



THE BRUSSELS-EU CHAPTER

# Newsletter # 9 Winter 2003

Summits  
30-10-2003

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The Club of Rome has since a few years a young think tank called tt30. They held their annual meeting in Rome in the beginning of September. The tt30 group is working on several research projects, which have been published in a report. Also they participated to the WSIS and presented some of the results in Geneva to a larger public. We congratulate this group for their activities and enthusiasm for working on problems of high concern of the CoR.

Further the Brussels-EU Chapter supported the initiative of YOIS, Youth for Intergenerational Justice and Sustainable Development. They held their meeting in Brussels in September 15-19 and several members of the Chapter participated in the workshops and panel discussions. Some of the presentations of their report are reproduced here, especially the one of our President HRH Prince El Hassan and the one of our colleague Mark Dubrulle. Many thanks for their contribution.

Raoul Weiler - Chairman of the Brussels-EU Chapter

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Winter 2003  
Volume 1  
Issue 9

## Impressions from the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) in Geneva. Raoul Weiler

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The World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) is just finished. It was a long way to get there and until the end the outcome was uncertain. Generally, summits are happenings which have the merit to have taken place and once again the presence of a large amount of participants enforces the perception of a major societal event. The preparatory process (PrepComs) was spread over three steps, however at the third PrepCom two prolongations were necessary to reach a consensus on the Declaration of Principles and the Plan of Action. It was a 'last minute' agreement, even with square brackets in it.

The Club of Rome participated at almost all PrepComs. At the Summit about 15 members of the CoR have participated and came from different places, among them from the Brussels-EU Chapter, t30, the Finish Chapter, the Club of Rome (Lebanon, Chile) and the Secretariat. The CoR organized an event which had a respectable attention, and participated at an event organized UNESCO. A flyer announced the events and was, largely distributed electronically as well as physically, together with the Statement to the WSIS of the CoR, during the Summit.

Some remarkable achievements have been reached during this Summit, and for this reason it is a successful Summit.

- The **participation of the Civil Society** in the debates and discussions has been stepwise accepted by the organizers and governmental delegates. The expertise available within the Civil Society (CS) is considerable and frequently higher than within the official delegations. It remains a difficult process for the decision makers to take advantage of this knowledge. This Summit has shown the way for a better integration of CS. It means also that the role to play by the Civil Society, the NGOs in particular, is an increasing one. There is a growing responsibility and accountability of the NGOs in world affairs and it is largely appreciated by outsiders that the CoR takes part in it.
- The Summit on the Information Society ICTs is built on a strong **technological platform**, what makes debates more difficult and is a new fact in world summits. Although the Summit has not the deal with technology as such, it still was confronted with issues and problems which have strong technological backgrounds. Access to information and knowledge require the technical availability of communication, hard- and software facilities as well as of electrical power installations, especially in rural and remote places on earth. The topic of free and open software has been put on the world agenda. The financial part of the discussions on infrastructure has not been finalized. A lot of work remains to be done and the Brussels-EU Chapter intends to contribute to *the résolutique* of these matters.
- The **human rights thématique**. An information society can only come into being or stay alive at the condition of freedom of speech. At this Summit the Civil Society has played a decisive role in this respect. Free access to information as well as freedom to create and distribute information, are still tremendous challenges for the majority of the governments on our planet. Civil Society, with its

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manifold of NGOs, has proven again to be able to play a master role in the orientation of mankind.

- Bridging the **digital divide** and safeguarding **cultural diversity** were major topics. Both are elements for achieving a sustainable world society. Explicitly this Summit refers to the Millennium Declaration Goals (MDGs) as well as to the Summit on Sustainable Development of Johannesburg. In this respect the message of the COR has been heard clearly.

The Summit has brought a testimony of the fast changing world and the potential of ICTs to help solving fundamental problems of humanity in a manner never experienced before.

A lot of work remains that to be done in coming decades. The digital divide has not been narrowed during this first phase of the Summit! This must be done on the field in partnership with the local political leadership, the NGOs and local and multinational enterprises. More and more the participation of the Civil Society is recognized as being a key for success. The *world problématique* looks for answers for alleviating poverty, reducing illiteracy at a large scale, respecting human rights, improving health care and many other unacceptable human situations. To address all these problems, financial means have to be decided upon, human capacity has to be built in a very short remained time frame.

The second phase of this Summit is already started, the next meeting takes place in Tunis in November 2005. The two remaining years will be very important for a better understanding of the significance of information and knowledge in the evolution of humanity as well as for the evaluation of investments in infrastructure and human capital, both required for making substantial progress in the creation of global access for all. However, two major difficulties will permanently challenge the implementation: one is the fast evolution of technological progress and consequently the choice of adapted resp. up to date infrastructure and the other, the still fast growing population in these regions, requiring the attention of additional resources and investments for the fulfilment of the basic needs of the newcomers

## **Web of the Problematique and Resolutique**

### **tt30 – the young think tank of the Club of Rome**

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#### **What is tt30**

tt30, the young think tank of the Club of Rome (CoR), is composed of around 30 independent men and women around the age of 30 (therefore tt30) who are concerned about the problems of today's world and committed to work toward solutions to these challenges.

