



**Global Dialogue  
Foundation**  
Unity in Diversity

GDF PRESENTATION AT

3RD WORLD FORUM ON INTERCULTURAL DIALOGUE (WFID 2015)

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# **WORLD FORUM ON INTERCULTURAL DIALOGUE BAKU, 18-19 MAY 2015**



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Dialogue as global trust building

Shaping common global agenda:

Responsibility of international institutions and governments in  
building trust and understanding between cultures and civilizations

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## **Dialogue as global trust building**

### **Shaping common global agenda:**

**The role and responsibility of:  
local and national governments,  
and importantly, international organisations –  
gov't and third sector as critical players in the  
challenge of building trust between people worldwide**

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## SHARED SECURITY

The importance of collective engagement by all stakeholders can really not be underestimated. Actually, the issue of countless communities around the world being vulnerable and in dire need of assistance to meet their 'basic living needs', presents a tremendous opportunity not only to address, but to accelerate the process of building global trust.

In the time I have among fellow speakers, I'll address dialogue as a tool in building trust and will enrich it with a most valuable initiative, as unique in the world.

It's not only that Global Dialogue Foundation brings it forward as unique, but it's in me from the very beginning of my entry into the field of Dialogue among Civilizations, which in its basis is the Global Dialogue Initiative, and established exactly for this purpose.

I will elaborate. But first, please allow me a moment to acknowledge the recent past and congratulate our collective efforts and successes.

Many of us in this room have worked hard - alone and together, as advocates for intercultural dialogue and understanding and we have indeed gone beyond the point of no return.

With building intercultural, inter-ethnic, inter-religious inclusive societies now recognized as essential for sustainable development and building shared security, it is opportune to acknowledge the Baku Process and the Republic of Azerbaijan, the Alliance of Civilizations, UNESCO, Council of Europe, ISESCO, and all other key global organizations working in this field. And of course, our beloved civil society and non-governmental organizations who have given so much of themselves to contribute.

What brought me to this field about 7 years ago having been in international logistics and as a partner establishing a multi-national company, was the need to gather resources and good people, and to address vulnerabilities in communities around the world.

So as a means to address global trust building and dialogue, and based on the model created by the Founder from over 20 years ago, I joined as co-founder to establish Global Dialogue Foundation.

I am also a co-founder of Whittlesea Community Leadership Network (WCLN), which operates in grass roots communities, reaching out and bringing together leaders and representatives of all the different cultural, ethnic & religious groups living in the municipality.

The WCLN organization uses dialogue as a tool, initially to overcome the barriers of getting to know each other. Then to understand the shared common vulnerabilities and establish a community-lead organization to share the responsibilities of addressing the challenges faced with living in a new country and among different cultural and ethnic groups.

The WCLN is a copy of what was created by the Founder more than 20 years ago, only now with different people, different organizations, and developed on a much broader platform, and that can be found in the City of Whittlesea in Victoria, Australia.

In one way, I somehow find myself here qualified with enough background and experience, to express how and why this project was established, how and why it continued and now completed. Also and above all, how and why this project went from local to global. So I am extremely grateful for this opportunity to present it for you while addressing this urgent topic of shared security.

Here I will not only speak about my ideas, but reality being developed and having been established, as a model for the future world order.

Some of you may not like to hear these words, but it's true and it's built with care, understanding, patience, meekness, compassion, love. It is based on dialogue for people to get to know one-another, to begin to respect each other and with that, to gain trust among each other and begin to live like good neighbors.

Excellency's, ladies and gentlemen, friends, this is the heart and soul of why we are all here because if humanity can't learn to live with each other, and learn about each other, then how will it be able to live with others from further away - from this or another continent or from a different planet or dimension of existence.

Tomorrow, developments across the world will be based on trust.

So engaging and facilitating joint-projects in communities in a coordinated and continuous manner is indeed how we can help prevent groups from descending into violent conflict and sustaining disharmony.

Please allow me to elaborate...

Firstly, it is essential to help cultural and ethnic groups in communities, which live in a multi-ethnic society, to have the privilege of maintaining their identity so that it remains as heritage for future generations.

Where this all started was by analyzing:

1. How is an ethnic community organized - what is its organizational structure in a given locality?
2. What are its strengths and weaknesses and what is required to fill the gaps and ensure that they can meet the needs of their community members, from any aspect?
3. What does it require to better organize the community and establish a pathway for its progress?
4. Above all, does it have tools for getting to know each other, which although from the same ethnic group now living in the same community but coming from different locations in their mother country and having had problems connected with their past (perhaps political, religious, ethnic, etc., ). How can members of the same community overcome resistances towards each other? Unfortunately, old conflicts come with the people to their new homeland often.

