

# Current Concerns

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## Russia continues to support Annan Plan

No more violations of international law by NATO and Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC)

by *Thierry Meyssan*

The nature of the Syrian crisis has changed. The process of destabilization that was to open the path for legal military intervention by the Atlantic Alliance has failed. Removing its mask, the United States has publicly announced the possibility of attacking Syria without the approval of the Security Council, as it also did in Kosovo. Washington must be preventing not to have noticed that the Russia of *Vladimir Putin* is not that of *Boris Yeltsin*. After being assured of Chinese support, Moscow literally fired two warning shots in the direction of Washington. *The continuing violations of international law by NATO and the GCC threaten to unleash a global conflict.*

President Vladimir Putin began his third mandate under the sign of sovereignty in the face of direct threats launched against the Russian Federation by the United States and NATO. Moscow has repeatedly denounced the expansion of NATO, the installation of military bases, the deployment of a missile shield on its borders, and the destruction of Libya and the destabilization of Syria.

### Syria has become the red line

In the days following his inauguration, Mr Putin reviewed the Russian military industrial sector, his armed forces and his treaty alliance system.<sup>1</sup> He pursued this course of action while choosing to draw in Syria a line in the sand that must not be crossed. For Putin, NATO's invasion of Libya was equivalent to the invasion of Czechoslovakia by the Third Reich and that of Syria, should it occur, would be comparable to the invasion of Poland that started world war II.

Any interpretation that what is currently happening in the Levant is the result of an internal dynamic of revolution/repression within Syria is not only false but a distortion of the real stakes involved, and simply amounts to more political maneuvering. The Syrian crisis is first and foremost a further stage in the project of "remodeling of the greater Middle East"; a further attempt to destroy the "Axis of Resistance" and the first "war for gas" being played out<sup>2</sup>. What is actually at stake in Syria is not whether *Bashar al-Assad* will

be able to democratize the institutions he has inherited or whether the Wahhabist monarchies of the Gulf will succeed in destroying the last secular regime in the region and impose their sectarianism, but to determine the lines of separation between the emerging power blocs of NATO (the North Atlantic Treaty Organization) and the SCO (Shanghai Cooperation Organization)<sup>3</sup>.

### Armed opposition attacks all the symbols of national culture and Syria's multi-confessional character (Alawis, Christians, schools, churches)

Some of our readers will be startled to read the preceding phrase. Indeed, the Western and Gulf media have been hammering the point day after day that President Al-Assad is a sectarian dictator working to the advantage of the Alawite minority, while the armed opposition to his authority is portrayed as the incarnation of democratic pluralism. Just a glance at recent events is enough to belie this version. Bashar al-Assad has successively convened municipal elections, a referendum, as well as legislative elections. All observers unanimously agreed that the elections unfolded in a transparent manner. The degree of popular participation was more than 60% even while the West was denouncing the electoral process as "a farce" and while the Western-backed armed opposition was preventing citizens from getting to the polls in the four districts under its control. At the same time, *the armed opposition stepped up its attacks not only against security forces but also against civilians and all the symbols of national culture and of Syria's multi-confessional character. They assassinated progressive Sunnis, then randomly killed Alawites and Christians in order to force their families to flee. They burned more than fifteen hundred schools and churches.* They proclaimed an ephemeral Independent Islamic Emirate in Baba Amr where they instituted a Revolutionary Tribunal which condemned more than 150 felons, who were then beheaded in public one by one by an executioner. It is certainly not the woeful spectacle of some vagrant politicians, meeting up at the exiled

Syrian National Council and erecting a facade of democracy having no relation to the reality of the crimes being committed by the Free "Syrian" Army, that will prevent the truth from coming out much longer. In the circumstances, who can believe that the secular Syrian regime, whose exemplary character was celebrated not so long ago, would have turned into a confessional dictatorship, while the Free "Syrian" Army, supported by the Wahhabist dictatorships of the Gulf and obeying the injunctions of Takfirist preachers would conversely be advanced as a paragon of democratic pluralism?

The announcement by US leaders of a possible international intervention outside a UN mandate in the same fashion as NATO dismembered Yugoslavia elicited both apprehension and anger in Moscow. The Russian Federation, which until now held itself in a defensive position, has moved to take the initiative. This strategic shift flows from the urgency of the situation from Russia's point of view and favorable shifts on the ground in Syria<sup>4</sup>.

Moscow proposes to create a Contact Group on Syria that would bring together the ensemble of concerned states, meaning Syria's neighbors as well as both regional and international powers. Its purpose is to put in place a forum for dialogue to substitute for the current bellicose approach imposed by the West under the Orwellian rubric, the "Friends of Syria Conference."

### "Blue chapkas" for Syria

*Russia continues to support the Annan Plan* – which is in fact the scarcely modified plan submitted earlier by *Sergei Lavrov* to the Arab League. Russia deplores that the plan was not implemented, assigning responsibility for that failure to the opposition faction which took up arms. According to *A.K. Lukashovich*, spokesperson at the Foreign Ministry, the Free "Syrian" Army is an illegal organization according to international law. It is assassinating twenty to thirty Syrian soldiers each day yet is publicly supported by NATO states and the GCC in violation of the Annan Plan<sup>5</sup>.

**"Russia continues ..."**

continued from page 1

Positioning himself as a peacemaker confronting NATO warmongering, *Vladimir Putin has demanded that the CSTO (Collective Security Treaty Organization) ready itself to deploy its "blue chapkas" in Syria*, to both separate the belligerents and combat foreign forces. *Nicolai Bordyuzha*, secretary-general of the CSTO, has confirmed that he is ready to deploy 20,000 men trained for this type of mission and immediately available<sup>6</sup>.

This would be the first time that the CSTO deploys a peace force outside of former Soviet territory. Cut to the quick, *Ban Ki-Moon* attempted to sabotage the initiative, countering with his own sudden effort to organize a Contact Group. Convening in Washington the Sanctions Working Group of the Friends Of Syria Conference, Secretary of State *Hillary Clinton* defied the Russian proposal and raised the ante in favor of regime change<sup>7</sup>.

