

United Civilizations™ (UC) Initiative Opens Global HQ in Mumbai India



Mumbai, 7th October 2019

Global Dialogue Foundation (GDF), a leading non-governmental organisation working to build Unity in Diversity and a global culture of peace, announced the opening of the Global HQ for its United Civilizations (UC) Initiative in India today.

For over 10 years, GDF, with its members and partners have been working with communities, governments, the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations, business leaders, and people from all 'walks of life', to build intercultural inclusive societies. Through GDF's well-known Unity in Diversity™ project, meetings at grassroots level in communities are organised so that people from different cultures can meet, get to know each, and where possible collaborate to better understand and address specific needs of their community.



The HQ in India will be hosted by the newly opened Thadomal Shahani Centre for Management in Mulund, Mumbai - one of India's premier management business schools and part of The Shahani Group of Institutions. The UC Initiative HQ will not only support local GDF outreach efforts in India, but also GDF Outreach efforts and offices working on building Unity in Diversity around the world.

Peter Pece Gorgievski, Chairman and CEO of Global Dialogue Foundation said, "Creating inclusivity among people from different cultural and religious backgrounds, whether it be in communities, companies, educational institutions, or anywhere for that matter..., is a key to success! Only several years ago, the topics of "culture" and "ethnicity" were seriously avoided. Today there's a plethora of activities globally in communities and companies working on strategies that build inclusivity across cultures. Many award programs are recognising leaders in this field.

Maya Shahani, Chairperson, The Shahani Group said "Unity in Diversity is a movement who's time has come. As the Vice Chairperson of Global Dialogue Foundation and as the Trustee of Thadomal Shahani Trust, I feel honoured that our centre has been identified as the global headquarters for United Civilizations initiative of the Global Dialogue Foundation. We will begin by setting up Unity in Diversity Clubs within campuses and companies."

Akhil Shahani, Managing Director The Shahani Group said, "The Shahani Group is privileged to setup the United Civilizations Initiative global headquarters at our Thadomal Shahani Centre For Management, in partnership with the Global Dialogue Foundation. We believe this will become a major centre for promoting mutual understanding among various cultural groups around the world."

The former Chairman of ISRO (Indian Space Research Organisation) Mr Kiran Kumar, floored the audience with his profound talk giving deep insights into India's space program and success stories.

Deeply inspired by the Global Dialogue Foundation's United Civilizations Initiative he said "What better place than India as the Headquarters of such an inspirational initiative because we all know that India has been home to diverse cultures and spiritual understanding where an individual is free to pursue whichever path he chooses. Today in this competitive world the business administration leaders are going to actually run institutions which are going to be positioning people from all over the world and not only parts of India. Globalization has made sure that the world has shrunk and is shrinking at such a pace".

Helen Silvester, West Asia Director British Council, espoused the cause of global degrees and certificates as being more attractive for students looking for quality placements. The Shahani Group has taken the lead in bringing British Degrees to India.

Iliana Schmatelka, Deputy Director-General of GDF said, "The United Civilizations initiative is there so that all people live in a society that does not exclude age, gender, status, culture or nationality - which gives us the right "To Be Human". It stands for a charitable mindset of mutual support for all in all spheres of the society. Setting up the United Civilizations HQ in the new Thadomal Shahani Centre - an institution for building new generations, in the traditional most diverse country, is a milestone from which we expect tremendous development."



Peter (Pece) Gorgievski pointed to some of the key considerations on which Unity in Diversity was first developed over 25 years ago by its Founder Dr. Vasko M Najdovski; “Firstly, it is essential to help cultural and ethnic groups, which live in a multi-ethnic society, to have the privilege of maintaining their identity so that it remains as heritage for future generations. An analysis is required to determine how an ethnic community is organised and structured in a given locality? Also, 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. Then, what is required to better organise the community and establish a pathway for its progress? 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.,). Unfortunately, old conflicts often come with the people to their new homeland, so this type of analysis is critical. Also, for an ethnic community to maintain their identity, without delving into the nature of past conflicts due to sensitivity. So, maintaining status-quo, but guaranteeing their autonomy and leaving conflicts to the old Country itself, with its responsible institutes – historians, archaeologists, etc., to resolve. So, the primary efforts were to create the space for the members, through various organisations formed according to their needs, to associate with each other and start dialogue. Over time, organising social events such as picnics, festivals, sporting activities. This association and richness is not only a legacy for future generations in the new homeland, but also for the old motherland. Members of ethnic communities establish organisations which interact and trade between the new homeland and old motherland. They also provide assistance for family and friends. E.g., shipping medicine, materials for improving living conditions, financial support, etc. Most valuable, business is intensified from which everyone benefits. Remittances follow and so too does investment and an increase in collaboration between the two countries... a win-win outcome.”

GDF serves as the nucleus for establishing United Civilizations (UC). Its members are currently in over 50 countries. The leadership team represents 19 countries on 4 continents. GDF's focus is on supporting communities to better organise and build inclusive and peaceful societies.

Interested persons/organisations may contact GDF via email,
info@globaldialoguefoundation.org

Websites:

<http://www.globaldialoguefoundation.org/>

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