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AND STAYING FIT**
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**TOWARDS A TOBACCO
FREE WORLD**
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INTERIM EDITORIAL COMMITTEE

UN75 and WHO

It's time to celebrate a thing or two... UN75 comes at a time when its agencies, such as WHO, have direct meaning as we seek ways to fight the pandemic. Its also our issue number 800, as we were *UN Special* in the past. Although the name has changed, newSpecial remains "special": we hear you and know that our readers like the fact that we are not a mouthpiece of any group or association. We don't serve or try to please any administration or other powers that be. We allow staff of international organizations to write what they want and what they care about. Like that, we serve the widest possible audience – the staff of international organizations in Geneva.

Our organization has a legitimacy which its history and the presence of member states confer on it. WHO advocates for a global health partnership. Partnership: the word is launched, and its synonym is multilateralism. During this crisis, most states have chosen to deal with it unilaterally. WHO has the expertise it has acquired during previous crises, which could favour cooperation for the benefit of humanity and not for the benefit of particular interests.

Indeed, megalopolises in the most remote places of the planet, decisiveness and initiative can reassure us on human genius and cause perception of our future world to evolve. The young generation in particular is leading us towards a new redefinition of perspectives, with heightened awareness of the danger and selfishness of a world that is sometimes lost.

Ultimately, it is up to us to make sure we continue, whatever the cost of this effort, by injecting it with a little of our energy and by listening to the new breath of a future to build. This is the least we can do whilst fully aware that it may not be enough. ■

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COMITÉ DE RÉDACTION INTÉIMAIRE

UN75 et l'OMS

Célébrons: L'UN 75 dans un moment particulier où ses agences, telles que l'OMS utilise son savoir-faire pour lutter contre la pandémie. C'est également le numéro 800, bien que le nom ait changé, nous demeurons «spécial». Nous savons que vous lecteurs appréciez notre indépendance. Notre magazine n'est pas le faire-valoir d'un groupe ou d'une association. Nous n'essayons ni de plaire à une administration, ni ne dépendons d'aucun pouvoir. Notre crédo reste d'ouvrir nos colonnes à tout le personnel des organisations internationales, afin qu'il puisse s'exprimer sur ses préoccupations profondes. Nos lecteurs, notre public, le savent.

Notre organisation dispose de cette légitimité que lui confèrent son histoire et la présence des Etats membres. L'OMS prône pour un partenariat sanitaire mondial. Partenariat, le mot est lancé, son synonyme est multilatéralisme. Pendant cette crise, la plupart des états ont choisi de la gérer de façon unilatérale. L'OMS, dispose de cette expertise acquise lors de crises précédentes qui pourrait favoriser la coopération au profit de l'humanité et non pas d'intérêts particuliers.

Pourtant, des mégapoles aux endroits les plus reculés de la planète, des volontés, des initiatives peuvent nous rassurer sur le génie humain et nous faire évoluer sur la perception de notre monde futur. La jeune génération notamment nous entraîne vers une nouvelle redéfinition des perspectives où sont mieux envisagés le danger et l'égoïsme d'un monde qui se perd parfois. Alors, finalement c'est à nous de faire en sorte de l'aider à poursuivre, coûte que coûte cet effort en lui insufflant un peu de notre énergie et en restant à l'écoute du souffle nouveau d'un futur à construire, c'est le moins que nous puissions faire en sachant que ce ne sera peut-être pas suffisant. ■

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THE 3

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newSpecial's exclusive interview

WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control

newSpecial had the opportunity to interview Dr. Adriana Blanco Marquizo, the Head of the Secretariat of the WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (Convention Secretariat), and learn more about its work and impact on global health.

GARRY ASLANYAN, WHO
You were appointed Head of Secretariat of the WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (WHO FCTC) in Geneva in March 2020. Before that, you had an impressive career both in the WHO Regional Office of the Americas and in your home country Uruguay. Tell us about yourself before taking up this important role in Geneva?

I am a medical doctor, born and raised in Uruguay and I have a Master's degree in policies to prevent addictions in children and adolescents. To be a doctor has been my dream for as long as I can remember, and I am

lucky to have worked in clinical settings for almost two decades.

I started my journey in tobacco control more than 20 years ago, in Uruguay, splitting my activity between clinical work and public health. At that time, the WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control was being discussed.

Back then, I worked for the Health Department of the Municipality of Montevideo, the government of the capital city of Uruguay, and soon I began to represent it at tobacco control activities towards the ratification of the Treaty and after that in the enactment of the first measures: smoke-free environments and health warnings. I also worked on tobacco cessation coordinating the clinics of the Municipality.

In 2006, I took the difficult decision of leaving my country to go to the Pan American Health Organization in Washington DC, to keep on working on

tobacco control, but at the regional level.

Could you share with the readers of newSpecial magazine a little bit more about the work of the Convention Secretariat in Geneva and how does it interact with the rest of the UN family (for example we know that the Convention Secretariat is part of the UN Interagency Task Force on NCDs (UNIATF))?

The Convention Secretariat, serves two treaties: the WHO FCTC and the Protocol to Eliminate Illicit Trade in Tobacco Products (the Protocol). We are currently hosted by the World Health Organization, here in Geneva.

The WHO FCTC was negotiated under the auspices of the WHO, adopted in 2003 at the World Health Assembly and entered into force in February 2005, and the Protocol was adopted by the Fifth session of the Conference of the Parties (COP) in 2014 and entered into force in September 2018.



The work of the Convention Secretariat includes:

- supporting our governing bodies: the COP for the WHO FCTC, and the Meeting of the Parties (MOP) for the Protocol, as well as any subsidiary bodies;
- supporting countries to implement the Global Strategy to Accelerate Tobacco Control: advancing Sustainable Development through the Implementation of the WHO FCTC 2019-2025 adopted by COP 8;
- providing technical cooperation in other areas requested by Parties; and
- coordinating with WHO, and other United Nations agencies.

Regarding the United Nations Inter-Agency Task Force on the Prevention and Control of Non-communicable diseases (UNIATF), we, as part of the United Nations system, are independent members of it. Taking into account the importance of the full implementation of the WHO FCTC to achieve the non-communicable disease-related targets of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, a thematic group on tobacco control was established and the Convention Secretariat currently chairs the group.

In that group, the Convention Secretariat has led the development and promotion of a

Model Policy on preventing tobacco industry interference among United Nations agencies; endorsed by the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) meetings in 2017 and 2018. Also, we promoted a smoke-free United Nations campus, joining forces with WHO, to develop a toolkit on how to make United Nations campuses smoke-free; and we are also working with several United Nations agencies to develop a new joint programme to support low- and middle-income countries in developing economically sustainable alternative livelihoods to tobacco growing.

When you assumed your position, what key priorities did you set for yourself and the Secretariat?

Firstly, I would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge the work of my predecessors – Dr Haik Nikogosian, and Dr Vera Luiza da Costa e Silva, for the tremendous work they both did in building this solid foundation on which I now find myself standing.

The WHO FCTC turned 15 this year on 27 February (yes, an adolescent!) and even though there is much we can be proud of in terms of achievements made by the Parties, the reality shows that progress is still uneven across the world.

The implementation of the Global Strategy that I mentioned before is my first priority. The Strategy has three pillars, the first one looks to strengthen the implementation of some articles of the Convention, targeting those places where we can be more effective. The second pillar focuses on raising the profile and visibility of the Convention as a response to the threat that tobacco represents to economic and social development and to the environment and to build partnerships with a wide range of sectors fostering policy coherence across them, internationally and nationally. Finally, the third pillar looks to overcome barriers to the full, effective and sustainable implementation of the WHO FCTC and to protect it from the interference of the tobacco industry.

Another priority for me is raising awareness and attracting more Parties to the Protocol. Illicit trade poses a serious threat to public health because it increases access to – often cheaper – tobacco products, thus fueling the tobacco epidemic and undermining tobacco control policies. It also causes substantial losses in government revenues, and at the same time contributes to the funding of international criminal activities.

We have often heard that tobacco is not just a health issue but a development issue. What are your views on this and how does the mandate of the WHO FCTC intersect, in concrete terms, with the Sustainable Development Goals?

After being totally absent from the Millennium Development Goals, now non-communicable diseases and their risk factors have been included in the Development Agenda, and specifically there is now one SDG target on tobacco control: Target 3.a, positioning

the implementation of the WHO FCTC as key to the achievement of SDG 3.4. in recognition of the tremendous health toll of tobacco use. The evidence is staggering: without adequate investment in tobacco control it is estimated that up to 1 billion people could die from tobacco-related disease during this century. The Convention Secretariat and WHO are co-custodians for the implementation of this target.

But we also need to remember the social, economic, and environmental consequences of tobacco use and production on individuals, families, communities and countries. Tobacco use costs the global economy over a trillion USD annually, due to medical expenses and lost productivity; and the environmental impact, due to deforestation and soil degradation from tobacco growing as well as water and soil pollution from pesticide use and cigarette littering, are of growing concern.

Recognizing the global commitment of the 2030 Agenda to 'leave no one behind', the contribution of tobacco to inequities, both within and between countries, is particularly troubling. Within countries, the poorest and most marginalized are more likely to consume tobacco and at younger ages, and to be exposed to second-hand smoke. Between countries, tobacco use is rising rapidly in many low- and middle-income countries, where the tobacco measures are still weaker than in many developed countries.

According to a UNDP and Convention Secretariat's jointly published report, the WHO FCTC is an accelerator for sustainable development and it interacts with all 17 of the SDG goals on the 2030 Agenda. Therefore, inclusion of the WHO FCTC within the

2030 Agenda is a potential game-changer.

Many of our readers would like to know more about current recommendations on novel and emerging nicotine and tobacco products, a growing concern worldwide.

This is an area that is very worrying, especially because of the systematic, aggressive and sustained marketing tactics employed to attract a new generation of tobacco users, through the introduction of flavours and other attractive features.

The Conference of the Parties has reviewed this theme on many occasions and has adopted decisions in the last three COPs. The COP8 has recommended to countries “to regulate, including restrict, or prohibit, as appropriate, the manufacture, importation, distribution, presentation, sale and use of novel and emerging

tobacco products, as appropriate to their national laws, considering a high level of protection for human health”.

Also, it recommends preventing the initiation; preventing health claims about these products; including them in the smoke-free regulations and ban on advertisement, promotion and sponsorship; and protecting tobacco-control policies and activities from all commercial and other vested interests related to novel and emerging tobacco products, including interests of the tobacco industry, in accordance with Article 5.3 of the WHO FCTC.

What has been the impact on the work of the Secretariat and on global tobacco control in general of this unprecedented period during which all the focus and resources have shifted to battling the COVID-19 pandemic?

To say that this year has been extraordinary, in every sense of the word, is no understatement. First, let me say that like the rest of the world, we are deeply saddened by the lives lost to this pandemic, and the heavy toll that essential workers are bearing for the good of the rest of us.

The Secretariat staff is teleworking, and many events have been cancelled and others held virtually. We have offered our Parties the reassurance that once the pandemic begins to be better contained and countries begin to take on other commitments again, we will be ready to assist them to continue strengthening tobacco control activities.

The Bureaus elected by the eighth session of the COP to the WHO FCTC and the first session of the MOP to the Protocol, during a virtual

meeting in April, made a joint decision to postpone the COP and MOP sessions scheduled for November 2020. Hence, COP9 and MOP2 will now take place in November 2021, in The Hague.

Unfortunately, even during the pandemic, the daily toll of the tobacco-related deaths continues and will claim the more than 8 million lives that it takes each year. That is why once the worst part of the pandemic passes, we will be urging our Parties to resume their work on tobacco control.

Lastly, I am particularly grateful for the tremendous leadership shown by our hosting agency – the World Health Organization – during these extraordinary and challenging times, in its efforts to stop the global COVID-19 pandemic.■



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Blitz interviews

Staying at home and staying fit!



JOYCE HADDAD, WHO

What are you doing to help people stay fit and healthy during the lockdown?

Yoga each morning, running 50kms a week, team squat challenges, my daily virtual lunch time fitness classes and hiking on weekends.

How has it been delivering your fitness training online, did you have any challenges?

In the beginning it was challenging to balance music, my voice, and participants failing to mute themselves! But 12 weeks in, and the only challenge I have is to come up with new moves on a daily basis! How have people responded to virtual training with you?

Was it familiar faces or new ones too?

From the feedback I have received, it has all been positively accepted. Usually people tell me that they look forward

to 12:00 every day:-) Many new faces who have now become very familiar. I love seeing colleagues, but love seeing their children and family members becoming involved too.

Name something that has inspired you with positive thoughts or pleasure today?

How much my body never fails me, no matter how much I put it through.

What is the one thing you have learned? What is one lesson that we all could learn from the situation?

When we manage our expecta-

tions, we can achieve anything.

Any general advice for those trying to stay fit at home?

Try to have the mentality of “any movement is better than none!” Don’t put too much pressure on yourself by needing to block out hours to exercise – small spurts of 10-minute movement throughout the day to make up a total of 30-60 minutes is good enough. ■



SOLEIL LABELLE, PRESIDENT OF THE WHO HQ FITNESS CENTRE (A TEAM OF STAFF THAT ORGANIZE AND MANAGE THE FITNESS CLASSES AND THE OPEN GYM).

What are you doing to help people stay fit and healthy during the lockdown?

During the lockdown, we have contacted the WHO HQ fitness instructors, who are providing both pre-recorded and live online classes for their staff as well as opening it up to all staff in the regions through an

online page via Workplace (stay active @ WHO). We share links from our instructors on Zumba, yoga, chair yoga, postural and movement mobility, and aerobics. Additionally, we send the information via email, for those non-WHO staff who are also members of the WHO Fitness centre (the fitness centre is open to all United Nations staff with access to the WHO building and who pay their membership fees). Other regions are also adding various online fitness classes,

and we try and link them all up on this workspace page.

How has it been delivering your fitness training online, did you have any challenges?

Since the lockdown, I have been providing early morning online classes, which was a learning curve: not everyone has the same equipment and it’s not so easy to see what each person is doing to make sure that they are doing the exercises well. We needed to modify the usual modalities of class to meet ‘apartment’ exercise conditions (early morning jumping is not always appreciated by the downstairs neighbours!) I also created a squat challenge on the workplace. Often we have been counting steps, in the lockdown it isn’t so easy to do this, so I created a challenge where collectively we would hit 10,000 squats. As people joined, the competition got

fierce, and someone changed the goal to 20,000 squats! It is nice to see that people are doing what they can and being part of a collectivity! I am now thinking of what the next challenge can be, as this creates a little healthy online competition, as well as making you that much more motivated to do and write in your daily squats.

How have people responded to virtual training with you? Was it familiar faces or new ones too?

At first, a few of us met in a park, socially away from each other, and we called in a couple of friends on whatsapp. It was appreciated, and when stricter lockdown came into force, and the parks were shut, I opened up a WebEx, as we were also more online. Through word of mouth, a few new people joined, which was nice.

Name something that has

inspired you with positive thoughts or pleasure today?

Today I had a new person join the online class. I was worried that my class (with lots of jumping and squatting) would put her off, as she is in a wheelchair. As I tried my best to modify keeping heart rates up, I saw that she was smiling, and enjoying herself, and for me that was great (well, either that or she was laughing at me!). At the end she said she had enjoyed it and would join again. I realized that being fit means we are a community. Any type of activity joins us in one way or another. Fitness goals are important – both in terms of having them, achieving them, as well as providing a medium for us all to be motivated by each other, supporting our challenges, as well as our failures, and lifting ourselves up to continue, while always smiling.

learned? What is one lesson that we all could learn from the situation?

Fitness is really one of the best avenues to support peers, have healthy competition and motivate ourselves to be better than we were yesterday. I wrote on the workplace site at the beginning of the confinement: when we come out of this, what will you be proud of? What will be your achievement? What will you do so that the day you leave your home you can say “wow, I am that much better”? For me it was a squat. I hate them. In many countries, people don't always sit on chairs – they squat. I have arthritis in both knees, and one hip and one shoulder (the joys of ageing!), and I was always amazed at the ‘squatters’. I decided that during this lock down I would focus on my squat. After six weeks (and two photos) I am simply amazed at my progress!

The lesson? Be proud of the little achievements. The first four weeks I thought I would just stop, I wasn't feeling the progress, but I persevered – only 10 -15 minutes a day and I feel better.