**Turkey: refugee camp served as cover for arsenals**

In Turkey, opposition legislators have visited the Syrian refugee camps. They have confirmed the absence of more than one thousand refugees registered by the United Nations in the main camp and noted, by contrast, the presence of an arsenal in the camp. They have also demanded in Parliament that Prime Minister *Recep Tayyip Erdogan* reveal the rising amount of humanitarian aid being given to phantom refugees. The deputies maintain that the refugee camp is a cover for a secret military operation, sheltering in reality combatants, principally Libyans who are using it as a rear base. The deputies are asserting that the combatants are those who were introduced in the district of Houla when the massacre was being perpetrated.

These revelations confirm the accusations of the Russian ambassador to the Security Council, *Vitaly Churkin*, according to which the Special Representative of Ban Ki-Moon in Libya, *Ian Martin*, had used U.N. funds destined for refugees to bring al Qaeda combatants into Turkey<sup>8</sup>.

In Saudi Arabia, the fracture between King *Abdullah* and the *Sudairi* clan has

reappeared. At the invitation of the monarch, the Supreme Council of the Oulema issued a fatwa stipulating that Syria is not a land of jihad. At the same time, however, Prince *Faisal*, the Minister of Foreign Affairs has been calling to arm the opposition against the "Alawite usurper."

Thursday, June 7 was a day of many significant events. While Ban Ki-Moon and *Navi Pillay*, respectively Secretary General and High Commissioner of Human Rights, were pleading their case against Syria before the UN General Assembly, Moscow proceeded with two test-launches of its intercontinental ballistic missiles.

Colonel *Vadim Koval*, spokesman of the Strategic Missile Troops of the Russian Federation (RSVN) confirmed the test of a Topol – launched from a silo near the Caspian Sea, but has not confirmed that of the Bulava from a submarine in the Mediterranean. But the firing was observed from all over the Near East, Israel and Armenia and there is no other known armament that leaves similar tracings in the sky<sup>9</sup>.

**NATO and GCC must not continue to foster terrorism**

The message is clear: Moscow is ready for world war *if NATO and the GCC do not comply with the international obligations as defined in the Annan Plan and persist in aiding terrorism*.

According to our sources, this this shot across the bow was coordinated with the Syrian authorities. Moscow equally had encouraged Damascus to liquidate the Islamic Emirate of Baba Amr once the authority of President Al-Assad was confirmed by constitutional referendum, as it also encouraged the President to wipe out mercenary groups present in the country as soon as the new Parliament and new Prime Minister were installed. The order was given to move from a defensive strategy to offensive action to protect the population from terrorism. The national army moved to attack the strongholds of the Free "Syrian" Army. The combat in the coming days is going to be difficult, all the more so in that the mercenaries possess mortars, anti-tank missiles and, as from now, surface to air missiles.

To lessen the rapidly-increasing tension, France immediately accepted the Russian proposal to participate in an ad hoc Contact Group. Washington hurried *Frederic C. Hof* to Moscow. Contradicting the statements made the day before by Secretary of State *Hillary Clinton*, Mr Hof also accepted the Russian invitation.

The time is past to lament the expansion of combat into Lebanon, or to conjecture about the possible regionalization of conflict. Over the past sixteen months of the destabilization of Syria, NATO and the GCC have created a situation without exit that might well degenerate into global war.

Translated from French by *Michele Stoddard*.

- <sup>1</sup> President Putin's agenda: May 7 – President Putin is inaugurated. May 8 – Dmitry Medvedev is nominated Prime Minister. May 9 – Commemoration of victory over Nazi Germany. May 10 – Visit of the Russian military-industrial establishment. May 11 – Reception for the President of Abkhazia. May 12 – Reception for the President of South Ossetia. May 14-15 – Informal meeting with heads of state of the CTSO. May 18 – Visit of the CYCLONE Central Research Institute. May 25 – Review of atomic sub-marines. May 30 – Meeting with key defense officials. May 31 – Meeting with the Russian security council. June 4-7 – Visits to China, SCO Summit. June 7 – Visit to Kazakhstan during the Topol missile launch.
- <sup>2</sup> "Struggle over the Middle East: Gas Ranks First", by Imad Fawzi Shueibi, *Voltaire Network*, 17 April 2012.
- <sup>3</sup> "Moscow and the formation of The New World System", by Imad Fawzi Shueibi, *Voltaire Network*, 11 February 2012.
- <sup>4</sup> "The Houla affair highlights Western intelligence gap in Syria", by Thierry Meysan, *Voltaire Network*, 5 June 2012.
- <sup>5</sup> "Comment of Official Representative of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Russia A.K. Lukashovich on the Question of Interfax related to the statement made by Representative of so-called Free Syrian Army S. Al-Kurdi," Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation, 5 June 2012.
- <sup>6</sup> "Syria: Vladimir Putin contemplates sending CSTO peacekeeping force", *Voltaire Network*, 3 June 2012.
- <sup>7</sup> "Friends of the Syrian People Sanctions Working Group," *Press Statement by Hillary Clinton*, Department of State, 6 June 2012.
- <sup>8</sup> "Libya: Brigands-Revolutionaries and the UN," by Alexander Mezyaev, Strategic Culture Foundation (Russia), *Voltaire Network*, 22 March 2012.
- <sup>9</sup> "7 June 2012: Russia displays intercontinental nuclear ballistic superiority," *Voltaire Network*, 9 June 2012.

Source: [www.voltairenet.org](http://www.voltairenet.org), 11 June 2012

## Syria

## Problems are to be resolved in negotiations

### “There should be no military interference from outside”

The magazine “Zaman” discusses the Syria-conflict with Professor Dr Hans Köchler of the University of Innsbruck

*Zaman: Key-word Syria conflict.*

*Professor Hans Köchler:* I advise against any foreign intervention, because problems that have to do with the relationships between social and religious groups and even with decades of internal political differences and resulting tensions cannot be solved by military means. A conflict of this kind can only be solved permanently within the country. Other countries should try to play a constructive role; they may possibly take over the role of a neutral mediator. That is my opinion about the task of former UN Secretary General Kofi Annan.

[...]

*The EU has recognized the opposition group as a representative. That’s a dangerous intrusion into an entirely confusing situation.*

That seems problematic. There are just different groups that are now in conflict with each other and they are involved in military conflicts, as well. From abroad, you should not interfere. That would be my principle. You can maintain contact to various groups, but one should be cautious about the recognition of groups as official representatives. Above all, one must also consider: The political constellation of the world contains a conflict on which a homogenous assessment cannot be formed by the decisive powers within the United Nations.

