

2008

WORLDCONNECTORS THE ROUND TABLE FOR PEOPLE AND THE PLANET

# Promoting global solutions

An overview of 2008



Sustainable development & climate change



Connection of civilisations



New scarcities



The EU as a global player

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## Sylvia Borren

### Being a Worldconnector is a lifestyle

The Worldconnectors are an inspiring group of diverse people. We do not only analyse, discuss and advise, but we are also emotionally involved in trying to shape a sustainable future.

Every Worldconnector has his or her own responsibilities and networks, and 'connects' different spheres of influence. We are in touch with universities, policy makers, media, the corporate sector, faith-based organisations, civil society, social

movements – in most countries in the world. The voices we hear elsewhere, enter our debates. For me, these are the voices of women unable to feed their children, of teachers with more than 100 pupils and of the 116.9 million people of the Global Call to Action against Poverty last October who work to change that.

The global crisis is urgent. There is a lack of food, energy, water, financial- and environmental stability, gender-justice, peace... What is our responsibility in the crises, in the Netherlands, in Europe? How do our choices impact on others elsewhere, on future generations? Our mission as Worldconnectors commits us to try to involve others to create just, sustainable and democratic communities. And how do we ourselves 'live' our convictions? This debate is on-going: about eating less meat, using public transport, being gender-just and respecting diverse cultures, beliefs and choices. We demand transparency and coherence of the Dutch government and of ourselves. In this sense being a Worldconnector is a lifestyle.

**Sylvia Borren** Co-chair Worldconnectors

### Worldconnector zijn is een levensstijl

De Worldconnectors is een inspirerende en diverse groep mensen. We analyseren, discussiëren en adviseren niet alleen, maar zijn ook emotioneel betrokken bij het vormen van een meer duurzame toekomst.

Iedere Worldconnector heeft zijn of haar eigen verantwoordelijkheden en netwerken, en 'verbindt' verschillende invloedsferen. We staan in contact met universiteiten, beleidsmakers, media, het zakenleven, geloofsorganisaties, civil society, sociale bewegingen – in de meeste landen ter wereld. Die stemmen die we elders horen maken deel uit van ons debat. Voor mij zijn dat de stemmen van vrouwen die hun kinderen niet kunnen voeden, van leerkrachten met meer dan 100 kinderen in de klas en van de 116.9 miljoen mensen van de Global Call to Action against Poverty afgelopen oktober die zich inzetten om dat te veranderen.

De mondiale crisis is dringend. Er is een gebrek aan voedsel, energie, water, economische en ecologische stabiliteit, gelijke rechten, vrede... Wat is onze verantwoordelijkheid in de crises, in Nederland, in Europa? Hoe beïnvloeden onze keuzes anderen elders, of toekomstige generaties? Onze missie als Worldconnector committeert ons om anderen te betrekken in het bouwen van rechtvaardige, duurzame en democratische gemeenschappen.

En hoe 'leven' we zelf naar onze overtuigingen? Het debat gaat door: over het eten van minder vlees, gebruik van openbaar vervoer, gender-just zijn en diverse culturen, geloven en keuzes respecteren. Wij eisen transparantie en coherentie van de Nederlandse overheid, en van onszelf. In die zin is Worldconnector zijn een levensstijl.

**Sylvia Borren** Co-voorzitter Worldconnectors

## How it started

The initiative for the Worldconnectors the Round Table for People and the Planet was taken by Ruud Lubbers, SID NL, NCDO and DPRN. They opinionated that a more positive and active role of the Netherlands in international cooperation and global sustainable development was needed.

The starting point was the insight that in this era of globalisation, inclusive development and solutions to global problems can only be brought about in the spirit of 'complementary governance' between key actors in society and across borders. Therefore they brought together women and men in influential positions, from different sectors of society, including youth.

On October 24, 2006, the Round Table was officially launched. Members of the Round Table are Worldconnectors. They are committed to connect knowledge and views in order to advance global thinking, to critically analyse current trends and propose alternative views, strategies and inclusive solutions. The Round Table was not set up to become a new institution in itself, but to create a dynamic network with an added value to the many organisations and initiatives that already exist.

### Global issues

The themes of interest of the Worldconnectors move beyond development cooperation to encompass a broader

scope of interest. Global and topical issues are the focus of attention. With regard to the Netherlands, the Worldconnectors agreed at the launch that Dutch society is influenced too much by fear. Worldconnectors strive to overcome the paralysis in society, through introducing new and innovative views on global issues, and through emphasising interdependence; the connections between all members of the national and global society. The Worldconnectors are inspired by the UN Millennium Declaration and the Earth Charter, a declaration of fundamental principles for building a just, sustainable, and peaceful global society for the 21st century.

### The Earth Charter

The Earth Charter is an important source of inspiration for the Worldconnectors. It is a declaration of fundamental principles for building a just, sustainable, and peaceful global society for the 21st century. The Earth Charter is created by global civil society, endorsed by thousands of organizations and institutions. The Charter is not only a call to action, but a motivating force inspiring change in the world. See what you can do on [www.earthcharterinaction.org](http://www.earthcharterinaction.org).



## Who we are

The Worldconnectors are a group of prominent and engaged people from all walks of life. They have backgrounds in business, government, trade unions, the NGO sector, politics, knowledge centres, media, religion, youth networks and international organisations. Together they form a dynamic network of opinion leaders. Whatever their background or age, they all share the ambition for the Netherlands to play a proactive role in the global community. They are willing

to contribute to this ambition by speaking out on matters related to international solidarity, global sustainable development and universal responsibility in their own networks and in public.

**Visit:**  
[www.worldconnectors.nl](http://www.worldconnectors.nl)  
[www.sid.nl](http://www.sid.nl)  
[www.dprn.nl](http://www.dprn.nl)  
[www.ncdo.nl](http://www.ncdo.nl)

## What we do

The Worldconnectors meet four times a year at a Round Table Meeting to engage in cross-sector dialogue on relevant themes. The meetings are closed to the public to allow all Worldconnectors to engage freely in open dialogue and to exchange ideas. The central aim is to influence the political agenda and the policy debate in the Netherlands from a global perspective.

Another goal is to reinforce a global mindset among the Dutch public. Following and sometimes preceding the Round Table Meetings, public events and media activities are organised in which the wider public is engaged in the dialogue. The statement that is discussed at the Round Table Meeting is published, accompanied by media coverage on the theme to stimulate the debate.

## Round Table Themes

**2006** First Round Table Meeting on New Leadership and Global Governance

**2007**

1. Migration and Development
2. Global Human Security
3. Millennium Development Goals
4. Policy Coherence on Aid, Trade & Investments

**2008**

1. Sustainable Development & Climate Change
2. Connection of Civilisations
3. New Scarcities

**2009**

1. The European Union as a Global Player
2. Sustainable World Citizenship
3. Gender and Diversity
4. Sustainable Financial Markets

Ruud Lubbers: 'The name Worldconnectors was chosen because of the fundamental obligation of Dutch society to look beyond borders. This is why we consciously chose in favour of a mixed composition of the group. After all, – as the Earth Charter reminds us – in order to achieve effective governance, a partnership between government, citizens and the corporate sector is essential.'

# What was on the agenda in 2008

- 20 February**  
Worldconnectors Kick off meeting at Nieuwspoor, combined with the public launch of 'Van Natuurlandschap tot Risicomaatschappij', edited by Worldconnector Ton Dietz with a foreword by Worldconnector Ruud Lubbers.
- 27 March**  
Round Table Meeting on Sustainable Development and Climate Change.
- 14 May**  
Worldconnectors Sayida Vanenburg, Hans Eenhoorn and Gabi Spitz presented their views in reaction to Erasmus lecture on Sustainable Development by Alexander Rinnooy Kan (chairperson Social Economic Council).
- 27 June**  
Round Table Meeting on the Connection of Civilisations.
- 24 September**  
SID NI and Worldconnectors Public Event on New Scarcities and Power Shifts, held in the Senate. Worldconnectors Jos van Gennip, Ruud Lubbers, Tineke Lambooy, Jan Berteling, Ton Dietz, Herman Mulder, Hans Dijkstra, Rindert de Groot, Sayida Vanenburg and Sandra van Beest participated.
- 2 October**  
A Worldconnectors delegation meets with members of the Parliamentary Commission on Foreign Affairs.
- 23 October**  
IPS, OxfamNovib and Worldconnectors Public Event on the role of the media in sustainable development and climate change. Worldconnectors Jos van Gennip, Sylvia Borren and Rob Visser participated, Alide Roerink replaced Henny Helmich.
- 24 October**  
UN Me, celebration of the anniversary of the United Nations together with Dutch youth. Worldconnectors Ruud Lubbers, Naema Tahir, Sandra van Beest and Ton Dietz participated.
- 6 November**  
Combined VROM International Think Tank and Worldconnectors meeting on migration from Eastern Europe. Worldconnectors Ruud Lubbers, Sylvia Borren, Anna Chojnacka and Lucia van Westerlaak participated..
- 24 November**  
Worldconnectors delegation meets with Minister Koenders and Joke Brandt.
- 25 November**  
Public Conference on Adaptation to Climate Change, organised by HIER, Akkoord van Schokland and Worldconnectors. Worldconnectors Ruud Lubbers and Herman Mulder participated.
- 2 December**  
Worldconnectors host Earth Charter network meeting with members of the Earth Charter Council, Commission and Youth Initiative. Worldconnectors Rindert de Groot, Willemijn Aerdts, Tineke Lambooy, Awraham Soetendorp, Ruud Lubbers, Sandra van Beest, Erik Thijs Wedershoven and Teresa Fogelberg participated.
- 12 December**  
Round Table Meeting on New Scarcities.