This lockdown is an opportunity to think about goals, where you are, where you have come from and where you want to go. It's a time to focus and reset.

Any general advice for those trying to stay fit at home?

Many colleagues have said that they don't have the time to work out: too much work, managing home and/or little kids needing attention. Since we are in lockdown, there is little me-time for anyone anymore. I advise including your children in your workout routines. Not only do they see you being sporty, but they eventually realize the fun and importance of it, and will actually push you! My little one

is now my coach and tells me what to do (best game is one dice, and each number corresponds to an exercise (1=10 jumping jack; 2=10 sit-ups). Working out in a lockdown is different from working out at home. Everyone is always around! Take time to teach your little ones the joys of working out. Don't be upset if you had a class to do and your little ones wouldn't let you listen or do the class. A little one will love to lay on your back while you hold a plank. A little one will love for you to pop them into the air while coming up in a sit-up. A little one will love to do a little obstacle course of jumping on one foot, dancing, hopping, walking like a bear....

During a lockdown it is all about balance, family, life, love, and smiles. ■

What is the one thing you have



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Entretien avec Guy Mettan

Qui, au sein de cette entité nommée Genève internationale, ne connaît pas Guy Mettan?



CHRISTIAN DAVID, UNOG

Le journaliste débutant devenu incontournable au fil des décennies, a reçu des dizaines de personnalités, nous revenons sur son parcours.

Cheminement journalistique

Le jeune valaisan que j'étais est venu terminer mes études en sciences politiques à l'université de Genève. En 1977, je crée «Courant», un journal étudiant qui a perduré pendant plus de 35 ans. Je me suis vraiment passionné pour cet exercice et me suis naturellement orienté vers le journalisme. La politique internationale m'intéressait. J'ai vraiment commencé mon parcours professionnel au journal de Genève, à la rubrique internationale. J'ai ensuite collaboré à un magazine traitait de géopolitique et s'appelait «le temps stratégique». J'ai participé à la création de «Bilan» ce magazine économique suisse. Au début des années 90, après une expérience dans le nouveau quotidien, mon éditeur Edipress, qui avait racheté la Tribune de Genève, m'a proposé la rédaction en chef, puis la direction pendant 6 ans.

En 1995, j'ai travaillé avec les Nations Unies à l'époque où

M. Boutros Boutros Ghali était Secrétaire général. Ce dernier nous avait remercié et remis un diplôme d'honneur suite à une série que nous avons réalisé sur l'Organisation à l'occasion de son 50^e anniversaire. Ce travail a constitué un vecteur pour mon intérêt car il alliait déjà la géopolitique mondiale et l'activité internationale à Genève. Nous sommes entrés en négociation avec l'Etat de Genève. En 1996, l'accord de siège de l'OMC a été signé, incluant le club de la presse comme une prestation offerte par la Suisse à la communauté internationale de Genève. Le club suisse de la presse a ouvert ses portes en octobre 1997.

Le club suisse de la presse

Nous sommes partis de zéro. Nous avons rencontré les difficultés d'une entité débutante. Nous souhaitions réaliser un club ouvert, quelques incompréhensions en ont résulté, notamment avec les Nations Unies. Pas tellement avec le service de l'information mais plutôt avec l'ACANU et l'APES. Ces deux associations de journalistes voyaient une concurrence plutôt qu'une complémentarité.

Deux mois après l'ouverture, nous recevons Fidel Castro. Il est venu chez nous et pas au Palais, ce qui a créé quelques tensions. Cet événement a constitué une chance, un peu provoquée, qui a contribué à créer une bonne notoriété au club et a assis notre réputation. Au fil des années, nous avons reçu 30 ou 40 chefs d'état ou premiers ministres, des dizaines de ministres, beaucoup d'ambassadeurs.

Le fonctionnement du club a évolué. A cette époque, internet et les réseaux sociaux n'existaient pas, la configuration de la presse, notamment écrite, était tout à fait différente. Il y avait des correspondants attitrés pour des journaux et non pas des collègues qui tentent de survivre en travaillant pour 5 ou 6 journaux différents. Les activités du club ont été affectées par cette évolution.

Il était plus facile aussi de recevoir des personnalités qu'aujourd'hui. Tous les dirigeants sont conseillés par des hordes de «communicants» qui au fond annihilent toute spontanéité et empêchent la communication. L'accès à ces



personnes est beaucoup moins facile.

Pour l'organisation des conférences de presse, elle s'effectuent soit sur sollicitation, soit à notre demande pour débattre d'une thématique. Il est évidemment plus difficile de coordonner quand vous avez plusieurs participants et les horaires doivent correspondre aussi aux disponibilités des journalistes.

J'ai reçu aussi le Dalai Lama, un dissident chinois et le Fallun-gong. L'Ambassade de Chine à

Berne était assez fâchée. J'ai invité l'ambassadeur avec ses collaborateurs et nous avons discuté, j'ai émis l'idée d'organiser des échanges avec nos confrères journalistes chinois pour mettre fin aux préjugés car la Chine était mal connue. L'association des journalistes chinois a alors invité à six rédacteurs suisses à une visite du pays. Nous leur avons rendu la politesse et ce fut le début d'un échange qui a duré 15 ans. Certaines de ces rencontres ont engendré des relations suivies, je pense notamment à Michel Rocard.

75^e anniversaire et évolution de l'ONU

Depuis que Koffi Annan a ouvert les Nations Unies aux ONG, au privé et à la société civile, tous souhaitent communiquer. Il s'en est suivi une multiplicité de thématiques nouvelles.

L'exemple qui me revient et qui me révolte, est la parole donnée à ces femmes, originaires du Congo, qui venaient parler des meurtres, des viols et autres violations systématiques aux droits de l'homme qui concernaient des centaines de milliers de victimes dans une indifférence quasi totale, aucun journaliste occidental n'était présent. Comment l'occident peut-il après ce constat, se permettre de donner des conseils en matières de droits de l'homme, à la Terre entière? Y aurait-il une hiérarchie parmi

les victimes? Il aura fallu attendre 20 ans, pour qu'avec le prix Nobel donné au docteur Mukwege, on commence à parler de la situation dans cette région. C'est emblématique de questions qui sont traitées à Genève dans une indifférence générale. Je trouve injuste qu'on choisisse, en quelque sorte, nos victimes.

Genève internationale et ONU

Les rapports entre la Genève internationale et la Genève locale n'ont pas vraiment évolué en 25 ans. Ils sont cordiaux, même bons, mais limités. Les deux mondes communiquent mais ne se mélangent pas. Le club de la presse a apporté sa contribution mais il y a un niveau de blocage. Malgré les crises économiques, il y a toujours eu un développement des organisations internationales avec parfois des petits reculs



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mais une constante à la hausse. Pour rester dans une définition économique, Genève a plutôt gagné des parts de marché. Le personnel qui travaille dans la Genève internationale a doublé depuis 25 ans. En revanche je note une crise du multilatéralisme. La grande force des Nations Unies, comparées à la SDN sont qu'elles possèdent une légitimité. C'est une organisation qu'on rejoint. Personne n'a quitté l'ONU depuis sa création. Chaque fois que la SDN a traversé une crise, elle perdait des membres. chaque pays qui acquiert son indépendance souhaite rejoindre l'organisation. Cette légitimité reste malgré le problème de gouvernance du conseil de sécurité, son manque de représentativité. Les pays occidentaux qui sont majoritaires, jouent un peu moins le jeu des Nations Unies. Quand ils pouvaient obtenir les résultats en utilisant le système à leur avantage, ils passaient par l'ONU. Maintenant, et je pense aux Etats Unis et l'Union européenne, ils ont tendance à le faire en dehors et mettant en place des sanctions prises en dehors du cadre de l'Assemblée Générale donc en dehors du droit international. cette tentation est grande pour les «puissants et provoque un

L'ONU est une Organisation qu'on rejoint, aucune pays ne l'a quittée depuis sa création

risque de marginaliser le système. Le cas de l'OMC qui est parfois empêchée de fonctionner est typique.

Un travail en silos qui empêche parfois un partage de compétences est également un problème mais il existe dans toutes les grandes administrations.

Médias

L'ensemble du système s'est développé à Genève mais la couverture médiatique s'est effondrée. Il y a des initiatives pour relancer. Le nombre de correspondants actifs à l'ONU, la représentation des grands medias a perdu de sa puissance. Les grands médias occidentaux ont quitté Genève mais cette perte a été compensée par le nombre de journalistes en provenance d'Asie. Du fait de ce manque de journalistes, le système devient de moins en moins perméable à la critique, alors que c'est justement la critique qui permet d'évoluer. Et évidemment, moins il y a de

critiques, moins le système supporte les rares critiques qui apparaissent. Ainsi, la survie du club de la presse est menacée, la confédération, le canton et la ville ont supprimé leurs subventions et on a résilié le bail. Est-ce que c'est parce que les personnes qui venaient s'exprimer sont trop critiques? La question reste posée.

Pour Genève qui dispose de cette multiplicité d'organisations, il faut défendre la liberté d'expression.

En plus, l'irruption des nouveaux médias génère des «fake news» mais aussi beaucoup de communications. Beaucoup de ces sites n'ont pas une approche journalistique et il peut y avoir une dégradation dans la qualité.

Conseils pour le magazine

J'ai lu le premier numéro, je n'ai aucun conseil à donner, je le trouve riche, c'est bien de garder cette diversité dans l'approche rédactionnelle et le contenu. Il reste important que les rédacteurs souscrivent à une charte.

Je le répète, ce qui est important c'est la diversité d'approches, pour contrer un peu ce que

j'évoquais précédemment, à savoir la perte de diversité des médias. Cette dernière est due, à une concentration de presse dans les mains de grands oligarques. Mon seul conseil finalement est persévérez.

Dans un mode saturé d'informations, la bonne information est en retour avec ce qui se faisait il y a 1500 ans, je pense à ces moines qui écrivaient, recopiaient méticuleusement les textes anciens et en somme préservait toute la culture antique. Différents peuples ont eu la même démarche et c'est ce qui a permis aux civilisations d'avoir ces points de repères culturels, philosophiques et religieux.

Ces quelques personnes restent pour moi des modèles inspirants dans notre démarche et qu'il reste essentiel que quelques individus s'accrochent à leur plume. La reconnaissance et la gratitude ne sont souvent pas présentes mais la démarche aide à la transmission. ■

Blitz interviews

Staying at home and staying fit!



YULIA ANDREEVA, UNDP, 10 YEARS, CURRENTLY UNDP/UNFPA/UNOPS & UN WOMEN GENEVA PERSONNEL ASSOCIATION

Self-isolating and teleworking

My family is located in France. We are very lucky. We have a beautiful garden and deserted cow fields around us.

What is the most abnormal thing you have done today?

Scheduling a meeting with the Russian Permanent Representative to the United Nations to

talk about what has changed in the daily life and work of the Russian Mission.

Babysitting for three girls whose parents are working on a COVID testing kit.

What was your most selfless or selfish deed throughout this period?

Selfless: Organizing my mother's online piano concerts for free. Creating an online schedule of daily live activities for the UN community in Geneva. Creating an online "Speak Out" community to give Geneva a sense of togetherness and optimism.

Selfish: Sleeping in! Reading lots of books – I was missing that.

Name something that has inspired you with positive thoughts or pleasure today?

Every day: The sun.

Today: Speaking with Garry ASANYAN from WHO and learning how much I can do for newSpecial, a United Nations magazine. Playing with the kids.

What is the one thing you have learned? What is one thing you miss? What is one lesson that we all could learn from the situation?

One thing I have learned: If I have the motivation, I can work in any conditions. Everything else is secondary.

One thing I miss: Lake Leman and wild nature.

A lesson we could learn: Everything is relative. Material conditions are secondary. We can do it all with no means at all. We have it in us and "business class" adds nothing.

What do you think will never be the

same after the pandemic?

The sense of security and superiority of the human race, I hope, which is a good thing. We have a great chance to rethink the way we live and work under these grim circumstances. We have a chance to focus on what is important, not a comfy leg-rest or a five-course menu. We have a chance to look not just at, but into, ourselves. And realize that we need nothing else. We have everything in us that the world needs: intelligence, analytics, creativity, technology, means and ends. What we are missing is an understanding that nature has a lot more. And it does not need us. So let's give it the respect, authority, power and beauty it deserves. Above all else. Above us. ■



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Parliament Hill celebrations 1945, Ottawa, Canada.

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75 years and counting

Lessons learned from World War II in the face of the new global threat

*May 1945 is remembered
for planting the vital seeds
for international solidarity
through the United Nations and
the European Union.*

YULIA ANDREEVA, UNDP

May 1945 is remembered for planting the vital seeds for international solidarity through the United Nations, the European Union and other multilateral platforms, bringing families and nations together in a mournful yet proud celebration of the end of World War II and moving decisively towards the emergence of new independent states and unparalleled international cooperation.

75 years later, we are in a very different yet strikingly similar month of spring. In May 2020, we are facing a new global

threat: the COVID-19 pandemic. The world is mobilizing all its forces – armed with science, health systems and human heroism – against the invisible but lethal enemy.

As the diplomatic community in Geneva reminds us, however, these parallels offer us valuable lessons of resilience, cooperation and multilateralism, which are not only relevant for our future but also today.

A special message carried by the 75th anniversary in 2020

Looking back 75 years back, it always strikes me that there is hardly a life that has been left unscathed by the violent march of World War II through the lands and freedoms around the globe. Coming from Russia, the Victory Day (as we call it) is a deeply personal opportunity for my family to keep alive the memory of six boys, who fought for our peaceful future.

In the words of H.E. Ms. Leslie Norton, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary Permanent Representative of Canada to the United Nations (UN) and the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva, for “those who had relatives living through and/or fighting in the war, not to mention the many individuals lost to us, [this day] has become part of our respective family narratives.”

Sharing the personal imprint that the war has left on him and his family, H.E. Mr. François Rivasseau, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of France before the United Nations in Geneva says: “*Pour moi, qui ai été élevé dans une famille marquée par la guerre – mon oncle ayant été déporté pour fait de Résistance alors qu’il était encore lycéen, mon père ayant dû s’enfuir et se cacher – la paix et la liberté retrouvées en Europe sont*



Family Commemoration of the 75th Anniversary of the End of World War II in Geneva, 2020

un acquis inaliénable. Elles ne vont jamais de soi et nous devons continuer, inlassablement, sur les murs à écrire leurs noms.

Looking back to 4 May 1945, H.E. Mr. Stephen de Boer, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Canada to the WTO and a diplomat of Canadian and Dutch heritage, recalls that “My mother and father were liberated by the Canadians 75 years ago today. My parents remember it today and are unfailing and

unflaggingly grateful.”

Millions of personal stories – some beautiful, some sad, but none forgotten – are still remembered in May 2020.

Commemorating the 75th anniversary in the times of a pandemic

The personal stories connecting 1945 with today are often public commemoration and historic traditions. Many of them had to be cancelled in 2020 due to the “social distancing” imposed by the pandemic.



Immortal Battalion March in Basel, May 2018

According to H.E. Mrs. Monique T.G. Van Daalen, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary / Permanent Representative of the Kingdom of The Netherlands to the United Nations and other international organizations in Geneva, “This year, for the first time our king Willem-Alexander held a speech during the Remembrance Day ceremony of laying the wreath on a completely empty Dam square in Amsterdam – where usually crowds of people gather during the commemoration ceremony.”

On the other hand, Ambassador Norton recalls a beautiful tradition of a tulip festival, the origins of which “lie in Canada’s role in liberating the Netherlands and in hosting members of the Dutch royal family during WWII. After the war, the Netherlands began presenting Canada with tulip bulbs in gratitude. This tradition is now

deeply rooted in Canadian culture and is a well-loved event.” Unable to enjoy the festival in person due to the pandemic, many of the Permanent Mission employees and their families recognize this historic moment “by sharing photos of tulips on social media.”

Public celebrations may be muted but we are not silenced. In the words of Ambassador van Daalen, the celebration still took place. The anniversary “remained a moment of pride, reflection and impressed a feeling of strong bonding.”

Lessons learned from 1945: rethinking gratitude?