[...]

*Iran and Lebanon are already at the negotiating table and want to contribute to a solution. It is true that a military intervention will result in more bloodshed.*

Exactly. It must also be remembered that the Syrian conflict can easily turn into a

regional conflict. It may very well spill over borders, and you have to watch and see that no one is playing with fire, no matter how bad the situation is. If you intervene in foreign countries – if it is not possible to do it in a non-partisan way – it makes the situation much more difficult. The question is how to stabilize the situation from abroad in a non-partisan way. Non-partisan action can be humanitarian action such as the International Committee of the Red Cross – these are very clear procedures, and this is all about humanitarian aid. However, if this means supporting the opposition or the government, the whole situation escalates. Syria is not some mini-state over which you can just run roughshod and whose fate can be decided at the round table in Paris, London or elsewhere

*From what you are saying, there is no short-term solution to be expected in Syria.*

[...]

What makes me also worry with regard to the relations between the Islamic world and Europe is this: What will be the situation for Christians? Many are scared that they have no future in Syria – after what happened in Iraq. This will have serious implications for relations with the West. This problem is so complex that you really have to proceed very carefully.[...]

*You often visit Muslim countries such as Qatar. Even in the Arab League there is no consensus about Syria. The region is once again very complex. The situation in Egypt as well.*

[...]

As the situation presents itself at the moment, the problem in the Arab World and

the Middle East is probably that in the course of colonization from outside this whole region was submitted to reorganization. The countries that exist today are in many ways the result of the intervention of the former Great Powers – the colonial powers, especially Britain and France. For nearly a century these peoples were ruled from the outside. They were exposed to this policy à la “divide et impera” (divide and conquer). This has been the situation since the end of the Ottoman Empire. The last, in a way more or less, balanced situation in which the individual peoples could express themselves, was probably the time of the Ottoman Empire. But that came to an abrupt end. The new political structures had the effect that the countries aligned themselves to various power centres, such as Paris or London. The new structures do not seem to allow the people, respectively the people of the Arab League to act as a union and in a coordinated way, and to realize common interests.

*What is the probability that the US or Israel attack Iran?*

[...]

We are facing of course a dangerous period of time before the elections in the United States. Until then, above all, one actor, namely Israel, has a special manoeuvring room. After the elections this will be reduced again, especially if this president is re-elected. But an attack on Iran would, not only in my view, be a violation of international law, and there would be even more oil poured into the regional fire. It would widely destabilize everything. •

Source: *Zaman*, 20 March 2012, Reporter: *Seyit Arslan*  
(Translation *Current Concerns*)

## UN Charter or Rambo-world ...

### Lavrov: Future balance of power in the world depends on the outcome of the crisis in Syria

*The future balance of power in the world and the world order are depending on the outcome of the persistent Syrian crisis, said Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov.*

The way the crisis in Syria was resolved would be decisive for what the world might look like in the future: whether it would be based on the UN Charter or would be a world where the law of the jungle applied, *Lavrov* said in Moscow on Saturday. He stressed that the UN Security Council was not going to approve of any military action in Syria. "And not because we are protecting *Assad* and his regime, but because we know that Syria is a complicated multi-confessional state." "Some of those calling for military intervention want to ruin this and turn Syria into a battleground for domination in the Islamic world," *Lavrov* said. This was a

very dangerous trend. Russia would do everything in its power to prevent such a development. "We do not defend the regime, but the chances of stability in this region and the Islamic world. We defend international law," *Lavrov* explained.

Violent uprisings against President Bashar al-*Assad* had broken out in Syria more than 14 months ago. According to UN figures some 12,000 people in total have been killed in the clashes between the army and the armed opposition. The Syrian opposition, but also Western countries, are calling for the resignation of *Assad*. In 2011 and 2012, Russia and China had blocked UN resolutions on Syria twice that had been submitted by Western states in the UN Security Council. Moscow justified its veto with the desire of preventing a military intervention in Syria similar to the "Libyan scenario", because the resolutions did not exclude an international

armed engagement against the *Assad* regime. The former UN Secretary General *Kofi Annan* conceived a peace plan for Syria on behalf of the United Nations and the Arab League, which provides for the cessation of violence, the withdrawal of government troops from the cities, a dialogue between government and opposition as well as free access for humanitarian aid. The parties called a truce on 12 April. The UN Security Council had given the go-ahead for the deployment of 300 observers to Syria. Nevertheless, there are clashes and bloody violence over and over. According to the Syrian authorities the rebels have violated the truce more than 5,000 times. The opposition makes the government army responsible for the ongoing violence. •

Source: *Ria Novosti*, 9.6.2012

(Translation *Current Concerns*)

## Is the "opposition" in Moscow bribed with dollars, euros and rubles?

### Investigators sort out the origin of the money

After searches of opposition leaders' homes in Moscow the Russian investigation committee ordered the tax authorities to investigate in the origin of the seized money worth more than a million euros.

On 12 June the spokesman for Russia's Prosecutor General's Office, *Vladimir Markin*, said in Moscow that the homes of the activists *Alexei Navalny*, *Anastacia Udaltsova*, *Sergei Udaltsov*, *Ilya Yashin* and *Ksenia Sobchak* had been searched by the police. Investigators impounded a

large amount of foreign cash in *Yashin's* and *Sobchak's* homes – over 1 million euros, 480,000 dollars and 480,000 rubles (\$16,000) in *Sobchak's* home alone. "Investigators want to ascertain the purpose of that cash wrapped in more than 100 envelopes and make sure that no tax laws or regulations have been broken", the spokesman said.

The concerned persons were called in for police questioning on 12 June. *Udaltsov* refused by arguing that he was respon-

sible for the security at the "March of the Millions" and therefore had to take part in the action. According to *Markin*, *Udaltsov* will be questioned on another day.