## Connecting Worlds: how we do it

### Round Table Meetings

The Worldconnectors come together at least four times a year in closed sessions, the Round Table Meetings. In these meetings they exchange ideas, inspired by each other and by international guest speakers. They discuss draft statements on a central theme, come up with outreach activities to engage in and agree on solutions to promote.

### Working Groups

In preparation of each Round Table Meeting, a group of Worldconnectors with a special interest in the theme as well as external experts are invited to join a Working Group. Next to preparing the meeting, the group drafts a central statement on the theme and organises public activities.

### Statement and opinion article

A central statement is drafted in preparation of each meeting. It states the vision of the Worldconnectors on the theme, what the added value of the Worldconnectors could be and how the vision would appeal to a wider public. The statement also incorporates perspectives of different stakeholders and people in developing countries. A draft statement is shared among all members and commented upon before the statement is finalized and an opinion article based upon it is written and published to reach the public.

### Support Team

The Support Team assists the Working Group to ensure they have access to information resources and recent research, documents and trends related to the themes. It coordinates additional research when necessary and produces quick scans; concise informative documents on the themes.

### Going Public

In connection with the Round Table Meetings, supporting organisations offer opportunities, and members themselves propose ideas to reach out to the wider public. They engage in a public dialogue, either during public events or via media activities. In 2007 and 2008 the Worldconnectors have participated in a debate on topical issues with young people at The Night of the UN. Individual members have published articles in the media on issues discussed at the Round Table, or on topical issues. The Worldconnectors website also offers the opportunity to interact with a wider public.

## Connecting Worlds

### Jos van Gennip, president of SID Netherlands and NCDO:

'I operate on the frontier between the academic and the political world. I try to bring an international and global dimension into the political discussion that is all too often about the national short term.'

### Joris Voorhoeve, professor, former Minister of Defence and chair of the World Population Foundation:

'I think the world is a chaotic, badly governed city with enormous differences and problems. The only way to deal effectively with these problems is to strengthen international governance: a stronger United Nations and European Union.'

### Anna Chojnacka, director of the 1%club:

'As director of the 1%club I want to convince everybody to commit one percent of his or her money, time or expertise to eradicate poverty. Together we can find eminent solutions for this problem, that concerns all of us.'

### Naema Tahir, writer and human rights expert:

'The worlds I try to connect are migrants in the Netherlands and the native Dutch. I want to give migrants a new profile and increase understanding between the two. Connecting people stimulates growth, security and a pleasant society to live in.'





One of the biggest threats to our world is the changing climate. Though sustainable development entails more than just climate change, the Worldconnectors focused primarily on the latter because it poses such a vital threat to life on Earth. Alternative views on climate change were discussed and actions and initiatives proposed at the Round Table Meeting in March.

Global warming is caused by the burning of fossil fuels, deforestation and an increase in livestock, brought about by a rapidly growing world population. A rise in temperature may cause melting ice caps, rising sea levels and consequently flooding. According to the UNDP Human Development Report 2007/2008 (HDR) this will lead to the displacement of 330 million people. Developing countries are extra vulnerable because of their geography, their dependency on agriculture and their lack of capacity to adapt to a changing climate.

**Inspiration**

Only through radical measures can we reduce dangerous climate change. This is a shared responsibility for all countries and all sectors of society: government, civil society and businesses alike. The central statement resulting from the Round Table Meeting presents a vision on sustainable development and climate change which is inspired by the Earth Charter and the Millennium Development Goals. The statement focuses on the three I's –Innovation, Inspiration and Implementation. With it the Worldconnectors address opinion leaders and decision makers in their networks, for example by writing articles and participating in debates. Their aim is to influence the political and public debate and arrive at improved policies and practices to fight climate change.

**Implementation**

Mitigating climate change demands immediate action. Therefore positive initiatives are highlighted, in the statement as well as on the Worldconnectors website and on the adjacent page in this yearbook (see: 'What can you do?').

Recommendations from the statement:

- Maximum efforts are needed to stimulate energy saving and the use of renewable energy sources (like solar and wind energy and sustainable bio fuels). We strongly support the further development and extension of a CO2 market.
- We believe that reporting of their carbon footprint should be made mandatory for all quoted companies. It will increase their climate awareness and give analysts better insights and peer comparison data, while civil society may comment and challenge the efforts made.
- Forest protection: payments for the Reduction of Emissions from Deforestation and Degradation (REDD) offer important possibilities for climate change mitigation, rural development, and biodiversity conservation.
- Carbon Capture and Storage (CCS) is relevant for the whole country. The government should collaborate with the private sector in developing pilot-projects to capture CO2. The remaining CO2 needs to be stored in the empty gas fields. We also call upon the Dutch government to push within the EU context for closer collaboration with China in the area of CCS.
- Assisting adaptation in the South is a responsibility for mature economies and should not be financed from the ODA budget but at least partly with money from auctioned emission rights. Civil society organisations are encouraged to establish a joint adaptation compensation fund to offer the public the possibility to compensate through donating to tangible adaptation projects such as early warning training.
- The SER (Sociaal Economische Raad, The Social Economic Council) should be transformed into a Sustainable Development Council.
- We call upon the Netherlands to move

# Innovation, inspiration and implementation



to the frontline of a progressive alliance of EU countries, which will not give up when other countries are reluctant to make far-reaching commitments.

The complete statement and the quick scan with background information can be downloaded and read on the website.

**Reaction**

The Worldconnectors received a very positive reaction to the statement on Sustainable Development and Climate Change from Hans Opschoor, member of

United Nations ECOSOC Committee on Development Policy. He congratulates the Worldconnectors with the statement and added: "I couldn't agree more! The statement is completely coherent with the agenda the ECOSOC Committee has tried to pursue in the past two years. It also helped me prepare my contribution to the next session of the Committee and it was an inspiration for me as member of the Adviesraad Internationale Vraagstukken Committee on Climate, Energy and Adaptation."

## The Working Group

Ruud Lubbers (chair), Johan van de Gronden, René Grotenhuis, Herman Mulder, Teresa Fogelberg, Gabi Spitz and Sayida Vanenburg.

**Special Advisors**

Sasja Kamil (Cordaid), Ian Tellam (ETC), Sible Schöne (HIER) and Sanne van Keulen (National Youth Council).

**Supporters**

Roeland Muskens (Wereld in Woorden), Iem Roos (SID NL) and Alide Roerink (NCDO). Koen Kusters (DPRN) drafted the statement.

**'Make a difference'**

Johan van de Gronden: 'My organisation, the WWF, is housed in one of the most energy efficient office buildings in Europe. We have also reached an agreement with an airline about their greenhouse emissions. We constantly work on alternatives with companies and citizens in order to highlight what you can do to make a difference.'

Sylvia Borren: 'With climate change, we sooner think of a polar bear in risk of dying, than of one third of the world's population, who are the losers of the changing climate. And within that group women and minorities lose most. If we want to build sustainable economies, we have to let the people speak for themselves. That's what I'm fighting for.'

**PUBLIC OUTREACH**

# Bulkboek: The Discovery of the Earth

Bulkboek number 10, titled 'The Discovery of the Earth', dedicated a special 27 page chapter to 'Young Worldconnectors saving the Earth'. Six youth Worldconnectors wrote an article about a sustainable future. They were inspired by different parts of the Earth Charter which is also printed in full in the chapter. By referring to the Earth Charter, youth Worldconnectors Leontien, Alpha, Anna, Erik Thijs, Willemijn and Sandra explain what you can do to improve the world. They featured next to many famous public figures, like former prime-minister and Worldconnector Ruud Lubbers, Nobel prize winners Wangari Maathai and Al Gore, and former president of the Soviet Union Michael Gorbatsjov.

