

Speech by Maurice Cosandey

Good evening My Friends,

When we studied, in the Vézelay Group, the issues related to the major technological risks, we soon discovered their interdependence with other issues of an ethical, political, legal, economical, and sociological order, to quote just a few.

Let's take an example: What is the use of an international convention prohibiting chlorofluorocarbons—the famous CFCs—which are destroying the ozone layer in the stratosphere, if a country that has signed for its own territory promotes the manufacturing and the marketing of these products in a non-signatory country, rather than providing this country with the know-how and expertise to make a harmless substitute product

Here we are entering the vast realm of human behavior. It is clear that our current behavior is leading us straight into chaos.

Since we do not want to go there, how, then, should we change human behavior? Is there a way of doing that?

This is a fundamental question. We cannot expect nature, which generated the hominization process in Africa, to come to our rescue quickly enough. It would take thousands of years.

Man claims to be free. So man himself must find the ways and means of his own transformation.

Changing one's heart is a beautiful mission. The meeting at Vaux de Cernay in 1993, a world meeting of 60 persons, showed me how great was the aspiration to a more coherent world. I had the feeling, at the end of the debates that led to the Platform for a Responsible and United World, that a number of participants had changed their heart. There's a mystery in the opening of one's mind and in communion.

Hence the idea of the Alliance, a vast network covering the planet, connecting the local sphere to the global sphere and providing information for action.

At the beginning, however, I was skeptical. To operate properly, a network needs steering. I thought that it would be necessary to set up some form of management.

Having worked for a private company, I had trouble accepting the idea of self-organization. This question was extensively discussed and the principle of self-organization was chosen.

However, as the process grew more complex, a certain degree of democratic leadership proved necessary. So, we created the Alliance International Facilitation Team. It is not an institution of power, as the power is in the hands of each Ally, who contributes his ideas, his work and his initiatives.

The Assembly being held today and in the coming days is only one step in a long process. The strength and the originality of the proposals it will generate will be the sign that the Alliance has become sustainable and autonomous.

Speech by Gustavo Marin

The Alliance for a Responsible, Plural and United World saw the light in 1994 ... a very intense period at the end of the twentieth century: genocide in Rwanda, Mandela's victory in South Africa, wars in the Balkans in Europe, difficult post-dictatorship transitions in Latin America, economic expansion and regional wars in Asia, growing poverty and extreme poverty in the South, as well as in the North, an information society that has accelerated our daily pace as never before ...

In the world that was opened after the fall of the Berlin wall, we took off from the Platform for a Responsible and United World to move forward, tenaciously, along the three Alliance paths. In 1995, we organized continental meetings in relation to the U.N. World Summit for Social Development in Copenhagen and we began a World Alliance against social Apartheid. Then, going down a path more independent from government institutions, we organized six continental meetings in December 1997, in São Paulo, Bangalore, Algiers, Barcelona, Kigali and in this very region of the North of France. In 1999, we elected an International Facilitation Team, in an attempt to have a democratic body to rely on to keep each other informed. During those same years, and especially in 2000 and 2001, we organized some one hundred meetings with all kinds of actors. Young people, farmers, artists, military personnel, businessmen, scientists and many more, came together to deliberate on all kinds of themes, such as education, sustainable soil management, regulation of the financial markets, and world governance. You will find all of these topics and many more in the Proposal Papers we are circulating. In addition, we are contributing to drafting a fundamental cross-cultural Charter, which we are also taking this opportunity to circulate.

This is just beginning. The Alliance is only seven years old. It's no more than a child. It can continue its course down a wide and turbulent world, but that will depend on us and on many more who are not here today, but who are still moving onward fighting for a responsible, plural, and united world. I hope we shall succeed, in this meeting, in establishing imperishable links that will help us keep going, learning from our diversity.

An Argentine friend of mine said, once: "The Alliance is like an archipelago: but we are not a series of islands separated by the sea ... we are separated ... by what unites us." Another friend of mine, an Indian, said: "The Alliance is like a firefly: suddenly we see it shining, then suddenly we don't see it at all, then it shines again." And another Chinese friend said: "When you dream alone, it's no more than a dream. But if many of us have the same dream, one day it will come true."

But if we do not want this dream to turn into a nightmare, and less into a collective nightmare, this determination to keep fighting is now more urgent than ever, with everyone rooted in their own roots and walking together with everyone else.

