

# Global Partnership Roundup!

Shelly Wilsey, ILA Director, Jeffrey Beeson, ILA Vice President, and Odir Pereira, ILA Board Member

Board  
CORNER



Now with 2100 members, the ILA recently exceeded our goal of 2010 members by June 30, the end of fiscal year 2010. As the association grows from hundreds to thousands of members, it is important for ILA to continue building pathways for member interaction in addition to the annual ILA Global Conference. One approach is to collaborate with other esteemed organizations to co-host regionally targeted events, seminars, and conferences. The three of us would like to report back on our experiences at the three events recently co-hosted by the ILA in Slovenia, Brazil, and China.

Each event focused on topics of great regional significance and involved participants from relatively local geographic areas. They provided opportunities for the ILA to build new partnerships and deepen existing relationships with key leadership practitioners, educators, scholars, and consultants in three areas of the world that share a growing interest in leadership theory and practice. Perhaps most importantly, at these events current ILA members, board members, and staff introduced the ILA to over two hundred people new to the association.

**Jeffrey Beeson:** The European Leadership Centre (ELC) at the IEDC-Bled School of Management in

Slovenia was the convener of the conference held May 27-28 at their beautiful conference facility. The focus was: ***Can European Leaders See Around the Corner and Find Creative Solutions?*** The ILA was one of the conference partners, along with the University of Exeter in the UK and IDM (Institute for the Danube Region) from Vienna. The conference attracted leaders from business, the public sector, and the media from many countries in Europe including the UK, France, Germany, Belgium, Russia, Turkey, Croatia, Serbia, and, of course, Slovenia.

Led by Professor Danica Purg, the European Leadership Centre was established under the auspices of the IEDC in September 2002. It is a forum for dialogue between business, policy makers, unions, and the media on issues related to European leadership. Located in the Alps, just south of the Austrian border on a lake with a 16th century castle upon the highest promontory, Bled offers an ideal place to reflect and discuss topics of leadership.

The ELC believes in the importance of good leadership in achieving heightened European competitiveness and more progressive and socially responsible European development. The key themes of the conference were innovation and collaboration.



Danica Purg

Excellent contributions were made by Professor Richard Lamming, Dean of the University of Exeter; Wilfried Grommen, the Regional Technology Officer for Microsoft in Europe; and Ambassador Irene Freudenschuss-Reichl of the Ministry of European and International Affairs in Austria, among others.

I contributed to the proceedings by holding a presentation on the importance of collaboration and citizen engagement in Europe based on my experience in the Basque country, where more than five thousand citizens gathered on one day to provide policy input on how to handle the financial crisis.

**The second conference took place a week later and 7660 kilometers (~4760 miles) away.**

**Shelly Wilsey:** Emeritus Professor Philip Hwang of the University of San Diego Business School partnered with the ILA and the Peter F. Drucker Academy of China to co-host an annual global leadership event called GLC 7. Attended by nearly one hundred participants, this was the fourth conference organized by Professor Hwang in China and the first in Beijing. The theme, ***Effective Leadership in Turbulent Times***, was explored through a two-day series of plenary presentations followed by a day of workshop options. Simultaneous translation enabled people to present and listen in their preferred language.

The conference opened with brief presentations by the host organizations. I enjoyed the opportunity to introduce the organization and board member Brad Jackson and



Shelly Wilsey addresses GLC 7 conference

ILA president Cynthia Cherrey to the attendees, several of whom subsequently joined the ILA. The introduction opened the door to several interesting conversations about leadership in China and the possibility of future ILA activities in the region.

Eight plenary speakers shared research, perspectives, theories, and experiences. The first focused on *Managing the Dynamics of Change*. Jerry Jellison, Professor of Social Psychology at the University of California, shared his model for leading change, the research behind it, common roadblocks, and specific guidelines for successfully leading change. The next speaker, Jay J. Cheng, Asia Regional Managing Director for KP, spoke on *Leadership in a Culturally Different Business Environment* from the perspective of business leaders working in Asia and the Middle East. Switching gears a bit, Jenny Darroch, Professor, Druker School of Management at the University of Claremont, talked about her new book, *Marketing Through Turbulent Times*, and the current challenges and opportunities of leading marketing efforts. The first day ended with roundtable discussions, which encouraged people to make new connections with one another.

Futurist Graeme Codrington opened the second day with a Drucker

quote: “The greatest danger in times of turbulence is not the turbulence, it is to act with yesterday’s logic.” His presentation focused on the enormous changes in the areas

of technology, institutions, demographics and the environment—and how to leverage these forces to lead more effectively. Next, Xiaozhi Liu, CEO of NeoTek China, shared her perspective that the “hardest part is not getting there, it’s staying there.” As a leader in the automotive industry, she has focused on articulating a clear vision, creating roadmaps for success, streamlining structures, measurable incentives, action plans, and daily execution.