The Dutch term 'Bulkboek' is used for a book, shaped as a newspaper. 'Bulkbooks' are easier and cheaper to print than ordinary books and therefore accessible to a larger audience. A slideshow about the Youth Worldconnectors in Bulkboek 10 was shown on 34 Dutch schools and reached 27.000 youth. You can order Bulkboek 10 for free, for as long as stocks last, via [earthcharter@ncdo.nl](mailto:earthcharter@ncdo.nl).

**Website poll**

The new UN Secretary General's first priority should be the reform of the UN and secondly the protection of human rights, development, care for the environment, global responsibility and human security.

- Agree: 35%
- Disagree: 64%
- Other opinion: 1%

'I think the world urgently needs real actions with an external focus. If the UN organization is not capable of fulfilling this task, the secretary general could seek other ways (outside the UN) to achieve the external goals (and parallel reorganize the UN). In my opinion the UN as an institute is always less important than the cause itself.' Marco Harms in his reaction on the Worldconnector website.

**In the media**

- 'Dé gelegenheid om te kiezen voor duurzaamheid', article in Trouw by Hans Eenhoorn, Tineke Lambooy, Herman Mulder (23 October 2008).



# What can you do?



Change has to be brought about in daily practice and through action. The Worldconnectors try to lead by example, by demonstrating that our quality of life can improve through practical actions, such as limiting our footprint. Check your carbon footprint on [www.carbonfootprint.com](http://www.carbonfootprint.com) and your climate footprint on [www.dekleinearde.nl/klimaat](http://www.dekleinearde.nl/klimaat).

Go to [www.milieueentraal.nl](http://www.milieueentraal.nl) and think about the choices you can make on climate neutral living when you fly or drive. An easy advice, not often thought about, is not to eat meat one day a week. It can make a difference of almost twenty percent in carbon dioxide emissions.

Get inspired by visiting other sites on climate compensation mentioned on our updated webpage 'What can you do?'.

Join or start a network like Cool Climate ([www.coolclimate.nu](http://www.coolclimate.nu)). This is a network of more than 10.000 people, among them writers, actors and journalists. Cool Climate wants a climate law and three percent reduction of CO2 emissions every year. Interested to know what your bank is doing to combat climate change? Then take a look at [www.nietmetmijngeld.nl](http://www.nietmetmijngeld.nl).



HIER (Dutch for 'Here') is the name of a large Dutch program that stresses the necessity of the immediate implementation of adaptation projects and initiatives to fight climate change. HIER unites and represents all initiatives that reduce climate change. It involves not only over forty national charity organisations, but also government and businesses. Eventually, this could be a starting point for an international campaign. Check [www.hier.nu](http://www.hier.nu) for a number of climate actions you can join.

HIER and Worldconnectors are working together to develop a public campaign on climate and adaption, which will be launched in the lead up to the UN Climate Summit in Copenhagen, December 2009.



## Connecting instead of clashing

'A culture of fear', 'the multicultural drama', 'us versus them'. How can we counter the increasing polarisation in Dutch society? At the end of June, the Round Table of Worldconnectors met to discuss the theme 'Connection of Civilisations'. The tensions that we perceive in the Netherlands today are a reflection of a larger trend: the global fear of diversity. The Worldconnectors discussed how to improve the perception of diversity and how to help cultures connect rather than clash.

The Worldconnectors believe people connect rather than clash. They see more value in emphasizing good practices and connections between people of differing cultures and religions, rather than emphasizing conflicts. They are convinced that this is the way to find a balance between diversity and unity. To realise the connection of different people, the basic rights of freedom, equality and recognition, as outlined in the Earth Charter, need to be guaranteed. At the same time, the Worldconnectors are highly aware of the difficulties involved in realising these principles. Their efforts are aimed at developing an open society with a positive sense of belonging for all citizens, irrelevant of their status or background.

### Challenges and conditions

There seem to be three main causes for the current struggle within Dutch society. Firstly, the 'ways of life' of migrants and indigenous Dutch people seem to clash. There is a mutual lack of knowledge about 'the other'. The second cause is the deep-seated individualisation of Dutch society. Citizens demand more, from society and others, than they are willing to offer. Finally, there is a 'value consistency gap': cultural groups often judge others by their own standards while many fail to live up to these standards themselves.

A number of conditions are crucial for connecting all people living in the Netherlands. All citizens, migrants and indigenous Dutch alike, should be allowed and encouraged to participate in all aspects of Dutch society, like education, work, media and civil society. Everyone must feel part of society as different but equal individuals, recognised for his or her own talents, qualities and achievements. Respect and dignity are key values, just like humility and modesty. In connecting cultures special attention should be given to the participation of women and youth.

### What binds us

To contribute to the lessening of tensions in Dutch society we need to emphasize a shared identity that connects people and creates a sense of belonging for all Dutch citizens. We need to develop a sense of shared values including liberty, equality and recognition and commit ourselves to taking action to promote those values every day. People need to make a real effort to understand, embrace and act toward connecting cultures. For example, as an individual you can participate by socializing with people who are different from you, at school or at work. Civil society, like sports organisations, needs to open up more towards the new Dutch. The media have an important role to play in transmitting positive and diverse voices.

For more recommendations and actions, read the full statement resulting from the Round Table Meeting on the website.



## The Working Group

Naema Tahir (chair), Ruud Lubbers, Tariq Ramadan, Halleh Ghorashi, Awraham Soetendorp, Ineke Bakker, Adrian de Groot Ruiz, Willemijn Aerdts and Sayida Vanenburg.

### Special Guests

James Kennedy (professor University of Amsterdam), Domenica Ghidai Bidu (The Hague Process on Asylum and Migration), Dennis de Jong (Ministry of Foreign Affairs), Karen van Oudenhoven-van der Zee (University of Groningen), Jan Donner (Director KIT) and Michael Slaby (Earth Charter International Coördinator Programme Religion and Sustainability).

### Supporters

Gordana Stankovic (SID NL), Roeland Muskens (Wereld in Woorden) and Alide Roerink (NCDO).

### 'A new "we" facing the future'

Naema Tahir: 'I am British, Dutch, Pakistani and Muslim. I'm also a lawyer, a writer, a Worldconnector. When I was younger, these identities did clash. But if you realise that you don't need to choose, that all your identities are of equal value and valuable to society, then you can go forward. I then started to focus on my talents and on my contribution towards Dutch society, rather than focussing on "Who am I?" I believe the diversity we have in Dutch society is not visible enough.'

Tariq Ramadan: 'Let us not be Euro-specialists talking among themselves but really be bridges, connectors at the grassroots level within our society. Spreading around the positive message: yes, we are human beings and yes, we are different, but we are building a common future. It's a new "we" facing the future.'

Awraham Soetendorp: 'You can connect in your own street, with people you meet there with different backgrounds, religions and cultures. For me as a Jew I connect with my Muslim brother and sister and also with Christians and Humanists. The moment people hear that Worldconnectors exist, they say: "That's what we would like to be as well!"'

## PUBLIC OUTREACH

# Clash

In September, Worldconnector Tariq Ramadan was invited for a debate with former Euro commissioner Frits Bolkestein about the question 'What can connect us'. He was rather surprised when he noticed that Bolkestein ignored the subject and started a series of personal attacks which forced him to defend himself. A few days later a concept version of an article was published in the Dutch newspaper de Volkskrant, that mistakenly confirmed the false accusations made by Bolkestein regarding the views of philosopher and Islam thinker Ramadan. In the final version of the article, that was published on de Volkskrant website, Youth Worldconnectors Adrian de Groot Ruiz, Sayida Vanenburg and Willemijn Aerdts stress the importance to keep on looking for what can bind us. You can watch a video of the debate on [www.nmo.nl](http://www.nmo.nl) and read the articles on the Worldconnectors website.

### Website poll

Rather than unifying or uplifting people, discussion creates distance between peoples and communities, which in turn leads to feelings of cynicism, distrust, isolation and fear. In the end, people rather clash than connect.

- Agree: 14%
- Disagree: 74%
- Other opinion: 12%

'I agree because discussions do create separatism, dialogues do not. Understanding the difference, is making the difference.' Arnold van der Beek in a reaction on the Worldconnector website.

### In the media

- 'Moreel gelijk valt niet te bewijzen', article (about the supposed controversy Frits Bolkestein - Tariq Ramadan) by Adrian de Groot Ruiz, Sayida Vanenburg and Willemijn Aerdts in de Volkskrant (September 2008).

