



World Citizens Association of Australia

THE BULLETIN

World Citizens Association(Australia)
Institute for Global Peace and Sustainable Governance (IGPSG)
Coalition for a World Security Community (WSC)

<http://www.wcaa.org.au>
<https://igpsg.com/>
<https://coalitionforawsc.org/>

Volume 20: Issue 2 Summer 2023-24 ISSN 2651-9453

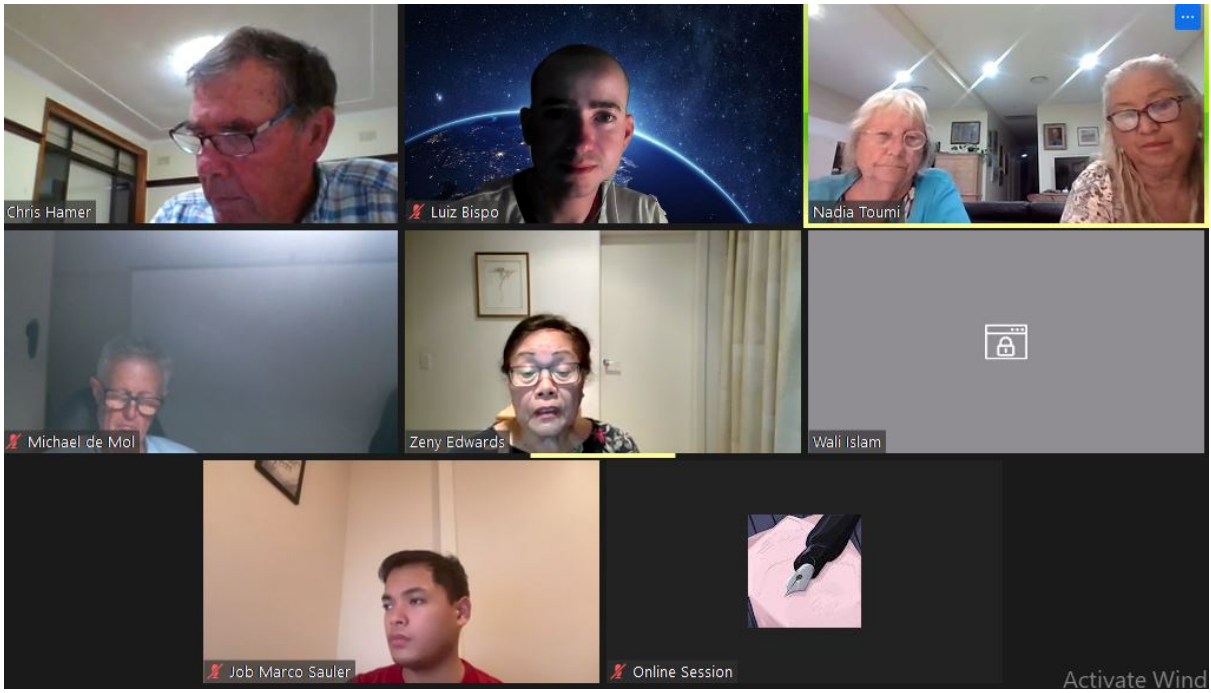
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President's Column – Interesting Times

As mentioned in my last column, the rejuvenation of our Association continues apace. Luiz Bispo is convening a new discussion forum on world federalist issues, and Nadia Toumi is overhauling the Treasurers portfolio, and assisting me in a new submission to DFAT concerning the Pacific Islands, which we have been invited to make – see later in the Bulletin. Zeny Edwards and her team in the IGPSG have organized a new schools Model Global Parliament at Unity Grammar, and are trying to fix a date for a new MGP later in the year at Parliament House – see Zeny's report below..

Meanwhile on the international stage, events have reached an interesting stage. Last month I attended the Copenhagen Democracy Summit once again, which naturally enough was concerned chiefly with the war in Ukraine -again, see later in the Bulletin. This month in June, the Ukraine Peace Summit took place in Switzerland. We submitted a peace proposal to participants in the Summit, so we will have to wait and see whether anything comes of it. And finally, this year's G7 Summit occurred in Italy, where a number of us in the CWSC have been pushing for discussion of the possibility of expansion of the G7 into a 'D10'. Again, we will have to see whether anything comes of that, although the news reports don't look very hopeful at the moment.