The twenty-first century is opening with deep pain, with old and new challenges. Will we be able to avoid local, regional, and world wars? Will we be able to reduce extreme poverty and the diseases that are hopelessly eating away at the lives of peoples, especially of children? Will we be capable of succeeding in exercising a justice that impedes the impunity of dictators and enables the rule of law and peaceful coexistence to triumph over those who impose wars, just as over those who make attempts on the lives of innocent people? Will we be able to keep an upper hand over science and technology, and especially over the

information systems that have altered our pace of living, over the time that is indispensable for dialogue, for listening to others, to the birds, to look at flowers?

My own experience has made me an optimist. My grandmother used to say that it was better to go cheerful than sad. I am Chilean and I am also a French citizen. I rather think that I have my roots in the Quechua people, this people still living and resisting in the mountains of the Andes. But today, in such a globalized world, one feels, or aspires to feel like a citizen of the whole world. So, as I am also Chilean, allow me to end these few words with some verses by our poet, Chilean and from the whole world, Pablo Neruda, because he expresses a thousand times better than I do this deep feeling of humanity, by which we are united in this meeting:

The poet says:

Hoy nacerás del pueblo como entonces.

Hoy saldrás del carbón y del rocío.

Hoy llegarás a sacudir las puertas

con manos maltratadas,

con pedazos de alma sobreviviente,

con racimos de miradas que no extinguió la muerte...

Today as then, you will be born of the people

Today you will come out of the coal and the dew

Today you will come to shake the doors

With injured hands,

With pieces of surviving soul,

With clusters of gazes that death did not extinguish.

Thank you very much.

Speech by Nacéra Aknak Khan

The youth network, which we chose to call the "Youth Workshop", was created in May 1992. So it actually preceded the movement that originated from the circulation of the Platform for a Responsible and United World in 1994.

May 1992 was also an important date since, one month later, the "Earth Summit" was held in Rio; and, as young people, we strongly felt the need to attend this event, to express our fears, our dreams, our responsibilities and our hopes through a Students Convention that we distributed at the Rio Summit.

Following that, this open space of public expression created by a summit that was supposed to be a one-shot event, was totally appropriated by the young people who were present. They had come from the entire world and were determined to continue exchanges and discussions on various issues related to the environment, education, citizenship, and many other crucial themes that must be addressed if we wish to build a better society. And following the course of events, we were able to measure the great fragility of young people facing a complex world where values, ethics, and morals are in a state of utter confusion.

Alas, today many young people are in the hands of violence. In many countries, the armed forces could not exist without the presence of children enrolled as soldiers. Over 300,000 children under the age of 18 are fighting and dying in 36 wars, in many countries of Africa, Asia, Europe, and Latin America.

In another form of violence, young people are used by a minority of people seeking power and blinded by irrational fanaticism. As you all well know, these youths are being instrumentalized, because they are poor and revolted by injustice, and this situation is due, among other causes, to a consumer model that is not adapted to the way of life of all people. This disequilibrium generates, of course, a gap between traditions and modernity, especially among the young people of certain societies in the developing countries.

I am really sorry to have to bother you with this sad reality but if we are really determined to build a society based on the values of peace, equality, and justice, it is urgent to seriously address this aspect.

So we cannot remain passive. Of course, we do not claim to be able to solve all these problems, but I am personally convinced that the accumulation of "small-scale" actions will generate the change we are hoping for.

In any case, in the Youth Workshop, we are aware of this reality, and we are aware that it is our duty and responsibility to tackle the issues.

It is urgent to step up cross-cultural exchanges between young people, especially through meetings and travelling, to help them discover the wealth and diversity that exist in the world, to offer them the tools that will enable them to remain connected with other youths throughout the world. We should educate children to become responsible citizens, who are able to meet the challenges of their time. And, of course, we must strengthen current youth organizations working for a positive social change, so as to show that there are other means than violence to express ideas and visions.

We should fight to ensure that young people from the South may travel without being humiliated. To sow this seed of justice that we are talking about, freedom of circulation should be guaranteed for all human beings, and in particular for young people, for travelling is the fundamental tool to promote mutual respect for our differences.