## What can you do?

The Worldconnectors are keen to initiate a dialogue with the general public. To realise this aim, there is easy access to the statements, quick scans and relevant publications on various issues at [www.worldconnectors.nl](http://www.worldconnectors.nl). Connect your world to the Worldconnectors by reading the background documents and join the discussions on the website!

Read the new books from Worldconnectors Tariq Ramadan and Naema Tahir. Ramadan's most recent book 'Een Jihad van vertrouwen' deals with all the misconceptions around his beliefs and allegations on his behalf in recent years. Naema Tahir has recently published the book 'Groenkapje en de bekeerde wolf'. It contains seven Muslim fairy tales. One of them is about Little Green Riding Hood, who is so devout that she wears headscarves in the colour of the Islam itself. The wolf she meets is an ex-Muslim, whose biggest wish is to be threatened so he can flee to the West to write bestsellers.

The United Nations Alliance of Civilisations (UNAOC) is an initiative of the UN Secretary-General which aims to improve understanding and cooperative relations among nations and peoples across cultures and religions, and to help counter the forces that fuel polarization and extremism. See [www.unaoc.org](http://www.unaoc.org) for more information about what you can do.

Visit an Iftar (the evening meal for breaking fasting) during the Islamic month of Ramadan, just like Ruud Lubbers did with Tariq Ramadan. There are various Mosques who invite non-Muslims to take part in this mutual meal.





# Threats and opportunities of bio-energy



With prices of food and oil rising worldwide, there is no ignoring that these commodities are at risk of becoming new scarcities. This may slow down reaching the Millennium Development Goals, like eradicating extreme poverty and hunger. It will take the combined efforts of the entire international community to prevent that from happening. The Round Table Meeting in December concentrated on bio-energy as one of the prime cross-cutting issues in the ongoing debate about scarcities.

With prices of oil going up it is becoming increasingly more interesting to invest in alternative energy sources. But when talking about bio-energy as one of the possible solutions for the growing scarcity of non-renewable fossil fuels, a lot of considerations have to be taken into account. The main question that has to be answered is: how can we / the EU design criteria and policies for the development and sustainable production of bio-energy without threatening the food security of people in developing countries and without damaging the environment and our planet's biodiversity?

### Considerations

The growing production of bio-energy based on food crops like corn, palm oil and rape seed leads to a rise in food prices, threatening people in developing countries. Second generation bio-energy should be promoted, since this is produced with non food crops like grass and waste biomass. It also produces less CO<sub>2</sub>, less land is needed for the same production volumes and it can be grown on degraded lands.

Then there's the consideration that the use of bio fuels should only be promoted if it's not produced at the cost of biodiversity and if its greenhouse gas balance is made to be evidently better than that of fossil fuels. For example: the production of bio ethanol from American corn scores quite badly when coal is used for distillation.

### Calls for action

- Reduce energy consumption. (See also Climate Change on page 6).
- Reduce the wastage of food.
- Translate the vowed commitment to eradicate poverty and hunger into concrete action by investing in sustainable agricultural productivity in developing countries and ending harmful trade policies.
- Invest in programmes for sustainable energy production and use in developing countries.
- Develop legislation for sustainable production and use of bio energy on a national level as well as within the EU and the international community.
- The EU should reconsider its 10% bio fuel target given that this target is not based on sound scientific analysis about the impact of bio fuel production on food insecurity of the poor and on causing harm to biodiversity.
- We call on Dutch companies and businesses to become international frontrunners by complying with the Cramer criteria when producing, purchasing and using bio energy.
- The Dutch government and the EU should use diplomacy to encourage other countries to implement binding policies on sustainably produced bio energy.
- We call on governments and business to significantly improve their disclosure-discipline with respect to usage (and waste) of scarce natural resources.
- We call for generous investments from government, business and universities in innovative research about sustainable second and third generation bio energy production and to actively engage in creating a methodology and toolkit on 'The Economics of Ecosystems and Biodiversity'.

- We call on the Dutch government to seize opportunities for cooperation with Indonesia and Surinam on the issue of the preservation and responsible management of the countries' rainforests, and bio diversity.

For more recommendations and actions, read the full statement resulting from the Round Table Meeting on the website.

## The Working Group

Jos van Gennip (chair), Annelies Zoomers, Hans Eenhoorn, Tineke Lambooy, Leontien Peeters, Herman Mulder and Johan van de Gronden.

### Special advisor

Wouter Thiebou (Youth Representative UNGA).

### Special guest

Professor Vijay Paranjpye (Pune University India)

### Supporters

Iem Roos, Koen Kusters, Gabi Spitz and Alide Roerink. Ellen Lammers (WiW) drafted the statement.

### 'Influence public opinion and policies'

Jos van Gennip: 'The core of our Working Group on New Scarcities is to mobilise the whole society, not just governments. We can only overcome the problems, for the sake of ourselves and of two thirds of the world population, if we find long-term, sustainable solutions. Both our own behaviour and politics have to change.'

Hans Eenhoorn: 'We can't go on using the world like we're doing now. We already knew that in 1970 with the oil crisis, but we've done so little with that warning. Now we have to work even harder to deal with the crises around food, energy and climate. With a group of people like the Worldconnectors, with their credibility and large networks, we can influence public opinion and government policies. For example by calling for the use and certification of sustainable bio-energy in different media.'

## PUBLIC OUTREACH

# Popular on Youtube

For its 2007-2008 series of monthly lectures SID NL (Society for International Development Netherlands Chapter) chose New Scarcities and Power Shifts as the connecting theme. The open meeting with the Worldconnectors at the end of September was the closing event. During this meeting in the Hague, a short film was made, in which Worldconnectors Herman Mulder, Tineke Lambooy, Hans Dijkstal, Jos van Gennip and Sandra van Beest express what they believe is the most important scarcity. Apparently the subject appealed to the viewers of the popular online video provider Youtube. The New Scarcities video was placed on the list of recommended videos and been watched over 11.000 times in the last three months of 2008.

### Website poll

Hans Dijkstal states: 'The most important scarcities are food and health. But the most important means to deal with them is water.'

- Agree: 78%
- Disagree: 14%
- Other opinion: 8%

'I agree, but what about democracy, emancipation, access to information? In lots of cases the will to improve seems to be a much bigger problem than the means available.' Benedict Broere in his reaction on the Worldconnector website.

### In the media

'Goedemorgen Nederland', radio show on Radio 1 with Hans Eenhoorn as one of the guests, talking about New Scarcities.

## What can you do?



See what you can do to reduce your energy consumption on [www.hier.nu](http://www.hier.nu). Use sustainably produced energy (in particular renewables such as wind and solar energy) at home. Several companies, such as Greenchoice, Nuon, Essent and Windunie, offer so called green energy. You can also invest in programmes for sustainable energy production and - use in developing countries. For example: you can support a Jatropha farm which produces bio fuel, check out [www.1procentclub.nl](http://www.1procentclub.nl) for this project.



Reduce the wastage of food. There are several cookbooks that provide tips, such as *Het kliekjeskookboek* by Lydia Tuijnman. Furthermore the website [www.lovefood-hatewaste.com](http://www.lovefood-hatewaste.com) is very comprehensive.

Buy fair trade and/or organic products to support small and sustainable farmers in developing countries.










© foto: UN






'We are in urgent need of a serious meeting of minds between scientists, practitioners, policy makers and politicians about the main problems of this planet and how The Netherlands can influence them. We have lived too long next to each other without seeing the other.' This personal slogan of Jan Berteling clearly states why he's connecting worlds.

