

Proceedings

Conference
20th anniversary of
Secours Islamique
France



**The future
of humanitarian action**

new challenges,
new players,
new partnerships



Palais du Luxembourg
12th November 2012

Editing Agence Rue Principale
Design and graphics elypss  (www.elypss.fr)
Printing Corlet Imprimeur

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The future of humanitarian action: new challenges, new players, new partnerships

How can future international humanitarian action best meet the challenges raised by the upheavals in the world? At the time of the Arab Spring, what are the new geopolitical issues confronting the international and local actors? How can organisations better work together? How can we better integrate the partnerships with the civil societies of the South? An actor in the field, a source of proposals and a link between the humanitarian aid from the North and that of the countries of the South, Secours Islamique France has decided to open the discussion during a symposium to celebrate its 20th anniversary. This document includes the main interventions during this important international meeting held at the Senate, in Paris, on 12 November 2012. ■

Opening addresses

Speech by

Bariza Khiari

Senator, Vice-President of the Senate

President Lahlou, Ladies and Gentlemen,

» **I first want** to state how pleased I am to welcome this symposium celebrating the 20th anniversary of Secours Islamique France. Moreover, I'm honoured to be able to opening the symposium in the company of its director, Mister Lahlou. I also want to pay tribute to his constant and intense commitment at the head of this prestigious organisation.

I'm all the more happy to be with you this morning as it's rare for members of parliament to express themselves within humanitarian organisations. This doesn't mean that we aren't in touch with humanitarian or non-governmental organisations. Whether in the opposition, as in the past, or in the majority, as now, we always keep in touch with the different associations in our country as they form an important network for our fellow citizens. Whether they provide aid, whether they offer athletic activities or the means to practice a cultural activity, these associations play a fundamental role in our country, at the local, regional, national and even international levels.

For this reason, the members of parliament try to consult them before making any decisions in their field of action. However, it's true that the contact is more tenuous with humanitarian organisations, certainly because the actions are often outside the national context and members of parliament have less leverage. Nevertheless, humanitarianism

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is vital for the equilibrium of the world. It helps support populations in dire circumstances to avoid human disasters with serious consequences. Humanitarianism is solidarity on a world scale, through which, beyond our religious, ethnic, social or cultural differences, we belong to the same species, the human species, and all share the same destiny. Solidarity makes us thinking beings, capable of compassion, including compassion for those far from our sight, far from our presence.

The importance of humanitarian action no longer needs to be demonstrated, just like France's commitment to destabilised populations. For our country, this involves helping populations suffering from natural disasters or armed conflict, in the name of the principle of solidarity. This doesn't consist of assuming the functions of an NGO but, on the contrary, helping them and providing them with logistic support, mainly in the case of emergency aid. We have to keep in mind that, in an emergency situation, the forces of a country such as France are able to quickly enter the area of operations. Non-Governmental Organisations encounter more difficulty in these areas since they don't always have the logistic means to quickly deal with the demands of destabilised populations. For this reason, our country's action shouldn't be seen as competition but, on the contrary, as an opportunity to provide NGO with the expertise and logistics they don't always have.

The importance of humanitarian action for France is significant through the development of a Humanitarian Strategy for the coming five years, after consultation with all of the actors. Since we're considering prospects today, I think it worthwhile to see how the party in power, to which I belong, sees the evolution of humanitarian actions over the coming years.

Our country wants to direct future actions in three directions:

- the support for populations in distress,
- the inclusion of humanitarian action in a global strategy including development aid to help strengthen local abilities,
- the ongoing re-assessment of the pertinence of the approaches chosen.

It's true that humanitarian action has to undergo constant adjustments and mutations in view of the changes in crisis situations. The 2004 tsunami and then the Haitian crisis clearly demonstrated the limits of humanitarian action, the different problems that may arise,

requiring an evolution in the modus operandi. This in particular involves trying to determine the best way to coordinate practices, or act to provide a better framework for the actors.

Needles to say, humanitarian action faces many problems involving both States and NGO. Of course, the first problem involves the coordination required for concerted action. France, as a member of the European Union, has to coordinate its approach and operations within a European framework so as to avoid duplicating the action of our European partners as well as sometimes receive backing from a member State. There are synergies at the European level that have to be reinforced and used to a maximum. France has been working towards establishing a European mechanism for emergency aid.

The multiplication of government and non-government actors is another important issue. In this way, network logics are replacing territorial logics. At the same time, the multiplication of actors doesn't prevent a reduction in the means of intervention, due to a context of economic and financial crisis, even though the needs of destabilised populations haven't decreased.

Therefore, a more complex world due to the effect of global logics responds to an increasingly complex humanitarian world, making each action more difficult. We thereby understand the challenge of rapid intervention in an emergency situation.

These points demonstrate the importance of humanitarian action and attest to the interest that members of parliament have in these issues. Obviously, this sector crystallises a number of points that may raise our attention and increase commitment.

In such a context, Secours Islamique is an unavoidable partner because of its experience in the fields where NGO operate less often, because it has set up networks that may facilitate emergency movements and aid, and because it has efficient teams. In this respect, it is a major partner with which it's possible to discuss and collaborate on behalf of populations in great distress.

Secours Islamique intervenes in many places throughout the world to help fragile populations. Since its foundation, it has proven to be a stable and reliable spokesperson in a great many conflicts. France has thereby learned to trust its teams and count on their commitment.

It's important for me to be here today to celebrate the 20th anniversary of the French branch of this institution. This is even more important, as I find the media context increasingly negative towards Islam. Magazine coverage, sensationalist reporting, snap judgements by journalists as well as politicians contribute, day by day, in creating a despicable image of Islam that has little to do with the message really conveyed by this religion.

Some people consider that the action of certain people, claiming to be followers of this religion, contributes greatly to this increasing mistrust. This is true, especially since the passivity and silence with which certain Muslims welcome their violent and radical actions seems to give credit to the idea of religious solidarity between moderates and radicals. I believe that part of the Muslim population doesn't firmly enough condemn what is only a sectarian aberration of Islam, an abomination that parasites this religion and perverts its principles. They have to manifest a rejection of terrorism and reject an outrageous form of religion.

However, I feel that we don't often enough speak about the other face of Islam, its pacific message. For this, I find it necessary to support the action of Secours Islamique because it's one of the pillars of this other vision. Its work reveals the importance of helping others for the Muslim religion. In passing, I call to mind that Islam doesn't represent a break with Judaism or Christianity, but rather a continuum.

Remember, Secours Islamique depends mainly on zakat in order to operate properly. This is the equivalent of alms for Muslims. It's certainly one of the five pillars of Islam, that is, a rarely mentioned obligation of canon law. On its own, zakat demonstrates that there's another way to practice, a way where the believer pays attention to others, considered in their human suffering, to come to their aid, because it's a duty. Explaining that Secours Islamique purports to be a way to apply the precepts of Islam may also help demystify the minority proponents of a religion who may seem closed and violent. In this, I also believe that it's a model for those who wish to understand Islam, a positive model for this religion, guaranteeing a proper understanding of its message.

It's true, Mr. Lahlou, that I previously thought that Secours Islamique chose its name poorly and that it would have difficulty being the counterpart of Secours Catholique. For example, certain people

see it as the communitisation of aid. Secours Islamique has disproven this. It intervenes everywhere in the world. In this respect, it complies with the precept that charity is for the needy without distinction.

I today believe that, on the contrary, it should bear this name, as a response to those who soil Islam through their words and actions, as a demonstration that another Islam exists, an open and tolerant Islam, the free and responsible Islam that won't be taken hostage by the fundamentalists.

During this celebration of the 20th anniversary of Secours Islamique, I want to congratulate you again, Mr. Lahlou, for your commitment and your courage and I ask you, as well as all of the members of Secours Islamique France, to continue your combat on behalf of others but also on behalf of the image of this religion of peace.

I'll conclude by quoting a Sufi master who said: "Money that doesn't turn into beauty leaves no trace." Beauty is a gift. It turns into the smiles of children and those helped throughout the world. This money, the means that have been used in favour of human beings, leaves a trace.

Thank you. ■

Speech by

Rachid Lahlou

Founder and President of Secours Islamique France

**Vice-President of the Senate,
Director of the Crisis Centre,
Ambassador,
Ladies,
Gentlemen,**

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> **First,** I want to heartily thank Ms. Bariza Khiari, Vice-President of the Senate, for sponsoring this event and also allowing it to take place in this prestigious place. Your support, Vice-President, is precious since it attests to your confidence in our organisation and, in a certain way, is part of your admirable and courageous combat for open-mindedness, diversity and tolerance.

As humanitarians, and as part of the actions urging that French policies in humanitarian areas better respond to the scope of the issues, with respect of neutrality, impartiality and independence, it's especially important for us to see the members of parliament take up such an important subject. We thereby rejoice at your interest by bringing this topic inside of the building that houses our senators.

Second, I want to welcome all of you, humanitarians, scholars, journalists, students, representatives from the Foreign Office, the Crisis Centre, the French Development Agency, as well as those of you who have come from farther away, from Brussels, London, Algeria,

Burkina, Qatar or elsewhere, to share a moment of debate and reflection about the future issues confronting humanitarian action. Welcome and thanks for being with us, at this symbolic moment for our organisation which is celebrating its 20th year of existence.

Before going into the heart of the matter, I want to take advantage of this occasion and this anniversary to briefly describe the development of our organisation, Secours Islamique France, since it was founded 20 years ago.

I must admit that I'm especially moved and honoured by the presence of a very dear friend, Hany El Banna, here today, to debate with us. Honoured because of his commitment on behalf of the humanitarian cause, so worthy of admiration. Moved, because he's at the origin of the creation of Secours Islamique France.

In fact, the great adventure of SIF began one day in 1991, with a phone call from Hany El Banna, then president of Islamic Relief UK, proposing the creation of a structure in France. I wanted to pick up the challenge and that moment heralded an incredible change in my life. I want to again confirm my admiration, my friendship and my gratitude.

From the beginning, two major ambitions presided over the creation of the association: show the real face of Islam through humanitarian action and create a structure that is among the great humanitarian organisations. We immediately based our mission on the values of solidarity and the respect of human dignity, essential in Islam, with as principle, the provision of help in the respect of cultural diversity, without distinction as to origin, political affiliation, gender or belief.

Today, SIF directly or indirectly intervenes in about twenty countries, in particular in the Palestinian Territories, Haiti, Chad, Madagascar, Senegal, Pakistan... and France. With 500 volunteers and about one hundred employees at the headquarters, SIF has found its place among the main French NGOs. Throughout its history, SIF has aimed at promoting dialogue, while trying to maintain the specificity of its identity.

Little by little, our relations with the main humanitarian, governmental, multilateral or non-governmental organisations have worked towards developing trust and partnership. This recognition is, on one

hand, based on the operational ability of the organisation, its reactivity, the margin of manoeuvre that our own funds give us when confronted with a humanitarian crisis or for social action in France.

Moreover, SIF makes a special effort to include its action in the community, participate in inter-association networks, coordinate and communicate. We've developed the ability to make a case, resolutely based in our action in the field, make our voice heard, valorise our specificity and influence the politicians who have an influence in the fields of action in which we intervene.