“The 75th anniversary marks a historic moment for the international community to come together and reflect on the heroes who helped defend freedom and secure peace around the world. No one will ever forget what they sacrificed,

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Flamme Soldat ... – Unknown Soldier Memorial, Paris, France, May 2020

and we will continue to honour those who contributed at home and abroad,” notes the Permanent Mission of the United Kingdom to the United Nations in Geneva.

Reflecting on the values important to her countrymen, Ambassador Norton adds that *“it is paramount for Canadians to remember those who have fought for peace, not only to honour the extraordinary veterans who served in the war, but also to remain grounded in what we stand for in the modern international arena.”*

“We must not forget our common history, which commits us to promote peace, freedom and human dignity through international cooperation,” echoes this important reminder from the Permanent Mission of Norway to the United Nations in Geneva.

The deep meaning of gratitude is a key lesson that humanity has carried from 1945 to 2020. Appreciation, recognition and support for all those at the frontlines of the response to the pandemic have been pouring over the closed borders, unstopped by any constraints.

Lessons learned from 1945: a chance to protect fundamental human values?

The moment of deep darkness – mourning a great human

tragedy – often brings out the best in us. In the words of H.E. Mrs. Socorro Flores Liera, Ambassador and Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary Permanent Representative of Mexico to the United Nations and other international organizations in Geneva, *“Remembrance and reconciliation are the seeds that enable us to build a better future. We celebrate the end of the conflict, and the start of a new era, based on genuine multilateralism.”*

Turning to the reasons for celebration, Ambassador van Daalen adds that the anniversary marks “what is closest to the heart of everyone in the Kingdom of the Netherlands: freedom.” In her words, “this pandemic, which makes us spend most of our time in the confinement of our homes, make us all realize even more that freedom is not to be taken for granted.”

In 2020, we are reminded that, no matter the magnitude of the threat, the fundamental human values – freedom, peace and dignity – remain as important as they were in 1945. Upholding and protecting them guarantees that the terror of World War II will never return.

Opportunity for 2020: international cooperation gains a special momentum?

The memory of 1945 not only

lives on but gets rekindled with the earning for an even stronger union and global collaboration. We are taking it forward as a lesson of solidarity.

According to Ambassador Flores Liera, *“This year, as we remember the end of World War II and the beginning of a new era, the world is fighting another battle, this time, against the COVID-19 pandemic. As in 1945, global solidarity and unity are essential to get ahead.”*

“For our Kingdom, freedom is only achievable by cooperating with other countries, based on equality, rule of law [and] open relations with other countries in an international system,” remarks Ambassador van Daalen. *“As the generations before us know: an effective multilateral system offers the best guarantee of stability, peace and sustainable development.”*

Opportunity for 2020: a special role for the United Nations?

The most remarkable landmark of post-war multilateralism was the creation of the United Nations and other multilateral institutions.

Recognizing the intrinsic link between the two events, the Permanent Mission of the United Kingdom to the United Nations in Geneva states that *“The UK is proud of its role as one of the co-creators of the modern rules-based international system, established in the aftermath of World War II, and remains committed to defending and strengthening these rules, in order to build a more prosperous and secure future for us all,”*

It is joined by Ambassador Flores Liera: *“As one of the founding members of the United Nations, Mexico reaffirms its unequivocal commitment to the*

multilateral system, which we, the international community, have built and strengthened over the last 75 years.”

In the words of Ambassador Norton, *“the anniversary provides space to reflect meaningfully on the principles of multilateral cooperation and the fact that peaceful negotiation facilitated by the United Nations is indispensable to global advancement across all issue intersections that may threaten global peace and prosperity.”*

Supporting this important commitment, the Permanent Mission of Norway to the United Nations in Geneva notes that “We must protect the institutions established in the aftermath of WWII to secure peace for our common future.”

Carrying the lesson of multilateralism forward, Ambassador van Daalen adds: *“we have to remember how and why the United Nations was built; but we also need to modernize it, so it remains relevant for our children and grandchildren.”*

From 1945 to 2020: lessons learned

Gratitude and appreciation. Respect for fundamental human freedoms. Global solidarity and unity. Trust in the United Nations as a global platform for dialogue, multilateralism and common action. Investing into the effectiveness and relevance of our institutions.

We will celebrate these lessons when we commemorate our global victory over the pandemic. In the meantime, let us do what we each can to bring this day closer. ■

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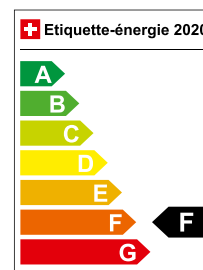
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“There’s now an app for that”

Bringing COVID-19 knowledge and skills directly to health workers around the world

The COVID-19 pandemic is an unprecedented global crisis. Its relentless spread has left a trail of illness and death in many parts of the world.



NELSON OLIM, CELINE HAZBUN, BHARATH KUMAR, MAHENDRAN KANNAN, KARTHIK MUTHUSWAMI AND DAVID ST. JOHN*

Even so, most countries are still in the early stages of their own battle with the virus. It is abundantly clear that COVID-19 will be with us for a long time.

At the same time, the pandemic is spurring innovation as governments, health partners and organizations around the world move as quickly as they can to find ways to counter the virus’s spread, including the development of new diagnostics, new therapeutic treatments for those who become ill, and eventually bring forth an effective vaccine.

The world needs these tools, and it needs them fast.

A key objective of the World Health Organization has been to support the millions of health workers around the world, many of whom have been thrust into the forefront of the response to COVID-19 and are making heroic efforts – under enormously challenging circumstances and personal risk of pathogen exposure – to treat those afflicted by the disease.

Accordingly, the WHO Academy, an internal WHO division that upon its launch next year will become the organization’s digital lifelong learning and training centre for global health, was called upon by senior WHO management to apply the latest

digital technologies and adult learning science to develop a practical solution for helping all health workers upgrade their skills and capabilities relative to COVID-19.

As a starting point for our work, the team looked at the essential challenge. The problem was not a lack of information and content, as WHO already has hundreds of COVID-19 guidance documents, training packages, tools and publications which have been produced by different departments and regions, targeting a range of key audiences including health workers, policy makers, public health officials and staff from WHO and other United Nations agencies.

The issue, rather, was how to develop a convenient platform and method of conveyance that would be accessible on demand to the many millions of health workers and others who need it to build their COVID-19 related knowledge and skills. Additionally, we needed to find ways to advance learning at a time when a pandemic is limiting opportunities for more traditional training approaches involving face-to-face contact, not to mention the enormous stress and demands on their time that so many health workers are facing.

We concluded that a mobile learning app, available to anyone via smartphone or tablet, would be the best way to speed

information, tools and a virtual classroom environment to health workers in almost any setting. An app could be developed quickly. It would be available in low-bandwidth and low-resource settings, and it would be available on demand.

It was clear that to develop an app that would truly be effective in supporting health workers during such a critical period in their careers, we would need more baseline information about their wants and needs. While the initial steps to build the app’s architecture were underway in mid-March, we created and distributed an online survey for health workers that was aimed at validating our approach and specifically the proportion of health workers who would find the app useful and accessible.

Within a little more than a week, we received 10,000 responses from health workers from all regions of the world and covering a broad range of disciplines. That number has since more than doubled, giving us a great deal of visibility into how health workers get their information on COVID-19 and what types of skills they feel they need to improve in the short term – and, most importantly, whether they would access such information on their smartphones and/or tablets if it was available on those devices.

The survey confirmed a number of

critical points. First, while three-quarters of respondents indicated they are at least somewhat competent and prepared to respond to the COVID-19, fully half of them feel they still need more information to be fully prepared. It also found that more than 70 percent of health workers already use the WHO for guidance on COVID-19, while the same percentage indicated that they would be open to using virtual learning on demand – online training materials, interactive workshops or mobile learning applications – to prepare for COVID-19 challenges.

And to validate that a mobile learning app could successfully reach a large number of health workers, more than 80 percent of respondents said they use their mobile smartphones and tablets to access information on the internet. This compared to 56 percent who said they use laptop computers.

From this, we knew that we were on the right track in developing an app for health workers, and the survey also confirmed the areas and topics where they felt the greatest need to build their COVID-19 related skills – infection prevention control, which was named by 43 percent, followed by case management (42 percent), use of personal protective equipment (41 percent), staff safety and health (38 percent), and risk communication (32 percent). This information has been critical in helping us design and present the app's key learning areas.

As we worked to bring all the elements together into one app, we faced a number of challenges, including the process of collecting and organizing content, developing a content management system that would ensure that content on the app was always updated, and creating a virtual learning environment on which we could run virtual classrooms, workshops and webinars.

By the time we launched the app at the end of April in both the Apple Store and the Google Play store, we felt we had developed a key learning tool that would bridge a lot of gaps in COVID-19 knowledge and skills among a widely dispersed health workforce numbering in the hundreds of millions. Bringing together all of the COVID-19 guidance, tools and training from across WHO headquarters and regions, the app offers a range of detailed information in

the topic areas identified by health workers as important to them, as outlined above, as well as in epidemiology, laboratory, maintaining essential health services and systems, international health regulations, research and development, and operational support and logistics. We are also excited about the live, interactive classroom learning opportunities that are now available through the app and that will be ramping up in the near future.

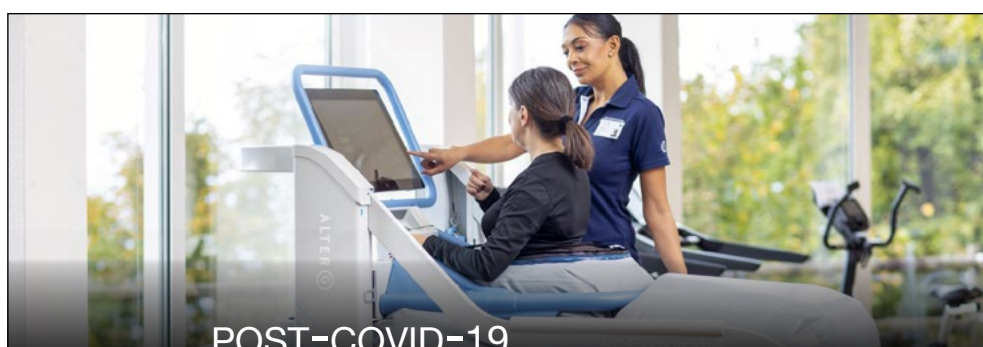
Going forward, we have high hopes that the app will have real impact in enabling health workers to build their skills and improve their preparedness to respond to COVID-19 – and that it will play an outsized

role in enabling them to save lives and protect themselves in the challenging and critically important work they are called upon to do. ■

*The authors are members of the WHO Academy's development team. To learn more about the WHO Academy and its mobile learning app, go to <http://academy.who.int>.

The link to the app in the Google Play Store is: <https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=org.who.WHOA>

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How did a medical university become the largest state employer and make a country resilient to global health threats?

Over the last few months, the need for health professionals has been especially noticeable.



YSMU students at graduation, 2019

**LIDA MELIKYAN, GEVORG TAMAMYAN,
YEREVAN STATE MEDICAL UNIVERSITY**

The practical implementation of medical sciences is greatly associated with decision making in times of uncertainty. Faced with an unknown threat the general public and medical communities around the world had to unite around a shared purpose and common values. Regardless of the time period and encountered dangers, medical education and institutes providing it are central for normal-functioning societies. In a small country in South Caucasus, Armenia, which has seen many disasters, development of such institutes has always been a key priority.

With over 3,500 employees, around 8,000 students at its various schools, and 3 hospitals, Yerevan State Medical University (YSMU) is currently the largest and the most influential provider of medical education, clinical care, scientific research and innovation in the capital of Armenia. Established 100 years ago at the time of global public health and geopolitical disasters, during its existence, the university has

played a crucial role in development of the country and had a significant impact on the local community. During the most challenging periods of the country's history, it has served as one of the means of unification and national betterment.

The creation of the medical school was of vital importance in the 1920's, when the newly formed republic faced lack of infrastructure, harsh socio-economic and sanitary conditions. The majority of the population was deprived of the opportunity to receive basic medical care. The first lectures were organized in the Yerevan City Hospital which currently, after a century not only serves as a part of the campus, but also incorporates a newly constructed state-of-the-art rehabilitation center for injured during the war.

In the following years, the Yerevan Medical Institute, which later earned the status of a university and was renamed after a medieval Armenian scholar – Mkhitar Heratsi, flourished. In a relatively short period major departments were organized, a large number of medical

literature was translated into Armenian and the number of faculty members and students had grown significantly. From 1922 to 1932, the university main campus buildings were completed which have become a distinctive part of the city center that represent classical Yerevan spirit.

The role of emergency preparedness, control of infectious diseases and pandemics became apparent again at the time of the World War II, during which the institute continued its educational and research activities, even though many faculty members and students joined the Soviet army. Patients were transported to multiple medical aid stations, which were set in different regions of Armenia and managed by the institute graduates and faculty. In 4 years of the War, the institute produced 800 graduates. Our current fight against global pandemic of COVID19 is often compared to the time of the World War II, which underlines the need and resilience of medical education institutions at difficult times of history.

It was only matter of time before the school expanded in its first wave of regional and global outreach. With the growing demand for health workers, the Institute faculty started lecturing in Russian, thus welcoming multiple students from different Soviet Republics. Then, a department was organized for diaspora Armenians, who arrived in Yerevan from the countries with large Armenian populations – Syria, Lebanon, Jordan, Iran, Cyprus and others.

The devastating earthquake of December 1988 in Armenia again became a major test for the students and faculty of the institute, who during those challenging times, demonstrated an excellent example of professionalism and humanism. On the same day of the earthquake, about 200 medical students, along with its faculty, provided first aid to the victims in Spitak and Gyumri. Every day, new groups of 200-250 students arrived at the disaster zone. A donation site was organized at the institute, and more than 400 people were donating blood every day.



International Students after class, 1957

The collapse of the USSR in the early 90's and an armed conflict left Armenia's economy, transportation and education systems in paralysis. YSMU continued functioning and, responding to the demand of the time, started the training of military doctors at a new military medicine department.

In recent and second wave of global outreach, the university has added English to its teaching languages and welcomed multiple students from around the world (India, Russia, USA, Georgia, China, Middle East, Central Asia, Europe, South America). 1,820 foreign students are currently enrolled in YSMU. This is the highest number of international students among Armenian universities and this number is

expected to grow. In addition to enriching the global health experience of the university, foreign students have a significant cultural influence on the local communities by stimulating businesses which represent cuisine, art and fashion of their countries of origin.

Currently, the University is the largest medical provider in the country, with 3 university hospitals, more than 100 clinics and departments, and is growing day by day. The recent addition of one of the largest and most historic hospitals in the country, Mikayelyan Institute of Surgery, was a unique example in which a former state institution, which was privatized in the 90's and had lost most of its power at that time, was gained by the University in 2018 and



Yerevan State Medical University (YSMU) main building, 2019

again became a state hospital and started flourishing rapidly. To date, the university has produced more than 31,000 graduates. Currently thousands of YSMU alumni work in leading medical centers around the world. Shaping a dynamic network between the alumni and the university has become a key milestone to be accomplished by the administration over the course of the upcoming academic years. Multiple networking events, reunions and lectures are being organized to ensure participation of the YSMU global community in the life and future strategic priorities of the university.

In 2019 the University became the largest state employer in Armenia and was included in the top 100 taxpayers of the country. In the same year, during the graduation ceremony, the Prime Minister of Armenia named YSMU as "the most successful state university in Armenia, which reflects our vision of the future of higher education".

Since human resources are the main and the most important asset of Armenia, the university and the government are interested in providing opportunities for students from different social strata. More than a hundred full scholarships are granted to the best students each year for many decades. This strategy has ensured social mobility and opened possibilities for multiple bright minds in the country.

Today the University celebrate its 100th anniversary. During the past 100 years, the political structure of Armenia has changed 3 times – 1st Republic of Armenia (1918–1920), Soviet Armenian Republic (1920–1991), and 3rd Republic of Armenia (1991 – present), but the YSMU proved its resilience and is still proudly standing ready to tackle global health challenges in the centuries to come. ■

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SwissYou: an App for expatriates and locals in Geneva

2019. Two friends are eating together at the Café du Soleil in Petit-Saconnex. They talk about their lives and their work in Geneva.

