Special Issue:
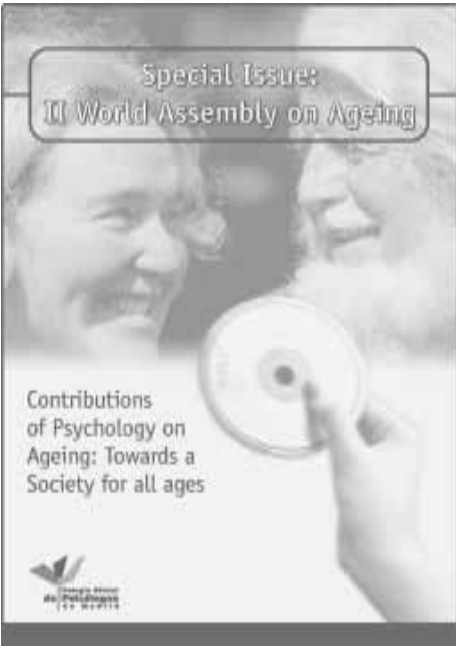# II World Assembly on Ageing

Contributions
of Psychology on
Ageing: Towards a
Society for all ages

**Colegio Oficial
de Psicólogos
de Madrid**

Special Issue:
II World Assembly on Ageing

Contributions
of Psychology on
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Society for all ages

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"Contributions of Psychology on ageing: Towards a society for all ages"

"Contribución de la Psicología sobre el envejeciento: Hacia una sociedad para todas las edades"

In 1982 when the "I World Assembly on Ageing" was held in Vienna, both gerontology and psychosocial intervention with older persons were areas almost unknown for the psychological practice in Spain. Within the academic field, whether teaching or research, ageing raised little scientific interest as it was yet considered an issue to be dealt with by charity organizations.

Twenty years later, by the time Madrid is hosting the II UN World Assembly on Ageing, the situation has undergone a powerful radical turn at least in developed countries. Social protection systems are devoting a great effort to encourage social policies bound to this population segment, aiming at giving a response according to the multiple needs of older persons. The development of these policies concerning the goals and priorities in intervention areas has experienced a rapid shift from the coverage of basic economic and health needs to the confrontation of new sizeable problems as dependence, which require a re-scheduling of protection systems for this population.

Nevertheless, this change in the relevance and role that older persons are taking in society, can be viewed from other angles of analysis noticed at first sight when we take a look at everyday life in our towns and villages. Not only there are more older persons than ever and their visibility is higher, but also a new concept of ageing has emerged which includes "other" older persons whose age seem very difficult to estimate according to traditional patterns for ageing and whose social mirror has little to do with the image we just had twenty years ago.

*Age is no longer the black and white frame of old films; on the contrary, older persons enjoy a wide range of colour and liveliness that refer to their full involvement in social life. Nonetheless, ageing is a social achievement realized only by few countries although it is something progressively coming true worldwide. UN Secretary General Kofi Annan has called it the **"Silent Revolution".***

In the last century, Western European countries doubled their population in the 60 to 100 age range while in the 21st century some countries will take only 25 years to double

their entire population. Within three decades, three quarters of the world old population will be living in developing countries. In Spain, the fast speed of ageing will make it possible within one century that older persons multiply almost by 7 and eighty-year older persons multiply by 13, while general population multiply just by 2. The increased life expectancy is one of the greatest achievements in our modern societies. But in order to consider longevity as a genuine fulfilment it is essential that we lay the foundations that ensure older persons good living conditions.

"A Society for All Ages" is the motto for this historic event. The International Plan of Action on Ageing 2002, coming out of Madrid Assembly will gather the three mainstreams where current and future policies on ageing must be based. First of all, participation of older persons in the development of societies is essential; secondly, health and welfare must be guaranteed in the old age; and third, enabling environments promoting capability and social support for the older persons must be ensured.

Along this process, gerontology emerges with an ever-increasing strength. An example is the inclusion of topics in the International Plan of Action of special relevance both for the society and for the psychologists and other professionals working with older persons, such as older person's mental health and references to disability and ageing, for the first time addressed in a UN document. The II World Assembly on Ageing must involve a relevant step ahead in the development of policies, schedules, and initiatives both public and private in order to achieve an active and socially built-in ageing that will benefit all the citizens, as everyone is concerned.

Furthermore, a qualitative change would be desirable when addressing ageing from any discipline, most specially from psychology. This special issue of the Psychosocial Intervention Review is a contribution to this process. It is a pleasure to confirm that twenty years devoted to social intervention with older persons have proved worthy. Although progress in the knowledge of this population segment has just started, an encouraging future is showing up which we are committed to make come true. A real challenge.

Mayte SANCHO CASTIELLO
Carmen DÍAZ GÓMEZ

Ageing: a global issue in the agenda of the United Nations

El envejecimiento: Una cuestión global en la agenda de las Naciones Unidas

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ABSTRACT

The Second Assembly United of the Nations World on the Ageing takes place in Madrid from 8 to 12 April 2002, twenty years after the first Assembly of Vienna. One of the reasons of celebration of this Assembly is the process of demographic transition and the interrelation with the process of progress and development in the world. The population's ageing is a common phenomenon to all countries characterised by the decrease of the rates of mortality and fertility. However, the countries in the developing world will carry out the process of demographic transition associated to the ageing faster that the experienced by the developed countries. In this article the main elements of the International Plan of Action on Ageing 2002 that will be approved in the II World Assembly of Madrid, are analysed. The mayor issues of the debate are related to ageing and development, health, intergenerational relationships, employment policies, the gender perspective and the needs to change the negative stereotypes of ageing promoting positive images of the older persons as active and independent.

KEY WORDS

United Nations, ageing, International Plan of Action on Ageing. preparatory process of the World Assembly on Ageing.

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RESUMEN

Las Naciones Unidas convocan la II Asamblea Mundial sobre el Envejecimiento en Madrid del 8 al 12 de abril 2002 transcurridos veinte años después de la primera Asamblea de Viena. Una de las razones de celebración de esta Asamblea es el proceso de transición demográfica y su interrelación con el proceso de progreso y desarrollo en el ámbito mundial. El envejecimiento de la población es un fenómeno común a todos los países que viene caracterizado por la disminución de las tasas de mortalidad y fertilidad. Sin embargo, los países en desarrollo van a realizar el proceso de transición demográfica asociado al envejecimiento a velocidades mucho mayores que la experimentada por los países desarrollados. En este artículo se analizan los principales elementos que centrarán el debate que tendrá lugar en la II Asamblea Mundial de Madrid en la que se aprobará el Plan de Acción Internacional sobre el Envejecimiento 2002 y que se relacionan principalmente con el envejecimiento y el desarrollo, la salud, las relaciones intergeneracionales, las políticas de empleo, la perspectiva de genero y la necesidad de cambiar los estereotipos negativos de la vejez por imágenes positivas de las personas mayores como activas, participativas e independientes.

PALABRAS CLAVE

Naciones Unidas, envejecimiento, Plan de Acción Internacional sobre Envejecimiento, proceso preparatorio de la Asamblea Mundial sobre el Envejecimiento.

I. REASONS FOR CONVENING THIS ASSEMBLY

The United Nations will soon hold in Madrid a World Assembly on Ageing. This will be the second assembly of these characteristics organized twenty years after the first Assembly of Vienna. The United Nations Secretary General, Kofi Annan, has referred to Ageing as the "silent revolution" that characterises this century. This description is quite proper since it sums up very well the enormous impact that Ageing and its trends have on practically all the areas of our social structure, and its non-traumatic or non-violent nature, even though ageing is still a quite surprising or explosive event.

The United Nations convene this World Assembly after realizing the global nature of the demographic transition process and its interrelations with the world's progress and the development process. With this initiative, the Organization marks the start of a significant way of collaboration which all the relevant institutions and organizations should join if we are going to address properly the challenges and to take advantage of the opportunities generated by a life cycle characterised by longer longevity.

Madrid's World Assembly also points to the pressing nature of the issues to be discussed and the need to prioritize actions and responses arising from their consideration. If the essential elements of this analysis are to be set forth briefly, the following ones can be mentioned:

– The Ageing of the population, taken as a process, independently from the time differences among countries due to differences in development levels, is a common feature of all countries that is characterised by a drop in mortality and fertility rates.

– Developing countries are undergoing or will undergo the demographic transition process at much higher

rates than those for developed countries. What in our case was 80 or 100 years will be 20 or 25 in many developing countries.

– The majority of the world's old population will live in developing countries and, in spite of the urban development process, in rural areas.

– The World Health Organization has indicated very accurately that while developed countries developed first and then aged, developing countries are ageing without having developed and the economic outlook for the next decades does not indicate that this situation is going to change significantly. Therefore, developing countries are the main countries affected by and interested in this process.

– The world is undergoing an important epidemiological transition in which non-transmissible chronic diseases will have more weight than transmissible, infectious diseases, even for those countries that are currently most affected by the latter. This is a fact of great significance for disability prevention policies.

– Longer old age involves a potentially longer period of maintenance of functional capacities and also, where it occurs, a potentially longer exposure to or installation in dependence situations, a factor that influences importantly public health policies.

– Longer longevity means that we are going from societies where three generations coexist or coexisted to the situation where 4 or 5 generations do coexist. From a psychosocial perspective, this issue leads to the fact that attention should be paid to the way in which these generations relate, the distribution of roles within the family and the community group in terms of care and protection, and to the review of models determining the social status on the almost quasi-exclusive basis of economic productivity.

– Employment and social protection policies should also be reviewed according to approaches that take into consideration the life cycle as a whole. Employment policies should go beyong the traditional cycle of education, employment or productive activity and retirement, understood as non-communicated life stages. Social protection policies should guarantee viability and maintenance of social protection systems in the countries where they exist, as well as their introduction or expansion in other countries.

– Ageing is usually linked to a social stereotype of dependence and passivity. The mentality change to achieve older people's full participation in social life and that their contribution thereto is recognised is another line for reflection for the Assembly. And all of it without older people's specific needs being forgotten.

– Policies on Ageing involve a significant "gender agenda" to be addressed, since Ageing affects women and men differently and neither men nor women are in equality situations throughout their lives.

These are some of the main elements for reference that are related to the debate that will take place at the next United Nations World Assembly on Ageing. Let us examine now some more institutional aspects.

II. THE WORLD ASSEMBLY AND ITS PREPARATORY PROCESS: STEPS TOWARDS A NEW INTERNATION PLAN OF ACTION ON AGEING

As it is common for other United Nations Summits and major Conferences, Madrid's Assembly will be open to participation by governmental organizations of all the Organization's member countries as well as to all the organizations within the United Nations System. Furthermore, a large number of participants in the Assembly will be non-governmental organizations, which will not only represent organizations of people but also of a general nature and interested, from various standpoints, in issues about ageing. Although any estimation is even today very little accurate, it is estimated that only the Assembly will generate the attendance of some 4000 or 5000 people.

It should be mentioned that, when the United Nations General Assembly decided to organize the Assembly in Madrid, it had already identified, with the agreement of all the countries, the following issues for special discussion:

– Identification of positive experiences and successful measures in the creation of societies for all ages.

– In-depth discussion of the relationships between ageing and development, with special attention being paid to the situation, perspectives and needs of developing countries, this being included in the strategies for development and eradication of poverty.

– Identification of measures to promote and reinforce solidarity among generations.
– Discussion of sectorial policies re-

lating to ageing from the life cycle perspective.

– Creation of mechanisms of partnership between the public and the private sectors in order for the goals and objectives fixed at the World Assembly to be achieved.

Responsibility for preparation of the World Assembly's major aspects was placed with the Social Development Commission, who became a Preparatory Committee and the venue where negotiations about Madrid's Assembly possible results have been held. Current work focuses on completing a new International Plan of Action on Ageing that will promote the taking of measures needed within the next two decades to address the challenges and opportunities arising from the ageing of our populations.

For this preparatory process, the United Nations Secretariat carried out the following actions:

– A questionnaire was sent to the Member States, the System's organizations and the main non-governmental organizations in order to ascertain up to what extent the Plan of Action of Vienna had been fulfilled.

– An International Technical or Expert Committee was created to advise the Secretary General on the development of a Draft International Plan of Action on Ageing.

– A work group was created to coordinate the contributions of the United Nations System's various bodies and agencies that work on ageing and older people.

After almost two years' work, some general conclusions can be drawn from this stage of the preparatory process:

The questionnaire used to obtain some conclusions about to what extent the International Plan of Action of Vienna had been complied with made it clear that, from the start, it had been a weak plan to carry out its intended purpose. Some answers were too general, as the questionnaire was a tool approved some twenty years ago. And it was felt that no resort to independent evaluation sources was present.

On the other hand, last year the International Technical Committee of Experts put in a significant amount of work to help the Secretariat develop the first draft of the Plan of Action. The Committee's recommendations have been well taken into account for the document currently under discussion.

In addition, coordination of the United Nations System has not been uniform. Some organizations, for instance, the Population Fund (UNPAF), the International Labour Organization (ILO) or the World Health organization (WHO), have taken from the start a very active part in the preparatory process, collaborating with the United Nations Ageing programme framed within the Economic and Social Affairs Department. Other organizations have contributed to this preparatory process less than it was expected.

As a result of this preparatory process, in February last year the Secretary General presented a document about a possible International Plan of Action and last October a first version thereof which since then is being discussed within the Preparatory Committee in New York. At present, half the document has been agreed on. Furthermore, in the next few days the Committee will consider the text of a Political Statement that will express the political support from the delegations attending Madrid's Assembly in respect of the new International Plan of Action.

Negotiations among governments have made it clear that there are not great differences among the various groups and delegations. Notwithstanding this, some different perspectives have marked the positions of developed countries and developing countries:

– Developing countries did not agree at first with a global document if this did not include specific separate sections about developing countries, their special circumstances and needs. Developed countries opposed this idea. They supported the need to have a global instrument, which would not mean that the different regional and development realities could not be taken into consideration. It was thought that these peculiarities would be better reflected if, after Madrid, specific regional strategies were adopted in order to apply the International Plan of Action on Ageing. To date, this viewpoint appears to be the one that has prevailed.

– Developing countries demand international cooperation resources to apply the International Plan of Action. The developed world believes that the solution does not lie in sending resources just like that. The idea would be to mobilize resources at different levels (national, regional and international) and involving different actors (governments, cooperation for development, international financial institutions, the United Nations, civilian society and the private sector). The outcome of this discussion is not known as yet.

– Developed countries defend the importance of establishing a strong mechanism to follow up the application of the International Plan of Action, both nationally and regionally and internationally, on the basis of the identification of a

number of basic indicators. Some developing countries have political misgivings about approving a strong mechanism to follow up the International Plan of Action and the use of indicators. These countries say that follow-up should be limited to a national scope and understand that any international follow-up is an undesirable control mechanism. Other developing countries, with the sympathy of some developed countries and some United Nations bodies, for example, the Statistics Commission, point out the absolutely excessive requests for statistical data and indicators received by their countries and express their initial opposition to open this already complex situation to new demands.

Another difference in perspectives as shown throughout the negotiating process and with the ones and the others taking different positions not linked to the development standards of countries has to do with the International Plan of Action becoming an instrument for older people's Rights or an instrument about the policies required by the ageing of Population.

In this respect, the negotiating process seems to be in favour of this last option, probably because it is understood that a global and horizontal consideration of ageing faciltates a better intervention in the various related sectorial policies and is, at the end of the day, the best way to make effective the rights of older people and fulfil their needs properly.

III. CONTENTS OF THE NEW INTERNATIONAL PLAN OF ACTION

Last year, the United Nations Secretary General presented within the World Assembly Preparatory Committee the draft of a new International Plan of Action on Ageing that, after negotiations, is expected to be adopted by the World Assembly in Madrid.

The International Plan of Action identifies three priority lines of action around which it structures a great number of objectives, special attention areas, recommendations and specific actions. These three lines are as follows:

1. Ageing and Development

The main goal here is to include in full the consequences of ageing in the design and implementation of development and poverty eradication strategies. This is a major issue still pending and up to date it is difficult for the people responsible for development policies to accept it fully.

The reasons for this are varied, but they can be summed up as follows: ageing is not accepted as a "cross-cutting" issue, older people are not acknowledged as active contributors to and participants in economic development and growth (even though they do work in the informal sector, in agriculture and within the family care area), and they are not regarded as a group whose specific needs should be taken into account as a priority (in fact, they have difficulties in accessing micro-credits and other economic rights).

Within this first priority line, other areas of special attention are included, such as the one that refers to the implications of ageing in relation to employment and social protection systems. In this respect, although there are significant differences depending on the various development standards and that require specific regional considerations, some common questions are raised.

For example, part of a common reflection is the fact that a longer life span leads to a review of the relationships between education and training periods, employment and active productivity, leisure and social voluntary work, throughout an individual's life. Another common issue is the right to keep being active if an individual so desires and he or she maintains the physical capabilities needed.

Notwithstanding the above and closer to our perspective, the Plan of Action under discussion deals with issues relating to the need to make flexible and diversify the opportunities for transition from the so called active life to retirement; to reinforce education and continuing training policies that will enable individuals to get to old age in a better state to prevent dependence and social exclusion situations; and to eliminate gender discrimination in matters of employment and social protection.

2. Health in old age

Longer longevity means that a higher number of people gets to current retirement ages with their functional capacities unimpaired to continue participating in a productive activity. Also, a longer old age period opens the door to possible longer dependence situations.

As a result, the main points proposed by the United Nations within this second priority line are as follows:

– Studying more in depth the concept of active ageing.

– Reinforcing prevention and health promotion during the whole life cycle so that functional capacities are maintained and possible causes for dependence are prevented in old age as far as this is possible.

– Reorientating health services so that they meet the needs of older people better.

– Investing in the training of geriatrics and gerontology specialists and in the training of health professionals and social workers in these specialised areas.

– Helping developing countries in the generation of resources and training for professionals needed for the International Plan to be applied.

The Plan of Action also introduces two important novelties for an instrument of this kind. First, it identifies as one of the areas of special attention that referred to the mental health needs of older people. Secondly, it sets forth a recommendation to work more in depth on the relationships between ageing and disability from a double perspective: that of older people with disabilities within a longer longevity framework and that of longevity in disabled people.

3. Creating the support environments needed to build societies for all ages

This third line that structures the Plan of Action centres on housing and environmental issues as essential components for intervention. What underlies this is the importance of generating more socially united societies, with a stronger relationship among generations.

Within the different areas for specific consideration, the Plan highlights, among others, those relating to mechanisms to support carers, policies to support the families in their social integration work, and the generation of standards for standardized care.

Another issue discussed in this section is the one about the change in social stereotypes that associate old age or older people with passivity or dependence situations.

IV. SOME ELEMENTS CUTTING ACROSS THE INTERNATIONAL PLAN OF ACTION

Two elements of a "horizontal" nature frame the new Plan: full enjoyment of human rights by older people and mainstreaming a gender equality perspective in the set of recommendations therein.

The first element includes one of the topics that is becoming quite important within the preparatory process, that is, ill treatment and abuse of older people, an issue about which the United Nations Secretary General has just released a specific report.

The second element is going to be equally relevant, in terms of human rights, of equal economic, labour, health and protection rights throughout the whole life cycle, of the priority that old women's situations should be given.