With this in mind, for our 20th anniversary, we wanted to organise a moment of reflection and discussion with all of you about the issues that our organisations will have to face over the next 20 years, in order to together imagine the ways to best adapt our methods of intervention and our strategy, provide pertinent and effective aid that respects our values and principles and bears a lasting added value for the persons it's meant to reach.

The issues are many and varied: the crisis that is raging and plunges us into a period of increased uncertainty, is creating difficulties in mobilising financing and generating a strong social impact; the Arab Spring, overthrowing the geopolitical balance, may be seen as marking the beginning of increased awareness going well beyond the Arab world; the emergence of new actors and new sponsors for humanitarian actions is calling into question the geography of our alliances and partnerships; a certain rejection of humanitarian action, seen as the instrument of a model, the universality of which is called into question; the acute problems of access that international humanitarian organisations are coming up against; the increasing power of local actors, etc.

We've organised today's discussion around these themes. The round tables will provide an opportunity to discuss and together explore the ways to improve the road to dialogue, coordination and joint action between the actors in the light of these new developments.

The exploration of all of these problems within this room, four year after our first symposium that questioned the added value of the confessional and cultural diversity of the actors, is a logical extension of our reflection, starting with questions about identities, to today

move towards the dynamics that should link different actors for more effective action.

I wish all of you a fruitful debate. ■

Opening plenary session

The 2030 horizon : World issues & challenges ahead for the humanitarian sector

What will be the major international issues twenty years from now? What will be the divisions in the world? Conversely, what international consensuses will we move towards? What will be the consequences of today's economic, political and ecological crises on the destiny of the planet? How will identity claims influence planetary relations? What are the new crises facing us? Will attempts at regional unity foster a better world? How will the humanitarian world evolve in view of these issues? What are the challenges facing NGOs, whether operational, financial or structural? Our experts, coming from different horizons, will describe the scenarios. ■

Moderator

Yann Mens

Journalist, Editor in chief
of *Alternatives Internationales*

Bertrand Badie

**University Professor, associate teacher-researcher,
Centre d'Études et de Recherches Internationales,
SciencesPo Paris**

➤ **Drawing up** a panorama of the global governance is a real challenge. I'll only propose a partial picture starting with globalisation in which four basic tensions may be detected.

First, we can note that globalisation promotes homogenisation, as well as the renaissance of particularism. In fact, for the first time in the history of mankind, the world is unified, in that the international system includes everyone. Nevertheless, the ambition to make a jump to totality is called into question by a dual movement: first, the western world's pretence that it expresses universality, as this reduces the movement of globalisation to westernisation; and then, the return to the local and particularism, still not snuffed out by globalisation but, on the contrary, has been given a second chance.

In addition, it's possible to note that globalisation is inclusive in its claims but exclusive in its mode of operation. Its inclusive nature falls within the great humanitarian project according to which we're all in the same boat. In fact, for the first time, one man is entirely equal another man. And yet, in the manner achieved, globalisation doesn't fail to exclude, whether in terms of wealth, communication, culture or respect.

In addition, although globalisation is interdependent, it nevertheless favours the resurrection of sovereignty. In fact, the most prominent aspect is the replacement of competition by interdependence: the strong and the weak reciprocally depend on each other since each needs a successful competitor. This means that the ideas of leadership and hegemony are falling by the wayside. In spite of this, we note that sovereignty has never been as strong.

Finally, although globalisation is calling for multilateral governance, it's clear that it revives the oldest forms of "club diplomacy" since world governance is unfolding in a context where multilateralism never began. In fact, the latter, established in its modern version in 1945, was, as soon as created, accompanied by an amendment that

nipped it in the bud: veto rights. In reality, this came down to partial multilateralism, that is, for everyone except for the powerful.

These characteristics of globalisation show that the socio-economic contrasts were never as strong and even constitute the greatest world threat. The first challenge in building peace is therefore the creation of real international social integration. In fact, the nature of conflicts is changing: politico-military and between states in the past, they are currently social. Therefore, the future lies in the social processing of these conflicts since the latter can no longer be mastered by military logic. In addition, the international actors are no longer the 193 member states of the United Nations but the 7 billion human beings populating the planet. The world will increasingly be governed by mobility.

I'll conclude with two comments about the ways of governing this new world. Although world governance was invented to define the new conditions for world control, we've seen that so-called UN multilateralism, in reality, isn't anything of the sort. There are three reasons for this. First, this multilateralism is limited by the fact that the most powerful are exempted from it, as demonstrated by the management of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. We also can't expect that the people drawing up the 1945 Charter think the way we do today since, few of the 51 founding states were aware of basic issues such as development, human security and conflicts between states. Finally, multilateralism remains political and has difficulty becoming social, complex and open, like the social issues seem to demand.

To sum up, let's note that this dysfunctional multilateralism was relayed by the old European idea of oligarchic governance, according to which a small number determined the law for one and all. Now, when five European oligarchs determined the law for ten, they didn't do too much damage. We can now wonder about the possible adaptation of a possible G8 to the realities of globalisation, since it's actually only a "G minus 175"). In reality, we can wonder whether it's possible to regulate the suffering of others without inviting the actors of the suffering to the table. Confronted with this serious dilemma, the contrasted interests of the oligarchs unfortunately consist of countering change so that **globalisation condemns the governance to immobility.**

Régis Koetschet

Directorate-General of Global Affairs, Development and Partnerships, Department of Foreign and European Affairs

➤ **We're currently** confronted with a deep mutation in international relations, both from the point of view of the actors, civil societies and issues, since the problems of global public goods has become a major problem in the world organisation. I'll make three observations about this.

First, if diplomacy is to be coordinated, it should also be “reinforced”, to borrow the term from our Foreign Office minister, and based on the action of the local authorities and a series of non-government networks characteristic of societies of the future. In fact, in terms of global public goods, the expertise is found in all of the actors in contact with these very complex problems. Among the encouraging advances over the last twenty years, there is the responsibility of States, and also that of the associative world on the one hand and, the globalisation on the other hand, so that the State and civil society can build together. Trust is found in the relationship between institutions and civil society, the best tool to prevent crises and settle conflicts. Europe is on the same road since it supports, along with the civil society, the domain of foreign affairs.

My second observation concerns the difficulties that risk aggravating over the next twenty years, in particular those concerning the complex requirements in the relations between the public powers and civil society. First, as I was able to verify myself as ambassador to Afghanistan, the “time” of the politician is not that of the civil societies and it may be difficult to have both coincide. In addition, we have to keep in mind that there is also a different relationship with space and evolving geographies. The cardinal directions – and very clearly North-South – do not allow for an understanding of the world, when we are more in cyberspace following to the digital revolution. These are the major and stimulating subjects from the diplomacy point of view. Another problematical evolution is that **the public powers may sometimes be tempted by the most simple vision – that is a world view that they appreciate, the civil societies that they recognise, define, or even**

co-opt – and content themselves with a significant reading of international reality, based on a type of simplistic universalism.

My third observation involves the requirements over the coming twenty years. First of all, civil societies have to invest the “post-Millennium Development Goals” agenda, after 2015, that is, the goals of sustainable development. This is the current debate, we’re entering, marked by the weight of the urban, not only in its social reality, but also in that of the crises, and that is opening onto the problems of food and water safety, migration, refugees and climate. This approach requires that NGOs as well as the State have to change and accept working in a much more open manner. The public powers have to accept the complexity of situations such as those expressed by the civil societies, with their disharmony, even if there is the temptation of the “club diplomacy” previously mentioned by Bertrand Badie, to maintain a homogenous view of things. If the public powers have to develop the ability to listen, it’s because it helps emphasise the major role of proximity, the citizen and the nation. The approaches to development and solidarity have been based on the dramas and horrors of the 20th century. The processes of reconciliation and memory can, in the 21st century, open up interesting horizons.

Finally, world governance requires rejecting inhibitions about controls. The road that was cut out for the establishment of World Environment Organisation projects, with a role given to the civil societies in governance, not only in a formal manner but in a real manner, is important, just like the role of unions in the International Labour Organisation. Moreover, at the time of the French presidency of the G8 and G20, we displayed our willingness to associate the civil societies. Not to be content to see them as only witnesses but as vectors of citizen participation.

I’ll conclude with four words, keys for the requirements over the next twenty years, whether it consists of the public powers or civil society, the North just like the South. “Transversality” first, since we should no longer work with a segmented reality, even if it seems more comfortable. “Sustainability” next, since the requirements of the biosphere require that the humanitarian world, just like the States, work in this direction. “Humility” comes next, since complex situations require that we listen to each other. Finally, “Curiosity” since

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it's essential that the public powers of a country such as France be curious about the world, civil societies, religions and all of the factors forming an identity.

Pierre Micheletti

Co-manager of the IGO-NGO master's programme at Institut d'Études politiques de Grenoble, teacher at Cameroon International Relations Institute (IRIC), former president of Médecins du Monde.

> **I'll base** my presentation on non-government humanitarian actions and, more specifically, French humanitarian actions derived from the "without borders" movement, that is, the major NGOs arising after the war in Biafra in 1969.

The humanitarian movement is based on the dynamics of societies, whether political, religious or secular. This is why Islam, after becoming the second religion in the country, it isn't surprising that an NGO such as Secours Islamique France was founded. The humanitarian NGOs are currently confronted with a new environment, that is, the convergence of complementary mechanisms. Above all, it's necessary to note that we're in the midst of an economic crisis that may threaten our private resources. The increase in the precarity at our doors raises the question of knowing how to distribute our means between locally based solidarity, and more distant, cross-border solidarity. Finally, international actions have become increasingly complex, with a perception of NGOs that remains globally positive but that is increasingly marred by suspicion or even violence, raising the issue of the safety of the teams in the field. All this attests to a risk of paralysis of action in increasingly large territories, so much so that French humanitarians are wondering about their ability to act and work abroad.

Although NGOs are all Western children, it still isn't possible to globalise their model since they represent constellations with typologies differing greatly in size, themes of intervention, whether they are or aren't secular, proselyte or not. Moreover, in the countries where they are numerous, it never consists of a monochrome family but a diversity

of extremely different cultures and political histories so that they entertain very different relations with the governments of their country of origin. Certain NGOs are, without complexes, tools of foreign policy, while others, such as Médecins du Monde, refuse this role in order to abide by the principles of neutrality and impartiality. In Afghanistan, for example, some of them are seen at the headquarters of the troops of the Coalition while others are more cautious about this. Now, in a contact where the radicalised Afghan actors want to influence the political game, there's a high risk in maintaining or emphasising, in one way or another, these elements of confusion.

It's also necessary to mention that, since the war in Biafra, the world has changed on the economic and political levels. This is seen in the fact that three African countries – South Africa, Nigeria and Egypt – are aiming at permanent membership status in the UN Security Council. There are also cultural re-equilibrations, sometimes the instruments of the political leaders of the countries involved, in particular as regards ethnic issues.

