

## Healing the Wounds of the Past

### The Caux Forum 2023

The Caux Forum 2023 was held in The Caux Palace above Montreux from 17 to 26 to July.

The Opening Ceremony “Strengthening Democracy: The Journey from Trauma to Trust” set the stage for: “Healing the Wounds of the Past” (17-22 July) and “Trust and Integrity in Democracy” (23 - 26 July).



### Healing the Wounds of the Past

After decades in which conflict has gradually reduced around the world, the tide has turned. Conflict is increasing.

This forum focused on a fundamental cause of this trend: the broken relationships caused by unhealed wounds of the past – personal, national and international. Drawing on the experiences of people from all continents and many cultures. It offered an opportunity to learn from each other, and from quiet reflection amidst the beauty of Caux’s setting.

The “Healing the Wounds of the Past” forum brought over 250 people together for an impactful 5 days of trainings, plenaries, workshops, quiet times and dialogues, designed to equip participants to contribute to peace and human security by fostering:

- A greater understanding of the impact of historical wounds
- Heightened skills in dialogue facilitation, conflict transformation, trauma awareness and story-sharing
- Learning from personal experiences of healing past wounds and building trust.

## What happened during the “Healing the Wounds of the Past” Forum?



### Figures on “Healing the Wounds of the Past”

- Five-day Forum (Tuesday to Saturday)
- Over 300 participants from 72 countries (Total Caux Forum 555 participants)
- 4 plenaries and 63 workshops
- 11 keynote speakers or panelists
- Early morning times for Silence, which is a core practice of IofC
- Greeting the Day Ceremonies with the Global Indigenous Dialogue
- Evenings : a documentary and discussion, World Fair of Initiatives and films, a theatre play and an evening celebration of music and dance
- Daily community time to create a safe space for deeper conversations that matter
- Multiple conversations at other times. Conversations that are often where action is developed for us personally or collectively
- Accommodation of 300 participants, over 1'000 meals served and over 2'000 coffee breaks
- Two thirds of the participants were sponsored for their stay at the Caux Forum
- 3,302 Bednights for the Caux forum with a average length of stay of 6,6 nights

Following the responses to the post-Forum survey, there was a strong consensus among participants that HWP was effective in providing them with the necessary tools to initiate and carry on their personal healing journeys, with more than **Three quarters of respondents experiencing a healing related shift within themselves. Almost everyone agreed that this forum facilitated important connections** with individuals and organizations that contribute to the ongoing support of their healing journeys.

76% of respondents reported they are planning to take some form of action as a direct consequence of their participation in HWP. These actions encompassed a range of key areas, including:

**Building trust across the world's divides**



- **Commitment to the Core Values of IofC.** “Deep listening and not quickly judging”, “Helping others to understand the importance of silence, and to put this into practice in our daily lives. Knowing how to listen to the inner voice.”, “Listen more and lead with the emotion of compassion first”.
- **Developing established connections** “Strengthen the connections established”, “I want to stay connected with some participants to build fellowship and keep the spirit of HWP alive.”
- **Community Healing** “Working with two conflict groups to bring healing.”, “I’m creating a cooperative to support small scale farmers in Burundi in three coming years in their effort to eradicate poverty - pls join us”, “Continue the work of healing and change in my own community with the 2 First Nations people from there who came with me.”
- **Personal Healing** “Continue healing, start new projects”, “Applying the Technics, dynamics, and knowledge gained to my personal life”, “Decide to refuse to accept to be a victim. After refusing to be a victim, second object is to resolve not to give up on the activities towards healing of the wounds of the past.”

