

'People often talk about the necessity for «world governance»'

Micheline Calmy-Rey  
President of the Swiss Confederation

The four booklets published in this collection by the *Fondation pour Genève* Observatory describe the changes that are taking place in world governance.

**N°1 «Soft governance».** The starting point for understanding the new practices. What are they?

**N°2 «Multi-stakeholders».** New actors enter the international arena and change the balance of power. Who are they?

**N°3 «Process & methods».** New governance leads to new negotiation processes but also to experimenting with new working methods. How?

**N°4 «Agenda».** What are the relevant topics for «soft governance» today? Why?

[www.fondationpourgeneve.ch](http://www.fondationpourgeneve.ch)



Soft governance

Booklet n°1 - Observatory - Fondation pour Genève - Soft governance



Fondation pour Genève

Xavier Comtesse

« S O F T »

G O V E R N A N C E

Preface

Interview

Contributions

Micheline Calmy-Rey

Joseph Nye

Daniel Vasella

Jakob Kellenberger

Luzius Wasescha

Roger de Weck

Martine Brunschwig Graf

Booklet n°1





# **Booklet N°1**

# **Soft Governance**



**Translated by Peter March**



# Preface ||

The world where we now live differs from the one we knew even only 15 years ago. Major upheavals have occurred, yet it is difficult to think about them in a coherent, rational manner. History, which seemed to be marching on with at least some degree of predictability, has become so complex that the path it is now taking is highly unpredictable. In a world with an increasing number of actors, torn between contradictory trends and tendencies, between moves towards regional integration through to “back to roots” assertions of identity, the classical process of war and peace is changing, and new concerns are surfacing. Issues or problems such as ethics, security, environment, sustainable development and the struggle against poverty, have become global. Such questions occupy more and more the political and social authorities in what we call the «global village».

World politics nowadays no longer consists of the sum of relations between countries. Nor, moreover, are diplomats or high-level civil servants the only ones handling politics. Given the rapid development of the means for communication and for distributing information, politics are now within the terms of reference of a profusion of players (NGOs, civil society, large companies, foundations, opinion leaders and even activists such as those involved in the attacks of September 11, 2001). Political borders have become porous, making traditional national regulations difficult to apply, and in one stroke changing world politics into a much more complex trans-national process.

People often talk about the necessity for «world governance». It is a rather vague idea, but it is gaining ground. It refers to the idea, one which I think is important, that the public interest is not, and cannot be limited to, a narrow area. On the contrary, it grows, it moves around and is handled at different levels at various moments in time. Whatever the level, whether it is a company, the political authorities or the UN, governance is today management by networks, this being the result of the multiplicity of international players, of the emergence of specific and global problems and of the increasing interdependence of countries. World governance should not however be seen as a new kind of institution, a kind of UN repeat performance, but rather as a

gathering of political, economic, social and cultural instances, acting in consort via «soft governance», and truly capable of making globalisation a process serving people rather than one under which they suffer.

The international image of Switzerland is that of a neutral and dedicated country, an image that has been built up over time and has given the country its credibility: there is no colonial past, nor are there hidden agendas. Switzerland is the very prototype of soft governance, a country which enjoys esteem and prestige due to its long experience of democracy, of pluralism and to its humanitarian tradition. A country with no ulterior motives, its contribution and commitment to respect for international law are recognised everywhere. A voice of pluralism, tolerance and integration, and one respected whether in the context of upholding values or of recognising different and sometimes radically opposed viewpoints, such as those which destabilise the international arena in what is commonly known as the «clash of civilisations».

In this context Geneva, both a Swiss and an international city, a centre of intense diplomatic activity and of networks due to the multiplicity of international organisations and NGOs pursuing activities of vital importance to mankind, possesses all the necessary qualities to be this crossroads of reflection about the world and by the world, in the service of diplomacy by consensus.

**Micheline Calmy-Rey**

President of the Swiss Confederation  
Federal Councillor, Department of Foreign Affairs





# Foreword

Not a day goes by without the attention of the media and of people around the world being drawn to the problems of global warming, pandemic disease, sustainable development, resolving conflicts and keeping the peace, humanitarian crises, the struggle against poverty and the globalisation of commerce. Are we even aware that these issues are debated in Geneva, and totally new forms of governance are invented here?

As the President of the Swiss Confederation points out in her preface, the world of international relations has changed significantly over the last 15 years. As the cold war came to an end and problems were of an increasingly global nature, new actors appeared alongside government representatives. A multitude of specialised institutions, of multinational companies as well as various interest groups proliferated in the region, interacting as networks and introducing new practices.

How can Switzerland, and particularly Geneva, take a leading role on the world stage, when the other players are constantly changing their positions?

It is with regard to this issue, one of the greatest importance for our region, that the *Fondation pour Genève* aims to contribute to current thinking, and notably to that of the Federal and Geneva authorities. By publishing a collection of four booklets, the Observatory of the *Fondation pour Genève* seeks to contribute to a better understanding of the emerging new approach to managing world affairs and, thanks to the work entrusted to Mr Xavier Comtesse, to take part in the debate on how the international development of Geneva should move forward in the light of this change.

Joseph Nye has coined the phrase «soft power» to describe these new realities. What are they? Who are the new players? How do their networks function and what are their objectives? Should host nations now play a different role, and if so, what?

This first booklet introduces «soft governance» as the starting point for understanding the changes taking place. According to

Messrs Daniel Vasella, Jakob Kellenberger, Luzius Wasescha, Roger de Weck and Ms Martine Brunschwig Graf, Geneva with its strong international profile must face up to the challenge represented by this new form of world governance. Espousing the values underlying consensus-based rather than coercive diplomacy, Geneva is the natural setting for the development and practice of this «soft governance».

Much hope is placed in this new form of governance, but it is not without risk. The only way forward is to properly understand the issues, and then to combine efforts in a pragmatic approach. The future role and image of Geneva in the concert of nations depend on it.

By publishing this booklet widely in three languages, the *Fondation pour Genève* invites you to participate in this process of reflection on a future which has yet to be built.

We wish you every enjoyment in reading this booklet.

**Guillaume Pictet**  
President

**Tatjana Darany**  
Director



# The emergence of a new form of governance



(Abstract)

The management of world affairs has intensified and at the same time become more complex.

Intensified, because with the advent of globalisation, almost everything is now the concern of everybody. Just think for a moment about the questions of climate, commerce, humanitarian problems, security, health, sport, sustainable development or even religions.

More complex, because the number of players involved in discussions or negotiations has grown exponentially over recent decades. NGOs, the media, think tanks, lobbyists, companies, the unions and more generally civil society now all challenge the monopoly of national governments in the management of world affairs. From then on, we find ourselves confronted with a paradox

without precedent: a weakening role for nation-states and a significant growth in the influence of civil society on international relations. Something we have never seen before! And yet as it develops, this new approach of «soft governance» offers a partial solution to the paradox, in that it gives everyone the opportunity to sit down at the same table and negotiate.

By encouraging processes that deliberately seek consensus, «soft governance» is progressively establishing itself as a real alternative to the coercive methods too often used in the past.

Understanding these new practices is thus vital to those, whether active participants or not, who take an interest in possible future scenarios for our world.



Among the battery of methods, procedures and agreements which dictate international relations, an expression suggesting a somewhat new approach to managing international affairs has emerged in recent years, namely the term «soft governance». This expression clearly has its roots in the earlier concept of «soft power», introduced for the first time in 1990 by Professor Joseph Nye in his book «Bound to Lead: the Changing Nature of American Power», and which he further developed in 2004 in his other work «Soft Power: the Means to Success in World Politics». At first sight it would therefore seem that «soft governance» uses «soft power» as the principle instrument for managing international affairs.

The reflections on «soft governance» throughout this book will however seek to expand the term used by Joseph Nye to cover a wider group of processes for managing international affairs, including in particular the array of techniques and the different frames of reference adopted by the various players. Our approach goes further and takes a broader view to include new, emerging methods. The experiments in using this new form of governance will be our guide, the experiences and outcomes our frame of reference. This shift in terminology, which comes about with the replacement of the word «power» by «governance», allows us to avoid taking too close a look at the real, «hard power» games, focusing instead on the rules of play as they develop. While still bearing in mind the importance of the traditional balance of power in world politics, we will aim to place greater emphasis on the new, emerging relationships.

Nonetheless, in order to be quite clear we will take a quick look at the definition of «soft power». Then we will suggest a definition for «soft governance», which will allow us to look at new practices in the context of international relations today.

## «Soft power»: a short definition

«Soft power» is a term used in international relations theory to describe the capacity of an organisation, be it a political entity such as a country or a non-governmental organisation, to indirectly influence the behaviour of one or several other political organisations. Contrary to the coercive methods used in the exercise of «hard power», for example having recourse to military force or economic blockades, «soft power» adopts a more subtle approach based on culture, values, best practices, on sincerity as well as on the ability to convince or to find consensus. It is a force of persuasion rather than coercion.

«If power is defined as the ability to influence others to do what you want them to do, then there are only three options: threaten them with the stick, buy them with the carrot, or persuade them to cooperate with you».

This is the simple description offered by Joseph Nye for his vision of «soft power».

But taking it further, the concept goes well beyond merely influencing people. In international relations if one or more partners are convinced that their point of view is correct, they can both cooperate on the basis of negotiated agreements, and even participate in the process of finding consensus. In such situations the concept of «soft power» is really working. This step forward towards the acceptance or the perceived attractiveness of a proposition brings with it the idea of appropriating

that proposition as one's own, a notion which is essential to «soft power» as it somehow obliges the partners to take action. The real weakness of «soft power» is that it is non-binding and therefore often leads to inaction.

To avoid this situation and assuming a well-run action programme (we will cover it via the examples later on in the paper), it is quite clear that «soft power» has more to offer in obtaining results of the kind that «hard power» would have had difficulty to achieve. Agreements reached under constraint often result in adversaries not really respecting them. This is where the real strength of «soft power» is to be found, with radically new initiatives and original ways of finding solutions based on consensus, and a very different approach to that of «hard power».

This kind of logic allows the various interest groups, civil society and governments to take the credit for the results of this consensus, and thus to implement the outcomes more easily.

However while not wishing to denigrate the role that «hard power» can play, it is a fact that once a large number of players become involved, the «hard power» approach becomes almost impossible to implement. Consider global management of the environment issue or that of nuclear weapons; it is improbable that any army or economic blockade could force all those involved to work together. Here is the context in which it is legitimate to associate the emergence of the «soft power» concept with the growing importance of global issues and of concerns regarding world governance.

## «Soft governance»: a possible definition

«Soft governance» is a non-binding form of governance<sup>1</sup> which encourages joint practices and the implementation of decisions in the field of international relations. To this end it applies consensus-based research methods to specific problems. The range of techniques used is wide. Implementation is on a voluntary basis. The processes involved are therefore often more extensive than the procedure for taking decisions itself.

This group of practices in the field of international relations is not as recent as one might imagine; more important is the fact that it is nowadays widely implemented. There is no lack of examples: Rio (1991), Kyoto (1997) on climate change; the fight against AIDS, malaria or tuberculosis in the medical field; the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS, Geneva in 2003 and in Tunis in 2005) in the communications field; the Millennium project in 2000 with its proposals to limit the misery and inequalities of people around the world.

Thus «soft governance» is opposite to the concept of «hard governance», as exemplified by the invasion of Iraq, the economic blockade on North Korea or the coercive action undertaken against the proliferation of nuclear weapons.

Even if references in scientific literature or administrative

*Civil society, interest groups and governments place themselves under the obligation to take action so they may take credit for the results obtained by the consensus-based process.*

documents to these new practices remain infrequent, it is clear that among those involved in intellectual diplomacy the term is frequently used in spoken language. From Washington to Brussels, in Geneva, New York or Vienna, senior civil servants and above all the intellectuals from universities and think tanks have adopted this new term and the practices it denotes. Its widening usage will no doubt lead to a tighter definition, whose characteristics we will try to clarify. «Soft governance» involves several aspects:

- A process seeking convergent solutions **by consensus**
- **Non-binding** recommendations
- A **large number of participants** (*multi-stakeholders*)
- An action targeted on **specific topics** of world governance
- A set of information, benchmarks, peer reviews, aimed at **best practices**

These five criteria (consensus, non-binding, multi-stakeholder, specific topic, best practices) are the common denominators in the *de facto* definition of «soft governance».

---

<sup>1</sup> The term «governance» refers to the development of new styles of governing, where the frontiers between public and private sectors become less distinct... The essence of «governance» is placing greater importance on mechanisms and processes than on the results themselves...  
G. Stocker, 1998; Peters et Pierre, 1998

## The «Millennium» project

Launched in 2002 by the United Nations Secretary General, Kofi Annan, the project aims to reverse the negative trends of poverty, hunger and pandemic diseases in the world. By setting eight key objectives with accompanying action plans, the project has the objective of eliminating poverty by 2015. Initiated in 2005, under the leadership of Professor Jeffrey Sachs and with the help of thousands of experts from civil society, governments and companies, these action plans include measurable objectives and solid deliverables. Without formal constraints placed on governments, but with a «soft power» kind of methodology and governance, the project has achieved remarkable progress in many areas over the last five years, though so far without being in a position to meet the final goal set for 2015. However, the most interesting aspect of the «Millennium» project resides in its huge and so far unparalleled effort to eradicate the poverty spiral. It represents the principle global «soft governance» project of today. By incorporating the environment, health, education, hunger, poverty and economic development, the project covers several other major projects such as the «Global Fund», Kyoto or the «Global Compact». ([www.unmillenniumproject.org](http://www.unmillenniumproject.org))

## The Global Fund

The «Global Fund» takes an active part in the fight against AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria; it is a private public partnership set up in Geneva in 2002.

