

The
VALUES
CAUCUS
at the United Nations

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 2, 2006
1:15-2:45 PM

BAHÁ'Í OFFICES
866 UN PLAZA (48TH ST & 1ST AVE)
SUITE 120 (1ST FL)

COMMUNITY DISCUSSION

The
Search for Values
in an
Age of Transition

A Statement of the Bahá'í International Community
on the 60th Anniversary of the United Nations

"IN AN EFFORT TO MOVE BEYOND A COMMUNITY OF NATIONS BOUND BY PRIMARILY ECONOMIC RELATIONSHIPS TO ONE WITH SHARED RESPONSIBILITIES FOR ONE ANOTHER'S WELL-BEING AND SECURITY, THE QUESTION OF VALUES - THE UNDERLYING ETHICAL PRINCIPLES SHAPING WORLDVIEW AND DECISION-MAKING - MUST TAKE A CENTRAL PLACE IN DELIBERATIONS, BE ARTICULATED AND MADE EXPLICIT." - SEARCH FOR VALUES IN AN AGE OF TRANSITION

AN EARNEST SEARCH FOR AND RECOGNITION OF COMMON VALUES ARE NEEDED TO ESTABLISH RELATIONSHIPS OF UNDERSTANDING AND TRUST REQUIRED FOR SUSTAINED COOPERATION.

WE WILL USE THIS DOCUMENT, PREPARED BY THE BAHÁ'Í INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY, AS A POINT OF DISCUSSION, IN WHICH WE'LL CONSIDER THE CHALLENGES BEFORE THE UNITED NATIONS IN ITS 60TH YEAR FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF VALUES.

WE INVITE YOU TO READ THIS STATEMENT BEFORE THE MEETING AND COME PREPARED TO SHARE YOUR THOUGHTS AND PERSPECTIVES IN AN INTERACTIVE DISCUSSION EXPLORING ITS CORE QUESTIONS:

- § WHY HAVE THE CURRENT SYSTEMS OF GOVERNANCE FAILED TO PROVIDE FOR THE SECURITY, PROSPERITY AND WELL BEING OF THE WORLD'S PEOPLE?
- § WHAT RESPONSIBILITIES DO NATIONS HAVE TOWARDS THEIR NEIGHBORS AND THEIR CITIZENS?
- § IS MULTILATERALISM A SUFFICIENT TOOL FOR INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION?
- § WHAT IS THE ROLE OF RELIGION IN THE PUBLIC SPHERE? WHAT IS AN APPROPRIATE ROLE OF RELIGION IN THE PUBLIC SPHERE?
- § WHAT CORE VALUES OR PRINCIPLES CAN GUIDE RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN NATIONS TO SECURE A PEACEFUL FUTURE?

THIS DOCUMENT CAN BE FOUND ONLINE - WWW.BIC-UN.BAHAI.ORG/05-1002.HTM

NGOs & UN STAFF INVITED

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION

CARL MURRELL 212.803.2531 * VALUESCAUCUS@VALUESCAUCUS.ORG

WWW.VALUESCAUCUS.ORG

EXCERPTS FROM THE MILLENNIUM DECLARATION...

WE BELIEVE THAT THE CENTRAL CHALLENGE WE FACE TODAY IS TO ENSURE THAT GLOBALIZATION BECOMES A POSITIVE FORCE FOR ALL THE WORLD'S PEOPLE. FOR WHILE GLOBALIZATION OFFERS GREAT OPPORTUNITIES, AT PRESENT ITS BENEFITS ARE VERY UNEVENLY SHARED, WHILE ITS COSTS ARE UNEVENLY DISTRIBUTED.

WE RECOGNIZE THAT DEVELOPING COUNTRIES AND COUNTRIES WITH ECONOMIES IN TRANSITION FACE SPECIAL DIFFICULTIES IN RESPONDING TO THIS CENTRAL CHALLENGE.

THUS, ONLY THROUGH BROAD AND SUSTAINED EFFORTS TO CREATE A SHARED FUTURE, BASED UPON OUR COMMON HUMANITY IN ALL ITS DIVERSITY, CAN GLOBALIZATION BE MADE FULLY INCLUSIVE AND EQUITABLE. THESE EFFORTS MUST INCLUDE POLICIES AND MEASURES, AT THE GLOBAL LEVEL, WHICH CORRESPOND TO THE NEEDS OF DEVELOPING COUNTRIES AND ECONOMIES IN TRANSITION, AND ARE FORMULATED AND IMPLEMENTED WITH THEIR EFFECTIVE PARTICIPATION.

WE CONSIDER CERTAIN FUNDAMENTAL VALUES TO BE ESSENTIAL TO INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS IN THE 21ST CENTURY. THESE INCLUDE:

FREEDOM MEN AND WOMEN HAVE THE RIGHT TO LIVE THEIR LIVES AND RAISE THEIR CHILDREN IN DIGNITY, FREE FROM HUNGER AND FROM THE FEAR OF VIOLENCE, OPPRESSION OR INJUSTICE. DEMOCRATIC AND PARTICIPATORY GOVERNANCE BASED ON THE WILL OF THE PEOPLE BEST ASSURES THESE RIGHTS.

EQUALITY NO INDIVIDUAL AND NO NATION MUST BE DENIED THE OPPORTUNITY TO BENEFIT FROM DEVELOPMENT. THE EQUAL RIGHTS AND OPPORTUNITIES OF WOMEN AND MEN MUST BE ASSURED.

SOLIDARITY GLOBAL CHALLENGES MUST BE MANAGED IN A WAY THAT DISTRIBUTES THE COSTS AND BURDENS FAIRLY IN ACCORDANCE WITH BASIC PRINCIPLES OF EQUITY AND SOCIAL JUSTICE. THOSE WHO SUFFER, OR WHO BENEFIT LEAST, DESERVE HELP FROM THOSE WHO BENEFIT MOST.

TOLERANCE HUMAN BEINGS MUST RESPECT EACH OTHER, IN ALL THEIR DIVERSITY OF BELIEF, CULTURE AND LANGUAGE. DIFFERENCES WITHIN AND BETWEEN SOCIETIES SHOULD NEITHER BE FEARED NOR REPRESSED, BUT CHERISHED AS A PRECIOUS ASSET OF HUMANITY. A CULTURE OF PEACE AND DIALOGUE AMONG ALL CIVILIZATIONS SHOULD BE ACTIVELY PROMOTED.

RESPECT FOR NATURE PRUDENCE MUST BE SHOWN IN THE MANAGEMENT OF ALL LIVING SPECIES AND NATURAL RESOURCES, IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE PRECEPTS OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT. ONLY IN THIS WAY CAN THE IMMEASURABLE RICHES PROVIDED TO US BY NATURE BE PRESERVED AND PASSED ON TO OUR DESCENDANTS. THE CURRENT UNSUSTAINABLE PATTERNS OF PRODUCTION AND CONSUMPTION MUST BE CHANGED, IN THE INTEREST OF OUR FUTURE WELFARE AND THAT OF OUR DESCENDANTS.

SHARED RESPONSIBILITY RESPONSIBILITY FOR MANAGING WORLDWIDE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT, AS WELL AS THREATS TO INTERNATIONAL PEACE AND SECURITY, MUST BE SHARED AMONG THE NATIONS OF THE WORLD AND SHOULD BE EXERCISED MULTILATERALLY. AS THE MOST UNIVERSAL AND MOST REPRESENTATIVE ORGANIZATION IN THE WORLD, THE UNITED NATIONS MUST PLAY THE CENTRAL ROLE.