Another kind of philanthropy

A history of the Charles Léopold Mayer Foundation
for Human Progress, 1980–2014

Summary

Disclaimer

The text you are about to read is a summary of a very detailed chronicle of the Charles Léopold Mayer Foundation covering the entire period from 1980 to 2014. This chronicle of nearly 500 pages was made possible by the Foundation's concern, from the outset, to document its activities, giving rise to a continuous series of 15,000 reports of meetings or contacts and 5,000 internal reflection documents which together reflect its day-to-day activities. While a summary has the merit of highlighting the broad outlines of this history, it smooths over the rough edges and hesitations and masks the particular circumstances and coincidences that made this history possible. It should be used to enable readers to understand the overall dynamics, because sometimes in a day-to-day chronicle the trees hide the forest, and then to go directly to the passages in the text that interest them most.

In 1980, Paulette and Pierre Calame, out of filial duty rather than any particular interest in philanthropy and the world of foundations, decided to help Madeleine Calame, Pierre's mother and executor of Charles Léopold Mayer's will, to rebuild on a sustainable basis a foundation that the latter had originally created on a precarious footing. They had no idea that this decision would consume most of their energy for more than 30 years and lead them to invent a new model of philanthropy.

This Foundation for Human Progress, whose name was taken from the title of a book by Charles Léopold Mayer, "Man is only worth what he can contribute to progress", became, over the years and in homage to the man who had bequeathed his fortune to it, "Charles Léopold Mayer Foundation for Human Progress" was created in early 1982 and placed under the aegis of the canton of Vaud, Switzerland. This choice proved to be decisive, as it was the trust placed in the leaders of this new foundation by the canton's supervisory authority that enabled us to think outside the box over the course of these 30 years.

We had no desire to do anything original. We simply wanted to do something useful. To this end, we started from an observation and a duty.

An observation. Foundations are, by their very nature, intended to be eternal, so what causes them to die? There are two very different reasons. The first is the obsolescence of their statutory purpose, which is based on the irrevocable will of their founder to use their fortune for a cause that they themselves define. However, this cause may lose its relevance over the decades. The second cause is poor management of their assets, which dwindle and disappear over time. We drew two conclusions from this. The first was that the Foundation needed to be given a very broad statutory purpose, in the form of a question rather than a specific cause. The second was that robust asset management needed to be put in place, ensuring sufficient income while preserving the capacity for future action.

A duty. In our view, this duty stemmed from the two exceptional privileges of a foundation: the freedom to choose the nature and scale of its actions, provided that its goals allow it to do so; and the ability to act over the very long term. These two privileges gave rise to what we called the *duty of ambition*: to take on challenges that cannot be met by ordinary public or private institutions, either because the scale at which they operate is imposed on them in advance, because their area of competence confines them within a straitjacket, or because they are unable to take the long term into account. It is this duty of ambition, to which we have remained faithful for more than 30 years, that has led us to invent a new form of philanthropy.

Indeed, philanthropy, as it is usually practised, consists of setting goals in line with the available resources, and this requirement is all the more pressing when the governing bodies of a foundation are keen to measure their impact. We took the opposite approach: we set ourselves goals and challenges that were beyond our modest means, and devised ways of making a useful contribution to these challenges, immediately abandoning any attempt to measure the impact of our actions due to their scale.

We often hear Machado's poem quoted: "Traveller, there is no path. The path is made by walking." Nothing could be more applicable to the Foundation. It did not have a ready-made thesis to defend. Its starting point was based on questions, not

certainties. This idea that there was a path to be forged quickly led us to mark it out so that we could keep track of it. And it is these thousands of day-to-day records, meeting minutes, and documents written over time that have enabled us today to describe the path we have travelled in this chronicle, forcing us to stick as closely as possible to these abundant archives to avoid reconstructing its history after the fact.

A human adventure is always like a high-mountain hike, made up of stages and moments of rest. This is exactly what the foundation experienced between its creation in 1982 and 2014. It went through three stages and three breaks, which provided opportunities for reorientation. These breaks, known as "sabbaticals", each lasted more than a year and enabled the foundation to take stock, reorient itself and give itself new impetus. Two factors made this possible.

The first was the remarkable stability of the core members of the Foundation Board and management. Throughout this three-decade period, they formed a close-knit team, each member intimately familiar with a collective history that they had helped to write. Pierre Calame served as both team director and chair of the Foundation Board from 1986 to 1998, when the French tax authorities requested that we change our governance structure. After 1998, he remained director and secretary of the Board. Relations between the members of the Foundation Board and the permanent team have always been encouraged. Numerous opportunities were created for the members of the Foundation Board, which is statutorily the supreme authority, to get to know the beneficiaries of our funding personally, to the extent that, as we shall see in the following pages, we can often speak of co-construction: a shared adventure involving the Foundation Board, the permanent team and the network of partners.

The second factor, which was just as decisive, was the extreme openness shown over the past three decades by the Foundation Supervisory Authority in the canton of Vaud. Once a relationship of trust had been established and the rigour of our management had been verified over the years, the rigour of our management, it allowed the investment of the Foundation's assets to move away from the prudential rules of Swiss pension funds, thus offering a financial return and an opportunity to reflect on the ethics of investment. Without this, it would have been difficult to gradually increase the Foundation's annual budget to CHF 9 million, while continuing to grow its assets to strengthen its future means of action. It is also this open-mindedness that has enabled the Foundation to move away from traditional philanthropic practices towards genuine strategies for co-constructing a collective adventure.

At a time when immense upheavals were brewing on a global scale, marked in particular by the collapse of the Soviet bloc, the globalisation of trade, the irresistible rise of China and the recognition of the limits of the biosphere, this freedom enabled the Foundation to freely choose its priorities, partners and scope of action.

The first stage, from 1982 to 1989, involved project funding

This first stage still resembled a traditional foundation, with one important exception: our action was focused not on a specific geographical area or field of action, but on an issue. It stemmed from the very name of the Foundation, "for the progress of mankind". Its donor, Charles Léopold Mayer, born in 1881 and died in 1971, a chemical engineer by training, fully shared the positivist utopia of his time: the future of humanity and human progress would depend on the development of science and technology, and practically on that alone. However, at the dawn of the 1980s, we could not share this unbridled optimism. The assertion of progress through science and technology became a question: "How is it that we have never been so knowledgeable and so wealthy, yet so many problems remain unresolved, some of which even threaten the future of humanity?" Or, to put it less negatively, "Under what conditions can the knowledge we have accumulated truly serve the progress of humanity?"

All the projects we funded in this initial period were inspired by this question. Most of them focused on developing countries and addressed sensitive issues such as poverty, agricultural backwardness, health and poor housing. But even at that time, we did not consider each project to be self-contained, as each one had to shed light on this central question by examining what knowledge had been mobilised, what new knowledge it had brought and what questions it raised for research. For our partners at the time, mainly international solidarity non-governmental organisations, these questions were unusual, even disturbing. This led us, in many cases, to try to support the projects with a "monitoring committee" whose role was to help generate answers to these three questions. For us, each project had to not only enable concrete progress in the communities for which it was being implemented, but also contribute to the production of knowledge.

At that time, we had already realised that "the most useful knowledge for action comes from other comparable experiences" and we promoted what we called the *capitalisation of experience*: by inviting each project to share its story, highlighting its successes and failures, we helped to create knowledge born of shared experience. This led to the creation of the first experience bank, DPH, "Dialogues for Human Progress".