V. FOLLOW-UP OF APPLICATION OF PLAN OF ACTION

This is a key issue that affects the credibility of any Conference and the international instruments approved therein. In this case, the United Nations starts from the basis that, after the International Plan of Action has been approved in Madrid, specific regional strategies will be adopted in order to adapt the implementation of the Plan to the peculiarities of each region. This emphasis on regional dimensions is quite relevant.

Without prejudice to the above, the proposal contained in the Plan differentiates the three traditional follow-up levels: national, regional and global, and sets forth precise indications as to the mechanisms that the United Nations will use to develop the follow-up process at this last level.

I think it is relevant to say that although the International Plan is ambitious in terms of the actions it sets forth, it is not so much so when it comes to discussing its application and follow-up. It is to be hoped that the intergovernmental negotiation process still pending will reinforce the current proposals.

In this respect, a final consideration may be made. The efficiency of the new Plan will be determined by the effective mobilization of economic and material resources needed for its application. This mobilization of resources is not exclusive to governments. Resources should also come from international institutions and bodies, non-governmental organizations and the private sector.

Ageing is an issue with a great potential for collaboration between the public and the private sectors in order to develop a much needed research agenda on ageing, to work on the training of professionals worldwide and to provide developing countries with the support and technical cooperation needed. Madrid's World Assembly is a great opportunity to articulate this collaboration and it should not be missed.

Psychology, Psychologists and Ageing: Contribution of Psychology and psychologists to the study and the intervention of ageing

Psicología, Psicólogos y Envejecimiento: Contribución de la Psicología y los psicólogos al estudio y la intervención sobre el envejecimiento

SPANISH PSYCHOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION - COLEGIO OFICIAL DE PSICÓLOGOS

ABSTRACT

*This document has been prepared by the Spanish Psychological Association (Colegio Oficial de Psicólogos) for presentation at the United Nations **Second World Assembly on Ageing** (Madrid, April 2002) and for the **International Plan of Action on Ageing 2002**, as a summary of the contribution of psychology to the study of ageing and of psycho-gerontologists to the improvement of health, well-being, quality of life and human development in old age. This paper represents an attempt to contribute to an international debate on the relevance of psychology and psychologists in the study of ageing and interventions with the elderly [1].*

KEY WORDS

Ageing, International plan action on ageing, Psychogerontologist.

RESUMEN

*Este documento ha sido elaborado por el Colegio Oficial de Psicólogos para su difusión con motivo de la **II Asamblea Mundial sobre Envejecimiento** (Madrid, abril de 2002) y del **Plan de Acción Internacional sobre el Envejecimiento 2002**, como síntesis de la contribución de la psicología al estudio del envejecimiento y de la aportación de los psicólogos expertos en personas mayores a la mejora de la salud, bienestar, calidad de vida y desarrollo humano en los mayores. Este trabajo pretende ser una contribución al debate internacional sobre la importancia de la psicología y de los psicólogos para el estudio y la intervención sobre el envejecimiento[1].*

PALABRAS CLAVE

Envejecimiento, Plan de acción internacional sobre el envejecimiento, Psicólogos expertos en personas mayores.

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INTRODUCTION

Ageing is a phenomenon of populations and of individuals. In populations, ageing expresses the success of humanity because it represents the outcome of human discoveries and developments in hygiene, nutrition and medical technology and social advancements. (WHO, 2002).

As an individual phenomenon, ageing is a bio-psycho-social subject of inquiry. Thus, the science of ageing is multidisciplinary. Human ageing cannot be described, predicted or explained without taking into consideration its three main aspects: biological, psychological and social. Throughout the history of the study of ageing, biology has been prevalent, by comparison with psychology or other social sciences (Birren, 1996). The human organism is a biological entity, but the understanding of ageing cannot be reduced to biology (or to biomedical sciences). Human beings are active organisms in active environments throughout the life span, and as biologists have stressed, environment and behaviour are modifiers of biological structures and processes (Kandel, 1998; Mora, 2001).

In recent decades, strong empirical evidence (from longitudinal and cross-sectional studies) has been provided about the importance of psychological conditions as predictors of longevity and quality of life. For example, cognitive ability, subjective appraisal of health, feeling of being needed, and being involved in activities were the best predictors of longevity in the BOLSA longitudinal study (e.g., Lher, 1993). Also, well-being – a target for most policies on ageing – is a psychological construct, so that its operational definition requires psychological kn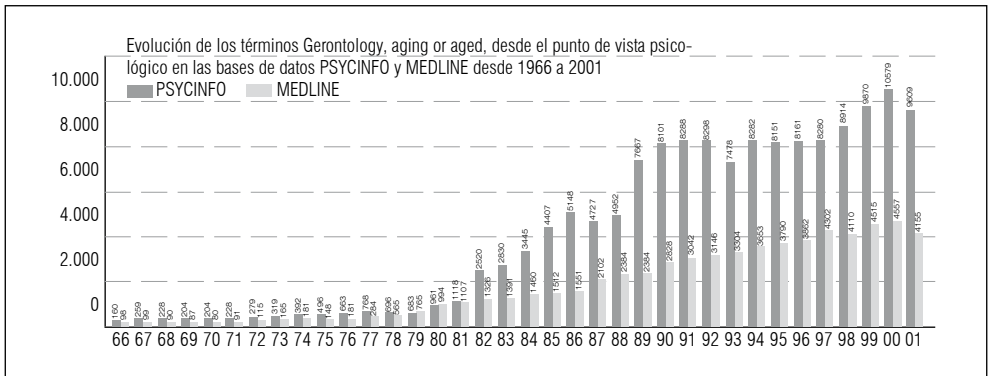owledge and investigation. And these are just a few examples of psychology's considerable involvement in ageing-related study, research and policy.

Psychology – as the science of mind, of consciousness and of behaviour – is one of the most important disciplines with regard to ageing. At the core of psycho-gerontology are questions fundamental to the study of ageing, and crucial for the promotion of well-being and quality of life in old age. Questions such as: What regular changes occur throughout the life span in cognition, affect, emotion and other psychological structures and processes?; How do people perceive these changes and how do they experience ageing in themselves and at a societal level?; What changes occur in behaviours over the life span?; How can psychology help in the description, prediction and explanation of person/environment relationships as part of the ageing process?; How can psychology contribute to improving conditions for the elderly and their rehabilitation where necessary?; How can psychology assist formal and informal care systems?; How can psychology aid understanding of the multiple interactions among elders, relatives and their contexts?

Scientific literature on the psychology of ageing has grown exponentially over the last twenty years. We examined the evolution of Psychology/Gerontology/ Ageing and Age in PSYCINFO (the most widely-used psychology database) and in MEDLINE (the most widely-used medical database). As can be seen in Figure 1, since 1980, the number of references to psycho-gerontology has increased in both the psychological and medical fields.

According to Birren and Schroots (1996; Schroots, 1995), psycho-gerontology includes three main areas of study: ageing, age and the aged. The

Figure 1

Evolución de los términos Gerontology, aging or aged, desde el punto de vista psicológico en las bases de datos PSYCINFO y MEDLINE desde 1966 a 2001

psychology of ageing is concerned with patterns throughout the ageing process; the psychology of age focuses on age differences by comparing groups of different ages; finally, the psychology of the aged deals mainly with the problematic conditions affecting old subjects. Let us present a brief overview of the main contributions of psychology to the study of ageing, age and the aged, within the context of the main points guiding the *International Plan of Action on Ageing 2002.*

PSYCHOLOGY OF AGEING AND AGE

Box 1 shows selected research topics of the psychology of ageing and age,

which has contributed important findings from longitudinal, cross-sectional and experimental studies.

Let us begin by outlining a psychological model necessary for understanding ageing and complementary to a biological conception of age and ageing. From a biological perspective, ageing is defined as a normative adaptation failure that eventually results in breakdown of the organism. However, as several authors have pointed out (e.g., Gould, 1977; Labouvie-Vief, 1985), changes across the life span (growth and decline) should be considered as partially independent of the biological process, and much of the variability of adults' behaviours fits better into

BOX 1: Psychology of ageing and age: Selected research topics

- Psychological versus biological model of ageing
- Longitudinal, cross-sectional and experimental studies of ageing: cognitive, emotional, personality, psychosocial and behavioural characteristics
- Growth, decline and stability of psychological and behavioural characteristics across life span
- Psychological/subjective targets: well-being, life satisfaction, subjective quality of life.
- Psycho-social network: intergenerational relationships
- Cognitive plasticity and its importance in lifelong learning as a protective psycho-educational-social factor against cognitive decline in ageing

a cultural evolution model than an exclusively biological one. This view is not at odds with the well-established biological bases of cognitive, emotional and motivational processes, but rather stresses that psychological conditions have been developed across the life span as dependent factors of the transactions between biology, environment and behaviour (Bandura, 1998), and that at a given point of life, in old age, psychological components – in interaction with environmental and biological conditions – may be responsible for important aspects such as health, well-being or quality of life.

Psychological conditions across the life span do not follow the same pattern of decline as biological conditions. A good illustration of this is provided by the case of differences in fluid and crystallised intelligence: while fluid or biological intelligence begins to decline quite early in life, crystallised or cultural intelligence remains stable until advance age (e.g., Baltes & Graf, 1996).

Over the last fifty years, important progress has been made in increasing psychological knowledge about the ageing process and the about the effects of age on psychological structures and processes. Psychology of attention, memory and learning, affect and emotion, developmental psychology, personality, social psychology, psychology of individual differences and abnormal psychology have all dealt with ageing as a scientific subject. Today, there is a body of scientific knowledge about growth, decline, change and stability in **cognition**, **emotion**, **personality** and **social behaviours** across the ageing process (e.g., Birren and Schaie, 2001).

Psychology is also the science of subjectivity: concepts such as **well-being, life satisfaction** and **subjective quality of life** are important components of the self-system that have been are highly relevant in the study of ageing and age, and that have become key concepts in public policy on ageing (Abeles, Gift & Ory, 1994; Fernández-Ballesteros, 1998). Psychology is crucial in the empirical definition of these concepts and in the study of their determinants. Psychologists should contribute to the harmonisation of reliable measures for the evaluation and follow-up of ageing policy and programmes.

A final research theme that should be mentioned is **cognitive reserve capacity** (Fernández-Ballesteros and Calero, 1995). Cognitive reserve capacity can be understood as the behavioural expression of a property of the human brain: plasticity (e.g., Kandel, Schwartz & Jessell, 2000). Cognitive reserve capacity or cognitive plasticity might be defined as the capacity to learn new information, strategies or skills that compensate for previous cognitive decline. Cognitive plasticity is a basic research topic whose findings are highly relevant to one of the priority directions of the *International Plan of Action*: Continuing education**. Lifelong learning, continuing education** and the **promotion and maintenance of cognitive activity** are priority objectives not only for elders' development and participation, as they also affect health (both physical and mental). Education is the most powerful strategy for human development, and there is empirical evidence that the maintenance of cognitive activity through education is a protective factor against dementia.

Priority direction 1. Development for an ageing world: Psychological determinants of active and productive ageing

One of the priority directions of the *International Plan of Action on Ageing*

2002 refers to the promotion of elders' social participation through lifelong learning and opportunities for individual development, self-fulfilment and well-being throughout the life span. This perspective has been called **active ageing.** Active ageing is a key concept in the *Plan of Action on Ageing 2002*, and was defined by the World Health Organisation in a seminal document (WHO, 2002).

This relatively new view of ageing aims to supersede and extend the classic concept of "healthy ageing". The active ageing concept is close to that employed in one of the latest research programmes in gerontology and psycho-gerontology: successful ageing. Since the 1960s, longitudinal studies of ageing have indicated the tremendous variability of the ageing phenomenon, with pathological and successful ageing at the two ends of the ageing spectrum. Several efforts have been made to discover the criteria for defining or identifying components of successful ageing. Baltes and Baltes (1990) established the following ingredients: length of life, biological health, mental health, cognitive efficacy, social competence and productivity, personal control and life satisfaction (p.5). As it can be seen, five of the seven criteria are psychological. Rowe and Khan (1997) described three main basic support conditions of successful ageing: avoiding disease and disability, high cognitive and physical functions and engagement with life, and here, too, we can identify important psychological components.

One of the main objectives of the *International Plan of Action on Ageing 2002* is that elders continue to participate in family, social, economic, cultural and civic affairs – that they continue to be active. Active ageing has been defined by the WHO (2002) as follows: "*Active ageing is the process of optimising op-portunities for health, participation and security in order to enhance quality of life as people age... (allowing) people to realise their potential for physical, social and mental well-being throughout the life course and to participate according to their needs, desires and capacities*".

How a person acts, thinks, feels and interprets reality are psychological conditions linked to health, to social participation and to security in old age. Psychological and behavioural factors depend on a myriad of transactions across the life course between a biological organism and his/her socio-historical context. At a given point in life, how a person acts, thinks, feels and interprets reality is a product of these transactions, but psychological factors determine other future life conditions, such as health, social participation and well-being.

There is empirical evidence that the way the person usually behaves, that is, his/her **lifestyle**, is a principal determinant of health and illness. One aspect of lifestyle relates to the individual's tendency to perform cognitive activities (e.g., doing crosswords, playing chess), which seems to act as a protective factor of mental health. Lifestyles are basic behavioural repertoires that operate as protective or risk factors, and are therefore key concepts for the promotion of health and the prevention of illness. The focus of any health promotion or illness prevention strategy is on behavioural change, so that psychological knowledge and intervention procedures are always at the core of these strategies (e.g., Matarazzo, 1980).

Similarly, how far people believe they are going to be competent in a given situation and are able to control their life is linked to how far they can be productive in common life situations;

Box 2: Likely psychological determinants of active ageing

- Behavioural protective and risk factors: lifestyles
  - physical activity,
  - nutrition,
  - non-smoking and mild drinking,
  - cognitive activities
- Psychological assets:
  - Intellectual (e.g., cognitive skills),
  - Emotional (e.g., self-efficacy),
  - Personality (e.g., optimism)
  - Behavioural-motor (e.g., activity, functional abilities),
  - Coping styles (e.g. , coping with stress), and
  - Psycho-social (e.g., pro-social behaviour, subjective social support)

how they manage health situations and how they cope with stressful situations is related to recovery from disease (e.g. Lazarus & Folkman, 1995; Moos, 1998); how people approach their relatives is associated with social participation; how they prepare for retirement is strongly associated with security in old age; and finally, the extent to which a person has developed cognitive abilities is related to mortality, longevity and active participation and productivity (Smith et al, 1999; Whalley, & Deary, 2001).

In sum, as shown in Box 2, active ageing is strongly related to psychological and behavioural conditions, and psychologists can therefore make an important contribution to promoting development in an ageing world.

Priority direction 2: Advancing health and well-being into old age: psychology of the aged

On the basis of psychological principles, and from a clinical perspective, psychologists have been contributing for around fifty years to the development and implementation of assessment systems and intervention programmes for dealing with behavioural and psychological problems in old age (e.g., Woods, 1999). Reliable assessment procedures and sophisticated intervention techniques have been the key to an effective contribution to the maintenance and improvement of well-being in old age, and clinical psycho-gerontology has become established as an important sub-discipline of scientific psychology (e.g., Edelstein, 2000).

Box 3 summarises the most important fields of clinical psycho-gerontology.

Priority direction 3: Ensuring enabling and supportive environments: Person/environment interactions

Person-environment interactions (or transactions) represent a heuristic formula that supports the importance of guaranteeing enabling and supportive environments for elders. The diversity of human contexts prevents any universal recommendation, with the exception of three environmental conditions that are present in this Priority direction: 1) promotion of ageing in place, as well as all recommendations that promote

Box 3: Psychology of the aged

- Behavioural and psychological risk factors of pathological ageing
- The frail elder as a target of clinical psychology
- Assessment and intervention of behavioural and psychological disorders and deficits of frail elders in:
  - Cognitive impairments
  - Affective and emotional disorders
  - Activity daily living and functional abilities and dependency
  - Health problems (e.g., sleep disturbances, headache, chronic pain)
- Social support intervention as a buffer of mental disorders
- Training and support for formal and informal care systems of frail elders:
  - Family and informal care
  - Formal care system training and support
- Behavioural intervention in health and social services for elders: treatment adherence, coping with stress, palliative care, etc.

independent living and accessible care; 2) prevention of any type of abuse and violence, and finally, 3) promotion of a positive view of ageing. However, in order to undertake work in this Priority direction, assessment systems and intervention procedures are required.

Box 4 lists relevant topics on which environmental psychologists have been working over the last thirty years.

Environmental psychologists have worked on several models for predicting adaptive behaviour and well-being in old age, taking into consideration elders'

needs (e.g., Lawton, 1977; Moos & Lemke, 1985; Kahana, 1975). However, beyond theoretical models, this Priority direction requires environmental systems for assessing gerontological contexts (homes, apartments, residences, day-care centres, nursing homes, etc.) from a multidimensional perspective, thus making it possible to implement programmes for improving these contexts and increasing the environmental satisfaction, well-being and quality of life of elders.

Unfortunately, frail elders are subject to abuse; psychologists have studied

Box 4: Environmental psychology and ageing

- Person/environment psychological models: competence, congruence and socio-ecological and behavioural-ecological models
- The assessment of gerontological contexts: residence, day-care centres, apartments, homes.
- Environmental control as a key concept for institutions and health and social services
- Psychosocial characteristics of gerontological environments
- Environmental satisfaction
- Leisure and Free time environments as developmental contexts
- Risk factors of abuse and violence in old age
- Social image changes

risk factors in an attempt to identify contextual and personal variables that may serve as antecedents of elder abuse (e.g., McDonald, 1996).

Finally, certain attitudes to and misperceptions of ageing can be considered as causing negative aspects affecting the elderly, such as ageism, lack of participation, social exclusion or abuse (Bytheway, 1995). From social psychology, intervention programmes for changing social images, prejudice and stereotypes have been developed with effective outcomes (Oskamp, 2000). Policies for promoting a positive view of ageing are key actions in which psychologists should be involved.

Applied Psycho-gerontology: The role of psychology and psychologists in the health and social services

So far, we have presented an overview of psychology's contribution to elders' needs. For several decades, psychology has been studying and proposing models of intervention with scientifically and experimentally guaranteed instruments and techniques, making contributions that have a direct influence on the quality of the attention given to the elderly population, with the eventual objective of improving their well-being.

The involvement of psychologists is essential for the satisfaction of elders' needs[2]

Psychology's approach to the ageing process has changed, from a view of decline and deterioration to a consideration of ageing as a positive and active experience of adaptation, dealt with by each person in a different way according to a set of quite heterogeneous factors. These factors can be grouped around three basic pillars: health and autonomy, productivity and protection. The promotion of elders' independence and autonomy and of their participation in society, the independent solution of their problems and the chance to remain in their familiar environment are recommendations by leading international organisations to all agents involved in making and implementing decisions about approaches to the phenomenon of demographic ageing.

The general objective of psychology and the psychologist is to optimise this adaptive process, through interventions related both to the needs of elderly subjects themselves and to their family and social contexts.