The mission of this organisation is to significantly increase financial resources available throughout the world to combat these three diseases. So it was that from its first year onwards, «Global Fund» financing of the fight against malaria doubled. Thanks to the fabulous donations from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, the Global Fund has mainly become a tool for providing financial support in the field to national and regional health services. Most of their support goes to very underprivileged areas of the world such as parts of Africa. By adopting modern techniques for coordinating efforts and reporting, the Fund is able to guarantee donors that their donations will be put to optimal use. The systematic, decentralised approach, which is always looking to achieve still greater efficiency, makes a new kind of contribution to NGOs in the form of “best practices”. Thanks to its exceptional ability to raise funds and to its support for national programmes, the organisation is now showing how it can make a difference. Whether for fundraising or initiating action in the field, the private public partnership is demonstrating its ingenuity for managing multi-stakeholder relationships. Here we have a new example of the «soft governance» of financial support provided to local health services. ([www.theglobalfund.org](http://www.theglobalfund.org))

## Some practical examples of «soft governance»



As we have just seen, «soft governance» calls for certain determining factors to be in place before one can really talk about a new form of governance. Let us observe this phenomenon in some recent initiatives:

- It was only in the last ten years that the European Union saw the need to introduce new methods of governance. The first experiment of its kind began towards the end of the 90s in the area of employment policy under the label “open coordination”. Governments, social partners, companies and civil society began a long process of non-binding discussions, in order to iron out differences in employment terms and conditions across Europe. This method (“soft policy”), light-years from typical practices of «community benefits» which somehow forced compliance (“hard policy”), quickly showed its worth. The experiment continues today, to the satisfaction of all.

- The so-called Bologna Process was a second fruitful example, this time in the context of European education and the implementation of «soft governance». The European network of education professionals and specialists played a key role not only in the development of educational policy, but also – or maybe above all – in its implementation. The example of the application of the Bologna principles, i.e. the creation of a common university programme with two certifying degrees “bachelor” and “master”, was the brainchild of rectors, faculties and professors rather than that of governments. It was a revolution in the domain, and it worked.



- In the spring of 2000, while preparing the Lisbon Agenda for the creation of the European knowledge-based economy, the European Union put the concept of "open coordination" into general use and defined the methodology. The key objective of this effort is to guarantee its effectiveness through non-binding governance, by demanding accompanying measures and tools such as general objectives expressed as guidelines, an unbiased information system with indicators, benchmarking, monitoring tools and a mutual learning process with regard to best practices.

Thanks to this new approach it may be said today that we are witnessing the emergence of a political concept similar to that of the «invisible hand» so close to the hearts of economists, formulated by Adam Smith in 1776 in his book on the wealth of nations. In world governance, recent examples point to a paradigm shift as regards governance methodology and process, and one that is fully in line with what we understand by «soft governance».

In order to better understand the relatively recent importance of the phenomenon we offer five examples, which we have chosen among hundreds:

1. In the area of global forestry management, the «Forest Stewardship Council» (FSC) was founded in 1993 after Rio. It is an international non profit-making organisation which brings together the key players in timber production and forestry management. The members of this organisation come from all over the world, and represent environmentalists, civil society, social partners, professional associations, organisations representing the natives living in the forests, the producers and other professionals as well as representatives of official governmental authorities. Their mission is sustainable forestry management of a non-binding nature, which takes into account the multi-stakeholder interests and focuses its actions in line with best practices regarding management, setting standards and norms and as regards information and education. In this way, via the principle of subsidiarity the FSC has broadly assumed a role mainly attributed to governments. The ball is now in its court.

2. The «Marine Stewardship Council» (MSC) for the preservation of marine life, founded in 1997 on the initiative of Unilever and the WWF, is a non-governmental organisation with the objective of ensuring the best possible environmental conditions for saving marine life. Although the initiative emanates from a company, council members represent a broad spectrum of players from all over the world, including scientists, NGOs, economic interests, fishermen, environmental organisations and representatives of local public communities and governmental institutions. The way the structure works is a direct forerunner to the new approaches explored by «soft governance».

3. In the area of fair trading, the «Ethical Trading Initiative» (ETI) was set up in 1998 and brings together companies, unions and NGOs in a tripartite association. They aim at improving working conditions via ethical behaviour

on the part of companies throughout the world. With this in mind they have developed a basic code of best practices. Entirely independent of governments, the organisation operates on a voluntary basis and using a «soft» approach seeks to have companies run in an ethical manner. This form of governance, operating outside the area of influence of the government, is clearly new and something that «soft governance» will in future experiment in other areas.

4. In the field of fair trade, le «Fair Trade Labelling Organisations International» establishes norms for fair trading which leave a chance to the small producers in developing countries. More than 800'000 have turned to them for «protection», and this organisation can no longer be ignored even by large companies. From a «soft governance» point of view, the interest is in the large number of players and the ability of the organisation to maintain a «soft» management style even when confronted with

*A new form of governance has taken its place in different parts of the world, in turn leading to the establishment of new working practices*

initiatives which are decentralised (national), numerous and sometimes contradictory.

5. In agriculture, the «Sustainable Agriculture Network» (SAN) set up in 1991 is a coalition of several independent organisations for agricultural conservation in tropical parts of the world. The goal of the coalition is to preserve biodiversity, while at the same time encouraging increased agricultural production and human development in these regions. As regards governance, the organisation sets standards and certification norms via an extensive, joint process involving criteria, principles and indicators. Although non-binding, the process nonetheless results in a real transformation of practices.

Even this cursory study of these examples shows how, since the early 90s, a new form of governance has taken its place in different parts of the world, in turn leading to the establishment of new working practices. These few examples could be multiplied by a hundred or even a thousand; an exhaustive listing is not what matters, but rather understanding and defining more clearly the paradigm shift in international relations.

## About CONGO

The Conference of Non-governmental Organisations at the United Nations (CONGO) is an independent, international, non profit-making organisation, established in New York and Geneva, with the mission of facilitating the participation of NGOs in debates, in the search for consensus and as regards decision-taking at the United Nations. Since it was founded in 1948, the organisation has been very active in human rights, the role of women, peace and disarmament, social justice, governance, the environment and in sustainable development. It now includes more than 2'000 NGOs. In addition the CONGO has been particularly active in improving the status of NGOs in the UN processes of reflection and decision-making. By obtaining formal consultative status for its members in 1996, this organisation has worked towards the improvement of governance with civil society. There can be no doubt this contribution was one of the key elements in what is now known as «soft governance». ([www.toile.org/psi](http://www.toile.org/psi))

## **World Business Council For Sustainable Development (WBCSD)**

At the instigation of the Swiss industrialist Stephan Schmidheiny and in preparation for the 1992 Earth Summit in Rio, a group of private sector personalities has been meeting in Norway since 1991. Together, they developed the basis for the idea of sustainable development. Starting from the principle that sustainable development is good for «business» and that a profitable business also has advantages for the environment, in 1991 they decided to set up the WBCSD.

Today, the WBCSD is an institution established in Geneva, and groups more than 180 international companies from 35 countries. Over time its intellectual contribution and the input from the companies have become indispensable in the complex process of multi-stakeholder management of sustainable development.

The WBCSD is both a source of powerful propositions and a platform for implementation.

Little known by the public at large, this think tank nonetheless plays a key role in the development of new policy for both entrepreneurs and governments. ([www.wbcso.org](http://www.wbcso.org))

## The forces driving change

One way or the other, three key factors have resulted in a perceptible change in the management of international problems: globalisation, new IT and communication technology, and the new ways in which responsibility is exerted, evaluations and comparisons are carried out. Taken together, these three elements allow each one of us to better know, compare and evaluate, and thus develop objective analyses while at the same time arguing relevant points of view. A detailed examination of these three vectors will allow us to start considering the likely future evolution of «soft governance».

### Globalisation

We do not propose to provide a full description of the phenomenon of globalisation; our intention is more to show how it influences the management of international affairs. On first sight it seems obvious – globalisation is the same as global management. While it may well be relatively simple for a company to go global, it is much more complicated, if not impossible, for a nation-state. This is so because, by definition, the sovereignty of a state extends over its territory, but no further. For this reason global warming cannot be dealt with by any one country, no matter how large it is. Here we have a typical example of globalisation of international affairs with regard to an issue which countries, even when working together, cannot resolve without the support of companies and civil society. From then on, the phenomenon of globalisation becomes a problem of planetary proportions

involving all the different players concerned. It is in this way that globalisation has become one of the key elements driving the emergence of «soft governance».

## The impact of new technology

The new IT and telecommunications technologies, in particular the internet, the mobile phone and text messaging have changed the way in which affairs are conducted in the world. On the one hand we have free access any time and anywhere, and on the other hand information is available to everyone at practically zero cost. These new technologies have encouraged the emergence of a kind of «direct democracy» on a global level. In this way, events such as the Forum of Davos, the PACE movement, G8 meetings or even the question of climate change have become practically transparent and accessible to all. People no longer hesitate

*Nowadays the impact of new information technology has changed the way in which international affairs are managed, even the way agendas are set*

to take part in the debate via “blogs”, via on-line newspapers or text messaging. For this, the public has an impressive arsenal of tools for communication and evaluation like never before. Nowadays the impact of new information technology has changed the way in which international affairs are managed, even the way agendas are set.

Civil society pressure groups, intellectuals, think tanks and companies are now in a position to compete in the field of international governance, which was formerly the prerogative of nation-states.

## The new responsibilities

Governments, political parties, the unions, media and companies have become the disciples of social, environmental and economic responsibility. By way of example, concepts such as sustainable development, ethics, fair trade or corporate social responsibility

all bear witness to this. The phenomenon has now reached a stage where we now see several hundred forms of evaluation, standards or norms around the world. Not a day goes by without the press publishing a new benchmark. This change reflects a strong desire to do things well, to do them better. With the massive introduction of such benchmarks and scores, the world has embarked on a chaotic process of permanent auto-evaluation. There is no doubt that this is the way it is going, in line with the improvements brought by «soft governance». This is why progress reports are vital for this new form of governance, something quite different from the traditional criteria on which diplomacy formerly depended. The «global compact» testifies to this (see box overleaf).

### The future of «soft governance»

Given the combined effect of the three factors described above, and the growing complexity of the problems to be solved, the future of «soft governance» would appear to be assured. How else could we imagine international relations, without non-binding but nonetheless effective joint decision-taking processes?

The multiplication of global problems under study, the proliferation of the parties concerned, the increase in the number of decision centres all require a total review of the previous procedures, which objectively can only be managed by using the «soft governance» approach. A new era is opening up, one characterised by informal networks, whose influence and ability to take the initiative more often depend on the skills and talents of personalities rather than of governments. World affairs are now run differently.

Throughout the capitals across the world, the intellectual diplomacy of various interest groups is taking the ascendancy. The NGOs, large corporations, universities, think tanks, unions and civil society as a whole work together for world affairs. This active participation in fact represents an opportunity for small entities that are often quick on their feet, experts in their field and know how to convince people.



In this new environment, Geneva seems to have good cards to play, as we will see in the second part of this booklet. For now, let us listen to those who are the active players in this new governance.

## The Global Compact

The Global Compact initiative was launched by Kofi Annan and Klaus Schwab at the 1999 World Economic Forum (WEF) in Davos.

The concept consists of bringing companies from around the world together with UN agencies, labour and civil society to support ten universal principles.

Through the non-coercive power of collective action, the «Global Compact» seeks to promote responsible corporate citizenship, so that business can contribute to finding solutions to the challenges of globalisation. Today, thousands of companies from all regions of the world, international labour and civil society organisations engage in the Global Compact by producing every year an individual and voluntary progress report.

The «Global Compact» is not a regulatory instrument – in no way does it sanction or dictate ethical behaviour – it is much more an instrument for highlighting concrete results of responsible corporate behaviour. Thanks to its huge network and the resulting collective apprenticeship, it represents a true participation in «soft governance» on the part of the business world. ([www.unglobalcompact.org](http://www.unglobalcompact.org))

## **CERN invents the WEB**

Everything began at CERN, the European centre for nuclear research. The idea was initially to associate hypertext with the internet and personal computers. Hypertext enables users to navigate easily from one file to another via links. As the network connecting computers to each other was already there, all the internet needed was a user interface – the web – to become a coherent system for the worldwide exchange of information and knowledge. Tim Berners-Lee and Robert Calliau produced this incredible communication system. A navigator was tested for the first time in the spring of 1993 and since then the invention has been a runaway planetary success. The Geneva area has become a «must» for the internet world. This technical contribution demonstrates that potential is there to be exploited with the combined intelligence of people concentrated in a very small area. ([www.cern.ch](http://www.cern.ch))



**The perspective of those  
driving the changes** ||

(Abstract)

By listening to the real actors driving «soft governance», one can better understand both the methods they adopt and the issues in question. While not wishing to overlook the difficulties associated with these complex practices as they emerge, the efforts put behind them merit enthusiastic support, as all the actors involved in this new form of governance seem to be playing their parts with energy and goodwill. By opting for best practices rather than theoretical perfection, for progress rather than the *statu quo*, by exchanging experiences rather than serving up ideology, actors work together in this complex world of «soft governance» thanks to extensive informal networks of people who are looking for new kinds of consensus. This is what international relations is all about

today. Already some years ago, Joseph Nye, Professor at the Kennedy School, Harvard, initiated the debate on alternative policies to the hard-nosed approach of the American administration. He talked about the concept of «soft power» rather than «hard power». The term «soft governance» goes further and is nowadays used in the management of world affairs to refer to policies of persuasion rather than coercion.

Companies, diplomats, NGOs, intellectuals, the media, unions, all see «soft governance» as real progress in the management of world affairs.

As new practices emerge, only those who are actively involved are able to talk about them. It is for this reason that the second part of the booklet consists of several contributions from people directly involved in the changes taking place. As the originator of the «soft power» concept, we naturally will start with Professor Joseph Nye. We asked him to introduce his concept of «soft power», extending it to include «soft governance». We also called on other actors in the field of «soft governance» such as Daniel Vasella, Chairman and CEO of Novartis; Jakob Kellenberger, President of the ICRC; Luzius Wasescha, Ambassador at the WTO; Roger de Weck, editorialist and President of IHEID; and Martine Brunschwig Graf; National Councillor and former State Councillor of the Canton of Geneva. All are making significant contributions to a better interpretation of this paradigm shift.

## From «soft power» to «soft governance»

### Interview with Professor Joseph Nye, Kennedy School, Harvard, Boston

While governmental negotiations struggle to relaunch the WTO, to rethink the UN and to restructure the WIPO, civil society, the NGOs and the large companies are taking action in the governance of world affairs. This shake-up now has a name: «soft governance». One man was the originator of this new concept: Professor Joseph Nye. In our interview below, he reveals the pertinence of the change and makes a unique proposal: the world used to come to Geneva just to lick its wounds; it should now be the venue for considering the issues facing our world.

#### *Who are the new actors in international relations?*

In the past, diplomats conducted international relations between governments. What we now see is that the current model where governments seek to control events outside their territorial borders has failed, and this has changed everything. It is not that the state as such has become obsolete. It is a new phase where the state is still an actor, but the political stage has become overcrowded with actors playing secondary roles; this changes the nature of world politics. Look at the impact of the IT revolution and the acceleration of globalisation. One can see that non-governmental players have seized power and are doing things that were generally the prerogative of governments.