The initiative to found this think tank was launched in late 2000 by the network of the European Support Centre (ESC) of the Club of Rome and the National Associations of the Club of Rome in Europe and driven forward with the strong support of the Presidency, the Executive Committee and the Secretary General of the CoR. The kick off meeting of tt30 took place in late summer 2001 in Hamburg. Since 2001, tt30 holds every year its annual meetings, in 2002 in Valencia on the invitation of the Generalidad de Valencia and the Spanish Chapter of the CoR as well as in 2003 in Rome in co-operation with the Aurelio Peccei Foundation.

Participants of tt30 are selected every year for one-year terms from all former participants and all new candidates. On average, one-fifth of the former participants are replaced with new participants every year. Former participants between the age of 36 and 40 may be invited as associates. Currently, tt30 participants come from Asia, Africa, North- and South America, the Middle East and Europe. They are involved in the academic field, the business sector, International and Intergovernmental Organisations and NGOs.

tt30 provides the CoR with the perspective and enthusiasm of the young generation and spreads the ideas and ideals of CoR into the new generations. In its work, tt30 is guided by the fundamental principles of the CoR: holistic thinking, taking a global approach and a long-term perspective.

tt30 is a platform for debate and, from the perspective of the new generation, establishes an agenda of topics that are central for the future development of humanity. tt30 summarises these challenges in a 'Web of the Problematique' that is regularly put into discussion and reviewed by the participants. With concrete projects and statements to the public, tt30 focuses specific issues from the 'Web of the Problematique' and proposes new ways and approaches to dealing with these challenges. In the following latest results regarding these activities of tt30 are presented.

#### **tt30's third Annual Meeting: 4<sup>th</sup>-7<sup>th</sup> September, 2003, Rome, Italy**

The 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Meeting of tt30 took place at Villa Aurelia in Rome, in co-operation with the Aurelio Peccei Foundation. The entire meeting was organised by tt30 member Rolando Burger, including fundraising for the meeting and travel costs. Beside the 24 tt30 participants, two members of the CoR attended the meeting: Esko Kalimo, President of the Board of the European Support Centre of the CoR

and Raoul Weiler, member of the Executive Committee of the CoR. From the Spanish Chapter of the CoR, Maria Antonia Martin attended the meeting as well.

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## Web of the Problematique and Resolutique

### tt30 – the young think tank of the Club of Rome

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After an informal get together of the participants on the first evening, the meeting officially began next morning with a review of the activities of the think tank over the past year. One of the most important achievements during the past year is the publication of the first tt30 book "Exploring a Worthwhile Future for All" (Editors: Tobias Lengsfeld, Ildiko Tulbure, Ali Vali. Valencia 2003), which was published with the strong support of the Spanish Chapter of the CoR and its Grupo Valenciano. This book gives an overview of the development of the think tank, its history and its achievements and it documents in detail all projects tt30 has realised thus far. The book includes a preface by the President of the CoR, HRH Prince El Hassan. Honorary President of the CoR, Ricardo Diez Hochleitner, contributed to the Prologue. The book presentation was followed by status reports on the project work 2002/03. In-depth discussions of the projects presentations lead to a definition of future goals for the project teams. Raoul Weiler contributed a critical review of one of the current projects of tt30. The next two meeting days focussed on brainstormings on crucial themes that are integral to achieving a better understanding of the World Problematique as well as on defining the themes and projects on which the think tank will focus in the coming year. At the end of the meeting, it was announced that the annual meeting 2004 of tt30 will be held in Amman, Jordan, upon invitation of the President of the CoR, HRH Prince El Hassan bi Talal.

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## Web of the Problematique and Resolutique

### tt30 – the young think tank of the Club of Rome

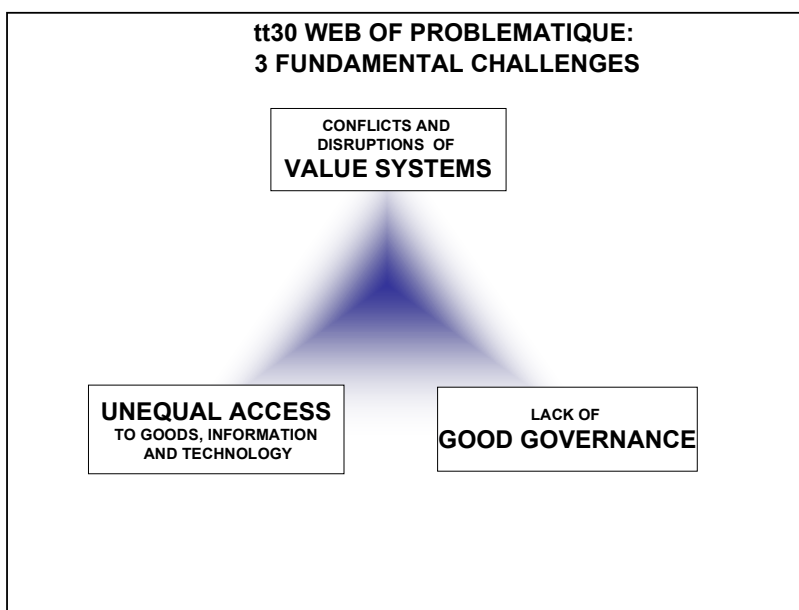
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#### Selected results of current tt30 projects

##### *The Web of the Problematique*

tt30 has adopted the World Problematique as the central concept for its work. The think tank regards it as important to provide an agenda of themes that it sees as priorities in a global context from the perspective of the young generation. This work shall serve as a starting point to define where action is most urgently needed in order to make the world a better place for all people. tt30 presents the result of its work in this area in the graphic form of the "Web of the Problematique". With the Web, tt30 intends to provide a roadmap that may differ from and be complementary to the agenda that is dealt with today in the many international fora such as the UN and, hopefully, to identify future problems before they appear on the horizon.