Worldconnectors inspire and connect each other and other people to build a just, sustainable, and peaceful global society. Coming from different backgrounds, they all participate on a personal basis. Every year a number of Worldconnectors give way to new ones with fresh views and different networks. You'll find an up to date list of current members on our website [www.worldconnectors.nl](http://www.worldconnectors.nl). Meet this group of inspiring people:


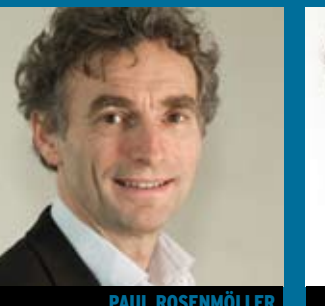

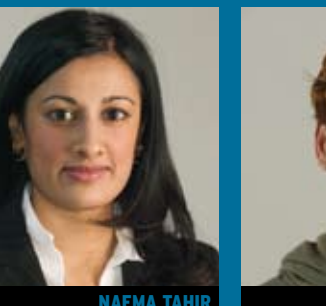


### STEERING GROUP

 <b>RUUD LUBBERS</b> is one of the initiators and co-chair of the Worldconnectors, an active member of the Earth Charter Commission and, among many other functions, the former Prime Minister of the Netherlands.	 <b>SYLVIA BORREN</b> is co-chair of the Worldconnectors and, among many other functions, co-chair of GCAP Global Council, former Executive Director of Oxfam Novib and the chair of The New Dialogue.	 <b>JOS VAN GENNIP</b> is the co-founder of DPRN (Development Policy Review Network), one of the initiators of the Worldconnectors and professor of Human Geography.	 <b>TON DIETZ</b> is a Taskforce member of DPRN (Development Policy Review Network), one of the initiators of the Worldconnectors, and professor of Human Geography.	 <b>HENNY HELMICH</b> is the executive director of NCDO (the Dutch National Committee for International Cooperation and Sustainable Development), and one of the initiators of the Worldconnectors.	 <b>JAN BERTELING</b> is the former ambassador of the Netherlands to the FAO and board member of SID Netherlands (the Society for International Development).	 <b>WILLEMJIN AERDTS</b> is the youth member of the Steering Group and studied International Law and International Affairs. She is a member of the board of the United Nations Association the Netherlands (NVVN).
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### PROMINENT POLITICAL PERSONS

 <b>WIM KOK</b> is honorary Minister of State and the former Prime Minister of the Netherlands.	 <b>JAN PRONK</b> is professor Theory and Practice of International Development at the Institute of Social Studies in The Hague and former Minister of Development Cooperation.	 <b>JORIS VOORHOEVE</b> is professor of International Organisations at Leiden University and professor of International Security at the Netherlands Defence Academy. He is also a former Minister of Defence and chair of the World Population Foundation.	 <b>HANS DIJKSTAL</b> was the leader of the VVD, the Dutch liberal right wing party, and a former Minister of Internal Affairs. He is also one of the initiators of the One Country, One Society initiative.	 <b>ERIC SMALING</b> is Senator for the Socialist Party (SP) and professor of Sustainable Agriculture at the International Institute for Geo-information Science and Earth Observation (ITC) in Enschede.
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### (NEW) MEDIA

 <b>PIETER BROERTJES</b> is editor in chief of de Volkskrant, a national newspaper.	 <b>PAUL ROSENMÖLLER</b> is journalist and former member of Parliament for GroenLinks (the Green Party).	 <b>MARC KLEIN ESSINK</b> is a media-professional and a professional participant in initiatives concerning social and global issues. He is one of the initiators of the project 'Day for Change'.	 <b>NAEMA TAHIR</b> is writer and an expert in human rights law for the Council of Europe. She recently published her third novel 'Groenkapje en de bekeerde wolf'.	 <b>RINDERT DE GROOT</b> is editor in chief of MTV Coolpolitics.	 <b>BEN KNAPEN</b> is member of the Scientific Council for Government Policy.
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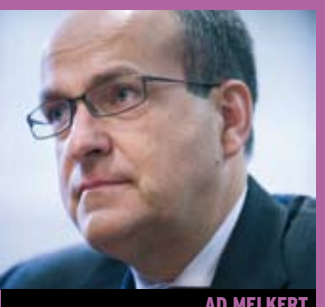

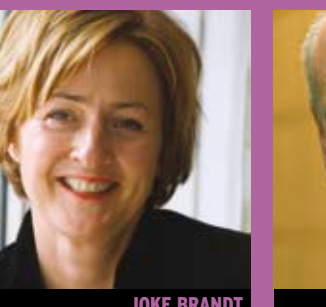




### NON GOVERNMENTAL ORGANISATIONS




 <b>TERESA FOGELBERG</b> is Senior Director Business Engagement and Stakeholder Relations of the Global Reporting Initiative.	 <b>DIRK ELSEN</b> is chairman of the Board of SNV Development Organization.	 <b>RENÉ GROTENHUIS</b> is director of the international development organisation Cordaid.
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### BUSINESS COMMUNITY ACTORS

 <b>PETER BAKKER</b> is Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of Koninklijke TNT Post.	 <b>TINEKE LAMBOUY</b> is a lawyer and university lecturer/researcher at Nyenrode Business University and Utrecht University with a focus on corporate social responsibility.
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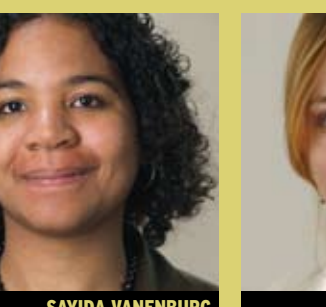
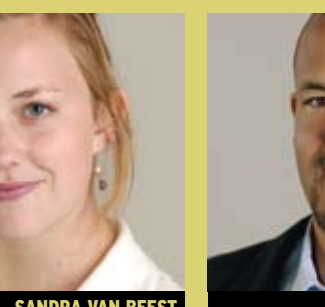


### NATIONAL OR INTERNATIONAL GOVERNMENTAL ACTORS

 <b>JOAN BOER</b> is ambassador of the Netherlands to the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD).	 <b>AD MELKERT</b> is the associate administrator at the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).	 <b>RUUD TREFFERS</b> is the Dutch representative at the World Bank, until recently he was the former Director General of the Department of International Cooperation at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.	 <b>JOKE BRANDT</b> is Director General of the Department of International Cooperation at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.	 <b>HERMAN WIJFFELS</b> was the former Dutch representative at the World Bank and led the negotiations for the Dutch cabinet formation in 2007.	 <b>ROEL VAN DER VEEN</b> is policy officer at the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the writer of the book 'What went wrong with Africa?'.	 <b>ROB VISSER</b> is the Chief Scientist at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.
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 <b>LUCIA VAN WESTERLAAK</b> is policy advisor within the FNW Trade Union's Confederation.	 <b>JANNET VAESSEN</b> is managing director of contemporary women platform WOMEN inc.	 <b>JOHAN VAN DE GRONDEN</b> is the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of World Wildlife Funds (WWF) in the Netherlands.
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 <b>HERMAN MULDER</b> is the former Senior Executive Vice President Group Risk Management of the ABN AMRO Bank, now independent advisor.	 <b>HANS EENHOORN</b> is member of the UN Task Force on Hunger and associate professor of "Food security and Entrepreneurship" at Wageningen University.
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### YOUTH

 <b>ERIK THIJS WEDERSHOVEN</b> is student at University College Maastricht and was the official Youth representative of the Netherlands to the General Assembly of the United Nations in 2005-2006.	 <b>LEONTIEN PEETERS</b> is manager Communication and Events for the Business in Development Challenge.	 <b>ADRIAN DE GROOT RUIZ</b> is a PhD-candidate in Economics at the Centre for Experimental Economics and Political Decision Making at the University of Amsterdam.	 <b>ANNA CHOJNACKA</b> is director of the 1%CLUB.	 <b>SAYIDA VANENBURG</b> is consultant Operational Excellence at Cap Gemini. She is a former Youth representative of the Netherlands at the UN Commission on Sustainable Development.	 <b>SANDRA VAN BEEST</b> studies European and International Law at the Radboud University Nijmegen and was the official Youth Representative of the Netherlands to the General Assembly of the United Nations in 2007-2008.	 <b>ALPHA BARRY</b> is policy advisor on UN resolution 1325 at development organisation ICCO.
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### KNOWLEDGE AND ADVISORY CENTERS

 <b>MIRIYAM AOURAGH</b> is post-doc Rubicon Fellow at the University of Oxford, researcher on the utilization of internet amongst Lebanese and Palestinian activist networks, former lecturer at the International School for the Humanities and Social Science.	 <b>HALLEH GHORASHI</b> is professor of Management and Diversity at the Vrije Universiteit (VU) in Amsterdam.	 <b>LOUK DE LA RIVE BOX</b> is Director of the Institute for Social Studies (ISS) in the Hague.	 <b>PAUL HOEBINK</b> is associate professor of Development Issues at the University of Nijmegen.	 <b>HANS VAN GINKEL</b> is the former Rector of the United Nations University, Tokyo.	 <b>TARIQ RAMADAN</b> is professor of Islamic Studies at the Faculty of Theology at Oxford University and professor "Citizenship and Identity" at Erasmus University in Rotterdam.	 <b>MONIKA SIE DHIAN HO</b> is Director of the Wiardi Beckman Foundation.	 <b>ANNELIES ZOOMERS</b> is professor of Development Geography (IDS) at Utrecht University and professor of International Migration at the Radboud University in Nijmegen.
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### RELIGIOUS LEADERSHIP

 <b>AWRAHAM SOETENDORP</b> is a rabbi of the Reform Jewish Community of The Hague and of the Union of Dutch Reform Jewish Communities. He is an Earth Charter Commissioner.	 <b>INEKE BAKKER</b> is director of development organisation Oikos and served as General Secretary of the Council of Churches in the Netherlands.
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# Youth & Young Professional Worldconnectors

Honour and support the young people of our communities, enable them to fulfil their essential role in creating sustainable societies. Principle 12c of the Earth Charter.