For example there are several multinationals with annual sales well in excess of the GNP of the majority of countries in the world. Obviously, there are NGOs like «Médecins sans frontières» or «OXFAM» which are doing a good job, which have power and in several cases have helped governments to implement programmes and provide aid. But there are also non-governmental actors who have seized power in a disastrous way, as is the case with trans-national terrorism (between countries).

It is terrifying to see that Al Qaeda, a non-governmental organisation with sleeping cells in 50-60 countries, was capable of killing more Americans on 11th September 2001 than at Pearl Harbor on 7th December 1941. As such, it is a typical illustration of how world politics have changed.

It isn't that Al Qaeda is more important than the Japanese government, but Al Qaeda was capable of committing acts that until then represented an option only available to governments. In this way countries, previously accustomed to close relationships through their diplomats and high level civil servants, find themselves in a much more complex situation as regards international political processes: they still have a leading part to play, but the stage on which they are playing their parts is becoming overcrowded. It is difficult for them to disregard these non-governmental players.

### *What do we know about this model? How is the agenda set?*

Traditionally, things were managed in the context of international policy. You worked to an agenda that was strictly laid down by the leading governments who were primarily concerned with questions of power, security, and military defence. Looking at the world today, you will see that the agenda is partly set by non-governmental players and, except for security issues, many subjects are treated, such as climate change, pandemic disease, organised crime and of course questions of international terrorism. There can be no doubt that the government agenda in Washington was decided to a greater extent by non-governmental players, and those more associated with international terrorism.

This new model does not represent a well-organised structure. It is a network organisation with considerable influence on «soft governance», and has an easy task to attract people around the world. After all, Ben Laden never forced anyone to crash into the towers of the World Trade Centre, but he used «soft power» to encourage them to do so. He or his co-founders or successors quite simply pushed people in London, Madrid or elsewhere into acts that are traditionally undertaken by governments. It was usually the case that whoever had the biggest army won, but on the stage of international politics today, we need to be aware that the winners are those with the best arguments.

*A non-governmental organisation was capable of killing more Americans on 11th September 2001 than at Pearl Harbor on 7th December 1941. As such, it is a typical illustration of a world in transformation.*

In this era of readily available information, «soft power» has as much talent to persuade, attract or convince people as «hard power» has to force them.

### *Why does the process take so long?*

I think it will take a long time, because nowadays with our international laws there are two mutually opposed principles, namely state sovereignty and compliance with international regulations.

Thus deploying peacekeeping forces, a supranational concept, is at odds with state sovereignty which, in the view of the UN constitution, considers each state as having sovereign rights and control over its own territory.

The second principle is based on international humanitarian laws, enacted after the Second World War, which prohibit governments from threatening their own subjects, as is the case in Dafour where the government has no authority to violate human rights or to order a genocide.

In view of the dilemma created by these two principles, «soft power» will take at least a generation to find a solution.

People are prisoners of this dilemma. On the one hand, they are not ready to abandon their sovereign rights under any circumstances, nor will they accept on the other hand that a government be permitted to violate human rights, whatever the reason may be. So they are torn between the desire as a state to protect the autonomy of their community, and their refusal to accept a government violating citizens' rights.

### *Does this lead us to «soft governance»?*

It is actually true that we see organisations such as the United Nations managed by delegates from individual governments, with instructions to defend the national interest as far as possible. But these government organisations have been replaced by unofficial networks meeting informally to discuss numerous problems such as security, exchange commissions, financial questions. They meet their counterparts from the different countries in Washington, bringing information for example about changes in rules or regulations in this or that country. Official representatives for agriculture talk to those handling public health, some are from non-governmental organisations while others come from intergovernmental organisations, yet all discuss matters of governance outside the rigid legislative framework of government. That is «soft governance».

For the future, I think we will be dealing with numerous international forces in the form of flexible organisations operating in networks, and which are able to find answers more quickly for their governments to the various questions posed. This would for example mean that informal circles would communicate with officials from the Finance Ministry to stop financial transactions associated with terrorism.

It can also work with police border enforcement patrols or the secret service in the fight against international terrorism.

In the same way, thinking now about pandemic disease, it would be helpful to have numerous contacts with informal networks and with those responsible for health, that is to say with the people best placed to organise local support, who communicate on an informal basis and in parallel to the procedures put in place by government health officials.

So it will be very necessary to develop a whole series of networks suitable for dealing with these kinds of problems between countries.

### *What type of organisation will these networks have?*

You will have noted that we have entered into the age of cheap communication where everybody can play a part; this makes coordination harder. Formerly, when communications between continents were inaccessible to most people, many of the actors did not participate at all; only the bureaucracy put in place by governments, the large companies or perhaps a few of the larger NGOs were there. Today anybody can communicate via the internet, all of us can take part in a discussion and have access to knowledge. More knowledge means that power is distributed more widely, but by the same token spread more thinly and hence diminished. It is harder to coordinate things and achieve improvements.

### *What kind of a future do you see for Geneva?*

I think that Geneva has certain advantages, such as its past as an international forum, its relationships with leading nations and the UN, its cosmopolitan atmosphere. All these are well known advantages that Geneva can exploit. It needs to be seen as a focal point; this should be made known abroad and by telling the NGOs that they are welcome and that you would like to see them in Geneva gathered around the UN organisations. All this will strengthen the image of Geneva, so that it may be promoted as a place for people to meet.

In this world of «hard power» it is interesting to imagine that a small country like Switzerland can play a key part in the exercise of «soft power», and is the only country having the opportunity to achieve its ends thanks to its power of persuasion. A small country or even a small Canton can stand out in the world by emphasizing its role in the context of «soft power».

I would like to point to the example of Norway. Norway is a small country with 5 million inhabitants, with a language that is infrequently spoken outside the country. It is not a member of the

European Union and yet has generated more interest than could every have been expected simply by acting as the mediator for the peace processes in Sri Lanka and the Middle East. This has stimulated interest in the country and given it greater standing on the international scene. And I can assure you that Norway has never been a military super-power!

You are therefore quite capable of developing the same kind of policy with «soft governance». In the same way, Switzerland in general and Geneva in particular can benefit from their standing in the world to become the purveyors of this «soft power», since Geneva has become the focal point for communications in this context. Thanks to its policy of openness and hospitality, both for new networks and with regard to the official organisations already there, I think that Geneva has extraordinary assets with which to encourage the promotion and expansion of «soft power».

*Do we need critical mass, think tanks and intellectual resources to pursue such policies?*

*I think that with these incredible assets Geneva could create something that would resemble a «soft power CERN».*

I think it is good to dispose of critical mass and intellectual capital at the university, HEI or other institutions, and of course the World Economic Forum. As things are, the foundations may be there, but they are insufficient for achieving critical mass.

I remember a conversation with Klaus Schwab some time ago about the opportunity of organising internships at the World Economic Forum in Geneva, and doubling the duration from six months to one year.

Wouldn't it be wonderful if the Canton could provide the necessary funds to HEI or the university to set up a think tank, for example. This think tank could not only offer permanent posts, but also an opportunity to people coming from all over the world on a temporary basis. This happens at CERN in the field of nuclear

physics. I think we should consider it for NGOs, something like a «soft-power CERN».

You already do this in certain fields; you should expand this exchange of experience in order to attain critical mass.

### *What is the outlook for Geneva?*

Once you become the focal point of one of these networks, there is a snowball effect and things expand naturally and take on a larger dimension. People say to each other «You know, I had a fantastic intellectual experience in Geneva, I met several people from Brazil. South Africa, China as well as from the United States». It happens automatically, you just have to be more explicit in what you offer, and this in turn attracts more people.

### *How do you assess the shift from the Atlantic to the Pacific?*

We should be paying more attention to Asia than to the Pacific due to the growing power of Asia with its burgeoning population. It is the key new development of this century and must be taken into account. Nonetheless, Europe and America will continue to be important. The question to ask is which direction will we take? In Geneva, you are half way between Asia and the United States: try not to choose one or the other!

I think that this project of making Geneva an intellectual centre with its own critical mass could be the key to your future role and enterprise. As things stand now, there are several fields in which you have a role to play: promote the internet, support the NGOs or focus on relationships between Asia and Europe.

The one thing to avoid would be to lose focus by spreading your efforts too widely, which could lead to a loss of critical mass.

On one hand you need to understand the expectations and the focus of interest of the actors in the international stage in Geneva, and on the other hand you should invest in a large number of fields where you have real competitive advantage.

*And Washington?*

I think the United States are more into «hard power» than anywhere else. It's the current tendency. They are like a child treating each problem like a nail by banging on it with a hammer: the Americans possess incredible military power and tend to use force for solving problems.

All that will certainly change and we are going to be spending more time on winning «hearts & minds». Surprisingly that is something we had understood during the cold war, but after the decline of the Soviet Union there was a period of uncertainty at the same time as a period of expansion of military power, which served to satisfy our desires.

When I wrote «The Paradox of American Power» in 2002, I pointed out that the paradox was due to the fact that we are the most powerful nation since the Roman Empire, but in terms of «hard power» which is not the best approach for solving problems. I think we are slowly getting around to understanding that.

## The WEF: worldwide influence

The World Economic Forum, set up in 1971 by Professor Klaus Schwab in Geneva, is known around the world for its annual Forum held at Davos. Year after year, the Forum brings together the principle players of the political and economic world and of civil society, generating a large number of initiatives in the «soft governance» style. There can be no doubt that Klaus Schwab is today the person who has made the greatest contribution to governance by multi-stakeholders; for this alone they owe him a debt of considerable gratitude. Among the recent initiatives directly associated with the impressive network built up by the Forum, one could mention:

- The announcement by Kofi Annan at Davos of the launch of the «Global Compact» project in 1999
- The «Global Alliance for Vaccines and Immunization» (GAVI) project started in 2000 by the General Secretary of the WHO
- Setting up a «Disaster Resource Network» platform in 2003
- The «Global Plan to Stop Tuberculosis» initiated by the Nigerian President Olusegun Obasanjo.

Behind its appearance of a media show dedicated to governance, the Forum nonetheless plays a vital part in this new and irreversible process of «soft governance». As an entirely private organisation, its role is pivotal in the pooling of efforts and energy to resolve the fundamental problems facing the world. ([www.weforum.org](http://www.weforum.org))





## **Soft governance in action**

### **Daniel Vasella, President and CEO of Novartis**

There can be no doubt that Geneva will be among those who benefit from globalisation. Globalisation will bring the city material benefits, but that is hardly what matters. Geneva is in an ideal position to strengthen its role as the place where the political future of the world is decided. Today more than ever, we need such forums for discussion, where different cultures can meet and world leaders can dialogue together. Just like we need this mentality which is so typical of Geneva, a cosmopolitan city marked by humanism together with a solid dose of pragmatism.

Geneva is rightly known throughout the world for the first two characteristics. In this 21st century where global competition exists not only between companies, but also between cities, pragmatism could well prove to be the key asset enabling the former citadel of Calvin to take its place as one of the major political centres of the planet.

Why pragmatism? The answer seems paradoxical, but in the end it speaks for itself: because idealism is never as effective as when it is also pragmatic. Today, «soft governance» is fashionable, but make no mistake about the meaning of the word «soft» in this expression. Joseph Nye, who invented it, is anything but the dreamer that some of his critics would have him be. Quite to the contrary: he is pragmatic, well aware that only transnational synergy will make it possible to stamp out the miseries

of our time, which are famine, disease, human rights abuse and damage to the environment.

In other words, let us not confuse the idea of «soft governance» with a group of friends chatting about how they are going to «change the world»; advocating «soft governance» is accepting that the different actors debate their ideas, fiercely defending them if necessary, but always driven by a true shared desire to behave responsibly towards the underprivileged. Even if they cannot always agree on how to achieve their common objectives, they defend the same fundamental values.

During the euphoria of the 90's, people forgot how much «soft governance» meant sometimes hard, but necessary debates on what to do. Faced with a world that seems to have become more brutal, conflictual and problematical, nobody can overlook that fact today. Be that as it may, the only thing that matters is the direction finally taken. It seems to me that nowadays the emerging forces capable of gaining the upper hand are just the ones which, taking a pragmatic view, use their energy to find realistic solutions to the world's main problems. They are also the ones who have adopted the idea that to get things moving it is usually best to have everyone working together: governments, international organisations, NGOs and companies.

Through its various activities Novartis, like any other large company, is in contact with many of the actors from civil society, whose various interests often lead to contradictory demands. Let us be clear: we are always ready to get involved in constructive proposals. But this availability is only possible if we follow a guideline on which I would like to insist: we have to stick to our principles. It doesn't matter if in certain circles this generates a Pavlovian reflex to view such an approach with suspicion - let us stay with our basic values. We are ready to work together with anybody for whom results matter more than clichés and vain discussions, but we will adopt our value system and follow a down-to-earth, pragmatic approach.

Those like us who are actively involved in health understand the growing importance of «soft governance» well. We are obliged to maintain on-going contacts with governments, but also with many others such as patients associations or the international organisations. Novartis is one of the founding members of the UN «Global Compact», a document setting out the ethical principles which should act as guidelines for global companies. Every year we invest some 2% of our turnover (\$700m) in campaigns whose goal it is to facilitate access to medicines for underprivileged, sick people.

Over recent years Novartis significantly expanded its non profit-making projects and public private partnerships. Together with the World Health Organisation (WHO), the Economic Development Board of Singapore (EDB), the «Medicines for Malaria Venture» (MMV) and the «Wellcome Trust», we have joined forces to fight «neglected» diseases such as leprosy, dengue fever and tuberculosis. Another example: in the context of an exemplary project run jointly with the WHO since

*Those who, like us, work in the health sector are well aware of the increasing importance of «soft governance»*

2000, Novartis is providing treatment all leprosy victims in the world, free of charge. Thanks to the efficacy of our multi-drug therapy (MDT), this programme has allowed four million patients to be cured.

Alongside the WHO and the UN children's fund (UNICEF), Novartis has also declared war on malaria. In 2006, we decided to reduce the price of Coartem, our anti-malarial medicine, to \$1 – much less than what it costs to produce. With the help of our two partners, and also that of NGOs such as «Médecins Sans Frontières» (MSF), we are contributing to the fight against this disease which, throughout the world, causes a child to die every 30 seconds. Our action in saving children is one of our greatest sources of satisfaction.

Contacts with these partners are often made in Geneva, which is where the headquarters of our trade body, the International Federation of Pharmaceutical Manufacturers Associations (FIIM) is established. This organisation handles matters related to health and commercial policy.

