

WORLD FAITHS DEVELOPMENT DIALOGUE
33-37 Stockmore Street, Oxford OX4 1JT, United Kingdom
Tel./Fax (44) 1865 790011. E-mail wfdd@btinternet.com
Website <http://www.wfdd.org.uk>

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This has been a difficult year for the WFDD, but one in which we have learnt a lot and also received a great deal of support from many of the people on our mailing list – you! – who see the potential in the Dialogue and have encouraged us to keep going. We now hope that our structural and staffing problems will soon be solved, as Michael Taylor has been appointed as the new director of the WFDD. He will take up the post on 1 January 2002 (see below).

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all who have been involved with the WFDD since it was set up in 1998 for the support you have given me as its co-ordinator. I shall stay on for a while to work with Michael, concentrating on research and writing, leaving him, with considerable relief, to take on the running of the Dialogue!

Wendy Tyndale

Michael Taylor

At present Professor of Social Theology in the University of Birmingham, United Kingdom, Michael previously spent twelve years as Director of Christian Aid, an organisation of the British churches which gives financial support to development programmes overseas, but has also led the way in campaigning for a fairer world.

He was the president of the Jubilee 2000 Coalition, UK, which carried out vigorous and effective research and actions in favour of the cancellation of the unpayable debt of the most highly indebted countries. He has wide experience of grass-roots development work all over the world and skills and experience in organisation.

Since he moved to Birmingham four years ago, Michael has been involved in inter-faith work. He played an important role in setting up a new Centre for the Study of Global Ethics and a chair in Inter-Religious Relations in Birmingham University.

He is the author of many articles on worship, theology, ethics and development etc and has written several books including: *Good for the Poor - Christian Ethics and World Development* published by Mowbray, and *Not Angels but Agencies - the Ecumenical Response to Poverty* published by SCM and WCC. *Christianity and Poverty*, was published by SCM in October 2000.

Michael's commitment to contributing to bringing about structural changes for the benefit of those least favoured by present the present economic and financial systems will soon be clear to all of you who don't already know him.

An early task for Michael will be to work out a programme for dialogue with the World Bank and other multilateral institutions. The WFDD is also planning a further meeting for religious leaders, to be chaired by James D. Wolfensohn and Dr. George Carey, from 2-4 September 2002 at Lambeth Palace in London.

11 September 2001

The WFDD has received over 100 comments and articles on this disastrous event from people belonging to a very wide range of religious traditions. All of them, without exception, have condemned the attack on the United States. At the same time, almost all of them have called for a

deeper reflection on the state of the world and on the role of the religious communities in bringing about peace, security and more equity to all peoples.

We cannot send you extracts from all the articles, but we have picked out some of the most thought-provoking ideas to be found in them. (Please see *Occasional Paper No. 5* enclosed.)

Cultures, Spirituality and Development

The warm reception given to the booklet we published in July on Cultures, Spirituality and Development has given us hope that we are, certainly slowly, but, we hope, surely, on the right track. (We have reason to believe that the postal service may not have been fully efficient in the delivery of this publication, so if any of you did not receive it and would like to, please let us know.) We are fully aware that requests are being made for Spanish and French translations and will do our best to produce these, if resources allow.

Website (<http://www.wfdd.org.uk>)

It is important that we see the WFDD as an accumulation of the activities of everyone in the network. If anyone would like to send us material to put onto our web-site, we would be more than happy to do so. The site includes links with other faith based organisations, forthcoming events, articles, case studies etc.

The WFDD is no longer participating in the *Development Gateway* website, set up by the World Bank in 2000. On one hand, progress with the transfer of this website to an independent body has been very slow. On the other, in response to world wide suggestions, the World Bank team decided to reduce the number of topics dealt with by the *Gateway* and, as a result, the Faith Communities page was removed. We are grateful to those who acted as advisors to the WFDD for this initiative.

Guatemala

The inter-religious group in Guatemala (DIRGD) has produced a leaflet on the *Ethical Values of the Religions which are Practised in Guatemala*. You can find it on our web site, but if you would like us to send you copies (either in Spanish or English), please let us know.

The intention has been to use the document as a basis for work done by the group with the Guatemalan Ministry of Education, which is planning a new curriculum for schools, as part of the Peace Accords of 1996, which ended over 30 years of internal conflict in Guatemala. The fact that the leaflet has the backing of the Evangelical and Catholic Churches, as well as the Jewish Community and representatives of the indigenous Mayan spirituality is a major achievement. The *Ethical Values* will also provide a basis for work now being planned more widely on ethics and development.

Studies on spiritually-motivated movements working with materially poor communities

WFDD has started gathering up material for a series of studies whose aim is to demonstrate that spirituality can play a vital role in enhancing the effectiveness and sustainability of anti-poverty programmes. Indeed our thesis is that, unless the spiritual dimension of humanity is taken fully into account, the regeneration of human, animal and plant life on our planet will be unlikely.

It is not our intention to provide blue prints for development, or even examples of projects which could be multiplied or “scaled up”, but rather to point to the existence of different understandings of development and efforts to bring sustainable ways of living, as well as peace and contentment, to individuals and the communities they belong to. We would very much welcome insights from any of you who are involved in programmes of this sort.