Following the principles of the Earth Charter, the involvement of young people is one of the basic principles of the Worldconnectors. Many of the Worldconnector themes are issues that affect current and future generations. Young people make up almost half of the global population and are therefore indispensable stakeholders, both at the Worldconnector Round Table meetings and in the international arena. From the start young people have been invited to the meetings and involved through public activities like UN Me, debates during youth events and essay contests. There are now eight youth and young professional Worldconnectors, which are listed on page fifteen.

### In the media

- Young Worldconnectors did well in the media with a number of articles.
- In September the Dutch women's magazine Viva published a list of the 400 most successful young women (under 38 years old) in the Netherlands. Youth Worldconnectors Willemijn, Anna and Sandra all achieved a place on the list.
- Viva deemed World Food Day (16 October) a good occasion to interview Anna, Sandra and Willemijn about their lifestyle.
- In August, Dutch magazine Grazia placed an interview with youth Worldconnector Anna Chojnacka about growing up as an immigrant child and about her initiative, the 1% Club.
- A slideshow about Bulkboek 10 ('De aarde ontdekken, jonge Worldconnectors redderen de aarde') was shown on 34 Dutch schools and reached 27.000 youth.



## A little less conversation, a little more action

Sayida Vanenburg, Youth Worldconnector since 2006: 'The Worldconnectors invited me to become a member because I was the Youth representative at the UN Commission on Sustainable Development. They therefore assumed that I would be able to stand my ground between all those well known, wise men and women and would add value by bringing in the perspectives of my generation. I participated in the working group on Climate Change because it related to my work as a Sustainability consultant. I was also part of the working group on Connection of Civilisations. I try to make family, friends and colleagues aware of these themes in their everyday life. For example, I tried to make a friend working in Human Resources see how the increasingly multicultural society influences job interviews. In some cultures it is perceived rude to look someone directly in the eye but this doesn't mean he or she isn't assertive enough.

My "buddy", or coach, within the Worldconnectors is Sylvia Borren. We exchanged experiences and learned a lot from each other. My goal for 2009 is to make the Worldconnectors a bit more action minded. Let's not just talk but put our words into real actions, connecting and engaging the worlds we represent. I guess that's one of the characteristics of my generation: we don't have the patience to wait for final results in the long term, we want to see and celebrate small successes along the way.'



## You don't have to agree to connect

Adrian de Groot Ruiz, Youth Worldconnector since 2008: 'There's a shortage of good ideas in the Netherlands, especially ideas that can appeal to and connect different groups of people. To keep the national and global society going, we need solidarity, but our fast changing world is putting it under pressure. I think the Worldconnectors can play a meaningful role in connecting groups and enhancing solidarity. So when I was asked to become a Worldconnector, I didn't hesitate.

How I have been connecting worlds in my first year as a Worldconnector? By connecting people. If you see society as a network, then 'separate worlds' are only smaller networks of people that have few connections with each other. I try to connect Dutch people wanting to do something good for Mexican children that can use a little support. Or I connect a businessman with an academic who both have the same thoughts about solving a problem without knowing it. I've learned that I don't have to agree with someone to still reach some sort of connection with him or her.

In the past year I've been a member of the Working Group 'Connection of Civilisations'. How can different cultures live together? First we formulated a common vision and I helped writing the statement of the Working Group. Then of course we wanted to express our vision in public debate. Fellow youth Worldconnectors Sayida, Willemijn and I wrote an article in de Volkskrant reacting on the debate between Tariq Ramadan and Frits Bolkestein.'

## The Support Team



ALIDE ROERINK JENNY HOFMAN IEM ROOS



GORDANA STANKOVIC GABI SPITZ KOEN KUSTERS



ANNE-KATRIEN DENISSEN KARI POSTMA SHERLIEN SANCHES

'I think that none of the problems here at home can be solved without a global dimension.'  
 Jos van Gennip, President NCDO and Vice-President of SID

## The Steering Group

Ruud Lubbers (co-chair), Sylvia Borren (co-chair), Jos van Gennip (President NCDO and SID NL), Jan Berteling (board member SID NL), Ton Dietz (Taskforce member DPRN), Henny Helmich (Executive Director NCDO) and Willemijn Aerds (Youth Worldconnector) form the Round Table Steering Group that is the decision-making organ of the Worldconnectors.



# Behind the scenes

The Worldconnectors, also known as 'The Round Table for People and the Planet' was initiated by Ruud Lubbers (as chair), SID, NCDO and DPRN. These initiators guide and sustain the initiative in consultation with the members.

### The Support Team

Organising a Round Table meeting, getting media coverage, coordinating information flows, updating the website, documenting and assisting the thematic Working Groups. The Support Team works on a daily basis to make the Worldconnectors an effective initiative. It is formed by people who work for the three organisations that initiated the Worldconnectors. They spend part of their jobs on supporting the Worldconnectors. The Support Team consists of:

- Alide Roerink, Advisor International Affairs at NCDO and projectleader Worldconnectors.
- Gabi Spitz, Project Officer International Affairs and Worldconnectors at NCDO.
- Gordana Stankovic, Europe Coordinator at SID NL and represents SID NL in the Worldconnectors Support Team.
- Iem Roos, Director at SID NL and represents SID NL in the Worldconnectors Support Team.
- Koen Kusters, represents DPRN in the Worldconnectors Support Team.
- Kari Postma, Communications Officer at NCDO and advises the Round Table on outreach.
- Anne-Katrien Denissen, Web editor for the Worldconnectors website (a.o.) at NCDO.
- Sherlien Sanches, NCDO Secretariat, member of Support Team.
- Jenny Hofman, Administrative Officer/Focal Point of the Worldconnectors.
- The quick scans, statements and other preparatory documents are produced in close cooperation with Frans Bieckmann, Ellen Lammers and Roeland Muskens (Wereld in Woorden).

### SID: opinion leader in the development sector

The Society for International Development (SID) was founded in 1957 as the first global nongovernmental organisation and now focuses on opinion making and policy development with respect to development cooperation. Over the past years, SID's Netherlands Chapter evolved from being the coordinator of an annual lecture cycle to an important platform for the debate on (the renewal of) international cooperation. Confronted with the lack of a European platform to enable a broad dialogue between politicians, scientists, policy makers and civil society representatives, SID Netherlands took it upon itself to stimulate the creation of the Round Table of Worldconnectors.

[www.sid-nl.org](http://www.sid-nl.org)

### DPRN: uniting science, policy and development practice

The Development Policy Review Network (DPRN) is a network of development experts and policy-makers in the Netherlands and Belgium who aim to reduce the gap between science, policy and development practice. To that end DPRN organizes and supports processes aimed at creating informed debate (about development policies) and synergy between the various sectors. In addition, DPRN is developing a web portal ([www.global-connections.nl](http://www.global-connections.nl)) to provide searchable access to development expertise in the Netherlands and Belgium. DPRN joined the Worldconnectors initiative to broaden the debate on the role the Netherlands could and should play in world affairs and international cooperation and to involve Dutch opinion leaders and the general public.

[www.dprn.nl](http://www.dprn.nl)

### NCDO: involving people in international cooperation

The National Committee for International Cooperation and Sustainable Development (NCDO) stimulates participation of Dutch citizens in international cooperation and sustainable development and supports them with information, subsidies and advice. With the MDGs as a point of reference, NCDO organises campaigns, debates, educational activities, exhibitions, media productions and cultural projects. It also highlights the efforts of government and citizens to achieve the MDGs. Since 2003 NCDO has endeavoured to renew its National Committee structure through seeking a composition that will reflect NCDO's mission to connect with various crucial sectors of Dutch society. From NCDO's perspective, the Worldconnectors replace the former National Committee in providing substantial input for NCDO's work.

[www.ncdo.nl](http://www.ncdo.nl)

Henny Helmich, Executive Director NCDO: 'At a global level we have the norms, knowledge, skills and also the wealth to enable all human beings to enjoy their human rights. We are working to reach the ultimate human frontier of universal human dignity. The Worldconnectors are a present and practical instrument to contribute to that aim.'



# Inspiring people, inspiring solutions

Getting the Dutch public to think and act global is one of the main aims of the Worldconnectors. Through publications of Worldconnectors or media attention for the issues they discuss, a wider public is drawn into the debate.