In starting a project we always depend on the goodwill of all the players, and particularly of the governments involved. Offering medicines is not enough; they must also reach those who need them. Where the political and logistical situation in the field does not allow us to distribute medicines, Novartis is condemned to do nothing – it is the same for all the leading pharmaceutical laboratories. Some accuse us of monopolistic domination, but in reality there is nothing we can do in situations such as these. If the countries concerned do not take a firm stand against corruption and do not really wish to help their populations, our efforts will fail. Providing aid is impossible in the absence of good governance.

Nowhere in the world could be better than Geneva, and Switzerland, for breathing life into the hard world of pragmatic, or enlightened, idealism. For many years our country has demonstrated how a patient, “step-by-step” process delivers some quite remarkable results. Max Weber used to define the essence of politics as its ability to «slowly drill a hole in a plank of hard wood». Switzerland, and Geneva, are certainly masters of this art. In my view this unspectacular and very Swiss way of making progress is exactly the kind of governance which can and should prevail in the era of «soft governance».

Here at home, there are also some who see it as appropriate to be sceptical of globalisation. Quite simply because it exists, Geneva, a city of intellect and of money, shows how such sceptics have been misled. The city is the demonstration that globalisation improves living standards by promoting the exchange of ideas and ideals. It also proves that it is possible to find a real *modus vivendi* between politics, which operates mainly on a national level, and the economy which is increasingly globalised.

If Geneva so wishes, it has all it needs to extend its influence and, as the 21st century unfolds before us, to become the city that welcomes and inspires the rest of the world.

### **An example of «soft» cooperation: WHO**

The World Health Organisation (WHO), set up in 1948, is a UN institution focused on health. For several years the WHO has been engaged in projects with companies, universities and civil society. With the «Civil Society Initiative», the WHO makes an ongoing contribution to action in the field. Today, 182 NGOs are associated with this initiative via various projects. Apart from that, the WHO has been working since 2005 with Swiss and foreign universities. Furthermore, specific situations such as the fight against malaria or the H5N1 virus have resulted in the WHO working alongside the largest pharmaceutical companies in the world. The experiment in «soft» cooperation is well on its way at the WHO. ([www.who.int](http://www.who.int))

## «Between rights and demands»

**Jakob Kellenberger, President of the ICRC,  
former Secretary of State at the Federal Department  
of Foreign Affairs**

Understanding international relations, and even more so seeking to influence them in certain areas, is not easy. The diversity of the situations and the multiplicity of the actors no doubt call for several analyses and perspectives. Thus the distinction Joseph Nye makes between «soft power» (power exercised «softly» is the sense of the ability to convince or persuade) and «hard power» (ability to constrain by force) is useful, even if these terms are not direct opposites. Care also needs to be taken not to fall into the trap threatening so many concepts: when influenced by certain notions or ideas, perceptions of a complex reality can be artificially simplified. Nothing can replace the detailed analysis of specific situations. There was a time when the role of «hard power» was overestimated; the risk today is the opposite: we risk overestimating «soft power».

An organisation like the ICRC, which aims to protect the life and dignity of the victims of armed conflict and to bring them help, is constantly faced with «hard power» and «soft power», and often a mixture of both. It cannot allow itself simplistic views of conflict situations. It represents a major challenge to develop an effective operational response given the variety of situations involving armed violence of one kind or another. Thus from the perspective of organisation and planning, flexibility in running an

action is as important, if not more important, than the pertinence of the initial analysis in a specific context. All local processes need to be understood and integrated into a regional and global analysis.

This is also true for the actors, whether they exercise «soft» power or they have the capacity to oblige others to follow the options they have laid down. Again, these terms should not be opposed to each other. Even parties with significant military capacity are obliged to act on the ideological level, in order to find political support for this or that armed enterprise. This happens all the time. Countries remain, or from certain perspectives become again, the key players on the international stage, notably due to their responsibility for assuring the security of citizens, for example with respect to terrorism. State sovereignty may be relative, or even weakened by the globalisation phenomenon, but it is not a reason to underestimate the importance of states in the international sphere. The «new» players on the international scene (none of them are in fact radically new) are not replacing the «traditional» protagonists; rather they add to the complexity of the political, security or economic considerations.

The humanitarian world has evolved considerably over recent years, with new actors and different objectives, activities and ways of working. The United Nations system for dealing with humanitarian problems is itself undergoing a process of reform, and a number of governments normally providing financial support to humanitarian organisations are re-examining their policies. One of the consequences of this evolution is an increase in demands for professionalism, proper coordination and accountability on the part of these organisations, both from the perspective of those providing donations and their recipients.

Added to the complication of the situations in which organisations such as the ICRC operates and the diversity of the actors which whom it is in contact, are the constraints posed by the globalisation of information. Almost all humanitarian action is public knowledge: thanks to the media, though generally with no

attempt to give any balance to the different pieces of information communicated, everybody can be informed in real time of what is happening everywhere in the world. The constant visibility to which the humanitarian organisations are exposed obliges them to be highly coherent in the action and statements – notably the media, governments and opposition groups, observe, compare and criticize. From then on it is obligatory to be - and to be seen to be - coherent, constant and credible on one's acts, and as regards the reasons for them.

The ICRC bases much of its action on international humanitarian law, expressed in its most significant form by the Geneva Conventions of 1949. Humanitarian law is both a reality (it is known and has been respected during a large number of conflicts) and a requirement to (better) fulfil. Since 11th September 2001, our world has witnessed polarisation taking place between different «camps», the profiles and operating modes of which are as different as the number of people involved. The law and humanitarian action are also affected by this development. Humanitarian law does not pretend to have ready answers to the situations created by this polarisation, which can also be viewed as a confrontation between the values and objectives of societies, but it remains relevant and useful for cases where such confrontations spill over into armed conflict. It can also serve as inspiration for constructive thought regarding the best means of countering the phenomenon of terrorism while still respecting the law.

*The «new» players on the international scene are not replacing the «traditional» protagonists; rather they add to the complexity of the political, security or economic considerations.*

Talking about the Geneva Conventions is talking about Geneva, where the ICRC has its headquarters. For many people, Geneva and the Red Cross are inseparable. Without Geneva, the work initiated by Dunant, Moynier, Dufour, Appia and Maunoir would not have seen the light of day; without the ICRC, Geneva would not be what it is today – a humanitarian «capital». Quite apart



from symbols and words, there can be no doubt that Geneva plays an important part in this respect. This role is not exclusive, and Geneva is not only that, but the city is known for its commitment to this cause.

Geneva is home to a large proportion of the humanitarian organisations in the United Nations family. The Human Rights Committee meets there. Now and then, Geneva provides a venue where the parties in this or that conflict may talk to each other, and try to move forward in their peace negotiations. The Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue also has its offices in Geneva, without mentioning the multitude of other organisations which, to a greater or lesser extent, are working for peace, disarmament or at least for promoting dialogue between personalities, governments or various groups. All these efforts, this research, this “groping for solutions”, are important. To take Joseph Nye’s expression, it is perhaps «soft» power, but it makes Geneva a place for reflecting on issues, where the law (human rights, humanitarian law, refugee rights) has its rightful place. Geneva is also of importance for whoever may be seeking the security provided by the law, vs. other capitals where «hard power» is in vogue. For the ICRC, whose action oscillates from one to the other, Geneva is also a platform for exchanges and an appropriate place to reaffirm, and where necessary to develop, international humanitarian law.

Geneva has the potential to become a renowned intellectual centre. Significant steps have been or will be taken to develop this potential. It is my most earnest desire that this centre distinguishes itself by its openness and respect for differences, as well as by its refusal of simplistic answers influenced by purely fashionable arguments of the time. Far from contributing to better understanding in an ever more complex world, such notions run the risk of making things even more difficult. A balance must always be found between providing necessary explanations of varied and changing realities – with a choice of suitable words and ideas to convey them – and the just as necessary epistemological modesty, knowing full well that an understanding of our world cannot be expressed by mere words or theories.

## **Médecins sans Frontières**

Since 1971, Médecins sans Frontières (MSF) brings help throughout the world to populations in conflict zones or those affected by natural disasters. Over recent years MSF has played a major part on the international humanitarian scene.

An international office exists in Geneva since 2004, tasked with organising exchanges and coordinating operations in the field. Although each national entity is legally autonomous, it became necessary to have a permanent liaison centre for the UN health organisations (WHO). This new process reinforces Geneva's position in NGO circles. ([www.msf.org](http://www.msf.org))

## CARE

CARE is one of the largest NGOs fighting poverty in the world. It has 14'500 people of whom more than 90% are local employees working in the field in 65 countries, and providing support annually to more than 50 million people.

It was founded in 1945 by 22 American organisations to help the populations of a Europe devastated by the Second World War. The International Secretariat of the organisation was set up both to coordinate activities and to play an active role in the humanitarian network established in Geneva.

First aid support and reconstruction activities following wars or natural disasters are today mainly operating in the countries of Africa, Asia, Latin America, the Middle East and Eastern Europe.

Thanks to its experience, size and ability to react, CARE is a vital NGO in the joint international struggle against poverty. Its activities in the field now also include promoting health and sustainable development.

CARE has also developed a strong power of recommendation and of advocacy at UN organisations, which reinforces its role and improves the effectiveness of activities in the field. ([www.care.org](http://www.care.org))

## «Towards intellectual diplomacy»

**Luzius Wasescha, Ambassador, Delegate for the Swiss Federal Council to Trade Agreements, Chief Negotiator for Switzerland for WTO negotiations, member of the Board at the State Secretariat for Economic Affairs (SECO)**

Globalisation is a phenomenon that has made possible the exchange of information, capital, goods and, to some extent, of persons throughout the world. National legislation formerly kept watch over the state sovereignty, and artificial barriers were put up from one region to the next. A globalised world means a constant, instantaneous interface with almost anywhere in the world. For the last 50 years, apart from governments who were the traditional actors on the international stage, we have seen parliaments, pressure groups, multinational companies and non-governmental organisations. An ongoing exchange of concepts and ideas is what makes the global culture absolutely fascinating and at the same time – for many citizens - something frightening.

Switzerland is not only a part of Europe. It is part of the world, and already 30 years ago the centre of gravity of the economic world shifted away from the transatlantic axis to the Pacific and increasing towards Asia. Asia, with China, Vietnam, India and other players too, such as Latin America and certain pockets of wealth in Africa, topped up the world growth rate, which was

traditionally and until very recently led by the United States. Growth in Europe was declining and, as the new order with the emerging countries such as Brazil, South Africa, India and China became established, Europe found itself marginalised. As a non-member of the European Union, Switzerland finds itself doubly marginalised: by its situation in Europe where it remains outside the mechanisms for European integration, and due to the overall marginalisation of Europe.

Switzerland does have some important assets, including International Geneva. The investment needed for its promotion is not enormous. This meeting ground will continue to be important in international politics, human rights, the environment and in the economic world. It is more a question of promoting the integration of International Geneva into daily cultural life, also as regards education, research and training, first of all in Geneva and then throughout Switzerland. When thinking about the incredible wealth of knowledge collecting dust in the libraries of the international organisations in Geneva, one is entitled to wonder if those involved in education in Geneva and in Switzerland couldn't make better use of it.

As regards international economic diplomacy, Geneva together with the WTO, UNCTAD, the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe, the International Trade Centre (WTO/UNCTAD) and the European Free Trade Association (EFTA) has a certain number of organisations which, individually, play an important role, even if this role is often not exactly visible. Thus the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe is responsible for standardised road signs in Europe, for the norms covering the transport of perishable goods or for the labelling of dangerous goods in international transport, to mention but a few examples. UNCTAD is heavily involved with the EEC/UN and other international entities regarding trade facilitation so that exchanges become less expensive and easier to implement. And in addition to that, it plays an important part in investments.

This centre of economic activity does of course attract the attention of a whole series of private organisations, and has done so for

a long time. These private organisations follow the debates of the international organisations to ensure that their interests are taken into account. The number of non-governmental organisations that are recognised by the United Nations, and are therefore players on the International Geneva stage, is such that any overview becomes difficult. In any case it would only represent the tip of the iceberg, since there is a whole series of bodies working with just a few individuals within the various international organisations to promote their cause. Out of this emerges a «career plan» for people who start out as lobbyists, who then join governments as specialists and all of a sudden find themselves in the secretariats of international organisations. That is a privilege that Switzerland did not always exploit to the full because we are pragmatic, we go step by step and we don't always work up action plans. When one looks at the really significant opportunities for training offered by International Geneva, it is by no means unrealistic to think that an International Geneva career plan could open up a new set of professions for young people educated in Geneva, whether they are Swiss, Europeans or whatever other nationality.

*An ongoing exchange of concepts and ideas make this globalised culture absolutely fascinating and at the same time something frightening.*

The WTO operates on three levels, each of which calls for different orientations in terms of professional interests, skills and ability. First of all there is the spectacular job of handling negotiations and working with a mixture of delegations from the various capitals or already established in Geneva. These negotiations have left their mark on generations of people who have devoted themselves to enhancing the public service in the field of international economic relations. Then there is the management of agreements leading to some extremely interesting positions at the WTO Secretariat with top-flight specialists for questions on the exchange of goods, services, capital and to a certain extent persons. And lastly, there is the work associated with the settlement of disagreements, which is a combination of legal,

diplomatic and political processes allowing a team of economists, legal counsel and diplomats to determine whether or not there has been a breach of WTO law. It is a prolongation of the processes of conciliation and mediation, which as such constitute a cornerstone of all mechanisms for international cooperation. A specific training in Geneva incorporating all these elements could be of interest, and a significant asset for Geneva's educational institutions. We need to take special care of the microcosm that International Geneva represents; the services it offers are subject to increasingly tough competition from all quarters.

Joining UNCTAD or the EEC/UN is like commencing a career in the United Nations system in its entirety. There too, Switzerland would do well to stimulate the vocation for entering universal public service. In this context it is quite clear that countries quicker to achieve maturity within the UN have advantages over the Swiss latecomers. But it is never too late to do things properly.

EFTA only consists of Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway and Switzerland. It has two mainstays: the Secretariats in Geneva and Brussels for matters regarding the EEC, of which Switzerland is not a member. It has developed impressive expertise in the development of free trade with other countries. There too, we have a potential training centre for the future managers of commercial policy.