I have been in the Alliance for quite a while. Hundreds of meetings and encounters that we have had the chance to organize and to experience, physically or virtually (thanks to technology) have enriched me and have changed the course of my life. Personally, I have great expectations concerning this Assembly and I'm sure they will be answered, thanks to the wealth that each of you is offering just by attending.

We all know that many people out there, in the world, are losing confidence in the future. As citizens who have the chance of gathering here, we have, I think, a responsibility to show that they must not despair. For the values of life, of love, of peace, and of justice surely lie deep inside each of us, and by adding up all of our daily forms of behavior, we can bring about the change that our global society needs so much. Thank you.

Speech by Heloisa Primavera

Okay, I was given about three minutes to explain something that is very complex: What is a Workshop? Since three minutes are three minutes, I began by searching for an answer on the Web site, on the Internet page. Starting from that, I'll tell you all the rest, that which is not stated on the Internet. On the Internet, a workshop is defined as a group in charge of discussing and developing proposals on the major issues that affect our common future and are related to water, soils, the economy, democracy, and art. These Workshops were divided into four workgroups: Values and Culture, Economy and Society, Governance and Citizenship, Humanity and the Biosphere. But in the few minutes I have left, I will tell you about life in a Workshop during the past two years.

Life in a Workshop even implied changing the name of the workgroup under which we started. In the beginning, we called it "Economy and Society", and soon we called it "Socioeconomy in Solidarity Workgroup," because the answer could be found in this heading. And suddenly, here in the Northern hemisphere where social economy was already known, social economy gained a qualifier and became "Social Economy in Solidarity," and that is how it is called today. If you come to think of it, this change is not insignificant, considering how much time it usually takes words to change their meaning.

Then I would like to recall that the Workshops started off in a very fragmented manner; we tried to discuss the entire spectrum that each proposal was suppose to cover in each workgroup. And something extraordinary happened: we had hoped that all aspects and dimensions would relate to one another, but that's not what happened, only the most important things related to one another. And I can guarantee you that whoever has participated in a Workshop cannot say that they came out the same as when they entered. We were all deeply transformed by this experience.

It also seems important to me to tell you something else -- it is almost something I owe to our French companions: when we tried to translate the word "*chantier*," it was not exactly a "*taller*," because a *chantier* expresses the idea of a serious job, hard work, like road work, and in reality "*cantera*" in Spanish actually means "*pedrera*" in Portuguese, which is a stone-pit, a quarry, a site from where stones are hard to extract. But in Portuguese, on the other hand, "*canteiro*" has something to do with a flower garden. And that had an attractive connotation for the Alliance. We were attracted into these Workshops, which evoked gardens full of flowers, and when we came out we were convinced that they were indeed rather like quarries, where we had to extract stones, one by one. But we were happy because these Workshops had been places where we could make our deepest beliefs blossom, regarding the true meaning of each and everyone of our responsibility to each and everyone of us. This was not written in my paper, but since I have spoken very quickly and have cut off half of my speech, I will now demonstrate that it is true. Two weeks ago, in a slum house, in one of those really poor places in the vicinity of Buenos Aires, the end of the Workshop on Social Currency made it possible to develop, with the inhabitants of that place, three theorems that I would like to present to you.

The first is that poverty is a great misunderstanding, because we are rich. We are considered as poor, in fact we are rich. The second theorem is that solidarity, whatever you may think of it, is the best thing you can imagine. And the third theorem is that prosperity is our starting point and not our point of arrival, because we have nothing to do with economic indicators, with the accumulation of vouchers and bills that do not mean anything. What we are interested in is life, it is life here and now, the well-being of those who are close to us. And

we think that, thanks to this experience, we have really helped the Alliance be the beginning of the world we all wish to build: responsible, plural, and united in solidarity. Thank you very much.