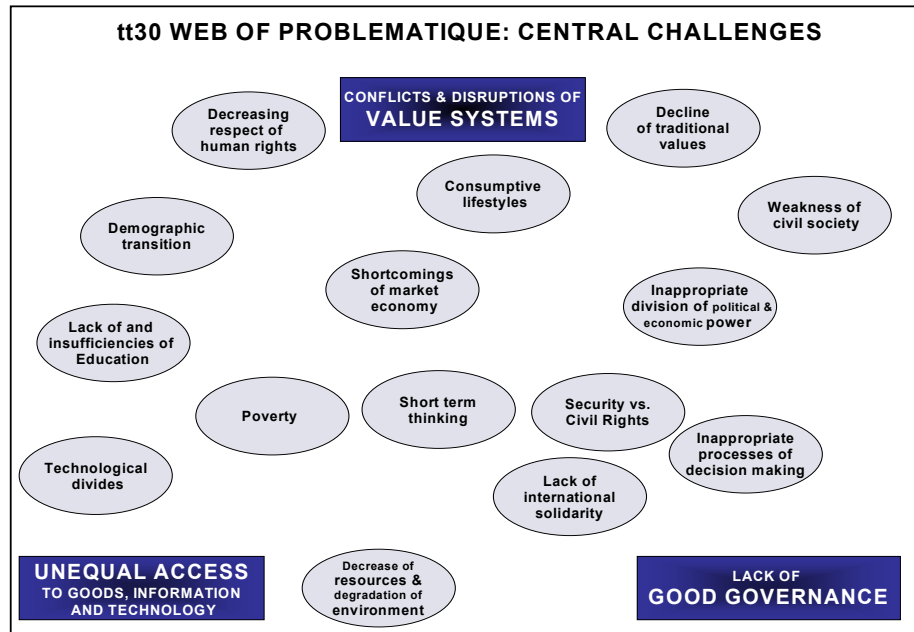
The Web aims at a multidimensional representation of the Problematique. The graphic approach was chosen to highlight the complexity of the Problematique and the interdependence of the issues. This Web is structured around three core issues: Unequal access to goods, information and technology, Lack of good governance and Conflict and disruptions of value systems. The three core themes represent the following three spheres of global society; economic, social and individual. At the highest level, these spheres are very closely related as individual choice and behaviour creates a social and economic structure and the efficiency with which the social and economic structures operate affect individual choice and behaviour. However, these three core issues are the most abstract and generalised.

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On the second level of the Web, more issues are positioned in the area limited by the three central challenges. These are specific aspects or consequences of one or more of the first level issues. In the first core theme for instance tt30 addresses issues like human rights, consumption patterns, identity or decline of traditional values. The second core theme encompasses issues like unequal access to resources, environmental pollution, technological divides in and between societies. By the third central theme issues like shortcomings of economy systems, responsibility, security and lack of international solidarity are covered. Several issues like poverty and welfare, education, migration or short term thinking are overlapping ones.

The third level is a next level of complexity in which further elements of the Problematique are given. That are of lower importance either structurally or regarding prioritisation as seen by the think tank. The third level is the least abstract and most definite and therefore it is at this level that policy targets can be identified. In addition to the usual complexity of complex systems, several elements of the Web are characterised by a constant high rate of change. Rate of change as well as rebound-effects are new and not well-explored phenomena that must be taken into consideration in order to understand the true complexity of the Web of the Problematique.

Currently the project group is working on the implementation of the interactive computer Web model making it accessible from the tt30 Internet site.

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## Web of the Problematique and Resolutique

### tt30 – the young think tank of the Club of Rome

#### Overcoming Technological Divides

tt30 deems the issue of *Technological Divides* a priority; it is extremely important to address problems such as the existing gaps between as well as within societies. These gaps are constantly increasing because of rapid technological progress.

The project "*Overcoming Technological Divides*" evaluates existing Divides in society concerning the use of new technologies and proposes appropriate strategies for overcoming the Divides. The project was launched in August 2001 and covers a period of several years.

The project has two main parts. In the first step an analysis and diagnosis of the existing situation in the field of Technological Divides i.e. access to, ability to use and effective use of is carried out. In the second step of the project the elaboration of concrete strategies and measures and their testing follow mainly by developing regional scenarios.

In the current project period, the analysis and diagnosis of the existing situation in the field of Technological Divides in European and African regions in comparison with the situation in the US and Japan have been carried out. *Technological Divides* are gaps between societies or specific societal groups in access as well as in ability to use new technologies in practice.

Although European countries may seem initially not to be affected by the Divides the careful analysis of the situation permits one to recognise that there are Divides between European societies and within societies between generations. More interesting is the fact that even within a country there are significant regional differences concerning the Divides, particularly between big cities and rural areas. A gap has also been recognised between people of different educational levels.

For the study of the Digital Divide in Europe, we recognised three categories of countries:

- The first group is fully "on-line" and is taking full advantage of Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) (mostly Northern European countries),
- The second group is "on-line" but still has problems in fully using ICT (mostly Western and Southern European countries) and
- The third group is moving slowly into the information age but is lacking appropriate infrastructure as a first condition (mostly Eastern and South-Eastern European countries).