The following needs represent priority intervention areas:

– *Need for psychology to promote health and well-being across the life span:* In order to reach old age in a state of well-being and good health, actions are necessary from childhood and throughout life. Psychology, together with other sciences, is a key discipline for people's development of independent and healthy lifestyles throughout the life span. It is important to underline the great relevance of the psychological variables involved in the promotion of active ageing.

– *Need for psychological evaluation/ intervention in relation to the mental health of elders:* Knowing the psycho-

logical characteristics and needs of elders makes it possible to improve services, make decisions on resources and design intervention programmes at a psychological level that facilitate prevention, rehabilitation and re-incorporation in the community (preventive measures, early intervention, provision of treatment and management of problems in relation to mental health). Assessment procedures in this context are especially important in cases of dementia and depression, with risk of suicide in circumstances of neglect and social isolation, highly prevalent among the elderly population. Likewise, attention from psychologists and/or neuro-psychologists is necessary in cases of disability and in situations of abuse.

– *Need for psychological evaluation/ intervention in elders with disabilities:* Psychology is clearly involved in primary, secondary and tertiary attention for people with physical and/ or mental disabilities. The incidence of disability increases with age, making psychological intervention more and more frequent and necessary. Apart from the role of psychological attention for general disabilities, assessment and intervention by psychologists is particularly important in the area of cognitive disability (e.g., dementia).

– *Need for psychological support for families:* Looking after people (children, adults or elders) that need help represents a challenge for society in general and for the family in particular. Living with dependent people and being responsible for them involves worry and stress, especially when they are one's spouse, parent, child or grandchild. At times, dealing with this experience in a positive way

depends both on the attitude taken towards caregiving and the skill with which one deals with the demands of attention and help from these people. Reducing the negative psychological consequences deriving from providing care and attention becomes a priority. It is important to emphasise the large number of elders that take responsibility for the care of relatives, be they elderly or not.

– *Need for social and community integration of elders.* Psychologists can contribute to improving the social integration of elders by analysing the psychological and psychosocial factors involved in the process and designing interventions, from information campaigns on the function of elders in our society, to strategies for changing stereotypes, to the organisation of informal support networks that facilitate acceptance of elders in society or the development of alternatives to institutions and residences.

– *Need for the training of other professionals in aspects involved in attention to the elderly*: Social and health professionals and paraprofessionals are well trained in their particular fields, but working effectively with elders requires the acquisition and development of a range of relational skills. Psychology contributes to improving the attention and care given from these different disciplines by providing the relational tools necessary in work with elders and their families, helping to humanise the psychological keys to active ageing, personalise care and incorporate the ethical principles underlying intervention with people, and to prevent Burnout in professionals. The importance of psychological aspects is especially clear in palliative care with terminally ill patients and in work

with special needs groups (elderly immigrants, elders in emergency situations, abused elders, etc.).

— *Need for education in psychological aspects involved in work.* Psychology has made numerous contributions in the field of work and organisations (personnel selection and training, ergonomics, prevention of risks at work, etc.). It is necessary to consider the psychological aspects involved in the ageing of the active population and policies for extending working life. Psychology has an important role in various aspects related to the labour force, whether it be in the assessment of premature ageing in workers, the training of trainers for the elderly (recycling of the labour force or extension of working life) or the design and implementation of retirement and early/partial retirement preparation courses.

— *Need for counselling, training and* *psychological support for elders active in society.* The capacity for learning is maintained throughout life, and constitutes the principal tool through which to facilitate active personal education and development. Support and training in their activities is fundamental for elderly volunteers. Elders can and should participate in and contribute to the development of our society, but technical support is required for their voluntary activities to be effective. Also important is the training of representatives of elders' organisations in management skills that allow them to participate effectively in the decision-making processes taking place at different levels.

— *Need to consider psychological aspects in urban and architectural planning and the design of new technologies:* Emotional and psychological security in the home and in the environment are basic aspects for promoting independent and autono-

Box 5 : Main functions of psycho-gerontologists

- Psychological assessment
- Planning and implementation of psychological intervention programmes
- Elaboration and presentation of psychological reports
- Group and individual psychological therapies
    - Cognitive deficit
    - Emotional disorders
    - Behavioural (motor) dysfunction
- Gerontological counselling
- Behavioural change for implementing healthy and adaptive lifestyles; general health promotion, illness prevention and rehabilitation
- Family counselling, training, and support
- Counselling, training, and support for psychological contribution of geriatric personnel and gerontologists
- Support in situations of burn-out or professional stress in formal and informal care situations
- Person/environment assessment and change in community and residential contexts
- Psychological support in situations of emotional difficulty
- Co-ordination of interdisciplinary teams

Box 6: Psychological intervention programmes in the fields of ageing, age and the aged

- **Health**
  - Health promotion and illness prevention: teaching lifestyles
  - Functional abilities and daily life activities
  - Psychological support in rehabilitation
  - Cognitive compensation programmes
  - Memory training programmes
  - Psycho-stimulation programmes for dementia patients
  - Emotional disorders psychotherapy
  - Relaxation training
  - Psychological support in palliative care
- **Social relationships**
  - Social Skills training
  - Problem-solving training
  - Grandparents training
  - Grandparents as teachers
  - Person/environment interactions programmes
- **Family programmes**
  - Family counselling
  - Family support in stressful situations
  - Self-help groups
- **Formal care system programmes**
  - Training in psychological components of formal care systems for the elderly
  - Training in support in professional burnout or stress situations
  - Training and support of others working with elders
- **Social contexts, leisure and education**
  - Changing prejudice and negative images in relation to ageing
  - Active ageing programmes
  - Psychological improvement in leisure programmes
  - Teaching programmes for elders
  - Training in road safety for elders
  - Professional counselling for older workers
  - Quality of life programmes
- **Elders at risk**
  - Alzheimer's disease and other types of dementia
  - Loneliness and depression
  - Terminal situations
  - Elder abuse
  - Grandparents as parent substitutes
  - Elders as volunteers
  - Disabled and handicapped elders
  - Immigrants elders

mous life in elders with and without disabilities. Psychological aspects of ageing must be taken into account in the design of thoroughfares, public spaces, dwellings, alternative accommodation, residences, and so on.

In sum, psychology and psychologists have access to a set of professional functions for implementing specialised psychological programmes responding to the social needs of elders and their families. Boxes 5 and 6 show the main functions of psycho-gerontologists and the most important general psychology programmes.

The psychologist as a member of the interdisciplinary team and a guarantee of quality attention

The inclusion of the professional psychologist in interdisciplinary teams at different levels of attention to the elderly is an established reality, and is becoming increasingly common. Psychologists have shown themselves to be professionals with access to a body of knowledge and skills that allows them to make highly informed and effective contributions in cognitive, affective,

behavioural and psychosocial aspects, assessing them and designing specific psychological intervention programmes. In addition to preventive work, psychologists are involved in more clinically-based activities with elders, treating behavioural disorders and depressive syndromes, working with terminal patients, and so on. Given the complexity of psychological intervention, an inter-disciplinary approach and teamwork are indispensable for permitting access to complete information on certain psychological variables of each particular case, and thus improving the quality of the intervention.

In **conclusion**, it can be stated that work over the last half-century in the areas of ageing, age and the aged has shown that psychology can make an enormous contribution to improving quality of life and well-being throughout the life span and in the elderly. The crucial relevance of psychology means that psychologists can and should be involved in work on the three priority directions of the ***International Plan on Ageing 2002:*** development for an ageing world, advancing health and well-being into old age, and ensuring enabling and supportive environments.

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Population ageing & world peace. Empowering future generations: older persons role and responsibility.

El envejecimiento de la población y la paz mundial. La capacitación de las generaciones futuras: el rol y responsabilidad de las personas mayores.

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ABSTRACT

The 'silent revolution' of the increased ageing of the population worldwide is bringing fundamental issues to the forefront. One of them is to question the role of the Elders in society today, knowing the state of the world is calling for urgent measures and interventions to " humanize" development, to empower civil society and to guarantee peace and security in all corners of the world.

Traditionally, ancient cultures have always praised their Elders as "Transmitters of culture", as "Guardians of the secrets of life" or as "the Wise" to consult for preserving and restoring peace in the individual and in society. Today their role is challenged with the mutation of the traditional family, with migration, with the mix of cultures and especially the predominance of the economy- and technology-based society.

An area which has not been given much attention is the implicit role and 'invisible' impact' of the elderly on society, i.e. the psycho-social effect of the role model elders play for younger generations. For example, the way the collective memory of war and peace processes is transmitted to the next generations is a powerful factor of psycho-social transformation: (i) Either by encouraging a spirit of forgiveness and of reconciliation within society (political) or/and within the family (socio-genealogical) and within the self (psychological), (ii) or on the contrary, by increasing the hatred and the will

for revenge of one generation on to another, through daily attitudes, behaviors and words – e.g. through informal education of war.

This article aims at bringing insights and reflections - based on scientific findings and theories - on peace and conflict processes from three different angles: a) interpersonal: between generations, b) intrapersonal: within the individual, and c) transpersonal: the transgenerational process of psycho-social patterns.

Finally, the scientific argumentation gives good ground to think that: (a) in order to ensure peace, world issues will have to be addressed in such a way as to avoid disruption or conflicts between generations, and (b) in order to ensure long term peace, a common vision for all generations will have to be addressed.

The 2nd United Nations World Assembly on Ageing, in Madrid, 9-12 April 2002, is an opportunity to address the issue of the Ageing Population and World Peace and to involve the Elders in all efforts as (a) Peace-keepers - preventing conflict and promoting peace at the inner and outer level, and (b) peace-makers - empowering future generations for peace. Psychologists have a new and growing role to play in supporting and sustaining internal and external peace efforts of the elders and of younger generations, especially situations such as after war trauma, mass destruction and many other effects of world crises.

KEYWORDS

Peace, war, inter-generational issues, psychology of ageing, coping, wisdom, responsibility, modelling, transmission, social learning, policy on ageing, psycho-social intervention in the population

RESUMEN

La "revolución silenciosa" del aumento del envejecimiento de la población mundial está produciendo cuestiones de gran importancia. Una de ellas es el rol de las personas mayores en la sociedad actual, en relación con la necesidad a nivel mundial de tomar medidas e intervenciones urgentes para "humanizar" el desarrollo, capacitar a la sociedad civil y garantizar la paz y la seguridad en todas las partes del mundo.

Tradicionalmente, las culturas antiguas han ensalzado a sus mayores como "Transmisores de cultura", como "Guardianes de los secretos de la vida" o como "Los Sabios" a los que había que consultar para preservar y restaurar la paz individual y social. Hoy en día, se enfrentan a un reto en relación con su rol debido a la mutación de la familia tradicional, a las migraciones, a la mezcla de culturas y en especial a la predominancia de una sociedad basada en la economía y la tecnología.

No se ha prestado mucha atención al rol implícito e invisible de las personas mayores en la sociedad, véase la repercusión psicosocial que el modelo del rol de los mayores tiene en las jóvenes generaciones. Por ejemplo, el modo en el que la memoria colectiva sobre los procesos de guerra y la paz es transmitida a las generaciones venideras es un factor poderoso de transformación psicosocial: (1) por un lado fomentando un espíritu de reconciliación en el seno de la sociedad (política) y/o en la familia (socio-genealógica)

y a nivel personal (psicológica), (2) o por el contrario, haciendo crecer el odio y el deseo de venganza de una generación a otra, mediante actitudes y comportamientos y verbalizaciones cotidianos- por ejemplo mediante la educación informal de la guerra.

Este artículo tiene la finalidad de concienciar y hacer reflexionar-basándose en recomendaciones y teorías científicas- acerca de los procesos de paz y conflictos desde diferentes ángulos: a) interpersonal: entre generaciones, b) intrapersonal: a nivel individual, y c) transpersonal: el proceso transgeneracional de los patrones psicosociales.

Finalmente, la argumentación científica hace pensar que: a) para asegurar la paz, los temas mundiales deben conducirse de tal manera que se evite la separación o el conflicto entre generaciones, y b) para asegurar la paz a largo plazo, es necesario construir una visión común para todas las generaciones.

La II Asamblea de Naciones Unidas sobre el Envejecimiento, en Madrid del 8 al 12 de abril, es una oportunidad para establecer la base para el Envejecimiento de la Población y la Paz Mundial así como para implicar a las personas mayores para convertirse en a) conservadores de la Paz-previniendo los conflictos y promocionando la paz a nivel interno y externo, y b) pacificadores-capacitando a las generaciones futuras para la paz. Los psicólogos tienen un rol nuevo y por desarrollar en relación al apoyo y mantenimiento de los esfuerzos para la paz a nivel interno y externo de las personas mayores y de las generaciones más jóvenes, en especial en situaciones como los traumas de guerra, las destrucciónes masivas y muchos otros efectos producidos por las crisis bélicas.

PALABRAS CLAVE

Paz, guerra, temas intergeneracionales, psicología del envejecimiento, afrontamiento, sabiduría, responsabilidad, modelado, transmisión, aprendizaje social, políticas de envejecimiento, intervención psicosocial en la población.

1. STATE OF THE WORLD POPULATION: "POPULATION BOOM"

On 12 October 1999, during the UN International Year of Older Persons, the United Nations Population Fund launched their yearly report "The State of the World Population" announcing an estimate of 6 billion people alive in the world. This report underlines key figures (table 1):

– *State of the population:* the world's population has quadrupled in the last 100 years and it has doubled in 40 years from 3 billion in 1960 to 6 billion in 1999; a billion was added in only the 12 last years.

– *Population growth and fertility:* The worldwide tendency is towards smaller families: women have fewer children than ever before as access to family planning is improving and allowing more control over the number and the spacing of childbirths. Although the population is still increasing by about 78 million people per year, the actual rate of growth has slowed down from 2.4 to 1.3 per cent in 30 years. In less-developed regions, fertility rates have fallen by half since 1969- from 6.2 children per woman in 1950 (2.8 in developed countries) to less than 3 today (1.6) and are projected to fall to less than 2.1 by 2045. Fertil-

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Table 1

Considering the state of the world and the spectacular increase in longevity, ageing in society must be pictured within a new framework: the increase of the inter-generational lineage and of living descendants contrasting with a decrease of intra-generational family members is building a new architecture of society. In other words, the structure, the backbone, of our society has expanded from '2 or 3 generations' during this last century to '4 to 5 generations' living at the same time - with less siblings and children - which is affecting all dimensions of life.

Expected changes in the population
Some 'Whispering' Figures...

In general

- Number of inhabitants...6 billion = 1st time ever : in 1960's = 3 billion - in 2000 = 6.1 billion - in 2050 = 9.3 billion.
- Annual Rate Growth: 1.3% per year or 77 million people/ year . 6 developing countries account for half of this annual growth: India (21%), China (12%), Pakistan (5%), Nigeria (4%), Bangladesh (4%), and Indonesia (3%).
- Youth (15-24): today the biggest-ever generation of young people with a number of 1.05 billion young people.
- Elderly (60+) : today the biggest-ever generation of older persons with an estimated number of 420 million at midyear 2000, 795'000 added each month during the year. The number of elderly is superior to the number of children under the age of 15. By 2050, the number of elderly will be the double of the number of younger people.
- The number of the elderly will triple from 606 million now to 2 billion in 2050, the number of nonagenarians and centenarians is increasing worldwide. Those age groups are proportionally the fastest growing segment of the population.
- Generations: 4 to 5 generations live together out of which 2 to 3 can be in the 'older persons generation' or at retirement age with wars and epidemics such as HIV/AIDS = "wipe out" one to two generations.
- Continuing urbanization and international migration creates policy challenges: half of all people live in cities, compared to a third in 1960. Worldwide, cities are growing by 60 million persons per year. Today, there are 17 mega cities – with 10 million people or more.

More developed regions

- Population: 1.2 billion.
- Little change over the next 50 years .
- Low fertility levels.
- Population decline: by mid-century, it is projected that 39 countries will have a smaller sized population than today: Japan and Germany (each 14% smaller), Italy and Hungary (each 25% smaller) and the Russian Federation, Georgia and Ukraine (each between 28% and 40% smaller).

Less-developed regions:

- Population: rise from 4.9 billion in 2000 to 8.2 billion in 2050.
- Declines in fertility; in the absence of such declines, the population of less-developed regions would reach 11.9 billion. Fertility is projected to decline markedly in the future.
- Rapid growth of population is still expected among 48 countries classified as least developed: population expected to nearly triple from 2000 to 2050: passing from 658 million to 1.8 billion.
- Rapid urbanization: by 2015, projections state there will be 26 megacities – 10 million and more – 22 of them in less-developed regions, 18 in Asia alone.

Sources: UNFPA (1999), UN Population Division (2000), US Census Bureau (2001)

ity has declined, however unevenly. In 61 countries, with about 44% of the world's population, couples are having fewer children than the two they would need in order to "replace" themselves. However, even if "replacement fertility" were to be reached immediately, populations would continue to grow for several decades because of the large number of people now entering their peak childbearing years.

– *Generations:* there are more young people and older people alive than ever before: nearly half are under 25 years old, over a billion are young people between 15 and 24- parents and grand-parents of the next generations. Among developing countries, more than a third of the population is under-age 15 compared with less than a fifth in industrialized countries. Even with the existing large numbers of young people, the elderly population has already exceeded the child population (below age 15) and by 2050, for every child there will be two elderly persons.

– *Place of population growth:* most of the growth of the population is taking place in the poorest and least prepared countries. Africa's population has tripled since 1960 and continues to grow the fastest as well as parts of South Asia and Western Asia (figure 1). Population growth has slowed down, stopped or decreased in Europe, North America and Japan. The population growth of those countries only increases as the result of immigration of the work force. Continual urbanization and international migration creates policy challenges. Half of the world population today lives in cities, compared to a third in 1960. Worldwide, cities are growing by 60 million people each

year and by 2030, it is predicted that over 60% of people, i.e. 5 billion, will live in urban areas. Today there are 17 megacities compared to just two in 1960 – a megacity consisting of 10 million or more people. It is projected that by 2015 there will be 26 megacities, 22 of them in less-developed regions, 18 in Asia alone.

– *Migration:* in all regions, international migration is moving close to the top of policy agendas, as the numbers of migrants increase: between 1965 and 1990, migration expanded form 75 million to 120 million. Migrant workers send more than $70 billion home each year in remittances. More and more migrants are women.

To summarize, despite the rapid decline of fertility rates, there is a lowered average life expectancy at birth due to specific situations such as wars, social crises, HIV/AIDS epidemic. The Population Division of the UN Department for Social and Economic Affairs now projects a world population of approximately 8.9 billion in 2050, rather than the 9.4 billion predicted in 1996. Nevertheless, as the world is changing, projections of numbers still hold a percentage of uncertainty linked to unexpected world crises and the consequences of globalization: new world epidemics, nuclear threats, human and economic terrorism, chemical contamination, food security, access to water, climate change, ecological disasters, etc. On the other hand, population and behavioural patterns could also take different directions: increase/decrease in national and urban/rural migration, more and more marriages between cultures, universal access for women to contraceptives, increase in literacy and education at all ages, new behaviours of younger.

In this context, the title of the UNFPA report ""6 Billion: A Time for Choices" highlighted the critical decisions facing the international community as we enter the 21st century: "This slow demographic change calls for policy choices."