Large amounts of propaganda material and subversive literature as well as several electronic data banks were seized during the searches, *Markin* said. •

Source: *Ria Novosti*, 12 June 2012

(Translation *Current Concerns*)

## Church occupied by militias: Christians demand respect of Holy Sites

*Qusayr* (Agenzia Fides) – The Greek-Catholic church of St. Elias in *Qusayr*, near the town of *Homs*, has been occupied by a group of gunmen of the Syrian opposition, that have established their base. As reported to Fides by eyewitnesses, on 13 June, men, probably Islamic radicals stormed into the church, forcing the door, ringing bells and carrying out a demonstration of scorn that had raised concern among local Christian leaders (see *Fides* 13/06/2012). But the group, instead of leaving the building, camped inside the liturgical classroom

and is now there permanently, carrying out all its activities. The local Church condemns the incident, defining such "behavior unacceptable and disrespectful toward a sacred place," as members of the hierarchy of the diocese of *Homs* report to Fides, they have also launched an appeal so that the current conflict "does not degenerate into the desecration of temples and sacred places, of all communities."

*Fides* sources confirm that – as many observers have been arguing for weeks – in the city of *Qusayr*, south of *Homs*,

there are radical Islamic Salafi groups that "want to fight a war of religion." In the meanwhile, the few Christians who had remained, mostly elderly people who did not want to leave their homes are escaping from *Qusayr*. At least a thousand faithful have fled in recent days after the ultimatum launched by an armed faction (see *Fides* 9 and 12/6/2012 and 9), which called on Christians to leave the city.

Source: *Agenzia Fides*, 15 June 2012

## An extinction

### The Hula Massacre is a turning point in the Syrian conflict

by Rainer Hermann

*The Hula massacre is a turning point in the Syrian conflict. Based on UN observers, the Western public blames the Syrian army. There are reports from eye witnesses that doubt this version. According to them, the civilians were killed by Sunni rebels.*

The Hula massacre was a turning point in the Syrian drama. There was a huge global outcry when on 25 May 108 people were killed, among them 45 children. Requests for a military intervention to stop the bloodshed were heard and violence has been escalating in Syria ever since. Based on Arabic news stations and the visit of UN monitors on the following day, the world public opinion almost unanimously blamed the massacre on the regular Syrian army and their close allies, the Shabiha militia.

Last week [7 June], the "Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung" (FAZ) challenged that version on the basis of eyewitness reports. It reported that the killed civilians had been Alawis and Shias. They were killed purposefully by armed Sunnis in Taldou, a city in the Hula plane, while there was heavy fighting around the town and roadblocks between the regular army and units of the Free Syrian Army. Many media worldwide have since then commented on this report, most of them discarding it as not trustworthy. Hence there are four questions: Why has the world public opinion followed a different version up to now? Why does the context of the civil war make the FAZ version plausible? Why are the witnesses trustworthy? Which further facts support their version?

Firstly, why has the world public opinion followed a different version? Undoubtedly, all atrocities committed in the first months of the conflict, while the opposition did not have any weapons and was defenseless, have to be blamed on the regime. Hence it was a plausible assumption that this would continue. Additionally, the Syrian state media have no credibility. Since the beginning of the conflict, they have repetitively been using formulas like "armed terror groups". That is why nobody believes them when this is really the case. The news stations Al-Jazeera and al-Arabia have become the leading media, however. They belong to Qatar and Saudi Arabia, two states actively involved in the conflict. For good reasons, we know the saying: "In war, truth is the first casualty".

Secondly, why does the context of the civil war make the FAZ version plausible? In the past months, many weapons

were smuggled into Syria; for a long time, the rebels make use of moderately heavy weapons. In Syria, more than 100 people have been killed every week; the deaths of both sides are balanced. The militia fighting under the banner of the Free Syrian Army controls a large part of the provinces of Homs and Idlib and is expanding their rule over large parts of the country. The increasing lawlessness has led to a wave of criminal abductions; it has also allowed to settle old scores. Whoever looks around in Facebook or talks to Syrians: Everybody knows stories of "confessional cleansings" – of people having been killed just because they were Alawis or Sunnis.

The plane of Hula, mostly inhabited by Sunni, situated between the Sunni Homs and the mountains of the Alawis has seen a long history of confessional tensions. The massacre has occurred in Taldou, one of the largest towns in Hula. The names of the 84 civilians are known. They are the fathers, mothers and 49 children of the *al Sajjid* family and two branches of the *Abdarrazzaq* family. Locals said that the killed were Alawis and Muslims who had converted from Sunni to Shia Islam. Only a few kilometers from the Lebanon border, this makes them suspicious to be sympathizers of the Hezbollah which is hated among the Sunnis. In addition, relatives of the member of parliament *Abdalmuti Mashlab*, who has been faithful to the regime, were among the murdered.

The apartments of the three families are in different parts of Taldou. The members of the families were killed in a targeted manner with only one exception. No neighbor was even hurt. Knowledge of the place was indispensable for these well-planned "executions". The news agency AP cited the only survivor of the *al Sajjid* family, eleven-year-old *Ali*: "the killers had shaved their heads and wore long beards". This is what fanatic Jihadists look like, not the Shabiha militia. The boy had survived because he had feigned death and smeared himself with his mother's blood, he said.

#### Sunni Rebels pursue the "liquidation" of all minorities

As early as 1 April the nun *Agnés-Maryam* of the Jacob monastery ("Deir Mar Yakub") south of Homs in the town Qara described the climate of violence and fear in the region in a long letter. She concluded that the Sunni rebels were pursuing a stepwise liquidation of all minorities; In her letter she describes the expulsion of Christians and Alawis from their homes as they were occupied by the rebels and

the raping of girls who were handed over to the rebels as "war booty"; she was an eye witness when in the Wadi Sajjah road rebels killed a merchant refusing to close his shop with a car bomb and then, in front of an Al-Jazeera camera, the same rebels claimed that this deed had been committed by the regime. And finally she described how, in the Khalidijah quarter of Homs, Sunni rebels had locked Alawi and Christian hostages into a house, blew it up only to declare later that this had been another atrocity committed by the regime.

