

Brief

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World Economic Forum 2006: Civil Society's parallel events

February 2006

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Geneva, Switzerland

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The Programme on NGOs and Civil Society

Worldwide, the role of civil society has been increasing at rapid speed. Non-governmental organizations (NGOs) have become significant and influential players and generate much interest. Created in 1986, the Programme on Non-Governmental Organizations and Civil Society aims at contributing towards a better understanding of NGOs and the solutions of complex and conflictive societal problems involving NGOs.

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INTRODUCTION

As part of its Programme on NGOs and Civil Society, CASIN attended the events organised parallel to the World Economic Forum (WEF) in Davos, for the third time in January 2006. Indeed, what we call the “other face of the WEF” is an amalgam of civil society organisations, both national and international. The latter get together each year in Davos, parallel to the WEF. The authors report on three events: the Public Eye Awards, the Open Forum and the protests surrounding the WEF.



Two different boards indicating the events. (source CASIN)

The first important parallel event was the Public Eye Awards, which for the second consecutive year offered a number of awards to misbehaving multinational corporations. This was understandably more controversial than the Open Forum, which was the second event. The Open Forum’s theme was indeed well connected to that of the WEF in its endeavours in tackling real world issues, both economic and social. Being co-organised by the WEF, it had a more consensual flavour. The last aspect of this evaluation of the parallel events looks at the demonstrations and protests, which took place against the WEF.

This report has been compiled based on the experience of CASIN’s participation in the event and with a civil society perspective in observing these social movements which constantly arise parallel to so-called “injustices and questionable summits”.

THE PUBLIC EYE AWARDS

Introducing the event

The seventh edition of the Public Eye on Davos, a forum on global governance organised by civil society in response to the WEF, took place at the church community centre of Davos on January 25, 2006. The Bern Declaration and Pro Natura¹ (Friends of the Earth Switzerland) co-ordinated the organisation of this event, offering a platform to critics of globalisation as promoted by the WEF. Its public nature intended to highlight the secrecy

¹ For more information, please visit their website: www.evb.ch and www.pronatura.ch

surrounding the WEF debates. Held at the same time as the WEF and the only true alternative², it has already become an institution. It offers a public platform at which the dark side of a uniquely profit oriented globalisation is illuminated. This year, the second Public Eye Awards were given to five multinational corporations for their particularly questionable lack of social corporate responsibility including tax evasion. The awards are categorised under three issues, environment, social rights and taxes. A novelty of this year's awards is the "positive" award³.

According to Sonja Ribi (Pro Natura), the Public Eye aims to remind WEF members and other multinational corporations that the public expects more environmental responsibilities, demands the respect of human and labour rights and does not accept tax avoidance. Furthermore, Ribi argued that the subject matter "corporate social responsibility", has been receiving increased attention in corporate circles. Until now, most corporations have only gone as far as paying it lip service. Pro Natura and the Bern Declaration have been calling for binding international legislation to monitor corporate social responsibility.

Awards and Winners

Over 20 domestic and foreign corporations were selected and short-listed for the Public Eye Awards 2006. In addition, ten NGOs from 5 continents applied for the first ever-positive award⁴. From these nominees, the public eye organisers chose four prizewinners. Three of them are prime examples of corporations that demonstrate the shady side of purely profit-oriented globalisation by their socially and environmentally irresponsible behaviour. In contrast, the positive award honoured a highly effective NGO campaign against corporate delinquency, guilty of environmental, social or tax transgressions.



The Public Eye Awards. (source CASIN)

The winners in each category were:

The public eye award in the category **environment** went to Chevron Corp. The US oil concern nominated by Amazon Watch⁵ (California based NGO) contaminated large areas of pristine rain forest in Northern Equator for nearly 30 years (under its former name Texaco). To this day it refuses to carry out a comprehensive clean up of this Amazon

²Gustavo Capdevila, "World Economic Forum: Disgraceful Distinctions" in Inter Press Service News Agency accessed 28/01/06 at [<http://ipsnews.net/print.asp?idnews=31914>]

³ An "Award from the public", was given last year based on an internet survey of public opinion. However, this year, the organisers chose not to include this category.

⁴ See Annex 1

⁵ www.amazonwatch.org

region. Representing Amazon Watch, Jennifer DeLury Ciplet, presented the case against Chevron Corp, with frightening figures illustrating the devastating acts of the company in the Amazon rain forest⁶.

The winner in the category **social rights** was the Walt Disney Company. Southern China's suppliers to the entertainment giant are guilty of serious labour and human rights violations, thus tarnishing Disney's family friendly image. The California based media and toy manufacturer, was nominated by Students and Scholars Against Corporate Misbehaviour⁷ (SACOM), located in Hong Kong. Parry Leung from SACOM showed that Disney has failed to implement its own code of conduct. He presented a recent study undertaken by his organisation which shows that in four different factories in China, Disney denied its workers basic rights such as minimum wages, reasonable working hours, provision of paid maternity leave as well as basic health insurance.