The “Healing the Wounds of the Past” Forum covered a number of key topics:

- The Qualities needed by those who aspire to be healers, peacebuilders and changemakers
- Religion and a source of healing and bridging divides when historically it has often divided our societies.
- Global Cooperation
- Forgiveness
- Trustbuilding through Education
- Art as a medium for Healing and Transformation
- Healing, renewal and advocacy for a better world, through the lens of Nurses
- Leadership in times of crisis
- Refugees and Re-builders
- Global Indigenous Dialogue
- Healing the wounds of the past between Israel and Palestine

Speakers included:

- Mr John Bond, Journalist (Australi, UK)
- Thembi Silundika – Initiatives of Change International Council member (Zimbabwe / Canada)
- François-Xavier Piollaud – Mayor of Louviers and Vice-President of Normandy Region (France)
- Professor Gerald Pillay – President of Initiatives of Change International (South Africa, UK)
- Lewis Cardinal – Leader of the Global Indigenous Dialogue (Canada)
- Monsignor Michael Aoun – Bishop of the Maronite diocese (Lebanon)
- Dr Eba Hathout – Faculty member at Harvard Medical School (USA)
- Venerable Galkande Dhammamamda Thero - Head of Walpola Rahula Institute for Buddhis Studies (Sri Lanka)
- Dr Maria de Pilar Griffin - Educational Consultant & Specialist in Conflict Resolution and Mediation (Costa Rica)
- Professor Ali Moussa Iye – Founder of AfroSpectives
- Meena Sharma – Peace Practitioner (Nepal)

### **What was the impact of the Healing the Wounds of the Past Forum on participants:**

HWP had a significant impact on participants and there were several accounts of healing and transformation.

Actions that participants have taken since attending HWP:

- Sri Lankans who met at HWP are organizing a youth dialogue in Sri Lanka between Sinhalese and Tamils in February 2024.
- “Since the inspiration received at HWP, I have developed Galkacyo Peace Education, Water – a peace and education initiative”.
- The TBP Indonesian team adapted their strategy to work with indigenous communities. After attending GID sessions, the team realized indigenous peoples were a missing voice their trustbuilding work.
- UNESCO youth made a connection with someone at HWP, and they are now running a workshop and have spoken at this person’s event for International Day of Peace in London.
- Amaal Hussen (UNESCO) met the lofC UK comms team at HWP and has started a paid internship with lofC UK as a result.
- “I am creating a cooperative to support up to 1,000 small scale farmers in Burundi in three coming years in their effort to eradicate poverty”.
- “Since attending HWP, I have consciously chosen to reach and out support people who are challenged / suffering or need empowering”.
- “After HWP, I wrote my reflection and sent it to the person who had wounded me so he could understand my pain. I got very positive feedback from the person”.
- “I am motivated to continue to engage in and deepen my practice of quiet time and holding the space for others to explore Living the Values of lofC”.
- “I am now extremely focused on my work projects and the potential positive impact they may have”.

**HWP has also made a difference on individual's lives:**

Several participants spoke about the healing they received from attending HWP, several mentioned the new contacts/ friends they made, and others mentioned new energy/ motivation/ revitalised passion, etc since attending HWP.

- "Joy and gratitude have grown in my heart since HWP. Healing from fear, doubts and sadness has started".
- " I could heal my past wounds myself as well i may more attention and caring others to heal them".
- "It gave me inner peace".
- "HWP has helped me to understand that, to care for others, I must care for myself first. This also changed the way I relate positively with my children and my dependable circles of influence."
- "I learned how to listen better".
- "I have stayed in touch with the new friends and contacts I made during HWP".
- " More motivated and energized"
- "I revitalized my community-based passion to improvement through empowerment and building communities".
- "It really enlightened me to become a better version of myself."

**The attitude/ behaviour/ thinking shifts that have occurred since attending HWP:**

- "The decolonisation project (UNESCO) will entail substantial rethinking of how I work as well as write"
- "I am much calmer. My children, customers worker's and friends confirmed that."
- "Quiet Time in my daily life now was a significant addition to my routine"
- "Compassion, spiritual healing, and self-reconciliation behavior".
- "That I need to acknowledge that it happened in the past, what has impacted me now, meeting directly with people who are different than me, it helps heal me with my own wound".
- "I'm noticing small shifts. As I'm in a healing process, I'm continuing to notice what I notice & try to practice what I have learned that to which I am committed".
- "I have become broader minded since HWP as I met fellow Tamil speaking citizens of my country who had to leave due to communal problems".



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