As regards an analysis of the issues and contexts, we can first note that the analysis of the consequences of the fall of the Berlin Wall on certain civil conflicts, such as Angola or Afghanistan, shows that with the end of the Cold War, some of these belligerents went to look for resources other than those until then provided by the two blocks. This gave rise to the mafia by-products of certain guerrilla movements, such as the FARC. **The rhetoric of the clash of civilisations involves a great risk for NGOs, who, as Westerners, may easily find themselves trapped in this rhetoric.**

I'll conclude with comments concerning the major issues facing Secours Islamique France over the coming twenty years. On the one hand, present in France and abroad, Secours Islamique France is confronted with the choice between locally based solidarity and distant solidarity, being aware that the great precarity in France, to a large extent, involves migrants and disadvantaged neighbourhoods, in which the Muslim population is not negligible. This involves a political and strategic more than a budgetary choice. On the other hand, it isn't important to wonder how Secours Islamique France can overcome the risk of participating in the rhetoric of the clash of civilisations, or even the risk of communitarism, in France as well as internationally. »

Finally, how can we ensure that you not only acquire a better understanding, but that you turn it into a source of new proposals for international interventions? In fact, other humanitarian practices have to be invented. For the humanitarian movement, non-western partners, in order to de-westernise, in a non-religious but political reading, may be an opportunity to further question these practices. Therefore, come up with new ideas to help us reinvent other models. ■

Discussion with participants

Christian Lespinats, president of Groupe Initiatives and member of Coordination Sud: The relationship between civil society and the French government has deteriorated over the last few years to pure and simple ignorance, since the existing spaces for public consultation have been closed. Can you tell us how things will evolve in this respect?

Régis Koetschet: We've witnessed the elimination of agencies such as the High Counsel of International Cooperation, but over twenty public consultation groups now exist and are highly operational. We still have to work on a better partnership, although communication has nevertheless already been established. We can thereby think that it's both necessary to develop the reality of dialogue and adequate financial means and, as regards financing, the commitment by the President of the Republic is highly encouraging.

Rachid Lahlou: The question of locally based solidarity has been the object of intense thinking within Secours Islamique France. Social issues have their own department, developing in an exponential manner. Our main challenge is to not become insensitive to poverty here. For this, we create awareness in youth in volunteer work and social action and we encourage them to prove their generosity.

Jean Bosco Bazié, deputy director of Eau Vive: How can civil society organise, in order to be better heard by the public authorities?

Yann Mens: And if we speak of the civil societies of the South, should they systematically pass by those of the North in order to address the public authorities of the North?

Régis Koetschet: The dialogue is complex. In Europe, we have a “structured dialogue” between Parliament, the Council, the Commission, the Member States and the civil society. France wants to work on a favourable environment, by ensuring that, in the partner States, the situation allows the civil societies to exist as well as communicate, in a democratic approach. This work is carried out in Europe by valorising the action of the civil societies of the partner countries of the South.

Bertrand Badie: The subject is difficult because although the idea of governance assumes associating the public and the private, in fact the actors of civil society are not very associated, for example to the G8 and G20. Until now, the political actor had a monopoly of resources and the right to decide. He finds it difficult to give this up. In addition, the political actor is directed towards decisions whose effects will be visible in the short term, and often with electoral aims. Now, the world-wide problems of development and social issues don't fall into any of these categories.

Mahieddine Khelladi, executive director of Secours Islamique: As regards going beyond the rhetoric of the clash of civilisations, we can get there by trying. Secours Islamique France, a Western Muslim association, by adhering to universal, international humanitarian values and by defending them in the field, shows that it does not position itself on a clash of cultures or civilisations.

Huguette Redegeld, officer, Mouvement ATD Quart-Monde: To find new models, the question of knowledge is essential. This is why we have to wonder what we know, what remains to be known and who to build this understanding with. In this respect, it's essential to remember that the populations concerned by our associations – our beneficiaries – are themselves our first partners.

Virginie Bineau, director of development for Eau Vive: If the future requires the social management of conflicts, it seems indispensable to remain in Mali in order to continue the actions of development. What is France's approach?

Bertrand Badie: Conflicts are developing today on social fields. Unfortunately, we tend to maintain a classic geopolitical viewpoint that understands all violence by means of political and military instruments without understanding the social basis of the crisis, whereas it's precisely necessary to begin here.

Régis Koetschet: Mali was a country where decentralised cooperation was very active and it's important for continued proximity with the field. At the same time, the State should be very attentive to the safety of humanitarian workers who have become targets.

Pierre Micheletti: The social management of conflicts can't occur through the export of kits of democratic models. For NGOs, the problem is how to transpose their working methods to other countries by creating bonds, outside a situation of major crises, and by obtaining a democratic dynamics among the different parties involved. ■

Round Table 1

The Arab Spring: a new deal for the Arab world

The Arab Spring movements from Tunisia to Egypt, going through Libya, have profoundly changed the political order and the societies of these countries. They have also generated a hope of democracy in a great many states in the Arab world. However, the hope that these revolutions have generated is also accompanied by a great many questions. What will the new balance of powers be like? What will be the place of the emerging civil societies? What will be the new international powers now being established? What evolution can now be predicted? ■

Moderator

Jean-Jacques Louarn

Editor-in-Chief at Radio France International (RFI),
Director and founder of Grotius International

Introduction

Denis Bauchard

**Diplomat, foreign ambassador,
Former president of the Arab World Institute**

> **I want** to emphasise that the organisation of such meetings is fundamental. Indeed, it's important that the different actors be informed and exchange ideas about the questions behind humanitarian action. We've been asked to make a first assessment of what is commonly called the Arab Spring, two years after the beginning. It currently seems to be at a dead end. Obviously we've gone from one extreme to another. We were euphoric. In the quest for democracy, the Arab world hasn't been an exception. We were waiting for a domino effect. We discovered young, friendly, "trendy" populations. We now note a catastrophist temptation: the Arab revolutions have been confiscated by the radicals!

The time has come to see things more calmly by asking two questions. One: will the democratic process continue? In who's favour? What will be the place of the liberal forces? What will be the role of the civil societies? Two: will the geopolitical map of the Arab world change? Will we witness the effacement of Egypt, Iraq and Syria? What will be the effect on Turkey and Iran? What can the European Union, Russia and the United States do?

Beligh Nabli

**Research director at Institut des Relations Internationales
et Stratégiques (IRIS), Observatory of political mutations
in the Arab world**

> **We can consider** that the analysis of the Arab Spring comes across two difficulties: the impossibility of making a definitive assessment and the inclusive nature of the expression "Arab Spring", as it assumes a unity in time and space while what we're witnessing isn't linear and involves different spaces.

I argue that the “Arab revival” indicates the increased awareness of populations and, on an individual level, what it means to be a citizen in the Arab world. This awakening has to be considered on a nation-state basis, and inscribed in the unity of the Arab world. My postulate is that of diversity. The events have to be analysed within national societies, characterised by significant particularities, as well as within States, with distinct international and regional environments. If the wave of shock provoked by the Tunisian revolution hasn’t generated the reproduction of identical situations in different Arab countries, it’s because we can’t speak of a single Arab model.

The protest movement crossing the Arab countries takes on different forms of unequal intensity. The variety of forms is incontestable. We witnessed sporadic demonstrations in Morocco, regular demonstrations in Jordan, urban revolts in Algeria, civil war in Syria and relatively classic uprisings in Tunisia and Egypt. We see that the Arab revival has taken on highly different forms, some of them classic, others more modern, backed up as much by popular demonstrations as by a mastery of technology.

Beginning with this postulate of diversity, we can underline that these upheavals come within a single historical movement in one and the same Arab world. Therefore, there’s a global dynamics. First, in spite of the historical and ideological failure of Pan-Arabism or Arab nationalism, the same immaterial bond continues to unite individual Arab consciences and form a collective Arab conscience. In addition, this bond is reinforced by a material element. A certain number of Arabs in the world are united by their condition. Though their social, political and economic status, they are related in their national and collective destiny. Moreover, we can determine the shared characteristics from the beginning of this protest movement. We first have to note that the Arab revival cropped up in profoundly inegalitarian societies, directed by autocratic and corrupt systems, comprising the seizure of political and economic power by the leaders, related by family or tribal bonds. In addition, these movements all share the hope for social and political justice, as well as individual and collective dignity. In this way, the demonstrations have raised awareness of what citizenship and popular sovereignty mean.

Another essential element was the inability of the established systems to enter into a dialogue with their own population. The pacific nature of the first upheavals quickly gave rise to the coercive reflexes of the authorities, accounting for the fact that some of them were toppled. It's also necessary to note that the popular upheavals didn't emerge within a rigid opposition between the civil society and the State, since a certain part of the population backed up the established system. However, **these popular demonstrations revealed the existence of civil societies in the Arab world, public opinion and organised and politically aware individuals.** Nevertheless, these popular insurrections weren't led by charismatic leaders or structured organisations.

We can identify three collective figures among the insurgents: the young, women and Islamists. This is essential because it informs us about contemporary Arab society. Although the societies are young, there is also a feeling of humiliation, fuelling a desire for dignity. In addition, the insurrectional movements, first mixed, became exclusively masculine as soon as there was armed confrontation. Finally, the Islamists were not the creators or the instigators. They were political opportunists. They used the democratic and electoral system to tip the balance of political and social power in their favour. However, they don't form a single entity and it's preferable to speak of Islamists.

Nassif Hitti

Ambassador, director of the Mission from the League of Arab States in Paris

➤ **I'll begin** with a preliminary comment: if we consider the fact that, in 2009, 50% of the population in the Arab world was under the age of 24, it becomes retrospectively obvious that we were close to the breaking point. In fact, if a desire to control the demographic tsunami existed, it would have been necessary to deal with the repercussions on the labour market. This is why we can consider that the shocks of demography and underdevelopment are structural elements that have to be dealt with. We can continue with the analysis of other structural factors, noting that we went from a logic where the State did everything

to a neoliberal capitalism of cronyism where the State no longer did anything, resulting in a double imbalance, both on the regional level and on the sectoral level. This is why the flow of migrants came to smother the cities in the countries concerned.

From this fast assessment, we can draw up a list of the major challenges that now have to be met. We first have to consider the return of politics as well as the means of revenge by society that has, for a long time, been kidnapped by the State. Finally, it's necessary to give the new governance real meaning. However, the only political actor that currently exists is the Islamic actor, since we went from the slogan "Unity is the solution" from the time of Arab nationalism, to the slogan "Islam is the solution". The problem is that only a concrete social and economic project can deal with difficulties. This is why it's necessary to provide secular answers for these questions. This clearly involves priorities, in particular by specifically identifying the model of the state to be retained. We have to understand that, although it's legitimate to emphasise cultural and the social aspects, we still can't do without a socio-economic project. It's therefore better to forget the obsessions of democracy or governance considered as slogans, and concentrate on democratisation, first through the creation of jobs and the development of a vision of the State. **In fact, we shouldn't forget that democracy isn't a procedure, but above all a political culture and institutions that have to be established over time.**

As regards the Syrian issue, although the Arab world indeed shows solidarity, we make predictions and draw conclusions based on specificities. The first parameter to take into account is obviously the geopolitics, immediately followed by the level of state control. In certain cases, problems are settled internally, since there is a very strong social cohesion, while in other cases, the States are weak. In Syria, the geopolitical and sociological components have created a highly dangerous and explosive mixture, comprising both horizontal and vertical conflict. We can therefore think that the underlying problem is internal. However, we can't neglect the regional competition between the two "re-emerging empires", Iran and Turkey. This power struggle is actually taking on the form of a clash between two functions: for Iran, Syria is the gateway to the Mediterranean; for Turkey, it's the Ottoman Port to the Orient.