After lunch, ILA president Cynthia Cherrey began by sharing poignant stories from her Katrina experiences, speaking on *Leadership in an Interdependent World: Lessons Learned*

*from Hurricane Katrina*. Long time ILA member and director of the East-West Center’s Asia Pacific Leadership Program, Nick Barker closed the day with *A Reflection on Adversity*, and the power and significance of individual action. On Saturday, the group split into several smaller workshop sessions and everyone reconvened for lunch before leaving the hotel to see the sights of Beijing.

**Two days later and 17,599 kilometers (~11,000 miles) away...**

Odir Pereira: the Grupo Bridge of Brazil in partnership with ILA, the Drucker Society Global Network, Leadership Institute of Brazil-ILB, and Institute Sagres sponsored a thought-provoking Forum on the theme of **Leadership & Sustainability: Seeking Transformational Solutions**. Close to one hundred participants attended the event, including executives, professionals, and scholars representing various segments of the private and government sectors. The forum objectives were to: foster discussion around the trends and challenges that the theme poses from a regionally related perspective; bring together people highly interested in the subject of leadership and how it can effectively impact sustainability solutions in

the region; and stimulate participants’ debate and engagement on sustainability issues in ways that social good and leadership approaches can be enhanced in Brazil.



Philip Hwang, Shelly Wilsey, Brad Jackson, and Cynthia Cherrey (L-R)

Speaking at the opening, I clarified key concepts and connections between leadership and sustainability, emphasizing the fundamental role that leadership plays in balancing the complex and threatening issues involved in the socio-economic-environmental dimensions of sustainability programs. Back in his 2003 book, *Transforming Leadership*,



Break out session in São Paulo

James MacGregor Burns described the core of the problem as a “missing link, an absent X-factor and catalyst: leadership.” In Brazil, this missing factor can only be fulfilled by a transformational kind of leadership committed to universally accepted values that transcend national, cultural, ideological, and religious barriers.

Focusing on “The Closing of the Responsibility Gap – A Call for Action,” Lawrence Greenspun spoke on Peter Drucker’s concern that as a society we are not being good managers of our resources, our institutions, our people, and our values. As a result, much of society today is unhealthy and a great chasm has opened between our obligation to be effective and ethical managers and our actions.

This distance is what Drucker terms “The Responsibility Gap.”

Greenspun also emphasized the need to build a better society

by stimulating leadership knowledge and promoting the common good, calling attention to the abundance of leadership potential at the bottom of the social scale.



Jair Militao, Odir Pereira, and Lawrence Greenspun

requirements. Education is necessary whenever change occurs. It is therefore always in high demand in transformational processes. He further emphasized that education should also account for the ‘transcendence’ dimension — in ways that the “individual will see the environment as a source of life and other individuals in society should not be seen as an adversary but as an ally”.

Focusing on the private enterprise role, Celso Braga talked about his vision of “the company as a place of health” where the thought of “sustainability stirs up human actions and activities that are: ecologically correct, socially just, environmentally feasible, and culturally acceptable.” These

actions should in turn result in individual recognition, growth, and adequate remuneration. An additional effect is teamwork that enhances the organization’s sustainability effort. The overall

achievement of these benefits should be the end result of an effective organizational leadership. For this purpose, Braga suggested that traditional hierarchical structures need to be overcome, including

intellectual, cultural, behavioral, and social aspects.

Special group sessions were held in which participants were requested to identify and discuss, from a Brazilian perspective, three major leadership and sustainability challenges, and propose solutions. Each group worked with a specific focus on the social sector, education, or private sector. At the closing of the Forum each group had the opportunity to make a summary presentation of their conclusions and proposals in the three discussion areas. Theme speakers then commented on the contributions presented and next steps were outlined for follow up action.

In line with the objectives set for the Forum, participants confirmed their interest to support follow up actions. Arrangements are now being coordinated by the Bridge Group, who produced and distributed a consolidated report to the participants.

**Shelly Wilsey:** As you can see by the richness of the topics, the expertise of the speakers, and the passion of the participants described above, ILA’s initial forays into conference partnering have been a resounding success. Further, each conference provided ILA members in each region the opportunity to attend an ILA event close to home, while at the same time introducing the ILA to potential new members in the area. As we look to next year, we are hoping to once again expand our portfolio of offerings in this area. If you know of an event that we could potentially partner with, please contact me at [swilsey@ila-net.org](mailto:swilsey@ila-net.org) or 1.301.405.8584.