Citigroup Inc. nominated by the Tax Justice Network⁸ (TJN) is the winner in the category **taxes**. Its subsidiary Citibank, one of the world's largest non-Swiss private bank abets tax evasion by helping millionaires potentates and corporations place their capital in tax havens and offshore firms, beyond the reach of national tax authorities. Lucy Komisar from TJN argued that tax evasion from corporations and the very rich impoverishes people of all countries, increases the gapping divide between rich and poor, and shifts tax bills to the middle class and small businesses. The latter do not and cannot avail themselves of mechanisms created to hide and launder income and profits.

The public eye organisers gave the first **positive award** to SNRTE (Sindicato Nacional Revolucionario de Trabajadores de Euzkadi), German Watch⁹ and FIAN¹⁰ (Food First Information and Action Network). Working closely with the Mexican labour union (SNRTE), the two German NGOs protested the unlawful closure of the Euzkadi factory of tire multinational Continental, located in El Salto, Mexico. Due to efficient NGO co-operation, professional lobbying and dialogue with Continental, the campaign brought about the tire factory's reopening in February 2005. Since then the workers are joint owners of the factory.

As to the question of whether any multinational corporation (MNC) could equally qualify for a positive award, Sonja Ribic explained that indeed many MNCs are on the way to perhaps qualifying in the future, however at present, no corporation fits the criteria for such an award. It is however disappointing that they did not take the opportunity to showcase an example of successful and honest social corporate responsibility.

Audience and Atmosphere

In the morning of the event, a press conference was held to allow questions from curious journalists. However, the attendance was quite low and few questions were asked. This shows a lack of media interest for the Public Eye Awards. Fortunately the event itself was well attended, around 150 people were present. In comparison to last year's event¹¹, the Public Eye Awards 2006 took place on one afternoon instead of two full days. This decision was taken due to a lack of public interest in the second day of the 2005 event,

⁶ www.chevrontoxico.com

⁷ www.sacom.org.hk

⁸ www.taxjustice.net

⁹ www.germanwatch.org

¹⁰ www.fian.de

¹¹ See report "Davos 2005, The WEF, its offshoots and the challenge of dialogue", CASIN: Geneva, February 2005.

which included a number of seminars presenting the various categories of the awards. This year, a large local presence was noticed, as opposed to last year's more professional civil society individuals. This reveals that the event seems to attract more attention from a non-professional audience. A number of local officials of the Canton of Grisons attended the event recognising the importance of the Public Eye Awards. Gret Haller, publicist and former President of the Swiss National Council, delivered the opening speech. Her intervention stood out amongst the others, inasmuch as she offered much food for thought, despite somewhat losing the attention of the audience. Indeed her presentation was highly conceptual and not in tune with this kind of event.

Furthermore, leaders of NGOs such as WWF and Amnesty International were equally present. Irene Khan, the Secretary of Amnesty International (AI), also attending the WEF, ensured the presence of her organisation at both events. She presented a new report from her organisation¹² on the effects of private sector companies in the reconstruction of Bosnia.

The moderator of the event was a controversial Swiss German comedian (Patrick Frey) who introduced each speaker with a touch of humour and even satire. To accompany him, another comedian sporadically burst into the scene dressed as a CEO of Disney and a representative of Citibank. Another appearance was made by an Italian comedian (Maurizio Antonini) who entered the room acting as Mr. Berlusconi with a number of pretend bodyguards and his personal translator. The audience appreciated the humour and understood the symbolism of such a presentation, especially in light of the current decrease in freedom of speech in his country through the domination of public media.

Indeed, to some participants, these contributions give an idea of the absurdity of the current practices of these multinational corporations and also enable a personal release through satiric humour of the atrocities of what they consider an unjust system. However, in the eyes of others, this satire may remove the credibility of such an event.

Concluding remarks

The originality of such an event and the effort made by a number of civil society organisations to co-ordinate it, illustrates the presence and passion of such organisations in the world of corporate profiting and self-interest. Indeed, the networking and campaigning between these various organisations in tackling the latter, is impressive in that both consumers and other members of civil society, endeavour to put checks and balances on these corporate acts. The large number of civil society organisations which were involved in the nomination of possible candidates from around the world, also illustrates the incredible borderless relationships which exist between civil societies from all countries, in our ever shrinking globe.

¹² The report is available online: <http://web.amnesty.org/library/eng-recent/reports>

THE OPEN FORUM

Introducing the event

For the fourth consecutive year, the World Economic Forum co-organised the Open Forum with the Federation of Swiss Protestant Churches¹³, which took place from the 26th January to the 29th January 2006¹⁴. Individual sessions were also co-organised by the Terre des Hommes Foundation¹⁵, Swiss Red Cross¹⁶ and Bread for All¹⁷ (the development organisation of the Federation of Swiss Protestant Churches (SEK-FEPS)). Under the theme “*Respecting, Crossing and Shifting Boundaries*”, it sought to create a “public and controversial” dialogue “between business, civil society, governments, the churches and the public” according to co-organiser Thomas Wipf, President of the Council of SEK-FEPS.

The Open Forum organisers, in the preparation of this year’s event, made an analysis through survey of 200 questionnaires, which resulted in a number of important recommendations. These recommendations were taken into account in the planning and conceptualising of the 2006 Open Forum. Among these recommendations, the following were retained: First of all, a larger number of women as well as experts from developing countries should be invited as speakers on the various panels and secondly, it was suggested to reduce the number of speakers in one debate in order to allow more time for discussion¹⁸.