So we will have to wait to give a wrap on these various events in our next Bulletin after the AGM!

Submission to a Parliamentary Committee on the Pacific

The Foreign Affairs and Aid Subcommittee (the Committee) of the Joint Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade has commenced a new inquiry into Australia's response to the priorities of Pacific Island countries and the Pacific region. They have invited us to make a submission to the inquiry.

Pera Wells and I have made submissions to previous parliamentary enquiries, as part of our campaign for an upgrade of the Pacific Islands Forum to a Pacific Islands Community. We were invited to make a presentation at DFAT on the subject in 2022. Some of our arguments for the upgrade have become even more urgent and compelling, including the existential threat of climate change to some of the smaller Island states, and the increasing tension with China in the Indo-Pacific region.

Nadia Toumi, Radhiga Dey and I are preparing a revised and updated submission to send to this new inquiry.

Ukraine Peace Proposal

Switzerland convened a recent peace summit on Ukraine in the middle of June. A group of us have been working on a peace settlement proposal that hopefully would be acceptable to both sides, involving new referenda in the disputed territories. We sent copies to the principals of



many of the governments concerned, including our Australian representative at the Summit, Bill Shorten. Whether our proposal got any hearing at all we are yet to discover.

The members of our little group included Alfred de Zayas, who was the first UN Independent Expert on the Promotion of a Democratic and Equitable International Order, plus myself as President, and Luiz Bispo Secretary, of the World Citizens Association of Australia, and Pratul Malthumkar, who is working with us as an intern. Like everybody else, we have been shocked and appalled by the death and destruction going on in the Ukraine war.

Basically, the idea involves a referendum of the residents in each of the disputed territories, using electoral rolls from before the conflict began, with the preliminary ceasefire and the referendum itself supervised by troops from neutral mediator countries such as India and Brazil. The full proposal will be posted on our website.

We believe that both sides are anxious to find a way out of the conflict without suffering an outright defeat, and this proposal should be acceptable to both sides in that regard, while offering a settlement on the basis of the democratic will of the people.

Chris Hamer

Coalition for a World Security Community of Democratic Nations

Copenhagen Democracy Summit, May 15-16th 2023.

This meeting took place in bright sunny weather in the Royal Danish Playhouse, Copenhagen. The meeting had a more urgent tone, and had a more restricted but higher status of attendees (by invitation only), unlike previous meetings,. We were reminded that in the struggle between democracy and autocracy around the world, democracy has been going backwards for the past eighteen years, according to Freedom House. For those interested, a summary and recordings of the proceedings may be found at the Alliance of Democracies Foundation website [here](#). Discussions included the following topics.

1. Ukraine

Speakers attending in person included:

- Denmark: Prime Minister Mette Frederikson (opening address), and Defence Minister Troels Poulson;
- EU: President of European Commission, Ursula von der Leyen, and President of the European Council, Charles Michel;
- Ukraine: Andrey Yermak, Office of the President of Ukraine attended in person to plead for help;

Speakers by video link included:

- US: former Secretary of State Hillary Clinton; Republican minority Senate leader Mitch McConnell.



- UK: businessman Sir Richard Branson.

All agreed that more weapons and financial aid to Ukraine were most urgently needed to stem recent Russian advances, and help Ukraine to eventual victory in the struggle. Promises included (exact figures not guaranteed):

- Denmark: 9bn Euro over 5(?) years, plus 11 F-16 fighters in June (rather puts Australian aid in the shade!);
- EU: 50bn Euro (?! where from?)
- US: US\$61bn, just passed by the US Congress;
- Richard Branson gave an excellent interview, short and to the point, and he and his business partners have already raised \$1bn for Ukraine!

Andreas Fogh Rasmussen argued that NATO must admit Ukraine as a candidate for membership as soon as possible; and Ursula von der Leyen said that the EU must likewise admit Ukraine as a candidate for membership as soon as possible. The trouble would seem to be that both these admissions are likely to be vetoed by recalcitrant pro-Russian present members, such as Hungary!

2. China/Taiwan

Speakers in person included:

Matthew Pottinger former deputy National Security Adviser under Donald Trump, who also gave an excellent interview, and emphasized that the democratic world needs to do everything possible to deter China from invading Taiwan,

3 members of the Interparliamentary Alliance on China, including a member of the European parliament, Uffe Elbaek, a former member of the Danish parliament, and a woman member of Bolivia's parliament. Apparently members of this group are actually in danger of physical attack from agents of the Chinese government.