One of the critical decisions concerns the ageing population – which is too often the 'forgotten child' of international and United Nations reports. The awareness of the "Age quake" is only at its first stage and needs serious consideration on mechanisms to bring the ageing issue as part of future debates on globalization.

This article has two objectives:

– First, to demonstrate the need to link population ageing with the current challenges of the United Nations: on the one hand, world reports do not put emphasis on or take older persons into consideration although they are essential to sustainable future policies, and on the other hand, population ageing is not only a challenge but an opportunity for responding to world issues at the population level as well as at the individual and societal level.

– The second objective is to take one of the most important mission of United Nations, World Peace, and see what role and intervention the elderly - a growing segment of civil society - can play at the individual and collective levels in their commitment to participate in local and global Peace. This aspect has not yet been considered, and this article wishes to bring light to the specific interaction between ageing, generations and peace with a discussion based on existing facts and a scientific perspective on psycho-social and behavioural dimensions of the population and the individual ageing process.

2. STATE OF THE AGEING POPULATION: THE "SILENT REVOLUTION"

Global population ageing is emerging as a phenomenon never yet witnessed in the History of Humanity. The spectacular increases in human life expectancy associated with lowered fertility and improved health is generating growing numbers and proportions of an older population and extending the duration of life to exceptional ages. This mutation has been qualified as the 'Silent Revolution' as the attention of the media and society has mostly been captured by the effect of technology on globalization, while the far-reaching effects of the 'silent revolution' are not uttered but are already felt by every individual, family, neighbourhood and nation throughout the world. Although, its consequences remain either 'excluded', or 'unaddressed' or 'unprioritized' in most UN agencies and international organizations, most governments in the developed world have already put in place elaborated policies on ageing and some governments in the developing world have also included this dimension (i.e. in Africa: in Mali and Benin).

The ageing of the population and individuals is changing and will continue to change the face of our world bringing unprecedented challenges but also opportunities. As stated at the Denver Summit of the 8 (G8) in 1997:

'One of the most important challenges the world faces in the 21st Century is responding to the economic, financial and social implications of the changing demographics in our ageing societies.'

What portrait of the Ageing World can one draw today? According to the most recent data from the Population Division, Department of Economic and

Social Affairs of the United Nations (2000) and to the US Census Bureau (November 2001), the latest data shows the following situation:

– *Dramatic increases in longevity*: which caused global life expectancy to climb 20 years since 1950, to its current level of 66 years in 1999. Life expectancy at birth exceeds 78 years in 28 countries. Although the United States will age rapidly when the Baby Boomers (people born between 1946 and 1964) begin to reach age 65 after the year 2010, in the year 2050 the population aged 65 and over is projected to be slightly above 20 percent (compared with about 13 percent today). In contrast, some African countries (e.g. Malawi, Swaziland, Zambia, and Zimbabwe) where the HIV/AIDS epidemic is particularly devastating, the average life expectancy at birth may be as much as 25 years lower than it otherwise would have been in the absence of HIV/AIDS, which does not mean that the possible longevity has eroded.

– *The numbers and proportions of older persons has increased:* since 1950, the proportion of the worlds' population over 60 years old has changed from one in thirteen to one in ten. By the year 2050, one of five will be 60 years or older. Italy has the highest proportion of elderly people with 18.1% aged 65 or over. By 2020, the Japanese population will be the eldest in the world, with 31% over 60 years of age, followed by Italy, Greece and Switzerland. The global population aged 65 and over was estimated to be 420 million people as of midyear 2000, an increase of 9.5 million since midyear 1999. The net balance of the world's elderly population grew by more than 795,000 people each month during

a year. Projections for the year 2010 suggest that the net monthly gain will be in the order of 847'000 people. China has the largest elderly population, numbering nearly 88 million in 2000 (Kinsella and Velkoff, 2001).

– *Some developing countries are ageing at a faster pace than developed countries (figure 1)* . By 2020, five of the ten countries with the largest populations of older persons will be in the developing world: China, India, Indonesia, Brazil and Pakistan. Although industrialized nations have higher percentages of elderly people than do most developing countries, 59% of the world 's elderly now live in the developing countries of Africa, Asia, Latin America, the Caribbean, and Oceania. By 2020 also, the population of older persons from developing countries will rise by nearly 240% from the 1980 level. For example, it took only 23 years for countries such as Chile or Sri Lanka to rise its population of 65+ year old from 7% to 14% while it took 116 years (5 times more years) for the same growth.

– *Striking differences exist between regions,* with for example, 1 in 5 Europeans being 60 years or older, as compared to 1 in 20 Africans. *The older population is becoming increasingly urban*. In 2000, the majority of the world's older population, or 51 %, lives in urban areas.

– *The older population itself is ageing.* The oldest old are the fastest-growing component of many national populations. The world 's growth rate for the 80+ population from 1999 to 2000 was 3.5 percent, while that of the world 's elderly (65+) population as a whole was 2.3 percent compared with 1.3 percent for the total popula-

Figure 1: Speed of Population Ageing

Figure 1: Speed of Population Ageing
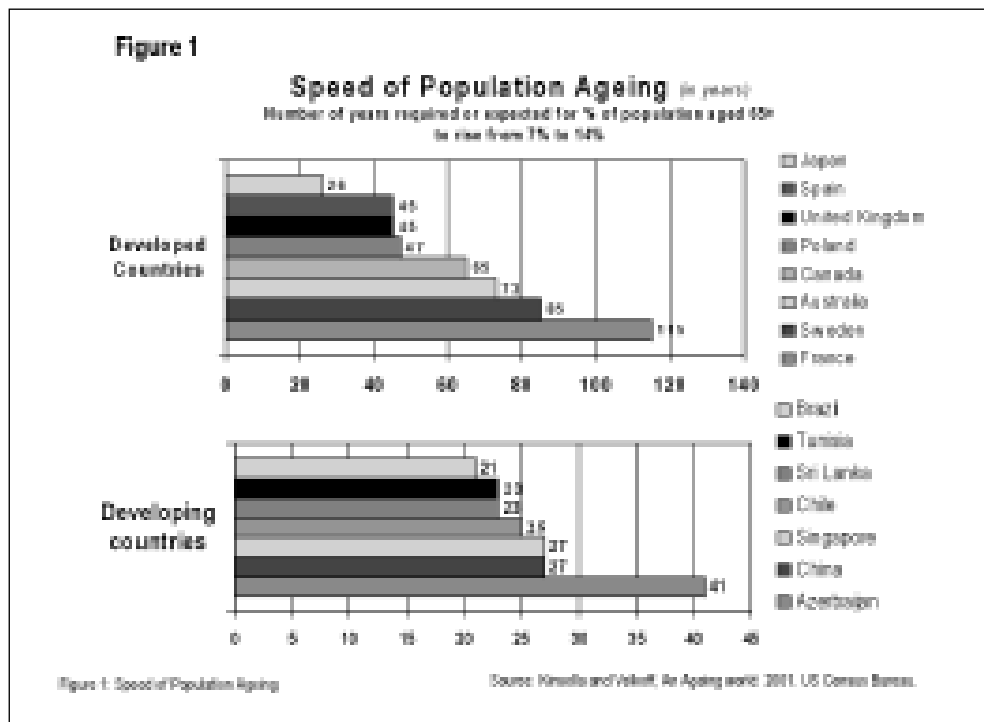
tion (all ages included)). Currently, persons 80 years and older constitute 11% of the population aged 60 and above. In contrast, by 2050, 27% of the older population will be over 80 years old. Past population projections often have underestimated the improvement in mortality rates among the eldest old and actual numbers of tomorrow's oldest old could be much higher than presently anticipated.

– *The number of centenarians is increasing worldwide*. In 1999, 145'000 centenarians were estimated to be alive, and 2.2 millions are expected in 2050, a 15-fold increase. According to researchers in Europe, the number of centenarians has doubled each decade since 1950 in industrialized countries, and developing countries seem to follow the same trend when data is available. The 1999 census in Viet-Nam counted about 4000 centenarians (Central Census Steering Committee, 1999). Using reliable statistics from ten Western European countries and Japan, Vaupel and Jeune (1995) estimated that some 8,800 centenarians lived in these countries as of 1990,and that the number of centenarians grew at an average annual rate of approximately 7 percent between the early 1950s and the late 1980s.They also estimate that, over the course of human history, the odds of living from birth to age 100 may have risen from 1 in 20 million to 1 in 50 for females in low-mortality nations such as Japan and Sweden.

– *The majority of older persons are women (55%);* among those who are 80 years or older, 65% are women. They make up the majority of the oldest old and the elderly widowed, and are most frequently the care-givers of the worlds' older persons! Although there are more elderly women than elderly men in the vast majority of the world 's countries, there are exceptions such as India, Iran, and Bangladesh. Older women are less likely to be literate. In China in 1990,for example, only 11 per-cent of women aged 60 and over could read and write, compared with half of men aged 60 and over.

– *The existence of up to 5 generations living at the same time is today a possible reality.* No longer can an increasing population of older persons be narrowly defined as a single group. The age of grandparents can now range from 35 to 123 years old, and their grandchildren from newborns to retirees. Intergenerational legal issues are becoming increasingly important. Although the world 's population is ageing, children still outnumber the elderly in all major nations except six: Bulgaria, Germany, Greece, Italy, Japan, and Spain.

3. DYNAMICS BETWEEN GENERATIONS: TOWARDS A NEW ARCHITECTURE

It is only through understanding how generations interact and evolve together, that one can grasp the elements necessary to any sustainable policy or action in society. The difficulty is to move from a static picture, the photographic cliché of society today and the past (statistics, census, etc.) to a more lively view, a motion picture showing us the unfolding of society (cohort and longitudinal studies, qualitative approach). The picture added to the motion picture of society gives us a more accurate understanding of its dynamics and consequently calls for dynamic policies. What can we say about generations? Although population census does not integrate yet the intergenerational aspect and very few research have tackled this dimension in a longitudinal perspective.

At the population level, evidence shows that four-generation families are becoming increasingly common (e.g. Lehr, 1998, Soldo, 1996) and the ageing of the baby boom may produce a 'great-grand-parent boom' in many countries. This is not only the case in the developed world, population statistics show that the average growth rates of higher age groups is increasing in all regions of the world (figure 2). The graphic clearly shows that, even the least developed regions, the most striking growth rate is among the ages of 80+ and 60-79: the parents, grand-parents and great-grand parents of today.

The impressive growth rate of the group of the elderly is supported by other trends and figures that are changing the architecture of the family descendants, the traditional genealogies, and consequently society:

(1) *The developing world is potentially more inclined to find a 4 or 5 generation structure*, as the average age of the mother at the birth of a first child is lower.

(2) *Finding two generations at retirement age or old age is more and more frequent* and the duration of retirement is increasing in all regions of the world (table 3). As an illustration, the official world record of longevity held by a French lady, Mrs. Jeanne

Figure 2: Average annual growth rates of 4 age groups by region

Figure 2

Population Average Annual Growth Rates by Age Group and by Region
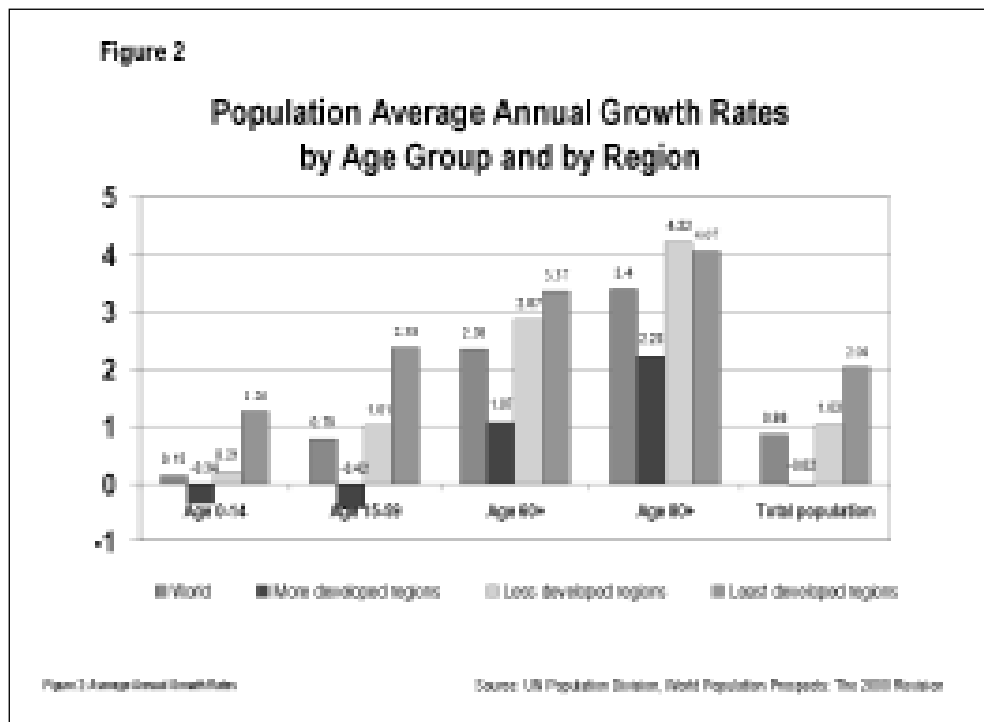
Calment who lived up to age 123 years in relatively good health can even make us suspect the future potential of 6 living generations with 3 generations at retirement age (Allard et al., 1994); the latest 1999 census in Vietnam counted nearly 4'000 centenarians which highlights the tendency of considering them to be a 'visible' group even in developing countries.

(3) *The constellation of families is dramatically changing worldwide* with the steady decline of fertility, raise in divorce rates and in mobility: for example, most retirees did not really get to know their grand-parents, they have many more brothers and sisters than the following generations, as most children of today get to know their four grand-parents and even their great-grand-parents, they have fewer siblings of the same father than any generation which ever lived. Many families today include half-brothers and half-sisters, which complicates the picture (i.e. in France - Toulemon, 2001).

An important component of this new architecture is the transition of the traditional family structure towards heterogeneous forms of genealogies and 'generation arrangements' (table 2), but also the shift from a homogeneous structure of generations within society to an increasing heterogeneity of generations.

Many factors influence this transition – let us mention the most striking ones:

Table 2

Mutation of Traditional Family Patterns
New Genealogies, New Generations

Traditional Architecture	*Current Architectural Tendency*
Strong mortality at all the ages	Increase of life expectancy and decrease of fertility
2 to 3 generations	4 to 5 generations
of which 0 to 1 generation is at retirement age	of which 2 to 3 generations are at retirement age

Predominance of

intra - generational links	Inter-generational lineage increases
Many siblings	Few brothers / sisters
Numerous descent	Weak descent at each generation
Traditional family	Nuclear family or single parent
Generations living together or near	Generations living apart or abroad
Homogeneous family:	Heterogeneous family —"Recomposition" of the family
One life cycle with unique events	Repetition of life cycles (re-marriage, work, migration, etc.)
Patriarcat – Matriarcat	Mixing of cultures and religions
Women : restricted choices in life	Women : more choices than ever: child, profession, …

Transmission of traditional education and socialization	Formal + new informal education (ICT*, mass media)
Shared economic management	Independent economy and security between generations
Genealogy-dependent survival	State-dependant survival
Work: Women at home - Man-centered career	Work: Men and women work outside the home
Hierarchy of age	Multiple hierarchy (economic, technological, etc.)
Unidirectional life course	*Complexities of life course pattern*
Unidirectional genealogies	*multiplication of genealogies*

Metamorphosis of solidarity — multiple generation society

* ICT: Information and Communication Technology

— *Older persons more likely to be married than in the past and have children at late ages*: not only do individuals live longer, but they have more freedom than ever to be parents at any age for men and at higher ages for women (the record age of giving birth for women is of 67 years in Italy). Over the last two or three decades, the marital status of the elderly has changed: with an increased proportion of mar-ried older men and women, and. a decreased proportion of widowers. Some of the change is attributable to improved joint survival of husbands and wives (Myers, 1992) but also to different marital experiences of birth cohorts such as the result of war. In most countries few elderly have not married.

— *Increase in divorce and remarriage rates at all ages*: although currently rates of divorced elderly people tend

to be low, the future cohorts of the elderly will have higher proportions of divorced/separated people. With the increase in divorce and marriages worldwide, it becomes increasingly common to find parents who during their life course become grand parents and then parents again, breaking with the stereotype of the traditional life course of a single generation's event.

– *Contrasting economic solidarity for old age throughout the world:* changes in family structure means that more elderly people must work for an income and that fewer benefit from the family support networks of the past. This is especially the case in the countries with no stable social security systems, or unstable governments, or regions affected by war or conflict. According to the latest statistics, labor force participation rates for men aged 65+ in developing countries is still very high and the decrease is much smaller than in developed countries (figure 3), contrasting with the trend, the retirement duration can be longer due to earlier ages of retirement (table 3). The lower the minimum age at which retirement social security pension benefits can be received, the more expensive it is to finance a given replacement rate and if retirement benefits are scarce, the more the retiree has to find other financial resources to live and survive (through his/her descendants, work or other means). For women, statis-

Figure 3: Labor force participation rates for men aged +65 in development countries
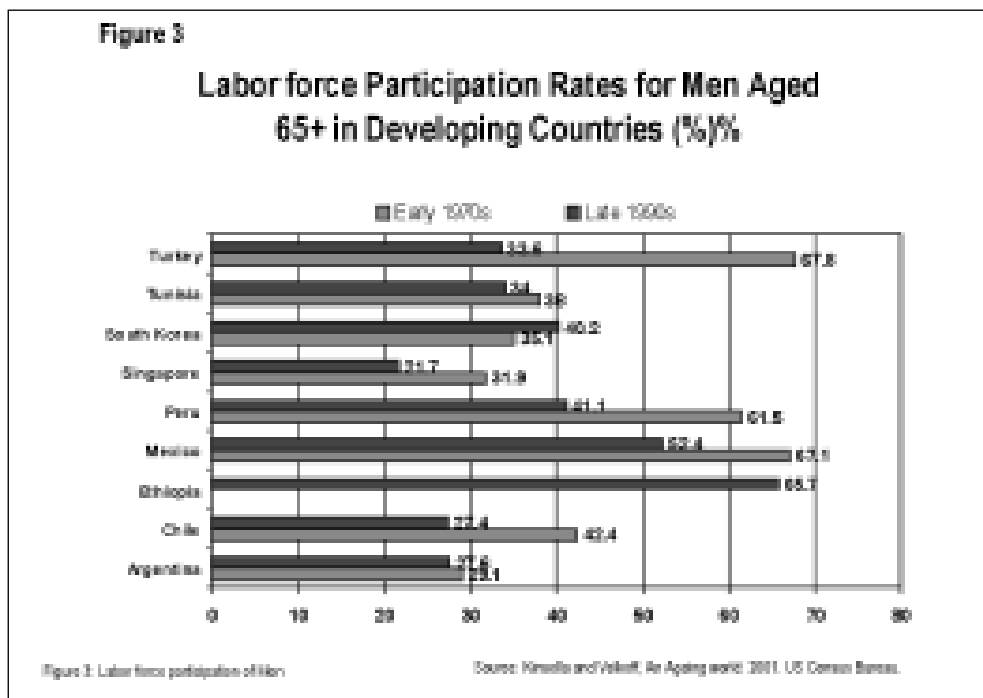

Figure 3: Labor force participation of Men

Source: Kinsella and Velkoff, An Ageing world 2001. US Census Bureau.