Most sessions were attended by 250 to 300 individuals who participated on a first-come, first-served basis¹⁹. The event took place in the auditorium of the Schweizerische Alpine Mittelschule, a local high school. The audience was mainly composed of locals of all age groups, alongside a few foreigners. A few participants from the WEF made their way over to the Open Forum, while several observers and protagonists of the Public Eye Awards also took part in the event. The sessions were organised as panels, for which the organisers had selected the speakers. The latter were a good balance of government, private sector and civil society representatives, as well as some prestigious guests, bringing along some of the “Davos Spirit”. The last 20 minutes of each session, allowed for questions and answers from the audience.

“Respecting, Crossing and Shifting Boundaries”

According to this year’s theme, boundaries play a key role in our lives. They provide us with guidelines and a framework in which to operate and give orientation, however, boundaries also restrict our movements; therefore they are often crossed or moved. Such shifts in boundaries often happen without being noticed: respected boundaries and limits seem to be moved over night, step by step. We often realise only afterwards that decisions, which were taken democratically and with clear goals, had evolved in a different way than originally intended.

¹³ www.sek-feps.ch

¹⁴ See Annex 2

¹⁵ www.tdh.ch

¹⁶ www.srk.ch

¹⁷ www.brot-fuer-alle.ch

¹⁸ For more information on the Open Forum 2005, see report “Davos 2005, The WEF, its offshoots and the challenge of dialogue”, CASIN: Geneva, February 2005.

¹⁹ For a complete list of sessions and panellists refer to annex 2

The eight sessions organised under this theme reflected different aspects of the topic. These ranged from physical and political borders between countries (like in the issue of taxation or labour migration), to intellectual boundaries relating to research and development.

The opening session of the Open Forum was entitled: **“Labour Migration: How far is too far?”** and touched upon issues such as the impact of labour migration in Europe, illegal migration and measures to control and avoid exploitation of migrant workers. The panel was composed of a European Member of Parliament who is also a Young Global Leader, a Trade Unionist, a representative of a consultant firm in Turkey, a representative of the Global Commission on International Migration and the president of the Swiss Red Cross. Despite this eclectic group of speakers, the discussion was indeed quite consensual. The debate did not provide much food for thought nor did it contribute any groundbreaking ideas. Perhaps this was due to the broadness of the topic under discussion which did not allow the however resourceful panellists to share much of their knowledge. Nevertheless, a few interesting ideas came out of the debate, such as the importance of not considering labour as a commodity but rather human beings. Another pertinent point was the stress on developing a coherent management of labour migration. Furthermore, it was agreed that migration of workers is inevitable, even desirable.

The evening session of the first day asked the question: **“Does Global Tax Competition Increase Poverty?”**. Governments are giving more and more tax cuts as a result of worldwide competition to attract multinational companies and foreign investment. Global corporations are striving to decrease their tax burdens; to this end, they often have recourse to consultancies, use tax havens and apply sophisticated (and at times abusive) methods. The main question of the debate was the link between global tax competition and poverty, with some references to the UN Millennium Development Goals. The discussion was highly instructive, thanks to its political perspective as opposed to more technical approach. Furthermore, the contributions of two panellists (current Finance Minister of Egypt and former Treasurer of the Philippines) on describing the effects of tax competition in their respective countries were enlightening and enriched the debate. Another positive aspect of this discussion was the presence of the CEO of Ernest & Young, Switzerland and the Chairman of the Global Public Sector Client Group of Merrill Lynch & Co, which added controversial opinions on this theme. Indeed, the topic of tax evasion and tax competition is currently highly debated within various circles worldwide. This is evident from a number of recently published articles in international newspapers²⁰ and of course, the Public Eye Award that was granted to Citibank for tax evasion (see above). Furthermore, a number of sessions in the WEF were dedicated to this theme²¹.

²⁰ For example, “Pinochet Daughter returns to face charges in Chile”, in New-York Times, 29/01/06 and “Yukos shares plunge on New Tax Claim”, in Bloomberg News, 20/01/06

²¹ “Finding Balance in the Global Economy” 28/01/06. “A Trade Compromise, for now?” 28/01/06; “A financial Architecture for the 21st century” 28/01/06; etc.



The Panel on Human Rights. (source CASIN)

In the afternoon of the second day, the discussion was entitled **“Human Rights: Reduced to Charity?”**. Due to the participation on the panel of a famous personality and Goodwill Ambassador of UNHCR, this brought much interest in the audience and increased the number of individuals present. The panel was indeed well composed. The executive director of Human Rights Watch brought substance on the subject and enlightened the audience through his experiences and knowledge. A director and councillor of the World Bank gave an economic approach and balanced the debate. Two individuals representing the work in Human Rights in developing countries, i.e. the Head of Mother Health Care programme, Afghanistan and a delegate from Terre des Hommes Foundation in Nepal, spoke of their experiences on the ground, which complemented well the debate. All the panellists agreed on the importance of Human Rights and concluded that it is crucial in the future for the various actors to collaborate and co-ordinate in the struggle for Human Rights. This session raised a few questions with regards to the role of Hollywood personalities as Goodwill Ambassadors, on one hand, participating in the WEF and on the other, in humanitarian work in general. Indeed, it can increase public focus and awareness of disaster situations and poverty in general. However, paradoxically, it can equally drive the attention away from the more substantive issues behind these disasters, including the political and social intricacies in these countries.