Speech by Siddhartha

Dear Friends: I would like to begin my speech by telling you the story of a woman who attended our Asia Pacific Workshop in a small cultural center called "Fireflies." She was the poorest participant in the workshop. Her name was Sakama, she came from a very low cast. She didn't have water in her house, she had to walk a kilometer to get water. She didn't have electricity in her house. And yet, this woman, to my mind, got a lot out of the Alliance for a Responsible, Plural and Untied World, which is what this workshop was about. Sakama's mother died about a month ago, and she buried her in a corner of the small plot of land that belongs to her. The whole family was very upset. On the eleventh-day ceremony -- they have an eleventh-day ceremony -- beside the grave, Sakama's family came from all around. Some came walking because they were quite poor, some took a bus, covered about a hundred, two hundred kilometers, and came for this eleventh-day ceremony at the grave. They poured milk on the grave, they placed coconut flowers on the grave, they placed marigold flowers around the grave, they sang a little, they stood in silence, and then Sakama took a jack fruit tree, and planted the jack fruit tree along with her brothers, at the head of the grave. They planted this jack fruit sapling at the head of the grave and they watered the sapling. A few minutes later, she spoke to the group there, about two hundred people, farmers and poor peasants. She said: "This tree that my family plants is in memory of my mother. But this tree is not only a memory, this tree is going to take the energy of my mother as it grows up, and one day this tree will leave fruit. When we see this tree we will remember our mother, and when we eat the fruit of this tree one day, we will also remember her. This is a sacred tree."

In the same village, Sakama had a small Alliance women's group, and a few days later she spoke to the women in this group. The women in this group were concerned with questions of domestic violence, of savings and credit, the chemicalization of agriculture. So she spoke to the women in this group and she said: "When this tree grows up I will remember my mother. But if all of us in the village were to plant trees of remembrance, the whole village would be full of sacred trees. And if the whole village is full of sacred trees, there would be less pollution in the village, there would be obviously more oxygen, the earth would be more solid, there would be less soil erosion." And this was the discussion of Sakama.

I have chosen this story as a little example of the work of the Alliance. The Alliance has been involved with social engagement, the various dimensions of social engagement. The Alliance has been concerned with personal transformation. The Alliance has been concerned with connectedness to the Earth. This story is one dimension of the work of the Alliance, connectedness to the Earth. Because in the Asia Pacific Alliance a recurring theme has been that we are not merely individuals born to compete with each other in school, to compete with each other at the university, to compete with each other at the work spot, to climb vertically in competition. In the Alliance we have said we are persons, persons who function horizontally, persons who are connected with each other and connected with the planet Earth.

In the Alliance we have said we are not only persons, we are "interpersons." We are not only beings, we are "interbeings." And I think for all of us in the Alliance being here this evening and for the week that lies ahead of us, we are going to experience personal fulfillment, but also social solidarity, and connectedness with the sacred space of Lille. Thank you.

Introductory Speech by Pierre Calame

Tomorrow, Dear Friends, and for one week, we are going to operate in workshops. This evening is therefore an opportunity to discuss together the methods and objectives of this Assembly.

First of all, this Assembly is an ambition, a dream, a commitment, a collective adventure, and, perhaps, a prefiguration.

A dream of creating a dialogue among all the components of the global society, of talking together about our common affairs, with respect for our diversities.

A commitment: Since 1973, we had said that one day, through all our adventures, we would have to dare to come together, physically, with all our diversities.

Therefore, an adventure:

A collective adventure, which, I hope, we will share with you for one week.

We had to innovate quite a lot to design this Assembly and to organize its methods. There will be many errors, there will be many trials. We invite you to share in this collective research, this invention, this learning process. We invite you to show some patience for all the mistakes that we have the right to make and that can actually, together, become fantastic opportunities to learn what it might mean to be a global society where people try to talk to each other. And thus, we believe that this Assembly is also:

A prefiguration

All the "grand witnesses" you heard previously, people who tried to create something after World War II, have said it: our imperative duty in the fifty years to come is to lay the foundations of a peaceful world community, where diversity is respected. Therein lies our formidable challenge. This is what we have to make visible, through everything we are going to try and accomplish this week.

The format of the Assembly—400 persons, from all the continents and all the sectors of society—was guided by a few simple ideas. The Assembly, as any step forward, is simultaneously:

- a end and a means

This is because thousands of friends, throughout the world, in the Workshops, in the Socioprofessional Networks, in the Continental Meetings we mentioned previously, said to each other: we have to be ready for the Assembly in Lille. Our proposals have to be ready. They have to be translated. The meetings—that of the military, that of the jurists, that of the health workers, that of the peasants, that of the inhabitants—have to have been held! And this date in Lille became something of a magnet that guided us to organize our work. But we know that Lille is not an end. It is not an end to assemble 400 persons for one week. It is only the means to go further. An end and a means.