This type of analysis is critical in order to understand and for a particular ethnic community to maintain their identity, without delving into the nature of the conflicts due to sensitivity. So leaving them as status quo but guaranteeing their autonomy and leaving conflicts to their old Country itself with its responsible institutes – historians, archaeologists, etc., to resolve.

So, the primary efforts were to create the space for the members themselves, through various organizations formed according to their needs, to get together and start dialogue - first among themselves, and later transform into ongoing communication.



Over time, getting together and organizing social events such as picnics, festivals, sporting activities. In this way, the members begin to associate with each other.

Later, with other cultural and ethnic groups. This association and richness is transferred to future generations in the new homeland, but is also transferred to the old motherland.

Based on their requirements in the new homeland, members of ethnic communities organize themselves. They establish organizations. They strengthen and also propose and organize assistance for their old motherland and this increases interaction, joint-events, sending help to family and friends back home, e.g., medicine for the sick, support for elderly, children, and so on.

This process directly translates into **respect and trust** among the community members.

Some of the areas where opportunity exists for collaboration are: culture, sports, tourism and education. Most valuable, business is intensified from which people in the new and the old homelands benefit.

Remittances follow and so too does investment and an increase in collaboration between the two countries... win-win outcome.

So how does all this actually start?

The community members in the new country organize themselves into committees or associations, or social and sporting clubs, e.g., for youth, women, senior citizens, children via women's groups. Similarly, they organize sub-committees for mothers, various specific illnesses, treatments, etc.

Where they don't exist, organizations are created. Where they do exist, they are developed. Together, all participate in cultural activities, sporting events, playing against each other, whether from the same ethnic community or others in the local areas where they live.

As other ethnic communities also develop this process, it expands and lasting trust is built. Relations developed with the host society needs mention. Morale is boosted and the learning and communications can be seen to harmonize.

Over time and monitoring its progress, it was found that although there were conflict situations in the beginning connected with historical events, they began to subside and the older leaders saw the benefit and all moved towards this new method of organizing.

Following positive results, efforts were extended to expand it from local to global level, with forming diaspora organizations.

After many more years, WCLN was started which has similar programs in its basis, but now with a step ahead. Namely, to form a body of all cultures and provide the space where leaders will meet, learn about each other, about the new country, their rights and responsibilities, how the society is organized, and how they can with their own organizations be active. I.E., forming leadership meetings and joint-events. Then later forming a similar body at federal level based on regions. From there, become a member of the global assembly comprising leaders of community.

So, leaders meet and work together. The contacts and outcomes are then brought back into the community, with everything being clear and transparent. By doing so, they establish a type of coordinative body locally, federally and later regionally and globally.

In the case with GDF, all of this was finalized recently, which is a good sign for positive development of cultures as citizens of old and new homelands. But within the cultures, they bring responsible functions into the community and the society in their new country. In various functions which is a reflection of the inclusivity and trust of one another and that grows and progresses.

This is how a global network is being organized with and through the UN as an excellent global forum for global governance and with it, building a global ethnic community as Unity in Diversity.

This is practical and continues to maintain contact with various top institutions globally, as does it continue its work locally.

Inspired by all of this and as an initiative, a number of other tasks are being developed of this character by different leaders and institutions, so it can be seen that it is successful. Only now, it requires understanding. For the first time here in Baku, it is being outlined - what and how is all this work, as it is now finalized.

Forming local committees or similar umbrella organizations gives leaders the opportunity to build Diasporas.

It is especially relevant to mention the total Diaspora remittances. For 2014, the World Bank reported remittances from Diasporas to their home countries topped \$400B globally.

From the USA alone, that number is over \$50B. This is a remarkable area we can all engage in. Former US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton in 2011 unveiled the International Diaspora Engagement Alliance, which has an instrumental role in developing this area.

For a small country like Macedonia where my family comes from, in 2012 the Global Diaspora Business community met for the first time and raised \$15M Euro to invest and create new jobs in the country.

Since then, investments have been pouring in and for 2014, the World Bank reported Macedonia's economic growth the highest in the region, nearing 4%.

**THE DIASPORA IMPACT, I.E., HELPING THEIR FAMILY AND FRIENDS, WAS ANALIZED IN MACEDONIA. AS A TINY NATION, IT WAS FOUND THAT REMMITANCES ARE IN EXCESS OF \$500 MIL. ANNUALLY.** In the current economic situation, this is huge!