“Water: Property or Human Rights?” was the theme of the second day’s evening session. A last minute change in the panellists gave another flavour to the debate. Indeed, the representative for Christian Churches in Brazil chose not to participate in the discussion due to the presence of another panellist, the Chairman and CEO of Nestlé, with whom the Churches and a community in Brazil are in a legal dispute over the ownership of a source of water in the area. Despite his absence, unfortunately, the session was dominated by accusations against practices (recent and not so recent) of the Nestlé Company. Some individuals both in the audience as well as in the panel, i.e. the director of the Institute of Theology and Ethics, Federation of Protestant Churches, maintained an aggressive stance towards the CEO. This shaded much of the interesting contributions from other panellists such as, the expert on international water policy at RWE Thames Water, UK; an African CEO, member of the African Union’s NEPAD (New Partnership for Africa’s Development) initiative as well as the chairwoman of a Washington-based think-tank, Centre for Global Development. They attempted in vain to focus the debate on the real problems related to the provision of water in developing countries and reinforced the importance of democratic and accountable government

intervention in the management of water resources, rather than a simple financial issue. The presence of a theology professor, gave a Christian perspective to the debate, reminding us that the co-organiser of the Open Forum is the Federation of Protestant Churches.

The next session's main issue was the conflict between the need for scientific research and the related ethical concerns. The title of the discussion was **"Are researchers moving limits without being noticed?"**, this topic however was under-debated. The consensus remained on the setting up of ethics councils in assessing research agendas. A professor of the Institute of Social Research in Mexico brought attention to the difficulties for developing countries to set their own priorities in the field of scientific research. The CEO of Novartis objectively represented the perspective of the large pharmaceutical companies on the need for Research and Development. For the second time in this year's Open Forum, a representative of the Protestant Churches was present to contribute to the ethics debate around embryonic stem cell research. Unfortunately, government was not represented which may show the general lack of investment of the public sector in scientific research.

The afternoon's session, **"Breaking the glass ceiling: more women in top positions"**, was indeed popular, on one hand due to the highly debated topic on "gender" and on the other, due to the presence of the Swiss Federal Councillor for Foreign Affairs who delivered the opening speech relating the topic to her own personal experiences. Her speech set the level for the following interesting discussion with a number of distinguished panellists, such as the president of the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions, a famous German feminist activist and editor of Emma and the Chief Minister of Delhi, India. Rather than focusing on the issue of restrictions on women's access to top positions, the debate focused on the general discrimination against women and its consequences. Thanks to the contributions of women representatives from both developed and developing countries, the audience learnt a lot about different forms of discrimination against women, which are present in all societies.

"The Future of Europe in the World" was the topic of the evening session of the third day. The discussion attempted to focus on the new global balance of power with the emergence of China and India and its effects on Europe. Despite a very interesting panel, composed of representatives from the Swiss government, the Swiss Federal Councillor of the Economy, a National Councillor, also member of the European Parliament and academics, the panellists flew over the subject with a lack of focus for the topics raised. The large presence of politicians in the panel created a constant competition to take the floor and hindered their abilities to listen to each other's interventions. However, the Oxford Professor of European Studies succeeded in introducing some very interesting ideas such as the importance of the unique combination of communism and capitalism in China as well as the importance for Europe to maintain a common ground in the promotion of universal values such as human rights, especially in its dealings with both India and China.

The closing session's subject matter corresponded to the overarching theme of this year's Open Forum which was **"Respecting, Crossing and Shifting Boundaries"**. The most interesting ideas, which came out of this debate, were first of all, that civil society is breaking down boundaries where the government and the private sector are inefficient in doing so. Another important point was that imagination and creativity equally brake down frontiers emphasising the concept of "think global, act local". The panellists representing

governments, churches and academia, all agreed on the importance of thinking in a much broader way than in the national interest. They reinforced the concept of collaboration that the WEF promotes and the necessity to build bridges between global actors.

Concluding remarks

The vastness of the overarching theme created the risk of loss of focus in certain discussions, despite the pertinence of that theme in our world today. Indeed, intellectual, religious, political or even ethnic boundaries represent highly debated topics, due to their importance in our everyday lives. Each session however, included at least one contribution from a “developing country” and therefore enriched the debates to the extent that it enlightened the audience about the impossibility of neglecting these countries as both global players as well as present and future partners.

Another important observation is that the women who were invited to participate in each panel were highly knowledgeable and passionate of their areas of expertise and often drove the discussions to interesting levels always refocusing it, if and when it got lost. This demonstrates a highly motivated portion of professional women in civil society, governmental and/or private organisations.

PROTESTS

After the violent protests surrounding the WEF and the G8 Summit, Switzerland decided to clamp down on demonstrations. This year the protests against the WEF were few and very calm²². The activists chose a new strategy by not demonstrating in Davos itself, due to a large presence of military and policemen²³. Instead, a number of demonstrations took place throughout the country in the run-up to the meeting²⁴, and as a major alternative, the World Social Forum was organised, parallel to the WEF, in Venezuela, Mali and Pakistan. Actions began with a dance on January 14th in Berne, a day of action on January 21st with protests in many Swiss cities and a third demonstration in Basel on the 28th. The Swiss branch of the international NGO “Attac” organised on Friday 27th a conference in Zurich²⁵ to discuss proposals from alternative grassroots organisations and encourage social mobilisation against the WEF. During the week the WEF was taking place, some theatrical militant demonstrations were staged in Davos against capitalism in general and against the Forum in particular. This year, as last year, the demonstrations that took place, both inside and outside Davos, were aimed primarily at addressing the public, rather than the participants to the WEF.