Chance, even if it is guided, being one of the great drivers of human action, in 1986, one project stood out: support for the "Vézelay group", a group of eight French-speaking intellectuals from Europe, Africa and North America, who pooled their thoughts on "major technological risks", i.e. the possible dramatic consequences of the development of our technologies without sufficient regulation. Within the framework of this group, we quickly encountered the issue of the ozone hole, which was making headlines at the time and was the very symbol of the globalisation of risks, since the ozone hole was at its maximum at both the North and South Poles, precisely where there was no human activity, followed by the issue of the greenhouse effect and climate change.

The Foundation Board, well aware that by funding this group it was taking us down a path far removed from traditional development projects, decided that two of its members, Maurice Cosandey, President of the Swiss Federal Institute of Technology in Lausanne, and Pierre Calame, would be part of it, to raise the Foundation's questions and feed them with these new intellectual contributions. However, the seriousness of the diagnosis we quickly arrived at showed us that existing institutions were incapable of meeting these unprecedented challenges. That is why, in March 1988, we launched an *appeal for a global conference*. It would play such an essential role in the rest of the adventure that it is worth recalling some of its key messages: "Man's hold on nature has changed radically... for the first time in history, human activity risks irreversibly altering the fundamental balances of our planet... The worst is not certain, but the factors of imbalance are accumulating like water behind a dam, and the day the dam breaks, it will no longer be enough to stop the water from coming in... Technical progress is accelerating to the point of escaping all control. Mindsets and institutions have not evolved at the same pace. It is essential to act on a global scale to regain control of progress. We therefore propose that, two centuries after the Declaration of Human Rights, the States General of the planet, bringing together all the driving forces, solemnly affirm the rights of humanity.
With this appeal, the Foundation was venturing into the unknown, recognising its duty to get involved in challenges that were immeasurable given its small size. It was therefore necessary to invent a new form of philanthropy.

It was also at the end of this first stage that we experimented with a new approach to relations between the state and society: bringing together all our partners involved in this issue to develop a shared vision. Thus, even though this initial period seemed very conventional, the Foundation Board had doubts about whether the funding of projects was in line with the goals we had set ourselves. This question justified the decision to take a sufficiently long break at the end of 1989 to give us time to digest all the lessons learned from our initial experience and to define new directions, if necessary. Thanks to this break, the foundation team had the opportunity, albeit with a certain amount of anxiety, to take a step back and identify the lessons learned from each funded project.

A key concept marked this first sabbatical period: *cross-cutting analysis*. The time for reflection that the Foundation allowed itself enabled us to discover that, beneath the apparent geographical diversity of the themes and projects supported, a number of common, cross-cutting issues were being raised. From then on, a new method became apparent: these cross-cutting issues had to be placed at the center of our work, and each of them would, by definition, concern a large number of partners.

Second stage: the transition from project funding to programme funding. 1991-1994

In 1991, we were ready for a new start. It was no longer a question of funding projects that were more or less independent of each other, but of enabling a group of partners to make progress together, according to methods to be defined, on each of the "cross-cutting" issues that had been identified. What was unique about the Foundation's approach was that the seven cross-cutting issues, each of which became the title of a programme, did not come from a scientific committee of experts who had identified the major issues for the future. On the contrary, they stemmed from the action we had taken ourselves, and our partners in the first stage could not fail to identify with them. In doing so, we renewed the relationship between action and reflection: the two were not separate spheres, the former reserved for practitioners and the latter for intellectuals, researchers or futurists; action and reflection were called upon to feed off each other.

The seven programmes that served as the starting point for this second stage were as follows: 1. *'Relations between the state and society'* and the implicit need to renew them in depth. 2. *"The fight against exclusion"* and the idea that the excluded should be made full participants in this fight. 3. *"Small-scale farming and its modernisation"*, which was soon renamed "small-scale farming and globalisation" given the importance of the future of this type of farming in a globalised trade environment. 4. *"Living in peace in a world of diversity"*, diversity being not only characteristic of relations between different cultures, but also found within each society. 5. *"The art of peace"*, because we had discovered that peace is not the absence of war but a complex construct whose elements had hitherto gone unnoticed, as if they were self-evident. *6. "Innovation, social change and the conditions for social control of technological innovations"*, at a time when innovations seemed, for better or for worse, to be imposed on societies without them having a say. 7. *"Control of major technological risks"*, finally, which was the continuation of the Vézelay group.

From 1991 to 1994, these seven programmes were given relatively equal importance within the foundation, and the methods used enriched each other. The first original feature of this second stage was to encourage dialogue between partners and broaden the circle around each of these seven issues. The second original feature was that it became essential to specify the methods. This was the role of the four policies which, alongside the seven programmes, were the hallmark of this second stage. 1. "*A policy of meetings*" where practitioners came to share their experiences and, where possible, draw general lessons from them. We took care to produce reports on these meetings, almost all of which were published and are of lasting value. 2. "*A policy of gathering experiences*," born of the conviction that the most useful knowledge for actors came from other actors in comparable situations and that, under these conditions, it was essential to gather experiences. 3. "*A policy of capitalising on experiences*" enabling early partners to take a step back and draw general lessons from their accumulated experiences. 4. Finally, "*A communication policy*" which, a few years later, gave rise to the publishing house created by the Foundation, Éditions Charles Léopold Mayer, to popularise the lessons learned from these different approaches.

This second stage brought profound changes to the nature and governance of the Foundation. In the world of foundations, a distinction is generally made between those whose purpose is to award grants (using the American term) and those that finance their own activities (operating). With the new guidelines, we became a mixed foundation, unclassifiable, falling into both categories at once. The second major change was the shift from projects to programmes, which profoundly altered the relationship between the Foundation Board and the permanent team. The team, and in particular each of the programme

leaders, was given considerable new freedom of initiative, which meant that mutual relationships had to be redefined. The solution was to establish strict rules of transparency, both in terms of the actions taken and the expenses incurred, with the Foundation Board exercising more comprehensive control than before, based on an annual programme forecast and a joint evaluation of the programme's results. This transparency, which formed the basis of the relationship of trust between the Foundation Board and the permanent team, proved so indispensable that it continued unchanged for decades to come.

The fruits of this new Foundation policy have been numerous and cannot all be listed here. Most of them are available on the Charles Léopold Mayer Publishing website, www.eclm.fr. For example, as part of the Smallholder Farming and Globalisation programme, they have made it possible to create the first mixed networks of smallholder leaders and experts on issues as varied as international trade and the running of smallholder organisations. They have given legitimacy to the idea and methods of capitalising on experience, showing that this creates a new kind of operational knowledge. For example, the 1991 Caracas meeting, dedicated to improving working-class neighbourhoods around the world and organised as part of the State and Society programme, showed that any policy in this area had to satisfy a number of common guiding principles, giving rise to a new principle of governance, the principle of active subsidiarity, which has now been adopted by the European Union.

The meetings have sometimes given rise to new and lasting institutions, such as the Finansol label for solidarity finance, which emerged from an international meeting on microcredit. They have also been very directly involved in events, such as the two international meetings on the art of peace, the first of which contributed to pacifying the situation in Ethiopia for a time, and the second, held in the aftermath of the Tutsi genocide in Rwanda in October 1994, helped to provide the new government with valuable insights and concrete examples for its peace-building strategy.