Research on the impact of this type of collaboration through the Diasporas has shown that the cultures organized at a global level, are increasing remittances to their home countries. It is a clear sign about the importance of this work, the sustainability and inclusivity and building respect and trust in the world slowly through the citizen sector.

**ON THE OTHER HAND IT IS MORE THAN OBVIOUS THAT THESE TYPES OF ORGANIZED COMMUNITIES ARE NOT ONLY HELPING THEMSELVES AND THEIR MOTHERLANDS, BUT THEY ARE HELPING AND MAKING REAL FRIENDLY COOPERATION BETWEEN THEIR OLD MOTHERLAND AND THEIR NEW HOMELANDS. THEY ARE EXPANDING NEW AREAS OF INTEREST AND COOPERATION BETWEEN STATES, INCLUDING IN SPORT, CULTURAL EVENTS, TOURISM, BUSINESS ETC., AND WITH ALL THAT FRIENDSHIP AND COOPERATION RISING AS A FUNDAMENT FOR RESPECT AND TRUST BETWEEN PEOPLE FROM DIFFERENT CULTURES FAITHS AND COUNTRIES, AND**

**FOR THE COUNTRIES AS WELL, THIS IS THE BASE FOR CREATING UNITY IN DIVERSITY AMONG PEOPLE.**

It can also be seen that in areas where there is no dialogue, and no understanding of each other's insecurities, there is conflict.

So this is collaboration by Citizens with Governments and Religion, as three basic pillars of the new world order, which through dialogue finds its pathways for collaboration and progress, building trust which is the basis for respect and living as good neighbors.

To address the topic of partnerships: 5 years ago, Global Dialogue Foundation began working with the Alliance of Civilizations and many partners to deliver the inaugural Unity in Diversity Forum in Australia.

The Alliance coming to Australia and since then, to other parts of the region, has been instrumental in connecting organizations from local with regional and global, to form partnerships.

Many events and gatherings have followed; in India, China, Azerbaijan, Qatar, and in particular New York, and the goal of building Unity in Diversity - World Civil Society, as a global assembly of citizens representing every culture, ethnicity and civilization, also from various fields, i.e., professionals from different branches of work, forming a multi-sectoral approach to community organizing and building capacity, together in partnership with local, state and

federal governments and international institutions, has been cemented.

In 2011, the inaugural country chapter of Unity in Diversity - World Civil Society was launched in Australia and has since been internationalized. Currently, it is lead by a global Presidency representing 19 countries from the South Pacific, South Asia, Europe, Africa, and the Americas. It is supported and guided by a Consortium - Global Consultative Advisory Body, and has a registered membership from over 45 countries, and growing.

The extent to which international organizations and national governments can and should recognize, highlight, challenge and resolve contemporary examples of global vulnerabilities and injustices, cannot be stressed enough any more.

This month, in my country Australia, the National Security stated that a terrorist attack is likely to occur in Australia. It seems now, that no country is immune to violence and terror.

While there is so much to learn and do, this is already becoming global - based on the same principles and the same model, permitting alternatives as required by the cultures and each individual local environment, and it continues everywhere drawing considerable interest and it will go into the future, forever!

So we have here a practical example, of collaboration:

At global: with the Alliance of Civilizations - as a peak global body at the UN. Also, recent association with DPI, for which I'd like to

encourage NGO's present here to do, and many other internationally represented organizations.

At the local: the WCLN is supported at Federal level, partially funded by State and Local Governments and business. It is developed under auspices and closely working with local government. It is lead by community leaders and representatives from different cultures and ethnicities. The efforts have been supported by academic institutions, and are hailed as one of, if not the best example of community and local government working together to address needs and vulnerabilities.

The first sector to activate under the WCLN program was Women. Today, the Women's Sector is in its 2nd or 3rd phase of projects. The first phase brought over 60 women together from different cultures in a 6 or 7 week program to learn about Health and Safety in the community.

Women gathered are naturally so vibrant, and this was no exception. But above all, the courage and the willingness to keep going forward and now establish women projects for each of the individual groups within themselves and gain support from all other cultures, in my mind and in my heart is what this is really about!

So, I will conclude here. The foundation is laid and what is required now, is to continue this noble process and realize this extraordinary vision we each share at some level, for a world order based on support for each other, care, compassion, REPSECT, love and service  
**- FUNDAMENTS FOR BUILDING TRUST AND LIVING AS GOOD NEIGHBOURS, LOCALLY & GLOBALLY.**





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Foundation**  
Unity in Diversity



## GLOBAL DIALOGUE FOUNDATION

Illuminating the World • Celebrating Life • Remembering who we are

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