We also have to seriously consider the reality of the Arab-Iranian conflict. We here speak of the return to the communitisation of the political arena, especially in Arab Middle East, fundamental in the legitimisation and de-legitimisation of certain policies, and in the mobilisation of other policies. This is an important factor in the mobilisation around Syria. We clearly have to distinguish between several aspects of the conflicts and demonstrate that there is a Western-Iranian conflict as well as a conflict involving Russia's image. The horizontal repercussions of the Syrian conflict lie here. In this respect, the future of the Arab world, its regional order or disorder, clearly depends on the Syrian situation. We can therefore clearly state that this is the new Eastern question.

I'll conclude by emphasising that we're involved in a dual historical process in the region. First, we're witnessing the end of the hereditary monarchical republics whose legitimacy has eroded. In this respect, we can no longer speak of anti-colonialism or Arab nationalism or third-worldism. It's therefore necessary to build a new base of legitimacy. We're also attesting to the constitutionalism and institutionalism of monarchies whose legitimacy still hasn't eroded. We're in a process that, in my opinion, will continue for years. ■

Discussion with participants

Joseph Dato, director of Humacoop, associate professor, University of Grenoble: What can be said about Libya, the outside intervention, the interference and the consequences?

Beligh Nabli: The Western forces in Libya and NATO in particular seem to have determined what then happened in Syria. The fact that the responsibility to protect was interpreted as the right to overthrow a political system led to the perception of an interventionist reflex that was neither appropriate or legitimate, thereby neutralising any possibility of intervention in Syria.

Hany El Banna, co-founder and former president of Islamic Relief Worldwide, president of the Humanitarian Forum: You spoke of Islamism on several occasions. Do you have a shared definition, since it's difficult to agree on this subject? I'd like to propose one. In my opinion, Islamism can be defined as a movement assembling all of the people sharing Islamic values, even if they aren't necessarily Muslim. The Islamists have taken the Arab revolutions hostage since, at the beginning of these revolutions, there was a deep desire for social justice. This said, the context triggering the Arab Springs differed according to the country, although this desire for social justice was the same everywhere.

Nassif Hitti: Syria requires the opposite of what was done in Libya. In fact, in this country, a national state was never developed, only a simple varnish of citizenship, so that each person falls back on his basic community, whether ethnic or religious. As regards Egypt, it's necessary to note the increased power of Iran and Turkey in Arab politics. However, Turkey can no longer alone play the role of a stabilising power for the Arab countries that fear Iran, or even Sunnite power, since others are there and Egypt would never accept it.

Wahid Abassi, director of development for Secours Islamique

France: I think we have to avoid a first trap, on the local or regional level, inside the Arab world, that of examining the polarisation of “Islam versus secularisation”. We’ll get there by concentrating on the nature of the State and the project for society that should be mobilised, through social and political reforms. The second mistake, on the international level, is to exaggerate the polarisation of “Islam versus the West”. To avoid the clash of civilisations, the process of democratisation in the Arab world has to be based on a real project of society. However, there also has to be a real distribution of wealth between the North and the South, and the Palestinian problem has to be dealt with in order to be able to develop a relationship between Islam and the West, the North and the South, based on mutual respect.

Rachid Lahlou: It can’t be overstated that the Arab world is dynamic. Its revolt began much before the colonisation and continued, even if smothered by the army and the regimes. Today, what has changed is the emergence of a civil society, an Arab awareness, so that a second Arab revolution is certainly a possibility. Our role, in any case, isn’t to stigmatise the different actors but to bring together and encourage the democratic movements.

Beligh Nabli: It’s true that the monarchies helped demonstrate the contradiction in Western discourse. Not only were they spared from the popular movements but above all, by Western criticism as regards democracy and the protection of human rights. The fact that the Tunisian and Egyptian rulers adopt the slogan “Islam is the solution” is an important political and historical statement that should be noted. In this respect, it’s necessary to emphasise that the Islamists don’t form a monolithic block. They can be distinguished by their relationship to the democratic process. The parties affiliated with the Muslim Brothers play the democratic game, which wasn’t self-evident, while the Salafists are ambiguous and the Jihadists refuse it outright.

Jamal Zahri, Islamic Relief Belgium: The Algerian movement in 1990 represented a hope for change. We saw Europe's attitude and the resulting consequences. We can wonder whether the West is now really aware of the change in the Arab world and if it is viewing it as a full partner, or whether it's still trying to shape it.

Nassif Hitti: With the increase in the means of communication, each problem is exported to the other side. This is why Euro-Arab cooperation is not an ideological choice but a necessity for stability that has to be legitimate to last. We should never forget that dialogue is never forged between civilisations, but always between individuals, provided that simplistic conclusions are avoided. ■

Round Table 2

Muslim charities and Western humanitarian organisations: from dialogue to action

They exist together in emergencies, from the Sahel to Pakistan, and have learned, over the years, how to converse. How can we move ahead today, so that the Muslim charity organisations and Western humanitarian organisations better coordinate their efforts and their action in the field? What are their complementarities? How can they juggle their efforts in favour of the populations? How can they carry out joint actions on public opinion and decision-makers? ■

Moderator

Véronique de Geoffroy

Operations Director of Groupe Urgence-
Réhabilitation-Développement (URD)

Atta El-Manan Bakhit

Assistant to the General Secretary in charge of Humanitarian Affairs, Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC)

> **The theme** for this symposium is very important for the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation and I'd first like to comment on the title of this round table: the comparison of Islamic organisations, identified by religion, and Western organisations, identified by geography or culture, doesn't seem right. I think that there isn't, in principle, an Islamic organisation. In the Muslim world, there are organisations which, without calling them "Islamic", uphold the principles and directives of Islam. In my opinion, it's better to speak of relations between the organisations in the Muslim world and the organisations in the Western world.

These relations began in the 19th century and have been marked by three major moments. Humanitarian organisations have been present ever since in Egypt and Syria. They were then called "popular" which, in the context of the colonisation of most of the Muslim world, defines it by what belongs to the people and opposes it to colonial government. This idea has persisted, today resulting in a quasi separation between what is within the sphere of the States and what is within the sphere of civil society within humanitarian organisations. We can note that this has negatively marked the evolution of humanitarianism in the Muslim world. The OIC is now trying to solve this problem.

The organisations during this first period defined themselves by the defence of the values of Islamic culture. They thereby invested a great deal in education, hoping for change within the society. This led to a very close relationship between Islamic humanitarian action and the Muslim religion. This idea persisted after independence and until today. During this period, humanitarian action in the Muslim world developed little, while it evolved greatly in the West, through ideas but also considerably more means and better-organised structures.

During the 1980's and 90's, a second generation of humanitarian action arose in the Muslim world, marked by the birth of new organisations: in Sudan and Kuwait, in particular in the 1970's and the 80's, in a great many of the Gulf states as well as within Muslim communities

in the West. Islamic Relief was founded at that time. A relationship in the field developed during this second period of relations between the organisations of the Muslim world and those of the Western world. The drought in the Sahel or the famine in the Horn of Africa provoked a major awareness in the Muslim world as to the need for humanitarian action, for personal more than religious reasons. The Western NGOs in the field were confronted with these new organisations. They weren't very aware of the evolution of humanitarian action in the West but had the advantage of major financial means and considerable knowledge as to the cultural context. The meeting between these two types of organisations was marked by rivalry, persisting until the attacks of September 11. This negatively influenced the evolution of humanitarian action in the Muslim world.

A third generation of humanitarian actions appeared in the 2000's. The Islamic communities of the countries in the West created organisations integrating Western experience and terminology and adopted international standards. At the same time, international Islamic organisations began to invest in the humanitarian domain. OIC, created in 1969, began in 2008 and tried to protect and develop humanitarian organisations in member countries. In 2011, it granted humanitarian associations observer status. In 2012, it created an office of NGOs grouping different organisations. It also aims at bringing together member countries and the civil society, and reinforcing the links between the Islamic humanitarian organisations and the international community. Excellent relations were developed between the humanitarian department of OIC and the humanitarian agencies of the United Nations. It thereby became possible to work together on the major challenges over the coming years.

The current increase in humanitarian disasters throughout the world provides challenges requiring much closer cooperation between organisations in the Muslim world and Western organisations. It's possible and above all necessary to work together in order to face these increasing humanitarian problems.



Kathrin Schick

Executive director of Voluntary Organisations in Cooperation in Emergencies (VOICE)

> **I belong** to a European network that isn't operational on its own but brings together 84 humanitarian NGOs, including Secours Islamique France and Islamic Relief. I'd like to raise a certain number of questions, on the basis of this experience, in order to fuel the debate.

Needs will certainly continue to increase and we have to work to reduce the risk of disasters. For this, we have to overcome our differences and concentrate on what unites us, independent of the location or origin of the organisations. The added value of NGOs is capital: they account for between 50 and 80% of the humanitarian aid in the world. Most of the NGOs in the countries of the South existed before the international NGOs and are responsible for the major part of this aid. The main challenges confronting us are related to a lack of communication and visibility as regards the quality of the work carried out by these NGOs, whether Western organisations or based in the countries of the South.

We can wonder whether it's exact to speak of Western organisations and Muslim organisations. Shouldn't we rather speak about big NGOs and small NGOs? Most of the big NGOs don't sufficiently appreciate the work of the small NGOs. During humanitarian crises, they are often insufficiently taken into account in the coordinating meetings and are considered more of a problem than part of the solution. This doesn't only apply to the NGOs in the countries of the South. This is also the case, for example, of NGOs based in countries that have recently joined the European Union. This question merits thought, in particular in the current context of a reduction in funding. We tend to focus too exclusively on the large NGOs, wherever they may be based, with the idea that they can count on reliable revenues. For this reason, the small NGOs are marginalised.

Another important question is that of complementarity. Becoming a big Western NGO is often presented as the only goal, pretty much a requirement to have an influence on the international scene. I think, on the contrary, that we have to put the accent on our differences

and complementarities for a better division of work. I also insist on the question of humanitarian principles, the heart of our action, the basic tools for quality work, that is, for better support of the populations affected by the crises. The main question is still to define the needs of the populations.

We have to reinforce our ability to develop fair partnerships, based on understanding and cooperation, bringing us together around shared values. This point requires effort, since we're still far from such partnerships negotiated by equal members. Such a process requires time, exactly what the pressing needs are currently depriving us of. This should lead to compromise in order to better work together.