Alongside all these programmes, each of which operated relatively independently, the programme on major technological risks developed by the Vézelay group stood out. The Call for a General Assembly of the Planet had not been launched in vain, even if its media coverage in a number of countries had been significant. It gave the Foundation a responsibility that the group of intellectuals gathered in Vézelay could not assume. The Foundation, like Saint-Exupéry's Little Prince, became responsible for the ambition it had helped to create: the organisation of the États généraux de la planète.

It is difficult to imagine a greater contrast between the relative modesty of our foundation, a dwarf compared to the large American foundations whose assets were dozens of times greater than ours, and this ambition for a new form of global dialogue. We got there gradually. The first step, in 1992 and 1993, was to organise seven regional meetings in Europe, Africa, the Middle East, North America, Latin America, China and South-East Asia to ensure that the diagnosis made by a few French-speaking intellectuals was shared around the world. The converging results of these meetings led us, in September 1993, to organise a "Preparatory Convention for the Estates General", the aim of which was to determine whether the Call for a Planet-wide Estates General had any chance of leading to a global collective dynamic, based on a common diagnosis of the situation. Here too, the conclusion was positive, leading to the collective drafting of the "Platform for a Responsible and United World" and then, on this basis, to the launch of a collective dynamic called the "Alliance for a Responsible and United World". The Foundation took over from the Vézelay group to take the reins. Everything still had to be designed for such a multicultural and multi-stakeholder dynamic, its very nature, its partners and its working methods. This alliance represented a new transformation for the Foundation, as radical as the first.

The development of the Alliance for a Responsible and United World and the organisation of the World Citizens' Assembly. 1994-2001

During the eight years between the launch of the Alliance and the organisation of the World Citizens' Assembly, the seven programmes defined in 1991 each followed their own path, but all the issues addressed by these programmes fed into the Alliance's thinking, which aimed to be threefold global, opening up to all regions of the world, involving all types of actors, and addressing all the major challenges facing humanity at the end of the 20th century.

Like the appeal in 1988, the Platform for a Responsible and United World received considerable media coverage. The allies, by definition signatories to the platform, quickly grew to several hundred and then several thousand, attracting the attention of much older global organisations such as the Citizens of the Earth Association, founded in the aftermath of the Second World War. But everything still had to be designed and done. Aware of the scale of the task, the Foundation Council decided in 1994 not to organise a sabbatical period until the organisation of these States General of the Planet, which became the Foundation's new horizon; in practice, until the World Citizens' Assembly to be held in Lille, France, in December 2001.

The challenge was colossal. Between 1994 and 2001, support for the Alliance, the new name for what had originally been a programme on major technological risks, would take up an increasing share of the Foundation's budget. The budget itself would be increased year on year to match the scale of this vast ambition. Thus, in ten years, the Foundation had moved from funding specific projects to organising a global alliance.

It is not possible here to detail everything that went into building this Alliance over the course of those eight years. We will focus on just a few particularly noteworthy elements. Very early on, it was decided that the Alliance would be built along three complementary paths:

- *a "geocultural" approach*, aimed at gradually bringing together different regions of the world;

- *a "collegial approach"* aimed at bringing together the views and proposals of all types of public and private actors on a global scale, from farmers to large companies, from teachers to local authority officials, from financial actors to those involved in research. This second dynamic was particularly difficult and original, based on the idea that the diversity of the world is not only geo-cultural, but also, and sometimes even more so, socio-professional. At a time when economic globalisation was giving rise to the emergence of "organ pipe societies", different socio-professional groups were juxtaposed within a society without mixing, to the extent that the leaders of large companies from different continents were much closer to each other than to the poor inhabitants of their own cities;
- *a "sectoral approach"* aimed at categorising issues and promoting a "thematic project" for each of them, bringing together the best specialists on the issue in as international a manner as possible, who were invited to formulate proposals for reform for the next century.

In short, a truly Promethean approach reflecting two convictions we had arrived at and which were clearly stated in the platform. The first is that there is no point in attempting a 'breakthrough' in a specific field, particularly technology, when the transition to be made is systemic. The second, stated by Pierre Calame in the book Mission Possible, written in 1994 to provide an initial intellectual assessment of the Foundation's progress, is that in periods of rapid change, which was obviously the case, *the conceptual and institutional framework inherited from the past, which evolves very slowly, is no longer suited to new challenges.* Therefore, as was said at the time, the most concrete action... is to think about and revise this conceptual and institutional framework.

It will come as no surprise to anyone that building this alliance was anything but smooth sailing. The greatest difficulty lay in the very nature of the Alliance and the terms of its governance. It was neither a political organisation, nor a trade union, nor an association. In all three cases, there is a clear boundary between those who belong and those who do not. We quickly realised that the Alliance was, on the contrary, an institution without walls and without formal members. Within this dynamic, the levels of involvement and commitment varied greatly, which deprived it of the traditional means of governing organisations: a list of members; statutes defining the responsibilities and powers of the various bodies; elections to appoint the governing bodies and spokespersons. In the case of the Alliance, the real power of each member derived not from a statutory position but from their added value to the common endeavour, whether it was establishing contacts in new countries or new circles, leading a thematic project or organising communication. Of course, the Foundation and, within the Foundation, the Council and its president played a decisive role, firstly because they embodied the continuity of the process, secondly because they provided the money, and finally because they developed the methods. For the first two years, everyone benefited, but the following years were punctuated by a series of crises. The most enduring crisis stemmed from the diverse expectations of those who, by signing the platform, had become allies. Two types of profiles emerged. The first, which for simplicity's sake we will call "the experts", brought together people who, in their field of expertise, had recognised the limitations of what they were doing, either because they were confined to too narrow a field, or because they were not sufficiently open to international developments, or because they were not coming up with enough proposals for the coming century. What these experts expected from the Alliance was to offer a flexible, effective working environment that would enable them to move forward quickly, open up to the outside world and connect fields that were generally separate. The second group, whom we will call "the activists", had come to the Alliance attracted by the novelty and ambition of its approach. Often disappointed by the timidity of political parties, power struggles or confinement within an overly restrictive geographical framework, they saw the Alliance as a possible renewal of their commitment and a new framework for their passion. On the other hand, deeply marked by their political or associative experience, they felt uncomfortable in this institution without walls and, above all, demanded to be involved in collective decisions. The central role of the Foundation and its president was not acceptable to them in the long term, and they wanted to replace it as quickly as possible with formal collective decision-making procedures. In short, they wanted to impose on the Alliance a conception of power inspired by their political or associative experience. This tension between experts and activists, and the latter's mistrust of the role of the Foundation, which they would have liked to reduce to the traditional function of a funding body, hampered the development of the Alliance by absorbing considerable energy from those who were most committed to its development. It was not until 1999 that the Foundation accepted that the Alliance was a completely new form of organisation, responding to the needs of an open world, a form that had to be theorised as such: the Alliance, a new mode of collective organisation.

The second difficulty is the scope and limitations of geo-cultural development. While it is easy to proclaim that the issues are global, and while it is possible to organise, as we did in 1992-1993, meetings of a few dozen intellectuals from different continents, the transition from a network of Foundation partners largely dominated by French-speaking countries to a truly global movement has been difficult. Magnificent efforts were made by all sides over the course of these eight years to broaden the Alliance's audience. Some allies even undertook veritable missionary journeys to spread the good word in new countries or new circles. But the fact remains that after eight years, more than three-quarters of the allies were still French- or Spanish-speaking. We even encountered prejudice: the Alliance's dynamic appealed to some in North America, but ultimately they could not imagine that a global dynamic could be driven from anywhere other than Washington or New York. This gap between the Alliance's actual human consistency and its ambition for a balanced dialogue between the regions of the world will lead us, as we shall see, to radical and irreversible decisions when it comes to organising the World Citizens' Assembly.

