

The following ‘Working Framework’ for the Alliance was presented to the founding gathering in Toronto:

World Wisdom Alliance (Working Framework)

Mission

To effectively address our growing, global/local societal and environmental challenges and opportunities with new thinking and actions in sufficient time to adapt to rapidly changing world circumstances.

Medium

A ‘world community’ aimed at actively addressing our shared challenges and opportunities by linking and connecting like-minded groups and individuals worldwide through effective communication, dialogue and collaborative action.

Method

- The core of the WWA communication network will be a web portal which creates a Member ‘on-line’ community
- The main Communication Centre will be established in Toronto, Canada

Member Benefits

- Connect, communicate and collaborate with like-minded organizations and individuals worldwide
- List Member events, activities and share other key information in the WWA ‘on-line’ community
- Access new members, supporters, partners and resources
- Distribute content and information on-line to WWA members and the public
- Develop new relationships including joint projects, collaborations and campaigns
- The WWA may coordinate joint projects, events and campaigns for Member and public participation

Member Responsibilities

- Endorse the WWA “Vision and Values Statement”
- Provide mutual web-links with the WWA web portal
- Share information and communicate Member's mission, projects, events, research, etc. with all other WWA Members via the on-line community
- Contribute content, as applicable, on an on-going basis to the community
- Appoint an individual from each organizational Member as a communication liaison for the WWA
- Make the applicable Membership contribution annually

Member Categories

- Community Groups & Communities of Interest
- Corporations & Companies
- Individuals

- Local/Regional Governments & Agencies
- Non-Profit Organizations
- Religious and Service Organizations
- Schools and Educational Institutions

The founding group in Toronto provided substantial input and further ideas at the working session. For example, the session on the 'Alliance Framework' suggested the following Mission Statement: "To facilitate the joining together of the hearts and minds of the citizens of the planet in an alliance which draws on and embodies deep wisdom to ignite a critical mass of people into co-creating a world in which we are one human family, flourishing together with all living things on sacred Earth." The process will continue on-line at The Club of Budapest Canada website pending the final framework being adopted.

The World Wisdom Alliance 'on-line community' website is now being designed. The site will be a community platform and meeting point of infinite diversity to catalyze global change. The first phase will be an extension of The Club of Budapest Canada site where Alliance members and participants can define how they can best contribute and interface, from the perspective of their community of interest, with the many other communities of interest within the broad shared mission and vision. It will also be a dynamic platform enhancing the effectiveness of the important work of our members.

In addition to a multitude of state-of-the art web communication and networking tools, our Alliance community will feature both a Public and a Member section: i) The Public section will contain content in categories such as global issues, solution pathways, alternative futures, editorials and guest editorials, blogs, database of world reports, world publications, world links, and other content. ii) The Member section will contain specific content and services of particular value to organizational members and activists including: World Calendar of Member events; Database of Members; Database of Member Projects tailored to finding sponsors, donors, partners; Member communications including Web Conferences, Discussion Forums, Symposia; Access to all Members for communication and collaboration, and other content and services as they evolve.

At this stage the World Wisdom Alliance is still in the process of co-creation - a potential butterfly that has just begun to emerge from its formative cocoon. This process is on-going but we can begin to envision what it can ultimately become - a world community of global citizens, spiritual progressives and cultural creatives who together can shift the future from our present path of breakdown to one of breakthrough.

The Alliance can become the vehicle to bring our growing community together worldwide. Ultimately, thousands of organizations and hundreds of thousands or even millions of individuals can connect, communicate and collaborate in shared vision and action in our new community toward a sustainable and peaceful world and future.

We welcome your input, participation, partnership, resource support and sponsorship in the development of the World Wisdom Alliance. Please Join Us!

Membership details will be available shortly. Please visit the WWA section of The Club of Budapest Canada website at www.clubofbudapest.ca for further information, updates and to register your interest. You can also contact me directly at dwoolfson@clubofbudapest.ca