- combining and harmonizing the diversity and the unity of the world

We were obsessed with diversity. Obsession with the diversity of peoples and cultures, with all that entails in terms of logistical challenges to prepare them, the cross-cultural challenges, the linguistic challenges that we are about to experience. And we shall experience patience, all throughout this week, patience in listening to each other, in acknowledging the misunderstandings.

Even more complex is the diversity of the social and professional spheres.

As you have seen in each participant's presentation, we have leaders of working-class neighborhoods, family farmers' leaders, fishworkers' leaders, company associations, trade-unionists, engineers, political leaders, scientists, teachers, etc.

We believe that the world needs all these people. We believe that in a society that is increasingly top-down and where—as our friend Siddhartha said—everyone follows a separate path, these people should learn to talk together.

And then, we also have a diversity of challenges and evolutions: this was brought up earlier. The challenges we face are interrelated. We must accept that fact. We must learn to interconnect them. Indeed, since 1993, our entire effort has been, through forty different Thematic Workshops, to gradually build such necessary links.

Last, we have a diversity of opinions: As you will easily observe throughout this week, people were not chosen because they all think the same thing. Of course, they share a deep common conviction: they all consider themselves as responsible citizens of this planet, they are aware that the world is not a commodity, they all know that a global community remains to be built, they all believe in the value of dialogue. But beyond these common convictions, there is diversity of opinions and we have to appreciate this diversity.

This different forms of diversity will feed our ambition to build elements of unity.

- **A third challenge** has guided our choice of the Assembly's format. This challenge will complicate our methods, it may well surprise us, it will certainly involve trials and errors, it has already made us ask many questions. The issue is the following: on the one hand, we wanted to promote the extraordinary work that has been accomplished in the Workshops, in the Socioprofessional Networks, and in the Continental Assemblies; and yet, on the other hand, we cannot tell participants, "you are just here to approve what we have done."

We said that on the very day we would begin the Assembly, we would be starting from scratch again. It is indeed up to the participants themselves to define through the different stages of the Assembly, how they, in their extraordinary diversity, see the world challenges, how they see, in their extraordinary diversity, the way to responding to the common challenges.

Regarding this issue, let me simply invite participants to get ready for tomorrow by reading the document they have been given in seven languages on the breakthroughs. It sums up, as it were, the best of the Proposal Papers, and by focusing on the elements dealing with the Workshop they will be involved in tomorrow, with their socioprofessional sphere. This will help you prepare the work.

Our determination for democracy has led us to make two important choices.

The themes were not fixed beforehand. This has surprised all the participants. How can the organizers, who have initiated a World Assembly, who are financing it, not even announce what themes are going to be discussed?

Well, for us this approach was the other side of the coin of our ambition: the themes should emerge out of the discussion among the participants themselves, and it is up to us, all together, by developing the adequate methods, to relate this work to previous

accomplishments and to build, through the comparison of the results of the different Workshops, some common visions.

- The fourth challenge: to be both global and local.

We know that, nowadays, anything that happens in one place is influenced by the rest of the world. But conversely, we do not insist enough on the fact that, to grasp the world you should begin with local realities, with your concrete experience. You think the world with your feet. You think the world from your experience, from your local context.

Therefore, we wanted our Assembly to express this global dimension and, at the same time, we wanted our method to appreciate all our local work and experience. This is why we felt it was crucial to hold this Assembly downtown, and not in some isolated conference center. We will walk to our Assembly, we are not in some vacuum, we are, as Daniel Percheron reminded us earlier, in the context of a region undergoing deep changes. We are "some-where", not "no-where". This place has a history, it has an identity, it has songs, it has convictions.

This is why we shall endeavor, during this Assembly, to appreciate your concrete experience; and this is also why various sectors organized to prepare this Assembly, in the Nord-Pas-de-Calais, to prepare their own proposals. And so, at the Assembly, in each Workshop, you will find the proposals developed by these sectors, for we believe that a proposal originating from a local context is as valuable as proposals claiming to be universal.

We wanted an Assembly rooted in a local context. We believe that is the best way to be global.

- The fifth challenge is to work as professionals (and this aspect will be complicated to manage) but also to be activists.