The development of the collegial approach, for its part, was hampered by the fact that at the end of the 20th century there were very few professional networks of global scope. Admittedly, there was an attempt on the part of the trade unions. Certainly, the heads of large companies, due to the global scale of their activities, may have felt that they embodied a global economic elite, but at the time, this elite remained very much North American and European in nature. China had not yet regained the prominent position it occupies 40 years later. There were also a few global scientific unions bringing together

specialists in the same discipline, but when it came to addressing the impact of scientific research on societies or the conditions under which scientists exercise their responsibility, there were not many people involved. This was again evident in 1998 with the World Summit on Higher Education and in 1999 with the World Summit on Science. In the religious sphere, there was a World Parliament of Religions, but in reality it was largely inspired, funded and run by various Christian denominations. At the same time, local and regional authorities were seeking to organise themselves on a global scale, with the first World Assembly of Cities, but this was primarily in the hope of making the voice of local and regional authorities heard in various multilateral institutions of the United Nations, rather than to reflect together on the role of territories in the future of the planet. The remarkable thing is that through the Alliance we were able to engage in dialogue with these various international bodies in formation, without necessarily convincing them to develop strong perspectives for the 21st century, let alone to engage in dialogue with each other on these perspectives.

The sectoral approach was the easiest of the three because creating a thematic project bringing together good experts did not necessarily require it to be truly global or to give a voice to different types of stakeholders. The difficulty here was primarily conceptual: how to structure this set of thematic projects to cover the spectrum of future challenges as effectively as possible. To do this, we designed a typology of projects, grouping them into four clusters: the *representations and knowledge* cluster, which brought together everything that structures our representations of the world and guides our actions, starting with the value system and culture; the *economy and society* cluster, covering the organisation of society, lifestyles, demography, social cohesion and exclusion, and production systems; the *governance* cluster, covering citizenship, the legal system, public policy, the organisation of civil society, and international policy; *the humanity and biosphere relations* cluster, encompassing climate change, energy and biosphere management. This typology, which we also used to classify the various socio-professional groups, enabled significant progress to be made, which can be quantified as follows: in 2001, at the time of the World Citizens' Assembly, participants had at their disposal nearly 70 notebooks of proposals classified according to these different areas, many of which made a truly innovative contribution.

In terms of its ambition, the Alliance was a bit like a horizon that seemed to recede as we advanced. On the other hand, if we judge it by the progress made in a few years, we can see that it has given rise to countless unlikely dialogues and has made it possible, along the way, to engage in equal dialogue with the largest institutions.

I will cite just one example here, both because of the importance of the subject and because of its ramifications and the original contribution that the Alliance was able to make: the search for values common to all humanity. This question of common values occupied a large place in global exchanges during the last decade of the 20th century, a period that, with hindsight, can be described as a period of hope. After the fall of the Berlin Wall and the collapse of the Soviet bloc, it did not seem unreasonable to dream of a new democratic international order, but in order to build this new order, it was essential to agree on common values.

In the aftermath of the Second World War, what is commonly referred to as the "international community" was built on two pillars: the UN Charter and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Both had the weakness of having been conceived by the victors of the Second World War and reflecting the Western supremacy of the time. In particular, the pillar of values: human rights are the legacy of Western history, which gives pre-eminence to the individual over society. Furthermore, these two pillars said nothing about the relationship between humanity and the biosphere, in particular about the limits of the biosphere and the risks to humanity posed by economic growth and the relentless exploitation of what were then called natural resources. Maurice Strong, Secretary-General of the first international meeting on the environment in Stockholm in 1972 and architect of the 1992 Earth Summit, was particularly aware of this and had hoped that the Earth Summit would give birth to a third pillar of international life, an Earth Charter, this time dealing with the conditions for preserving the biosphere. Its failure mortified him. Convinced that heads of state were in no way prepared to adopt this third pillar, he changed tack and sought to make the drafting of the Earth Charter a shared endeavour of civil society. For its part, UNESCO, under the leadership of its then Director-General Federico Mayor, had come to the conclusion that it was vital for humanity to agree on common values.

It was in this context that the Alliance and the Foundation sought to bring their own added value. This stemmed from two of our specific characteristics: looking beyond environmental issues and focusing on genuine dialogue between cultures and socio-professional circles.This led us to take our place in the ongoing international dialogues. Convinced of the relevance of Maurice Strong's thinking on the need for a third pillar, we spent several years talking about the Earth Charter, both to engage in dialogue with the initiative taken by Maurice Strong and Mikhail Gorbachev and to name our own effort to seek common values.

Gradually, one thing became clear to us. The only value common to all of humanity was responsibility. This is a concept that, with many nuances of course, can be found in all languages and describes the fact that when there is a community, each of its members must assume responsibility for the impact of their actions on all other members. A few years later, this gave rise to the proposal not for an Earth Charter, but for a *Universal Declaration of Human Responsibilities,* an obvious parallel to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. In doing so, we took up and expanded on the proposal made a few years earlier by the Interaction Council, a think tank formed on the initiative of former German Chancellor Helmut Schmidt and former heads of state.

The Alliance's work had a knock-on effect on the Foundation's other programmes. Thus, the programme initially devoted to combating exclusion gradually evolved into a broader and more conceptual effort to imagine a new socio-economic model. The Alliance's sectoral approach also opened up new perspectives. For example, we have shown that territories, i.e. living

areas, will become the building blocks of future governance; we have helped to spread the concept of industrial and territorial ecology internationally, including in China; and we have begun to lay the foundations for responsible finance.

The World Citizens' Assembly and the Agenda for the 21st Century. 1999-2002

During the last decade of the 20th century, more and more people saw the limitations of managing global interdependencies, between societies and between humanity and the biosphere, reduced to market globalisation and the worldwide spread of the liberal economy. The initial reaction took the form of the anti-globalisation movement, with some believing that only a return to economic sovereignty for states would give people back control over their future. This movement enjoyed some successes, such as the blocking in 1998 of the Multilateral Agreement on Investment (MAI), which had been negotiated behind the backs of the people. This victory was more apparent than real, as the abandonment of this agreement led to the replacement of internationally accepted rules with bilateral agreements, which were likely to be even more unfavourable to the poorest countries. Above all, this anti-globalisation movement offered no answer to the question that was on everyone's mind: how can we manage our fragile planet together for the benefit of all humanity? People were beginning to talk about the various limits of the biosphere, and the issue of climate change had already been on the global agenda for more than ten years. Hence the shift from an anti-globalisation movement to an alter-globalisation movement asserting, to use the slogan of the time, that another world was possible. The Alliance, by its very nature, embodied alter-globalisation, since its aim was to define the concrete contours of this other world. But at that time, we were confronted with another vision of alter-globalisation, one that gave rise, at the very moment when the World Citizens' Assembly was about to take place, to the World Social Forum. This was a more militant, less technocratic form of anti-globalisation than that embodied by the Alliance; it was not burdened by the need for dialogue between different socio-professional groups, nor by the need to develop strong alternatives in the areas of governance, economics or law. It aimed to bring together, on an international scale, militant civil society movements, mainly from the left and green parties, without worrying too much about the actual representativeness of these movements within society. Many of the Platform's signatories, those described as "activists" as opposed to "experts", felt much more comfortable with the widely publicised collective dynamic of the World Social Forums than with the Alliance's approach. The World Social Forums, conceived as the counterpart to the World Economic Forum in Davos and inheriting a long tradition of counter-summits, enjoyed much greater media coverage than the Alliance.

