



SPIRIT OF HUMANITY
FORUM

NEWSLETTER

September 2017

Social Media developments

We welcome **Tom Chick** who is looking after our social media channels. You may already have noticed that he has been active since July, as there is a regular stream of new material being posted. Tom set up his own digital media consultancy in 2016. His background is in sport and his work for the international governing body of World Rugby for over seven years included global events such as the Rugby World Cup and the Rio Olympic Games. Whilst Tom acknowledges the power of sport and social media, he was always looking to use his experience and knowledge to help shine a light on organisations that were doing meaningful things in the world, and SOH is exactly that for him.



Regional events



To spread seeds from the SoH Forum around the world, we encourage our friends, previous forum participants, to organise events in their respective regions. [Guidelines for setting up a regional SoH Event](#)

The first to accept this challenge are our friends in South America and the UK!

Spirit of Humanity Forum goes to South America!



Alan Gegenschatz, Dr Juan Hitzig, Sara Caputo and Javier Casas Rua, who participated in previous Forums, want to replicate the Forum in Spanish with the specific needs of South America in mind. We welcome this initiative, indicating the strength and the potential for Forums in other places. This will support the emergent spiritual community and enlarge the circles of spiritually-inspired leaders in all fields of endeavour and cultural contexts. Here are their own words:

“In our last ‘opening’ session, at the III Forum in Reykjavík, there was space to hear ideas and propose creative ways to expand the energy we have lived during those days. One of the proposals was to organise local forums to spread the seeds of transformation more widely and share the Spirit of Humanity (SoH) experiences with people who cannot be with us in Iceland. We feel proud of taking the torch of SoH to our region. We committed ourselves to be faithful to the essentials of this idea. We want to invite spiritual leaders and change-makers from our region to deeply reflect on new approaches that can engender greater harmony between peoples and between humanity and our planet. We are looking forward to focusing

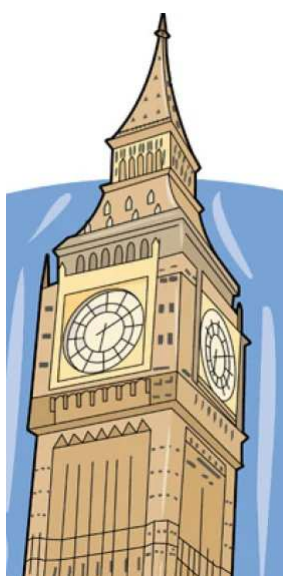
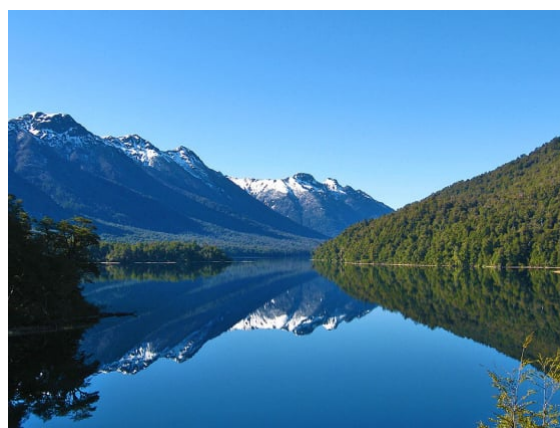
on the issues that matters in a Latin American perspective and being open to share other views in a global perspective.”



Alan Gegenschatz, Dr Juan Hitzig, Sara Caputo and Javier Casas Rua enjoying a planning meeting.

The Argentina Forum, Villa La Angostura, 24-27 October 2018

The Forum will take place in Villa La Angostura, a small, picturesque village in the Andean Mountains, surrounded by lakes and ancient trees. Its silent atmosphere invites everyone who visits to slow down and stay connected to nature. October is spring time and flowers are just blooming. [See more of Villa La Angostura](#)



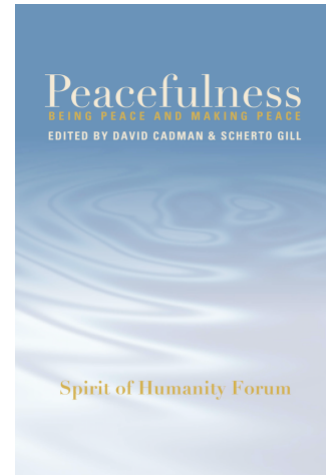
SoH meeting in London

On the initiative of our friends from the last Forum Catherine Allinson (Future Earth) and Kate Monkhouse (Caux, the Initiatives of Change centre in Switzerland), SoH participants from UK will come together in London for a one day SoH national forum. This will take place on **3 November** and will be hosted by the Initiatives of Change London Centre. For more information please contact [Lotta Arbman](#)

SoH Press presenting its first book:

‘Peacefulness: Being Peace and Making Peace’

“This book will be on my desk and not my bookshelf for quite some time,” writes Mike Hardy CMG OBE in his foreword. As Professor of Intercultural Relations and Executive Director of the Centre for Trust, Peace and Social Relations at Coventry University, he praises this volume’s unique approach, that is connecting peace and peacefulness to the noblest state of being human and, in so doing, seeking to overcome the simplistic divisions between the inner and outer peace, the positive and negative peace, personal, communal and political peace. Indeed, the most important contribution of the book rests on its insisting on a spiritually-rooted and ethically-oriented peacefulness in our personal and communal relationships, as well as in global socio-economic-political structures.