For African countries we remarked that the level in the access to and the use of ICT is much more lower than for European countries. US has the leadership regarding IT infrastructure, but not regarding mobile phones, for which the leadership belongs to European countries.

Three groups of African countries regarding the access to and use of ICT can be recognised:

- The first group trying to establish the use of ICT, such as South-Africa and Egypt,

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- The second group being in the very beginnings of establishing an infrastructure and use of ICT, such as Gabon, Cameroon, Kenya,
- The third group being almost absent from the developments regarding ICT, like Zaire, Ethiopia, Chad.

For African regions there is a most stringent Divide in the field of energy production, distribution and use. This gap in energy use brings other gaps, like in use of technology, in economic development, in education possibilities of young people.

In spite of this situation, the weightings in the different activities to overcome divides do not always correspond to the real needs. This is exemplified by the fact that for instance out of all European ICT projects, only about one-fourth are located in eastern Europe and about three-fourths are in the western Europe, even though the needs for development in the field of ICT are clearly greater in the eastern part of Europe. For African countries there are only sporadically trying to overcome the Digital Divide. Reasons are other urgent problems with which the African world is confronted.

There is a general belief, that by realising the *Information Society for All*, the sustainability of our society will be naturally assured. Contrary to this widespread belief, our project work demonstrates that the emergence and use of ICT have, in addition to the primary (desired) effects, secondary (negative) ones in all human activity fields and the environment. We conclude that while the development and expansion of the Information Society is necessary, *it does not assure per se* the sustainability of our society. By analysing the European situation came out that, for instance, an increase in the efficiency of technological applications by using IT-applications does not automatically lead to a decrease of energy use and of environmental stress because of changes in human values and lifestyles. So called "*rebound-effects*" do, in some cases, eclipse the positive effects of efficiency increase. Rebound-effects are to be expected not only in the energetic and environmental arenas, but also in the social and cultural sphere. Potential rebound-effects represent a danger for the sustainable development of societies.

Scenarios are very important to point out the chances and challenges related to the emerging Information Society. In the context of the project we analysed various possibilities to develop scenarios for the concrete situation of Slovenia. Existing programmes on national levels and possible future developments emphasise the role of *education* already in primary schools for the emerging of the Information Society. It is not only an education for use of ICT but combined with an education which promotes the values of sustainable development. We consider *education* the key issue in promoting the use of ICT and in promoting sustainable development.

A general challenge researching the field of Technological Divides in a holistic way is the fact that existing indicators used to describe Divides make hardly possible a comprehensive state diagnosis. These indicators characterise the technical infrastructure and the usage rates of technologies, but do not express the real personal skills, real needs of the society, the real values and the real quality of life.

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On the other hand, indicators for quality of life used nowadays do not allow measuring the impacts of using ICT on welfare such as, for instance, the famous Human Development Index (HDI) of the United Nations Development Programme. Exploration of the connection between indicators for ICT field and quality of life, taking into account regional differences, is till now almost not existent. New methods are needed which allow the integration of qualitative aspects and quantitative indicators.

Next steps of the project work will involve the integration of other world regions and countries in our analysis of the ICT related situation especially Latin-American countries. Furthermore the development and evaluation of scenarios and proposing concrete strategies taking into account regional differences will be followed next year. On the methodology side, developing new flexible indicators for evaluating Divides by taking into account regional differences will be taken into account. The findings and proposals will contribute to fostering dialogue between and within societies concerning the field of Divides. Simultaneously the project group will go more outside and present the ideas and results of the project work.

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#### **Knowledge Transfer Across Cultures: A Comparative Analysis of the West, South East Asia & West Africa**

The tt30 project on Knowledge Transfer (KT) Systems [*intercontinental, intercultural and intracultural knowledge transfer*] started in September 2003 and aims to review the methods and mechanisms by which knowledge is transferred between and within cultures, with a specific focus on how this impacts upon development trends in three regions: West Europe/North America, South-East Asia and Sub-Saharan West Africa.

By capitalising on the diversity offered by the members of the tt30, this project will study multiple areas of the world in a surgical attempt to identify the possible cultural “areas” that could create conflict between cultures and those that could facilitate and even foster interaction between them. The main goals of this project are to identify key indicators of indigenous knowledge transfer in various cultures, to prepare a comparative analysis of knowledge transfer potential of the three regions, to indicate key determinants underlying current trends in intercultural knowledge transfer and to suggest measures to influence existing patterns in knowledge transfer.

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#### **Outlook for the tt30 future work**

tt30's work will continue using all possible and available communication and exchange resources among participants; the think tank will fully use virtual meetings and exchanges. tt30 is eager to work further on its projects as well as to publish and disseminate results of its work. The publication of "Exploring a Worthwhile Future for All" is the first step toward sharing tt30's knowledge and experience with the CoR and with other interested parties.

For tt30 to keep its perspective, contribution and vision alive and constantly vibrant, tt30 pays attention on further diversifying its membership. The wealth of the think tank comes from the diversity and energetic dynamism of its members and the variety of backgrounds and experiences.