This confrontation between the two conceptions of anti-globalisation was very useful for us. We knew the promoters of the World Social Forum well, for whom we had a great deal of respect, and for a time we dreamed together of the complementarity between the Alliance's propositional approach and the more oppositional approach of the World Social Forum. The early years of the Forum seemed to confirm this complementarity, until 2004, when it left its home base in Porto Alegre to hold its annual summit in different regions of the world, thereby abandoning its proposal-based approach.

This confrontation between two visions of anti-globalisation had a second effect: it forced us to follow through on the logic of the World Citizens' Assembly, the new name for the States General of the Planet. In 2000, the Foundation Council was faced with a dilemma: should the World Assembly be a kind of general assembly of allies, or should it be conceived as an assembly representative of the world's diversity, both in geo-cultural and socio-professional terms? As the World Social Forum was becoming a major attraction for many signatories of the Alliance Platform, we opted for the second solution and designed the World Assembly as a radically new form of global dialogue. In doing so, we were aware that only a small minority of allies would actually participate in this assembly, which amounted to a kind of scuttling of the collective dynamic in favour of a radically new type of meeting, whose value would result from its format, conclusions and follow-up.

The Foundation then developed the concept, philosophy and methods of the World Assembly: a ten-day meeting in Lille, France, with 400 participants representing the socio-cultural and socio-professional diversity of the world. To ensure this representativeness, we set rules for participant quotas by region of the world, based on the relative weight of each region's population, and quotas for representation from different socio-professional backgrounds. This Assembly, where Chinese and Indians alone represented 25% of the total participants and where military leaders rubbed shoulders with spiritual leaders and peasant leaders, was an incredible event in its own right, which left a lasting impression on all those who experienced it, beyond anything we could have imagined. For the first time, and in a very tangible way, "the whole world was there".

In addition to the participants, the Assembly had to mobilise hundreds of volunteers to assist in the workshops and provide simultaneous translation into 35 languages. We designed the working method itself, drawing on all the methodological expertise of the Foundation, so that each workshop would result in a summary highlighting the contributions of the various participants and so that the day's achievements would feed into the next day's work. It was a balancing act, and on several occasions we almost succumbed to the complexity of the system we had invented. However, the multiplicity of workshop activities provided a formidable basis for drawing conclusions, ensuring traceability between each person's contributions and the general conclusions. Vincent Calame developed a first version of the Desmodo software for this occasion, which was often used afterwards to transparently build the conclusions of large meetings organised in multiple workshops, which is a prerequisite for all participants to play an active role.

The Agenda for the 21st Century

The great challenge of the Assembly, its raison d'être, was to determine whether these thousands of exchanges and dozens of proposal notebooks could yield common priorities for action. The analysis of all this material in the months following the Assembly provided a positive answer to this question. Yes, despite or thanks to the diversity of the allies' geo-cultural and

socio-professional backgrounds and interests, a²¹ˢᵗCentury Agenda emerged. And that is the very good news: we can act together to meet our common challenges. Agenda is to be taken in its literal sense: the transformations that must be undertaken. The second piece of good news is that these common challenges are limited in number, allowing us to focus on a small number of actions: the Agenda establishes a strategy for change for the world. On the other hand, the bad news, which explains the difficulty encountered over several decades in implementing it, is that each of these challenges involves radical transformations in the way we think and act. The Agenda cannot be reduced to the debates and collective struggles of past centuries. It is truly a change of era. The emphasis is on the relationship between scales, from local to global, between environments, between issues.

Four interrelated challenges structure the Agenda. First, *a common ethical foundation, responsibility,* which links actions to values, individual behaviour and legal standards, and which is revealed through concrete behaviour: responsibility is only revealed through the way in which it is exercised. Secondly, *a revolution in governance*, i.e. in the way society is managed, in order to take responsibility for relationships, organise cooperation and combine the dual requirements of consistency and autonomy, unity and diversity at all levels, from local to global. Thirdly, *a radical transformation of our economic models* to reconcile the well-being of all with the limits of the biosphere. Finally, *the emergence of a global community*, a lived sense of a shared destiny, without which we will be unable to manage the irreversible interdependencies between societies and between humanity and the biosphere.

Third stage: the Foundation sets out to tackle the challenges of the 21st century. 2003-2014

The second sabbatical period was used to define the Foundation's new strategy

The development of the Agenda was the first step of the second sabbatical, in 2002-2003. It was necessary to collectively digest everything that had happened over the last ten years and draw conclusions from it.

During the last decade of the 20th century, the global context had changed profoundly: the fall of the Soviet Union had given rise to dreams of global harmony, which were quickly dashed by reality; Asia, and China in particular, had become the most dynamic poles of global change, confirming our intuition that nothing would be possible without building dialogue with the new emerging giants; the illusion of the "end of history", with the triumph of democratic models and the market economy, had quickly dissipated; attempts to impose democracy by force or persuasion had failed; market globalisation had neither united societies nor ensured the management of interdependencies between humanity and the biosphere; the assertion of the universal nature of human rights was contested and did not ensure social cohesion; political Islam was asserting itself and the attacks in New York in September 2001 ushered in the era of globalised terrorism; climate change, now recognised as a common threat, was struggling to give rise to international strategies commensurate with the challenge. All of these examples underscored the urgency of the Agenda, the content of which we had just explained.

For the Foundation Board, the Agenda clearly represented our new horizon: the very circumstances of its emergence made it an urgent obligation. But how could we move from one form of structuring our action to another? How could we manage the relationships between the actions that the Agenda reminded us were necessary? With which partners, old and new, could we pursue this ambition, so out of step with the structure of political debates and social forces? The sabbatical period was devoted to finding answers to all these questions.

Without rendering obsolete the themes that had structured our seven programmes in 1991, the Agenda invited us to place them in a new, more global perspective, with the four challenges identified in the Agenda as the cement. The affirmation of the close links between the four challenges meant that it was no longer possible to structure the Foundation's action and organisation on the basis of thematic programmes, even though these had hitherto given autonomy to the teams that ran them. It was therefore necessary to devise a new form of organisation that would take into account the links between all the Foundation's activities without leading to a centralised mode of operation. Neither respect for the aspirations of the various team members nor loyalty to our long-standing partners could divert us from our new strategic priorities. Foundations are, par excellence, non-democratic institutions, their strategy depending neither on voters, shareholders, members nor customer demands. It was the right moment to give substance to this other form of philanthropy, which aims to best serve the public interest that transcends it.

The main uncertainty concerned our future partnerships, since the vast majority of civil society organisations, businesses and public institutions remained heirs to the "old world". We felt that in many cases we would have to find new partners, relying on our partners from the previous stage if they were willing to embark on this new adventure with us. One of the solutions we found was to encourage the desire for autonomy among the most experienced members of the team by offering them the opportunity to create their own structures and become our partners. This led to the creation of the IRG (Institute for Research and Debate on Governance), the IRE (Initiative to Rethink the Economy) and the FNGM (Forum for a New Global Governance). Other creations will follow, generally in line with the work carried out jointly within the Alliance. This was both the strength and the weakness of this new phase: we succeeded in inventing new ways of doing things, but in return, many new partners, created from scratch to fit in with the Foundation's agenda and new strategy, would be permanently dependent on our funding.