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Save the date!

Official publication date 3 November on Amazon

We want to make an effort to reach a “bestseller status” on Amazon.

If enough copies are ordered on 3 November it may reach a 'bestseller status', which would make it visible to a wider audience!

If you are interested in purchasing that book we will be delighted if you take part in this effort with us and buy it on 3 November. We will send you the link to purchase the book on that day.

Edging towards a new set of understandings



Interview with Lord Alderdice

At the 2017 Spirit of Humanity Forum in Iceland, Jim Paymar sat down with Lord John Alderdice to discuss conflict, bridging divides and the Forum itself...

JP: You're no stranger to conflict. Northern Ireland had conflict for many decades. How were people able to come together and finally put the conflict behind them and decide that peace was going to be the new road?

JA: The first thing was that people who were involved in the violence itself came to the conclusion that they couldn't win. I did some work with Martin McGuinness in Iraq and I remember him saying to me they that they came to the conclusion that we couldn't beat the Brits, albeit they couldn't beat us, and he had an ethical problem. He was sending young friends out to be injured, possibly killed, knowing there wasn't going to be a successful outcome and therefore needed to find another way; and that was a political way. Physical force was not going to bring a result. The external stakeholders then came to a new set of relationships, they engaged in a friendly, constructive way. A whole process developed – internal exhaustion and recognising the limits of the force, and external coming together of the stakeholders, assisted by the EU and the USA. The peace is holding. The peace process is about finding ways to disagree with each other without killing each other.

JP: The Spirit of Humanity Forum– what do you see as the essence of this Forum, to promote peace globally?

JA: One of the things I detect is an appreciation that it is about building better relationships with groups of people. This was one of the key lessons of the Irish peace process. In fact the whole process was built on addressing three key sets of relations, between Protestants and Catholics of the north, between north and south, and between Britain and Ireland. The second thing is I hear from people is a wish to find a new way of thinking about and understanding of our problems in order to change our paradigm. We need to understand things in a different way, if we are going to get a better outcome. That is not as smooth a road as some of the people here would think. 500 years ago we had the Reformation; these were really important steps in human

understanding but they were also very violent. One of the messages I have for the people here is I am with you in finding a new way, but even if we do so, it won't be a smooth ride. Thirdly, in political life, almost exclusively in the West, there has been a wish to believe that you can separate off what you could broadly call the spiritual element of humanity and put that in a private space. I don't think that is possible, I think that what is moving you, at every level of being an individual, impacts and affects how you conduct yourself. [Full article](#)

Articles

Cultivating Human Potential – Towards Flourishing of All

By Scherto Gill, written for Learning for Well-being (L4WB) Magazine

Individual unique potential and collective/communal human potential are interdependent and mutually enriching – each person's unique potential is best achieved by participating and engaging in common endeavours and shared ventures with others; and our collective human potential is best attained through fostering and nurturing the individual's specific qualities and capacities. Such mutuality also suggests that any attempt to support our personal growth will equally enhance our human system, all effecting greater social change... [Full article](#)

Spirit of Humanity Forum promotes love, transformation and humanity

By Myrian Castello, written for the Culture of Peace News Network (CPNN)

Every two years the Spirit of Humanity Forum brings together leaders from around the world to talk about love, peace and humanity, to empower people and encourage a lasting transformation in the world... [Full article](#)

Change in the Executive Circle

Svanhildur Konráðsdóttir left the City of Reykjavík for a position as Director of the Harpa Concert and Conference Centre in May this year. In light of the demands of her new circumstances, she has decided to withdraw from the Executive Circle. We thank Svanhildur for her invaluable work



for the Forum. She was a key person in bringing the City of Reykjavík in as a partner. The Forum would not have succeeded so well in Iceland without her participation. She remains in our close circle of friends and supporters in Iceland, and we are looking forwards to more collaboration in the future.



We welcome **Pia Hanson**, Director of HÖFÐI Reykjavík Peace Centre, to the Executive Circle. Reykjavík's partnership in the Forum will operate through the Peace Centre. We are very lucky to have Pia with us and we look forward to further co-operation with her and with the Peace Centre.

Message from Dadi Janki



The meaning of Spirit, Humanity and Forum

Dadi Janki, who in her 102nd year still heads the Brahma Kumaris worldwide, has strongly supported the Spirit of Humanity Forum since it was initiated. Together with the President of Iceland, Ólafur Ragnar Grimssón, she opened the first Forum in Reykjavík 2012. This is her message for the SoH Forum.

"Today in a profound way I have seen how every human being has the capacity to interact with compassion and love, with the self, with others and with the world. Relationships based on an exchange of truth and love bring great happiness. No matter what situation arises, the solution is to do everything with peace. By being compassionate, your deeds and relationships will be good. Blessings will emerge from everyone's heart and you will receive strength from God. You will have self-respect. To respect the self and give respect to others becomes natural. It is my wish that the Spirit of Humanity Forum will continue to be a success."



Spirit of Humanity Forum

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