²² Simon Petite, “Le Mouvement anti-WEF reflue...pour mieux rebondir?”, 23/01/06, Le Courrier

²³ Around 6000 military and policemen assured the security within and around Davos. Any public demonstrations were forbidden.

²⁴ Gustavo Capdevila, “Police occupation of Davos forces protesters to act nationwide”, in Inter Press Service News Agency accessed 26/01/06 at [<http://ipsnews.net/print.asp?idnews=31868>]

²⁵ “L’Autre Davos se penche sur la lutte contre la pauvreté”, 23/01/06, SDA-ATS News Service



Some demonstrators dressed up as businessmen in Davos. (source CASIN)

The fact that less protestors joined public demonstrations this year, as indeed last year, raises the question as to where the public and the activists stand in relation to these topics. Does this illustrate their lack of interests in these summits or rather does it illustrate a new form of voicing opinions?²⁶

CONCLUSION

The Public Eye Awards, a much-praised event by national and international circles, is truly original and refreshing in its approach. It dares to voice important issues, which cannot be ignored any longer in the face of unjust actions of multinational corporations. Over the years, this event has sought public opinion in reinventing itself and improving its image and professionalism and mirrors in some sort, the World Social Forum. Unfortunately, the Public Eye Awards do not receive enough media coverage, hidden behind the enormous popularity of the WEF and worldwide coverage of the latter.

The WEF also easily eclipses the Open Forum. Questions do arise as to the purpose of such a forum, beyond serving a relatively local public with the opportunity to listen to speakers who otherwise are behind the closed doors of the WEF. On the plus side, the organisers do seem to have become more adept at turning this event into an “open” forum by greatly increasing the time provided for questions. As a sideshow to the WEF, however, it is impossible for the event to stand on its own feet, and therefore the little dialogue the Open Forum does manage to create, remains dependent on the WEF. It is unclear whether the event is meant to grow beyond its local Davos importance and impact at all, however it appears that the organisers are not pursuing a clear strategy in that direction. Its significance therefore needs to be questioned. Furthermore, the WEF’s collaboration with a major religious group, i.e. the Federation of Protestant Churches, in the organisation of the Open Forum gave an important presence of religious representatives as well as religious ideas within each debate. Apart from a few direction signs to the Open Forum, most of the WEF participants were unaware of the latter and therefore their participation was low.

²⁶ Bastienne Joerchel, “Le mouvement altermondialiste n’est ni dispersé, ni essoufflé”, 26/01/06, Le Temps.

The sessions seemed to target a local audience which somewhat disinterested much of the international media and therefore, was highly under-covered by the latter. Unfortunately as well, the United Nations was under-represented at the various sessions and their contribution would have been much beneficial and enlightening to the debates.

The side-events organised parallel to the WEF, as described in this report, are indeed a refreshing alternative to the secretive and high-level meetings, which take place in Davos. The atmosphere at both events as well as the various demonstrations which took place around the country, illustrate the dynamism of civil society today and the will of people to speak out and defend their fundamental values and rights of freedom of speech.

Resources

If you want to have a different vision of the WEF, please read the cover story from John Elkington: "Davos2015", available on:

www.globescan.com/news_archives/What%20next%20for%20WEF.pdf

This gives you new perspectives on what should be on the agenda of the WEF-or whatever replaces it-a decade from now. Indeed, it is very interesting and innovative.



PUBLIC EYE AWARDS 2006
Overview of the nominated companies

Corporate Group	Reason for the nomination	Nominated by
Environment		
Alcoa	Participation in the construction of dams with disastrous consequences for human beings and the environment.	International Rivers Network, São Paulo (Brasilien)
Bayer AG	Responsibility in Australia's worst case of contamination with genetically engineered organisms.	Greenpeace Australia Pacific, Sidney (Australien)
Chevron Corp. (formerly ChevronTexaco)	Contamination of large parts of pristine Amazon rainforest by using substandard oil drilling technology in Ecuador.	Amazon Watch, San Francisco und Malibu (USA)
The Coca-Cola Company	Responsible for severe water shortages and soil and groundwater pollution around its bottling facilities in India.	India Resource Center, El Cerrito (USA)
Dalhoff Larsen & Hornemann	Policy of buying timber from suppliers who practice destructive forestry and violate national laws.	NEPENTHES, Kopenhagen (Denmark)
GUNNS Limited	Logging activities that are destroying Tasmanian ancient forests. Persecution of its critics.	Milieudefensie Amstelveen, Utrecht (Netherlands)
Karachaganak Petroleum Operating B.V.	Oil and gas drilling in Kazakhstan that causes severe health problems for nearby communities.	Crude Accountability, Alexandria (USA)
Novartis International, Ciba Speciality Chemicals, Syngenta	Irresponsible practices in handling toxic waste, incl. dioxin, at several dumpsites around Basel and in Bonfol.	Greenpeace Schweiz, Zurich (Switzerland)
Tesco plc	Its irresponsible procurement policy is driving the conversion of remaining rainforests into palm oil plantations.	Friends of the Earth England, Wales and Northern Ireland together with WALHI (Friends of the Earth Indonesia)
Vattenfall Europe	Menaces with an opencast pit in Lacoma (Germany) a local nature reserve and ethnic settlement areas.	Initiative Group "Freunde von Lacoma", Cottbus (Germany)
Soziales		
The Coca-Cola Company	Accused of complicity with right-wing paramilitaries to persecute union members in Colombian bottling plants.	International Labor Rights Fund, Washington (USA) Polaris Institute, Ontario (Canada)
Delta & Pine Land Company	Promotion and testing of "Terminator technology" (seeds that due to genetic manipulation are sterile upon harvest).	Ban Terminator Campaign, Ontario (Canada)