Why should the Syrian eyewitnesses be considered credible? Because they belong to none of the parties in the conflict but stand in between the battle lines and have no interest other than trying to prevent a further escalation of violence. Several of these persons have already been killed by

continued on page 6

#### Internally displaced persons take refuge at the Jesuit Monastery in Aleppo

Aleppo (*Agenzia Fides*) – Families of displaced Syrians, fled from the conflict that raged in the west of the country, found hospitality and were welcomed in the Convent of St. Vartan, run by the Jesuits in the Midan neighborhood in the heart of Aleppo. The monastery, dedicated to the Armenian Saint, was an Armenian school a century ago, then served for hosting Armenian refugees. In November 2008 the Jesuits, through the "Jesuit Refugees Service," after restoring it, opened a reception center for refugees, with after school activities for children and social activities. The beneficiaries were Iraqi refugees and children from poor Syrian families. The Centre continued to host up to 2010 new families from Iraq, which gradually began to be incorporated into the social fabric of the city, settling in Syria. Today the Centre is open to refugees and needy people without any discrimination of religion, ethnic group or origin. Given the violence that continues in Syria, some Syrian IDPs have arrived at the Center and found an oasis of hospitality and solidarity.

The plight of Syrian refugees continues: according to the latest UNICEF report, more than 54,000 Syrian refugees are in Jordan, Lebanon, Iraq and Turkey. 50% are children who have left school, they suffer from poverty and trauma caused by the escape.

Source: *Agenzia Fides*, 30 May 2012

## Were rebels the Hula perpetrators?

by Michael Wrase

*Local eyewitnesses accuse Syrian rebels of having been involved in the massacre of Hula. However, only an independent inquiry into the atrocities might establish clarity.*

At the massacre in Hula on 25 May at least 108 civilians were killed, among them many women and children. According to the opposition the perpetrators were President Assad's Shabiha militias who "went murdering from house to house." Meanwhile this view has been contradicted by several witnesses who – independently from one another – were interviewed by reporters of foreign media.

### Proceeding in a "targeted" manner

They report consistently, that there had been "almost exclusively families of the Alawi and Shiite minority", among the victims in Hula whose inhabitants are more than 90 percent Sunni. "Hence several dozen members of one family have been slaughtered who have converted from the Sunni to the Shiite Islam in recent years", the Middle East correspondent for the "Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung" (FAZ), *Rainer Hermann*, reported from Damascus that weekend. The reporter who has operated for over 20 years in

the Middle East bases his report on opposition circles from the Homs region, who rejected the use of violence. According to their accounts, "the offenders filmed their victims, pretended they were Sunni victims and spread the videos via Internet."

The Russian TV journalists *Marat Musin* and *Olga Kulygina* substantiate the version of the FAZ. According to their research the murder gangs were not at all going from house to house, but "proceeded in a targeted manner". Two "well-off families were killed, who were considered traitors because they had never supported the rebels with donations."

### "Bald shaved men"

The list with the names of the dead which were spread widely by the opposition proves that most of the victims were members of the extended families *Al-Sayed* and *Abdul Rasak*. One of the sons of Sayed, the eleven-year old *Ali Al-Sayed*, survived the massacre because he pretended to be dead. In a report by the *Associated Press* Ali describes the attackers as "bald shaved men with long beards" – a description that applies to radical Islamist rebels rather than to Assad's Shabiha militia.

But why should they kill their own people, Shiites and Alawis, the 'Guardi-

an' also wonders, as to its research the few survivors of the massacre spoke with an "Alawi accent."

The management of the monastery of Qara located south of Hula interviewed by the Dutch journalist *Martin Jansen* as well doubts the guilt of the Shabiha militia. It is said in a statement of the monastery, that the murdered people are victims of "an endless chain of violence and torture", that above all people would fall victim, who refused to support the rebels. In a report published on 30 May the news agency *Fides* closely associated with the Vatican pointed out that among the victims of the escalating violence in the region of Homs there were "hundreds of Christians". After the massacre of Hula they had left the region which is partly being controlled by the rebels, because they were afraid "of becoming persecuted as proteges of the Assad regime".

### Have tracks been blurred?

Only an independent investigation could determine who the real offenders of the massacre of Hula were. But it might be too late already. Because many of the traces of the recent atrocities in Syria are being systematically erased. •

Source: *St. Galler Tagblatt*, 12 June 2012  
(Translation *Current Concerns*)

### "An extinction"

continued from page 5

now. Hence nobody wants to reveal his or her identity. But there can be no certainty about all details at a time when there is no chance to double-check all facts on site. Even if the Hula massacre did happen as described above, we cannot draw any conclusions for other massacres. As was the case in the Kosovo war, each massacre has to be investigated independently.

What are further facts supporting the above reported version? The FAZ was not the first to report a new version of the Hula massacre. The other reports could simply not stand their ground against the big media. The Russian journalist *Marat Musin* who works for the small news agency *Anna* had been in Hula on the 25 and 26 May, had been partially an eyewitness and had published the testimonies of other eyewitnesses. In addition, the Dutch Arabist and free journalist *Martin Jansen* had contacted the Jacobs monastery in Qara where many victims had been ac-

commodated and where the nuns do humanitarian work in a selfless manner.

### Rebels present their version of the massacre to UN observers

To him the nuns described how more than 700 armed rebels, coming from Rastan, had overrun an army roadblock before Taldou, how they had piled up the bodies of the dead soldiers and civilians in front of the mosque and how, posing in front of a media station's cameras sympathizing with the rebels, they had presented to the UN observers their version of the alleged massacre committed by the Syrian army. The very next day, UN General Secretary *Ban Ki-Moon* reported to the UN Security Council that the detailed circumstances remained unclear. But the UN could confirm that "there had been fire from artillery and grenades. There had also been other forms of violence including shots from closest distance and serious abuses."

This progression of events can be reconstructed: After the Friday prayer on May 25, more than 700 armed men under

the leadership of *Abdurrazzaq Tlass* and *Yahya Yusuf* attacked – coming in three groups from Rastan, Kafr Laha and Akra-ba – three army roadblocks around Taldou. The rebels outnumbering the soldiers (most of them also Sunni) engaged them in a bloody battle, killing two dozen soldiers, most of them conscripts. During and after the fighting the rebels executed the families al *Sajjid* and *Abdarrazzaq*. They had refused to join the opposition. •

Source: *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, 13 June 2012, © all rights reserved by *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung GmbH*, Frankfurt. Provided by the *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung Archive*.