One of the questions put to the Board concerned the future of the Alliance. The choice made for the World Citizens' Assembly already anticipated the answer: we did not want to make it a General Assembly of allies, and most of them were unable to participate because of the quotas we had imposed on ourselves. Unsurprisingly, the momentum had been broken. In 2003, the Council had to decide between three options: end our support; transform the Alliance into an institution with traditional statutes and become one of our partners; create multiple alliances from the Alliance, each pursuing one of the Agenda's objectives but retaining the characteristics we had invented for the alliances, in particular the possibility of participating with varying degrees of intensity. The third option was chosen.

The Foundation Council also considered our potential intellectual contribution to this innovative agenda. At the end of the sabbatical period, it noted that we had already made significant contributions to three of the four challenges: the draft Charter of Human Responsibilities, a very provisional version of which had been approved by the World Assembly; the proposal papers on governance, from local to global; and the Alliance's own method for building a community of destiny. One challenge remained unaddressed: the renewal of economic thinking. It was to meet this challenge that we created the Initiative to Rethink the Economy. In doing so, the Foundation no longer positioned itself solely as a supporter of external dynamics, but became a direct actor in the implementation of the Agenda.

Finally, in order to reconcile our requirement for consistency across all actions with the decentralisation of initiatives, we had to innovate once again in our working methods by placing each supported action within a four-dimensional framework: "where", "with whom", "on what" " and "how", which enabled each team member and each partner to clearly identify other actions overlapping with some of these dimensions in order to establish cooperation between them. We must admit that this was asking a lot of everyone . Not everything was successful, but this method was very beneficial in drawing up the Foundation's budgets, which became biennial to affirm the continuity of the action. Each of them was now an opportunity to take stock of progress in a resolutely global strategy. As with the Alliance itself, the scale of the goals may have seemed unreasonable, but it provided us with a formidable compass. This is so true that the 2004-2005 budget, the first of this third phase, foreshadowed what the Foundation's action would be for the next ten years. We will limit ourselves to mentioning a few particularly significant episodes, each corresponding to one of the four challenges.

Renewing dialogue between societies and building a community of destiny: the China Europa Forum

Whether we like Chinese civilisation and the Chinese political regime or not, the world cannot do without China and we must learn to engage in dialogue with it and take up common challenges. Strengthened by this firm conviction, the Foundation had, from 1992 onwards, very shortly after the events in Tiananmen Square which had helped to open the eyes of those who saw Maoist China as a model for the world, established relations with Chinese partners. These relations gradually diversified and intensified, particularly with the development of the Alliance, so that by 2003 several of the Foundation's programmes had partners in China, demonstrating the fruitfulness of these exchanges. It must be said that we benefited at the time from two exceptional circumstances: first, the beginning of the [21st] century, until Xi Jinping came to power, was a period of openness, as China experiences from time to time, making fairly free inter-individual exchanges possible; secondly, most of the leaders of this new China were part of the first generations to have access to university education when it reopened after the Cultural Revolution, creating an astonishing "network effect" that made high-level contacts possible in many circles, which would have been unimaginable in other times.

A meeting to review ten years of cooperation was held in Beijing in early 2003 and showed the possibility of moving beyond programme-based compartmentalisation to identify numerous avenues for future cooperation. However, it was a fortuitous event that had a unifying effect: China's desire to better understand the European Union at a time in its history when it had to integrate multiple components, Hong Kong, Macao, Tibet, and tomorrow Taïwan, while respecting their diversity, and saw European integration as a possible model for integration. In response to this expectation, the Foundation co-organised a symposium in 2005 with the Chinese University of Diplomacy and the Association of Chinese Intellectuals in Europe, presenting European integration from various angles to a particularly attentive Chinese audience. The Foundation's credibility stemmed from the fact that, thanks to its previous work and the trusting contacts it had established in various circles, it was able to bring together major players in European integration in Nansha, in southern China. This was something the Chinese audience loved, knowing that while they had no difficulty establishing academic or diplomatic contacts, they were unable to bring these historical players to China.

This initial success led us to build on it with the creation of a China-Europe Forum, embodying the possibility of a profound renewal of relations between societies. The Alliance's experience served as a model for this Forum, with decentralised dialogue enabling Chinese and Europeans to compare their views and solutions on a wide range of topics of common interest, before identifying the main prospects in plenary sessions. At first glance, this working method seemed incompatible with the Chinese political system and initially aroused a great deal of scepticism on the European side, where there were doubts that the Chinese counterparts would be able to express anything other than the Communist Party's vision. However, through sheer determination, all these obstacles were overcome.

 The second Forum was held in Europe in 2007, with 45 workshops spread across different European countries, followed by plenary sessions in Brussels. The third Forum, even more improbable, was held in China in 2010, with 56 workshops spread across China and plenary sessions in Hong Kong. These forums demonstrated, with the Chinese case being the most difficult a priori, that another dialogue between societies was possible, replacing the classic opposition of "us versus them" with a much more subtle approach in which the internal differences within each continent were equal to the differences between the

Chinese on one side and the Europeans on the other, and that it was possible to draw from these dialogues a clear statement of the challenges to be tackled together.

These forums also served to reveal the short-sightedness inherited from the past: although they received extensive coverage in the Chinese media, they were superbly ignored by the European media, which, failing to understand the nature of China's formidable emergence on the world stage and still imbued with European superiority, did not see what Europe could learn from China. This was a disastrous historical error that caused us to ignore the richness of this dialogue and explains why, in just a few years, China has gone from being seen by Europeans as the world's factory, taking advantage only of its low labour costs, to being seen as Europe's strategic rival, surpassing it in many areas. But history does not repeat itself...

The Forum remained at its third edition in 2010. It was too large to rest mainly on the shoulders of our small foundation, and the administrative inability to obtain substantial funding, particularly from the European Commission, irreparably compromised its sustainability. Would it have continued with China's withdrawal into itself from 2012 onwards? Would the desire for exchange have remained as strong on the Chinese side at a time when China was becoming the world's leading power? No one can say. What remains is a tremendous achievement: the demonstration that with our limited resources, but with credibility and well-established methods, a small foundation is capable of reinventing relations between societies.

Creating international citizen alliances

The Alliance's collegial approach taught us two things: despite the globalisation of interdependencies, intercontinental socio-professional networks remain the exception; and when such networks do exist, they often have a corporatist agenda. With the Universal Declaration of Human Responsibilities, which replaced the Charter, we proposed a whole new perspective: *making the exercise of responsibility by each socio-professional group the foundation of the social contract with the rest of society.* And we proposed that the organisational model should be that of alliances, knowing that it was unlikely, and even undesirable, to rely on traditional associative structures, which are inseparable from a more corporatist approach. Hence the generic term proposed, "citizen alliance", with the qualifier "citizen" referring to the idea of place in the city and therefore to that of the social contract. But this was, of course, only a general reference, and in practice each of these citizen alliances had its own specific characteristics, resulting in a variety of unique ventures and tailor-made solutions, generally starting with the formation of alliance committees.