FILA	Unwilling to improve the labor rights situation at its suppliers facilities in Asia.	Labour Behind the Label in collaboration with the CCC
GAP Inc.	Unwilling to halt the sexual abuse of female workers at its suppliers located in India.	DISC Bangalore (India)
Nestlé S.A.	Violation of the WHO's Code of Marketing of Breast-milk Substitutes. Negative influence on coffee and cocoa prices.	IBFAN, Cambridge (UK) Polaris Institute, Ontario (Canada)
The Walt Disney Company	Unwilling to ensure the observance of labor and human rights at its supplier factories in China.	SACOM (Students & Scholars Against Corporate Misbehaviour), Hong Kong
Steuern		
Citigroup Inc.	Assisting corrupt dictators and criminals to discretely avoid tax authorities and invest their money abroad.	Taxjustice Network, London (UK)
Kendris	Helps wealthy individuals achieve tax-free growth of assets and inheritance transfer free from estate taxes.	Berne Declaration, Zurich (Switzerland)
ZfU- International Business School	Indirectly promotes aggressive tax avoidance for wealthy individuals and corporations.	Aktion Finanzplatz Schweiz (AFP), Basle (Switzerland)
Positive Award		
NGO	Reason for the submission	Filed by
Amazon Watch	Campaign against Chevron Corp. for its toxic legacy in the Ecuadorian Amazon.	Amazon Watch, San Francisco und Malibu (USA)
BioTani Indonesia Foundation	Campaigning for the right to food and against biopiracy.	BioTani Indonesia Foundation, Jakarta (Indonesia)
CARE Trust	Campaign against Wal-Mart in India.	Community Awareness Research Education (CARE Trust)
Clean Clothes Campaign	Supports workers affected by labor conflicts in the textile industry and participates in the improvement of production standards.	Thai Labour Campaign, Ladprao (Thailand)
Comisión Nacional en Defensa del Agua y de la Vida	Successful campaign against water privatization in Uruguay.	REDES (Red de Ecología Social)-Amigos de la Tierra Uruguay, Montevideo (Uruguay)
Corporate Watch UK	Campaign against large retailers in the UK (Tesco).	Corporate Watch UK, Oxford (UK)
Euzkadi-labour union SNRTE, Germanwatch and FIAN (Food First Information & Action Network)	Successful campaign against the unlawful closure of a Continental tire factory in Mexico.	Germanwatch, Berlin (Germany)
Global Witness	Advocacy for good governance and increased revenue transparency for resource extraction companies.	Global Witness, London (UK)
India Resource Center	Campaign against Coca-Colas harmful activities in India.	India Resource Center, El Cerrito (USA)
The Coalition of Immokalee Workers	Campaign against Taco Bell to bring about fair salaries and humane working conditions in Florida's fields.	Robert F. Kennedy Center for Human Rights, Washington (USA)

A project of The Berne Declaration (coordination) and Pro Natura - Friends of the Earth Switzerland

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“Respecting, Crossing and Shifting Boundaries”

Davos, Switzerland, 26-29 January 2006

For the fourth year in a row, the World Economic Forum co-organized the Open Forum with the Federation of Swiss Protestant Churches. Individual sessions were also co-organized with the Terre des hommes Foundation and the Swiss Red Cross.



There were a number of controversial debates around the overall topic “Respecting, Crossing and Shifting Boundaries”. Boundaries play a key role in our lives. They provide us with guidelines and a framework in which to operate and give orientation.

However, boundaries also restrict our movement. Therefore, they are often crossed or moved. What was accepted and followed yesterday is no longer valid today. Such shifts in boundaries often happen without being noticed: respected boundaries and limits seem to be moved over night, step by step. We often realise only afterwards, that decisions which were taken democratically and with clear goals, had evolved in a different way than originally intended. Shifting boundaries is ethically and politically relevant. Who moves boundaries? Where are the boundaries shifted to? By the order of whom? Authorised by whom?

The debates were open to the public and took place in Davos between Thursday 26 and Sunday 29 January 2006 in the Main Hall of the Alpine Middle School.