And I would like to acknowledge and salute all the energy of the people who have prepared, here, in Paris, and in Belgium, this Assembly. All these people have made this Assembly possible, they did their utmost to ensure that it will be a cordial, rewarding, and unique time in your life. I would like to invite them to stand up, although they are working to prepare the coming events. First we have the organization team in Paris, in Lille, in Namur, who toiled without sparing their time and energy; there are 50 of them, only 4 of them are in this hall, so 46 are working. Yes, they toiled without stinting to make it possible for us to meet here, to bring people here—they are all over there, working. Then we have more than 100 students from the Institut Universitaire de Technologie in Valenciennes; with their teacher they made the preparation of this Assembly their year's project. You cannot see them here, they are all working. They welcomed you at the train stations, they will feed you, they will help you out materially. You will easily recognize them, they are all wearing the Assembly T-shirt. You should know that all these young people have worked generously for this Citizens Assembly.

Then we have the many interpreters who are coming (there are 200 of them): trainees, students with their local teachers. They have come so you may speak in your own language at the Assembly.

We did not want a so-called "world" assembly where those who did not have some command of English or French would have been unable to speak. Everyone should be allowed to speak in their own language.

We are going to face many, many challenges. We will make many mistakes, things will often take time, but, believe it, our mobilization is extraordinary and it's worth it.

- Our last major challenge: We wish to focus on our internal work. The 400 participants need to be able to work together. They need tranquillity to move forward on difficult questions. But at the same time, we do not want an Assembly with 400 secluded persons, who have the privilege of holding plane tickets and are cut off from the rest of the world. We have tried to imagine a way of linking the "inside" to the "outside" and to make this link visible.

This will be possible thanks to our journalist friends who are here and will make this link. Let us thank them.

We have also set up a marquee in the city of Lille. There, you will be able to meet the people of the Nord-Pas-de-Calais, who will come to see what we are doing.

We have also established an interactive link. We set up a web site, www.gouvernance.net, which will allow us to relate to the outside world, to pool the ideas expressed in the Assembly, to put them to debate. And I wish to salute in particular the "People's Daily" of China, which will follow us throughout the week and will organize daily interactive debates between some of you and 700,000 Chinese Web surfers, so we may share the work of our Assembly as simply as possible. Add to this all the links you may wish to establish with your own networks through the Internet tool. So, be assured that we want you to be able to work in peaceful conditions, but that our decision to set up small and closed workshops is intended to ensure the quality of our work and does not imply that we wish to isolate ourselves. Be assured that we will do our utmost to open up to the outside world.

In what form will this Assembly progress?

From the very start, we were guided by the three dimensions of diversity.

The dimension of socio-professional sectors,
The dimension of issues, of challenges,
The dimension of the regions of the world.

We wanted this Assembly, your Assembly, to address these three dimensions. So we are going to work through three stages:

Tomorrow and the day after tomorrow, we will assemble by socio-professional sectors. People who have the same social and professional background, in 20 different Workshops, and who come, of course, from different regions of the world.

Tomorrow these workshops will try to state how each sector perceives, from its point of view, the challenges of tomorrow. They will offer their proposals.

Tuesday, in the "daisy spirit" mentioned by Edith Sizoo, we will pool our thoughts on the need, the structure, and the content of what we call the "Charter of Human Responsibilities." You will be invited to say whether you consider the Charter necessary, opportune, or essential, what its content should, etc.

That will be the first stage.

And then we will pool all these ideas, all these proposals, and initiate our second stage: the work on strategies. We will reshuffle our Workshops: the Workshops of the first two days will split up and recombine into Thematic Workshops on the basis of the priorities that you, yourselves, will have defined. Once again, we will try, very modestly, to feed your reflections, our reflections, with the results of the work accomplished in the framework of the Alliance. And here, I would like to tell you that, in addition to the participants, we have a very essential category here: we call them resource persons. I would like those who are here to stand up, they have coordinated and facilitated the Alliance workshops, prepared the Proposal Papers, worked late at night to get the Proposal Papers ready for this Assembly in Lille. They facilitated electronic forums, they organized meetings, often international. It is the results of their work that we wish to place at your disposal. Let's say that our ambition is to feed you without stifling you.

And the third stage will naturally be to address the regional dimension and to determine, considering the strategies we have adopted, the first necessary steps to be taken in our own region.

We have therefore tried to make sure that this Assembly will not be conference with a succession of presentations, as we did, I confess, today. Instead, we wish it to be a true series of hopes resulting from our work, which will bring each of us, through different paths, to appreciate the three dimensions of our being, the three dimensions of our experience.