CHRISTIAN DAVID, UNOG*

KAMELIA KEMILEVA, a lawyer by training, has worked for two years in a variety of local and international, public and private institutions in Geneva.

XAVIER PÉCLARD, an advisor on business strategy, has created three businesses and is an expert on Geneva's ecosystem.

A platform for brokering advice

They discuss the fact that expatriates find it difficult to get good advice on how to solve the different, notably administrative obstacles, that confront them when they arrive in Geneva. Professional advice is available but it is very expensive.

Both Xavier and Kamelia regularly receive calls for help from "expats". They conclude that an online tool is required to connect those who need advice with local experts who can answer their questions. They agree on the importance of "personal advice" that will support people who are struggling with administrative or language problems.

The idea is a good one. However, numerous challenges must be resolved before it can be implemented. Language is an obvious issue. In addition, the project must offer real expertise and a peer to peer service. The application must be simple to use. Those who use the tool need advisors who speak their language, know how things are done in Geneva, and can help to resolve their problems cheaply.

Kamelia and Xavier begin to plan what needs to be done. During their careers, each has developed a sizeable professional network, and they have complementary expertise. Those they consult are enthusiastic. The task list lengthens. A web developer is commissioned to build the site. On the strength of their professional reputation, they assemble a first group of advisors to test the model. The advisors include people with experience of administration, politics, bars and cafés, shops and commerce, small business, editing and translation, real estate and property management, insurance, languages. The project is registered in Geneva as SwissYou (www.SwissYou.ch)

How SwissYou works: peer to peer, or expert advice

The clients

Clients may be expatriates or local. They are abroad or already in Geneva and need advice or accompaniment to resolve local administrative issues (with respect to government regulations, finance, employment, welfare, translation, accommodation, property, moving, mergers, acquisitions or sales). SwissYou combines administrative with linguistic advice.

Clients can contact SwissYou seven days a week. They select the profile of the advisor, choose a language, state when they are

available, and place a request. They can speak to an available advisor on the spot or make an appointment.

Advisors

Advisors are paid for the services they provide. They signal their availability and operate as self-employed consultants. Working with SwissYou generates complementary income and enables them to add to their expertise, widen their networks, and in some cases extend their social and professional activity.

Where an advisor is not able to resolve a client's problem, or the problem requires a legal input, SwissYou draws on professional partners. This step necessarily involves additional costs that may include fees for translation as well as time. SwissYou offers clients a range of professional options. The final fee therefore depends on the services that are required and the choices clients make. SwissYou explicitly declare all costs and fees on its website and on the App.

Clients confirm each transaction and electronically authorise payment before work can start. Payment is made to SwissYou which remunerates advisors. SwissYou has established strict confidentiality standards to ensure that clients' personal information is not divulged or exploited.



© Olivier Chamard

Future developments

Though their evolution is difficult to foresee, networks are naturally dynamic and SwissYou is likely to develop additional features over time. It is clear, for example, that many people who work in International Geneva, notably Europeans, are not visible to the Swiss Mission because they do not need visas. SwissYou can help such people. The current health crisis has also underlined the relevance of digital services, especially to public authorities. Covid 19 is destroying the barriers between physical and digital services and reliance on the latter is very likely to increase.

Examples

Clients

- Fabrizio is coming from Argentina to work for a Geneva NGO. He has received some advice but must contact different institutions to arrange accommodation, open a bank account, find a school for his children, help his wife to find work, and buy a car. He does not speak French well and the websites of the Canton, the City, the Confederation and welcome centres make him dizzy. SwissYou helps him to sort these matters out before arriving in Geneva.
- Angela, who is German, has a job in Geneva but has been posted to Asia for two years. She has a property in the Valais and wants to decorate and rent it, but does not know who can help her to do this.
- Jessica and Brian from the United States have lived across the border in France for ten years. She works at WIPO, he has part time jobs in several private schools. They want to buy a house in Switzerland and need help to prepare the paperwork and negotiate a mortgage.
- Bakr, a former diplomat from Senegal, is organising an international online seminar in French, for which some participants need translation. Bakr hires SwissYou advisors to translate into English via Zoom. At the last minute, a Brazilian who speaks only Portuguese joins the seminar. SwissYou supplies an experienced Brazilian student to provide translation and support.

Advisors

- Dimitri, a Russian, has lived in Geneva for 20 years. He is a freelance UN translator. Douglas, an American, has just been appointed to a post in the Red Cross. Dimitri explains to Douglas how he can

rent a flat in Geneva and agrees to accompany him to an accredited *régie* (estate agent) the following week to sort out his dossier and translate for him.

- Natasha is Swiss. She accompanies her husband, a Swiss diplomat, based in Pretoria. From there, she wants to assist people who have just arrived in Geneva. She can't find work in South Africa. Through SwissYou she uses her skills and makes new contacts, helping her to prepare professionally for her return to Switzerland.
- Ian, a retired Scot, has lived in Geneva for 40 years. He is bilingual. He worked all his life as an oil executive and now translates for small Geneva NGOs. He wants to use his Swiss and international

experience and knowledge to help other working or retired expatriates to settle in Switzerland or change their career.

- Anne, from Geneva, is a student at the University of Geneva. She wants to meet people because it might help her find a job – and to make some money! She speaks excellent English, French and Italian. ■

*English version drafted by Robert Archer, Plain Sense, SwissYou

<https://www.swissyou.ch>



The advertisement features a red Mazda CX-5 driving on a city street. The Mazda logo is in the top right corner. Below the car, the text reads: **MAZDA CX-5**, **25%* DISCOUNT FOR ALL LEGITIMATION CARD HOLDERS.** In the bottom right corner, there is a circular emblem for Mazda Motor Corporation's 100th anniversary (1920-2020). Below the car image, the text states: **Unique diplomatic conditions also available for staff members. Contact your Diplomatic Sales expert to customize your own Mazda.** A small note says: *See applicable conditions at your official Groupe Chevalley - Mazda dealer. Below this, two locations are listed: **Autos Carouge** (Route de Saint-Julien 46, 1227 Carouge – Genève – T. +41 (0) 22 309 38 38) and **Colarusso Centre** (Chemin Delay 50, 1214 Vernier – Genève – T. +41 (0) 22 341 40 35). At the bottom, the **GROUPE CHEVALLEY** logo is shown with the tagline **VOTRE PARTENAIRE AUTOMOBILE**.

73rd World Health Assem

Geneva, Switzerland, 18-19 May 2020

Historic consensus resolution on COVID-19 and the way ahead

The discussions of the Health Assembly were held virtually with Heads of Government around the world. A landmark resolution was adopted that underlined WHO's key role in promoting access to safe, effective health technologies to fight the pandemic. The critical points from the resolution included:

Fair distribution of all quality essential health technologies to tackle the COVID-19 pandemic.

Harness relevant international treaties, including the provisions of the TRIPS agreement.

Classify COVID-19 vaccines as a global public good for health to bring an end to the pandemic

Promote both private sector and government-funded research and development to include open innovation, and the sharing of all relevant information with WHO.



bly



The Director-General Dr Tedros made a closing speech to delegates in a shirt from Tonga, presented to Dr Tedros last year during a visit to several islands in the Pacific, where he was welcomed by a choir of nurses. He wore the shirt again as a gesture of thanks and solidarity, in the hope that the choir expected to perform this year at the WHA will be able to travel for the WHA in 2021. In this spirit of solidarity, he thanked all Member States who have expressed their support at the Assembly, throughout the pandemic and for adopting the resolution, which calls for an independent and comprehensive evaluation of the international response – including, but not limited to, WHO's performance.



“We welcome any initiative to strengthen global health security, and to strengthen WHO, and to be more safe. As always, WHO remains fully committed to transparency, accountability and continuous improvement. We want accountability more than anyone” – said Dr Tedros.

Enhancing and enriching news content through linguistic plurality: The case of the Brazilian Report

*Interview with the Editor in Chief
of the Brazilian Report,
Mr. Gustavo Ribeiro.*



**GUILHERME SANCHES LIRA,
UNIVERSITY OF NEUCHÂTEL**

In recent years, there has been an exponential growth of sources of news. At the same time, the news and information sources that perform fact-checking and present balanced journalism have dwindled. The staff working at international agencies based in Geneva come from all over the world and have various language abilities. The crisis and challenges seem to be never-ending. Getting a good grasp on what happens locally and globally is vital to understand the world's latest developments. How can the news content be enhanced and enriched, particularly through linguistic plurality? This is an interview with the Editor in Chief of the Brazilian Report, an English language journalism source from Brazil.

Thanks a lot for agreeing to do this interview. Could you please start by describing to our readers a bit about the Brazilian Report, how the idea came about, what's its mission and who is its main audience?

The Brazilian Report was created by chance, while I was doing my Master's degree in

France, in political sciences. While in France, I was not very happy or impressed about the way Brazil or the news from Brazil were mentioned or portrayed by the foreign media outlets. There was little detail about what was going on in Brazil, especially its political landscape and complexity. Furthermore, things were not well explained or portrayed, and sometimes bluntly inaccurate. I felt that many of the newspapers / media outlets painted Brazil with a broad brush, and they were not necessarily able to understand what was going on. My girlfriend at the time, who is now my wife, told me to stop complaining about it and try and do something. In addition, while working for a news organization in France, I was once told by my editor that the perspectives I brought as a Brazilian who was able to explain the contexts of Brazil differently from others had a positive impact on the way the message was being imparted. I had some sort of epiphany at that moment, thinking I may be onto something here. My first step in the direction of doing something about it was a blog in French, called "Parlons

Bresil" or "Let's talk Brazil" in English which I started while in France. Having finished my Masters, I went back to Brazil, and started seriously thinking about a project of establishing a media outlet whose focus would be Brazil but done in English. A first attempt was called plus55.com (based on Brazil's international dialling code) but it didn't work out due to the different views of associates at the time. I left the project, and then that project eventually came to an end. This is when I opened *The Brazilian Report* with the views and perspectives that I thought made more sense. It would focus on politics and economics of Brazil, in English, from a Portuguese speaking country.

How important is it that there are media outlets in Brazil reporting in English language? Or perhaps even in other languages? What do you think is the direct impact of this kind of journalism?

It is extremely important. We are aiming to reach an audience, that is, people in decision-making positions, those who are in the diplomatic corps of the consulates and embassies, foreign correspondents

from other countries, C-level executives of international companies. There was this need to hold the ground as a Brazilian outlet, which could discuss Brazil with more credibility and knowledge. I feel we are filling in a gap of a Brazilian voice, but in English because Brazil lacked a Brazilian outlet media reporting from Brazil to Brazilians and as well as foreigners in English language. So in a nutshell, the direct impact of the work we do at the Brazilian Report is that we dispel the fog over supposedly convoluted events happening in Brazil, in English, and we make it all easier and clearer for people to understand them.

You mention that The Brazilian Report unpacks what matters the most in Brazil with straightforward explanations and analysis and that you always place events in their context. How important is context when trying to explain Brazil? Does it make a difference if it is done in English as opposed to doing it in Portuguese?

I believe many of the new agencies in Brazil often fail to provide context to the present events, which makes things to appear more convoluted or complex than they should be. As in many other countries, context is definitely a very important part of news. Being able to communicate news

which make sense by looking back at past events and then depart to place the current event taking place now, seem to make more sense for any audience, especially when the sources are not always in the languages of those who are seeking that piece of news. Brazilian journalism done in English tends to fetishize Brazil around its stereotypes, that of a land of Samba and soccer (football). But we know there is much more to it, Brazil is not just an exotic land, it is a normal country, too, despite the difficulties imposed by the current political situation. To illustrate my point, when our previous President, Dilma Rousseff was in the process of being impeached, the way foreign media portrayed the political event and the way it unfolded was not quite accurate, it was perhaps incomplete and even skewed. Some outlets went so far even to depict Brazil as some sort of Banana Republic, as through dysfunctionality were an intrinsic feature to Brazil's democracy — even though one can argue the Dilma Rousseff impeachment was much less dysfunctional than the Clinton impeachment, for instance. There was this misconception that bad things will happen in Brazil, because after all, it is Brazil... which of course is not true. Bad things happen in all countries.

What are the main topics or issues that readers or listeners of your podcast are interested in? And what aspects of those stories they value the most?

With any topic, we don't ever assume that our audience is as knowledgeable about any given topic as journalists are. We start by breaking down concepts and put them back together with the audience so that it makes total sense when communicating the news. And that perhaps happens often, because so often journalists are writing to other journalists and sources that generally possess some or a deep knowledge of the subject at issue. It is not that *The Brazilian Report* tries to dumb down stuff, but rather that it does not take for granted that all its readers and listener have an extensive knowledge of whatever is being discussed. We had a podcast about Little Africa in Rio de Janeiro, which huge interested many of our readers and listeners. But now obviously, what everyone wants to read and hear about is the COVID-19 pandemic and issues around it. The demand is high for the coverage of the pandemic and how it unfolds in Brazil, we try to depart from a broader topic of COVID-19 in order to delve into a specific question related to the crisis.

Do you know who are the main or secondary audiences of the

Brazilian Report where do they come from/located in?

Our biggest audience comes from the United States, more precisely the East Coast of the United States but also from Chicago and California. We also have a lot of foreigners who live in Brazil, mostly in Sao Paulo and Rio de Janeiro who are our audience and finally we have readers and listeners from the UK and France and some other European countries.

Thank you very much Gustavo for this interesting and informative interview. We hope this helped our readers to better understand the peculiarities of reporting news in English from Brazil and the need for breaking language barriers through journalism. You can listen to the Brazilian Report on any of the platforms you get your podcasts, just look for Explaining Brazil. ■

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Covid-19

Les professionnels de la santé publique étaient-ils prêts, et comment l'UNIGE les prépare-t-elle?

Les professionnels de la santé publique sont sous le feu des projecteurs. Faut-il les blâmer pour la relative impréparation du pays en mars dernier? Ou au contraire, les inclure dans les applaudissements quotidiens destinés aux professionnels de la santé?



PROF. JEAN-FRANÇOIS ETTER,
INSTITUT DE SANTÉ GLOBALE (ISG),
FACULTÉ DE MÉDECINE, UNIVERSITÉ
DE GENÈVE

Bien que l'épidémie ait commencé dès décembre 2019 en Chine et qu'elle fit rage dès février en Italie, les autres pays européens ont été surpris en situation d'impréparation début mars. Les pays voisins de la Chine (notamment Taiwan, Hong Kong, Corée du Sud, Singapour) avaient déjà connu l'épidémie de SRAS en 2003 et ils s'attendaient à l'arrivée d'une nouvelle épidémie en provenance de Chine, ils connaissaient aussi le manque de fiabilité des informations venant de Chine. Ils étaient donc mieux préparés et ont mieux su faire face à l'épidémie, notamment en appliquant précocement la triade tester-tracer-isoler, qui consiste à largement tester la population, à tracer les contacts des personnes infectées et à les isoler. L'usage du masque et les autres mesures de distanciation sociale y ont aussi été appliqués plus tôt.

Apprendre des expériences passées

En Europe, plusieurs experts et

organisations avaient averti les autorités à temps, mais leurs voix étaient discordantes, certains experts sous-évaluant les risques, ce qui a retardé les décisions politiques. Espérons que les leçons de cette impréparation ont été retenues et qu'une nouvelle épidémie, ou une seconde vague de la même épidémie, ne nous surprendra pas de la même manière. Il convient de planifier dès maintenant une réponse qui maximise l'impact sur l'épidémie et minimise les dégâts sur l'économie et la société.

Nous apprendrons sans doute beaucoup de la comparaison des conséquences sanitaires, économiques et sociales entre les pays qui ont appliqué des mesures strictes de confinement (p.ex. France) et les pays qui ont appliqué des mesures moins strictes et qui se sont davantage reposés sur l'autodiscipline des citoyens et ont laissé l'économie fonctionner (p.ex. Suède).

L'incertitude pèse aujourd'hui sur les conséquences à moyen et long terme de cette crise sur l'économie, la société et la santé. L'histoire nous apprend

que les épidémies ont souvent été suivies de guerres, et les risques de violence et de troubles sociaux ne peuvent être écartés. La crise agit comme un révélateur des forces et des faiblesses des sociétés concernées. A Genève par exemple, les longues files d'attente pour les distributions de nourriture gratuite ont rendu visible une population précaire que l'on ne savait pas si vulnérable, ni si nombreuse.