The Open Forum 2006 addressed the following topics:

- *Labour Migration: How Far is Too Far?* Thursday 26 January, 12.30-14.00
- *Does Global Tax Competition Increase Poverty?* Thursday 26 January, 18.30-20.00
- *Human Rights: Reduced to Charity?* Friday 27 January, 12.30-14.00
- *Water: Property or Human Right?* Friday 27 January, 18.30-20.00
- *Are Researchers Moving Limits Without Being Noticed?* Saturday 28 January, 12.30-14.00
- *Breaking the Glass-Ceiling: More Women in Top Positions* Saturday, 28 January, 15.30-17.00
- *The Future of Europe in the World* Saturday, 28 January, 18.30-20.00
- *Closing: Respecting, Crossing and Shifting Boundaries?* Sunday 29 January, 11.00-12.30

Programme

Thursday 26 January

12.15-12.30

Introducing the Open Forum 2006

The organizers of the Open Forum 2006 present the objectives and the challenges of this year's sessions.

- **André Schneider**, Managing Director and Chief Operating Officer, World Economic Forum
- **Thomas Wipf**, President of the Council, Federation of Swiss Protestant Churches, Switzerland

12.30 - 14.00

Labour Migration: How Far is Too Far?

With countries opening their borders it has become easier for both individuals and companies to relocate. Although today we are afraid of increased competition for jobs, tomorrow we will not have enough people to do the work and to cover the increasing social costs due to demographic changes.

- 1) What is the impact of labour migration in Europe?
- 2) How can regulations be adapted to reduce illegal migration?
- 3) How can migrants be integrated in the job market?

A session co-organized with the Swiss Red Cross

Yilmaz Argüden, Chairman, Arge Consulting, Turkey

John G. Evans, General Secretary, Trade Union Advisory Committee to the OECD, Paris

Piia-Noora Kauppi, Member of the European Parliament, Brussels; Young Global Leader **René**

Rhinow, President, Swiss Red Cross, Switzerland

N. K. Singh, Chairman, Management Development Institute, India

Moderated by, **Bendicht Luginbühl**, Journalist, Switzerland

18.30 - 20.00

Does Global Tax Competition Increase Poverty?

Governments are giving more and more tax cuts as a result of worldwide competition to attract multinational companies and foreign investment. Global corporations are striving to decrease their tax burden; to this end, they often have recourse to consultancies, use tax havens and apply sophisticated (and at times abusive) methods.

- 1) Does global tax competition reduce government revenues in such a way that it endangers the financing of the UN Millennium Development Goals to relieve poverty?
- 2) Do tax avoidance strategies by global businesses contradict their proclaimed corporate social responsibility?
- 3) Is a "race to the bottom" taking place? How can it be stopped?

A session co-organized with Bread for All

Peter Athanas, Chief Executive Officer, Ernst & Young, Switzerland

Youssuf Boutros-Ghali, Minister of Finance of Egypt

Leonor M. Briones, Co-Convenor, Social Watch; Former Treasurer of the Philippines,

Brian C. McK. Henderson, Chairman, Global Public Sector Client Group, Merrill Lynch & Co., USA

Sheila Killian, Lecturer, Kemmy Business School, University of Limerick, Ireland

Introduced by **Reto Gmünder**, Secretary-General, Bread for All, Switzerland

Moderated by **Hugo Bigi**, Journalist, Tele Züri, Switzerland

Friday 27 January

12.30 - 14.00

Human Rights: Reduced to Charity?

The Universal Declaration on Human Rights (1948) and the Convention on Child Rights (1989) are supposed to be milestones for a world in which economic development, democracy and the respect for basic rights are combined. However, it is clear that some nations apply the rules whenever it is convenient for them. Their policy is liberal for some, and "compassionate" (President Bush's 2001 inaugural speech) for others.

- 1) Are we moving towards a situation in which rights are applied and enforced only when it fits the interest and willingness of nations to do so? Have we moved from a rights-based approach to one based on charity?
- 2) How has the use of fear (security/terrorism) by nations influenced their attitude towards the respect of rights?
- 3) How must nations, business and NGOs focus their actions with respect to the application of these basic rights?

A session co-organized with the Terre des Hommes Foundation

Noorkhanom Ahmadzai, Head, Mother Healthcare Program, Terre des Hommes, Afghanistan
Reinhardt Fichtl, Delegate, Terre des Hommes Foundation, Nepal
Angelina Jolie, UNHCR Goodwill Ambassador, Geneva
Katherine Marshall, Director and Counsellor, World Bank, Washington DC
Kenneth Roth, Executive Director, Human Rights Watch, USA

Introduced by, **Peter Brey**, Secretary-General, Terre des hommes Foundation, Switzerland
Moderated by, **Christine Maier**, TV Host, Swiss Television SF DRS, Switzerland

18.30 - 20.00

Water: Property or Human Right?

Currently, 1.1 billion people do not have access to clean water, 2.4 billion people lack access to basic sanitation. In 50 years, an even higher number of people will be suffering from water shortage according to the estimates of the UN. Therefore, access to water should become a basic human right. Whether the privatisation of the water sector is needed to meet this objective or whether privatization is misleading, is currently subject to debates.

- 1) What are the consequences of water scarcity and how can the problems be solved?
- 2) Who decides on the privatization of the water industry and how decisions are taken? Who benefits from privatisation?
- 3) What is the content and scope of water as a human right?