This is how thirteen citizen alliances came into being, one after the other. Simply listing them gives an idea of the ambition and focus of each one: *the International Alliance of Residents,* created at the end of the first World Assembly of Residents of Popular Neighbourhoods, co-organised by the Foundation in Mexico in 2001; *the Alliance of Journalists*, which, after a promising start, saw its geographical scope narrow but its purpose, the ethics of journalists and the responsible practice of the profession, endure; a short-lived *Alliance of Lawyers*, which encountered difficulties in this milieu, accustomed to dealing with the responsibility of others, in reflecting on its own responsibility in society; an *alliance of academics*, conceived as an extension of the report prepared by Edgar Morin as part of the Alliance on the University of the 21st Century, which set out the conditions for a university to assume its responsibility towards society; a formidable and unexpected *alliance of young people* initiated by our Brazilian ally Rachel Trajber, who, during President Lula's first term, invented new methods of dialogue between young people on their responsibilities, methods which, with the support of the Foundation, were extended to the world with the first global meeting of young people, "We will take care of the planet", with follow-ups in subsequent years, particularly in Europe; an *international alliance on executive responsibility*, IRESCA, initiated in France with the active support of the CFDT trade union, but which subsequently declined due to the difficulty executives had in speaking clearly about the concrete dilemmas they face; An equally unexpected *alliance of military personnel for peace*, led by Manfred Rosenberger, heir to the Art of Peace programme, which led to remarkable dialogues between military leaders from different countries on military ethics, culminating in the presentation of the Universal Declaration of Human Responsibilities at the 100th anniversary of the Colombian War College. an *alliance* of *citizen* scientists who are aware of the exhaustion of the discourse inherited from the Enlightenment on the automatically positive and liberating nature of scientific research and who set out the conditions for responsible scientific research; an *alliance of independent publishers*, concerned with maintaining and developing 'bibliodiversity' in the context of the concentration of publishing companies; *an alliance of small-scale farmers and fishermen*, extending the networks built by the "Small-scale farming and globalisation" programme; APM, a space for collective reflection that has given rise to lasting initiatives such as the "peasant seeds" network and the AGTER association dedicated to improving the governance of land, water and natural resources; four unsuccessful attempts to spark a debate on the responsibility *of large companies, philanthropists, financial institutions and religious leaders.*

The scale of the ambition may seem laughable when compared to the very limited resources that the Foundation was able to devote to each of these initiatives. This is all the more so given that no group places its own responsibilities at the centre of its thinking. Only those alliances or initiatives that the Foundation decided to continue supporting were able to survive, and rarely with a global perspective. But it is precisely the diversity of these attempts that makes them so valuable: in a world that tends to pit "good" against "bad", we have maintained the idea that, on the contrary, each community must be invited to evolve and that it is this participation of different communities in a liveable world, where everyone assumes their share of responsibility, that must continue to be encouraged. Our difficulty in fostering exchanges between foundations on our responsibilities is just one example of the scale of the changes that are needed.

The other major lesson has been the importance of seizing key moments and identifying the actors who can make a difference at those moments. This has been the case for universities, young people and the military. By seizing these opportunities, we

were able to bring about events that, while not having lasting consequences, left a lasting mark, providing a springboard for action when new favourable circumstances arise.

Putting responsibility at the heart of society and law

As the Alliance's work progressed, we distanced ourselves from the Earth Charter while retaining Maurice Strong's original ambition of developing a "third pillar" of the international community, on a par with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. But to do so, we had to come up with a text that met two requirements: it had to be both an individual ethical reference and the foundation for collective behaviour and legal systems, and it had to resonate with all societies. At the time of the World Assembly, we were still in the middle of the process, and the text adopted on that occasion was clearly only a first step.

The citizens' alliances we have just mentioned were a test of relevance in a wide variety of settings. The text still had to be translated into more than twenty-five languages and, in addition, a short text had to be produced that could serve as the basis for a future global law. Then it was necessary to identify the conditions under which such a text could effectively take its place in international negotiations. The ambition of this task can be gauged by remembering that the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, despite originating solely from Western culture and benefiting from its hegemony, took centuries to become established! The Foundation Council was well aware of this in 2003 when it decided to move forward pragmatically, one step at a time.

Experience had also taught us that the community of heads of state gathered within the UN would undoubtedly be the last to adopt a third pillar and that it was therefore necessary, without neglecting potential opportunities, to move forward in several directions: professional circles, the application of the principles of responsibility to multiple areas of human activity, and dialogue with legal professionals.

In 2011, the time had come to draft a short summary text that could serve as the famous "third pillar". This was the *Universal Declaration of Human Responsibilities*, whose title and style fully reflect the parallel with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. All that remained was to test it. Among the many efforts made, two are worth mentioning: the engagement in dialogue with political authorities during the preparation of the 2012 Rio Summit, the twentieth anniversary of the 1992 Earth Summit; and the introduction of these ideas into the legal world. In both cases, the task seemed beyond the reach of a small foundation, but, as in the case of citizen alliances, we benefited from the credibility and contacts we had acquired in many circles thanks to the Alliance's work and methods.

In the political arena, the partnership forged with Michel Rocard, former French Prime Minister, who enjoyed a very high international profile and had himself promoted a Declaration of Interdependence with great similarities to our draft Declaration, was essential. With him, we were able to engage in dialogue at the highest level with the Brazilian government, host of the Summit, and arouse its interest. Then, buoyed by this positive response, we organised a tour of Asia – India, the Philippines, Malaysia and Indonesia – with Edith Sizoo leading the process. Thanks to our efforts to make the World Assembly a true reflection of the world's diversity, we were able to meet with key players at the highest level of government in each case. The time was not yet ripe for the "international community" to put this draft Declaration on the Summit agenda, but we demonstrated that, through a rigorous and determined approach, it was possible to play in the big leagues.

The same observation can be made in the legal world: the rigorous process of drafting the Declaration and testing its appeal within the Citizen Alliances made it possible to engage in exchanges with specialists in international law in India, Brazil and France. Our great ally in this effort was Mireille Delmas Marty, an internationally renowned jurist and professor at the Collège de France, who was deeply convinced of the ability of law to reinvent itself in order to respond to new challenges. This led to two fruitful collaborations with the Collège de France: the "taking responsibility seriously" process, led by another unanimously respected jurist, Alain Supiot, which placed the metamorphosis of responsibility at the heart of legal developments; and then the international work led by Mireille Delmas Marty, which was her last initiative before her death, devoted to the possible emergence of common foundations for a global law, which gave rise in 2022 to the book "Sur les chemins d'un Jus commune universalisable" (On the paths to a universal common law). On behalf of the Foundation, Pierre Calame published a summary of our reflections in the same year in the book "Métamorphoses de la responsabilité et contrat social" (Metamorphoses of Responsibility and the Social Contract). The Foundation was thus able to show that its dialogue with different peoples and different circles around the world had enabled it to lay solid ethical foundations for the twenty-first century.

Promoting a revolution in governance

After new relationships between societies and a foundation of shared values, this was the third change identified in the Agenda for the Twenty-first Century. The "State and Society" programme launched in 1991 had enabled progress to be made, with increased observation and dialogue on the crisis in public action, revealing in this area too the impossibility of sticking to a philosophy of public management inherited from past centuries and developed to respond to a state of society very different from the challenges facing us at the dawn of the 21st century. From the role of territories to the foundations of global governance, the Alliance's work had made it possible to identify general principles of governance, which were explained in the book "Democracy in pieces, for a revolution in governance" published in 2003. At the beginning of the Foundation's new phase, the challenge was therefore not to develop a doctrine but to compare the doctrine we had arrived at with other schools of thought and test its relevance in different political and cultural contexts. This was achieved through three mechanisms: the creation of an Institute for Research and Debate on the Refoundation of Governance (IRG); a Latin American Forum on

Governance (FLAG); and an Alliance for the Refoundation of Governance in Africa (ARGA). This was made possible once again by mobilising the Foundation's intellectual capital (the governance principles put on the table), its social capital (the relationships forged in different parts of the world) and its methodological capital (in particular the tools for identifying concrete experiences and drawing general lessons from them).