Speakers by video link included both the former and the newly elected Presidents of Taiwan, who emphasized their determination to maintain Taiwan's freedom in the face of Chinese threats, and the need for support from allies in their hour of need.

3. Democracy activists from authoritarian regimes

We heard some remarkable tales of suffering and courage in a good cause, e.g. from

- Iran: Masih Alinejad was the star of the show for the second year in succession, giving a passionate, fist-pumping speech arguing for women's rights in the Islamic republic of Iran. She pointed to several friends in the audience from both Iran and Afghanistan who had been subjected to imprisonment and rape for their advocacy in this cause. For instance, we learned that women are forbidden to sing in public in Iran, along with having to wear the hijab;



- Hong Kong: Carmen Lau, of the Hong Kong Democracy Council, told of looking down the barrel of a gun during student protests in Hong Kong, and pointed to two friends in the audience who had each lost an eye when shot with rubber bullets;
- Venezuela: Leonardo Lopez and other activists of his World Liberty Congress appeared onstage to tell their stories. Apparently there is some hope of seeing Maduro gone if the upcoming elections there are at all free and fair: apparently about 80% of the population would like to see the end of him.
- Russia: Leonid Volkov, right-hand man to Alexander Navalny, had survived a recent attack with a hammer. He told us that despite all the repression in Russia, 40,000 people attended Navalny's funeral, and 8 million more watched it online. Navalny's widow Julia is carrying on his work from exile.
- Belarus: Sviatlana Tsikhanouskaya of the Belorussian Democratic Forces told us that her husband and other imprisoned activists like him are now sealed off from any contact with their families. Russia is apparently infiltrating and gradually taking over control of institutions there, turning it into a province of Russia.
- Ghana: The President of Ghana, Nana Akufo-Adda, attended in person, and told us that democracy was in good health in Ghana, with the next election coming up in 2024. Apparently four out of 13 countries in West Africa have fallen under military rule recently, because of destabilization by Islamic jihadists who appeared in northern Mali after being chased out of (Egypt and Sudan?);

4. Technology

The second day of the Summit was devoted to discussions of the threats of disinformation and deepfakes using AI in our new digital age, and how they might be used in the imminent elections for the European Parliament.

Various young entrepreneurs in the Democracy Tech Entrepreneur program were invited to discuss briefly their ideas and enterprises aiming to debunk, and even better 'prebunk', disinformation and deep fakes. Three prizes of \$10,000 euros each were awarded.

A group consisting of Vera Jourova, Vice-President of the European Commission, Annette Kroeber-Rial of Google in Europe, and Ginny Badanes from Microsoft, were invited to discuss what was being done regarding these matters at the official level, especially in respect of the upcoming elections in Europe.

Sanna Marin, former Prime Minister of Finland, discussed her experiences in this regard.

Apparently 2 billion people are due to cast their votes in elections this year, and the elections might be in danger of disruption by disinformation emanating from the autocratic governments in Russia and China. We will have to wait and see the outcomes.



D10 Proposal

This year's G7 Summit was held June 13-15th in Italy. Italian principals were Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni, Foreign Minister Antonio Tajani, and 'Sherpa' Ambassador Luca Ferrari. A group of our CWSC members tried to lobby them and others to try and get a 'D10' proposal on the agenda for the Summit.

The core argument runs as follows. There is a distinct possibility that World War III could break out in the next few years over China's threatened invasion of Taiwan. To prevent this catastrophe, the world's major democracies need to form an alliance formidable enough to deter China from any such use of force. Our Coalition advocates the formation of a World Security Community embracing all the world's major democracies for this purpose. This could indeed provide the first step towards a brighter future, an improved system of democratic global governance capable of dealing effectively with all the world's manifold common problems, starting with climate change. An enlargement of the G7 into a D10 grouping at the next Summit would be an ideal opportunity to start this process.

Ideally, the Summit could agree to form a D10 Alliance or Security Community of democratic nations, and set up a Commission to draft a new Treaty to that effect. The community could then be opened for membership to other democracies around the globe. That is probably too much to ask at this stage, but at least they could agree to expand the group by admitting Australia and South Korea as members as well as the EU. A longer document outlining the proposal will be uploaded to our website.