«Le confinement était-il la meilleure réponse possible, et ses effets adverses ont-ils été bien considérés avant qu'il ne soit imposé?»

Ce que devront connaître les professionnels de la santé publique de demain

Une partie de la préparation aux conséquences de la crise actuelle et aux épidémies futures passe par la formation de professionnels de santé publique en nombre suffisant et disposant des connaissances et compétences pertinentes.

Ces professionnels devront en particulier disposer de solides bases en épidémiologie, afin

de comprendre la situation et de proposer des solutions efficaces et basées sur les faits. Ils devront aussi savoir planifier et gérer des projets et programmes de santé publique, collaborer à l'élaboration des politiques de santé et faire preuve du leadership nécessaire à leur mise en œuvre. Puisque ces mesures impliquent souvent des restrictions des libertés individuelles, ces professionnels devront disposer des connaissances requises en droit et en éthique, afin de proposer des réponses qui respectent autant que possible nos valeurs fondamentales de droits humains et de libertés individuelles.

«Savoir convaincre le public et les décideurs est une compétence clé de l'expert en santé publique»

Ces experts en santé publique devront aussi disposer de compétences communicationnelles, afin de transmettre les connaissances et les messages clés à la population et aux décideurs politiques. Ils devront apprendre à interagir

avec la presse et comprendre qu'une formule bien tournée sera souvent reprise par les journalistes. Les meilleurs d'entre eux pourront tenter de rivaliser dans ce domaine avec Alain Berset et sa phrase devenue culte: "Aussi vite que possible, aussi lentement que nécessaire"

Ne pas négliger les priorités d'avant

Plus sérieusement, la concentration des ressources en faveur de la lutte contre l'épidémie peut conduire à négliger d'autres priorités, comme la vaccination contre d'autres maladies infectieuses.

Cela pourrait causer une hausse de la mortalité liée à ces maladies, en particulier si les messages au sujet des campagnes de vaccination ne sont pas reçus par le public. Par exemple, bien que la grippe saisonnière tue 10000

personnes chaque année en France (l'épidémie de Covid-19 a fait jusqu'ici 28000 morts en France), et bien que l'on dispose d'un vaccin anti-grippe efficace, une trop large proportion de la population à risque ne se vaccine pas contre la grippe.

Le tabagisme tue 73000 personnes en France et 9500 en Suisse chaque année, ce qui n'empêche pas un quart de la population de continuer à fumer et d'ignorer ainsi les messages sur les risques liés à la fumée.

«La concentration des ressources en faveur de la lutte contre l'épidémie peut conduire à négliger d'autres priorités»

La crise actuelle exacerbera de nombreux problèmes de santé, notamment parce que leur

prise en charge a été négligée durant l'épidémie, mais aussi à cause des difficultés économiques ou de l'insuffisance des systèmes de protection sociale, de la malnutrition, de la violence domestique.

Des conséquences inattendues de cette crise sont à craindre, et les experts en santé publique devront proposer des solutions innovantes à ces problèmes nouveaux. Ils devront être capables de collaborer au sein d'équipes multidisciplinaires, et de comprendre la dimension internationale de la situation afin de proposer des solutions qui tiennent compte des enjeux globaux.


Perspectives de carrière


Les formations en santé publique proposées par l'Université de Genève permettent aux professionnels intéressés d'acquérir les connaissances et compétences précitées, par

des enseignements théoriques et par la réalisation des projets leur permettant de s'intégrer dans les réseaux de la santé publique aux niveaux local, national et international.

Les formations en santé publique sont actuellement prioritaires et doivent être renforcées. Elles comprennent notamment en formation continue un CAS en promotion de la santé et santé communautaire et un MAS en santé publique, et en formation initiale un Master of Science in Global Health et un doctorat en santé globale.

La santé publique est aujourd'hui plus que jamais un domaine en pleine expansion avec des perspectives de carrière inédites pour des professionnels exerçant dans les domaines de la santé ou dans des secteurs connexes (administration, politique, etc.) ■






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Fortifying our mental health in the time of COVID-19

**SHEVA CARR¹, ROBERT BROWNING²,
GEMMA VESTAL³ AND SANDRA
SOLANO-MCGUIRE⁴**

The COVID-19 pandemic is giving many of us challenges, adversity and stress. We cannot prepare for all stressors but we can recover from and adapt in the face of them with enhanced resilience⁵ – when we learn to self-regulate our physiological stress response.

One major stressor during the pandemic is the impact of quarantine on mental and physical health. For some, who are sheltering in place alone, this strain can result from social isolation which is shown to be as strong a risk factor for all cause mortality as other clinical risks.⁶

For others, the strain comes from being quarantined with family members 24 hours a day, which sadly led to an increase in the burden of domestic disputes, domestic violence,⁷ and increasing divorce inquiries.⁸

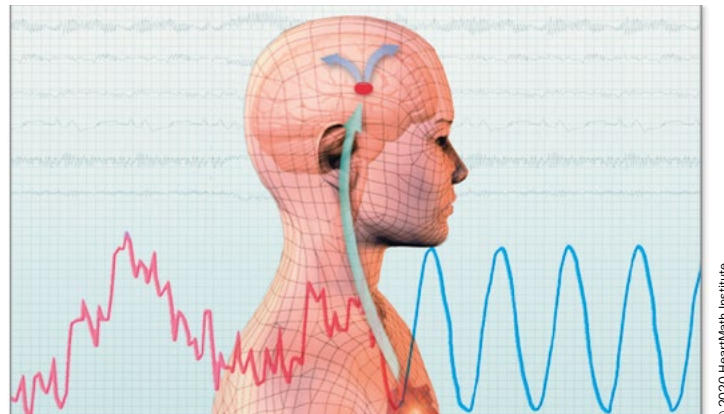
Even prior to the pandemic, while part time telecommuting has mental health benefits,⁹ full time telecommuting was demonstrated to “increase stress secondary to overlapping family responsibilities, blurred work-homelife boundary, family conflict, overwork, long working hours and the inability to switch between work and rest.”¹⁰ The benefits of part-time telecommuting appeared due to increases in personal freedom and flexibility, neither of which are enhanced in our current lock-down. Full time telecommuters were also more likely to experience obesity and addictive behaviors.

So how do we protect our mental and physical health in a mandatory work-from-home order?

Self-care tips for quarantine in an online search produces a range of advice from making sure to exercise every day, eat a balanced diet, get 7-8 hours of sleep per night (which is hard to do in a physiological stress reaction!), avoid alcohol and drugs, work in one location only, delineate work hours from “home” time, and so on.

What we’d like to focus on in this article, however, is how accessing applied heart intelligence can give individuals and families a source of self-care through self-regulation from the inside out. HeartMath¹¹ researchers uncovered simple tools that anyone of almost any age can use to facilitate these internal communication pathways for better physical and emotional health and resilience.

Phrases like “listen to your heart”, or “follow your heart” turn out to be more than a poetic song lyric. Dr Drew Armour discovered what he called a “little brain” in the heart. The heart has its own proteins, neurotransmitters, support cells, and an intrinsic cardiac nervous system. The quality of signals being sent from the heart to the brain via the vagus nerve facilitate or inhibit cortical function. We can self-regulate those patterns to be more harmonious or coherent which can help us respond to life’s events with more clarity.



“Changing Heart Rhythms” – These heart rate variability traces illustrate how emotions impact the autonomic nervous system.

© 2020 HeartMath Institute

Renewing emotions such as appreciation, compassion and courage create harmonious patterns, whereas depleting emotions such as fear, anger or irritation create incoherent patterns. We can leverage this intelligence to help us cultivate a more balanced physiology to align with our integrated intelligence which facilitates our mental health and well-being. HeartMath skills give us a way to tap into “inner quiet” when there is no outer respite from the noise and chaos around us.

It can be very helpful for individuals or families in quarantine to create this “inner

quiet”. Many will reach for the constant stimulation of social media and the news for a sense of connection rather than pausing to connect with themselves. Whether you are alone but in online meetings constantly, or sheltering with others in constant interaction, it is important to take time away from devices and in silence (alone or together) to balance your nervous system and listen to yourself. Periods of silence have been shown in early animal and human research to increase brain neuroplasticity.¹²

And, establishing quiet “outside” doesn’t necessarily stop



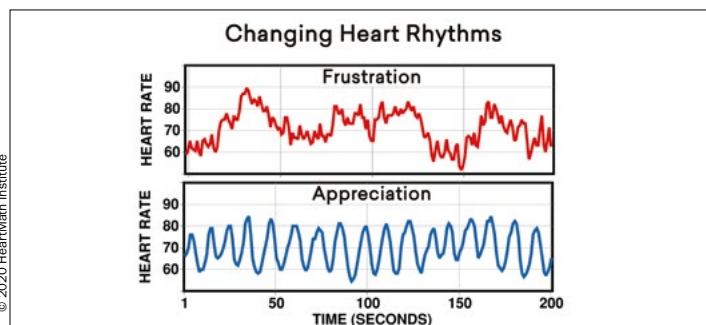
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"Heart-Brain Communication" – Heart rhythm patterns and associated emotions either inhibit or facilitate cortical function.

the radio station playing inside your brain, filled with mental ruminations about the past and worried projections about the future – especially in a collectively stressful time like a pandemic.

Here is a simple tool you can use from HeartMath proven to balance your autonomic nervous system, auto regulate your stress response, and help you "hear yourself".¹³

The Quick Coherence Technique^{®14}

Step 1: *Focus your attention in the area around the heart – the chest area. Imagine your breath is flowing in and out through the heart or chest area a little slower and deeper than usual. Some find it helpful to count to five as you breathe in, and count to five as you breathe out.*

This Heart-Focused Breathing™ begins to balance our autonomic nervous system which benefits our physiology, and if you can include the next

step, it can further enhance your hormones and immunity – important in a pandemic. Step 2 adds a regenerative feeling which can help stabilize this shift and amplify access to our intelligence, like getting a cell phone into a place where there's a stronger signal.

Step 2: *Make a sincere attempt to experience and activate a regenerative heart feeling such as appreciation, care or compassion for someone or something in your life. Breathe that feeling through the heart area. You can remember a special place, an accomplishment or the love you feel for a close friend, relative, or pet.*

Pay attention to what happens in your body, emotions, energy level and thought process – what changes do you observe? It's skillful to pause when you complete the breathing and just listen. Is there any insights or discernment that you can hear right now... to help you respond to a situation in a way that minimizes your stress?

This shift you just created in your heart rate variability changes over 1400 other things in your physiology, including the part of your brain that chooses what to pay attention to, interprets that incoming information, and responds to it. There is an important advantage of this tool for self-care and mental health resilience: it allows each person to tune into what they uniquely need for their own balance and well-being, rather than providing a generalized checklist which may or may not be relevant to that individual. We need ways to individually break through all the distracting noise to find a path to the information that is most relevant and beneficial to each of us in each moment. Both mountain climbers and scuba divers need oxygen – but very different gear to go with their unique contexts. Each of us has a guide inside, an intelligence within us that is uniquely connected to where we are and what we need in any moment. To learn to pause and quiet the inner chatter and external information overload long enough to sense those signals from the heart is not just a soft skill – it is a heart skill for hard times that can be lifesaving and quality-of-life saving.

We hope this tool is helpful as you deal with the unique challenges COVID-19 brings to us. ■

- 1 Sheva Carr is CEO and Executive Director of Heart Ambassadors, and a Senior Trainer at HeartMath LLC. She can be reached at destress@heartmath.com
- 2 Robert Browning is Director Health Partnerships and Senior Trainer at HeartMath LLC.
- 3 Gemma Vestal, a WHO Staff, is a certified HeartMath trainer.
- 4 Dr Sandra-Solano-McGuire is Executive Director of Integro, LLC and a certified HeartMath trainer.
- 5 HeartMath defines resilience as the capacity to prepare for, recover from and adapt in the face of challenge, adversity, or stress.
- 6 <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3871270/>
- 7 <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/04/06/world/coronavirus-domestic-violence.html>
- 8 <https://pagesix.com/2020/03/24/divorce-rates-jumping-in-corona-quarantined-couples/>
- 9 Henke RM1, Benevent R2, Schulte P2, Rinehart C2, Crighton KA3, Corcoran M4 The Effects of Telecommuting Intensity on Employee Health. *Am J Health Promot.* 2016 Nov;30(8):604-612. Epub 2016 Jun 17.
- 10 Tabares AI. Telework and health effects review. *International Journal of Healthcare* 2017;vol. 3, No. 2:30-36
- 11 HeartMath Healthcare is an evidenced based research institute bringing resilience building skills and technology based on peer reviewed science to hospital systems and organizations worldwide.
- 12 <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4087081/>
- 13 <https://www.heartmath.com/science/>
- 14 For a downloadable version of the Quick Coherence® Technique, and quick self-care videos relative to Covid-19 go to: <https://www.heartmath.com/lp/heartmath-for-healthcare/>



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Portugal brings down obesity by taxing sugary drinks

On World Obesity Day, 4 March, the success of Portugal was highlighted in tackling childhood obesity – one of the main health challenges in the WHO European Region – with their sugary drinks tax.



ELEANOR SALTER, WHO/EUROPE

Childhood obesity is a complex public health issue – caused by many factors, it intersects significantly with socioeconomic status. As obesity can establish behaviours at a young and vulnerable age, countries have a duty to protect children from a phenomenon that can become a health burden for the rest of their lives.

In Portugal, the combination of unhealthy diets and a rise in sedentary lifestyles has precipitated a public health struggle with childhood obesity. The consequences of this have implications for Portugal to achieve the wider targets for noncommunicable diseases (NCDs) by 2030.

The importance of monitoring health trends

However, one monitoring programme, the WHO European Childhood Obesity Surveillance Initiative (COSI), has attempted to take a firm hold on the crisis. COSI has been tracking the trend in childhood obesity for 12 years and has seen the numbers in Portugal slowly but surely turn around. COSI is an initiative that has surveyed the weight of school-aged children every 2–3 years in over 40 member states

of the European Region since 2008. It has delivered invaluable data to governments across the Region in that time.

Dr Ana Rito, Portugal's Principal Investigator for COSI, walks us through the component parts of this critical monitoring initiative. "Between 2008 and 2016 we can see a drop in overweight children [in Portugal] from 37.9% to 30.7% and in obese children from 15.3% to 11.7%. However, it remains one of the highest rates in Europe," she explains. Thanks to COSI, it is not just prevalence that can be assessed but also the behavioural aspects of healthy lifestyles, including diets and physical habits. It also goes beyond the children themselves to assess their environments, such as schools and family. This detailed level of analysis showed that despite the decreasing rates of obesity overall, dietary patterns seemed resistant to change.

Healthy lifestyles

Most importantly, COSI identified one of the main culprits. It seemed that the number of children who regularly drink soft drinks – a significant influence on weight gain – had increased over time to reach over 80.1%

of children aged 6–8 years in 2016. "This data provided scientific evidence essential to supporting the implementation of the sugary drinks tax," Ana tells me.

Taxation is often an effective way of nudging behaviour change and is far more successful than targeting or shaming individuals. However, building political momentum for such legislative change often proves challenging, particularly when it tackles an industry which puts profits before the health priorities of young people. Nonetheless, leading public health institutions in Portugal helped drive tax on sweet beverages up the agenda and in January 2017, Portugal brought into force a sugary drinks tax.

Big steps forward

The results are impressive. Many companies have radically reduced the amount of sugar in their products and sales of sugary drinks have fallen overall. Future rounds of the COSI Portugal study will be able to track the full impact on children's consumption patterns, but the initial plunge in high-sugar beverage sales and the significant reformulation of products is impressive.



Dr Francisco Goiana Silva was in the cabinet of the Ministry of Health of Portugal when the sugary drinks tax was implemented and is confident about the tax: “this policy intervention is estimated to have had a far greater impact on the population’s diet than all the education and self-regulated mechanisms combined. The tax also serves as a measure to tackle health inequalities”. Unhealthy diets and obesity are strongly related to social determinants of health in Portugal – people at lower income and education levels are the most vulnerable to developing NCDs. “By promoting transfer of consumption to healthier choices, such as water, which is not

more expensive, this policy will reduce the risk of developing NCDs among the most vulnerable population groups,” added Dr Silva.