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Tulbure, I. (Ed.): Second report of the tt30 - project "Overcoming Technological Divides" covering the period Sept 2001 - August 2003, tt30 internal report, see: <http://www.clubofrome.org/tt30/projects>

For more information on tt30, its activities and projects please refer to the tt30 book "Exploring a Worthwhile Future for All" or please visit the site: <http://www.clubofrome.org/tt30>

Ildiko Tulbure, Tobias Lengsfeld, Rolando Burger

European Youth Conference 2003,  
16th – 21st September 2003, Brussels



*Inter-generational Contracts for Sustainability:  
Building together a better future for the European Union”*

Documentation of the European Youth Conference 2003,  
16th – 21st September 2003, Brussels



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European Youth Conference 2003,  
16th – 21st September 2003, Brussels

**His Royal Highness Prince El Hassan bin Talal**  
**Words by the President of the Club of Rome**

The theme of this year's European Youth Conference presents the question of sustainability from a fresh and exciting angle, and the participation of 'the older generations' should provide an invaluable opportunity for knowledge exchange between generations.

As President of the Club of Rome I am fully aware of the huge potential that youth can bring to society, and this month's meeting of our own youth think tank, tt30, was another example of proactive young people taking steps to ensure that our shared future is one of peace rather than war, sufficiency rather than poverty, and progress rather than regression.

However, for today's youth to be able to take control of their future, they must be supported by the generations before them. In order for our ecological, financial, political and cultural problems to be addressed effectively, we must understand the manner in which their causes are elated and appreciate how a holistic course of action is the only viable path for us to embark on. Respect for fundamental human rights, expressed by a common set of universal values, has to be recognised and adhered to by all and it is through education that the greatest ground can be made. It is only appropriate here to draw attention to the Erasmus, Socrates and Minerva schemes which have been promoting learning, cultural awareness and international cooperation within Europe for many years now.

And since there are always two sides to each coin, it goes without saying that we older generations stand much to gain from the young; freshness of thought, vitality of action, and ,perhaps most importantly, optimism and the belief that 'we the people' can change the world we inhabit. Adults too must be included in the process of education, for it is they, after all, who are charged with being role models and guiding their children in the best way that they can. I have often called for the creation of a network of citizen's conferencing, whereby people the world over can discuss issues affecting their daily lives and strategise together to overcome them using their combined learning and experience. It is through steps such as this that the aforementioned set of universal values can be identified, respected and promoted, with 'indigenising modernity' and 'learning from each other' chief among them. In a rapidly modernising world, we must be careful not to forget traditional methods of knowledge exchange – a process which is central to the way in which cultural identity is preserved and passed on within any given community – such as intergenerational discourse. It is in this vein that I say that it is imperative for 'we, the people' to face the future imbued with the spirit of human solidarity so that every one of us has the opportunity to contribute to his or her community in a positive way. In 2030 the world's population will be 8 billion, most of them under the age of 20; it is a daunting statistic, but it is through our work today in the fields of economical and ecological education and development, that this number can be one for hope. I think it is important to focus on the idea of the quality of our lives collectively as a community; the interconnectibility of the different backgrounds that we bring to this rich and enriching experience, not only professional backgrounds but confessional backgrounds, social backgrounds and generational backgrounds. I think this is one of the most important contributions that we can make.

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## His Royal Highness Prince El Hassan bin Talal Words by the President of the Club of Rome

simultaneously to building our communities, through inviting greater conversation between societies, but also remembering to develop it within our societies.

Although it is right to talk of the successes which have been implemented in this field, I would like to take the opportunity to stress my belief that there is a lot of ground to be made. In addition to the various intra-European educational schemes, it would be very fitting at this time to see the promotion of inter-regional exchange and thus have a far wider intercultural inclusiveness. After all, in historical terms and from the point of cultural heritage, the southern European states share much in common with the other countries of the Mediterranean basin. The Prague Forum 2000 was a positive step in the right direction, and its lead needs to be built on and expanded. The creation of an international, interdenominational Media Peace Corps of young people would be a very powerful tool in raising awareness of the shared values, aspirations and concerns which unite the many different cultures of the world under the banner of humanity.

I would like to wish the EYC my best wishes for their 2003 meeting, and look forward to hearing the results of your discussions,



*His Royal Highness **Prince El Hassan bin Talal** of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan*

**President of the Club of Rome** [www.elhassan.org](http://www.elhassan.org)

*Prince El Hassan had his early schooling in Amman, largely with tutors. He then went to Summer Fields School in England, and later to Harrow, graduating from Christ Church, Oxford University with a B.A. (Hon.) in Oriental Studies, followed by an M.A. His Royal Highness has also been awarded the Honorary Degree of Doctor of Civil Law, University of Durham (1990); Honorary Degree of Doctor of Letters, University of Ulster, Northern Ireland (1996); Honorary Doctorate from Moscow State Institute for International Relations (1997); Doctorate of Laws, University of Birmingham (1999); Honorary Doctorate from the Bilkent University, Turkey (1999); Honorary Degree of Doctor of Laws (Hon LLB) from the University of Hertfordshire and an Honorary Doctorate of Theology from the Faculty of Catholic Theology at the Eberhard-Karls-University in Tübingen, Germany (2001). Prince El Hassan also received the 1995 Science and Society Prize in Madrid in 1997. In April, 2001, His Royal Highness received the inaugural Gandhi/King/Ikeda Community Builders Prize at the Martin Luther King, Jr. International Chapel during Morehouse College's International Reconciliation Sunday.*

*Always interested in young people, and believing in the importance of their community, His Royal Highness founded the Forum Humanum in 1982 (renamed, in 1988, the Arab Youth Forum); and the Crown Prince Award in 1984 (renamed, in 1999, El Hassan Youth Award), and its affiliate programme, the Sabilat El Hassan in 1988.*

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**Opening Remarks by Mark Dubrulle**

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It is a great pleasure and honour to be with you today. I have always been very eager to exchange views with youngsters, especially on subjects which are close to my heart as well as to my professional activities: environmental protection, sustainable development, culture, Europe and the planet Earth. You may argue that this is a very broad spectrum and that one obviously cannot be an expert acting effectively in all these areas, each of which covers in turn itself a wide range of complex issues. That is precisely the point of my short introduction today: “tout est en tout”, everything in life is interconnected. You cannot resolve any particular issue without taking into account the whole web of related subjects. We cannot talk about sustainability and a better future for the European Union without a holistic approach. The core of my remarks will therefore be the needed shift towards a new Weltanschauung, a new vision of the world, another paradigm.