To implement this stage, to be able to develop summaries of all our proposals, to allow each participant to speak in their own language, without slowing down things excessively, we have had to adopt strict methods.

You will not be surprised that we invite you to comply with a working discipline. This appeared to us as a condition of democracy. In your file, you have a note on the method. It will give you our operational principles and, as you will see, they are based more on ethical principles than on intellectual principles.

How can we organize so that each person may have an opportunity to speak—and also ensure that our words feed each other mutually and help us identify elements of consensus, elements of disagreement, and give us a chance to move forward in the course of this week.

So we will try our best. Once again, we had to innovate, please forgive us, there will be many mistakes, many approximations—but on the other hand, there will be many collective inventions and I hope that at the end of this process we will be all the richer.

What do we, the organizers, expect from this Assembly? Of course, you will have to say what *you* expect from it—and that is what is most important. But since we took the responsibility of inviting you, of hosting you, we have a duty to tell you why, what our objectives are. You all know that we have taken great care to be very transparent from the beginning. Our objective is not to submit a document at the end of the Assembly and to have it approved by the participants. Not at all! We know that collective work is slow, we know that our challenges are tremendous, and we are also aware of the extraordinary diversity of points of view among the participants.

Our objectives are basically both very modest and very ambitious. I will state four of them:

- First, we seek to identify the issues that the dialogue between socioprofessional sectors and the regions of the world should continue to address. Indeed, if the debates between these 20 regions of the world that you saw with their signs a while ago could generate, not the conclusions, but at least the terms, we will have achieved considerable progress. Basically, through our diversities, there are indeed a number of questions that we must imperatively work on together et we are going to try and outline their terms.
- Then, concerning these issues, we would like to reach a better mutual understanding of our differences, of our different points of view. As Michel Rocard reminded us when he spoke of the Tree of Peace, we needn't consider that one point of view is necessarily good, while another is necessarily bad, that people in one sector are all just greedy for profit, while another sector is supposed to include only good people. No! We are going to reach an understanding of our differences through mutual respect.
- We may, and this the third point, discover unexpected convergencies—as I have often witnessed since the beginning of the Alliance; I have in mind the magnificent work accomplished by our colleagues in the Nord-Pas-de-Calais, who held a meeting a month ago, where unemployed and impoverished people, workers, young men and women, family farmers, and academics discovered each other one evening. On that occasion we discovered that, strangely, the fundamental issues that actually motivated them were the same. If we are able, during this Assembly, to make a few discoveries such as that one, but on a broader, world scale, I think we will have taken a great step forward.
- Finally, I hope this will be an opportunity to explain ourselves. With the debate on the Charter, with all the exchanges on the Charter in the various sectors that will take place this week, I hope will be able to recognize our mutual responsibilities as a fundamental element of citizenship today.

What will be follow-up? That is for you to decide. All I can do is sketch out a few dreams, given that basically, an action is always preceded by a dream and this meeting is the result of a dream. So I say to myself that, if in different regions of the world meetings with as much diversity as this one could continue what we are doing, this would be a way for other people to pursue on the same path to take up the task of building the global civil society, the global community. The process has to circulate and regional meetings would work for that. In any case, the proposals should be circulated.

Already, the proposals developed by the Alliance will be circulated in seven languages. I am sure that the wealth that will come out of this Assembly will deserve to be circulated. And then of course, in less than two months, there is the second World Social Forum in Porto Alegre; already, at the first World Social Forum the Alliance proposals were on the agenda. I should rather say the Allies' proposals, since there are no "Alliance" proposals, the Alliance is not monolithic. So, the Allies' proposals. And I'm sure that these Proposal Papers that we've printed and that will all be available to each of you tomorrow, that these Proposals will in turn, like a rolling ball, feed a process akin to the one we are experiencing today.

And then, we should also challenge the states, the political parties, as Michel Rocard called upon us to do in his speech; we should promote the Charter of Responsibilities, continue to build a public debate through the Web site, thanks to what we have learned by using Internet

tools to develop world democracy. And then we may be able to demonstrate that such an international dialogue is possible and urgent, and project our energy toward a genuine parliament of the planet, in, say, 10 years or so from now, a parliament of which this Assembly in Lille will have been, so as to say, a first prefiguration.

Thank you.