

To the Editorial Staff of IPS, from the IPS Board of Trustees

The International Board of Trustees, after a careful exam of the international situation, present the following suggestions to the Editorial Staff of IPS:

The international situation is still in a process of adjustment of the end of the Cold War. The re-emergence of Nations State, after the era of blocs, has made visible the internal fissure of ethnic and religious minorities, in non-homogeneous countries. A policy of information stressing the values of reconciliation and democratic participation is urgently required, considering how media tend to cover radicalisation and conflicts.

The process of globalization, as a market value oriented, is having an exacerbation of internal social and economic disparities, with a progressive erosion of the ability of the State to provide answer on behalf of its citizens. At the same time, there is a growing answer of a new global civil society, which is attempting to elaborate an alternative answer, by claiming for a more solidaristic globalization, based on social justice, participation and the values of peace, human rights and international law as basis for cooperation. IPS has become a major point of reference for this process. It should continue its efforts and partnership with those new actors.

The other major element of mobilization of civil society and citizens has been the growing awareness of the little time left for action on the issue of management and viability of our planet. The first warning come 30 years ago, with the report of the Club of Rome "limit to growth", and since then a number of serious warnings have been delivered, from the Brandt commission to the Brundtland Commission, without any serious impact. Now it is clear that there are not 30 years left, also in view of the serious scientific evidence, which has being collected worldwide. IPS should increase its efforts on this issue, also considering the erratic and inadequate attention given until now by media, who tended to focus on events, instead of trying to cover the systematic problem.

An other major field of action should be given to the dialogue of civilizations, or to the issue of the present clashes among major world religions, with the dramatic clash of terrorism and intolerance. It is clear that this is more than anything a political problem, not a religious one, with its growing economic and social aspects. Communication could be an important element of understanding and dialogue, and media until now have tended to exacerbate the conflict, as the case of the Danish cartoons has exemplified. IPS has the extraordinary task to cover this missing space, even with its limitations, so to open a process, which would be, hopefully, become more powerful and participatory.

In general terms, a serious reflection should be given to the status of implementation of the Millennium Development Goals. We are halfway its timetable, as decided by the Summit of Head of States in the year 2.000, and serious concern must be expressed, as the goals are becoming more and more elusive. But the achievement of the MDG, which are the only measurable instrument of the global commitment to a better world, remains an absolute priority for a viable world. IPS has been at the forefront of a journalistic effort, and it should intensify his efforts, especially in view of the deafening silence of the major media.

The International Board of Trustees, also on the basis of the report of the Director General of IPS , and its staff, consider that a great progress has been achieved both in terms of reach and quality of professionalism. It considers that IPS is confronting a very serious challenge in its efforts to bring different information, directed to the processes and not to the events, and giving voice to those often excluded by the commercial criteria of information. Its efforts to build bridges and dialogue, among

different realities and cultures, is expressed by the unprecedented number of languages in which is working, by its large diversity of professionals, and by the unusual exercise in training and networking. While especially Civil Society has recognized this,, the Donor's Community has not given, by and large, enough consideration to Information and Communication, as vital tools for participation and development. We only hope that this consideration will increase, also in view of the very unsatisfactory state of the world.

Pres. Martti Ahtisaari

Dr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali

Dr. Federico Mayor Zaragoza

Pres. Mario Soares

Dr. Roberto Savio