Allow me, before coming to the heart of the matter, to convey to you the apologies and warm greetings of professor Raoul Weiler, president of the Brussels-EU Chapter of the Club of Rome. He could not attend today’s opening session as he is participating in a preparatory meeting of the World Summit on the Information Society in Geneva. He will however join your party in Brussels on Friday.

At this point you may wonder why the Club of Rome, more particularly its Brussels EU Chapter, is cooperating with your project. You may also ask how we see intergenerational dialogues, what challenges we, as elder people, believe your generation has to face, what we are expecting from you and what we think we can offer you.

I am very pleased that His Royal Highness Prince El Hassan bin Talal of Jordan, president of the Club of Rome, agreed to address this question to a large extent himself. It is my honour and privilege to read his message to all of you here today. [He reads out the Message by His Royal Highness Prince El Hassan bin Talal]

I assume most of you are familiar with the Club of Rome, at least with its name. Before moving on to more substance it might be worthwhile though to remind you its philosophy, its objectives and its activities. I happen to be old enough to have witnessed the birth and development of what would become one of the most provocative and authoritative think tanks on global issues in the world.

In the sixties the Italian economist Aurelio Peccei, who had a successful industrial business record in China and Latin America, but had also fought and been jailed as a committed antifascist during the war, was a Vice-president of Olivetti and Italconsult, a consulting firm. In this capacity he became involved in broad societal issues. His personal priority was to explain that the planet Earth was becoming a global village and that human beings were all interdependent. In March 1968 he called a meeting together of some distinguished scientists, economists and businessmen with the aim of creating a think tank. As this meeting took place in Rome it took the name of Club of Rome. The first gathering was rather a failure but the vision, the faith and the self confidence of a handful of participants made the idea come true. The Club was formally constituted in April, just one month before the famous May events in Paris.

European Youth Conference 2003,  
16th - 21st September 2003, Brussels  
**Opening Remarks by Mark Dubrulle**

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It is most interesting to note the parallel between the social and economic concerns of the students and youngsters on one hand, and those of a group of mostly middle aged, successful representatives from the establishment. This fact is clearly showing that there is no generation gap in the perception of major threats and challenges the world and human society are facing, at least among the active minority of people who feel responsible and believe that life is not totally determined and deterministic.

The objective of the Club of Rome was – and still is – to arrive to a deeper understanding of the interactions between political, cultural, socio-economic and ecological problems, across national, ethnical or religious boundaries.

In 1972 a first “Report to the Club of Rome” was published under the title of “Limits to Growth”. As an environmental activist at that time I had the privilege to be associated with the launch the Dutch edition. Its immediate success gave a tremendous boost to the newly born environmental movement in Europe. So far, we had been seen by public authorities, the media and the public at large as a bunch of soft dreamers, disguised leftists and even dangerous revolutionaries, threatening the welfare society, which was expected to bring food, wealth and peace to the whole world. Now, with the publication of this Report, it appeared that established and respected scientists publicly stressed the necessity to transform ways of thinking about how we handle the limited natural resources of our planet. On top of that, distinguished representatives of the establishment endorsed their report: most readers therefore referred to it as the Report of the Club of Rome, instead of to.

Needless to say that because of its provocative scenario's it found a very large response – 12 million copies in 25 languages were sold. It was also very much criticised. Its conclusions were often doubted and contradicted, especially by vested interest groups among business leaders, scientists, politicians, even labour unions. Yet this publication still remains a classic and a work of reference. More: thirty years later facts and figures prove that the growth economy based on the reductionism of the production/consumption model is unsustainable, the source of much poverty, social injustice, violence and war.

I'd like to remind that at the time of the first Report to the Club of Rome I was in my late twenties, which I believe you will consider as being young. Since the early sixties I had been eager to change the world, as probably many of you feel today. Because the world I was living in seemed to me most unfair, although I was born in a rich, industrialised country, with a booming economy largely generated by the reconstruction after World War II. There was an incredible and undisputed faith in the virtues of science and technology. The American Way of Life was the credo of most Westerners, spreading rapidly all over the world.

Yet, my generation was lacking a true sense of purpose. What is the meaning of material welfare when you realise that happiness is not for sale, but in the first place a state of mind based on a spiritual dimension? Besides, we discovered through the exploding media, especially the upcoming television, that much of our

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wealth was based on the exploitation of natural resources and even the exploitation of people, as cheap labour, in other parts of the globe, in former colonies where Western powers had imposed their rule under the false pretence to “civilise” and “develop” other cultures.