It is increasingly urgent to develop synergies between the economic organisations and the other international organisations. The challenge is the growing need to achieve coherence between economic and public service policies (health, environment, development, social services, etc.). International Geneva constitutes an ideal platform to encourage such consistency, thanks to the numerous specialised UN agencies that have chosen to establish themselves in this city.

Finally, in this era of public-private partnerships, there is another element that should not be underestimated: the fact that Geneva has managed to attract many multinational headquarters offers

new perspectives for a career within International Geneva.

What Geneva citizens sometimes see as extravagant is not necessarily a privilege of International Geneva alone, but an asset allowing the city to retain a whole panoply of economic activities that give the region its dynamism and drive it forward. It is therefore essential to do everything necessary so that people understand better how International Geneva works, and to help international personnel to feel comfortable there. There is a real need for the political, cultural and economic circles of Geneva to better appreciate this seemingly impervious world. Greater synergy between Geneva, Switzerland and International Geneva would be worthwhile for all, each deriving benefit from the improved relations.

### **Norms at the service of world governance**

The International Standards Organisation (ISO), established in Geneva since 1947, is one of the most important standards organisations in the world and, like its neighbour the International Union for Telecommunications, works closely together with other national and international bodies. ISO works on building strategic partnerships both with companies and supra-national organisations such as the WTO. It is tasked with defining requirements for improving the quality of products, services, processes, materials and systems. Having recourse to best practices, to the verification of conformity, management quality and organisation, ISO promotes an equitable free-trade system. Its future activities will be expanded to adapt norms and worldwide standards as they constantly evolve. ([www.iso.org](http://www.iso.org))



## Geneva and micro finance

The attribution of the Nobel Peace Prize to Muhammad Yunus generated public interest in this particularly specialised branch of finance: microcredit. This banking sector is highly active in poor countries such as Bangladesh or Bolivia and operates with minimal overheads. It offers a financial product consisting of a very small, appropriately adjusted loan to categories of the population that are normally unable to obtain credit. Even if results are not always optimal, this practice has notably enabled women to help their families escape from poverty. In particular via the «Blue Orchard Fund», Geneva has been extremely active in this field. By regularly organising Forums in Geneva, the Swiss Financial Centre has created a number of financial instruments supporting this activity, such as the Credit Suisse «Respons Ability» unit trust, to name but one. The interest shown by the World Bank in the recent development of the micro insurance should allow this area of activity to develop still further. It is to be hoped than the multitude of players who are now active in this field will in future rely on the competence built up in Switzerland. ([www.novethic.fr](http://www.novethic.fr)) ([www.credit-suisse.com](http://www.credit-suisse.com))

## Geneva, a city of intelligent globalisation

### Interview with Roger de Weck, President designate of the IHEID

*How do you see the role and contribution of researchers and intellectuals regarding «soft governance»?*

In some ways they may be viewed as the incarnation of «soft governance». Take Walter Kaelin, Professor of Law at Bern University, who was the initiator of the Human Rights Council. That is the first thing that scientists and thinkers can offer: their creativity. Take Charles Wyplosz, Professor of Economics at HEI. His capacity for analysis is such that everything becomes crystal clear. That is the second contribution: an awareness of the situation and of what needs to be done, followed by the input to policy planning. Then take Professor Keith Krause of HEI; he runs the «Small Arms Survey». Here we have the third point: scientists are there to use their research for questioning conventional thinking; a subject that has been neglected once again takes its rightful place. And lastly, consider the specialists in international law at Geneva University or at HEI, some of whom are valued experts at the International Court of Justice at The Hague. There we have the fifth contribution: offering good advice. Discover, understand, explain, teach, on occasion advise: these are the obvious essentials.

*You mention certain personalities. What about the networks?*

The networks exist thanks to strong personalities. By their very nature, they consist of relationships between people – please excuse the truism. You can only really work well with people who, one way or the other, are on the same wavelength. The strength of an institution, a think tank, a network is the mutual rivalry and encouragement between first-rate scientists. The institutional context is of importance for strategy development, but it remains no more than a framework. Institutions or networks fulfil their roles when their rules, traditions and the means at their disposal attract the very best people.

*The «second Gotthard» with a far brighter future – namely Geneva: a venue for meeting and exchanges with the whole world, a place open to all.*

*How can we train the next generation of students, given the context of «soft governance» and of multi-stakeholders?*

The Director and the Vice-Director of the future Graduate Institute of International Studies and Development IHEID, Philippe Burrin and Michel Carton, would be better placed to answer the question than me as a journalist. How to put a mark on the next generation? First of all by educating the students, selected after rigorous evaluation, in «hard governance»: understanding and analysing the balance of power underlining all international relations. And then by stressing more than ever, as the IHEID will, the proper understanding of interdependencies and interactions, or interdisciplinarity; this is why we have introduced an interdisciplinary master. Apart from that, it is a real opportunity to be able to combine international and development studies; given globalisation today, it is no longer possible to imagine one without the other. But what is most important is to educate and train cultivated people who will, in turn, educate and train the next generation of cultivated people around the world. This is

fundamental to an institution's influence. That way, the strongest networks are forged. It takes a long time.

*What is the role of the IHEID: what strategy will it adopt, what alliances will it form?*

I'm sorry to say my answer will be short, because it is up to the future Foundation Board of the IHEID, together with the management and other contributors such as the professors, to define the strategic orientation of the institution. The initial idea is, in addition to an academic core programme, to build poles of competence in areas where Geneva has the competitive edge; we will work even more closely with the international organisations.

As for networks, we have agreements for cooperation or exchanges with some of the best universities in Europe, Asia and the United States. There is clearly a mutual interest. Most of our partners are larger than us, but nowhere in the world is there an institution with such a «concentration» of international studies specialists in the broad sense of the term. And the faculty must be one of the most cosmopolitan that exists.

*How do you see Geneva in the future?*

Allow me to quote Jean Freymond who said that there are two Gotthards in Switzerland. The old Gotthard symbolized the meeting of northern and southern Europe, it signified commerce across Europe, our continent opening up. And then there is the «second Gotthard» with a far brighter future – namely Geneva: a place for meeting and exchanges with the whole world, a gateway for global contacts. Places of action need thinkers and excellence at all levels. Geneva, with its fine scientific tradition is predestined for exchanges between researchers and deciders. It is the citadel of intelligent globalisation.

## **An institution with a global vocation**

In 2008 a new actor will be present on the university scene: the Graduate Institute of International Studies and Development, born from the integration of HEI and the IUED. This new contributor will be unequalled in Europe for combining international relations and development, and will receive increased financing from the government in order to face up to international competition. With a faculty of more than 50 professors, it will teach some 1000 students from around the world at master and doctoral levels. It will also provide the international community with focused expertise on issues where Geneva has the competitive edge, such as world commerce, migration and refugee problems, conflict management and de-escalation, and international policy regarding the environment and health. In partnership with Geneva University, which has its own very significant resources in the field, it will be the cornerstone of a Swiss network for international studies, and one which will focus the strengths the country has to offer so as to maximise their visibility.

## The beginnings of a new role



### **Martine Brunschwig Graf, National Councillor, former President of the State Council of Geneva**

International Geneva: the concept is known and understood in federal circles. Our Republic and Canton fulfils a special assignment on behalf of the Confederation and constitutes a vital element of Swiss policy to position our country as host to international, governmental and non-governmental organisations.

Quite recently and for the first time, special legislation was submitted to the Federal parliament giving Switzerland and Geneva a formal basis for this hosting function. The parliamentary ratification process is currently underway. With our democratic system it was important to take this step, as it permits popular support to be expressed for a policy of openness and readiness to offer a welcome, with its attendant advantages but also the effort it implies.

Today, no institution may legitimately govern the world. There is no democratic process for electing supra-national authorities with responsibility for managing world affairs. World governance cannot and must not be seen as an authoritarian system, with supra-democratic power in the hands of few and in the name of all.

Even in the wildest dreams, there can be no place for such a structure of governance. The world is too complex; its needs are too great. No governmental or parliamentary structure can claim to meet the needs of 6.5 billion people.

At the opposite end of the spectrum, it would be irresponsible to accept that the world satisfies itself with isolated initiatives and decisions, corresponding to the interests of this or that country or region, when the consequences of such decisions affect the planet as a whole.

A true concept for world governance must also integrate two apparently opposed aspects, namely complexity and globality.

Due to the international activities taking place in the canton, Geneva constitutes an excellent laboratory for evaluating how the world governance we aspire to might actually look. All the elements are there: governmental or non-governmental international organisations dealing with matters of crucial importance, NGOs representing people's opinions in various fields, training and research institutions active in key areas for world governance. The relevant economic players are also present: multinationals and companies that are leaders in certain world markets.

I couldn't explain the wonderful opportunity represented by Geneva any better than by borrowing the descriptive of a project sponsored by the Geneva International Academic Network (GIAN):

*Geneva is a centre for world governance where many of the critical issues facing the planet are discussed: health, commerce, climate, water, peace initiatives, migration, humanitarian matters, human rights, sustainable development, the internet... Few people, in Switzerland or in the world, appreciate the true scale of this role. Many university researchers, dozens of international institutions and thousands of people actively dealing with these issues make Geneva an incredible fount of knowledge and expertise, but one which is little exploited.*

*Dozens of entities in the Lake Geneva region are involved one way or the other in the interaction between the media and global issues. The World Summit on the Information Society confirmed the importance of the role of Geneva in the regulation of new information technologies.*

That the GIAN project is mentioned is no accident. It promotes training in global journalism. Effectively there was a missing party in global governance: the media, this fourth element without which democracy cannot be fully achieved.

*World governance cannot and must not be seen as an authoritarian system, with supra-democratic power in the hands of few and in the name of all.*

We are faced with vital issues such as health, working conditions, the free flow of goods and services, but also respect for human rights and humanitarian support, to which should be added the whole area of the information society and communication. I cannot give a full list, but I would add intellectual property and meteorology, two subjects that are complex, but decisive for development. All the major international organisations which are responsible for developing norms and standards in these fields have their headquarters in Geneva.

Little by little the planet is introducing a form of global governance based on rules and directives that have undergone fierce discussions and debate. The regional and national political authorities wield their influence and legitimately take decisions, but other players from economic circles or from the so-called civil society play their parts when it comes to taking a view. They are all part of the process, whether as deciders or as pressure groups.

Today Geneva constitutes an ideal location for exercising a significant part of this world governance, thanks to the conditions offered for hosting the various players, thanks also to its plans to develop a centre of competence for teaching and research on the most sensitive present day issues facing world governance.



Managing complexity and meeting the need for globality is the task of many of the actors on the world governance stage. They often elect to meet in Switzerland, and notably in Geneva. It's up to us to make it a place that meets a wide variety of requirements and expectations, on behalf of our country which has given us this assignment and provides the necessary resources.

### **Negotiating skills: CASIN**

Set up in Geneva more than 25 years ago, the «Centre for Applied Studies in International Negotiations» (CASIN) has over the last few years become a think tank specialised in international negotiations. In this sense it possesses the knowledge and the know-how related to new forms of governance, particularly «soft governance». This think tank, which works closely with the international organisations, the NGOs and academic circles in Geneva, has been able to develop unique services. Much appreciated by developing countries it has undertaken numerous missions for the Swiss government and for the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC). Closely linked to the diplomatic world through Jean Freymond, it develops synergies via a network which is typical of Geneva. ([www.casin.ch](http://www.casin.ch))

## **The worldwide reference on climate: the IPCC**

Global warming has focused the world's attention on an important international organisation in Geneva: the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) set up by the member countries of the «World Meteorological Organisation» (WMO) and the «United Nations Environment Programme» (UNEP), as well as non-governmental organisations active in climatology. The scientific results emerging at the latest conference held in Paris in 2007 led to numerous comments and reactions around the world. Its «soft» methods of work are setting an example and a reference for others to follow; it has proved to be a wise approach, and the results speak for themselves.



**A venue of choice for  
considering global issues** ||

## (Abstract)

According to the experts and those involved in «soft governance», Geneva could be the venue of reference for considering the issues facing the world. However, to implement all the requirements for achieving such an objective, we would need to obtain at least the following:

- A paradigm shift on the federal level setting out a strategy aiming at providing «creative offices» rather than merely «good offices».
- A political agenda for Geneva providing the necessary framework to allow «soft governance» to establish itself long-term in the region.
- Local support, especially from the Canton and City of Geneva, for relaunching International Geneva.
- A strong academic centre structured as

a network and bringing together the skills Geneva has to offer.

- An efficient platform for informal discussion networks.
- An electronic platform for sharing knowledge and processes.
- Implementation of the international label on both economic and political levels as a priority and long-term policy for the ongoing development of the region.

Only coordinated actions between the Swiss public and private sectors will bring Geneva long-term success.

Sharing this vision is one of the first conditions for success. It is therefore vital for civil society and the public authorities to adhere to this concept and to adopt the appropriate policies.

The world is changing. Even if this has always been so, our period is characterised by ongoing change driven by innovation.

Under the combined effects of this transformation, of globalisation, of the markets, of an increasingly powerful civil society, of consumers, of technical and scientific evolution, of violent and destabilising attacks by non-governmental organisations of mafia or terrorist origins, of ever more devastating natural disasters, of highly destructive new or existing pandemic diseases, of the geopolitical struggle for natural resources and for many other reasons too, the world is constantly evolving, for better or for worse, at a hectic pace.

This widespread change makes earlier management systems obsolete. A new form of governance is emerging. Certain places will establish themselves as the citadels for this new governance. Let us analyse this novel situation.

## Short history



A brief historical review of governance around the world highlights the principle characteristics of the change that has occurred. Adopting this approach will also allow us to discuss the new vocation of Geneva.

First of all, international world affairs were for centuries the exclusive responsibility of nations, of their armies and of their diplomatic representatives. Alliances, pacts, peace treaties and commercial agreements were the main instruments available to nations to achieve periods of some stability, permitting tranquillity and development. Over previous centuries, many personalities around the world - writers, intellectuals, merchants, civil servants - were concerned by this and sought solutions. In their view, there had to be a better way for dealing with crises.

Geneva made a substantial contribution to this international expression of goodwill, particularly through the contributions of certain eminent personalities during the 19th century, such as Count Jean-Jacques de Sellon, Henry Dunand or Elie Ducommun.

As a consequence of the great humanistic ideas of the Century of Enlightenment, questions regarding peace and humanitarian issues led to the creation of new organisations: these were «peace societies» which may today be seen as the precursors to modern-day NGOs. These organisations, created in the Anglo-Saxon world at the beginning of the 19th century, played a new and vital role in international relations, and notably forced governments to adopt some of their initiatives. Thus it was that in



Geneva in 1830, Jean-Jacques de Sellon set up the Peace Society, modelled on the Anglo-Saxon «peace societies»; it was the first of its type in continental Europe. Jean-Jacques de Sellon fought mainly against the death penalty, and his ideas gained ground in Switzerland up to 1942, when it was repealed.