## Media response on Europe's foreign policy

The responsibility of Europe in the world is the theme of the first Round Table Meeting in 2009. It's a theme that has the warm interest of Worldconnectors, as shown by their quick response in the media to the situation in Georgia last summer. Ruud Lubbers, Joris Voorhoeve, Jan Pronk and Tineke Lambooy wrote an article which was published in NRC Handelsblad in September.

In this article they stated that it was time for the European Union to cooperate instead of confront. In their opinion Europe's foreign policy should serve as an alternative for the hard power politics of the US.

## Business Worldconnectors speak out on credit crunch

Worldconnectors frequently speak out on hot news items, connecting them to the issues discussed during the Round Table Meetings. A number of Worldconnectors reacted to the credit

crunch in Dutch media. Dutch newspaper Trouw published the article 'De gelegenheid om te kiezen voor duurzaamheid' concerning the global consequences of the credit crunch in October. It was written by Hans Eenhoorn, Tineke Lambooy and Herman Mulder, all Worldconnectors from the business sector. The article stresses that the current crisis is yet another one mounting on the four other crises: the climate crisis, the energy crisis, the food crisis and the cultural crisis. Developing countries already suffer disproportional

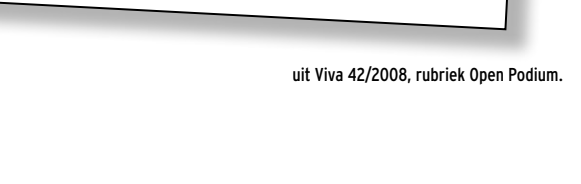
from these crises, but the current situation will probably lead to a reduction of the effort from the Western world to reach the Millennium Development Goals. The accumulation of crises is a clear sign that our current way of living is unsustainable and often unethical. However, the financial crisis in particular presents us with a once in a lifetime opportunity to go into a different, more sustainable direction. Now is the time to make the necessary changes to create a new global system based on the paradigm of sustainability.

# Dozens of news items

A lot of work goes into reacting to the news and trying to get media attention for themes discussed by the Worldconnectors. But there's always the chance of not getting the attention that is aimed for. Some articles unfortunately never make the headlines, like Ruud Lubbers' and Sylvia Borren's opinion article on reviewing the budget for development cooperation. It can be read in full on the website: [www.worldconnectors.nl/upload/cms/251\\_Steun\\_Koenders.pdf](http://www.worldconnectors.nl/upload/cms/251_Steun_Koenders.pdf)

## MINISTER KOENDERS VERDIENT STEUN / BUDGET KOENDERS MOET CRISISBESTENDIG BLIJVEN

Ontwikkelingssamenwerking ligt onder vuur en de VVD gaat komende week tijdens de begrotingsbehandeling voor het eerst voor halvering van de hulp pleiten. Maar in tijden van financiële en andere crises is het investeren in ontwikkeling wereldwijd juist van groot belang, stellen Worldconnectors Ruud Lubbers en Sylvia Borren.



In addition to the media coverage mentioned on the pages before there were a number of other memorable news items in 2008:

- 'Gewoon Naema', interview with Naema Tahir in AD Haagsche Courant, January 2008.
- 'Sandra van Beest naar Amerika', article in Dagblad De Limburger, January 2008.
- 'Wie beïnvloedt het beleid? De Top Tien', Top Ten of people who have the most influence on international development policies, published in Vice Versa.
- 'Ruud Lubbers, vrijgestelde', interview in De Gelderlander, April 2008.
- 'Zijn achternaam kost geld', article by Anna Chojnacka in Grazia, June 2008.
- 'Softies bereiken niets in Moskou', interview with Ruud Lubbers on the Georgia situation in HP/ De Tijd, September 2008.
- BNR newsradio interviewed Herman Mulder and Ruud Lubbers on the credit crunch, September 2008.
- 'Missionaris voor een betere wereld', interview with Ruud Lubbers in the TV-programme Buitenhof on Nederland 1, September 2008.
- 'Ruud Lubbers als Worldconnector', interview with Ruud Lubbers about UN me (the night of the UN) in Metro, October 2008.
- 'Mijn Project', article about Gabi Spitz in IS, November 2008.
- Hans Eenhoorn, radio 1, 'Goedenmorgen NL', December 2008.

# One Million People Reached!

In 2008, the Worldconnectors have put a lot of effort into reaching out to Dutch citizens. We calculated the results by 'counting' the number of readers of media articles, our unique website visitors and audiences of radio and TV interviews in which the Worldconnectors are explicitly mentioned. This was done in a strict manner in which only 10% of edition figures are counted as outreach results. Using this method, Worldconnectors have reached 962.185 people. If we add the number of people who were introduced to the Worldconnectors during events, it amounts to 1 million. In 2007 the Worldconnectors reached out to 800.000 Dutch citizens. Let us hope we can double this number in 2009!

## Europa Buitenlandpolitiek dient alternatief te zijn voor botte machtspolitiek van de VS EU moet samenwerken, niet confronteren

Nieuw EU-beleid moet oog hebben voor de gevoelens van anderen in de wereld, stellen Ruud Lubbers, Joris Voorhoeve, Jan Pronk en Tineke Lambooy.

De Europese Unie (EU) heeft zich tijdens de speciale top van afgelopen maandag eenzijdig geprojecteerd in haar houding naar Rusland toe. Dat is explosief om verdedigd naar buiten te treden. Tenor daar er tal van tekorten zijn naar vergelijking met de VS, maar vergelijking met de VS is niet terecht. Het ontwikkelingsbeleid van de Europese Unie is een heel ander verhaal. Het ontwikkelingsbeleid van de Europese Unie is een heel ander verhaal. Het ontwikkelingsbeleid van de Europese Unie is een heel ander verhaal.



Illustratie Rhonald Blommeijn

Wij zijn van mening dat Europa zich onafhankelijk moet positioneren van de huidige lijn van de VS en naar buiten moet zien te gaan. Het ontwikkelingsbeleid van de Europese Unie is een heel ander verhaal. Het ontwikkelingsbeleid van de Europese Unie is een heel ander verhaal. Het ontwikkelingsbeleid van de Europese Unie is een heel ander verhaal.

treden in een tripartite initiatief met Rusland, Georgië en de twee regio's. Daarbij zijn een aantal punten centraal moeten staan. In ruil voor erkenning van zijn territoriale integriteit door Rusland, zou Georgië de autonomie van Zuid-Ossetië en Abchazië moeten erkennen. De recente erkenning door Rusland van Zuid-Ossetië en Abchazië, made in de hand gewerkt door de overname van de gebieden van de twee regio's over de twee gebieden. Maar wel voor de twee gebieden van de twee regio's over de twee gebieden.

De EU moet zo spoedig mogelijk humanitaire hulp bieden, met name in de vorm van het opruimen van clusterbommen en landminen in het gebied. In er moet op worden aangedrongen om het gebied van de fundamentele rechten van mensen en minderheden, maar wel op het gebied van de fundamentele rechten van mensen en minderheden. Het moet op het gebied van de fundamentele rechten van mensen en minderheden.

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In 2009 the Worldconnectors aim to deepen the themes that they have discussed in previous years. This gives them the opportunity to discuss recent developments and link up with current events.

# Themes for 2009



## 1. The European Union as a Global Player

In view of the elections for the European Parliament in June, the Worldconnectors chose 'Europe' as the first theme of 2009. The Round Table Meeting in March will focus on the European Union as a global player and the role of the Netherlands in the EU. From April to June the Worldconnectors aim to raise more public awareness for 'Europe' within Dutch society. For example by organising hearings with leading members of political parties and other well known people. When relevant, the European dimension will be a focus point in the themes throughout 2009.

### Challenges

The Worldconnectors will be aiming their attention at the four new European challenges: diversity, sustainability, peace and equality. To advance these challenges, The Netherlands need the European Union and vice versa.

#### Diversity

The European Union consists of people from diverse cultures with different backgrounds and religions. This diversity is one of the prominent features of the European Union but it also makes everyone's participation and cooperation a challenge we have to face.

#### Sustainability

Regarding the climate crisis and the Copenhagen agenda, Europe is known for its sustainable development. The Netherlands can play an important role in this in view

of the European energy policy and the financing of adaptation to climate change in developing countries.

#### Peace

The role of Europe as a peacekeeper is in line with the 60 year old Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the Earth Charter. We therefore believe Europe can and must play a key part in enhancing peace, especially now that the era of super powerful states seems to have ended. This asks for a multi-polar world with a number of influential countries.

#### Equality

The European Union's responsibility concerning the realisation of the Millennium Development Goals with special attention to eradicating poverty and gender equality.