A number of intellectual gurus – Herbert Marcuse, Ivan Illich, Alan Watts – denounced the “onedimensional Man” of the Western economic growth paradigm. They pleaded for another lifestyle. Some of us reacted radically against the materialistic industrial society. We preached the flower power and “make love, no war”. We went back to nature, growing our own vegetables, making our own tools. Very few were able to pursue this dream of a gentle and soft world. Most reintegrated the established society. Others realised that a mental revolution was needed. The hippie movement and May '68 were attempts to change society fundamentally. It failed although it left us some valuable messages and food for thought.

In the wake of the Report to the CoR several other initiatives took shape:

- the environmental movement started organising itself to become the powerful network we know today (think of Greenpeace, WWF, Friends of the Earth, the European environmental Bureau);
- women, consumers and pacifists movements also became representative organisations, often professionally staffed;
- books such as “Silent Spring” by Rachel Carson, “Only One Earth” by Barbara Ward and René Dubos, “Small is Beautiful” by Fritz Schumacher, “The Greening of America” by Charles Reich contributed to an increasing environmental awareness;
- new think tanks were born, such as ECOROPA (Ecologica Europa) chaired by the Swiss philosopher, writer and federalist Denis de Rougemont. Among the committee members we find several members of the Club, like Orio Giarini, Ernst von Weizsäcker, Wouter van Dieren and myself;
- some environmentalists believed only politics could change the paradigm in our democratic countries and laid the foundations of the green parties, many of which have broken through to government level. In any event all of them influenced political programmes and policies;
- even the United Nations recognized the urgent need for action and convened the first world conference on the Human Environment in Stockholm, June 1972. I had the pleasure to attend it as an official delegate of Belgium.

I should like to stress that all successful initiatives, actions and publications were nearly always the result of confrontation, dialogue and synergy between at least two generations: one generation of mature, middle-aged and even old men and women, with the richness of their experience and authority in their field of professional activity; the other generation, one of youngsters under 30 blooming with the openness of mind and eagerness for action.

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There were and there still are generations “gaps” and generations “clashes”. The latter seems to me natural and even healthy. Elder people who are not provoked tend to become conservative and fossilise, if I may use the word. And gaps can be bridged if one talks to the other. The danger is that too much emphasis is being put on differences between seniors and juniors, just as between men and women, blacks and whites, believers and non-believers.

It is most revolting to see how much of the almighty business world is lead by marketing principles and marketers – often young, I must say!

– to split up human society in ever more segments in order to increase the number their commercial targets and potential markets, and thus their profits. Babies are a market, teenagers, students too; the 30 generation, the 40, the 50, the 60, the retired, the 70 generation, the housewives, the businesswomen, the jobless, the smokers, the nonsmokers, the drinkers and the anonymous alcoholics, the fat and the anorexic, the healthy, the handicapped, the hospital patients, even the dying... and I’m afraid my list is too short.

All these target groups are told to be the most important one, different from the others, with their own rights (duties are hardly mentioned, if ever), the right to be happy. The message, preached by advertising and P.R people is: whatever the group you belong to, your major purpose in life should be perpetual happiness in a world of wealth.

Against this background, probably a bit to sketchy because I have got to focus on the very theme of today’s conference, let me tackle the main challenges and opportunities as we do see them at the Club of Rome. I will therefore mainly refer to our statement presented at the World Summit on Sustainable Development, in Johannesburg in August 2002. It is called “**No limits to Knowledge, but Limits to Poverty – Towards a Sustainable Knowledge Society**”. Our Brussels EU Chapter largely prepared it and the full text is obviously available to anyone interested.

This statement is built around six issues, which I shall briefly comment:

**1. Thirty years nearer the limits.**

As shown in some of the scenarios of “**Limits to Growth**” and confirmed in recent UN reports, the natural capital of the environment and resources of the Earth is threatened more than ever by continued population and economic growth.

Therefore the current socioeconomic model and concept of growth must be profoundly redesigned. The continuing demographic transition amplifies the need for a global ethical commitment, as well as for a new socio-economic system.

**2. The limits of poverty and inequity.**

Sustainable development includes the social parameters. Sustainability can thus only be achieved by reducing poverty worldwide. Greater integration of more people into world trade is therefore the most effective but still insufficient measure against growing inequality. Obviously international trade has to be reoriented.

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Information and communication technologies are essential for more eco-efficient growth everywhere, but particularly in the “developing” countries. Reducing the “Digital Divide” must become a worldwide priority because the transition to a knowledge society is likely to enable more people to actively participate in creative work.

The eradication of poverty must be the highest priority. We cannot accept that more than half of the world population is deprived of food and fresh water, shelter and basic health care. Communications and information infrastructure as well as greater investment in education in local communities are essential to reducing the “digital divide” and to participation in the future knowledge society. Development aid has to focus on these long-term objectives.

### **3. Towards a sustainable knowledge society.**

The emergence of a networked knowledge society in the next twenty or thirty years is a major paradigm-shift from the industrial model of the 19th and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. It can be part of the problem, but even more part of the solution to many of our problems. The hope that the dynamics of the IT technology within globalizing markets alone will contribute to reduce poverty and create wealth is of course too simplistic. However I can offer new access to education, information and knowledge, even in the most remote regions, helping to eradicate poverty and building sustainable communities.

Science and technology have to respond to real needs, be accessible and shared by all people. The emergence of a knowledge society is the major paradigm shift for the next half century. A holistic methodology and approach is imperative to empower a stepwise construction of sustainable societies with constant elevation of the quality of life for all.

### **4. No limits to diversity and creativity.**

To avoid a catastrophic “clash of civilisations”, which we can see emerging in the last couple of years, not the least since the 11 September 2002 events, both cultural identity and diversity must be accepted as legitimate goals in themselves.