Dr Silva also stresses the importance of investing revenue raised by the sugary drinks tax in health promotion initiatives. “It allows the creation of a multiplier effect,” he said. “It brings to light the positive impacts of the tax and prevents criticism from stakeholders in the industry arguing that the tax serves only to generate revenue.”

Surveillance systems such as COSI are clearly not just monitors of change – they have a huge amount of agency in driving through reforms and

building change themselves. When policy-makers, politicians and academics collaborate flexibly, they can have a significant impact on influencing the healthy behaviour of populations.

COSI is just one of the WHO tools that Portugal has adopted to tackle childhood obesity and other NCD risk factors. National-level stakeholders have recognized the importance of such tools and resources. “Having tools which can be readily used by policy-makers and ministries of health to assess the potential impact of policy scenarios is extremely useful. In the past, we have also used WHO tools to estimate the

potential health impact of the Portuguese Sweetened Beverages Tax and we are currently considering their application in other policies,” commented Dr Maria João Gregório, Director, Portuguese National Programme for the Promotion of Healthy Eating.

Portugal’s fiscal measures are taking on entrenched challenges and defending the right to health for all – including children. Although there is more work to be done on healthy behaviours, these measures offer a guide to best practice in turning the tide of the childhood obesity epidemic. ■



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COVID-19 and tobacco industry interference: Exploitation of a global pandemic

KERSTIN SCHOTTE AND SIMONE ST CLAIRE,

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH PROMOTION, WHO

There are 1.3 billion tobacco users worldwide, a number that would be even larger if tobacco didn't eventually kill half of its users. Every four seconds, tobacco takes another life. Tobacco use affects almost every organ of the body. The use of smoked tobacco products or e-cigarettes damages the lungs and respiratory functions, thereby increasing risk and/or severity of contracting respiratory infections, such as SARS or COVID-19. As smokers may already have reduced lung capacity or preexisting lung diseases, the risk of serious illness is high. Smokers are also likely to be more vulnerable to COVID-19 as the act of smoking means that fingers (and possibly contaminated cigarettes or waterpipe hose) are in contact with lips, which increases the possibility of transmission of virus from hand to mouth.

The tobacco industry has predictably found ways to exploit the current COVID-19 pandemic. To date, the industry has done so through marketing of novel nicotine and tobacco products alongside COVID-related communications messages, lobbying for the classification of tobacco and vape shops as "essential businesses" to remain open during lockdowns, conducting misleading research on the links between nicotine and tobacco product use and COVID-19, making philanthropic contributions to appear socially responsible and more. For example, in the UK and New Zealand, the tobacco industry is actively lobbying for tobacco shops be listed as "essential." In Lebanon, the tobacco industry is sending text messages using the "stay at home" message and asking recipients to encourage friends and family to get on a wait-list for IQOS. In Kazakhstan, the tobacco industry is asking influencers to post content in Glo-branded face masks (a face mask model not proven to be helpful for protecting users from contracting COVID-19).

The tobacco industry's interference with life-saving public health measures in the context of this global pandemic is nothing

new. Decades of deceptive tactics and interference with public health policy by the tobacco industry have hooked generations of users to nicotine and tobacco, driving the global tobacco epidemic. It is now well established that tobacco is harmful to almost every organ of the body, but just 70 years ago, the link between tobacco use and the dozens of diseases it causes was largely unknown. In light of the industry's exploitation of COVID-19, WHO reflects on two remarkable anniversaries in global tobacco control that have been instrumental in countering industry tactics over the last few decades.

50-year anniversary of the Resolution on the Health Consequences of Smoking

In the late 1950s, evidence emerged that demonstrated a causal link between smoking and lung cancer. Prior to the publishing of the U.S. Surgeon General's Report on the Health Consequences of Smoking in 1964, concern had already been voiced by the public health community, catalyzing the tobacco industry to employ a cadre of strategies to discredit scientific evidence and deny the harm of tobacco products.

The 73rd World Health Assembly will mark 50 years since the introduction of the Resolution on the Health Consequences of Smoking. The resolution acknowledged the serious effects of smoking in promoting the development of pulmonary and cardiac disease and called for the Assembly to consider educational methods to prevent young people from being persuaded to begin smoking, as well as bring attention to the need to study crop substitution in tobacco producing countries. The resolution also called for all participants to refrain from smoking in meeting rooms of the Assembly.

Substantial evidence has mounted over the ensuing decades revealing that tobacco not only causes lung cancer, but harms almost every organ of the body. Nicotine contained in tobacco products is highly addictive. Tobacco use is a major risk factor for cardiovascular and respiratory diseases

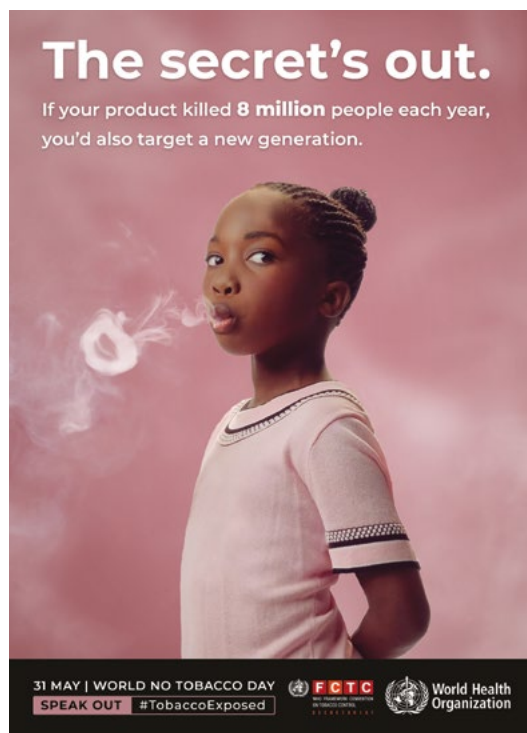
and has causative link to over 20 different types or subtypes of cancer, as well as many other debilitating health conditions. Every year, over 8 million people die from tobacco related illnesses, 1.2 million of which are non-users exposed to second-hand smoke.

As awareness of the harms of tobacco use grew and global tobacco control efforts intensified over the last decade, social acceptability of tobacco use declined. In an effort to restore its tarnished reputation and secure a new generation of users, the tobacco industry made well-researched and calculated efforts to redesign and rebrand its products to sustain profitability. It introduced smokeless tobacco products, cigarette filters and the so-called "light" and "mild" tobacco products as an alternative to quitting, while being fully aware that the products were not less harmful to health. This not only reduced tobacco users' perceptions of risk and harm, but also undermined effective tobacco control policies. The tobacco industry has also used its economic power, lobbying and marketing machinery, and manipulation of the media to discredit scientific research and influence governments in order to propagate the sale and distribution of its deadly product.

15-year anniversary of the entry into force of the WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control

In response to the global tobacco epidemic, and the tobacco industry's aggressive and well-resourced tactics to undermine global tobacco control, WHO Member States unanimously adopted the WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (WHO FCTC) in 2003, the only public health treaty under the auspices of WHO. This year marks 15 years since its entry into force, now legally binding in 181 ratifying Parties.

Since the adoption of the treaty, more countries have implemented effective measures to reduce the demand for tobacco, such as raising taxes on tobacco, banning tobacco advertising, promotion and sponsorship,



Despite significant global progress, many countries are still not adequately implementing policies that can save lives from tobacco. The global target set by governments to reduce the prevalence of tobacco use by 30% by 2025 remains off track. Currently, only 32 countries are on track to reach the 30% reduction target.

Tobacco industry efforts to thwart effective tobacco control

The lag in global progress is due in part to tobacco industry's long history of efforts to subvert life-saving tobacco control measures, discredit scientific evidence, and deny the harms of tobacco use. The multi-billion-dollar industry has increasingly preyed on children and adolescents, employing advertising and promotion tactics and targeting them directly with a

enacting smoke-free environments, warning about the dangers of tobacco, and offering help to quit.

To help countries implement the WHO FCTC, WHO introduced the MPOWER technical package, which includes measures such as protecting people from tobacco smoke, warning about the dangers of tobacco, offering support to quit and raising taxes on tobacco. Since the MPOWER measures were introduced more than a decade ago, the number of people covered by at least one of these effective tobacco control measures has more than quadrupled, from 1 billion in 2007 to 5 billion in 2018. Over the past two decades, while the global population has increased by over 1.5 billion people, global tobacco use has fallen. The 1.397 billion users in 2000 declined to 1.337 billion in 2018, a decrease of nearly 60 million. For the first time, the number of male tobacco users, which had previously been increasing every year, is on the decline.

new portfolio of products that threaten their health. These industries are moving at a rapid speed to launch new or novel products and use every means to expand their market share of existing products before regulations can catch up with them. These calculated approaches are designed to recruit a new generation of users to replace the millions of people who die each year from tobacco-attributable disease, rewarding investors with as much profit as possible and keeping the tobacco industry's business alive.

In response to the tobacco and related industries' devious tactics to attract a new generation of tobacco users, WHO is launching a counter-marketing campaign for World No Tobacco Day 2020 (31 May), which aims to empower young people to join the fight against the tobacco industry. The global campaign will debunk myths and expose the devious tactics employed by these industries. Some of the tactics the campaign seeks to expose include

advertising and product placement in entertainment media and through social media platforms with paid influencers, promotion of tobacco products and distribution of free samples at popular events for young people, and flavours appealing to children in smokeless tobacco, shisha and e-cigarettes. It will provide young people with the knowledge required to more readily detect industry manipulation efforts and equip them with the tools to rebuff such tactics. In the context of the COVID-19 pandemic, the campaign will also serve to raise awareness on the links between tobacco use and COVID-19, as well as expose tobacco and related industries' attempts to exploit the outbreak.

Global tobacco control efforts have evolved and intensified over the last 50 years since the introduction of the Resolution on the Health Consequences of Smoking, but there is still much more work to be done. WHO calls on governments to support the implementation of comprehensive tobacco control policies, as outlined in the WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control. This will help prevent industry evasion of tobacco control legislation and exploitation of regulatory loopholes, protect children and adolescents from industry manipulation, and prevent younger generations from initiating nicotine and tobacco product use. The world cannot afford another generation deceived by the lies and subterfuge of the tobacco industry, which pretends to promote freedom of personal choice while really ensuring eternal profits – profits that cost millions of lives every year. ■



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En temps de covid, les émotions avancent masquées!

DONALD GLOWINSKI, CHERCHEUR EN NEUROPSYCHOLOGIE, UNIGE

Comment reconnaître les émotions de son interlocuteur... à travers son masque?

Bonne nouvelle, restons positifs, l'avantage du masque, c'est qu'il n'y a plus de problème d'haleine pour un contact trop rapproché. Mais comme la distance sociale créait déjà un éloignement salvateur, de ce côté-là, nous sommes «safe». Plus sérieusement, nous sommes littéralement câblés pour lire les expressions faciales, les d-é-c-o-d-e-r, et dans le meilleur des cas, agir en conséquence.

Décoder les les expressions faciales

Cette capacité commence très tôt. Dès 3 ans, un enfant distingue des traits chez une personne qu'il ne connaît pas qui lui inspireront confiance ou non. De manière générale, la lecture des traits de personnalité ou des émotions est une habitude à laquelle on n'échappe pas. En moins de 100 millisecondes, vous vous formez déjà une opinion sur la personne qui vous fait face, et, si cette impression est négative, le risque est de renforcer rapidement cette première impression durant le laps de temps qui suit (s'en rappeler à votre prochain entretien). Enfin, si votre interlocuteur vous montre un visage impassible, tel que le ferait un agent de sécurité à la sortie du magasin, il est possible que cette absence d'expression émotionnelle vous déstabilise. On cherche en effet, dans toute relation, à

instaurer un minimum d'interactions émotionnelles, ce qui suppose, a minima, d'émettre des signaux à travers notre corps et d'en chercher chez notre interlocuteur pour comprendre son état émotionnel (par exemple est-il surpris par ce que je dis? va-t-il se mettre en colère?).

Une dynamique mise à rude épreuve par les temps qui courent

Le covid et les nouvelles règles d'hygiène édictées invitent expressément au port du masque, du moins dans les transports communs (en Suisse). Or, si je vous efface la moitié de votre source d'information (le visage), ce qui reste à voir vous suffira-t-il pour interagir efficacement avec votre interlocuteur?

Certains scientifiques ont posé les bases d'un repérage systématique de ces expressions faciales, et développé un code permettant d'identifier objectivement les émotions exprimées (au moins les émotions dites de base: joie, tristesse, peur, colère, dégoût et surprise).

Fondée sur les travaux d'Ekman, l'analyse de micro-expressions faciales (par exemple la légère inflexion de la lèvre supérieure, le petit pli du bord de l'œil) vous permettrait même de vérifier la sincérité de votre interlocuteur. Une visée inquiétante qui se pratique à des niveaux variés de validité scientifique dans certaines situations de négociation ou d'interrogatoire policier (voir

la série à succès *Lie to Me* pour une mise en scène intrigante).

Les zones cibles du visage associées aux émotions

Si vous n'êtes pas encore prêt à vous entraîner au repérage systématique des micro-expressions, une récente étude répertorie les zones cibles du visage associées aux émotions. En résumant: l'expression de la tristesse et de la peur se reconnaîtrait davantage autour du mouvement des yeux tandis que la reconnaissance de la joie et du dégoût se situerait au niveau de la bouche. En extrapolant, si vous portez un masque, il est possible qu'il faille exagérer votre bonheur ou votre écœurement pour être bien compris par celui qui vous regarde.

Mais soyez rassuré: votre cerveau est entraîné à pallier les manques! Il sait intégrer l'information parfois redondante (ou contradictoire) du corps ou des intonations de la voix qui accompagnent l'expression du visage. Donc votre attention habituellement portée sur le visage se déportera parfois davantage sur l'attitude générale ou sur les nuances vocales. Comme on le voit, le port du masque risque d'avoir une incidence non négligeable sur la lecture et l'expression de nos émotions faciales.

Maintenir le rapport émotionnel Étonnamment, peu d'études se sont penchées sur la question alors même que, dans plusieurs pays asiatiques, nous aurions assez de données pour

observer les conséquences du port du masque sur plusieurs populations (les enfants, par exemple). L'enjeu pourtant peut aussi être thérapeutique: plusieurs compagnies développent des masques pour les personnels de santé qui laissent transparente la partie du visage afin de préserver le lien soignant/soigné. Maintenir ce rapport émotionnel est d'autant plus attendu que le patient est vulnérable, angoissé et a besoin de réconfort.

Nul doute que des stratégies originales seront développées dans les années à venir, mais elles pourront prendre des voies diverses: exagération de certaines expressions là où l'information est visible, ou alors comportement inhibitoire («à quoi bon sourire si on ne le voit pas»). Et là, résistez à cette tendance: ne vous interdisez pas de vous exprimer, car au fond, on exprime aussi ses émotions pour soi et pour réguler ses actions.

Le simple fait de sourire, qu'il soit vu ou non, vous donnera déjà du baume au cœur. ■

Pour aller plus loin

Willis, J. & Todorov, A. *First Impressions Making Up Your Mind After a 100-Ms Exposure to a Face*. (2006).

Zebrowitz, L. A. *First Impressions From Faces*. *Curr. Dir. Psychol. Sci.* 26 237–242 (2017).

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Love differently



ANTHONY NDIRGURI

2020 progresses, COVID – 19 bites harder and deeper...
The pangs can be felt all over the world's skin.
Everyone is affected. The ground shaking beneath our feet,
we are trapped with no place to go.
The roar, only getting wilder and louder.
No where to run, No where to hide, we can only wait.
It's not what, where, when nor how...
Our world has suddenly become a village...
Our voices echoing throughout the land...
Like the Muazzin call for prayer!
From the highest minarets of the globe.

STAY AT HOME! WASH YOUR HANDS! LOVE DIFFERENTLY

News are depressing, we can only wait for the worst.
The worst comes... lockdown comes...
Schools close, markets close, airports close, entertainment places
close, worship centres close... the world closes.
Where will we go and repent.