I'd also like to discuss the question of responsibility and accountability, as well as standards. We consider responsibility towards donors and beneficiaries as central. We've done a great deal to establish transparency in accounts between donors and the populations affected. Tools are available to provide better quality and improved accountability, although this is a great challenge. Responsibility within humanitarian action is, above all, based on a state of mind. The essential aspect consists of being able to work more transparently, with a better assessment of the monitoring of our work and improved organisational development. The procedures, in particular the reporting and the presentation of accounts should be simplified, using standards that are clear to one and all. I insist on this point since we're working on it at the European NGO level, in particular by targeting the joint presentation of accounts and reporting.

The question of labels and accreditation is currently being debated. They may create a threat for the diversity of NGOs, although we need agencies that will guarantee professionalism. The diversity of organisations specialised in different domains should be developed, since this helps respond to the complexity of the needs in the field. It's also of prime importance to be able to resort to measures that are more incentive than punitive, to encourage actors to develop and enter these systems of quality. About standards, joint work has already been established. A very extensive consultation of the actors, better reflecting the general opinion is required.

The idea of compromise is crucial in these domains. However, it's essential to keep in mind that these processes should not favour a small number of NGOs, but, on the contrary, aim at maintaining diversity, one of the major assets of our organisations.

Ayyoub Aboulyaquin

Director of the Qatar Charity Office, Great Britain

➤ **My commitment** to the humanitarian domain is relatively recent. However, I represent an organisation that is fairly old, since it began its activity in the 1980's with the war in Afghanistan, and become really institutionalised as of 1992. Qatar Charity is also celebrating its 20th anniversary this year, just like Secours Islamique France.

I'll finish the presentation of my organisation by noting one of its basic characteristics: unflinching concern. This inspired it in the 1990's, in its work on behalf of development by, above all, emphasising partnership with other actors. This is why we now count over 50 offices throughout the world and work with over 150 local associations.

There are a number of reasons why partnership is an integral part of our values. First, there is a practical imperative. We can't have a great impact on development, that is, accomplish major projects, whether local, regional or even international, without extremely solid partnerships. In addition, we're extremely concerned about increasing the safety of our teams and the stability of our actions. This isn't possible without partnership with other organisations. This is all the more true as the new technologies have deeply changed the world as regards distances and remoteness, have transformed it, making it now resemble a small village. Finally, we especially make sure that our partners are as diversified as possible. We commit to partners of different cultures as well as partners of different sizes. We're convinced that this diversification of the actors we work with is a real added value for our organisation.

I find it important to distinguish three main elements for our activities. In fact, there are different types of partnership and need to be differentiated. It may involve total financing, partial financing or even

shared financing. In addition, the projects and the needs considered differ greatly. Therefore, our organisation may turn towards coordination in the field or even the exchange of experiences or joint initiatives. To conclude, I'll mention several examples of partnerships that we entered into since 2006: Beirut, Lebanon, Gaza with UNWRA but also with the Islamic Development Bank. In 2008, we also worked with the World Food Programme, in Sudan, and with UNHCR, in Aden, Yemen, and also, as always, with the HRC in Chechnya, Bosnia, Afghanistan and currently in Myanmar and Somalia, in view of the crises that these countries are unfortunately experiencing.

Javier Perez

Deputy head of the “Strategy, Coordination and Interinstitutional Relations” Unit of ECHO

» **As representative** of the European humanitarian agency, ECHO, I'll return to a number of the challenges that humanitarian action has to confront, from the point of view of the community of sponsors. Sponsors, as well as humanitarian organisations in the field, are confronted with the increasing complexity of international and internal conflicts, challenges related to urbanisation, climactic changes, the increase in poverty, as well as a great many international crises, in particular the current crisis that is affecting a number of European countries. In this context, the reinforcement of existing partnerships represents an extraordinary challenge. This assumes putting aside differences between Western and Muslim organisations, furthering dialogue and exchanges in order to work together in a more coordinated manner.

As far as we're concerned, we only implement humanitarian operations directly in the field on an exceptional basis (the only example now is provided by Echo Flight), although we foster privileged partnerships with about two hundred international NGOs, United National agencies as well as organisations from the Red Cross. We're involved in humanitarian aid through these organisations, to which we provide financing from the European Union. We maintain very close partnerships. »

A really central question already raised, is that of reporting and accountability. In fact, we often consider that we're a difficult partner and a complicated donor. However, it's necessary to keep in mind that we use public funds obtained from the taxpayer and, as a result, we have to guarantee that the money will be wisely spent, as effectively as possible. In this way, we're not the easiest of sponsors and, the question of partnership arises here. The situation is monitored in the field where we have over one hundred people present, with our partner organisations. This brings us back to the idea of a fair partnership. Although we provide the financial means, the operational organisations provide their experience and human resources to succeed in their projects in the field. We together discuss what they perceive in the field and their evaluation concerning their needs. This makes it a true partnership.

It's also increasingly important for us to develop partnerships not only with the humanitarian community but also with other sponsors, so that the new or infrequent sponsors take part in the creation of bonds, in particular, with those of the Arab countries. We've participated in a great many conferences and coordination meetings in this region. One of the measures that we've taken consists of translating the text of the European Consensus on Humanitarian Aid into Arabic, something I consider true progress. Our Internet site has also been translated into Arabic. This makes it possible to meet the population of these regions, something we also implement in the Gulf region, where we are in partnership with OIC. However, it's also important to encourage other countries, such as China or Russia, to participate in this effort. Our partnerships also concern organisations with religious affiliation, such as Islamic Relief, with whom we've collaborated a great deal in different countries, or even Catholic organisations. These partnerships provide an opportunity for very informative exchanges about the policies required. **I don't feel that there's a real difference between these religious organisations and other organisations. What's important, above all, are the humanitarian principles at the heart of our partnerships, whatever their origin.**

We really believe that the principles of humanitarian action – independence, neutrality, impartiality – are universal principles that, far from being exclusively or specifically Western principles, are the foundation of common principles and cohesion between organisations.

Hany El Banna

**Co-founder and former president of Islamic Relief Worldwide,
President of the Humanitarian Forum**

» **Our first partnership** was established with ECHO in 2002, after having been put off by the events of September 11, prolonging a relationship initiated in 1991 after the Bosnia crisis. When speaking about partnership, we realise that even the definition of the term raises problems. The approach to humanitarian action is, in fact, different in the West than in the Arab world. On the one side, the activity mainly consists of an emergency response, whereas it's closer to rehabilitation and development in the countries of the South.

Some of the new challenges that we have to meet are related to local culture and the question of knowing what to do on a local scale, the effect of globalisation. In fact, globalisation is little by little appearing in local cultures. One of the criteria for partnership between Muslim NGOs and Western NGOs should thereby be to monitor the evolution of the local actors. It's necessary to be able to understand the religion, history, culture and values of a community as well as the local resources. Setting up links, above all requires the same tools and a shared structure. An operational commitment doesn't only require financing but the mutual will to create a partnership and learn from each other.

In a context of "the war against terrorism", we have also confronted new challenges: those of financing. How to provide the funds to support other Islamic organisations? All charitable Muslim organisations have to be able to provide funds directly on the spot, wherever they may be. Now, governments, the international community and the banking industry often create an obstacle, since all transfers of money are considered as likely to come from extremist or fundamentalist movements. Speaking about professionalism has no meaning if certain organisations come up against rejection due to the history of their culture or if they are made to think that they can never carry out humanitarian activities according to certain principles.

Another very current question is the tendency to include humanitarian actions in a political and military context. There have been a great many discussions about this, with respect to the distribution »

of food aid to Benghazi, Libya, for example, and it turns out that the application of such a principle to humanitarian aid doesn't work. Military forces shouldn't take charge of these activities. This isn't the type of partnership we want to establish.

To provide a few examples, we created a partnership within a very big operation in 1991, in Iran, to deal with an earthquake, as well as in 1993 in Bosnia. In 1998, during the hurricane in Honduras, we acted in partnership with Christian movements. We were also active in China, in 2002, as well as in Burma and the Congo. As regards Haiti, we're investing about six billion dollars with Islamic Relief.

The key element in a partnership lies in trust and exchange, alone able to transform dialogue into action. **The question that I ask is: "How do you feel about the idea of an association bearing the name "Islamic" coming to you for funds, at the local or international level? We have to think about this.** In 2005, during the great conferences of the United Nations agencies, an organisation, in other respects very transparent and very open, reportedly adopted an embargo on Islamic humanitarian organisations.

We have to test our abilities as an organisation and as professionals, and remember that we adhere to all of the principles mentioned during this round table. However, we also have to have faith in the Islamic sector and keep in mind that, in the humanitarian movement, Christians play an important role because they're older, but that Muslims also have a role to play. Complementarity is essential today, whatever the age or history of an organisation, to better determine the dynamics of work in the field. I'm fully convinced that partnership is the keystone for success. However, it has to be built on real trust and respect of local values. Today, we live with globalisation but in a society with local cultures. ■

Discussion with participants

Véronique de Geoffroy: Can you present, as an example in the field, the partnership that was established in Somalia by the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation?

Atta El-Manan Bakhit: It's a very good example since, in 2011, Somalia was subjected to an unprecedented famine. Major financial aid was given, but no humanitarian organisation worked in the centre and the South of the country, controlled by Al-Shabab. We accepted the challenge of establishing ourselves in Mogadiscio and we set up over 300 camps in this zone, as well as a coalition of 28 organisations of which there are over 40 today. The OIC was the only one on the field from June to November 2011, recognised by a resolution passed by the UN Security Council. This shows that we can carry out actions that others can't. Unfortunately, this leadership wasn't recognised by a great many international entities. We hope that the international community will also try and work more effectively in the field.

Hany El Banna: With my organisation, the Humanitarian Forum, we had difficulty building bridges between Muslim and international NGOs and non-Muslim Western NGOs. This has been a problem over the last five years. However, we've been able to develop a partnership with the OIC last March in Libya, and we organised conferences about Syria and Yemen to develop the emerging actors in these regions. The youth, accounting for 50% of the population in Egypt, is a power that may help develop humanitarian organisations, still not very plentiful today. It's essential to unite the youth movements in Arab countries.

Finally, I don't want to forget to mention that there is competition for funds between NGOs and also among Muslim NGOs. Some NGOs have very close relations with donor agencies. This search is a part of the professionalism, but should be defined by moral values. The real owners and managers of our organisations are the beneficiaries, those on whom the money is spent.

Rachid Lahlou: When speaking about new partnerships or new sponsors, we above all refer to Middle-East organisations. On one hand, we speak of Muslim organisations that proselytise, finance contestable networks and, on the other hand, we name them the new sponsors. This isn't the way to build true partnerships as they can only be created around the universal values of humanitarian action. There's currently a race for funds from the Middle East, without sufficiently knowing the source we're dealing with and without a sufficiently transparent dialogue.

A participant: NGOs are always asking for more money but why don't they establish sustainable projects, producing sustainable funds and thereby avoid having to rely on donors?