(Translation *Current Concerns*)

## Federal people's initiative "For an economy to the benefit of all"

by Reinhard and Daniel Koradi

*The Swiss people's initiative "For an economy to the benefit of all" basically affects all major economic sectors. It does not serve individual interests but is committed to an economy that benefits the people and thus Switzerland as a whole. The initiators intend to launch a basic discussion among citizens about the future economic policy of our country..*

### The newly defined economic "freedom" is harming the public good

In recent years, a perverted form of free market economy has largely become prevalent. Thus the state was tied back. The capacity to make economic choices demanded by the situation was lost. With today's progressive individualization of society special interests set themselves above the public interest. The economy moved away from its accountability towards the public. The absolute economic freedom led to economic and socio-political damage that must and can be corrected today. The initiative replaces the primacy of economic capital by the consideration for the environment, natural resources and it wants to protect and promote local economic and social structures.

In recent decades a business concept has been spreading, which degraded the nation-state to an agent of powerful economic organizations and the financial world. As a result, the citizens of a country were incapacitated with respect to economic matters.

The initiative creates prerequisites to think this development over and to initiate the necessary corrections in a dignified way.

### Yes to a competition of quality and innovation

In the context of competition policy, market access (licensing requirements for certain professions or products) and possible penalties for offenses against fair competition are regulated. The freedom of trade and economic freedom are basically guaranteed by the Swiss competition policy and will not be called into question by the initiative. However, the initiators want to promote fair competition and above all combat some powerful companies' abuse of power. The approach of "promoting competition" by deregulation and liberalization, a policy pursued during the last few years, should give way to a policy of fairness and "equally long spears". The one-sided price competition at quality's expense or producers' advantages by economies of scale and price

dumping should be mitigated by value-for-money competition. Yes to quality and innovation competition – No to the sale of products below real production costs. A value-added strategy instead of low-price strategy recommends itself in view of our environment and limited resources. The ever-shorter life-cycles of products should be re-extended by appropriate quality and services (reparability of the products). This should also have a positive impact on employment (repair jobs).

The initiative demands that the state intervenes in the market when market partners

- pursue an unfair competition policy,
- sell products below production or procurement costs (dumping),
- offer low quality products in order to gain a price advantage accept harmful effects on the economy by unjustified price pressure (checkmating competitors – loss of jobs) and on society (wage dumping).

This demand is to ensure that "the economy" is understood as part of society and is re-integrated into a socio-political entity. Another demand of competitive policy refers to the protection of domestic production. This protection is needed to prevent the capital of replacing the personal entrepreneurial performance, for example through acquisitions, mergers, etc. The healthy growth of a company should develop within the company itself. Furthermore, speculation and a locust-like mindset ruined solid companies in the past and they are the reason that the workplace Switzerland lost a large number of renowned, successful and traditional companies (*Saurer, Oerlikon Buehrle, Rieter, Sulzer, Swissair*, etc.). Cash economy drained the productive economy and ultimately led to the global financial and economic crisis. Due to our industrial and company structure in Switzerland, we have a varied, locally and regionally networking economy, which is one of the reasons for the relatively low unemployment rate. Why should we not protect this structure?

Market regulation or technical trade barriers are legitimate economic measures, reflecting the will to take responsibility towards the population and protect one's own sovereignty.

### Initiative supports conjunctural policy

Economy knows some basic laws that were intentionally pushed into the background in the course of liberalization and globalization. A global economy does not stop at national borders and does not care about national economic policy. Thus, the national

### EFTA – in favor of a Europe of fatherlands

The greater the problems in the EU area, the more thinking is setting on all over Europe about a possible alternative. We speak again of a "Europe of fatherlands" which we should work for. This would allow sovereign states to assume their responsibilities once again and settle their affairs, said Dr *Martin Zbinden*, Head of Department for Free Trade Agreements/EFTA in the State Secretariat for Economic Affairs in Switzerland. The EFTA still exists and currently consists of four members: Norway, Liechtenstein, Iceland and Switzerland. If a country is not an EU member, it can act independently in other organizations, such as the WTO or EFTA, and directly represent its concerns there.

Source: *interinfo*, Episode 402, June 2012

(Translation Current Concerns)

economy is neglected – with negative socio-political consequences. Economic development follows the capital flows. A domestically oriented economic policy can no longer be implemented due to the lack of influence of the nation state. The economic policy objectives proven by experience and adapted to meet national needs such as: balance between production and consumption, price stability, full employment and a positive trade balance get lost in the transnational competition and drive national economies in a global cluster risk (worldwide economic crisis). In good times, national wealth should be increased and in bad times it should be reduced. If these control mechanisms, so well adapted to the nation state cede in favor of international organizations like IMF, WTO and EU by treaties or by membership to transnational centres, the state will lose its economic sovereignty, and thus any possibility of directing its economy. The initiative defends this national influence, and hence strengthens the federal economic policy order laid down in the Federal Constitution. Consequently, it allows no compromises in favor of economic freedom.

### Country's supply

The country's supply has been largely limited by arguing that there was no immediate threat. Strategically important goods, however, are still stored in order to ensure the supply with essential goods and services (fuel, seeds, fats, etc.).

continued on page 8

**“For an economy to ...”**

continued from page 7

The initiative confirms the mandate of the Federal government, but neither does it allow any concessions to economic freedom; therefore the respective regulation for exceptions is deleted.

**Strengthening the Confederation’s structural scope of action**

The structural policy of a country intends to promote and safeguard the unity and solidarity among the population and in particular to safeguard the social, economic and cultural future of the border areas. Switzerland has always pursued a policy of decentralized settlement. Structural policies are often denounced as being oriented backwards instead of being oriented towards the future. It is precisely the structure created in the past, which the future is based on. Destroying structures means to obstruct the future. Switzerland in particular has a totally sustainable societal, governmental and economic structure. The diversity in branches and company sizes guarantees a highly developed and stable economy and a high employment rate. For our country, to preserve structures means to preserve future opportunities. Therefore, we should also boldly protect our structures. The initiators recognize the importance of preserving the structures for the future. They support the Federal Government in its relevant tasks and want to extend its scope of action even more.

**Sustainable agricultural policy**

The Federal Constitution commissions the Federal Government to implement an agricultural policy which promotes sustainable and market-oriented production and makes a significant contribution to secure

the supply of the population, the conservation of natural resources, the maintenance of the countryside and the decentralized settlement of the country.