STAY AT HOME! WASH YOUR HANDS! LOVE DIFFERENTLY

We listen, we watch, we peep from our windows and balconies.
Like prisoners we wait for the day of our freedom.
Are the numbers right? Wrong? Sure?
Media houses projects...
Breaking news everyday.
One more infection, the numbers end with a +

STAY AT HOME! WASH YOUR HANDS! LOVE DIFFERENTLY

One more day we sink a day deeper.
The rich, the poor, Kings, Queens, Presidents, Prime Ministers.
Scholars, Leaders... me and you...
With hearts filled with fear we sail on...
I feel sick after sanitizing my hands.
I can't figure out if it's the 70% alcohol in the sanitizer or if
am coming down with a flu... a flu?

STAY AT HOME! WASH YOUR HANDS! LOVE DIFFERENTLY.

But,
We shall survive, the human race always does.
We will survive with scars.
A mother, a father, a brother, a sister, a son, a daughter, a spouse,
a partner, a friend. One less a family member.
A job, a penny, a semester, a term, a deadline, a goal...
We will all lose something at the end.
The scars will tell a story.
Of fear, agony, loss.
A story of victory and a battle won.
The poem will be read with tears.
Tears of victory, tears of friends we lost along the way.
We will surely survive... if we...
STAY AT HOME! WASH OUR HANDS! LOVE DIFFERENTLY ■



What is Parkinson's disease?

Close to 10 million people have Parkinson's disease worldwide, more than 15,000 of whom are in Switzerland. We also expect to see an increase in the number of patients with Parkinson's in the years to come. So, how much do you know about this disease? And how to live with it? Dr Julien Bogousslavsky, Swiss Medical Association (FMH)-certified neurologist at Clinique Valmont in Glion sur Montreux and Chief Medical Officer at Neurocentre GSMN, answers our questions.



Dr Julien Bogousslavsky, FMH-certified neurologist

Dr Bogousslavsky, what is Parkinson's Disease?

Parkinson's is a chronic, progressive, neurodegenerative disease that causes gradual destruction of the neurons responsible for the production of dopamine in the brain. Dopamine is a neurotransmitter that facilitates the conduction of the "messages" sent between neurons. This lack of dopamine gradually limits more and more functions of the central nervous system, which leads to motor disorders. However, very quickly in the progression of this disease, neurons that are not involved in the production of dopamine in other areas of the brain are also affected and begin to die.

What are the symptoms of the disease?

We generally see three main symptoms. The most well known is the resting tremor,

which is, however, one of the less common symptoms. Only two out of three patients present this symptom. For that matter, it is important to note that not all types of tremor are necessarily caused by Parkinson's disease. The second, and more common, symptom is akinesia, which is a movement disorder, and slowness of movement. Finally, stiffness or rigidity in the limbs is also a sign of the disease. Although they are manageable at the beginning, these symptoms gradually become harder to deal with as the disease progresses.

What should someone do if they suspect they have Parkinson's?

It is vital to consult a neurologist to find out if it is truly Parkinson's. If the disease is confirmed, treatment consists of mitigating the motor disorders. Indeed, it is not yet possible to treat the cause of the disease nor to halt its gradual destruction of cells.

There are two main approaches to treating motor disorders. Medical treatment, such as taking dopamine, largely helps offset tremors, lack of movement and rigidity in the limbs. The second approach is physical treatment of the symptoms through various types of

therapy. Physiotherapy works on walking, balance and flexibility. Occupational therapy targets the upper limbs, such as the arms and the hands, and particularly aims to improve problems writing. An occupational therapist also finds practical solutions to problems with day-to-day tasks such as buttoning a shirt, washing yourself, climbing stairs, eating, etc. Finally, some people with Parkinson's have trouble with speech and swallowing and are treated by a speech and language therapist. All of these therapies help offset the problems in order to maintain or improve the patient's level of functional independence.

As this is a neurodegenerative disease, the symptoms can't be treated with just one type of therapy. How often would you recommend these therapies?

Really, these therapies ought to be carried out regularly. For patients in advanced stages of the disease, we recommend two stays of 2 to 3 weeks per year in a rehabilitation clinic.

Is it possible to prevent the disease?

Unfortunately, not. In fact, Parkinson's disease begins well before the first symptoms appear. It is even estimated that around ¾ of the disease

processes are already well underway before the onset of these symptoms.

Are there currently any new leads in treatment?

In recent years, many clinical studies have been carried out and they are promising. For example, researchers are interested in alpha-synuclein, a protein found in the neurons of the brain that contributes to their destruction by aggregating into small clusters. The new treatments are aimed at solving several problems: reducing the production of alpha-synuclein and facilitating its elimination from neurons.

Research into stem cells and genetics also seeks to find new treatment pathways for Parkinson's disease. The aim would be to replace the diseased cells in the brain with new ones or simply to directly eliminate the errors in the genes responsible for the disease's onset.

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Jacques Rannou: derrière l'uniforme



© Jacques Rannou

CHRISTIAN DAVID, UNOG

Jacques est agent de sécurité à l'ONUG. Ce sexagénaire souriant et enjoué a, comme beaucoup de ses collègues, vécu avant l'ONU. Avec une expérience de 7 ans dans l'armée comme parachutiste dans les forces spéciales et 29 années passées au sein de la police nationale en France, il a rejoint l'ONU à Genève en 2017.

Avant d'enfiler la chemise bleue à Genève, il a porté le bérêt de cette même couleur à Haïti pour la Minustah.

Derrière l'uniforme, Jacques se distingue de ses autres collègues. Il est capable d'approcher quand il le souhaite, une autre dimension: celle de l'art. Parlez-lui d'un sujet et il imagine aussitôt un dessin, une gravure, une caricature. Donnez-lui un meuble et il le restaurera, le reconditionnera et le décorera. Devant une façade, il imaginera et réalisera une fresque.

Soumettez-lui un texte et il vous proposera plusieurs illustrations sorties de son imagination fertile et qui, la plupart du temps ajouteront une dimension supplémentaire voire imprévue de ce qu'a voulu exprimer l'auteur de l'écrit. Vous avez déjà pu voir ses dessins qui illustrent plusieurs articles de votre magazine.

Comment cette faculté singulière est-elle apparue? Il répond que, depuis son enfance, sa vie a été ponctuée par les crayons, les dessins et les

images. Tout au long de sa vie professionnelle, et notamment en opération pour son métier, ses carnets de route servaient de supports à ses illustrations. Mettant à profit sa facilité à transformer et à embellir son environnement, il a été appelé, dans sa vie personnelle comme professionnelle, à pratiquer son art. Ainsi, la salle de la sécurité au Palais des Nations a été pavoisée par ses œuvres alliant la décoration, l'humour et l'expérience.

Alors si, au cours d'un contrôle de sécurité au portail, dans l'enceinte du Palais des Nations ou dans ses annexes, vous croisez un agent de sécurité, ne vous arrêtez pas à considérer uniquement l'uniforme bleu. Soyez bien conscients qu'au-delà de l'apparence, de ces femmes et de ces hommes, certains disposent de talents particuliers qui pourraient certainement vous étonner.

En ces temps particuliers, il est bon de s'apercevoir que chaque collègue possède, derrière son uniforme ou son apparence, des qualités ou des compétences qui ne demandent qu'à être découvertes, mise au service de l'organisation et qu'il appartient, notamment aux responsables, de les valoriser, voire de les détecter. ■



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Canton of Valais

A visit to the World Nature Forum in Naters

ALFRED DE ZAYAS, UN SOCIETY

OF WRITERS

In November 1972, following the Stockholm Conference on the Human Environment¹, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)² adopted the "Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage", which entered into force in 1975. As of 2020 there are 193 State party signatories.

To be accepted into the World Heritage List, a nominated site must satisfy specific criteria, and be of "outstanding universal value", i.e. important for the collective interest of humanity. Depending on the category, whether natural, cultural, historical or mixed, a site should satisfy one of these criteria:

- "represent a masterpiece of human creative genius and cultural significance"
- "exhibit an important interchange of human values, over a span of time, or within a cultural area of the world, on developments in architecture or technology, monumental arts, town-planning, or landscape design"
- "bear a unique or at least exceptional testimony to a

cultural tradition or to a civilization which is living or which has disappeared"

- "be an outstanding example of a type of building, architectural, or technological ensemble or landscape which illustrates a significant stage in human history"
- "be an outstanding example of a traditional human settlement, land-use, or sea-use which is representative of a culture, or human interaction with the environment especially when it has become vulnerable under the impact of irreversible change"
- "be directly or tangibly associated with events or living traditions, with ideas, or with beliefs, with artistic and literary works of outstanding universal significance"

UNESCO has identified 1,121 sites as world heritage sites³, twelve of them in Switzerland:

- Abbey of St Gall
- Benedictine Convent of St John at Müstair
- Old City of Berne
- Three Castles, Defensive Wall and Ramparts of the Market-Town of Bellinzona
- Swiss Alps Jungfrau-Aletsch
- Monte San Giorgio*

- Lavaux, Vineyard Terraces
- Rhaetian Railway in the Albula / Bernina Landscapes *
- Swiss Tectonic Arena Sardona
- La Chaux-de-Fonds / Le Locle, Watchmaking Town Planning
- Prehistoric Pile Dwellings around the Alps *
- The Architectural Work of Le Corbusier, an Outstanding Contribution to the Modern Movement

On 24 September 2016 a fascinating new museum opened in the town of Naters on the right bank of the Rhone River, right across from the city of Brig in the Swiss canton of Valais, famous for the Stockalper castle and the building of the Simplon tunnel to Italy in 1906.⁴

This Museum and Congress Center is devoted to one of Switzerland's twelve World heritage sites: the Swiss Alps Jungfrau-Aletsch Area, which covers 1,629 square kilometres of mountains and glaciers in two adjacent Swiss cantons, Bern and Valais, including 9 peaks over 4,000 meters in altitude, the Finsteraarhorn being the highest with its stately 4,273 meters. There are some 50 summits over 3,500 meters

and 350 square kilometres of glaciers. Aim of the Center is to impart knowledge concerning the natural heritage – and to clarify key issues such as the endangering the Alps, climate change and changes in farming and agriculture.

On an approximately 1,500-square-meter area, the Center offers a unique exhibition, revolving around the themes landscapes, water and climate. One highlight is the panoramic cinema with a large 100-square-meter screen, which is slightly curved, thus allowing visitors to almost plunge into the virtual – sometimes vertiginous – presentation, which is accompanied by impressive sound effects. Visitors learn about the protection of the Alpine environment, glaciers and lakes, and are treated to spectacular helicopter views, courtesy of Air Glacier and Air Zermatt, etc. Indeed, one of the best ways to discover this world heritage site is to drive ten kilometers West of Naters to the town of Raron (where Rainer Maria Rilke is buried) and hire an Air Zermatt helicopter to experience a 20 minute flight over the Aletsch



© A. de Zayas



© Flickr - Lawrie Gate

glacier, the Oberaletsch glacier and the Fiescher glacier. My wife and I did it and recommend it to everybody – just awesome!

The Center houses a research facility, equipped with the most modern digital equipment and tools to get people closer to nature and to the culture of the people living in this mountain habitat, games with balls that run through tubes, 3-D presentations and videos. The interactive exhibits and multimedia displays are quite accessible – more than that – they are fun! With the aid of “experience stations”, visitors also gain insight into the formation of the Alps through the collision of the tectonic plates, and an interactive sandbox invites them to a hands-on experience, as one creates mountains and rivers to shape our own personal landscape.

In an authentic railway carriage from 1912, the planned but never realized southern approach to the Jungfrauoch from the Aletsch region provides another virtual experience, accompanied with the sound of the train and the illusion of movement, with projections of the glaciers passing by the windows, as if the train carriage was really advancing toward the summit. There is, of course, a famous northern railroad connection to the Jungfrauoch from nearby Grindelwald⁵, built

in 1916 and modernized ever since. The Jungfrau Railroad is a 1,000 mm metre gauge rack railway running 9 kilometres from Kleine Scheidegg to the highest railway station in all of Europe at the Jungfraujoch, a saddle between the Bernese highlands and the Valais, connecting the two four-thousand peaks Jungfrau and Mönch. The breathtaking platform at 3,454 meters combines a majestic backdrop of ice, snow and rock.

Swiss and foreign tourists, school classes, families with young children and adolescents flock to the World Nature Forum to spend a couple of hours learning about this enthralling world heritage area, and enjoy virtual flights over the Konkordia hut⁷, the phenomenal Jungfraujoch, Mönch and Eiger mountains, the 23 km Aletsch glacier (the longest in Europe), the Lötschental with its old cottages, churches and the Tschäggtäta carnival traditions⁸, the descent of the cows to the valleys, the shepherd feast at Belalp, birds and bird-song, the amazing fauna and flora of the Alps, including ibex, red deer, chamois, marmots, black grouse, magnificent butterflies, the world's highest forest of stone pines⁹, 45-meter larches, and the Swiss Pro-Natura Center¹⁰ at the Riederfurka's Villa Cassel¹¹, where Winston Churchill once stayed.

An inter-active exhibit explains the regression of glaciers as a consequence of global warming, and honours the pioneering work of the Irish-British scientist and botanist John Tyndall¹², who lived in Belalp and who is remembered in a huge menhir stone overlooking the Aletsch glacier. We learn about irrigation in the area – water carried in the man-made “Suonen” or “Bises”. We see images of skating on frozen lakes and are reminded of great authors like Tolkien, who in his memoirs wrote about the inspiration he had drawn from hiking in the Bernese mountains from Lauterbrunnen to the Jungfrau, which he later reflected in the description of the Hobbit's habitat¹³: “I left the view of the Jungfrau with deep regret: eternal snow etched as it seemed against eternal sunshine.”

In the museum shop visitors can purchase many UNESCO publications and local products, including honey and, of course the region's red gold: saffron, saffron pasta and saffron vinegar – all produced at the nearby village of Mund¹⁴, which is the only Swiss location where the priceless spice is still grown according to centuries-old traditions. The crocus sativus is cultivated over approximately 18,000 square metres on a sunny plateau at 1,000 m altitude. During the harvest in October and November,

between 30 and 1,000 flowers are harvested every day.

UN staffers would enjoy a visit to the World Nature Forum in Naters, just over a two hours' automobile or train ride from Geneva. ■

- 1 <https://www.jungfrau-aletsch.ch/en/worldnatureforum-en/>
<https://www.myswitzerland.com/en-ch/experiences/world-nature-forum/>
- 1 <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/milestones/humanenvironment>
- 3 <https://whc.unesco.org/en/>
- 3 <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/>
- 4 UNESCO-Welterbe Swiss Alps Jungfrau-Aletsch
Bahnhofstrasse 9a, 3904 Naters Phone +41 (0)27 924 52 76
info@jungfrau-aletsch.ch
- 5 <https://www.jungfrau.ch/en-gb/>
- 6 <https://www.jungfrau.ch/en-gb/jungfraujoch-top-of-europe/construction-of-the-jungfrau-railway/>
- 7 <https://www.konkordiahuette.ch/>
- 8 <https://www.loetschental.ch/en/culture/tschaeggtaeta-carnival>
- 9 https://www.waldwissen.net/wald/baeume_waldpflanzen/nadel/wsl_arve/index_EN
- 10 <https://www.pronatura-aletsch.ch/de>
- 11 <https://www.myswitzerland.com/en-ch/experiences/nature-reserve-center-villa-cassel-aletsch-forest/>
- 12 <https://www.climate-lab-book.ac.uk/2018/john-tyndall-founder-of-climate-science/>
- 13 <https://stories.jungfrauregion.swiss/en/story-tolkien>
- 14 <https://www.valais.ch/en/activities/gastronomy-local-products/saffron>

WHO Art Gallery

Looking back and looking forward

The WHO Art Gallery had an unusual and interesting visitor at the beginning of this year. An unexpected email led to a detective hunt, a journey of discovery and the reclaiming of a little of the artistic heritage of the organization before it goes under wraps for a few years.

KEVIN CRAMPTON, WHO

In November 2019, the WHO Art Gallery had been open for a month, and the organizers (including yours truly) were busy putting together the “Meet the Artist” sessions (see the March edition of *newSpecial*) and thinking of ways to keep the little project relevant and engaging for anyone that cared to visit. The opening party had been thrown, the drinks drunk and the nibbles nibbled and we were looking for the next big challenge – creativity can’t stand still!

In fact, we didn’t have to look too hard; that challenge found us in the form of an unexpected email redirected to the art gallery team in the mistaken belief that we were somehow responsible for all the artwork at WHO, including the many world-class donations from

member states that the organization is lucky to own.