## The Working Group

Ben Knapen (chair), Ruud Lubbers, Jos van Gennip, Lucia van Westerlaak, Alpha Barry, Paul Hoebink and Joan Boer.

### Special advisors

Paul Engel (ECDPM), Zita Schellekens, Christel de Lange (National Youth Council), Marjolein Bulk (FNV), Mirjam van Reisen (European External Policy Advisors).

### Supporters

Alide Roerink, Gordana Stankovic, Iem Roos, Koen Koesters and Gabi Spitz. Frans Bieckmann (WiW) drafted the statement.



### 'Europe is our second home'

Ben Knapen: 'The Worldconnectors try to open up windows between the Netherlands and the rest of the world. They bring international and responsible citizenship to the attention of the Dutch people. I deem it a worthy cause to try and help them with these tasks. That is why I recently became a Worldconnector and will be chairing the working group on Europe. Europe is our second home and the most important entity and vehicle through which we are able to influence and shape our societies and the rest of the world. There's a lot to be won from a European Union that succeeds in developing social cohesion, sustainability, an international legal order and peace as its core business.'

## 2. Sustainable World Citizenship

With this theme the Worldconnectors link up with the previous themes 'Sustainable Development and Climate Change' and 'New Scarcities'. They will deepen the theme with questions like 'how to be a sustainable consumer, business or society?'. Further attention will be given to new scarcities like food, water and the 'global commons'. Concerning climate change, the Worldconnectors will focus on the consequences for people in developing countries and on the role of the Netherlands in the upcoming UN Climate Meeting in Copenhagen at the end of 2009. Worldconnectors and HIER will cooperate on the development of a public campaign to hand citizens in The Netherlands options to contribute to help financing the 'climate bill' in developing countries. The Working Group will be co-chaired by Herman Mulder and Rindert de Groot.

### 'Change by civil society'

Ruud Lubbers: 'Until now almost all problems ended up being left to be solved by governments and politics. Now we see that many processes of change are started by civil society. They put pressure on business, that leads to Corporate Social Responsibility. Six years ago CSR was a CEO's private luxury. Now he realises it's also good for his company.'

## 3. Gender and Diversity

Discussing gender and diversity is not a question of focussing on problems, but of focussing on all the small and big solutions that gender and diversity can offer us. The theme builds upon the findings of the previous themes 'Connection of Civilisations' and 'Migration and Development'. The Worldconnectors will look into unequal participation, governance and rights of women and minorities on three different levels:

- stopping exclusion, violence and exploitation (racism, child labour, homophobia)
- more equal sharing of space, participation (jobs, education) and decision-making
- searching for transformation of current balances of power (at the kitchen table as well as within the IMF or the UN)

Partly because of the gender perspective within 'Sustainable Citizenship', both themes will be discussed in the same Round Table Meeting at the end of May. The Worldconnectors aim at getting public attention around international Women's Day by communicating the results of the global Social Watch Report on gender equality and participation of women. They will also collaborate intensively with Women Inc. during the Women Inc. Festival at the end of November.

The Working Group will be chaired by Sylvia Borren with Jannet Vaessen at her side.

### 'Let diversity enrich your life'

Halleh Ghorashi: 'Let us look at migrants as powerful interpreters that bind cultures. Let us see them as a metaphore for the future of the Netherlands. A country in which the presence of a diversity of cultures is no longer a threat, but a challenge. A future in which the strength of diversity will be seen as a basic condition for reflection, that will enable the Netherlands to be the land of innovation.'

### 'I am MaD'

Herman Mulder: 'My personal slogan is: I am MaD, Making a Difference. When we're talking about sustainability and fairness in this world, we need more MaD-ness. We are the change, we have to do it. Making links between business, government, NGO's and academics is essential to solve all problems we have in the world. That's what Worldconnectors do.'



## 4. Sustainable Financial Markets

Can we find solutions for the current financial crisis and contribute to defining a 'New Bretton Woods': a new concept for financial markets? The Working Group will take the article 'De gelegenheid om te kiezen voor duurzaamheid', which was written by three Worldconnectors, as a starting point when trying to solve these questions. The Worldconnectors see the connection between the financial crisis and other crises like climate change and food scarcity and link these with developing countries, the agrarian sector and reaching the Millennium Development Goals.

The intended chair for the Working Group is Herman Wijffels with Ruud Lubbers at his side.

## Agenda for 2009

### March

Round Table Meeting Europe in the world

### May

Round Table Meeting Sustainable World Citizenship

### May

Round Table Meeting Gender and Diversity

### September

SID Conference in the Senate on Economic Growth and the Common Good

### October

UN Me, annual celebration of the anniversary of the United Nations together with Dutch youth

### November

Women Inc. Festival

### December

Round Table Meeting Sustainable Financial Markets

Keep an eye on the agenda on the website for news on interesting debates, lectures, conferences and other events around this year's themes.

# Let's clash, connect and incorporate!

Sylvia Borren asked me to join the Worldconnectors in the spring of 2008. Apart from being an inspiring and diverse group of people, the Worldconnectors to me represent the conviction that if you join forces and ideals to achieve specific goals, you can really change things. That is also what Women Inc., the organisation of which I am managing director, is all about. With Women Inc. we strive to make a difference in opinion and mentality of women and society concerning the position and contribution of women to society. Our slogan is: enlarge your opportunities. We try to influence public opinion and individuals through events and media attention.

The Round Table Meetings really inspire me because you discuss a theme with people from such different backgrounds and ages. Together we search for perspectives to get public attention for

the importance of these themes in the media. I think the website is a wonderful library for looking up information on important themes of this moment. I do think it's interesting to develop other tools for reaching the public than just with words. How can you make sure people really 'incorporate' these themes in their everyday lives? Small moves, big changes!

Because I haven't been a Worldconnector for very long I haven't accomplished very much yet. But I do involve individual Worldconnectors on a regular basis in relevant events organised by Women Inc. For 2009 I've been asked to become a member of the working group on Gender and Diversity, a theme in which I can put a lot of my ambitions. It truly connects the work of Worldconnectors and Women Inc. so we can learn from each other and strengthen one another.

Let's unite all strategies for a dynamic 2009: let's clash, connect and incorporate!

Jannet Vaessen



## Opening up the curtains



I look back with satisfaction on yet another good year for the Worldconnectors. Collaborating with Sylvia Borren, our first ever co-chair, has worked out very well. The past year saw the Worldconnectors becoming more known amongst the general public.

We were mentioned more often in the media and I have to explain less often what it is we do. It's also getting clearer to people that we're trying to open up the curtains and focus everyone's attention on the Millennium Development Goals and the Earth Charter. I notice that youth

are playing an increasingly important role within the Worldconnectors. Our 'intergenerational' cooperation began a couple of years ago at Lowlands, with thanks to Erik Thijs Wedershoven. Now I have my own "youth buddy", Sandra van Beest. It's really pleasurable working together with Sandra, in 2008 we co-wrote the foreword for a veterans book on development projects. I also enjoyed attending the Night of the UN with her, a celebration of the anniversary of the United Nations together with Dutch youth.

My personal highlight in the past year was participating in the special Earth Charter Meeting in December in Amsterdam. There I presented my latest publication, entitled 'Inspiration for Global Governance', which I wrote in cooperation with Worldconnector Tineke Lambooy and Willem van Genugten. The book is based on the belief that the Earth Charter, dating from 2000, is a valuable complement to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights which celebrated its 60th birthday. It was a very inspiring meeting and an opportunity for Worldconnectors to become part of the Earth Charter International network. I'm sure 2009 will be an equally inspiring year, for me not as a (co) chair, but as a "regular" member. I am very proud to pass on the torch to our new co-chair Herman Wijffels in April 2009.

Ruud Lubbers

### Colofon

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**A word of thanks:** All visitors of the  
Worldconnectors website who expressed  
their views on the central themes and  
formulated their reactions to the polls.

This magazine is printed on FSC paper.

### Engels of Nederlands?

Een groot deel van de communicatie van de Ronde Tafel is in het Engels. De naam Worldconnectors geeft al aan dat het doel is om verschillende werelden te verbinden en om Nederland te verbinden met de rest van de wereld. In de 21ste eeuw is communiceren in het Engels een noodzakelijk middel om dit doel te bereiken. Het is ook bedoeld om deelname van niet-Nederlands sprekende personen mogelijk te maken en om makkelijk informatie uit te kunnen wisselen met collega's van SID Internationaal en internationale gastsprekers. Media-uitingen die gericht zijn op het Nederlandse publiek zijn wel altijd opgesteld in het Nederlands.