Hany El Banna: Sustainability is part of a difficult equation, that of criteria. It depends on accounts, funds and the history of the organisation. In addition, in emergency aid, the funds have to be spent within twelve months, not always possible when the infrastructures of the country have been destroyed. Sustainability for Muslim organisations will be possible when they receive more respect, trust and space for evolution. The West isn't to blame for this, but the local organisations and governments that restrict their activities, and don't distribute enough money to local organisations even though the accounts are clear. Sustainability also requires stability, at the level of the country itself, before it's possible to ask organisations to develop more sustainable projects.

Atta El Manam Bakhit: Certain organisations establish lucrative activities to cover their operating costs. However, the monetary needs for emergency activities don't stop increasing.

Kathrin Schick: Competition is inevitable. In the business world, we would resort to a merger for better operation. However, for NGOs, it's necessary to be able to work better together while preserving diverse entities. Concerning sustainability, the more the State withdraws from its relationship with the populations, the more the NGOs have to take care of them. This involves an evolution in the role of the civil society.

Larbi Benchetouya, representative for Secours Islamique France:

What are the different Western and Muslim institutions doing to reinforce their capacities so that the populations won't need our aid one day?

Hany El Banna: I repeat, it's necessary to be more attentive to the local culture and educate our donors so that they understand that the reinforcement of our capacities is the best way to render the countries and the populations independent, by reinforcing the local civil societies. ■

Round Table 3

Strengthen local actors and develop networks to better respond to future humanitarian crises

Confronted with the proliferation of crises, the multiplication of humanitarian action requires a constant improvement in the efficacy of international NGOs as well as a more active contribution by the local actors. How can we support the action of associations in the countries of the South? What types of partnerships and synergies can we develop together? What forms of networks can we build for a revitalised and reinforced North-South humanitarian action? ■

Moderator

Joseph Dato

**Director of Humacoop, associate professor,
University of Grenoble**

Nathalie Péré-Marzano

Director General of the Research and Information Centre for Development (CRID)

➤ **The CRID** is not only a research centre, it's also a grouping bringing together about fifty international solidarity associations, including Secours Islamique France. It fosters thought about working with local actors and the decompartmentalisation between NGOs working in different domains: development, human rights, environmental issues, etc.

Confronted with the proliferation of crises, their scope requires much thought, whether it involves food, energy, climate or social issues. These crises aren't related to a simple increase in hazards but structural causes. Unbridled speculation for commodities, for example, is a crucial subject that we strongly emphasised during the G8 and G20 in France. In the same way, a natural disaster, of course, has very different consequences, depending on the structures of aid set up. This reflection is, for humanitarian actors, an essential dimension for the future.

The second aspect of this round table involves the strengthening of the local actors. The CRID considers these actors in terms of partners and emphasises the need to work, during crisis situations, with the actors of the civil society already organised on the site. We have to better identify these multiple potential actors and develop long-term relations of cooperation. These actors can help us better understand the causes of the damage provoked by the crises and, in this way, let us better adapt the aid during the emergency and post-crisis situation, in cooperation with them. The ideas of partnership and shared values are essential to better respond to future humanitarian crises.

The strengthening of partnerships and the development of networks with the local actors raises the question of the development of strategies and alliances to better intervene in these emergency fields. **The networks to develop involve the actors invested in the questions of international development and solidarity. These actors are in the field throughout the year. They carry out a certain number of actions and combats, enabling, depending on the extent of the actions that they are able to carry out locally, more effective interventions in crisis situations.** These actors are militant in favour of the

fundamental rights of populations, in particular freedom of expression and the right of association, conditions for an organised civil society, as well as the questions of water and sanitation, climatic changes, or even the right to housing. In crisis situations, these actors create relays and partnerships with which the humanitarian action has to learn to work with.

The strengthening of these partnerships therefore involves developing the commitment of the actors of humanitarian action as to these challenges, related to changes in our lifestyles and models of production and consumption. Today, in particular, we have to face the consequences of the unfair over-exploitation of our natural resources that does not benefit local populations and has been going on for over a century. We have to build on this basis and identify this set of local actors, partners.

There are places for exchanges that help strengthen these bonds. An especially interesting example is that of the World Social Forums that, since 2001, have formed a veritable self-organised and horizontal space for civil society, every two years, bringing together actors from the entire world. The next one will be held for the first time in Maghreb, in Tunis, in March 2013. This is a major challenge considering the events that have unfolded in this region over the last two years. This Social Forum will be an opportunity for meetings and exchanges between the actors in this region and the organisations of Western civil society to foster solidarity and other types of partnerships. This is an important meeting to strengthen the local actors and develop networks and is open to all organisations. It suggests both a global and local position. It's also an opportunity, for charity organisations from the Muslim world, to be better known and counter the a priori that they still suffer from.

It's crucial for us to work more together in order to develop complementarities and solutions for the coming crises concerning development, basic human rights and environmental problems.

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Abderrahmane Arrar

President of the Algerian Network for the Defence of Child Rights (NADA)

➤ **I here represent** the Algerian Muslim Scouts and am also president of a community network for the defence of child rights. I'm pleased to have the opportunity to present a very rich experience, which owes a great deal to the North/South partnership with Secours Islamique France.

Mohamed Bouras created our organisation in 1936. The Military Tribunal sentenced him to death in 1941. In 1939, it became the League of Algerian Muslim Scouts, grouping all of the Algerian Scout organisations. Between 1941 and 1945, the movement was firmly integrated in the population. It played a major role in the preparation of the events of May 8, 1945. The leaders of the organisation participated in the liberation of the country, triggering the Revolution of November 1st 1954, and the Algerian Muslim Scouts played a major role in the construction of the country in 1962. Since 1963, we've been affiliated with the World Organisation of the Scout Movement, in Geneva.

It's a non-profit, voluntary and independent organisation. Its mission lies in the participation in the community development of society, through solidarity, within the international principles of the scouts and Algerian values. As of the age of six, scouts are integrated into the educational programme as cub scouts and this continues until the age of 23, for the companions who enter the "project" phase. It's a large organisation grouping over 120,000 members and 15,000 volunteers.

A first mission component involves activities of solidarity and service for a vulnerable population: destitute families, disabled children, the ill, etc. A second component involves a series of cleaning activities and reforestation, solidarity actions during national and religious holidays, awareness raising actions, etc. The third component involves development activities, pertinent to humanitarian work and sustainable action with vulnerable and marginalised populations. Right now, we're working with a population infected with HIV, or children in the penal environment, along with local and national partners. Another aspect involves humanitarian work in emergency situations. We intervened in 2001 during the Bab El Oued flooding, in partnership with Secours Isla-

mique France, during the Boumerdes earthquake, where we mobilised over 7,000 volunteers, and the flooding in Ghardaia in 2009.

Our organisation has strong social roots in civil society, and deep credibility among the different layers of the population. Our presence in the field includes 15,000 volunteer scout leaders and we have built up considerable experience in the management and mobilisation of these volunteers, as well as the organisation of service and development projects. We've been recognised as a public utility organisation by presidential decree in 2003. Our perspectives are to reinforce our volunteer capacities both in the scout movement and in civil society, for humanitarian work. A crucial perspective is also the creation of local community networks. Since 2004, we've established the NADA network for the defence of child rights, working on specific issues such as violence, sexual abuse, as well as aid for child victims of the black decade, forming a different and hard to access public.

The improved care of victims requires partnership between the state authorities and the civil society, which has a different vision. **This work, developing a partnership, is essential for the evolution of mentalities, to get out of the idea of assistantship and the view of a civil society relegated to the role of an onlooker, unable to provide alternatives and answers.** We also have to create legal anchorage for the volunteers, providing social and medical cover during emergency actions. For this aspect, partnership with the North can provide experiences within the existing laws.

I'll conclude with the idea that, although it's essential to reinforce the partnership between the North and the South, with international NGOs, it's also very important to develop partnerships between the South and the South.

Jean Bosco Bazié

Deputy Managing Director of Eau Vive, Africa Office

> I first want to remind you that the SIF is a member of the Water Coalition, grouping about thirty NGOs active in the water and purification sector, under the leadership of Eau Vive, to which I belong. Moreover, »

Secours Islamique France has joined the African Dynamics sector of the Water Coalition with a certain number of projects that we've initiated in West and Central Africa to help communities better organise to influence public policies.

It's important to remember that the crises are the result of human action. They can be avoided, are reversible and aren't a fatality. A rapid historical review will help better understand the accumulation of crises in West Africa. Although all of the countries in the sub-Sahara obtained independence in the 60's, the euphoria quickly came up against the fact that the African elite was unable to take over the State, since this was not the subject of any debate in society. This is why the first crises arose as of the beginning of the 60's. At the beginning of the 70's, the first droughts developed followed by humanitarian interventions by international organisations. Then, in the 80's, with the structural adjustments, the sponsors of international funds made the States stop financing the peasantry, dismantling farming and provoking the serious food crises that we witnessed at the beginning of the 90's. Then came the so-called democratic era, with the arrival of the multi-party system, elections and all of the so-called institutions found in a constitutional state.

These crises continued until the great peak of the current crises, with Islamic factions taking control of the North of Mali, threatening to extend to the entire Sahara. It's true that certain sociological events, in particular multi-ethnicity contributed to this. However, multi-ethnicity isn't an obstacle in itself. The question remains as to how it can be used to create a nation-state, which can't be declared by an elite that is often disconnected from the people.

In the same way, I think that the crisis in North Mali is less due to the religious factors than a lack of institutions such as a national assembly, a constitutional council, a court of audit, or an economic and social council. This institutional deficiency is above all due to the fact that such institutions haven't been anchored in the socio-cultural realities of the countries concerned. The only remedy for this is **to have the political courage to revive independence, along with an idea of society around the State and the nation, without forgetting civil society that, aware of its political role, should provide a better qualitative contribution to this social project.** It's also important that the actors in the civil society in the North back up the increased power of this civil society in the South.

The local communities also form a second group of important actors in Africa. In fact, since democratisation has induced decentralisation, territories with elected organs have emerged in most of the countries. It's here that we have to create citizen awareness in the populations, so that they participate more fully in the exercise of power at the local level and so that this exercise prepares them for participation at the national level.

A partner of the North such as Eau Vive is able to support this type of initiative of village committees. For example, between 2004 and 2009, I travelled through the 9 countries that share the Niger basin, in order to identify the actors involved, that is, the organisations of consumers of natural resources, in order to identify the actors involved. In fact, the sharing of resources has become a topic of conflict in the zone. Fishermen, farmers, boatmen, as well as woodcutters who make charcoal have been identified to construct a mechanism of participation for all stages in the plan of action for the sustainable development of the basin. This provides a concrete example, since this mechanism was adopted by the States, through resolutions of the council of ministers of 9 countries.

We therefore see that it's possible to develop the mechanisms from the national to the regional level. Of course, the participation of these highly illiterate populations requires technical information made palatable, by image, or with explanations backed up on the radio in the local language. In this respect, it's necessary to note that the imams have been a great support in this process since, after Friday's prayers, they pass the microphone to the organisers to get the message out about peace and the sharing of resources between ranchers and farmers.