Table 3

Potential Conflicts & New Opportunities between Generations
some examples...

Conflicts :

➔ techno clash: information vs experience

➔ communication: mutual ghetto of generations (?)

➔ historical culture: local vs global or mixed

➔ socio-demographic: complexity of family ties

- Unequal distribution of social welfare + goods
- Health care rationing (i.e. age discrimination in access to high-tech care, transplants, etc.)
- Retirement age and ghetto economy
- Employment vs free voluntary work
- Gerontocracies. old age party as deciders
- Conflict of values? Economy vs Humanity
- Inter-generational rights absent

Opportunities :

➔ of continuity: transmission of know how, coping, being

➔ being a model of life/death for future generations

➔ shared responsibility for the future as promoters of peace, protectors of the environment, values and spiritual leaders, etc.

- volunteering - time and experience available
- life experts - strategic competencies
- adding life networks and experience
- development : age and generation-specific
- transmit values to the children of tomorrow
- global solidarity - new concept of service
- starting a new 'free' career – constraint-free

tics on their economic activity is still not reliable (i.e. household industries, family business, agriculture, etc) and the informal economic activity still 'underestimated' or uncovered in most statistics.

– *Urbanization and migration as a 'generation splitting factor':* in contrast with the elderly usually 'ageing in place' the not-yet-elderly are dependant on income and move to urban areas or foreign countries in order to insure their income. This tendency toward urbanization is increasing worldwide as mentioned above and leads to the separation of young people from their grandparents, who previously played a role in their traditional education and socialization. It also causes new financial flows between developed and developing countries if retirement is lived in a different country, or if working migrants return to their home country after retirement.

– *Conflicts of rights: the equal distribution of social welfare to all generations (within a family or in general)* and equal access to treatment and health care is emerging as a future key societal issue. For example, end of life care or costly treatment is often considered as 'a luxury' to be avoided in times of economic pressures. Often priorities in economic investment are calculated on the potential years a person can live, thus valuing young ages and discriminating old ages, putting more value on birth than on death and the importance of its handling for the next generations.

– *Effect of epidemics on generations:* today in some regions, *an entire generation is wiped out* by crises such as epidemics, wars. For example, children orphaned by HIV/AIDS is a matter of great concern: not only do the children depend on older relatives for their care, but when separated and

not "brought back" to their elders or relatives, they could also be at risk of becoming street children or entering the social assistance system and head towards the 'poorest of the poor life course'. Other striking figures are those of the suicide rates in older age groups which are higher than in any younger age group (WHO, 1999), this in itself could be considered as a mental health disorder epidemic that might affect future generations by its sole figure as a model.

Finally, it appears clearly today *that traditional extended families are gradually disappearing.* Recent data confirm this tendency worldwide. For example, in the Middle East, as is the case in Egypt, 85% of all households are now nuclear families (UNFPA, 2001).

The mutation of traditional family patterns and the links between generations is clearly provoking a reform of the classical genealogy (Table 2) but also of the way society and policy will have to deal with it without taking the place of the family. It is no longer possible to build a genealogical tree without being confronted to complex situations and, the social or legal framework for solving those situations is often not yet in place. For example, recently the court of justice in Geneva (Switzerland) has reported an alarming tendency of divorced parents who are giving their resignation as legal parents and they are requesting that the custody of their children be withdrawn from them. The motive is that their children have become 'uncontrollable' and are no longer obeying the family or social rules; they address the court by affirming that the State has to take care of our children, we no longer know what to do with them" (Tribune de Genève, March 2002). New programmes to empower parents to apply their rights as parents will be put in place. This is just but emerging 'symptoms' of a new society where the State will have to very carefully look into preserving the responsibility of its citizens toward their ascendants and descendants.

As one acknowledges the growing "complexities of the traditional genealogies", the challenge ahead lies more in the regulation and adjustment of the dynamics between generations than in solving the challenges of old age alone. The socio-economic interdependency of generations in building a sustainable society calls for a systematic approach with more generation-integrated or generation adjustment components. The non-adjustment of generations bears a definite risk: the future conflict and clash between generations.

4. CONFLICT BETWEEN GENERATIONS?
'GENERATION DIVIDE' OR 'INDIVIDUAL DISTRESS'

Data about conflicts or peaceful interaction between generations are rare and results are contradictory. The new architecture of the family genealogies, as described above, has given rise to debates on the potential conflicts and opportunities between generations (table 3). In this context, a fundamental issue when discussing the process of conflict or peace is first to clarify the concept of generation and its definitions and then to highlight research areas where psycho-social research and theories contribute to our subject, either on the intergenerational aspect or the individual development aspect. Finally, a special point should be made on insights of findings supporting the transpersonal and transgenerational theories on transmission of peaceful behaviors and values from generation to generation.

The concept of generation is similar to the methodological concept of cohort: in essence, humans born and raised at different time points have experienced different life events that can have long-term consequences on them (figure 4). For example, major worldwide events that have taken place at particular time points in history have had profound impacts on particular segments of a population or a specific generation such as large numbers of males were killed at relatively young ages by various wars or conflicts (e.g. the Viet-Nam veterans are a specific group of survivors). The same must be kept in mind when considering the evolution and ageing process of the population affected by disasters and conflicts touching generations at different stages of their development: for example, some generations of youth have only known war (e.g. the youth of Afghanistan has experienced 23 years of war), or some generations have lived an abrupt trauma that will mark their life development (e.g. the Rwanda genocide). This aspect is important in any analysis and consideration of sustainable social and policy development of a population.

A. Generation Development: Divide or Social Cohesion

The definition of generations usually takes into account two main levels of definition:

a. *micro level* - generation within the family context (time framework: genetic identity)

b. *macro level* - generation within the larger context of society (time framework: socio-political identity)

Table 4

Edad de retiro efectivo y duración del mismo
Evolución de 1950 a 1990

Región	Edad de retiro efectivo		Duración esperada del retiro	
	1950	1990	1950	1990
Japón	66,2	65,5	12,0	17,8
Norteamérica	65,9	62,6	13,1	18,1
Oceanía	65,3	60,0	13,2	20,5
Europa del Norte	67,2	61,9	12,2	18,7
Europa del Sur	69,0	60,1	10,5	19,9
Europa occidental	65,7	59,3	12,8	20,7
Europa central y del este	65,0	59,2	12,8	18,6
Media de Europa occidental, central y este	66,5	61,8	12,4	19,0
Todos los píses	66,0	61,0	12,5	18,9

Fuente : Gillion, Turner, Bailey and Latulippe (2000). Social Security Pensions, Development and reform. International Labour Office, Geneva

The Micro-level: *The biological-family lineage generations*: based on the genetic identity the generation is defined by sequences of organisms deriving from a common ancestor, each sequence creates a generation. This is the classical concept underlying the construction of the genealogical tree.

Potential conflicts arising in the context of lineage can take many forms depending on which and how many generations are involved: inter-personal, economic conflicts, family issues such as grand parent custody in the case of divorce, and transgenerational violence.

The importance of lineage in generations lies in the fact that there exists a mechanism of transmission within society, which may account for variation within the larger society (Back, 1995). This transmission is not so much linked to genetic factors, but to psycho-social factors influencing the life course of the individual. Studies on generations have proved that there is transmission of values within a family (i.e. Bengston et al., 1985) or even from the psycho-analytical point of view the transmission of psychological distresses and unsolved conflicts from one generation to another (Kaës et al., 1993). Thus, one can postulate that peace and conflict does transmit from generation to generation - at the conscious and subconscious level - and that the role of elders a key to perpetuating a memory of peace versus war, conflict versus reconciliation, hatred versus forgiveness, etc.

The Macro level: a generation is defined herewith in the social and cultural context as living a common period of time in the history of humankind. In other words, a generation is defined by its socio-cultural mark. Each generation composes a succession of different individuals in society bound to specific social, cultural, economic or political common experiences (methodologically, this division of time corresponds to the same meaning as cohort or period). The time framework of a generation depends on the time influence of specific events or experiences. This definition is also considered as the cultural-anthropological approach.

Conflict and peace arise at both levels, within the family context, in this perspective, conflicts can perpetuate from one generation to another - but it can also arise at the macro-level, where an entire segment of the population is affected by war or conflicts perpetuating a different behavior which affects the following generation.

Reviews of the concepts of conflict or the peace process at the micro level or macro level inevitably overlap. War, genocide, natural disaster affect not only a generation at the macro-level but at the micro level as well.

On the other hand, some micro level conflicts might not seem to affect the macro-level directly, although it is important to keep in mind that micro-level conflicts might affect the long term lineage of future generations within the family.

Theories on transmission of models of behavior and values between generations have not yet been given much attention. Some researchers and anthropologists have studied this link in very different contexts. Putting them side-by-side, those findings give us serious elements to say that the older generation has an impact on the younger generation. The idea of this chapter is to bring some basic reflections from scientific findings and psychosocial theories on how generations at the micro and macro level live and interact with each other in a

peaceful or conflicting way and how this affects younger and future generations.

In 1971, in her famous book "A Study of the Generations Gap" (1970, 1971), Margaret Mead describes the evolution of links between generations in a tri-dimensional perspective of the past, present and future. Her approach gives an interesting framework to the possible developments of conflict or understanding between generations :

– *The Post-figurative Model* (traditional context) : this is the traditional model where children are educated by their parents and are in contact with their grand-parents who both play the role models of different stages of life. This model predominates in cultures with little mobility and the sense of timeless continuity and identity. The authority stems from the tradition of the past and the ancestors.

– *The Co-figurative Model* (war, migration context): this model emerges with a disruptive event – war, revolution, migration, new technologies – where children live a completely different experience from that of their parents, grand-parents and other older members of their community. In this context, the younger generations can no longer learn from their grand-parents from whom they are often separated, and must create new closer models. In this model, children don't live or see their grand-parents and great-grand parents regularly, or, they see them rarely, then their parents do maintain a dominant role. Parents look for models among their peers, whilst their children look for new existing models of grand-parents in their surroundings.

– *The Prefigurative Model* (today's generation gap context): younger generations are taking a on new

authority in the unfolding future and parents often learn from their children. Grand-parents no longer play the role of transmitters of traditions, there are no possible links and communication between generations as parents belong to a 'past' world and children to a radically 'new world' that is unknown to their elders. The new generation is facing its own modeling through the mass media and modern technology. Margaret Mead even affirms that we know that we are facing a youth that will never experience what we have experienced and that we will never experience what they have experienced. Grand-parents and even parents do not play an important role in transmitting knowledge as the speed of change and the advancement of technology do not allow sufficient time to incorporate and learn the new in order to be able to face the modified conditions of the environment. In this situation, a generation gap is clearly at hand. The "technology versus tradition" clash of generations is a risk.

Gerard Mendel also studies the relations between adolescents with older generations in a psycho-analytical approach. This author links the crisis between generations to a Oedipal-type of crisis against the father figure due to the dominance of technology. The refusal of the inheritance and of the father figure creates a divide more than a conflict between generations and empowers youth as a political force in society (Mendel, 1963). Recently, Mendel stresses the crisis of authority of society, and the sacred authority even more, father figures can no longer help solve the archaic anxieties brought by society and globalization (Mendel, 2002). In a society pushing individualism, the problem is how to have cohesion in society and how to

make people responsible. He suggests new ways to palliate the negative effects of modernization and the advancement of technology in society by humanizing and completing and the psycho-familial pattern as well as developing a new psycho-familial personality, not so much based on kinship as on social bounds, and taking in charge one's own life with one's own values..

The socio-psychoanalytical view of Gérard Mendel as well as the anthropologist's view of Margaret Mead certainly bring a very interesting perspective to the development of generations which is in line with the mutation of the traditional family structure to the new architecture of the family, and consequently of generations. It seems quite evident that the individual can no longer be separated from the generation and from the global context we are living in. Nowadays, a mix of post-, co- and prefigurative models of generations is without a doubt crucial to the decisions that will be taken for the betterment of the world and of the ageing population. The dynamics between generations and the mutation of the family in the context of peace and conflict affects many areas. We propose to take two examples of these consequences.

Example one: Economy-based conflicts

According to former Minister of Health of Germany and Professor of Gerontology Ursula Lehr, conflicts between generations will not so much be generated by demographic change but by *economic constraint* (1998). In countries with strong social welfare systems, the government is slowly replacing the 'traditional inter-generational economic system' and has taken a key role in the management of micro-family economies (i.e. social security, health and disability insurance, homelessness, unemployment, divorce regulation, etc.). Consequently, new forms of solidarity are developing and other forms are vanishing. Ties between generations no longer depend on an 'obligatory economic interdependence". Inheritance is still the main form of legalized economic transfer that is universally admitted.

It has also taken another form: as life expectancy has been rising, inheriting is an event occurring at higher ages. In developed countries, especially where social security guarantees a minimal wage to retirees, mutual exchange can take the form of kin-free and more social or global solidarity. According to a research conducted in Germany on transfers among living kin (Kohli, 1999), inheritance happens at a time of life when the recipient is no longer in real need of it (i.e. to establish a household or start a family) and that money transfers are part of an ongoing process of family relationships with its different dimensions of solidarity, but also with all its complications and conflicts. Nevertheless, economical transfers (inheritances) are partly done before the death. Kohli describes the family as a component of the "new welfare mix" assuming an important and complementary role the state cannot play on its own. Finally, transfers remain predominantly in the family and flow from the older to the younger members of the family, which is also the case in lower income families. What is given is the direct result of what retirees receive in pensions. Poverty reduction programs would highly benefit from taking into account this dynamic dimension between generations in supporting the long term flow and preservation of financial transfers among members of a family.

On the other hand, increased life expectancy in the context of an inter-generational perspective requires that

we view developments not just form the angle of old people, but also from that of an extended youth period (longer period of education, marriage and family at higher ages) which is also costly to society – and from that of a reduced period of professional work – with pre-retirement schemes.
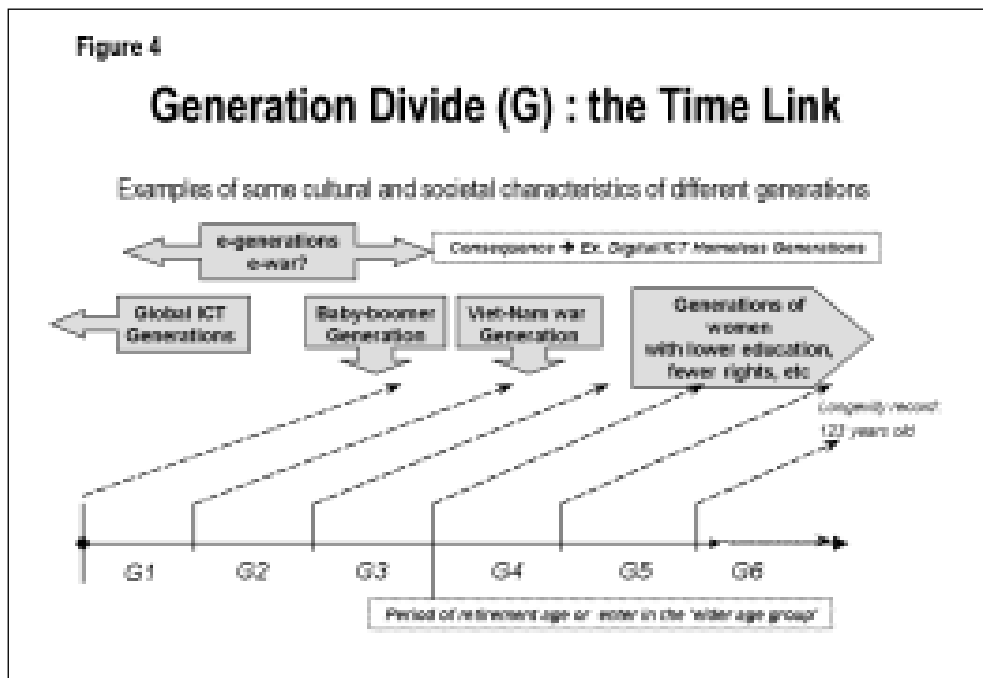
Today, new 'symptoms' of generation maladjustments are emerging through publicly expressed dissatisfaction and misunderstanding. For example, a frequent debate taking place in developed countries is that the old person constitutes a "pension burden" – this argument stems from the materialistic perspective and is not rationally justified as elders are not responsible for the declining birth rates of the new generations (and consequently the declining working force contributing to pension systems), in addition, they have put in 40 to 45 years of work while contributing to their retirement wages, had less choices, and a shorter education than today's active population. Another recent criticism addresses the accountability of the older generation towards the younger generation, for example reproaching elders to leave debts and problems to the younger generations that they did not want or are not responsible for. The question of accountability could well be one of the future grounds for conflict and a divide between generations, especially in situations of war and the degradation of the environment. The state of the world the younger generations as a global youth, will have to take care of this and might well become a justified reproach that the older generation should anticipate.

Example two: Technology-based conflicts

Conflicts can also emerge from the *rapid pace and technological changes*

and modernization of our Society. A German study underlined that both the young and the old felt that they were not understood by the other party (Lehr, 1998). Those findings provide more evidence to what Margaret Mead described as the pre-figurative model. It announces a possible cultural and technological clash between generations if care is not given to the development of cohesion in society while developing the economy of a country (table 4, figures 4 and 5). New discussions about the right to development will need to address the issue of including and addressing all ages and generations. The speed of development of each generation is different and would require different policies of development or generation-adapted policies. Some writers and thinkers have predicted that future wars in the world will be between the "fast" and the "slow", between the "ICT-rich" and "ICT-poor" (ICT = information and communication technology). This remark is particularly relevant when taking the ageing population into consideration, as the decline in the speed performance during the ageing process is in complete contradiction with the required speed of development that is impinging on us. The same can be said about life experiences: what the elders of today have lived and experienced is completely different to that of the younger generation: let us not forget that the older generation has lived remarkable changes with television, radio, airplanes, phones, electronics, computers, and internet which the younger generation has lived with it since birth. Socialization has also changed, for the older generation the mapping of the world was local-national; traveling beyond the village or the country was exceptional. Today the mixing of cultures and the open window of the media/internet on the world is giving children a more 'global' view and the awareness of living in a 'global village' with a common

Figure 4: Generation gap - the time link

Figure 4

Generation Divide (G) : the Time Link

Examples of some cultural and societal characteristics of different generations

future. Even in the arts, children films are internationally viewed, from Pokémon to Harry Potter and more, all children today have access to the same information, which was not the case of the elderly as children (figure 4). The generations of the children of today are living with a global and universal feeling of one planet, they see through the mass media what is happening on the other side of the planet, almost instantly, they are aware of their neighbor whether he/she is next door or at the far end of China, Australia, Patagonia or Iceland. In this perspective, one can wonder about how generations can communicate and what it is they can share together. One should also question the value system generations have in common, what is changing and what is continuous in time, what has to be sustained or even what should not be developed in future generations.