This obligation is fully supported by the initiative. The measures taken by the federal government must comply with the multifunctional role of agriculture. Multifunctional means that the farmer – apart from his merely productive tasks – creates and maintains cultivated areas, the diversity of natural habitats and social life in rural areas and creates recreation areas for people from the agglomerations.

Incentives to meet these requirements will be the direct payments that are paid on the basis of natural, environmentally friendly and animal-friendly production methods. Apart from that, the federal government is to promote the marketing of domestic products by declarations of origin and investment aids for the farmers. It is in the interest of the Swiss population to maintain or respectively promote a productive agriculture. Our security of supply and thus our independence are directly related to the safeguarding of our farmers’ existence, specifically in their present corporate structures. The initiative is not in contradiction to the constitutional mandate in favor of agriculture. By demanding competitive policies, however, it suggests effective control measures to enable the fulfillment of the constitutional obligation.

**Conclusion**

The initiative “For an economy to the benefit of all” is a clear response to the negative consequences of the unilateral strategy of growth and globalization. With their demand “Protecting – Developing – Passing on” the initiators inspire our reflections and actions.

Critics may accuse us of promoting protectionism and neglecting the export economy. As long as vital national interests are affected – and the initiative is about vital interests – the citizens have the right, indeed the duty, to take protective measures. The export sector cannot be played off against our domestic economy. Both have their economic importance; however, seen from the point of view of economic policy, domestic economy is an important stabilizing factor that can be influenced by Switzerland itself, while the export sector is affected by the development on foreign markets and is subject to enormous fluctuations.

It is up to us whether we are willing to recognize the economic reality and to pave the way for an economy that benefits the people and not the capital. •

**Obama receives the orders for his next presidency from Rothschild and Rockefeller**

Bilderberg: A meeting of the Bilderberg Group was held from Thursday 31 May to Sunday 3 June 2012 near Washington DC. The venue was, as repeatedly used before, the Westfields Marriott Hotel in Chantilly. The safety of the approximately 120 participants was guaranteed by the usual contingent of security forces; moreover, the luxury hotel is surrounded by a forest and you cannot see into the hotel. This time, in addition to numerous far-reaching decisions, *Obama* will be given directions for his next presidency by *Rothschild* and *Rockefeller*. New chairman of the Bilderbergers is now *Henri de La Croix de Castries*, CEO of the French insurance group AXA.

Source: *interInfo*, Episode 402, June 2012  
(Translation Current Concerns)

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# “Has the abandoned nuclear power plant Hamm-Uentrop affected its environment?”

## Students experiment in 2012

*cc. Jugend forscht<sup>1</sup>: As part of the Dortmund 2012 regional competition the now eleven year old grammar school student Samantha Seithe was awarded second prize in February 2012. Thus a prize has been awarded to a project that not only deserves extraordinary attention but is probably going to influence the lives of future generations in the region. Along with her academic advisor, graduate geologist, Achim Hucke, Samantha has come across evidence that the official policy probably prefers to be kept under the carpet.*

In the period between 1986 and 1987 a series of nuclear accidents happened in Germany, the backgrounds of which have not been fully clarified yet. An accident in Hamm-Uentrop on the THTR (Thorium High Temperature Reactor) on 5 May 1986, an accident in the reactor at the site of the *Gesellschaft für Kernenergieverwertung in Schiffbau und Schifffahrt mbH* (Society for the Utilisation of Atomic Energy in Shipbuilding and Shipping Ltd. – GKSS/Geesthacht) on 12 September 1986, an accident in *Nukem/Hanau* in January 1987. What these accidents have in common is that in their vicinity microspheres can still be found releasing alpha, beta and gamma radiation, depending on their nature. If the spherules are very small, they are inhaled with the dust without being noticed. They are deposited in the lungs. Leucemia and cancer are proof that the radioactivity released can be assigned to a specific mix of radioactive nuclides. It is only thanks to *Samantha Seithe's* work that these spheres were also discovered near the Hamm-Uentrop coal and nuclear power plant, like those found some time ago in Hanau-Wolfgang, Marschacht, Tespe and Geesthacht.

*Current Concerns* asked Samantha Seithe and her academic advisor to answer our questions together:

*Current Concerns: After the triple disaster of Fukushima you decided to work on the subject of nuclear power plants and the environment. Mr Hucke*

*has supported you. Would you ever have guessed that this issue would lead you to one of the most explosive nuclear issues in Germany, namely the microspheres discovered in the vicinity of nuclear sites? Samantha Seithe and Geologist Achim Hucke: No, before the microspheres were found, we did not even know what nuclear fuel looked like or that there had been nuclear power plant accidents. The only nuclear issue which we knew from the media was the disposal of nuclear waste. You always think in Germany everything would be well monitored and in order.*

*Did you/your neighbours know about the problem of increased cancer around the power plant in Hamm-Uentrop prior to the selection of your topic?*

*Yes, we knew of many cases of cancer in the Welver community and of the many young people who had died. People always see them in the nuclear context, and it is always assumed that we do not know by far everything that happens in a nuclear plant.*

*You have created a very valuable collection of statistical material about the lifespan of 35,000 residents of the surrounding communities. This collection shows that the average life expectancy is clearly lower in the close vicinity of the plant. What did you think when you had the results of the statistics so clearly at hand?*

*Those poor people. I feel sorry for all those who lived in the immediate vicinity of nuclear power stations and for those who still have to. We were shocked how clearly our findings reflected this in our model.*

*An incident at the THTR in Hamm-Uentrop took place in May 1986, just a few days after Chernobyl. The incident was assessed at 0 on the “International Nuclear Event Scale” (INES). In the German weekly magazine “Der Spiegel” there was an article which suppressed the extent of the environmental contamination. After 26 years, it turns out that strange microspheres were blown out and entered the environment, which could explain the above-mentioned damage. You have written that you consider it too dangerous to continue working with the spheres and that your supervisor has dissuaded you from dealing with them any longer. Do you want to investigate any further?*

*I must not and do not want to research directly into the spheres any further, it is too dangerous for me. There are alarming findings and results that we have not published yet. We are still awaiting the final written analysis result from abroad that we have been promised for the near future.*

*Mr Hucke worked for over a year on a geological study and conducted a thorough statistical data analysis of the 35,000 deaths. In addition, several scientists and nuclear physicists have joined Mr Hucke's workgroup. What they found out is really totally contaminated.*