In 1848, the various elements of the «peace societies» in the world met for the first time in England, then in 1891 in Rome for their 3rd Congress, after which a permanent office was set up: the «International Peace Bureau». Encouraged by the Swiss Elie Ducommun and Albert Gobat, the Bureau was established in Berne, then in Geneva from 1924.

*The countries relinquished part of their monopoly by calling on non-governmental organisations. This was a vital step marking the advent of the era of «soft-governance».*

One of the greatest successes of the International Peace Bureau was the signature by the principle countries of the time of the Hague Convention, and the establishment of an International Court of Justice in the same city to handle penal procedures between countries, which much later led to the question of war crimes.

It was thus in the 19th century that civil society made significant contributions to the first public debates on issues such as the death penalty, slavery, working conditions, arbitration between countries and above all regarding the treatment of the wounded and of prisoners of war.

These last two subjects were the work of an exceptional personality, Henry Dunand. After his return from the battlefield at Solferino in 1864, he put all his energy into the Red Cross, an organisation that was extraordinarily original for its time. Its founder had sensed the necessity of setting up an organisation that was independent of countries yet recognised and financed by them, for defending the cause of the wounded and of prisoners of war. This strategic positioning, its legitimacy established by the signatures of the major countries on the first legally independent «Geneva Convention», gave the Red Cross and later the «International Committee of the Red Cross» (ICRC) exceptional powers.

Thus it was in the 19th century that a new form of action by civil society emerged, contributing to the management of international problems.

As for the 20th century, two world wars took place during the first half of the period, gravely undermining this impetus. Even if, after the First World War, the American President Woodrow Wilson established the League of Nations in Geneva, in an attempt to give the advantage to diplomatic discussions over armed conflicts. The Second World War temporarily blocked this initiative.

As of 1945, the establishment of the European headquarters of the United Nations and of other secretariats and affiliated UN organisations such as the WHO, WMO, WIPO, etc., gave new impetus to the role of International Geneva.

Between 1945 and 1985, numerous summit conferences punctuated international life in Geneva, including the Conference on Indochina (1954), the four powers summit (1955), the Reagan-Gorbachev summit (1985), the Russian/American meetings on strategic arms limitations (1960-1980) as well as the OPEP meetings before the latter were transferred to Vienna as of 1965. It was the time of so-called «good offices» diplomacy.

This period came to an end with two crucial events - the fall of the Berlin wall immediately followed by the collapse of the Soviet bloc - which precipitated a change that had been waiting to happen for a long while, namely an increasing role for civil society in international affairs.

The environmental cause is an excellent example. Under the pressure of the ecological organisations and of think tanks such as the «Club of Rome», a series of controversies increased the awareness of the environment in western populations. Questions such as those referring to the potential danger of nuclear power stations, the need to control pollution, the problems associated with demographic growth and overpopulation, and then much later climate change, all this has affected the behaviour of public authorities in the principle nations.

This new change in citizens' concerns led to political manoeuvring. On one hand, political parties defending the ecological cause (Greens) were born in most countries, and on the other hand these new topics were addressed and handled by these same countries on a worldwide basis due to the pressure of civil society. For the first time, major international conferences such as Rio, then Kyoto integrated civil society in their discussion rounds.

Nation states thus relinquished part of their monopoly by massively calling on non-governmental organisations. This was a vital step marking the advent of the era of «soft governance». It may thus be said that the ending of the Cold War period with the two opposed blocs, a situation that had lasted since the Second World War, ushered in a new form of international relations.

## The Nobel Prize winners of the International Peace Bureau

The International Peace Bureau was founded in 1891, and established in Geneva in 1924.

This non-governmental organisation has its roots in several peace societies which flourished throughout the 19th century. A symbol for pacifist movements, the Bureau worked for the establishment of international procedures for arbitration, bilateral peace treaties, for the creation of a permanent international court of justice and for setting up supra-national organisations for cooperation between countries.

Numerous were the successes at the beginning of the 20th century, especially with the Hague Convention and the establishment in that city of the International Court of Justice, then the award of the 1903 Nobel Peace Prize to the two Swiss Elie Ducommun and Albert Gobat, and in 1910 to the organisation itself. Since then, 10 other members of the Bureau have won the Nobel Peace Prize.

The two world wars put an end to this auspicious period, but the Bureau nevertheless became active again in 1946. Today, 265 member organisations representing 60 countries work out of Geneva, creating a worldwide network of skills and competencies. These days, it is mostly involved in encouraging and promoting non-violent actions and solutions.

The Bureau, the working methods and procedures of which have evolved, no longer calls for the establishment of supra-national organisations since these already exist, but rather for the more intellectual activity of persuasion with regard to non-military methods for conflict resolution.

The Nobel Peace Prize award to Jody Williams in 1997 for her international campaign in favour of banning anti-personnel mines is a fine example. ([www.ipb.org](http://www.ipb.org)) ([www.nobel-paix.ch](http://www.nobel-paix.ch))



## The modern-day era

Geneva did not rest on its laurels during this period of change, and from 1991 onwards, on the initiative of the Swiss industrialist Stephan Schmidheiny, the «World Business Council for Sustainable Development» was created. This institution is based in Geneva, financed by the business world and continues to exert influence through its process of reflection on the issue of sustainable development.

In a similar fashion, another Geneva organisation became both the expression of this change and one of its main vectors, namely the «World Economic Forum» with executive offices in Cologny. Together with his team, Klaus Schwab assembles each year the most important personalities in world governance. Leaders from the business world and from political circles, senior diplomats and leading intellectuals are together at Davos to debate the important issues of the times, but always related to the problems of world governance. This immense networking operation is a powerful example of what «soft governance» really is today.

Defining the topic to be considered, and achieving consensus between the key players through discussion, is the bottom line for the World Economic Forum; it works extremely well. All the credit goes to Klaus Schwab who, thanks to his extraordinary talent as the maître de cérémonie and a careful choice of topics for discussion, has been able to develop this process to perfection.

This very different kind of structure has over the years led to the spawning of numerous solutions, with responsibility for implementation falling to personalities who, to a greater or lesser degree, represent governments. Nowadays, governments are clearly no longer the only ones controlling the situation, nor do they really set the agenda.

In giving the priority to its relationships with NGOs via a liaison office (CONGO) in 1948, the UN had taken the point. Today the question is no longer one of placing non-governmental and governmental organisations on an equal footing, but rather getting them to work together around the same table in order to speed up the process of finding consensus.

It is not a question of the representative quality of the players, but of ensuring compromises are found and rapidly implemented. Achieving improvements in quality and speed when one is dealing with complex processes is not evident, particularly since these «soft governance» practices are fairly new, even for the negotiators themselves.

Experiments with such processes were attempted in Rio, and then in Kyoto on the issue of the environment. This all helped to

provide a better understanding of these mechanisms.

Geneva also tried it out in 2003 on the occasion of the «World Summit on Information Society». Issues such as the digital divide, the very low cost computer accessible to all, the control and management of the internet or even the protection of privacy and intellectual property, were at the heart of the debate. Even if the final resolution left many participants somewhat disappointed, it remains true that the process of preparation and the animated discussions were not only instructive, but also useful. The IT and telecommunications companies gained a better understanding of the NGO world, which from their perspective often appeared to be chaotic. Their very diversity demonstrated the vivacity of the modern world, and the ability of civil society to coordinate

*The informal meetings organised around the world, including within the Davos Forum, are the modern expressions of the parliamentary antechambers of the old world.*

its activities via new organisational structures which, while not democratically elected, are extremely efficient and increasingly professional.

The launch of the major project «Millennium » by Kofi Annan in the year 2000 is of the same calibre. This project proposes a concrete worldwide action plan to curb poverty, hunger and diseases affecting millions of people. With Professor Jeffrey Sachs at the helm, the «Millennium» project has an independent board which regularly comes up with its own recommendations. Major world pandemic disease, for which the World Health Organisation (WHO), governments, the major pharmaceutical groups and the NGOs work together, is another example of how crises can be jointly managed by adopting the «soft governance» approach. The strategic plans are developed by mutual agreement, the action in the field then being allocated between the participants.

Particularly as regards Africa, there is no way that the governments could operate in any other way, since the aid provided by the NGOs has become essential. For causes like the fight against AIDS, with worldwide support from the homosexual community, or the threat of H5N1 pandemic disease, the eradication of malaria and tuberculosis, joint programmes are legion. «Soft governance» has become the watchword for managing such programmes.

It remains nonetheless clear that numerous global problems subsist for which such elegant solutions or even draft solutions will not be found. For example we could take the case of the commercial world, where the WTO is having problems with its negotiations and in breathing new life into the search for consensus. The same goes for serious problems today like nuclear arms proliferation or the fight against global terrorism. These new techniques for problem-solving are not universally applicable. We will no doubt continue to have recourse to «hard power» techniques (they will never really disappear) alongside those of «soft power».

## The Geneva Association

Founded in 1973, the association is one of the largest institutions worldwide in the field of risk management for the various sectors of the economy.

Made up of the 80 largest insurance companies, the «Geneva Association» proposes a medium and long-term assessment for its members, and also for society at large.

It is widely used by governments and public authorities, particularly for questions regarding the aging population, and that of the uncertainty and volatility of economic development.

By identifying the underlying trends in society and the future strategic issues, the association provides a practical basis for managing future risks. While developing the growth of the insurance sector, the «Geneva Association» contributes to a better overall understanding of changes taking place. Its contribution is beyond debate, its network powerful.  
([www.genevaassociation.org](http://www.genevaassociation.org))





## New media

For a long time in contemporary democracies, the media represented a key power, a kind of political counter-force versus the legal, military, political or economic powers. Today, the media are going through a crisis due to the growing strength of the internet and to the «blogosphere» world, a personalised medium available to everybody. The destabilisation caused by the falling costs of digital information (access, creation, storage) has resulted in a revolutionary environment – the «web». Business models have evolved (YouTube, Skype,...). Access is free of charge (Google, Yahoo, ...) and citizens all over the world have become key players in this «blogosphere» (OhMyNews, Wikipedia, Wikia...). These changes have often taken place to the detriment of the traditional media, and mostly to the advantage of the consumer citizen. This change appears to represent a paradigm shift, greatly influencing world affairs.

The tragic episodes of the tsunami in December 2004, of 11 September 2001 in New York, the attacks in Madrid on 11 March 2004 or in London on 7 July 2005, demonstrated the power of communication and the sheer domination of these new media: internet, mobile phones and text messaging took over from the traditional media, which were not there when it was happening. In view of this, inter-governmental relations need to take account of this new player: the universal-individual-communicating-citizen.

More than two billion mobile phones exist today, and therefore the same number of communicators, making it the leading world

media. And more than one billion «citizens of the world» use the internet.

It is therefore reasonable to suppose that the management of world affairs will no longer be the prerogative of high-level civil servants alone. In the same way, supposedly secret negotiations always end up being leaked. In any case the rule is nowadays that things should be done transparently; it is increasingly difficult to imagine having confidential negotiations. There are already several precedents such as rather private discussions taking place at the World Economic Forum in Davos and ending up on blogs. It shows that a metamorphosis of media is in progress, and one with a lasting effect on the way world affairs will be handled in the future.



## The future for governance

Factors such as the new communication and information technologies, the acceleration of contacts between citizens of the world and the globalisation of commercial markets, have contributed to lowering the barriers of time and distance. The nation-state concept may still be in force, but it is undergoing radical change. The model of world governance primarily based on relationships between governmental organisations is going through a crisis. We are moving towards a change of paradigm, since individuals, groups, non-governmental organisations or schools of thought increasingly act and work without any particular national identity. They get involved directly, with time and distance adjusting to the circumstances. This absence of territorial constraint leads to a global approach to problems. The issue of sustainable development is a good example.

Furthermore, efficiency of communications has led to a considerable distortion in time, as everything now happens in real time. The smallest item of information or knowledge is immediately picked up, then amplified or corrected by other players. The world is a huge Wikipedia. This fact obliges governments and their diplomatic representatives or senior civil servants to contact civil society. It is often an arduous task, as the processes are still new and experimental. Nevertheless, just like with creativity, enthusiasm and a spirit of innovation are to the advantage of the new arrivals; depending on the economic situation it is they who oblige nations to take certain decisions. The action of Jody Williams, winner of the Nobel Peace Prize for her dedicated

struggle against the use of arms and anti-personnel mines, is there to prove it.

All in all, we are witnessing the end of the governmental monopoly on international relations, replaced by an era of difference, multiplicity and complexity. Thus we are entering the era of «soft governance». Everybody, or nearly everybody, has a part to play in the conduct of world affairs. This fragmentation will no doubt lead to in-depth reforms of the UN organisation and of governments.

### **The Global Digital Solidarity Fund**

The Digital Solidarity Fund is an initiative on the part of the President of Senegal Abdoulaye Wade, put forward during the World Summit for the Information Society (WSIS) held in Geneva in 2003.

The aim of this NGO is to reduce the digital divide throughout the world by financing projects for the development of IT and communication in the most underprivileged countries.

The fund, financed by a voluntary contribution of 1% on purchases of IT equipment or services by public authorities or companies, redistributes these donations for specific development projects. Today, 11 pilot projects in Africa are in progress.

The Fund is clearly in line with the «Millennium » Project launched by Kofi Annan in 2002. ([www.dsf-fsn.org](http://www.dsf-fsn.org))

## **The emergence of «intellectual diplomacy»**

The term «intellectual diplomacy» has gathered fresh momentum on the international scene. While still referring to the process of developing strategic thinking in international politics, pressure from civil society (NGOs, foundations, think tanks, universities) has pushed this expression into the forefront of the debate. The vision behind preventing a H5N1 pandemic, «the Geneva initiative», the idea of sustainable development, all constitute examples of these new ways of approaching problems that are initiated more by civil society or individuals than by governments. However, this «intellectual diplomacy» does not necessarily mean the same thing in Washington, Brussels or Geneva, where views differ radically as regards the process of deliberation and action.