Signatories on the letters included myself (Australia), Didier Jacobs (Belgium), Antonio Roque and Titus Alexander (UK), Nico Heller and Andreas Bummel (Germany), and John Davenport (US). I have received formal acknowledgements from the offices of Justin Trudeau in Canada, and Ursula von der Leyen in Brussels.

Chris Hamer



Vice-President (Community Engagement) Report – Dr Zeny Edwards OAM

Taronga Zoo ‘Welcome to International Students Community Event’, Saturday, 9 March

It was a highly successful event with 20+ international students attending. Taronga Zoo offered a very entertaining and educational workshop to introduce Australian animals to the audience. We were treated to a live bird show, which was very impressive, the preferential reserved seats provided the very much needed shade on a hot day. The immersive workshop gave the students the opportunity to touch and interact with the animals. The Zoo also allowed access to some of the enclosures which are not open to the public. The photo session with the Luigi, the koala, with individual students gave them a souvenir to remember the day by. We were also treated to a sausage bbq and paddlepops afterwards. The feedback from the students were very positive. All in all, one of the best events IGPSG has had so far! Thank you to the efforts of Sophia Maranan and Suzanne Thomas of the Taronga Zoo Foundation and the staff of the Taronga Zoo Conservation Society who took care of us and went out of their way to enable the students to learn as much as they can from the visit.

Image 1: The IGPSG Welcome Party/ The students at the entrance of Taronga Zoo to start their workshop.



Model Global Parliament 2024

1. Unity Grammar High School has proposed to organise an MGP at their high school on – 27 June 2024/1 July 2024 (TBC). No funding has been requested for this MGP. Last year’s MGP at Unity Grammar was a tremendous success and this offer of 2024 from the same school highlights their commitment to education and promotion of global peace, security and human rights.

2. The IGPSG MGP Committee is also organising the MGP to be held at NSW Parliament on 21 September 2024. In its planning stages to be led by Sophia Maranan, Coordinator of the Model Global Parliament program of IGPSG.

Dr Wali Islam (Vice-President WCAA)

Treatment and rehabilitation of a destitute girl

Rozina Akter comes from a very poor family of the Jamuna River eroded area of Sonatola, Bogura, Bangladesh. A tragic event put her in deep trouble when she was fetching soil from underneath the riverbank. She broke her back and leg in the event. She used to earn approximately 10-20 cents a day for this hard work. She dedicated her time and effort to earn a bit of money for her poverty-stricken family. Now she became the victim of a major life changing accident.

An appeal has been lodged to support Rozina’s treatment and rehabilitation programs. The treatment and rehabilitation programs are costly. The family would not be able to bear the cost. Failure of effective management of Rozina’s conditions could put her future life into deep challenges and unbearable.

To support Rozina’s treatment and for more information, contact Wali via islam.wali6@gmail.com

Secretary’s Report - Luiz Bispo

The World Federalist Movement – Institute for Global Policy (WFM/IGP) - umbrella organization in which our WCAA is a member of - is currently focusing on two major initiatives: Mobilising an Earth Governance Alliance (MEGA) and the campaign LAW no War.

MEGA’s idea is to establish a global alliance of environmental governance.

LAW no War aims to enhance the jurisdiction and use of the International Court of Justice (ICJ) in order to assist countries resolve international disputes peacefully rather than through recourse to the threat or use of force.

Learn more at www.wfm-igp.org



REGISTRATION FORM

I would like to join/renew my membership in the World Citizens Association (Australia)

Surname: _____

First Name: _____

Occupation: _____

Postal Address: _____

Email Address: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Subscription Rates: Full \$40

Juniors, seniors, unwaged \$10

Funds transferred:

Subscription _____

Donation to World Citizens Aid Project _____

Total _____

Please complete this form and send together with your cheque made out to 'World Citizens Association (Australia)' to:

Nadia Toumi, Treasurer, World Citizens Association (Australia),

4 Fern Creek Rd.,

Warriewood NSW 2102

nadiatoumi56@gmail.com

Alternative methods of payment: (please still send in the form)

Online via <http://www.wcaa.org.au>, hit the 'Member Login' button at the top of the page, and then either the 'Join Us' or the 'Donate' button (no password necessary).

Or use direct electronic funds transfer to

BSB: 633000, account: 122927916