What every individual indisputably has in common is the life process itself, which ageing is a part of, and through life experiences each person will age and form his/her own history, his/her own strategies of conflict resolution, his/her own sense of coherence his/her in life. These 'personal treasures' gathered throughout time can be transformed into memories and values with peaceful effects on the future generations, or with hatred perpetuated throughout their life and future generations (figure 5). Thus the personal dimension of the individual can have a tremendous effect on his/her descendants. Research has not yet measured the effect of the transmission of memories or the wishes of the elderly before death on to the following generations. The powerful impact of the will and wish for hatred or peace of a dying elderly person on his/her descendants – at the conscious and subconscious

Figure 5

Figure 5

The Treasure of Time...of Life
Transmitting Memories...Values...
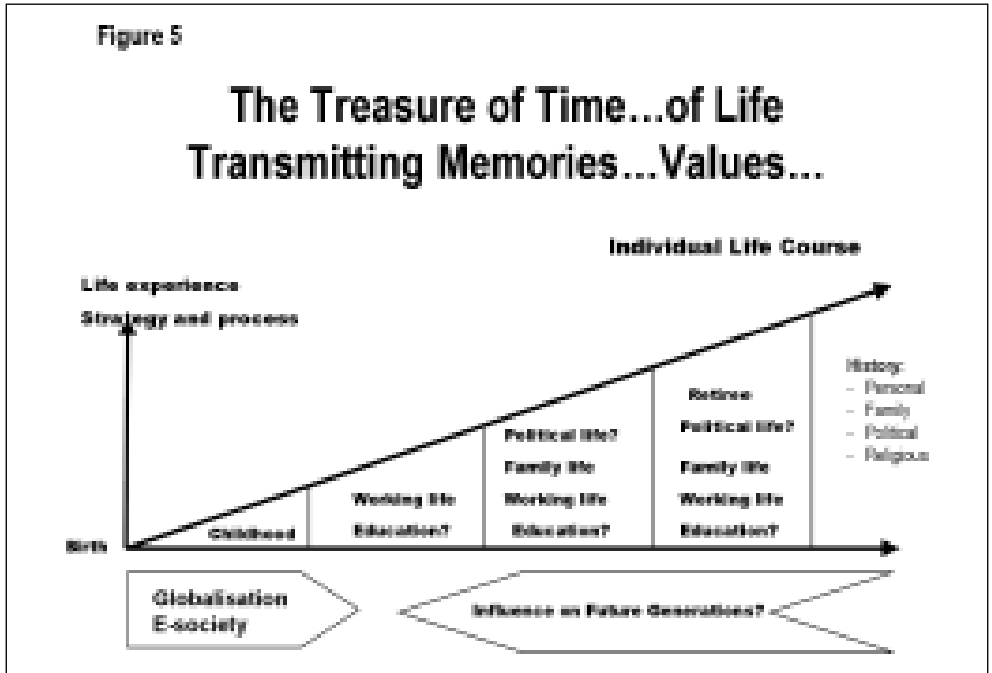
level - can certainly have an impact on the behavior of the descendants, especially in cultures with strong traditions of respect toward their elders.

Despite findings on conflicts between generations, some researchers have found different results and insist on good relations between generations today (e.g. Attias-Donfut et al. 2002, Roux et al.). These contradictory results might confirm the theory of the cultural lag, formulated by Ogburn in 1922, with which one can make the assumption that the good social integration and the good contacts between the generations result from structural conditions in society that have existed earlier. The negative effects of the processes of industrialization and urbanization do not have immediate effects, but instead are felt after a couple of generations.

Finally, conflicts between generations can take place at different levels of society (economic, social and cultural) and take many forms (intra-individual, in the family, within society, or at the national and international level). What is important is to recognise that each generation is interdependent and that they must work together in order to improve the state of the world. It is in the hands of elders and younger generations to understand and grasp the opportunities to create a common vision and agenda for the future. If elders take on the agenda of society on their own, without considering the inter-dependency of all other generations, the risk of a generation conflict will increase. No generation could dispute that it is in our interest to build a viable and sustainable future for the world, thus anticipating conflict resolution and bringing or ensuring peace

between generations is a prerequisite for any sound policy or plan of action.

B. Individual Development: Towards Distress or Peace

Understanding the development of the individual within his/her life course cannot be separate of the concept of generation and cohort. The methodological 'trap' is that research and science provide us with a unidirectional and static view of either the 'photograph' at one point in time of individuals or populations (statistics through for example census, transversal studies), or a more dynamic picture of many 'photographs' at different points in time - those 'snapshots' representing the evolution of the same group of individuals (i.e. longitudinal studies) or with the same selection criteria (i.e. cohort studies). The difficulty lies within grasping the 'unfolding motion picture' of the many axes (the population studied, the sub-groups within a population, each age group, the broader image of generations all moving in time from childhood to old age and the evolution of the techno-political context), especially in a time of rapid changes and mutation.

In general, developmental psychology deals with the individual throughout his/her life, and studies the description, explanation and modification of the ontogenesis of interindividual age – related change of mind and behavior, from conception to death – and aims at identifying the range of conditions of individual plasticity or modifiability of development (Baltes and Smith, 1995). Numerous specialties have emerged that concentrate on either age-graded periods infancy, childhood, adolescence, adulthood, old age, centenarians) or on domains of functioning and processes (physical growth, cognitive development, memory development, personality devel-

opment, social development, spiritual development, etc.). Interestingly enough, some authors have questioned the goal of development and what really develops throughout a life course (Miller, 1993). Many theories have surfaced, all giving a different perspective of the course of development. Theories range from giving focus to social behaviors and personality (Freud, Jung, Erikson as well as social learning theory, ethology) to thinking and cognitive structures (Piaget, Baltes as well as information processing theories, problem-solving, conflict-resolution), to perception (Gibson) or culturally constructed systems of knowledge (Vygotsky-contextualism).

In the area of ageing, developmental psychology is quite new and gerontologists have further questioned what is the most important goal of ageing. While some authors came up with the concept of "Successful Ageing" which combines three elements: survival (longevity), health (lack of disability) and life satisfaction (happiness) (Palmore, 1979), others have recently given more attention to the subjective appraisal of life linked to psychological mechanisms and processes such as coping, resilience, beliefs or wisdom. Lately, discussions have also taken place as to include the process of 'dying well' or the quality of the end of life as a developmental task (eg Lawton, 2001). Findings have shown that very positive aspects of ageing beyond expected ages: individuals feel they are 'survivors' and thus a certain 'elite' of society which empowers them with a sense of exception and privilege and a renewed sense of physical and psychological well-being (Perls, 1995). One could actually reverse the 'life time system' to a 'death time system' and argue that the perception of the proximity of death is proportional to one's will or sense of being at peace with oneself and the world. Although the topic of

the psychology of inner peace is not yet recognized, its link to the ageing process would be crucial. One of the aims of this article is to give some insights on to new ways in which psychology could further advance scientific investigation and progress in terms of more precise constructs concerning the development of peaceful versus distressful states of being.

This article does not claim to make a review of developmental psychology and ageing, but to highlight certain areas of research linked to the development of the individual and ageing which lead to clashes or to peaceful states and relationships with other generations. Two approaches will be discussed: 1) the stress-coping model, in particular the psycho-dynamic theory associated to inner distress leading either to aggressive behavior or to conflict resolution or problem solving strategies, 2) the concept of wisdom as it refers traditionally to old age and has always been associated to the attainment of a higher skill of problem-solving and peaceful being.

Stress and Coping: inner distress to sustainable life strategies

Peace and conflict can be considered as a result of intra- and interpersonal forms of stress and coping. Stress can arise either from the social context, either by internal unresolved conflicts. An individual with unresolved inner conflicts and who is not at peace with himself, or cannot cope with life, is more inclined to develop aggressive behavior or mental health disorders which will affect the family and society at large.

Although the terms stress and coping refer to different notions, they are linked in the sense that coping is a positive response to stress. Coping refers to those things people avoid doing to prevent themselves from being harmed by stressful experiences which includes direct action taken to resolve problems as well as thoughts or actions intended to control the impact, either in the way the problem is perceived or the emotional response to the stressor (Pearlin et al. 1985). Failure to cope with a situation can on the other side generate not only inner conflicts, but aggressive and externally expressed aggressive behaviors. Thus, considering the inner dimension of inner conflict or peace, stress and coping theories can grandly contribute to the understanding of the process at hand and give clues for the prevention, intervention and reconstruction of individual development.

As Leonard Pearlin (1993) himself acknowledges: "Stress researchers experience some confusion and despair about the concept of stress and its study, however it is acknowledged that it is not the core meaning of the concept that is confusing, for there is general agreement that stress refers to 'a response of the organism to a noxious or threatening condition', the doubt and disagreement arise with regard to where and how to identify this response." Another difficulty is the fact that different people experiencing similar life conditions are not necessarily affected in the same manner, which has led to focus on the concept of coping. Pearlin notes that stress results also form the individual's "reading" of the environment in situations related to fear of crime, fear of strangers, or simply fear of being lost in an unfamiliar section of town. As stress studies move outside the laboratory, these sorts of questions will become more readily apparent to researchers confronted with real world settings and will hopefully help to tackle today's new situations.

The conceptual basis of stress has been used in three different ways essentially, depending on where one chooses

to focus attention on in the process of stress: (a) the difficulties that people face, (b) the psychological distress that results from those difficulties and (c) the mediating relationship between these two (Lazarus and Folkman, 1984). The stress - generated by stressors - refers to problems, hardships and other circumstances that have the potential to adversely affect people's well-being and inner peace. For example, an area that has been received attention is the 'extreme stressors' such as victimization in a variety of ways, involving the violation of social norms and moral standards. Interpersonal violence involves several sources of stress such as the experience of a violent situation, but is also involved in the aftermath of a violent trauma, and sets a number of secondary stressors in motion such as the post-traumatic stress syndrome (Pynoos, Sorenson and Steinberg, 1993). Another area of study has been covering the stress resulting from diverse holocausts and genocides (Eitinger and Major, 1993). Some gerontologists have developed new concepts such as the one of "Antegration" on the basis of the posttraumatic experiences of Holocaust survivors and expanded it as a personality concept (Lomranz, 2001). The concept of "Antegration" calls for acceptance of inconsistencies, ambiguity and paradox, openness to contradictions, whilst maintaining mental health, development and creativity. All these require a paradigmatic change of thinking (e.g. from solving all conflicts to living peacefully with conflicts, expansion of openness, decline in manipulations, coercion, etc.). Lomranz underlines that elders who represent post-modern society and cultures have been robbed of their role as "transmitters of culture" which is partly a result of the absence of life-sustaining-values in late adulthood. They nonetheless, transmit what they have used to be; either liberal or conservative, promoters of peace promoters or promoters of cruel power and wars. Many of these adult developmental processes become major in the wake of traumatic experiences such as wars and its consequences.

In general, research on stress and ageing investigates how adults successfully negotiate – via effective coping strategies, defense mechanisms, problem-solving, optimism – the life challenges, life events and crisis, and life/health threats that accompany growing old. Although there is no question that late life can be more affected by losses in health, the social network and participation in major roles, those changes appear to have less impact on the elderly than on younger persons (Kasl, 1992). Very little is known on what is stressful to the elderly and their adaptive strategies facing conflict situations.

Some elements of response stem out of the psychodynamic theory of stress with researchers such as Diehl, Coyle and Labouvie-Vief (1996) who have advanced the work on coping in the elderly; in some recent studies they contrasted coping and defense strategies across age and gender groups. The findings show that older adults use a combination of coping and defense strategies indicating greater impulse control and the tendency to positively appraise conflict situations. Adolescents and younger adults use more outwardly aggressive and psychologically undifferentiated strategies, indicating lower levels of impulse control and self-awareness. Women use more internalizing defenses than men suggesting that men and women face different developmental tasks in the process to maturity in adulthood and thus to coping strategies. Those findings also question the differences between men and women in conflict resolution situations, knowing that their subjectivity and coping mechanisms do differ,

and consequently to their life course also differ (Stuckelberger, 1997, 1998; Stuckelberger and Höpflinger, 1996). Women do not react in the same way when facing a threat such as subjective health appraisal: as women tend to adopt an active coping strategy and base their action on the belief they can be active agents of change while men tend to adopt a passive and escapist strategy based on the belief that things will resolve on their own with time; women carry out self-intervention and use multiple coping strategies as men do not operate in the same way or rely less on self-intervention (Stuckelberger, 2000).

An interesting aspect linked to peace is the work on *Society as Stressor :* Several classical studies viewed society and culture as a reservoir of personal stress and maladjustment. Anthropologists, in particular, have been very sensitive to discrepancies between the real and the ideal, the differences between the principles and beliefs to which a society claims adherence and those that are reflected in the actions of members of society. To the extent that individuals internalize both the idealized values and the discrepant norms regulating actions, they would presumably be host to inner conflict detrimental to their well-being (Pearlin, 1993). Nevertheless, societies are both sources of stress and sources of patterns by which people avoid stress or recover from stress.

There has been relatively little research on the *stress creating violence* or criminal acts by the elderly, although available evidence consistently indicates that older persons have the lowest rates of getting arrested for all types of crimes. It is important to note that the most crimes for which older persons are arrested are for minor offences (Cutler, 1995). This gives a good basis

for involving the elderly in creating models of society or peace initiatives. It is also important to note the contradictory observations one can make about some elderly world or nation's leaders ruling countries disrupted by war and conflicts. While some of these leaders are models of peace for leaders of future generations, they can also on the opposite, display a model of leadership prone to violence. As UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan recently reminded Israeli and Palestinian leaders that they have a special and urgent responsibility to chart a path back to negotiations leading to a peaceful settlement of the conflict, without which there will be no security for either people. "They have a responsibility to lead," he said. "History will judge them harshly, and their people will not absolve them, if they fail to do so." (UN Press Release, 6 March 2002), a statement that very clearly gives responsibility to older generations towards the younger and future generations.

The conflict-theory analysis states that stress does not always have detrimental or maladaptive effects. More theoretical analysis and empirical research is needed in order to know under what conditions does stress have favorable versus unfavorable effects on the quality of decision-making and long term behavior. In other words, when is stress transformable into peace and when does it transform into aggressiveness and conflict? And what are the ingredients to build the best response and outcome? Wisdom theory might bring a solution to consider.

Wisdom: seeking the common good and common interest

Wisdom has been considered one of the highest forms of knowledge and personal functioning all throughout

history of mankind. Wisdom carries a very strong interpersonal and social aspect with regard to both its application and the consensual recognition of its existence. Wisdom is an antonym of war and violence and synonym of peace and serenity. Research and theory on the sources and conditions associated with the development of wisdom across the life span is one of the least developed fields of investigation. Wisdom has been identified through its assessment as 1) a personality characteristic (eg Erikson), 2) a post-formal thinking process (i.e. Piaget) or 3) an individual's problem-solving performance with regard to difficult problems involving the interpretation conduct and management of life (eg Baltes, Smith and Staudinger, 1992). Erikson, in his epigenetic theory of personality development, identified the achievement of integrity and wisdom as the last and highest form of personality functioning (Baltes and Staudinger, 1993, Sternberg, 1990, Erikson, 1959: Erikson, Erikson and Kivnick, 1986; Jung, 1971). Achieving this last stage requires, on the one hand, successful mastery of the previous life tasks and, on the other hand, accelerative and supportive conditions associated with the social environment: it requires the full expression of mature identity, including the transcendence of personal interests, mastering one's own finitude, and attention to collective and universal issues. A few studies have appeared and reported that older age groups are characterized by higher levels of integrity than young and middle-aged subjects (eg Whitbourne et al., 1992). Baltes and Staudinger (1993), some of the pioneers in research on wisdom have developed a model outlining a set of factors and processes that need to 'cooperate' for wisdom to develop: the cognitive and emotional-motivational processes as well as certain experimental factors associated with the interpretation, conduct and management of life are important antecedents of wisdom. An exceptional coalition of several sources and experimental combinations of circumstances are required for wisdom to be generated. The study of wisdom will always be bound to be complex as it involves the need to understand the richness of a person's inner life and processes such as knowledge and procedural knowledge about life, value relativism, awareness and management of uncertainty, eclectic frame of reference and a meta-coping skills.

Gerotranscendance: In the line of the concept of wisdom, a new interesting theory of "Gerotranscendance" was developed by Lars Thornstam (1989, 1992). In his theory, the author suggests that human ageing, encompasses a general potential towards gerotranscendance which is a shift in meta-perspective, from a materialistic and rational vision to a more cosmic and transcendent one, normally followed by an increase in life satisfaction. He cites Harald Ofstad (1972), a Norwegian philosopher, who views our society as looking down upon and holding in contempt those who are unproductive, ineffective, and dependent such as old people in society – the value patterns of Western society also lies in the old Hebrew tradition where old age and wisdom are held in high esteem, thus creating a conflict with the value patterns that generate contempt for the elderly. The consequence is that the general population holds a value-dependent tendency to adopt a wretched perspective on elderly people, which is also found within gerontology.

Another area of research in this field concerns religious and spiritual behaviors. Research on the spiritual dimension of the human being such as

beliefs, faith, religious practice or rituals and spiritual motivation are giving more and more evidence of their impact on the successful coping in ageing and in death management (for a review see Pargament, 1997). This area can also contribute to the reflection on peace, this topic will not be tackled here as it involves a more complex situation that also calls for the simultaneous analysis of the political implication of religion on human behavior.

Balance theory of wisdom: Although most developmental approaches to wisdom are ontogenetic, other views have taken for example a philogenetic or evolutionary approach, arguing that constructs such as wisdom must have been selected over time, at least in a cultural sense (Csikszentmihalyi and Rathunde, 1990). A further view of wisdom worth mentioning - as it refers to the direct and practical aspects of peace or conflict - is *the balance theory of wisdom* (for a review see Sternberg, 1998; Sternberg and Lubart, 2001) which hold the core notion of 'tacit knowledge' as action-oriented knowledge acquired without direct help form others, that allows individuals to achieve goals they personally value (Sternberg, 1999). The interesting parameter used is tacit knowledge, a form of "knowing how" rather than of "knowing that" (Ryle, 1949). To help someone develop tacit knowledge, one must provide mediated learning experiences, rather than academic abilities and direct instruction or information as to what to do and when (Sternberg, 1999). From a developmental standpoint, this view suggests that wisdom is not taught so much as indirectly acquired. While practical intelligence seeks deliberately outcomes that are good for oneself, regardless of the interests of others, wisdom seeks good ends for oneself, but also good outcomes for others. In wisdom, one seeks a common good, realizing that this common good my be better for some than for others. As Sternberg and Lubart (2001) mention "an evil genius may be academically intelligent, he may be practically intelligent, he cannot be wise". Problems requiring wisdom always involve at least some elements of intrapersonal, interpersonal and extrapersonal interests. In this view, wisdom is defined as the application of tacit knowledge toward the achievement of a common good through a balance among (a) intrapersonal, (b) interpersonal, and (c) extrapersonal interests in order to achieve a balance for adaptation to existing environments, the shaping of existing environments and the selection of new environments.