### **A rapid review of the current situation**

First of all, governments do recognise the value of these propositions and try to take them into account. A report produced at the end of 2005 by the Foreign Affairs Committee of the French National Assembly put forward the resolution (N° 2338) proposing «intellectual diplomacy». Noting the influence of American intellectuals from universities, think tanks and non-governmental organisations, Jean-Louis Bianco (PS) expressed concern about France's weakness in this area. He proposed dealing with the

problem by involving both France and Europe in a creative process aimed at developing «intellectual diplomacy».

Furthermore, while links have always existed between diplomacy and intellectuals (especially through training and research establishments such as the Kennedy School, the London School of Economics or HEI in Geneva), traditional diplomacy tended to use intellectual expertise for its own purposes. What is new today is the emergence of an autonomous role for think tanks and NGOs in the debate on international relations. The initiative has changed sides.

By way of illustration, let us briefly examine three examples from Washington:

- In 1980, the Heritage Foundation in Washington published the «Mandate for leadership», a kind of manual on governance for use by the White House. Ronald Reagan, United States president from 1981 to 1989, applied the basic principles of this work, particularly to foreign policy in the context of the arms race with the «Strategic Defense Initiative», better known as «star wars». It contributed to putting an end to the cold war.

- In 1997, a neo-conservative group presented the «Project for the New American Century», of which certain foreign policy elements such as «preventive strikes» or «rogue countries» were adopted by the Bush administration in the Iraq conflict.

- More recently in 2005, via the «Progressive Policy Institute» the Democrats proposed a new vision of American foreign policy. In a document entitled «Progressive Internationalism», this think tank offered the idea that American interests would be best served in a safer world with more individual liberty and democracy. The fundamental idea being to use persuasion rather than coercion. We can bet that the future democratic candidate will largely draw his/her inspiration from this report.

In North America these practices have undergone considerable expansion particularly, but not only, since the 70s with the

burgeoning conservative think tanks. Today, it may be supposed that without these conservative ideas, American foreign policy would be less ideologically oriented. The Bush administration hired no less than twenty «brains» all coming from the «American Enterprise Institute» (AEI), one of Washington's most powerful think tanks. It also receives input from other institutions such as the «Brookings Institution», the «Heritage Foundation» and

*These new practices, increasingly imposed by civil society, lead to a redefinition of roles that enables each player to contribute to the common good.*

also the «Council for Foreign Relations». It should be remembered that not all American think tanks are conservative in their orientation, but all make significant contributions to the discussion regarding the foreign policy agenda.

James Mac Gann<sup>1</sup>, the leading specialist in think tanks, estimates their number at more than 1'500 in the United States. Looking more closely at their contributions, a clear overall trend may be identified, namely their focus on American global leadership. With this one-sided approach, they promote the vision of separate worlds and neglect more contemporary kinds of relationship such as «soft power» or the «multi-stakeholder» approach currently under evaluation in other centres.

These new practices, increasingly imposed by civil society in the context of international relations, lead to a redefinition of roles and to enabling all players to make their contribution to the definition of a common policy. On the issue of the environment, Rio then Kyoto saw civil society take a major part in the global policy discussion. Their influence, the positions they adopted and also their intellectual input have since then continued to grow.

---

<sup>1</sup> Mc Gann, Think Tanks and Civil Societies, Catalysts for ideas and Action, Transaction Publishers, 2000

Even if most of these practices stem from the Anglo-Saxon world, there are today 3'000 other think tanks around the world, the strength of which is slowly but surely growing, and which are looking at other ways to approach international relations. Brussels and Geneva are of particular importance. We will be examining these centres of international politics in the next two sections, and will see how a tacit agreement on task-sharing has over the years come to be.

## The emergence of «intellectual diplomacy»: Brussels

Europe is evaluating a new form of diplomacy based on propositions emanating from its think tanks. Known as «intellectual diplomacy», this approach to policy development is initiated outside the hushed atmosphere of public institutions, and in an open debate of ideas under the media spotlight. After a long period of Anglo-Saxon influence, notably through establishments such as the famous «Chatham House», reflection on Europe is now opening up to include an enlarged Europe.

Although the European Union in its current form is the legacy of several outstanding politicians like Winston Churchill or Robert Schumann, it was first envisioned by the intellectuals. Jean Monnet is often quoted as the founding father, the man who conceived modern Europe. After the Second World War, his thinking was entirely guided by the vision of uniting the people of Europe in freedom and in all their diversity. His method clearly prefigures current practices of Brussels «intellectual diplomacy», notably as regards the new European think tanks.

A short review would be appropriate to justify this.

In a recent publication<sup>2</sup>, now a reference on the subject, Stephen Boucher and Jacques Delors' think tank team «Notre Europe» paints a clear portrait of the emergence of the intellectual contribution to thinking in Europe. Of the 149 European think tanks reviewed, representing no less than 3'000 researchers, 36 are



dedicated to questions of the construction of Europe. Even if the majority is not based in Brussels, they are active contributors to the discussion and are beginning to exert significant influence.

The authors of this study take the view that the situation cannot be compared with that of Washington, neither in terms of the volume of propositions, nor in terms of the influence exerted. The reason most often put forward is that the movement is still in its early days. Whereas the principal American think tanks were set up between the post-war years and the 70s, the same movement emerged much later in Europe (the first of them some 20 years later). On the other hand, according to the same sources these think tanks have been very well received in political circles, as it would seem that in Brussels there is a huge demand for an efficient market for ideas. The think tanks from the countries having recently joined are already finding their feet in the European capital, with approaches and methods increasingly similar to Anglo-Saxon practices.

There are, however, three specificities which distinguish them from their American counterparts: their input is focused on questions of European construction, their headquarters tend to be located in the member countries rather than in Brussels, and their financing is still inadequate. Nonetheless, their influence is growing constantly – we can evaluate this evolution based on some good examples.

- In Brussels during the 80s, the «Kangaroo Group» helped instil a new dynamism into the debate on the four founding principles of the European Union, namely free movement of goods, services, people and capital. All this gave a certain impetus to the debate following the 1985 publication of the «white paper» on the interior market. The Swiss know this issue of the four freedoms

---

<sup>2</sup> L'Europe et ses Think Tanks: un potentiel inaccompli, oct. 2004, Notre Europe [www.notre-europe.asso.fr](http://www.notre-europe.asso.fr)

well, as it led to the referendums on the bilateral agreements (which were approved by the people in 2000 and 2005).

- In 1989, the «Delors report» took up the suggestions of the 1988 study published by the «Centre for European Policy Studies» (CEPS) on economic and monetary unification, which led to the creation of a single currency.

- Similarly, the «white paper» on industrial policy published in 1993 by the European Commission was mainly inspired by the Brussels «Forward Studies Unit» think tank.

- Lastly and also more recently, the «Centre for European Reform», no doubt the most influential think tank due to regular articles in the Anglo-Saxon press, has taken a view regarding the construction of Europe. With ideas close to those of Tony Blair on the national priority, on liberalism and on pro-Atlantist policy, this think tank has become most popular even among European institutions. It effectively proposes greater consolidation of the European institutions and less enlargement. Thanks to its ability to make a reasonable and well-documented intellectual contribution, it has achieved a certain eminence in political circles.

*The emergence of Think Tanks' intellectual offer in the process of world reflexion has become one of the main characteristics of our times.*

While succinct, this overview should not omit to mention certain national think tanks which are of interest to Brussels for several reasons, such as the «Institut Français des Relations Internationales» (IFRI) in France, the «Fondation Bertelsman» in Germany, «Chatham House» in England, the «Istituto degli Affari Internazionali» (IAI) in Italy. Furthermore, the think tanks of members having recently joined the EEC, such as the «Free Market Institute» (Lithuania) or the «Open Society Institute»

in Budapest, are likewise beginning to exert their influence in Brussels.

Henceforth, a wind of change is blowing in Brussels: the intellectuals have regained the initiative over the technocrats. Ideas are once again first debated before being implemented by civil servants on a purely pragmatic basis. The spirit of Jean Monnet has returned to encourage competitive intellectual thinking in the context of revived political discussions. It is however to be hoped that the debate will go beyond the issue of European construction alone.

In this concert of international relations, Geneva is taking a leading role, one setting it apart from Washington and Brussels. This will be the subject of the following section.

## The emergence of «intellectual diplomacy»: Geneva

In the course of a few years, Geneva has become a preferred location for thinking about important world issues. Thanks to the existence of numerous think tanks, international companies and NGOs, new schools of thought emerge on major world issues such as commerce, standards, telecommunications, health and the environment. A new form of diplomacy is born: it is called «intellectual diplomacy».

Historically, Geneva achieved growing recognition in the international context thanks to the initiatives of certain outstanding personalities. By their actions, Henri Dunand (Red Cross), Woodrow Wilson (League of Nations), William Rappard (HEI), contributed to shape International Geneva as it is today. However, being too often limited to a political role of providing so-called “good offices”, Berne has always hesitated between the task of offering a venue for negotiations and that of developing Geneva as a centre of excellence for international initiatives. Concerns regarding the quality of the accommodation available for several international organisations have tended to take precedence over the efforts required for creating favourable conditions to permit

the emergence of «intellectual diplomacy». Nonetheless, despite this real ambiguity and in accordance with the tradition of taking initiatives on its own, Geneva has been able to play an original and respected role in creative diplomacy.

### **Between «soft» and «hard» governance: the Centre for the Democratic Control of Armed Forces**

On the initiative of the Swiss government, a rather original organisation was set up in 2000 in Geneva: the «Geneva Centre for the Democratic Control of Armed Forces» (DCAF). Its task is to encourage and support governments and civil society in their efforts to reinforce the democratic and civil control of armed security forces, and to promote the reform of the security sector in line with democratic norms. A true think tank, the centre makes available research skills, practical experience and information. In the service of governments, parliaments, international organisations, though also non-governmental bodies and universities, the DCAF acts as a bridge between the «soft governance» players, but in a «hard» governance environment!  
([www.dcaf.ch](http://www.dcaf.ch))

## **Humanitarianism in the cause of demining**

In 1997, several nations signed a treaty banning anti-personnel mines. Since then 152 nations have ratified or approved this treaty, better known as the «Ottawa Conventions». In 2001, the «Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining» was tasked with following up the implementation of the treaty, and also with setting up a database of all available knowledge and information on the subject. The GICHD, a real international centre on demining knowledge, constitutes an intellectual, legal and practical reference available to governments and their agencies in their efforts to increase awareness of the impact of anti-personnel mines on humanity, and to limit the deployment of these weapons. Jody Williams, the figurehead of this movement and Nobel Peace Prize winner has become the ambassador for the international campaign to ban mines. ([www.gichd.ch](http://www.gichd.ch))

## **A think tank for peace and security**

The «Geneva Centre for Security Policy» (GCSP), established in 1995, is listed as an active organisation in the field of peace and security. The GCSP proposes education, research and an opportunity for dialogue, and makes a significant contribution to the world programme «Partnership for Peace». Strongly focused on making practical contributions, it uses its extensive network to provide support to areas of the world in difficulty. This fairly recent form of action has acted as a precursor to contemporary diplomacy and has contributed to the emergence of «soft governance», alongside other initiatives from the Geneva Forum, the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR), or the Programme for Strategic and International Studies (PSIS). ([www.gcsp.ch](http://www.gcsp.ch))

By way of illustration, we will cite just four particularly representative examples among many others:

- In 1973, Orio Giarini set up in Geneva the first institution focused on the insurance sector and on risk. Bringing together the principal players from the private sector (80 companies), this institution produces the best assessments available in its field. The «Geneva Association» is remarkably well focused and has excellent connections; its influence on the world agenda for insurance and risk is considerable. Although relatively unknown among the public, it is highly active on issues as important as ageing populations, work for senior citizens and the risks of natural disasters.

*Geneva's role as a place for thinking about the major global economic and political issues*

- Klaus Schwab has been running his Davos Forum since 1971. It offers the various world governance players a new discussion format for debating economic and political issues. The huge success and the considerable media interest generated by the Geneva professor demonstrates the fundamental change in Geneva's role as the place for thinking about the major, global economic and political issues. From then on, there can be no doubt as to the positioning of Geneva and «intellectual diplomacy». As further proof, even the Swiss diplomatic corps hastens to participate at the Forum. The initiative has changed sides.

- The «World Business Council for Sustainable Development» was set up in 1991 on the initiative of Stephan Schmidheiny. This institution, financed entirely by the private sector, not only advocated the term «sustainable» but was also its principal initiator. Today, its rich intellectual output continues to influence worldwide debate, particularly though not only within the large companies that finance it. Its direct influence on deciders brings little exposure to the public at large, but the impact of its activities has repercussions on our everyday lives. This institution, which is

established in Conches, near Geneva, well reflects the paradigm shift towards a diplomacy which is both open to private initiatives and focused on the key issues for managing world affairs.

- In December 2003, the media spotlight fell on a young university graduate from Geneva, Alexis Keller, a partner in the «Geneva Initiative», who offered a different strategy for solving the Middle East crisis. It is a typical example of «intellectual diplomacy». Alexis Keller and his group proposed a political agenda with no real diplomatic power supporting them, and in the absence of a representative mandate from any country. Such major changes in the management of international affairs should lead Switzerland to set up a «think office» environment rather than one of «good offices».

These four examples demonstrate very well how International Geneva's situation has evolved. Relying on the initiatives of exceptional people, Geneva is profiled as the real place to consider world governance. The methods adopted and the players have changed, but the results are truly impressive.

While Washington is certainly very well placed as regards power politics, or «hard power» to take the term used by Joseph Nye, former President of the «Kennedy School », Geneva is emerging little by little as the theatre for «soft power». Certain diplomats now use the term «soft governance» when referring to this new reality in the governance of world affairs.

While Brussels is focusing most of its intellectual efforts on European construction, Geneva differs from the European capital by its more global orientation towards the major issues facing the world. This specificity has allowed Geneva to open the debate to specialists from civil society, from NGOs and from companies, all of whom have understood what is at stake and have no hesitation in participating (for example almost 200 international NGOs have headquarters in Geneva). We are therefore witnessing amazing advances in the process of reflection aimed at finding solutions for specific problems in what may be called a multi-stakeholder environment. By this we mean the partici-

pation by all concerned in the debate: governments, companies and civil society.

In conclusion, thanks to the ICRC Geneva was the place to which the world came to lick its wounds; it may now be said that it has become the place of reference for considering the major issues facing our world.



## **GLAND (CH): World capital for the protection of nature**

Founded in 1948 and now established at Gland, Switzerland, the IUCN (International Union for Conservation of Nature and Nature Resources), better known as the «World Conservation Union» is a non-governmental organisation with more than 1000 employees in 62 countries. With ties to 82 countries, 111 government agencies, more than 800 NGOs and some 10'000 scientists or experts around the world, the IUCN is the largest network worldwide of partners for the protection of nature.