Martin Spitz

Responsible for the Department of International Solidarities and Emergencies at the Foundation of France

➤ **My point of view** is that of a private sponsor since the Foundation of France is an independent organisation that operates with project appeals, in the domains of solidarity and the promotion of philanthropy. »

It mainly intervenes in France but although it is active at the international level. This involves programmes of development related to the occupational integration of the young in three countries of the Maghreb (Algeria, Morocco, Tunisia), the promotion of family farming in West Africa, and post-emergency interventions, following disasters whose mediatisation has mobilised public generosity. In this way, over the last few years, we've intervened in Asia following the tsunami, in Haiti and even in Japan.

If we examine the action carried out in Haiti, we detect a well-known and recurrent problem in humanitarian action. Several months after the earthquake, the distribution of free medical care led to the closing of three private hospitals. The free distribution of water or imported food products also risks creating competition that pushes aside or destroys producers and local associations in charge of these services. This problem also concerns the local communities and the State, which, in the case of Haiti, has not greatly benefited from the international aid and help in the recovery of the country. Of course, this doesn't call into question the principle of the gratuity of aid in a humanitarian context, but how to better use the local structures that, in this way, we help strengthen, and the compensatory mechanisms established to support them.

It's often difficult to simply delegate services to local organisations, since they are far from always being trained to manage the sums and comply with the requirements of accountability. Thus, after having initially supported humanitarian NGOs, a second element of a solution in Haiti was to use the development NGOs that have been established for a long time in Haiti. They have the advantage of having a good understanding of the context, have already established partnerships with the State and the civil society, and are concerned with the problem of the sustainability of the effects of the actions. In fact, it's indispensable that emergency organisations, upon arrival, are able to reinforce dialogue, search for complementarity and share information. Nevertheless, the support of development NGOs did not provide an adequate solution in Haiti, since these NGOs were also weakened by the disaster.

A third part of the answer to this situation, after the financing of the humanitarian organisations, and that of development NGOs related to local organisations, was to transfer our expertise as sponsors to local

structures, by entrusting them with the development and circulation of calls for projects, the formation of independent assessment committees and the distribution of funds in several parts, due to the requirements of accountability. We've already used this system in Maghreb. Therefore, we developed four funds of local initiatives in Haiti on the basis of this model with different organisations specialised in specific domains, and backing from the international NGOs. **The goal consists of strengthening the local actors within the networks in which they are inserted, while guaranteeing controlled monitoring of the funds and independence, in the assessment of projects, with respect to these networks.**

This direct financing of local projects also helps reduce costs, compared with operations where everything is imported. We're convinced that this strengthening of the local actors, when possible, is the best way to intervene, providing more flexibility and adaptation to the evolution of needs. In line with a proposal from the Initiatives Group, grouping about ten French NGOs, we are keen on defending this type of operation with other sponsors, based on less compartmentalised, more global aid, falling within previously defined national policies.

It's also indispensable, and this is the second aspect of this round table, to reinforce the development of networks. In Haiti, we made an attempt, that unfortunately failed, to transpose a method that we established in Asia after the tsunami, by supporting a "centre of resources and information for NGOs" provided by the Inter-NGO liaison committee, to allow the local actors to benefit from information, shared between humanitarian organisations and at the level of different clusters, and create links between development NGOs and emergency NGOs, and to involve the local community. Moreover, in Haiti, we support a series of seminars and trainings in evaluation and capitalisation for local NGOs, in order to improve the methods and be able to share them better. In Maghreb, for the same purpose, we support concerted multi-actor programmes that aim at the cooperation of the public and private actors, since it's also important to avoid eliminating companies from these plans. Our goal is therefore to foster, as much as possible, the conditions required to increase exchanges and the sharing of expertise and projects. ■

Discussion with participants

Amine Trouvé Baghdouche, Director of International Operations for Secours Islamique France: I'll return to what Mr. Bosco Bazié said, in direct relation with operational questions: corruption, embezzlement, work that isn't carried out, breach of trust are existing realities. When an international operator, in an emergency sector, realises that funds aren't going where they should, we're not only confronted with a financial problem but also an ethical problem and a problem of relations with the partner. We've often been obliged to radically break with partners, or file a complaint for embezzlement, forcing us to become even more radical in order to be sure that money is properly used. This is related to the question of the strengthening of skills. How can we avoid corruption, embezzlement, etc.?

Second, I think it's important to differentiate between general and emergency humanitarian action. It's often said that it isn't possible to provide development in an emergency. However, we forget that a camp of refugees, for example, isn't development. Emergency action is something specific requiring organisational, financial and operational anticipation. Our president proposed creating an international school to train emergency humanitarian workers. Today, everything may possibly become an emergency on an international level, raising the question of knowing where development is found in these conditions.

Joseph Dato: As regards the question of emergency and development, the answer seems to lie in the means of response. Perhaps we have to speak more about long-term projects than of development and often, it's not easy to determine when this begins. There are emergency situations, like certain camps of refugees, that become chronic and, after ten years, we can no longer use the term "emergency" when referring to them. The control of corruption is a real problem since we're dealing with systematic "micro" corruption.

Abderrahmane Arrar: We have to understand the situation of partner organisations in the South and they, in turn, have to understand the work standards of international humanitarian organisations. A local organisation that isn't backed up and doesn't comply with minimum standards can't be a partner. This is why it's necessary to emphasise the strengthening of skills, which is what we try to do in Algeria. This is an important step in preparing the social fabric and then moving towards the stage of a partnership. This reinforcement always raises the question of relations with the authorities.

Jean Bosco Bazié: As long as there aren't strong, well structured States, we can't have a civil society or a solid private sector. These are aspects of the same thing. As regards the question of trust, things are changing. Today's youth has nothing to do with colonisation, whether they live in the West or in Africa. It needs to see how to manage our interdependence. What's important is progressiveness. This isn't something that is decreed or imposed, but something that is built, starting at the bottom, that is with education, citizen culture, so that everyone feels concerned by the social project.

Nathalie Péré-Marzano: If we talk about relays, you can't just have one single model structure. Every relay has its own justification for existing. It's a question of the identification of our complementarities. The question of partnerships and interdependence is really the central question of the CRID. When the humanitarian field is mobilised in an emergency, we're often frustrated by the aftermath. The humanitarian actors should work between the management of two crises to determine what made the intervention difficult and on the identification of the local relays, partners, by getting the support of development NGOs or existing networks, with actors who may avoid the major disadvantages of the poor use of funds, etc. As for corruption, the humanitarian associations should join this battle. Certain networks are working on these questions at the local and international levels.

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Jean Bosco Bazié: Interdependence isn't a specific need with an end. The object of the need may change but everyone has to reposition himself in order to be able to answer the new needs of the other.

Sandrine Chopin, Delegate from Handicap International: To prevent disasters and prepare interventions, it's certainly indispensable, before the crises, to work together, build together. This would allow us, at the time of the crisis, to be able to act together. ■

Round Table Conclusion



Moderator

Christian Troubé

Director of the communications agency
Rue Principale

Omero Marongiu-Perria

Sociologist, executive director of European Centre for Leadership & Entrepreneurship Education, France

➤ **Thank you one** and all. It's difficult to propose a summary of such a full day with such very productive and constructive contributions. Three sub-themes emerge: assessment and prospects, situation in the Arab world and collaboration between the actors, qualified as actors from the North and South, or Muslim and non-Muslim actors, with a number of ideas.

In the different interventions, in particular those of the introductory round table, we were at the crossroads of three dimensions: the geopolitical dimension, the social dimension, emphasised a great deal by the morning speakers, giving rise to a series of new themes, and finally a dimension that appeared implicitly or in a transverse manner in the different debates, the ethnic dimension. What meaning should we confer on the action, how can we cooperate with each other, etc. It's important to note that, during the day, we were able to overcome a certain number of clichés, about globalisation or global governance, Islamism and the uniformisation or uniform nature of the situation in the Arab countries, since we have seen that the situation differs greatly from one country to the next, and also clichés about the supposed inability of civil societies and the actors of the countries of the South to be self-sufficient, since many examples have demonstrated the contrary. There are a certain number of ideas that I'll sum up briefly.

First, what I find interesting is the shared and collaborative state of mind that moreover, sometimes pushed us to occult a certain number of concrete problems, by putting the accent on actions that we want to qualify as effective. Beyond this first comment, there are some hard realities today. The finding, raised by the Ambassador Bauchard, as well as Mr. Micheletti and Mr. Badie was rather disturbing. We see social problems emerge that develop and risk provoking a number of conflicts. Going from here, we have seen, in particular by the intervention of Ms. Schick, that there are two logics of intervention, those of States and those of humanitarian organisations. This day has shown that the rift between these two types of logic isn't as obvious as all

that, since there are three types of expectations that have, at times, difficulty converging: those of States, those of NGOs and those of the populations themselves, the beneficiaries. These three types of expectations provoke a certain number of tensions, and this interpenetration of the different logics greatly resembles the situation in France, in other fields of action, for example city policies, where the logic of intervention in the priority neighbourhoods are developed between the sponsors, or the State, and the great structures intervene in the sector. The multitude of small actors, implicitly present in the field, tends to be pushed out. As noted by Mr. El Banna several times, Muslim humanitarian aid exists independently of the will of the sponsors or States, and, beyond Muslim humanitarian aid, most of the organisations present in the field aren't waiting for the mobilisation of the sponsors before acting according to what the emergency requires.

Mr. El Banna used the term glocalisation, which hasn't been translated as such into French. In sociology, we speak more and more about the glocal, that is, the interpenetration between international problems, that refer to globalisation, to the global and the way it's concretely translated in the lives of individuals on the local level. The neologism "glocalisation" was coined to demonstrate this interpenetration between the global issues and the reality of the actors on the local level. Now, glocalisation is a concrete reality that concerns all populations. The observation made by Mr. Badie is extremely important since it demonstrates the logic of intervention that should drive us both here and there. In all this, we can qualify Secours Islamique France as a UFO structure, if you excuse the expression. This is to say that Secours Islamique, like a certain number of other NGOs is confusing the issue. You have a name that refers to the category of a religious humanitarian organisation. However, today, your logic of action, in any case in the image that you are conveying and in your mode of action in the field, you're completely secularised. You put yourself in a field that is no longer specifically religious and, in this respect, you question an entire set of ways of perceiving sponsors and States.

I find that there was a gap in the thinking of the different actors. On one hand, we have the intra-French logic specific to Secours Islamique France and its relationship with the sponsors, with other NGOs and the State and, on the other hand, that of an organisation located in other

geographic zones, perhaps that hasn't evolved in the same way you have, in particular in their relationship to their environment. Therefore, I wonder whether you are a specific case in the field of NGOs derived from religious matrixes or the pre-figuration of an evolution towards greater secularisation of humanitarian action, towards a change in the way the sponsors or States change their outlook? The question has been raised since we mentioned the Arab Springs, and that we saw that there was the superposition of two very interesting things. We now say that the analysts were not able to foresee the revolutions in the Arab world. This is false. Ambassador Bauchard clearly demonstrated that there were reports. The French ambassadors themselves were able to alert the French administration about the transformations occurring and the explosive situations. A set of data was available. However, at the same time, there was a sort of blindness, a skewed way of seeing things. Today, we can't predict the future but we are the actors that have to create the future, actors in which I include myself as donor, among others, to Secours Islamique, and therefore as an indirect participant in this transformation.