The ideal problems for measuring wisdom, in the light of balance theory are complex conflict-resolution problems involving multiple competing interests and no clear resolution of how these interests can be reconciled (see eg Sternberg and Dobson, 1987). It is difficult to measure the increase/decrease in the wisdom of the peoples of the world. However, the levels of conflicts and wars has certainly escalated in the world. Sternberg and Lubart (2001) do press psychologists to take the measurement of wisdom and the formulation of theories and theory-based measures of wisdom much more seriously. The work at hand is often dwarfed by work on intelligence. The authors state: "Perhaps we even need to think about how we, as psychologists, might create experiences that would guide people to develop wisdom, much as we have been concerned in some quarters about developing intelligence. Perhaps if schools put into wisdom development even a small fraction of the effort they put into the development of an often inert knowledge base, some of the conflicts that have arisen so quickly would also quickly disappear" (p. 509).

C. Dynamic Interaction Development: Sustainable Transmission Paradigm

Adult developmental theory is needed to comprehend the ageing survivor as well as the total ageing population. Major adult developmental theories either idealize ageing process or emphasize the pathological aspect of ageing. Modern culture has robbed the elderly of their role as "transmitters of culture" – a very famous writer of Africa once said : " if an elder African dies, it is a whole Library that is burning" (Hampatê Ba). In the same way, aboriginal culture as many indigenous people wove a special respect to the elders and to the dead ancestors, which builds the backbone of the value system guiding all decisions. Indigenous population use to say "all decisions taken are to be made for the 7 generations to come".

Researches have shown that the behavior of parents affects the behavior of their children even far beyond the time of education. Ex. smoking, alcoholism, suicide, sexual abuse, transgenerational violence. Many research areas have emphasized the importance of transmission between generations, some of the main areas linked to peace and conflict transmission are:

Social Learning Theories : Social learning theories are certainly the version of learning theory that most clearly influences current developmental thinking and research and is the most relevant in 'inter-generational psychology'. Watson and Skinner have become key figures of Social learning theories in psychology who like other following behaviorists had visions of a better society and humanity. If changing the environment can change behavior, there are exciting possibilities for human society. According to learning theory, personality, or self, is a repertoire of behavior created by an organized set of contingencies. As one of the key figures of behaviorism, B.F. Skinner, wrote: "The behavior a young person acquires in the bosom of his family composes oneself; the behavior he acquires in other surroundings, say, the armed services composes another. The two selves may exist in the same skin without conflict until the contingencies conflict – as they may, for example, if his friends from the services visit him in his home. Several theories of personality are classified as social learning theories. Bandura (1977) disagreed with Skinner as he sees the child as an active, thinking being who contributes in many ways to his/her own development. The child is an originating agent, free to choose the models he/she will attend to and hence will have some say about what he/she will learn from elders. In Bandura's cognitive social learning theory observational learning requires the observer to actively attend to encode and retain the behaviors displayed by social models. Children are active information processors, who organize experience by making mental notes about their strengths and weaknesses and about the likely consequences of their behavior. For example, new findings on the cessation of smoking have proved that parents are models not only in smoking behavior but also in the pattern of the cessation of smoking is significantly linked to the children's pattern of taking up or quitting smoking (Farkas et al., 1999). What is interesting is that not only do negative patterns have an impact, but positive behavior also does, which gives ground to postulate that positive models of older generations do influence the behavior of younger generations.

Emotional transmission - patterns of attachment over generations : Bowlby the pioneer of attachment psychology, believed that the attachment

theory is not only a theory of child development, but is a lifelong phenomena (eg Bowlby, 1988). Some research shows that present thoughts about the past are assumed to influence the quality of adults' relationships of attachment with their children. There is evidence for the intergenerational transfer of individual differences in patterns of attachment in different continents (see Sperling and Berman, 1994 for an overview; Parkes, Stevenson-Hinde and Morris, 1991; Van Ijzendoorn 1995) Those studies conclude that there is substantial intergenerational transmission of individual differences in attachment pattern. In about 75% of families, the classification of the parents' mental representation of how they were attached themselves to their parents is in agreement with measures of the attachment relations they currently have with their infants. In about 25% of the families, parents classified as secure in their mental representations of the past were nevertheless diagnosed as having an insecure relationship with their infant, and vice versa. Although one can still question what is the cause and what is the effect, one can talk about intergenerational concordance or congruence instead of intergenerational transmission of the quality of attachment relations (Demetriou, Doise and van Lieshout, 1999).

Transgenerational model of violence of elder abuse suggests that violent behavior learned within the family is transmitted from one generation to the next. According to this view, abusers grow up in violent families only to re-enact the parent-child cycle of violence once the dependency roles shift form child to parent (Wilber and McNeilly, 2001). Transgenerational violence is based on findings that perpetrators of domestic violence are more likely to have grown up in violent homes where they witnessed spousal abuse and/or were

victims of child abuse themselves. In the same way, battered women, as well as their abusers, are more likely to batter their children. According to Quinn and Tomita (1997), the rate of transmission of abusive violence from one generation to the next is estimated to be about 30% compared to a 3% rate of abusive violence in the general population. The same pattern applies for alcoholism, suicide and other behavioral disorders leading to 'self-violence' or violence. Another form of violence derived from domestic violence that is only starting to raise interest is 'financial elder abuse' especially in the case of patients suffering from cognitive impairment or under mental health treatment.

Generativity theory: the motivational factor of social transmission

In the psychosocial theory of development over the life course, Erikson (1963) described a series of 8 stages of crisis in personality growth, of which generativity versus stagnation was the seventh. Generativity represents the component of the individual's personality that develops to incorporate concern beyond the self to the needs, interests, and well-being of future generations. The unfavorable resolution represented by stagnation involves a selfish interest in oneself to the exclusion of others who may follow. The psychosocial crisis stages Erikson defines are set in terms of pairs of bipolar opposites such as generativity vs stagnation, the most favorable vs the least favorable resolution of the crisis. The ability to achieve a favorable resolution of a stage depends in part on the combination of biological, psychological and social forces that operate at a given time.

Creative endeavors in which the individual leaves something behind for the benefit of future generations may also be

seen as forms of generativity. Not only in terms of commitment of parenting and providing for one's own children but in a larger sense it may be expressed in the involvement in helping future generations through, for instance, a career dedicated to teaching, improving the environment, the political climate or social welfare and a peaceful society – these can also be expressions of generativity.

The concept of generatifvity has not been subjected to empirical testing. A series of longitudinal studies however, have tried to measure this dimension. The findings of these investigations support the implicit hypothesis that generativity is positively associated with well-being and adaptation in a larger sense and that favorable development in the area of family life is associated with success at work for men (i.e. Vaillant, 1977, Vaillant and Milofsky, 1989). Furthermore, the development of a sense of generativity may be strongly related to other changes in personality and the self, such as a greater sense of self-assurance, and the ability to cope flexibly with life stresses. Constructs, such as role involvement and satisfaction, personality, identity and coping lead themselves more readily to empirical investigation than the more generic and perhaps elusive notion of generativity – the concept remains useful one for heuristic purposes and a stimulus for further inquiry regarding the notion of change and continuity throughout the life course (Whitbourne et al., 1992).

From the above section it appears clear that the prerequisite to maintaining peace in society must address as much the relations between generations as the sound development of the individual throughout his/her life course. On the other hand, putting together the findings one must also admit that each generations has an implicit impact through its behavior, through its pattern of attachment and by its problem-solving attitude on future generations. However, more investigations are needed in this context. It can be supposed that as violent patterns of behavior perpetuate in generations to follow, peaceful patterns of behaviors will also perpetuate in generations to follow. Therefore, the decisive influence of one generation upon another in matters of inner/outer peace and conflict calls for moral responsibility of older generations with regard to younger generations. This is valid as much in the post-, co-, as in the pre-figurative model. Older persons do have a duty and responsibility towards younger generations: they set a reference, a model or 'anti-model' of coping with life and facing death. To become an 'Elder' in the sense of a wise and naturally authoritative figure within the family and society should be a term that is generalized implicitly by the elderly themselves as by society. Elders are essential to the cohesion of society. Not only are elders transmitters of tacit knowledge, of life experiences, of history, of life crisis management, they are also the 'roots of our society' (e.g. African and Aboriginal). Thus, in order to find our 'true common values for peace and justice', it is of paramount importance to restore the role of the elder in society and build a cohesive common vision for the future.

7. THE IMPERATIVE FOR PEACE: GLOBAL ROLE AND RESPONSIBILITY OF THE ELDERS

The Millennium Summit of the UN, held in New York in September 2000 offered the peoples of the world a unique occasion to reflect upon their common destiny in a new global world. As stated in the Millennium report of the UN Secretary-General (UN, 2000),

the declaration adopted by the summit reaffirms the faith in the UN as the indispensable common house of the entire human family "through which we will seek to realize our universal aspirations for peace, cooperation and development". Peace and disarmament, as well as environment are prioritised as the declaration states: We must spare no effort to free all of humanity, and above all our children and grandchildren, from the threat of living on a planet irredeemably spoilt by human activities, and whose resources would no longer be sufficient for their needs.

Globalization, a solution or a problem for peace …

More than ever what we are facing today are the positive and negative effects of globalization, a situation never experienced in the history of mankind. The interconnectedness and interdependency of nations and peoples of the world is becoming a reality. What affects one country today affects all of us as we are witnessing through the media and 11th September and follow up images on the media. What is needed more than ever before is a common vision for Humanity. Globalization offers both opportunities and perils. On the one hand, globalization can help millions of people around the world overcome poverty, improve health and education, participate in economic and political decisions, and improve their lives. On the other hand, partly because a common agenda and common values have not been given due consideration, globalization has produced environmental degradation, sharpened disparities between the "have" and "have-nots", and thereby diverted national priorities away from basic services and threatened to homogenize local traditions into a global consumerist culture.

Elders have a unique contribution to offer in meeting these challenges particularly in emphasizing human values and the spiritual and moral dimension of economic and political life. Fostering a dialogue between generations in order to learn from our business and political colleagues about globalization, and to identify the role the ageing population can play. We stand at a critical juncture in human history, one that calls for strong moral and spiritual leadership to help set a new direction for human society. Elders should recognize their special responsibility for peace on earth and the well-being of the human family.

The 20th Century was a century of war and conflict, where there was been a major change in the character and scope of armed conflict, at present bringing to the ground women, children, the elderly and innocent civilians. More than ever, people of all nations are aware of the state of the world, there have never been so many people aware at the same time of so many wars and conflicts - through the mass media and technology. Unprecedented levels of violence expressed in today's society: in schools, in the family and in the community, the spread of racism, massive violations of human rights, the huge and widening gap between the rich and the poor, the degradation of the environment and the continued development of weapons of mass destruction should also be specially mentioned. One way of 'quantifying' the need for peace in the world is to look at UN peace-keeping operations, although this does not give an idea of the current wars and situations of conflict.

According to the Yearly Review of UN Peace Operations (UN, December 2001), the number of states contributing to UN peacekeeping reached a record high of 90 early in the year. The year 2001 saw UN peace operations in almost every part of the globe: 4 in Africa, 5 in Europe, 3 in Asia and the Pacific, 3 long-running peacekeeping operations

Figure 6

Figure 7
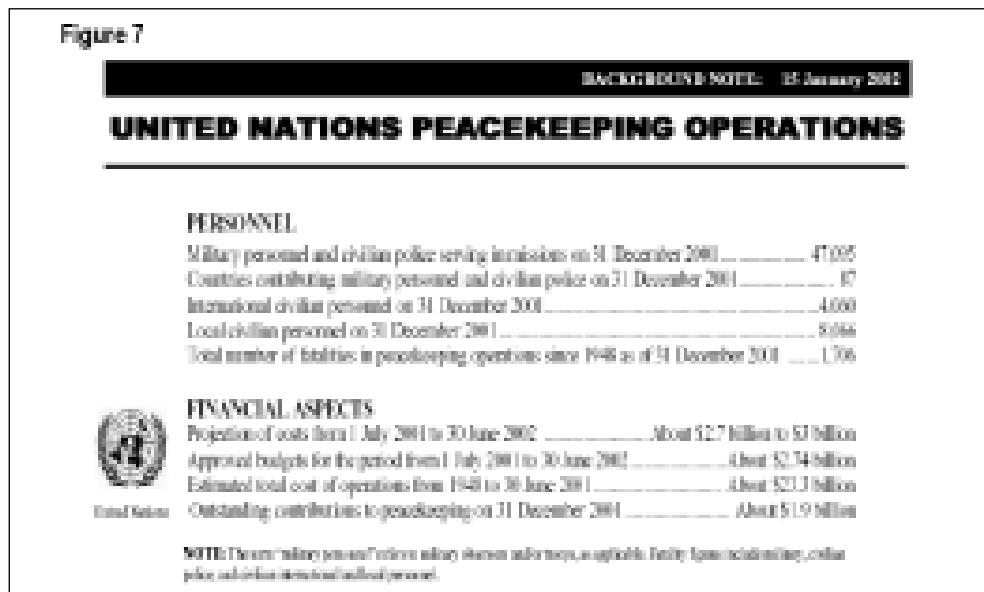
in the Middle East (figure 6). At the end of 2001, UN peacekeeping operations deployed some 39'500 soldiers and officers and 7'500 civilian police. There were almost 4'300 international civilian staff and some 8'500 local civilian staff working with the uniformed personnel. As for the 13 peace-building support and political offices, their staff numbered around 600, most of them international and local civilians. Some of these men and women are military observers, some were road engineers, some de-miners or political analysts, media specialists, child protection officers, human rights workers. Many other professions and skills are involved in peace-keeping operations: drivers, interpreters, doctors and diplomats or other civilians helping prepare a new country to independence, setting up the infrastructure of a provincial administration, or supporting a disarmament and demobilization program. One can thus wonder how many retirees are involved in the civilian personnel serving those operations and how could more retirees contribute (figure 7). The future of peace-keeping operations may well change as some authors have argued that the era of conventional war as we know it is an anachronism and that we will assist to the emergence of information and economic wars at all levels, and the demise of bureaucracy (Van Crevald, 1991).

Elder's role and responsibility: from inner peace to outer peace

Today the strife observed in the world implies and concerns the whole of society. In this context, the elders are key to the promotion of the culture of peace and of war by the simple fact that, throughout their lives, they are witnesses of history on a personal level as well as on the levels of the family and society. In living the history of their own nation, the elders have experienced the profound impact of war on society and on their families. The way in which the collective memory of war and the peace process is transmitted to the following generations is a powerful factor of social transformation:

(i) Either by encouraging a spirit of forgiveness and of reconciliation within society (political) or/and within the family (socio-genealogical) and within the self (psychological).

(ii) Or on the contrary, by increasing the hatred and the will of revenge of one generation on to another one, through daily attitudes, behaviors and words – e.g. through informal education of war.

The beliefs - and false beliefs - portrayed from one generation to another can without any doubt be a source of

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Lieutenant General Romeo Dallaire, former commander of the United Nations Observer Mission in Uganda and Rwanda during the Genocide

"We cannot continue to believe that war is the ultimate dimension of discipline and of destruction of the world (…) the elders of the world cannot accept that the youth of the world is being sacrificed and trained to self destruction, be abused in war, being instruments of war, soldiers, that they are targets of a new era of conflict. The elders can coalesce and bring to an end the intolerable use and abuse of younger generations. Elders can build the power, the lobby, to bring it all to an end. Elders today have to keep up with our youth, to be credible to our youth." Speech given at the World Congress on Gerontology in Vancouver (July, 2001)

"Carrying the bones of the ancestors"

Where is the common man today who offers protection to his family, people, and nation through promoting peace? Where is the common man who is committed and hardworking – who although he may be unemployed continues to work for the everyday essentials of living and for training the children, youth and young adults. Confusion has now set in among the common man. With today's cross-cultural, high technology, choice-filled and multi-society mode of attaining more than just enough to get along in life, the common man's image has been weakened, This has often pressured him to become corrupt, i.e. and make excuses to the point of becoming an artifact or a relic in his own world."
Indigenous Leaders Statement, given at the Peace Summit of Religious and Spiritual Leaders, August 2000.

"We will disarm the world only if we proceed to inner disarmament" Anonymous

"There is no way to peace, peace is the way" Mahatma Gandhi

collective conflict or a warranty of peace in the world. One way to overcome discord, selfishness and hatred is through the commitment of ageing individuals to become conscientious role models representing key values of forgiveness, reconciliation and peace. The elders have the choice to conscientiously address their responsibility: (i) to leave the fruits of their work and achievement behind them, (ii) to leave an image of the way to live and die that will influence their peers and descendants positively, (iii) to transmit through their attitude and behaviour a 'mental stamp of living in peace with the self, the family and the nations.

The elders need a role in society and society needs to engage in peace efforts and the humanitarian implications more strongly. The 2nd United Nations World Assembly on Ageing, to take place in Madrid 9-12 April 2002, offers an opportunity to address the issue of the Ageing Population and World Peace and to involve the elders in all efforts to (a) prevent conflict, (b) promote peace at the inner and outer level, and (c) empower

future generations for peace. The International Plan of Action on Ageing that has been revised and amended in the 3 past years will hopefully include a section on elders role in civil society, according to the Millennium Summit goals, and in peace-building and peace-keeping. Following the points of this paper, it seems logical to propose a Peace Plan of Action for the elders of today, but more than this, a plan that takes into account the inner dimensions of peace as well as the inter-generational aspect, two aspects which alone can guarantee a long term sustainable strategy.

A PLAN OF ACTION FOR PEACE: A COLLECTIVE VISION, A COMMON AGENDA

The idea of this conclusion is to raise a new action-oriented policy for a Peace agenda for the ageing in society that fits in the context of priority issues in the global society we live in. In order to guarantee peace, other areas will have to be addressed in such a way as to avoid disruption or conflicts between

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generations, and in order to guarantee long term peace, and a common vision for all generations will have to be addressed.

Priorities linked to World Peace– Building a common agenda and plan of action

In this context, the importance of the dynamics between generations emerges as a key component in sustaining social and human development. Thus the role of older generations within the global agenda will need to be addressed at many levels according to the state of the world.

– *Health*: Equality between generations in for example access to and distribution of medical, social and economic
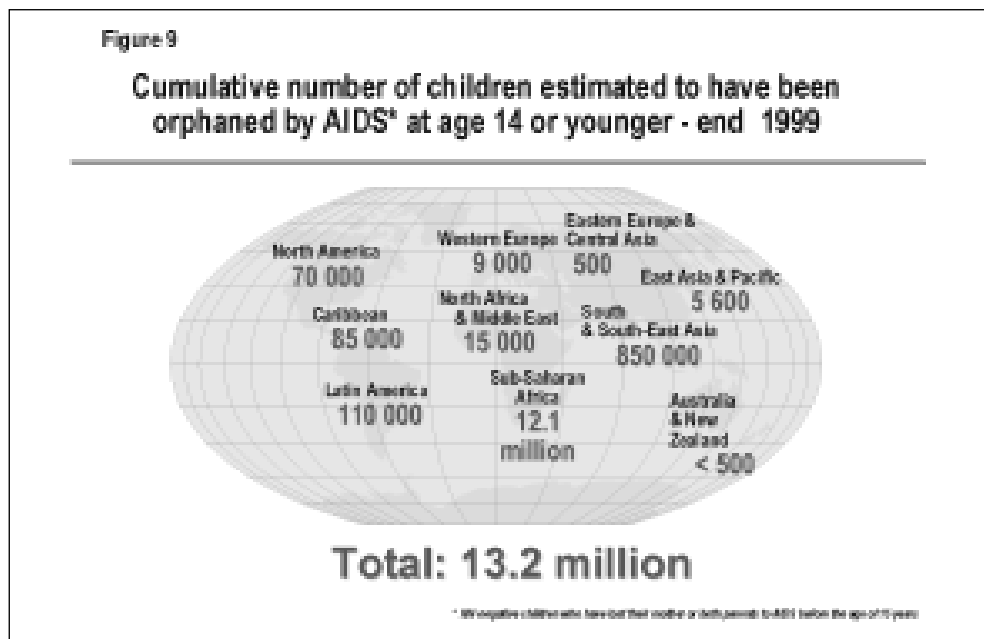
resources. Poverty alleviation programs during the entire life span as well, but also the setting up of long term and sustainable anti-poverty programs linking many generations. The HIV/AIDS epidemic is a good example for proving the need for building inter-generational dimensions in development, anti-poverty programs and policy-making. The AIDS epidemic at the end of 2000, showed alarming numbers (figure 8), the global estimates are of 36.1 million people with HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS, 2001). This epidemic is not only wiping out one or two entire generations, but it has created a whole generation of children without parents: today, 13.2 million children aged 14 and younger have been orphaned by AIDS in all parts of the world (figure 9).

