



**Global Dialogue
Foundation**
Unity in Diversity

UNDER THE AUSPICES OF
UNITED NATIONS ALLIANCE OF CIVILIZATIONS

*Bridging cultures, civilizations & ethnicities
towards peace & prosperity*

Citizen Diplomacy : How Ordinary People can Change the World



14 November 2011

Last Tuesday 8th November, Global Dialogue Foundation together with ACCESS-Australian Institute of International Affairs (AIIA) presented an event entitled, "Citizen Diplomacy : How Ordinary People can Change the World."

As an emerging topic, Citizen Diplomacy aims at empowering ordinary citizens to strengthen inter-cultural ties, raise awareness and promote worldwide cultural understanding to overcome adversities. Unlike conventional diplomacy that involves state officials and not always the public, this practice strictly involves people-people ties and is gradually being adopted in practice by the United Nations and other organisations.

Ms. Melissa Conley Tyler - AIIA's National Executive Director, introduced and defined the term 'Citizen Diplomacy'. "The reason Citizen Diplomacy matters is because we depend on others. How others view us matters to our security, our prosperity. It matters broadly", she said.

Highlighting AIIA's activities in Citizen Diplomacy, including a Forum presented in Canberra on the topic in June 2011 and last month's Indonesia-Australia Dialogue, Ms. Conley Tyler provided insightful perspectives and further reasons for increasing citizen-citizen contact as a method for building partnerships between countries. [VIDEO](#)

As case examples of engaging organisations at the grassroots level, Mr. Peter (Pece) Gorgievski - CEO of the Global Dialogue Foundation presented initiatives developed with its partners under the auspices of the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations in both Australia and India, aimed at promoting understanding among different cultures and contributing to strengthening ties between the two countries.

"One of the main focus areas for Global Dialogue Foundation moving forward, is to develop civil society chapters that work together under the umbrella of the Alliance, so that each culture and community may represent its own voice, its needs, and find itself among organisations that are like-minded and with similar objectives", said Mr. Gorgievski. [VIDEO](#)

The third speaker, Mr. Ikani Taliyai - Founder of Ovava Limited and also a Pacific Islands and Tongan community leader, spoke about some of the issues faced by the Pacific Islands communities in Australia.

Mr. Taliyai is one of the pioneers behind establishing United Pacific Council of Victoria, a new peak body that aims to support its communities to better organise and modernise, to establish local partnerships, and to add greater value to the Australian society.

Expressing appreciation for the opportunities to bring his community into the discussion and to have a presence through Global Dialogue Foundation with the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations, Mr. Taliyai welcomed citizen diplomacy as a promising tool for stimulating discussion among different cultures and communities and for further strengthening ties throughout the Pacific region. [VIDEO](#)

In part 2 of her presentation, Ms. Conley Tyler elaborated on the role of AIIA. [VIDEO](#)

The event included audience interaction, with questions on citizen empowerment, media, among others. [VIDEO](#)

Event Library/Links:

Photos: <http://www.flickr.com/photos/globaldialogue/sets/72157628096271688/>

Videos (speeches) : <http://www.gdfunityindiversity.org/8nov2011videogallery.htm>

Speech by GDF CEO - Peter (Pece) Gorgievski : <http://www.globaldialoguefoundation.org/files/CitizenDiplomacySpeech8Nov.pdf>

ACCESS weblink: <http://www.aiaa.asn.au/vic-home/event/363-citizen-diplomacy-how-ordinary-people-can-change-the-world>

Questions and Answers with Peter Gorgievski on Citizen Diplomacy: <http://www.globaldialoguefoundation.org/files/CitizenDiplomacyQandAGorgievski.pdf>