The author of the email was Mr. Kwame Amoah Labi, Associate Professor of African Art history at the University of Ghana and he was in the process of researching modernist influences on Ghanaian art. He wanted to track down a mural that a Ghanaian artist, Professor Ernest V. Asihene, had executed in the WHO building, Geneva in 1966 as a gift from his country to WHO. Did we know if the mural was still there and, if so, could we photograph it or arrange for him to visit?

The whole request was too unusual to resist – my day job involves rebooting servers, writing test documents for software and emptying the



Mr. Kwame's visit to WHO HQ

© Kevin Crampton

chocolate vending machine – and even though WHO boasts an excellent archive department and professionals who do take care of our member state donations, since this one had landed in my in-box, I wasn’t going to resist the opportunity to play art detective.

WHO’s main building (about to close for renovations as part of the campus revamp at the time of writing) had its inaugural ceremony on 7 May 1966. 30,000 cubic metres of reinforced and prestressed concrete and 2,000 tons of steel went into its creation to the designs of the Lausanne architect Jean Tschumi – his last building. Previously the WHO staff had been housed in the United Nations Palais and the new home with its bold, modernist style attracted many member

states to make cash gifts and donations of artwork or interior elements.

A list of these gifts from the 1966 WHO album celebrating the opening is truly wonderful to read. Medical equipment was given by the Federal Republic of Germany for the staff health service, paintings, carpets, statues and furniture and Japan created the oriental garden on the west side of the Executive Boardroom. I think my favourite gift in the list was from the Central African Republic who donated a television and record player for the staff rest room! There’s a wonderful photo of some of the gifts brought together including the television, a cutting-edge 1960s monolith.

Ghana’s contribution was to



The WHO art gallery opening



Gifts of the member states at WHO opening

send Professor Asihene to complete a vaccine-themed mural on the spot and tracking this down became an all-consuming hobby for about a week.

Professor Asihene (1915 – 2001) was a Ghanaian national who had studied at Goldsmith's, University of London and following his country's independence in 1957 was among a number of emerging artists that were forging a new visual identity for the young nation. Although classically trained in the Western tradition of art, Asihene's work dealt with everyday themes of Ghanaian life and remained rooted firmly in the African experience to create a new Ghanaian style emerging from the previous colonial influences on the country's artists. Along with his contemporary Kofi Antubam, he is referred to today as one of the "Old Masters of Ghana" – applying Western pictorial formats and techniques to portray traditional African life.

In 1960 Asihene was appointed Dean of the College of Art in Kumasi and was responsible for setting the syllabus that trained the next generation of artists, a legacy that can still be traced today in different Ghanaian schools. His influence

therefore on the early modernist movement in Africa was considerable and it was at the height of this career that he came to Geneva to execute his commission for the WHO (as well as a second commission in Brazzaville).

After a not insignificant amount of footwork the mural was located. There was a brief period when I feared that it might not have survived an earlier renovation of the building but thankfully it is still indeed in-situ, on the 6th floor of the main building near the Western end and, according to Mr. Labi, pretty much unchanged since it was painted.

It's a bold, swirling figure of eight composition covering the whole of one of the building's transverse walls. It depicts public health workers and a mother carrying her children framed by the intersecting lines, looking not unlike traditional African basketwork. I am ashamed to say that I must have passed it several times without really taking the time to stop and look properly.

In February of this year, Mr. Labi was able to visit Geneva headquarters to see the work for himself up close and

photograph it for his paper on early modern Ghanaian art. He had himself studied under Professor Asihene and it was fascinating hearing further stories and anecdotes about the man behind the work and the preparations he did for the WHO piece.

And that was the whole reason why we launched the WHO Art Gallery in the first place. In line with our core organizational value of "People Caring about People", we wanted to provide a forum through which to learn something new about the artists among us and discover some of their stories. I just never expected that reason to expand out to the other donated artworks that adorn the building but the whole experience now has me much more interested in the fascinating objects that, until now, I had passed in the corridors without a second look.

Taking a fresh look at the art around us is particularly timely now that the main building will soon close for its refurbishment and we'll lose access to murals such as Professor Asihene's for a few years.

Each piece has a story and each story is part of our collective history at WHO, a chance to

look back at who we have been and where we've come from as we simultaneously look forward to everything we still plan to do.

This month the art gallery was refreshed with new works, soon we'll have a new building. I like to think that Professor Asihene's career and artistic contribution (working as he was at such an exciting time of new possibilities for his country) all suggest the same sentiment – creativity can't stand still! ■



Les paysages de Namibie donnent parfois l'impression d'appartenir à une autre planète, comme à Deadvlei et sa forêt d'arbres pétrifiés



Au nord de la Namibie, la rivière Kunene qui s'étire sur 1050 km fait office de frontière avec l'Angola

NAMIBIE 1/4

Joyau d'Afrique australe

Forte d'un patrimoine naturel spectaculaire et d'une faune sauvage remarquable, la Namibie abrite également une impressionnante mosaïque culturelle pour le plus grand bonheur des amateurs assoiffés d'aventures exceptionnelles.

CLAUDE MAILLARD

Bordée géographiquement à l'ouest par l'océan Atlantique, au nord par l'Angola, au nord-est par la Zambie, à l'est par le Botswana et au sud par l'Afrique du Sud, la Namibie compte moins de 3 habitants au km². D'une superficie de 825 418 km² et peuplée de près de 2,5 millions d'habitants, sa densité est la plus faible d'Afrique. Au rang mondial cela la classe avant-dernière devant la Mongolie, mais très très loin du leader, Monaco, qui détient le triste record avec 18 866 habitants au km².

Deux grands déserts composent la Namibie avec tout d'abord celui du Namib qui occupe un dixième de la superficie du pays et qui s'étend sur plus de 1500 km le long de l'océan Atlantique. C'est ici que l'on trouve les dunes de sable les

plus hautes du monde. Soumis à des conditions arides ou semi-arides depuis au moins 55 millions d'années, le désert du Namib est considéré comme le plus vieux désert du monde.

Couvrant une large partie du Botswana, s'étendant vers l'Afrique du Sud, le désert du Kalahari occupe également l'est de la Namibie. Bien qu'étant l'une des régions les plus sèches au monde, ce désert, situé entre 600 et 1600 mètres d'altitude, abrite par endroits une végétation assez abondante. Troisième cours d'eau d'Afrique australe, l'Okavango (qui a la particularité de ne pas rejoindre l'océan à la suite d'un accident géologique) se perd dans ce désert sous la forme d'un gigantesque delta, apportant un peu de fraîcheur à la région.

Entre les deux on retrouve un plateau plus élevé avec notamment le massif du Brandberg dont le Königstein, qui culmine à 2573 m et qui est le plus haut sommet de la Namibie. C'est là que sont concentrées les villes dont la capitale Windhoek.

Indépendante depuis 1990

L'histoire précoloniale de la Namibie (autrefois connue sous le nom de Sud-Ouest africain) n'ayant jamais été écrite, on en connaît peu sur le passé de ce pays. Mais des traces d'art rupestre découvertes dans le désert du Namib attestent que des peuples l'habitaient il y a au moins 25 000 ans. Ces peintures sont attribuées aux Boskop, population dont les Bushmen (ou San) seraient les descendants directs. Ce peuple nomade de chasseurs-cueilleurs occupait jadis toute

l'Afrique australe. Aujourd'hui seuls quelque 2000 Bushmen conservent leur mode de vie ancestral au sein du désert du Kalahari.

Vers le IX^e siècle, venant de l'Afrique orientale, les Khoïkhoï débarquent avec leurs troupeaux. Ce peuple pastoral précédera les Bantous dont certains sont agriculteurs, comme les Ovambos, et d'autres pasteurs, tels les Héréros.

Au XVII^e siècle, les Héréros qui occupent le nord et l'ouest de la Namibie s'opposent violemment aux Khoïkhoï pour la maîtrise des parcours de transhumance. A la même époque, des marins hollandais venus d'Afrique du Sud remontent le long de la côte et après avoir traversé le fleuve Orange (qui fait frontière entre l'Afrique du Sud et la Namibie) ouvrent la route aux Blancs, chasseurs, marchands et missionnaires.

Dès 1878, l'Allemagne occupa la côte ouest du pays puis établira un protectorat appelé Sud-Ouest africain allemand. Des fermiers allemands



© Claude Maillard

Pouvant peser plus de 6 tonnes, l'éléphant d'Afrique dispute au lion le titre de «Roi des animaux»

viennent alors s'y installer, suivis de commerçants et d'autres colons. A l'intérieur des terres, les Héréros font de la résistance, bientôt rejoints par les Namas qui forment une population de pasteurs. S'ensuivra alors une sévère répression qui prendra l'aspect d'un génocide à partir de 1906 lorsque la découverte de diamants provoquera un afflux de colons qui chasseront les indigènes de leurs terres. La répression qui fera 60000 morts manque d'anéantir le peuple héréro.

Lors de la Première Guerre mondiale, l'Afrique du Sud envahit la Namibie, et l'Allemagne se voit contrainte de remettre la gestion du pays au Premier ministre sud-africain Louis Botha. L'Allemagne laissera une profonde empreinte de son passage et aujourd'hui on peut encore voir de nombreux vestiges de cette période.

En 1920, la Société des Nations déclara la Namibie sous mandat de Sa Majesté britannique exercé en son nom par le gouvernement de l'Union sud-africaine. L'expropriation des fermiers noirs continue au

profit des Blancs sud-africains et la ségrégation raciale est instaurée. En 1946, l'Organisation des Nations Unies qui vient de voir le jour rejette la requête de l'Afrique du Sud qui voulait annexer le territoire. Mais cette dernière refuse, bien résolue à faire de la Namibie l'une de ses provinces à part entière. Elle en profite même pour renforcer son pouvoir et réserve à la population blanche les meilleures terres namibiennes.

Peuple majoritaire du nord de la Namibie, les Ovambos réclament l'indépendance de leur pays en 1958. Deux années plus tard naîtra la SWAPO, Organisation du peuple du Sud-Ouest africain, qui se transformera rapidement en mouvement militaire contre la colonisation sud-africaine. Face à la ségrégation raciale exercée par l'Afrique du Sud, l'ONU met fin à son mandat sur le Sud-Ouest africain et en 1968 change le nom du territoire en celui de Namibie. Mais l'Afrique du Sud qui continue d'ignorer les décisions onusiennes sera à l'origine d'une guérilla menée par la SWAPO. Finalement, en 1988, l'Afrique du Sud accepte



© Claude Maillard

Certains stéréotypes sur l'Afrique sont mis à mal en Namibie avec ses villes, comme Swakopmund, à l'architecture germanique

enfin de signer les accords de Brazzaville sous l'égide de l'ONU, qui promulguent l'indépendance de la Namibie. Le pays devient un Etat indépendant le 21 mars 1990 et Samuel Nujoma, leader de la SWAPO, est le premier président élu démocratiquement. Depuis mars 2015, Hage Geingob est à la tête de la Namibie.

Windhoek, une capitale à taille humaine

Aéroport de Windhoek, la nuit est déjà tombée. A cette saison, le soleil se couche tôt en Namibie. Le vol depuis Genève a été long, l'escale à Johannesburg (Afrique du Sud) s'étant éternisée. Aussi c'est avec un réel plaisir que nous retrouvons Joseph¹ qui sera notre guide pour toute cette fabuleuse aventure qui nous attend à la découverte de l'un des plus beaux déserts de la planète, à la rencontre des différentes tribus qui le peuplent et qu'elles doivent partager avec une faune sauvage importante et diversifiée.

Capitale de la Namibie, Windhoek est la ville la plus importante du pays. Construite à 1650 m d'altitude, au milieu

des montagnes, la métropole s'étend à perte de vue bien que peuplée seulement de 300000 habitants. Des quartiers «blancs» et riches, succession de villas cossues, jusqu'aux quartiers «noirs», faits de petites maisons, Windhoek dégage une atmosphère presque champêtre, très boisée et fleurie. On n'a pas vraiment l'impression d'être en Afrique. Son architecture est plutôt d'origine coloniale allemande, ce qui surprend au milieu des paysages lunaires environnants. Centre névralgique de la Namibie, Windhoek, dont le nom signifie en afrikaans «le coin du vent», a été fondée en 1844 par Jonker Afrikaner. ■

Suite de l'aventure à vivre dans le prochain numéro du newSpecial.

1 www.sandwichadventuretours.com



Jean-Bernard Buisson

Sa caméra prolonge son âme

Avec son chapeau vissé sur la tête, il a un côté lutin des montagnes qui se serait perdu dans une société qui ne lui correspond pas vraiment. Jean-Bernard est cinéaste, photographe, éleveur d'oiseaux, collectionneur de papillons, naturaliste et pêcheur professionnel dans les eaux du Rhône et du lac du Bourget.



CHRISTIAN DAVID, UNOG

Au milieu du bourg jumeau de Seyssel, les eaux alluviales et chahutées d'un fleuve couleur d'or s'écoulent et se précipitent en remous incessants et tortueux. Jean-Bernard Buisson nous reçoit dans une petite maison table d'hôtes située en aplomb direct du Rhône, au nom évocateur de «la Pêcherie».

Cet amoureux inconditionnel de la nature possède un talent incroyable pour saisir et fixer sur pellicule la nature, l'animal, l'humain. Cette captation, au-delà de la technique et de la patience, nécessite l'œil particulier et la perception d'un artiste humaniste, profondément – presque viscéralement – attaché à son environnement. Pour comprendre cet homme, il ne suffit pas d'écouter sa parole volubile. À croire même que ce débit incessant compense

en quelque sorte les longs moments de solitude de ses longs périples, à la recherche de l'instant unique et fugace qu'il pourra enfin fixer sur sa photo.

Il faut prendre le temps, s'écarter comme il le fait, gravir les cimes, contempler son œuvre en silence, presque avec recueillement, pour percevoir la dimension onirique d'un univers qu'il a le talent de partager. Cet ami de l'eau et des oiseaux, comme il se qualifie lui-même, n'est pas non plus un doux rêveur. Il a compris, peut-être avant les autres, la nécessité pour chaque être humain d'aimer et de poser son regard, en vivant des instants qui se transforment en parcelles d'éternité. Ne boudons pas ce rare privilège en prenant le temps de la contemplation. Et si nous ne pouvons saisir qu'une parcelle

de ce que cet artiste nous présente, nous en sortirons de toute façon meilleurs, car disposés à comprendre à quel point la nature, la biodiversité et notre environnement sont précieux et rares.

C'est également pour cette raison que ses clichés de montagnards dégagent une telle authenticité car il a découvert, cachée sur les sommets et au fond des vallées, une espèce d'humains en voie de disparition. Quel contraste avec celle qui s'est noyée dans un maëlström citadin où les gens se croisent sans se voir, dialoguent sans se parler, s'ébattent dans tous les sens tels des papillons de nuit affolés par les lumières artificielles!

La Terre est vivante, à sa manière, elle nous prend à partie, de façon toujours plus

spectaculaire, car nous ne l'avons pas respectée. Loin des experts et de leurs analyses, les artistes et les personnes connectées à la planète seraient-ils les meilleurs des guides, pour nous accompagner dans une prise de conscience salvatrice?

En attendant de présenter, nous l'espérons, une exposition de ses plus belles photos de la faune alpine, Soyez gourmands, savourez-en quelques-unes. ■

Le pêcheur vous invite à déguster à sa table d'hôtes les produits de sa pêche, agrémentés des légumes bio de son potager.

<http://jean-bernard-buisson.fr/>

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Adressez vos commentaires à:

Garry Aslanyan – newSpecial
OMS, 20 av. Appia, CH-1202 Genève, Suisse
Par courrier électronique: info@newspecial.org

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We will be glad to hear from you. The most interesting, relevant, or even ingenious responses will be published in the magazine. Should you wish to submit an article or a subject, please do not hesitate to contact us at any time.

Send your thoughts to:

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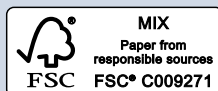
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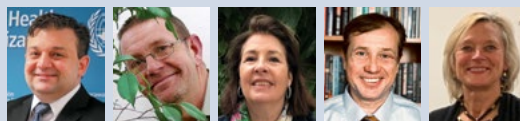
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