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I'll conclude by mentioning the fact that, beyond the richness of this day, I had the feeling of *déjà-vu*, not because the discussions were trivial or had been dealt with in the same way in the realm of humanitarian action, but because the type of questions raised are very similar those raised by other actors in different areas. Concerning the situations in the Arab world, almost twenty years ago, symposiums were held in which specialists debated the situation of the countries in the Arab world with specialists from Latin America. The latter provided a certain number of points to analyse as to what would happen in the Arab world, since they had already experienced and analysed dictatorial and post-dictatorial periods. Concerning the relationship between the different types of actors, beyond their religious identity, we clearly saw today that the basic problem isn't really religious identity. Other approaches are much more important, as emphasised by Ms. Schick. Now, this is also true of what is happening in other sectors of intervention that are not directly related to humanitarian aid, but more to the economic and social levels. It's advisable, in this type of symposium, to create openings for other types of problems, showing that we are really at the heart of the global, both in terms of level and type of intervention in the field.

Serge Mostura

Director of the Crisis Centre for the Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs

As director of the Crisis Centre for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, I want to state that, for the State that I represent here, Secours Islamique France is an important NGO due to its diversified intervention capacities. In fact, Secours Islamique France first of all intervenes in France, in the suburbs, both on behalf of the French and foreigners, in particular the Romani. However, it also acts in the international arena in about thirty countries and, it should be noted, not only in the Arab-Muslim world but, for example in Haiti. It will also set up a support structure with our consulate in Jeddah to help the French who, every year, make the pilgrimage to Mecca. This is a very important measure, both intelligent and useful, especially since we have just added a dimension to the action of our general consulate in Jeddah: that of representative with the Organisation of the Islamic Conference. Therefore, all this confirms that Secours Islamique France is basically, in the eyes of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, a NGO of universal vocation, according to the true meaning of the word.

I now want to make several comments about the word “partnership” as this was mentioned a number of times during the afternoon. It’s necessary to immediately note that a partnership is especially necessary between partners who, by nature, are not equal. This is the guiding principle of Jean-Jacques Rousseau’s Social Contract, according to which the relations between different entities, the strong and the weak, can’t lastingly rely only on trust. It’s therefore necessary to agree about a certain number of things found in a contract, an idea that we can mention in less economical terms with the concept of “partnership”.

Concerning NGOs, the terms of the partnership are, for the State, contained in a document called the French Humanitarian Strategy. This consists of four distinct aspects. The first aspect refers to the realm of values that, in the case of humanitarian action, can be united around the idea of solidarity. Then comes the legal aspect. This is a continuum that goes from international humanitarian law to contracts

of a commercial nature. We can then discern a more general aspect, that of development. Moreover, we have to dispel the idea that humanitarian action may be durable, since on the contrary, it's meant to end, to disappear. In fact, humanitarian action should serve development and not render it fragile. However, NGOs should have a durable nature since, in the face of a natural disaster such as an earthquake, it's necessary to be able to lean on NGOs that have a real capacity to act in emergency situations. Finally, the respect of cultural differences is the last basic aspect of the French humanitarian strategy. Actually, as opposed to what is observed in certain countries such as the United Kingdom, the humanitarian movement in France does not have its roots in religion, even though there are NGOs of religious inspiration such as Secours Islamique France, moreover providing an important cultural dimension and an intelligent approach to the reality of the France of today.

I'd like to conclude by considering how Secours Islamique is a good example of what we have to lean on as regards the Arab-Muslim world. First of all, in no way can you consider Secours Islamique France as an operator better able to operate than other NGOs in an Arab-Muslim environment because a great many NGOs are perfectly able to do so. However, it's possible to expect that SIF conveys values and methods. Now, as already mentioned and emphasised by different speakers, there are already changes, not only from the humanitarian but the diplomatic point of view. For example, the Organisation of the Islamic Conference has, for a certain number of years, carried out a major action in the humanitarian field, is now beginning to work with the United Nations and has come to carry out two missions, one in Syria and the other, more recently, in Mali. Here we clearly see that humanitarian mobilisation goes way beyond simple charity and is incontestably raised to a higher level. In addition, the structures are also starting to be reformed. This is clearly seen in the case of Egypt since the State humanitarian structure in reality has a hybrid aspect. It is both a State structure and a private association. Now, with the emergence of democratic mechanisms in a certain number of countries, including Egypt, the most secular and least familial structures are being established and it's really important to accompany these changes.

Mahieddine Khelladi

Executive Director of Secours Islamique France

➤ **The first thing** I want to do is, of course, heartily thank all of the speakers, some of whom came from quite a distance, for the way they've been able to fuel the debates, with intelligence and passion. Thanks also, of course, to all of the participants for having been here to listen, question, participate and, finally, join us in celebrating the 20th anniversary of Secours Islamique France.

Thanks again to Ms. Bariza Khiari, vice-president of the Senate for having sponsored this day, as well as all of the institutional partners who have been with us for this symposium. Finally, I want to praise the workers of the ISIT interpreters, Christian Troubé, Rue Principale, Omero Marongiu, director of ECLEE and thank our partners, the Crisis Centre, CRID, Grotius International and Alternatives Internationales.

Finally, thanks to all of the Secours Islamique employees who made a major effort in organising this symposium.

In 20 years, Secours Islamique France has grown and evolved, at a rate that has, I think, even accelerated over the last few years. We thought of this day as an opportunity to take a break, stand back and examine the issues waiting for us, confronting all humanitarian actors, and together identify the ways to respond to these evolutions and adapt to them.

I think that most of the humanitarian actors are currently questioning the no border model, related to increasing politicisation, the instrumentalisation of humanitarian action by political and military actors and the emergence of new actors and sponsors with different visions and modes of operation. It's a little difficult for me to speak about the no border movement, especially since Secours Islamique is not an emanation of this movement. However, since we are part of this French humanitarian family, I hope that the representatives of this movement present today will excuse me for it.

The current debates have shown, once again, the need to make every possible effort to communicate with all actors that intervene in humanitarian crises and also the extent to which it's important to learn how to work together. As an organisation assuming the mission

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of providing aid, we have the duty to really reorient our way of acting if we want to continue being effective and have access to those who we hope to help.

Will the universalistic model of humanitarian aid be called into question? There is a real risk, as shown by the questions raised during the third round table and that still have not received answers. However, it's up to us to make sure that this doesn't happen, fight ignorance, build bridges from both sides with the same materials, inform about our values, explain and respect them, as well as understand the values and culture of the NGOs of the South.

During its existence, Secours Islamique France has thought a great deal about its identity, since it was sometimes questioned, or was a source of mistrust or false ideas. We've always tried to preserve and valorise our specificity, because it's an advantage. The five-year strategic plan that we've developed grants a great deal of importance to these questions, in particular through the establishment of an ethics committee, among other things, to create the link between thought and action. Our organisation, while having developed its expertise and experience on the international NGO model, has closer proximity with the cultures of the countries of the South.

To try and play such a role requires much effort and the constant search for a good balance between the need to take our differences into account without cutting ourselves off from others. We have to go even further in considering the type of bonds that we can create with our partners in our different countries of action.

We have to go even further in the way that we invest ourselves in the different areas of group consultation or coordination, in order to be better heard, and be better able to enrich and possibly influence the orientations that may be taken.

The example given by the Humanitarian Forum, founded by Hany El Banna, or even by the coordination efforts of Muslim NGOs by the Department of Humanitarian Affairs of the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation, with initiatives at dialogue and joint work on the crises in Somalia, Yemen or in Syria, provides interesting ideas about the way Secours Islamique France can work to create bonds between humanitarian organisations in the North and the actors from other parts of the globe, by trying to answer all questions.

Pierre Micheletti proposes that we consider a new model in operational terms – without wanting to recreate humanitarian action, since we are part of a continuum, which is, like any process, necessarily evolving – that, according to what I believe, needs a triptych:

- Respect our humanitarian principles and the local cultures and values of the populations in the countries of intervention. I believe that there isn't a contradiction between the humanitarian principles and the local values defended in the South.
- Cooperate with the other international NGOs, even if, sometimes, we're competing, as mentioned a while ago, or with local NGOs, by reinforcing our capacities through operational partnership, and not with pre-established recipes, by responding to a real need rather than by thinking for them.
- Innovate, since the world is moving, and as said in the first round table, we can't continue to see the world only with the cardinal points. A cyberworld also exists. We've seen its impact and influence in the Arab Spring or Revival.

The real danger comes from the international social contrasts exacerbated by globalisation, with paralysis of the multilateralism by a club oligarchy (G8/G20), to borrow the terms of the plenary session this morning.

The wealth of information that we've gleaned from this day of reflection will, I hope, help us better understand how we have to evolve over the coming years, because SIF still has to progress in order to make the best of its advantages.

I'll conclude with the phrase found on our posters, once a year, in the Paris metro, to leave our anonymity, overcome our inhibitions and move forward. I hope that the Symposium contributed to this idea: Together, let's build a better world because suffering has no origin, religion, gender, nor does solidarity.

Thank you for your presence and your participation. I hope to see you soon for another symposium in the next stages of Secours Islamique! ■



▼ Bariza Khiari, Vice-President of the Senate, and Rachid Lahlou, President-Founder of Secours Islamique France.

▼ Hany El Banna, Co-Founder of Islamic Relief Worldwide and President of the Humanitarian Forum.



PORTFOLIO





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We based our mission of the values of solidarity and respect of human dignity, essential in Islam, with as principle, providing aid with the respect of cultural diversity and without distinction as to origin, political affiliation, gender or belief.

RACHID LAHLOU

▲ *Round table 3*
From left to right: Martin Spitz, Nathalie Péré-Marzano, Joseph Dato.

▼ *Round table 2*
From left to right: Hany el Banna, Kathrin Schick, Javier Perez.



TOP, LEFT PAGE

Opening plenary session
From left to right: Régis Koetschet,
Bertrand Badie, Yann Mens,
Pierre Micheletti.



◀ Part of the organising team
of Secours Islamique France:
Judith Chaize, Rachid Lahlou,
Nadia Fankrache, Nadia Sahli.

IN THE CIRCLES

Jean Bosco Bazié,
Sandrine Chopin – Handicap International,
Jamal Zahri – Islamic Relief Belgium.





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Our organisation, while having developed its expertise and know-how on the model of international ONGs, is in closer proximity with the cultures of the countries of the South.

MAHIEDDINE KHELLADI

IN THE CIRCLES

Rachid Lahlou,
Amine Trouvé Baghdouche,
director of International
Operations for SIF.



◀ *Concluding round table.*
From left to right: Mahieddine Khelladi, Christian Troubé, Serge Mostura.
▼ *Round table 1*
From left to right: Nassif Hitti, Denis Bauchard, Jean-Jacques Louarn, Beligh Nabli.