Once again, one might rightly wonder what added value a small foundation could bring to bear on powerful political science networks or on realities as complex as those in Latin America or Africa. However, this added value proved to be very real. In each case, it was the result of a subtle alchemy, based on the complicity between the Foundation and the leaders of each of the three initiatives. This was both the strength and the limitation of our approach. It relied on the personal ties between the Foundation's team and the project leaders, which made it possible at all times to combine the strengths and contributions of both parties, with the Foundation not only financing the work but also participating in the discussion. This was also the weakness of these initiatives: the difficulty in taking over, both on the part of the Foundation and its partners, as each side grew older.

The IRG, led by Michel Sauquet, was able to find its place, including in the academic world, by stimulating international exchanges on governance. A subtle balance was struck between the desire to promote the school of thought on governance that the Foundation had become and the concern to create a space for debate that was widely open to other contributions. This balance was achieved, enabling the joint reflections to be published in various languages. The IRG succeeded in creating new processes for dialogue that highlighted the notion of "legal pluralism", particularly in formerly colonised countries where the state models inherited from the colonisers had been imposed on society, and placed the concept of "legitimacy of governance", too often confused with its legality, at the centre of international discussions.

The FLAG, led by Claire Launay, has provided numerous opportunities to present the Foundation's doctrine on governance to Latin American actors and to compare it with their own approaches in Colombia, Ecuador, Bolivia and Peru. What is striking here too is that an approach that could have been interpreted as a neo-colonial desire to lecture others was always well received, precisely because the lessons the Foundation brought were the result of international exchanges that respected the diversity of cultural traditions. In a way, the Foundation was simply sharing the fruits of a synthesis of everyone's experiences, and that is how its contribution was appreciated.

As for ARGA, led by a long-standing partner of the Foundation, Ousmane Sy, who was highly regarded in the Sahel for having successfully decentralised Mali, it came at just the right time. France, Europe and international institutions, with their eternal superiority complex, wanted to impose their model of multi-party democracy on Africa and, in the case of international institutions, their "principles of good governance" without taking into account African realities, traditions and skills in the management of societies. However, for the promoters of this Alliance, the challenge was not to modernise governance in Africa by imposing imported models once again, but rather to rebuild African governance through a dialogue of equals between African management methods and external contributions. Although the extension of the approach to the whole of Africa has been sporadic, given the resources available, ARGA has earned the respect of stakeholders through its approach and methods – notably the collection of experiences – and for a number of years has become an essential reference point for African thinking on governance, recognised by governments, civil society and external partners, particularly in Europe. It may seem presumptuous to talk about ARGA's intellectual and political legacy at a time when Islamist movements and military coups are on the rise in the Sahel, but, as with all the actions supported by the Foundation, its work has been thoroughly documented and remains a strong reference point for the future. This can be seen in the fact that the idea of "rebuilding" African governance has been taken up everywhere. However, ARGA's work is the only one that lays the foundations for this.

Rethinking the economy

This was the fourth and final change set out in the Agenda for the[21st]Century. Unlike governance and ethics, in 2003 we did not have a doctrinal text that could serve as a basis for a strategy of dialogue and dissemination. We proceeded in two stages. First, as an extension of the programme that had become "for a solidarity-based socio-economy" and under the impetus of its leader, Philippe Amouroux, we explored the possibility of making it a comprehensive alternative to the dominant economic model. It was through this approach that we managed to put economic alternatives on the agenda of the World Social Forums, showing that it was not enough to advocate "deglobalisation" in order to have a real alternative. This approach contributed to the internationalisation of thinking on the solidarity economy, particularly its development in Asia thanks to allies, which has been a lasting result. The highly collective intellectual process followed had the great merit of highlighting the large number of proposals drafted for the World Assembly by identifying common issues that, twenty years on, remain as relevant as ever: the territory as a space for integrating solidarity economy initiatives, the articulation of levels of exchange from local to global in a perspective of active subsidiarity, and the social responsibility of economic actors. On the other hand, the approach, which started from a "bottom-up" economy, failed to propose a general model. The cohesion of the collective formed around Philippe Amouroux also led to its limitations by closing in on itself, and the premature death of Philippe, who ensured the link with the Foundation's other initiatives on governance and responsibility, accelerated this decline.

We were then led to revisit our ambition on a different basis by exploring the feasibility of an "international initiative to rethink the economy" (IRE). Nothing less! We must admit that we were a little nervous when we embarked on this project. Pierre Calame, with the assistance of Aurore Lalucq, acted on behalf of the Council by undertaking a review of all the "heterodox" movements challenging the dominant paradigm at the time, that of classical economics. The results were also mixed, to say the least. On the one hand, because of the dispersion of initiatives, with each heterodox movement acting in

ignorance of the others, and on the other hand because the criticisms of the classical model, however well-founded, did not lead to an overall vision of an alternative. We therefore decided to strike out on our own, capitalising on what was essentially our unique selling point: having a broader perspective than just economics and returning to what had been at the heart of our thinking from the outset, namely the threats to the biosphere posed by an economic model that owed its survival solely to a headlong rush towards growth. The concept of oeconomy, adopted jointly by Pierre Calame and Aurore Lalucq, summarised these two specificities. Oeconomy: this is the term used until 1750 to refer to modes of production which, before the industrial revolution, had to take into account the limits of local resources and had been theorised by the botanist Carl von Linné as the art of ensuring the well-being of the whole community while respecting the limits of resources. This is precisely the challenge facing the global economy in the[21st]century! The adoption of this concept and what we have called the great "return to oeconomie" had another tremendous advantage for us: it made economics not a science closed in on itself but a branch of governance, one that deals with the system of production, exchange and consumption, which brought us back to a familiar problem: applying the general principles we had developed for governance to this particular branch of human activity. To give just one example that continues to have implications today, the management of greenhouse gases is governed by the principle of matching governance procedures and instruments to the problem at hand... which is not the case today and has led us to advocate equal greenhouse gas emission quotas for all in order to drive the ecological transition. The book "Essai sur l'oeconomie" (Essay on Oeconomy), published in 2009, develops these ideas and responds to the Council's wish to have a proposal document for each of the four challenges on the Agenda.

Conclusion

No, our small foundation has not succeeded in transforming the world and implementing Agenda 21. That much was to be expected! Conceived as a collective human adventure closely involving the members of the Foundation Council, the permanent team and hundreds of partners, its strength has resulted from the bonds of trust forged over the years and consolidated by a common vision. It also had its limitations: like all human endeavours, many of the initiatives taken had a beginning and an end, closely dependent on the longevity of the partners, sometimes on wear and tear, retirements or even premature deaths. Many citizen alliances, for example, have experienced moments of glory when breakthroughs were achieved and periods of stagnation or even decline, but the traces they have left behind have often been lasting.

By fulfilling what it itself called "the duty of ambition of foundations", our collective adventure has opened up a host of new perspectives and risen to the challenge we ourselves identified in the Call for a General Assembly of the Planet: in a context of changing times, when the systems of thought and institutions inherited from early modernity are proving unsuited to the challenges of tomorrow, we needed to lay the foundations for a second modernity, define a common agenda for the twenty-first century and propose possible solutions. We did it. It was our passion. It is still our pride.

If it speaks to your heart and makes you want to follow one of the paths thus marked out or to set yourself a "duty of ambition", this chronicle of thirty years of the Foundation will have achieved its goal.