Figure 8

Figure 8

AIDS epidemic end-2000
Global estimates: children and adults

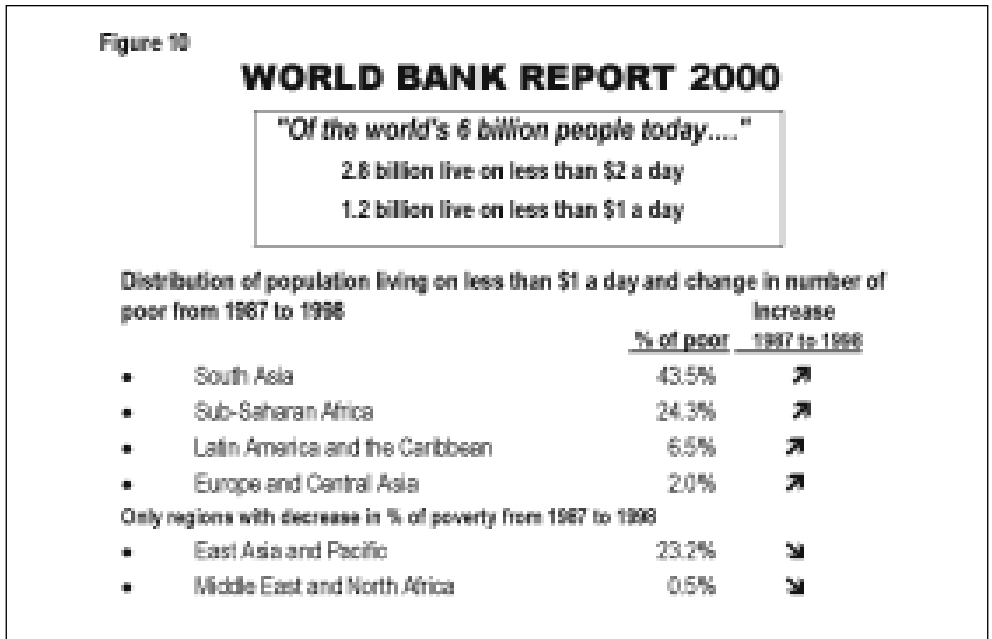|	
People with HIV/AIDS	36.1 million
New HIV infections in 2000	5.3 million
Deaths due to HIV/AIDS in 2000	3.0 million
Cumulative N of deaths due to HIV/AIDS	21.8 million

Source: UNAIDS – Geneva (December 2001)

Figure 9

Figure 9

Cumulative number of children estimated to have been orphaned by AIDS* at age 14 or younger - end 1999

North America
70 000

Western Europe
9 000

Eastern Europe &
Central Asia
500

East Asia & Pacific
5 600

Caribbean
85 000

North Africa
& Middle East
15 000

South
& South-East Asia
850 000

Latin America
110 000

Sub-Saharan
Africa
12.1
million

Australia
& New
Zealand
< 500

Total: 13.2 million

* HIV-negative children who have lost their mother or both parents to AIDS before the age of 15 years

– *Migration*: International migration is projected to remain high during the 21st century. The more developed regions are expected to remain receivers of international migrants, with an average gain of about two million per year over the next 50 years. Care must be given to avoid or implement mechanisms to deal with stress and conflicts emerging from migration.

– *Poverty*: The world has never shown so much poverty through statistics. The 2000 World Bank Report not only shows that almost half of the world lives on less $2 a day, but that 1.2 billion people live on less than 1$ a day (Figure 10). The alarming fact is that poverty has globally increased all over the world. Knowing how wars deprive and destroy the sources of life and income of entire populations, it is important to address in the future not only the clear link between the economy, the increase in poverty and wars, but to also address poverty reduction in a more inter-generational perspective. The fair distribution of income and poverty reduction in all age groups can only benefit the different generations and avoid perpetuating poverty from generations to generations.

– *Human Rights*: Inter-generational rights and protection between 4 to 5 generations are strongly needed not only to prevent abuse, but even more to guarantee the right for generations to stay together in crisis situations such as wars, natural disasters, migration and HIV/AIDS.

– *Education and telecommunication*: Long life learning encouraged and accepted by all integrating the use

Figure 10

Figure 10

WORLD BANK REPORT 2000

"Of the world's 6 billion people today....."

2.8 billion live on less than $2 a day

1.2 billion live on less than $1 a day

Distribution of population living on less than $1 a day and change in number of poor from 1987 to 1998

		% of poor	Increase 1987 to 1998
•	South Asia	43.5%	↗
•	Sub-Saharan Africa	24.3%	↗
•	Latin America and the Caribbean	6.5%	↗
•	Europe and Central Asia	2.0%	↗

Only regions with decrease in % of poverty from 1987 to 1998

•	East Asia and Pacific	23.2%	↘
•	Middle East and North Africa	0.5%	↘

of new technology in order to avoid creating a society of digital homeless, technologically-poor.

– *Family and security*: Preservation of links between generations in the cases of migration, armed conflicts and displacement.

– *Environment*: Confirming humanity's influence on the global climate, a United Nations-sponsored report warns that temperatures will continue to rise in the coming century and "possibly cause serious harm." The increase in temperature over the past 100 years was likely the largest of any century during the past 1,000 years. This includes sea levels rising by 88 centimetres by the year 2100, which would make tens of millions of people homeless in Bangladesh, China, Egypt and other countries.

Northern polar sea ice has already been reduced by 15% in the last 40 years, and snow coverage has decreased by 10% in the last 30 years. The report projects a "potentially devastating" global warming of 1.4 degrees to 5.8 degrees celsius from 1990 to 2100. (IPCC, 2000). One of the real choices we will face in the 21st century is how many species and ecosystems we are willing to eliminate in order to make more space for more human activities".

– *Culture and Values:* Values transmission and cultural inheritance from generation to generation, preservation of heritage and historical background.

– *Policy*: Respect of the role and responsibility of each generation for the future of the planet. Many deci-

for a better world (figure 11).

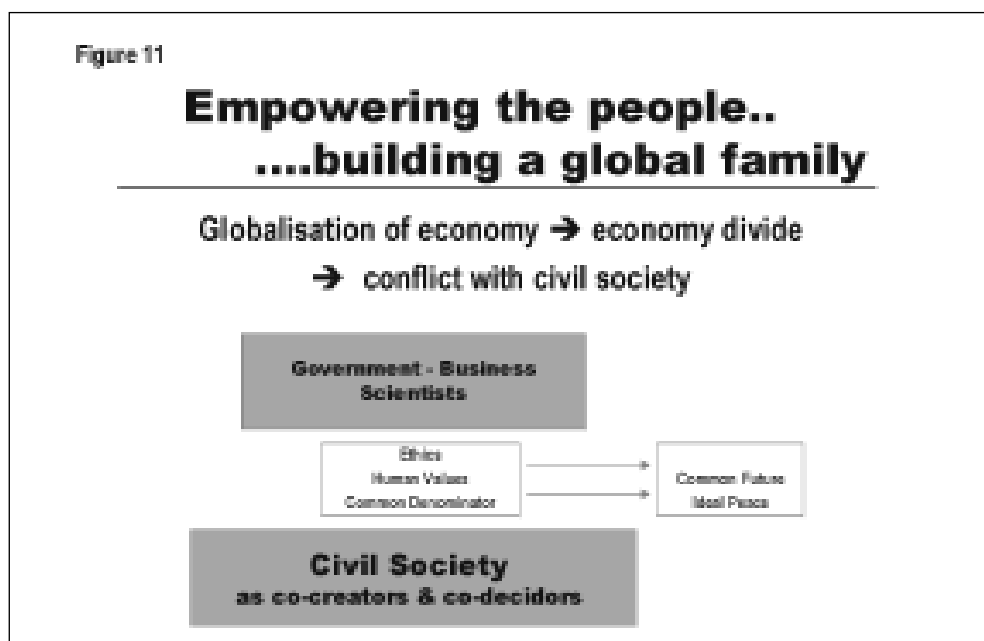**Elements of a Plan of Action for Peace including older generations:**

1. Empowering the elders in their role and responsibility as contributors of peace: Bring the elders of today and all of us tomorrow to play a key role in building and promoting a culture of peace within the family and the 'global village' they live in. From their own inner/outer peace-making process - through memories and actions, through reporting the 'history' linked to war/peace - the elders set models of how to engage or not in the peace process: either through building reconciliation or through perpetuating conflicts. The responsibility of elders in leaving behind a legacy of peace or war can empower their children, grand-children and soci-

ety as a whole. Thus, subtle and powerful models of behavior (life and death) influence future generations - an area that has very rarely been addressed or investigated. As an illustration, given the worldwide increase in longevity, policy on ageing should enable the elderly to bring their human expertise in improving the state of the world not only for tomorrow but also for the generations to come.

2. Create a platform involving older and younger generations, in order to build a coalition for promoting Peace and acting subsequently towards peace at different levels:

– *at the individual level:* setting educative programs involving new aspects such as wisdom (see Sternberg above), inner peace, conflict resolution within, peaceful behavior.

Figure 11

Figure 11

Empowering the people..
....building a global family

Globalisation of economy ➜ economy divide
➜ conflict with civil society

Government - Business
Scientists

Ethics
Human Values
Common Denominator

Common Future
Ideal Peace

Civil Society
as co-creators & co-decidors

sions and world events of today will affect and shape the world of future generations. Voluntary actions by the elders should also be encouraged, supported and recognized.

– *Peace and security:* Involving all generations in the fight against violence and armed conflict, by encouraging role models in the security of the elderly for many generations to come as discussed above

Knowing that the priorities of the UN and the fundamental idea of the United Nations when it was created to bring Peace to the World and that the United Nations in its Charter has pledged to save successive generations from the scourge of war and to secure universal justice and peace, to address peace and war from all levels of society and with innovative ways of thinking appears as a priority.

New ways of thinking and building a plan of action for peace are needed. So let us just ask the following very simple questions as world citizens, scientists, retirees, …:

– Where do we all want to go with development (at the global level, as well as on the personal level)?

– What state of peace do we want to achieve and by which mechanism?

– In the race to technology, what do we want to preserve? (i.e. elders values, wisdom, religion(s), …)

– In the face of the developmental paradigm, what should we protect from development? (i.e. indigenous population, treasures and knowledge) and where do we want to reverse development (eg environment, nuclear or biological arms, genetic research,…)?

– Where do we want to intervene to change or modify in the course of development?

– What do we really need to be happy and satisfied with life? What is our common standard or what is the norm of minimal need? who decides what is the norm of the material and non-material development?

Setting a minimal common psychosocial and not only economic standard, according to regions, is of paramount importance. The taxation of industrialized nations upon the developing world is alarming and calling for re-thinking what really is the standard to be 'normal' and what human and quality standard could we include beside the mere economic factor. Globalization is running the risk to create not only an economic divide between the 'materially rich' and 'materially poor', but also the risk of setting standards based on the core value of the economic paradigm led by the economically rich, without considering civil society's core value of a same humanity based on a non-material paradigm with the common ideal of peace and happiness. The 2000 World Bank (figure 10) report does admit that the only way to avoid further increase in poverty and implement programs and plans that effectively reduce poverty is to involve civil society in collective action. "There is nothing that will replace the imperative of empowering the poor and the needy in our societies. They must become the actors, the owners and the architects of their own destiny" (Sfeir-Younis, 2001).

This gives reason to create a Plan of Action for Peace with a 'Bottom - Up" strategy rather than the usual sole "Top-Down" strategy. Thus civil society, including elders and scientists, should take responsibility for setting the standard and ways to achieve it in order to work

– *at the family level*: intra and inter-generational peace, by building cohesive family planning with more than 2 generations when possible, respecting the gender balance.

– *at the societal level*: organizing groups for Peace, but also getting groups of elders involved in Politics for a Peaceful world and setting up parliamentarian groups of Youth and Elders – Create a Circle of Wise Elders at the local, national and why not at the UN? Involve elder religious and spiritual leaders or retired political leaders in addressing the issue and participating in the Peace Plan agenda.

– *at the political level*: (i) identifying all elders ruling the world and getting them to be part of promoting peace as (ii) bringing the issue up within the peace process negotiation in a long term basis, (iii) constructing instruments to prevent conflicts, preserve and build a peaceful society.

3.   *At the level of the mass media:* create awards for the best article that enhances inter-generational cohesion and peace initiatives by the elderly. Urge the media, through scientific arguments, to take responsibility for the psychological damage created by the negative and sometimes terrifying images and news they 'freely' launch with no ethical guidelines as to their impact on younger and older generations.

4.   *Educate* our communities about the urgent need to provide tools and instruments to enhance the knowledge of wisdom as an education complementary to intellectual knowledge. Educating children and all generations to care for the common good of the planet such as peaceful resolution of conflicts at all levels or the protection of the **natural environment and all forms of life**, which is a component of peace.

5.   *Set up an organization of Volunteers for Peace* which could provide interventions in different situations: preventing war, during war or post-war reconstruction.

6.   *Women as active agents of peace, and especially older women* considering the high proportion of women in older ages, they should be involved in civil societies initiatives of peace as well as the planning of peace missions from the outset, and peacekeeping personnel should be trained in their responsibilities towards women and children. The prejudice and discriminating image of older women will have to be dispelled as they are the main portrayers of care in younger generations and in the very old generation.

The Need of a Paradigm Shift : « OUR GLOBAL COMMON AGENDA »

Rethinking, investing and preserving a society with 4 to 5 generations
- «Thinking for 7 generations to come » *[indigenous tradition]*
- sustaining anti-poverty programmes in a life course and the generation perspective
- Integrating the older and younger generations in decision-making discussions
- To identify a role for the older person either through humanitarian labour or volunteering for peace
- To develop an ethical framework which sets the standard of human values before economic values,
- Living with and building the awareness that we are: firstly, all ageing and building our future (short term), secondly, acting and making decisions for generations to come (long term)

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7. Integrate elders into UN peace operations could include

– each mission could have a plan for incorporating the issues of the elderly into all aspects of its work

– all sectors of peacemaking and peace building should take the issue of the elderly into account

– more retirees and women retirees, must be appointed as special representatives

8. Psychology as an instrument for international intervention: for psychologists to bring the very needed perspective of human development and psychological perspective to all UN priorities. More particularly, psychologists and policy psychologists will be asked to work more and more on issues related to psychological reconstruction of men, women, children and the elderly who have suffered major traumas collectively (wars, bombing, terrorist attacks, etc.) or individually (violence, rape, abuse, etc.). The new situation psychologists face today is collective trauma and generation's trauma, such as with children who have only lived war situations.

9. Psychology of Peace and inter-generational psychology are two areas that strongly need more research, theoretical and practical models. Psychologists can be involved at different levels: in the prevention of conflicts and wars, in the many forms of interventions during conflict and post-conflict situations, as well as in the individual peace-restoring and peace-building psychology. Psychology could greatly contribute in furthering reflection form its own theoretical or heuristic (?) models.

– *Before- peace-keeping in peaceful situations*: prevention: anticipatory

coping patterns, education to coping with crisis situations

– *During signs of crisis:* problem-solving, minor conflict resolution

– *In crisis and war:* hypervigilance, coping, outcome-solving

– *After crisis:* reconstruction, psychological trauma, healing, behaviorism

As was stressed earlier, the contribution of transmitting values and beliefs sustaining peace or war from grand-parents to parents, to children to grand-children is not thoroughly taken into account and underestimated far too often, although as we have witnessed from findings they do play a key role. Cultivating a culture of peace in whatever situation the elderly live can empower future generations as opposed to a culture of war which perpetuates resentment and hatred.

A Peace Plan of Action would need to cover two different levels of peace:

– Micro Peace at the individual level: the concept of ageing goes far beyond the mere fact of "fulfilling one's life and living a retiree life", it also includes the notion of reconciling with oneself, with one's life, to find peace of mind and to get prepared to die well leaving an image of serenity.

– Macro Peace At the level of society: ageing is inseparable from the notion of social participation and the responsibility of the elders towards the generations to come. The cultural and spiritual heritage that the older generations leave behind them is in a way the state of the world they have collectively co-created. The younger generations are living by the life example and through being educated

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Inner and outer Peace process: Role & Responsibility of the Elders

·   **'Inner' Peace** = « Models » of Life/Death
·   **'Outer' Peace** = « Transmitters » -
    History bearers - promoters of reconciliation/hatred, respect, tolerance/discrimination
·   « **Healers of the World** »
    memory healing role (psycho-social), environment, cultural heritage
·   **Shared responsibility for the State of the World** (inner/outer)
     for future Generations – improving or destroying it?

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in a spirit and a culture of war or of peace.

In conclusion, ageing is with no doubt one of the most fascinating and complex areas for humans to face and for science to analyze. Ageing being a result of a lifetime, holds clues and lessons about human development that no other science can give us: what better age than old age can teach us how life unfolds, what values to preserve and cultivate all through life to reach wisdom and happiness? What better science than gerontology can teach us fundamental knowledge on factors contributing to sustainable human development? Future research will certainly focus more and more on identifying universal mechanisms and patterns within human beings that are continuous throughout time and generations: if universal mechanisms exist in individual ageing that work in bringing a peaceful attitude and skills in problem of conflict solving instead of violent, non adaptative and aggressive behavior, we will then be able to reinforce and sustain those favorable factors in all interventions (on the individual, societal or political level). In the same way, after mass trauma set by terrorist attacks, genocides, and wars - what the population needs is mass healing and 'reconstruction' of their self-confidence and human values. In this respect, psychology can bring light to the universal phenomena of human development and the mechanisms of the psyche or collective psyche leading to peace.

The emergency situations in the world today can only call upon us to take all actions as world citizens, scientists, future older persons and older persons in improving the state of the world. As scientists, we can contribute with our knowledge to rethink intervention strategies and actions that will make a change on human behavior and psyche, not only for one group or section of society but for all generations. The Plan of Action for Peace can offer a tool for thinking of new ways in which psychologists can bring their expertise out of the clinics or private practice into broader issues that the world urgently needs today.

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