Nancy Birdsall, President, Center for Global Development, USA
Peter Brabeck-Letmathe, Chairman and Chief Executive Officer, Nestlé, Switzerland; Member of the Foundation Board of the World Economic Forum; Co-Chair of the Annual Meeting 2006
Ulrike Ebert, External Affairs & International Water Policy, RWE Thames Water, United Kingdom
Firmino Mucavele, Chief Executive, NEPAD Secretariat, South Africa
Christoph Stückelberger, Director, Institute for Theology and Ethics, Federation of Swiss Protestant Churches, Switzerland

Moderated by **Bendicht Luginbühl**, Journalist, Switzerland

Saturday 28 January

12.30 - 14.00

Are Researchers Moving Limits without Being Noticed?

Research, particularly in the areas of natural sciences, technology and medicine, opens the door for progress, but at the same time increasingly releases fear. Fighting illnesses, yes, but how long should we prolong life? Protecting life, yes, but how far should we go to artificially create it, change it or select it? Use energy more efficiently, yes, but what energy is preferable? Especially in research, limits are pushed, mostly in an unnoticed and creeping way.

- 1) Are there limits in research? And if yes, which ones?
- 2) Are researchers moving barriers? To what extent are the funding institutions restricting the independence for research?
- 3) What role do national governments play in setting limits in research?

Peter Gruss, President, Max Planck Society, Germany

Ilona Kickbusch, Senior Adviser, Kickbusch Health Consult, Switzerland

Elena Lazos, Professor, Instituto de Investigaciones Sociales, UNAM, Mexico

Christoph Stückelberger, Director, Institute for Theology and Ethics, Federation of Swiss Protestant Churches, Switzerland

Daniel Vasella, Chairman and Chief Executive Officer, Novartis, Switzerland

Moderated by · **Urs Leuthard**, TV Host, Arena, Swiss Television SF DRS, Switzerland

15.30 - 17.00

Breaking the Glass Ceiling: More Women in Top Positions

Around the world, barely one percent of women are in CEO positions. In other areas, such as politics and civil society, women are similarly underrepresented in higher positions. Access of women to top positions is blocked, as by a "glass ceiling", an invisible but difficult to overcome barrier.

- 1) How can this glass ceiling be removed?
- 2) What is the responsibility of men in this process?
- 3) How does the world change when women make it to top positions?

Sharan Burrow, President, Australian Council of Trade Unions, Australia

Sheila Dikshit, Chief Minister of the National Capital Territory of Delhi, India

Alice Schwarzer, Writer and Journalist; Editor, "Emma", Germany

Bärbel Wartenberg-Potter, Bishop of the Northelbian Evangelical Church, Germany

Introduced by **Micheline Calmy-Rey**, Federal Councillor of Foreign Affairs of the Swiss Confederation

Moderated by · **Christine Maier**, TV Host, Swiss Television SF DRS, Switzerland

18.30 - 20.00

The Future of Europe in the World

For centuries, Europe has played a key role in economic, political and social affairs in the world. At the end of the 20th century, the USA appeared to be the remaining super power. Today Asian States, such as China and India, are catching up. We're facing a new global power balance. What will be the role of Europe?

- 1) Will Europe be off track economically, politically and culturally?
- 2) What will the future of Europe look like?
- 3) What role should Switzerland play in this process?

Joseph Deiss, Federal Councillor of the Economy of the Swiss Confederation

Timothy Garton Ash, Professor of European Studies, University of Oxford, United Kingdom

Andreas Gross, National Councillor of Switzerland

Erika Mann, Member of the European Parliament, Brussels

Urs Schottli, Correspondent, Neue Zürcher Zeitung, People's Republic of China

Moderated by **Reto Brennwald**, Journalist, Swiss Radio DRS, Switzerland

Sunday 29 January

10.00-11.30

Respecting, Crossing and Shifting Boundaries?

Boundaries can provide security, orientation and a sense of belonging. At the same time they can also be restricting, confining, suppressing, and hindering development. Participants in this closing panel of the Open Forum 2006 will discuss social, political, economic and societal boundaries, limits and frontiers and provide guidelines to answer the following three questions:

- 1) What limits should be respected? What frontiers should be crossed? What boundaries should be moved?
- 2) How can civil society, politics and business shape these processes?
- 3) What type of society do we want to build for future generations?

Paola Antonelli, Curator, Department of Architecture and Design, Museum of Modern Art, USA

Franz Jaeger, Professor, Economic Policy and Director, Research Institute for Empirical Economics and Economic Policy, University of St. Gallen, Switzerland

Moritz Leuenberger, President of the Swiss Confederation and Federal Councillor of Environment, Transportation, Energy and Communications

Eberhardt Renz, Co-President, World Council of Churches (WCC), Switzerland

Yossi Vardi, Founding Investor ICQ, International Technologies, Israel

Moderated by **Urs Leuthard**, TV Host, Arena, Swiss Television SF DRS, Switzerland

11.30-11.45

Concluding Remarks on the Open Forum 2006

The organizers of the Open Forum 2006 will give concluding remarks on the key learning of this year's edition of the Open Forum.

André Schneider, Managing Director and Chief Operating Officer, World Economic Forum

Thomas Wipf, President of the Council, Federation of Swiss Protestant Churches, Switzerland