We need culturally diverse, tolerant and vibrant societies in which individuals have the opportunity to practice actively and fulfill their primary need for a sense of identity and a sense of belonging. Our future world must be one of “multiple modernity’s”, of “learning communities” where indigenizing modernity and learning from each other are values in themselves. The European Union too has to protect and promote the richness of its diversity.

Human society tomorrow must be based on local communities embedded in their cultural heritage and participating in the knowledge society. Respect for fundamental human rights, expressed by a common set of values, has to be recognized and adhered by all. The networked knowledge society must integrate the richness of indigenous knowledge and practice.

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**5. Efficiency and steering mechanisms; an answer to resource limits.**

The natural capital of the planet Earth is more threatened than ever by continued population growth and the dramatic increase in industrial activity, which is still ignoring basic rules of good environmental management and practice. We are near to limits to growth in resource use, yet we do not modify our production and consumption behaviour.

We must shift to more rational use of resources, to use of renewable materials, to cycles of production and consumption in which wastes become primary materials. A shift from non-renewable material goods production to a service economy is urgently needed.

In developing countries the emphasis must shift from mining natural resources to empowering human capital with a new concept of "growth".

Energy demand can be reduced considerably in industrial countries and energy supply has to shift from carbon to renewable and clean sources, which exist.



**Member Executive Committee, Brussels-EU Chapter Club of Rome President, European Society for Environment and Development Executive Director, Europe of Cultures Forum**

**Curriculum Vitae**

Mark Dubrulle has 35 years of professional experience in environmental protection and management, as well as in public affairs and communication strategies. He presently is a self employed Senior Adviser in Environmental Management & Communication Strategies and Senior Advisor within the Core Team of Ernst & Young Executive Temporary Management in Brussels.

He has a special expertise in environmental crisis management and conflict resolution, as well as in facilitating various EU projects, especially on priority waste streams. These projects included assignments on behalf of the EC, the DOE in the U.K., ENEA in Italy, ADEME in France, OVAM in Belgium. Besides he has counseled a significant number of multinational corporations on environmental policies and strategies.

A founding member of the Belgian confederation of nature conservation and environmental organisations, Mark was National Secretary of the Bond Beter Leefmilieu / Inter-environnement from 1971 to 1980. He was a co-founder and, from 1980 to 1982, the first Secretary of the Flemish green party AGALEV.

Appointed Managing Director and General Manager of Hill and Knowlton International in Brussels in 1980, he left this leading PR agency to start his own consultancy in 1986. Until 1998 he was Managing Director of EMSA Europe S.A., specialising in environmental management and communication strategies.

Mark is the author of numerous articles on environmental issues and communication. He published "Future European Environmental Legislation and Subsidiarity" ('92) and "Régionalisme, Fédéralisme, Ecologisme: de nouvelles bases culturelles et économiques pour l'union de l'Europe" ('95). He lectured at several universities in Belgium, France, Italy and the U.K.

He was a Belgian delegate at the UN Conference on the Human Environment in Stockholm [1972], is President of the European Society for Environment and Development (ESED) since 1997, Executive Director of the Europe of Cultures Forum, Executive Committee member of the Club of Rome Brussels EU Chapter and Committee member of ECOROPA, a think tank on Europe and ecology since 1976.

## Forthcoming Events

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### 1. Thursday January 29, 2004.

Aurelio Peccei Lecture at 6:00 -20:00 pm

Prof. Dr. Dr. Franz Josef Radermacher from FAW in Ulm presents his new book:  
*Balance or Destruction. Eco-social Market Economy as the Key to a Global Sustainable Development.*

### 2. Friday January 30, 2004.

Workshop from 08:00 am – 17:00 pm

The Global Marshall Plan  
From 8:00 till 9:45 am breakfast in the Brasserie Leopold, 35, 2 rue du Luxembourg.

From 10:00 am till 5:00 pm workshop in the Royal Academy.

### 3. Thursday March 04, 2004.

Aurelio Peccei Lecture

Very special event with contributions from UNESCO and UN University.

Invitations and information follow shortly.

## About the Brussels-EU Chapter CoR-BCH

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The Brussels EU Chapter of the Club of Rome is an independent non-profit association, registered under Belgian Law, affiliated with the Club of Rome. The Association specifically aims to build bridges between the European Union Institutions and the Club of Rome.

**The Association's mission is to act as a catalyst of reflection on sustainable development in Europe on all levels: Government and private.**

**Its aims are:**

- To identify the most crucial problems facing European society; to analyse them in the global context and to reflect on alternative future solutions for a sustainable European Society, including the elaboration of specific scenarios for the future of the European continent.
- To initiate research in which the major theme is the development of a conceptual foundation for globally sustainable development and for the specific contributions that Europe can make;
- To organise a societal discourse on the implementation of European policies in a global context, involving the most important public- and private-sector decision-makers, as well as the general public.

Its activities are framed within the objectives of the Club of Rome and of European society:

- **A global perspective**, recognising the increasing inter-dependence of nations;
- **A holistic approach**, seeking a deeper understanding of complex contemporary problems;
- **An inter-disciplinary and long-term perspective**, focused on the choices and policies determining the destiny of future generations;

It is composed of individuals who subscribe to the goals of the Association; of outstanding ability and with well-established reputations in their professional work, and who are active in the Brussels region – in Belgian society or with the European Institutions. ♦

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