



Press Contact:

James B. Quilligan: 215-592-1016

INTERNATIONAL GROUP LAUNCHES PLAN FOR GLOBAL COMMONS

March 5, 2008, Philadelphia – An unprecedented move to gather worldwide commentary on a new “global commons” was announced today in Berlin by an international coalition including the Philadelphia nonprofit organization, Centre for Global Negotiations.

The proposal calls for wide-ranging discussions on a common action plan, authored by the world’s people, to address transnational problems and create checks and balances on the world’s governmental and corporate sectors.

The strategy for this integrated global dialogue was outlined by HRH Prince El Hassan bin Talal of Jordan, chairman of a group of international leaders who will shepherd the consultation process. Joining him at the press conference were (alphabetically listed): Scilla Elworthy of the United Kingdom, Frithjof Finkbeiner of Germany, Olivier Giscard d’Estaing of France and James B. Quilligan of the United States.

“If we do not have this conversation and realize a new framework for the global commons during the next several years, the bilateral economic and religious tensions we have been experiencing will almost certainly result in world conflict,” said Prince Hassan.

“It is time to listen, engage in dialogue and ask the people of the world to decide on a responsible course of action,” he said.

An international partnership -- called the Coalition for the Global Commons – will use advanced internet software on an interactive web site, <http://www.global-commons.org/>, as well as personal discussions, international meetings and electronic surveys. The initial partners include such organizations as the Centre for Global Negotiations, CIVICUS, Ethical Markets Media, LLC, and Global Marshall Plan Initiative.

The Coalition aims at tapping global opinion and expertise on problems that transcend national borders which neither governments nor businesses are equipped to address. Among those issues are the global environment, poverty and an emergency relief program for the world’s poorest nations. Consultations will also consider reform of the global economy, the creation of fees on international transactions to fund sustainable development, and new multilateral institutions for global governance.

The dialogue is expected to last two years, with efforts to draw in stakeholders from around the world, such as civil society organizations, scientific and religious communities, members of business and government, and the media. Thousands of partners from charitable, environmental, educational, activist, feminist and other arenas are expected to add their voices to a plan that will continually evolve throughout the two-year consultation period.

Results of the consultation will be ratified and made public at a conference of international representatives in early 2010.

“Some of these matters have been explored by international groups before, but never on this scale,” Prince Hassan noted. “For the first time, international representatives from every sector -- government, business and civil society -- are being invited to participate. All cross-border issues are on the table for discussion.”

He added that the talks could become a global referendum -- a “people’s voice”--on the world’s interdependent issues.

He said that new technology, combined with expanding global networks and rising public concern, has made possible this unique attempt to bring forth worldwide consensus on urgent global issues. The web site will use Confluence, an advanced form of wiki software, for discussion forums and policy recommendations.

Prince Hassan’s group, called the Eminent Council, will serve as an advisory body for the international consultation process, which will be managed by a secretariat. Input from individuals and groups of all kinds will be gathered on the web site. Meanwhile, changes will be made to the evolving plan by editors and policy decision-makers working with the Secretariat.

The discussions will be organized into the following themes:

- (1) Living the Principles of Global Spirituality, Ethics and Values
- (2) Achieving the Millennium Development Goals
- (3) Protecting our Common Global Resources
- (4) Restructuring Global Economic Rules & Institutions
- (5) Establishing New Forms of Governance
- (6) Generating Multilateral Financing through the Implementation of International Standards
- (7) Realizing Human and Social Potentials

The Centre for Global Negotiations was created in 2001 for the purpose of informing and educating the public, media, business, and governments about the interdependence of global development issues .The CGN has created a comprehensive update of the 1980 Brandt Commission Report, worked closely with the Commission for Africa to develop an agenda for the 2005 G8 Summit, and is now an active partner in the Coalition for the Global Commons.

###

Notes:

James B. Quilligan is the managing director of the Centre for Global Negotiations