Dedicated to obtaining scientific data for the protection of nature and its implementation in the field, the organisation possesses unique knowledge that it makes available to governments, civil society and the private sector. It takes part in the major projects for nature conservation such as those of the «Millennium» project, the protection of forests, of threatened species and of national parks, as well as the conservation of parks in conflict zones.

Over time, the IUCN has become a key partner for «soft governance» on issues involving nature. ([www.iucn.org](http://www.iucn.org))

### **WWF: The panda as a symbol for protection**

Set up in 1961 to protect threatened wildlife species, the World Wildlife Fund immediately adopted the panda as the symbol of their cause. Today, the international WWF has its headquarters in Gland, Switzerland, and more than 100 independent agencies with over than 5 million supporters throughout the world.

By involving companies on behalf of its cause since the 1990's, the organisation defends bio-diversity, natural renewal of resources and reduced pollution in order to ensure a harmonious future between humankind and nature. The WWF thus awards its label to those partners implementing best practices. Thanks to its non-binding approach to, but a shared concern with its partners, the WWF has ensured the implementation of a large number of major projects. ([www.wwf.org](http://www.wwf.org))

## **Lausanne: World capital for sport**

The city on the shores of Lake Geneva is home to the main international sports federations. The most important of them is the International Olympic Committee in Lausanne, responsible for the event with the widest media coverage in the world: the Olympic Games. A Frenchman, Pierre de Coubertin, initiated the Olympic movement more than 100 years ago. The goal of his Charter was to contribute to building a better and more peaceful world by educating young people via sports practised without any discrimination and in a spirit of mutual comprehension, friendship, solidarity and fair-play.

By clearly following such explicit overall objectives, through these governing bodies sport takes on a political role. Sport cements national structures, but its essential role is one of education, and in certain poorer countries it plays a key part in the development of the educational and sports infrastructure. By interacting with governments and companies around the world, the Olympic movement indisputably constitutes an example of «soft governance». ([www.olympic.org](http://www.olympic.org))

## A role for Geneva and the region



Thanks to its history and to the massive presence of governmental, para-governmental and non-governmental organisations, Geneva and the Lake Geneva region is where this change is taking place. Geneva is certainly not the only player in this context; other cities in the world also seek to play significant parts.

For this reason it is insufficient to identify potential as we have done so far; we need to identify the keys to success. Joseph Nye already designated and summarised three criteria in his interview. They follow in the form of seven propositions for implementation.

Joseph Nye suggests that Geneva should reinforce the following:

- The attractiveness of Geneva city and the region by creating new networks with which to exert influence. As we have seen, such networks are made up of NGOs, the unions, think tanks, intellectuals and by civil society in general.
- A first-rate academic and research centre built around a university faculty, but also think tanks and other private research bodies.
- The competence built up in the whole region, based on skills and abilities, on information and knowledge in the field of «soft

governance». The Lake Geneva region would be transformed into a kind of modern-time «Library of Alexandria», fabled for its new global ideas on «soft governance».

The platform thus established in the region would generate the intellectual and practical competitiveness necessary for the centre to lay claim to its position as a citadel for change. For this, new structures will be necessary to allow the players to mutually benefit and grow in this multi-stakeholder environment. The new cluster of various competences could achieve this objective. We have therefore analysed and distilled out seven clear objectives:

1. A reallocation of assignments on the global level entitling Geneva to adopt a positioning built on «soft governance».
2. An attractive urban strategy. Only Geneva city and the Lake Geneva region as a whole could be considered to be a viable entity, and hence attractive for such a role.

*The Lake Geneva region must undergo fundamental change to secure its future as one of the main world centres of «soft governance»*

3. Diplomatic creativity. It is necessary for Switzerland to continue its efforts notably by pursuing the policy of establishing think tanks begun in the 1990s. The principle of «think offices» should replace that of «good offices», and take its place as the new vision for Swiss foreign policy.

4. Anchor the networks. While many already exist in Geneva, the «soft governance» networks need a base. Perhaps a «network of networks».

5. A centre for academic excellence. The centre will need both public and private support during the period of reorganisation. Private initiatives, notably from bodies such as the WEF, IMD or other think tanks in the region could lead to still greater competitiveness.

6. A common «soft governance» data centre. It would help consolidate past, present and future work, notably by pooling competences to the benefit of all.

7. A local political agenda, with top priority of the local and regional authorities to promote and support this new positioning.

This agenda of proposed actions, developed in part thanks to the contributions of the personalities whose views are expressed in this booklet, brings us to the close of the first part of the process: that of taking cognisance of the situation and formulating preliminary recommendations. Our task does not stop there; it will continue with three booklets to come, one every six months, to complete our understanding and views with regard to this future process. At this stage therefore, any conclusions would be premature.







## ACRONYMS & ABBREVIATIONS

<b>AELE/EFTA</b>	Association européenne de libre-échange / European Free Trade Association
<b>AEI</b>	American Enterprise Institute
<b>AI</b>	Amnesty International
<b>CASIN</b>	Centre for Applied Studies in International Negotiations
<b>CICR/ICRC</b>	Comité International de la Croix Rouge / International Committee of the Red Cross
<b>CD</b>	Conférence pour le désarmement / Conference on Disarmament
<b>CEE</b>	Commission économique européenne
<b>CEPS</b>	Centre for European Policy Studies
<b>CIJ/ICJ</b>	Cour International de Justice / International Court of Justice
<b>CIO/IOC</b>	Comité International Olympique / International Olympic Committee
<b>CPI/ICC</b>	Cour Pénale Internationale / International Criminal Court
<b>DCAF</b>	Organisation for the Democratic Control of Armed Forces
<b>GAVI</b>	Global Alliance for Vaccines and Immunization
<b>GICHD</b>	Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining
<b>CNUCED/ UNCTAD</b>	Conférence des Nations Unies sur le Commerce et le Développement / United Nations Confe- rence on Trade and Development
<b>CONGO</b>	Conférence des Organisations Non-Gouverne- mentales ayant des relations consultatives avec les Nations Unies / Conference of NGOs in Consultative Status with the United Nations Economic and Social Council
<b>EDB</b>	Economic Development Board (of Singapore)
<b>ETI</b>	Ethical Trading Initiative
<b>FIIM</b>	Fédération Internationale de l'Industrie du Médicament / International Federation of Pharmaceutical Manufacturers Associations

<b>FSC</b>	Forest Stewardship Council
<b>GIEC/IPCC</b>	Groupe gouvernemental d'experts sur l'évolution du climat / Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change
<b>GRID</b>	Global Resource Information Database, Istituto degli Affari Internazionali
<b>IFRI</b>	Institut Français des Relations Internationales
<b>IMD</b>	International Institute for Management Development
<b>ISO</b>	International Organisation for Standardisation / Organisation Internationale de Normalisation
<b>IHEID</b>	Institut des Hautes Etudes Internationales et de Développement
<b>MDT</b>	Multi-Drug Therapy / Thérapie Multi-Médicamen-teuse
<b>MMV</b>	Medicines for Malaria Venture
<b>MSC</b>	Marine Stewardship Council
<b>MSF</b>	Médecins Sans Frontières
<b>OMC/WTO</b>	Organisation Mondiale du Commerce / World Trade Organisation
<b>OMM/WMO</b>	Organisation Mondiale Météorologique / World Meteorological Organisation
<b>OMPI/WIPO</b>	Organisation Mondiale de la Propriété,
<b>OMS/WHO</b>	Organisation Mondiale de la Santé / World Health Organisation
<b>ONG/NGO</b>	Organisation non-gouvernementale / Non-governmental organisation
<b>OPEP/OPEC</b>	Organisation des Pays Exportateurs de Pétrole / Organisation of the Petroleum Exporting Countries
<b>PESI/PSIS</b>	Programme d'Etudes Stratégiques et de Sécurité Internationales / Programme for Strategic and International Studies
<b>PIB/IPB</b>	Bureau International pour la Paix / International Peace Bureau
<b>PNUE/UNEP</b>	Programme des Nations Unies pour l'Environnement / United Nations Environment Programme

## WHAT IS SOFT GOVERNANCE?

<b>RUIG/GIAN</b>	Réseau Universitaire international de Genève / Geneva International Academic Network
<b>SAN</b>	Sustainable Agriculture Network
<b>UNICEF</b>	The United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund now United Nations Children's Fund
<b>UNIDIR</b>	Institut des Nations Unies pour la Recherche sur le Désarmement / The United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research
<b>UIT/ITU</b>	Union Internationale des Télécommunications / International Telecommunication Union
<b>WBCSD</b>	World Business Council for Sustainable Development
<b>WEF</b>	World Economic Forum
<b>WSIS/SMSI</b>	World Summit on Information Society / Sommet Mondial de la Société de l'Information
<b>WWF</b>	World Wildlife Fund

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

BASSAND, Michel [2004]: «La métropolisation de la Suisse à Lausanne»: Presses polytechniques et universitaires romandes: Lausanne

BLANCHARD, Francis [2004]: «L'Organisation internationale du travail. De la guerre froide à un nouvel ordre mondial»: Seuil: Paris

CHANCELLERIE FEDERALE [2005]: «La Suisse et l'ONU. Rapport du Conseil fédéral»: Chancellerie fédérale, Berne

COMTESSE, Xavier [2006] «La soft governance: interview de Joseph Nye»: L'Hebdo N° 42: Lausanne

COMTESSE, Xavier [2006] «Emergence de la diplomatie intellectuelle»: Le Temps: Genève

DOUGLAS, Mary [2004] «Comment pensent les institutions»: Editions La Découverte: Paris

ECO'DIAGNOSTIC [2005]: «Yearbook of International Organizations: Guide to global civil society networks»: vol 5: Genève

FAVEZ, Jean Claude [1990]: «Genève et les organisations internationales» in: Genève, Ville internationale, Encyclopédie de Genève, vol VIII, 160-180: Genève

FREYMOND, Jacques [1990]: «Genève, ville internationale»: Encyclopédie de Genève, vol VIII, 187-189: Genève

FRIEDMAN, Thomas [2005]: «The world is flat»: Farrar Straus & Giroux: New York

GENEVA NETWORK [2006]: «Thoughts for the Future»: [www.GenevaNetwork.net](http://www.GenevaNetwork.net) : Genève

GODET, Blaise [2005]: «L'avenir de la Genève internationale»: Conférence du Représentant permanent de Suisse auprès des Organisations internationales à Genève: Genève

METTAN, Guy [2004]: «Genève, ville de paix. De la Conférence de 1954 sur l'Indochine à la coopération internationale»: Editions Slatkine: Genève

METTAN, Guy [2006]: «Le Feu au Lac, Vers une région métropolitaine lémanique», Ouvrage collectif sous la direction de Xavier Comtesse et Cédric Van der Poel: Think Tank «Avenir Suisse»: NZZ Libro: Zurich

NOTRE EUROPE, [2006], Stephen Boucher et Martine Royo, «Les Think Tanks»: Editions du Félin: Paris

NYE, Joseph [1990] «Bound to Lead: The Changing nature of American Power»: Basic Books: New York

NYE, Joseph [2004] «Soft Power: The Mean to success in World Politics»: PublicAffairs: Washington

PETERS, B. G et PIERRE, J (1998) «Gouvernance without Government? Rethinking Public Administration»: Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory: Vol 8, N°2: 223 - 224

ROSSIER, Roland [2007] «Le nouveau visage de la Genève internationale»: L'Hebdo N°6: Lausanne

SENARCLENS, Pierre de [1988]: «La crise des Nations Unies»: PUF: Paris

SERVICE CANTONAL DE STATISTIQUES DE GENEVE, DEEE [2005]: «Les Organisations internationales à Genève. Résultat de l'enquête 2004. Aspects statistiques»: Genève

SLIM, Hugo (2007): (Geneva's future: reflections on the role of values - based - city»: International Affairs 83: 109 - 125: Londres

STEPCYNSKI-MAITRE, Maryvonne [2002]: «L'esprit de Genève de Robert de Traz. Retour aux origines du mythe de la Genève internationale»: Editions Slatkine: Genève

STOCKER, G (1998): «Governance as Theory: Five Propositions»: International Social Science Journal: vol. 50. N°1: 17 - 28

VALLEJO Nancy et Pierre HAUSELMANN [2004]: «Governance and Multi-stakeholder Processes»: IISD: [www.iisd.org](http://www.iisd.org): Canada

## INDEX

PREFACE	6
Micheline Calmy-Rey	
FOREWORD	10
Guillaume Pictet - Tatjana Darany	
THE EMERGENCE OF A NEW FORM OF GOVERNANCE	13
Soft power: a short definition	17
Soft governance: an possible definition	19
Some examples of soft governance	23
The forces driving change	29
Globalisation	
The impact of new technology	
The new responsibilities	
The future of soft governance	
THE PERSPECTIVE OF THOSE DRIVING CHANGE	35
«From soft power to soft governance»	39
Joseph Nye	
«Soft governance in action»	48
Daniel Vasella	
«Between rights and demands»	53
Jakob Kellenberger	
«Towards intellectual diplomacy»	59
Luzius Wasescha	

«Geneva, a city of intelligent globalisation» Roger de Weck	65
«The beginnings of a new role» Martine Brunschwig Graf	69
A VENUE OF CHOICE FOR CONSIDERING THE ISSUES FACING THE WORLD	75
Short history	79
The modern-day era	84
New media	88
The future for governance	90
The emergence of «intellectual diplomacy» A rapid review of the current situation The emergence of «intellectual diplomacy»: Brussels The emergence of «intellectual diplomacy»: Geneva	92
A role for Geneva and the region	107
ACRONYMS & ABBREVIATIONS	112
BIBLIOGRAPHY	115



With special thanks to:

Members of the Board of the *Fondation pour Genève*, and particularly Ms Françoise Buffat and Mr Ivan Pictet, as well as the members of the Geneva Network group, especially Ms Maria Cattai and Mr Philippe Burrin.

We also wish to thank Ms Iris Bonnet, Ms Manal Fouad and Ms Michka Comtesse as well and Messrs Fred Krimgold and Antoine Maurice for their valuable help in the development of this booklet.

Published by the *Fondation pour Genève* - April 2007  
[www.fondationpourgeneve.ch](http://www.fondationpourgeneve.ch)

Graphic artist:	Mathieu Liehti
Proofreader:	Frederick Kermisch
Printers:	Imprimerie du Cachot, Geneva

