*Have you consulted experts for the interpretation of the microspheres?*

*Yes, we submitted the microspheres to Professor *Schmitz-Feuerhake* and Mr *Gabriel*, a graduate engineer. Both immediately recognised the microspheres because of their many years of experience in Geesthacht and Hanau and confirmed the radioactivity with their first measurements. The plant management and the nuclear regulatory authority allegedly did not know about such microspheres.*

*Can the further work on the problem count on further support from the head of your school?*

*My school had nothing to do with my project. Mr Hucke has already been teaching me privately for four years in science and is my coach at “Jugend forscht”. We are currently working on a finding from the vicinity of the THTR that even scientists have not been able to explain so far.*

*We thank you for this interview and wish you all the best.*



*Sampling in the vicinity of the NPP. (picture Samantha Seithe)*

## Has the abandoned nuclear power plant Hamm-Uentrop affected its environment?

by Samantha Seithe (10 years, 7<sup>th</sup> grade) Supervisor: Achim Hucke

### 1. Introduction

In March 2011 a catastrophe happened in the Fukushima nuclear power plant in Japan. I was told that there is the decommissioned nuclear power plant Hamm-Uentrop close to my home village Welper-Scheidungen. So, I asked myself the question if this nuclear power plant has affected the environment and how I could detect that and measure it myself. I decided to measure radioactivity with a Geiger counter in air and soil and to analyse soil samples under the microscope.

Also acquaintances in my area are frequently telling that many people developed cancer and died. So I wanted to get to the bottom of this and had the idea of recording the birth cohort and the year of death from graveyards to find out, whether the distance to the power plant had something to do with life expectancy.

### 2. Radioactivity

There are atoms, which decay all alone. These are usually large, heavy particles such as: Uranium, Plutonium, Curium or Americium. This atomic decay is called radioactivity, as radiation is created. Three types of radiation can be measured: alpha, beta, and gamma radiation.

“Has the abandoned nuclear power ...”

continued from page 10

\* \* \*

Editor's Note: As we hear from our readers, secondary school students, grammar school students and vocational school students have very often asked questions about the environmental impact of nuclear plant accidents since Fukushima. As the answers to these questions must be correct and scientifically accurate, and not based on “feelings” and assumptions, an opportunity should be set up to forward these questions to scientists for an answer. This could increase the number of high-school students choosing science subjects with a high level of motivation and “love of the subject”. Samantha is only eleven, but she's on the ball! We congratulate her on her seriousness.

<sup>1</sup> *Jugend forscht* (literal translation: “Youth researches”) is a German youth science competition. With more than 10,000 participants annually, it is the biggest youth science and technology competition in Europe. It was initiated in 1965 by *Henri Nannen*, then editor-in-chief of the *Stern* magazine. (Wikipedia)

The alpha radiation is caused by a nucleus of two protons and two neutrons, such as Helium. This radiation can be stopped by a sheet of paper. The beta radiation consists of electrons, which can even penetrate thin metal layers. The gamma radiation is a very high-energy radiation that is similar to X-rays. It can get even through stone and thick layers of metal.

Atomic decay results in heat that can be used to heat water, and to produce electricity in nuclear power stations.

### 3. Measurements, soil samples and Microscopy

#### 3.1 The soil

Soil consists of humus, sand, air, living animals and plants and water. It is formed by weathering of rocks. Therefore our soil has multiple layers, the bottom layer contains many stones and the top layer humus.

#### 3.2 Measurements and soil samples

On a map with a scale of 1: 25000 I have described three different circles with a radius of one, two and three kilometres around the nuclear power station. On the circles I marked places in all cardinal directions and sub-directions, such as the South East, and there I took soil samples. Firstly, I have taken some soil with a spade and filled it into a labeled plastic bag.

Then I made a photo of the place, recorded GPS data from a mobile phone and measured the alpha, beta, and gamma radiation at one meter altitude and right on the ground with a Geiger counter (Gamma Scout) for three minutes each. The results are listed in table 1.

#### 3.3 Microscopy

I mixed the soil sample 30 (about 2 kg) with approx. 5 litres of water and strained it with two sieves. Then I spread the mud on a clean object slide and microscoped it. Based on my Seben Transmitted Light Microscope I have built a reflected light microscope with two additional desk lamps, because in the beginning I couldn't see a lot.

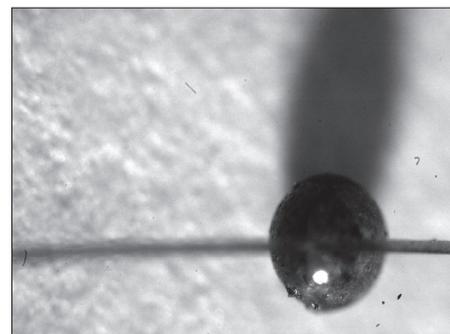
In a hundredfold magnification I discovered primarily sand-grains, but also strange black balls. After I showed them to my supervisor, he searched in the internet for the pebble bed reactor. There one learns, that similar spherules were found in Geesthacht near Hamburg. Because they are potentially very dangerous, my supervisor decided that I had to give up on this part of the project.

Table 1

Sample number	Radioactivity air micro Sievert per hour	Radioactivity soil micro Sievert per hour
1 N	0,24	0,22
1 N O	0,27	0,22
1 O	0,22	0,19
1 S O	0,24	0,23
1 S	0,20	0,23
1 S W	0,21	0,22
1 W	0,18	0,20
1 N W	0,20	0,24
2 N	0,18	0,22
2 N O	0,24	0,20
2 O	0,21	0,19
2 S O	0,21	0,22
2 S	0,14	0,22
2 S W	0,16	0,19
2 W	0,22	0,23
2 N W	0,20	0,21
3 N	0,17	0,22
3 N O	0,22	0,20
3 O	0,27	0,23
3 S O	0,22	0,21
3 S	0,20	0,21
3 S W	0,17	0,21
3 W	0,17	0,23
3 N W	0,14	0,18

The exposure to natural radiation is 0.24 micro Sievert per hour.

(Source: [www.wikipedia.org](http://www.wikipedia.org), orders of magnitude)



A bead from the surroundings of the pebble bed reactor Hamm-Uentrop. In front a human hair for size comparison. (picture of Achim Hucke)

### 4. Life expectancy and statistics

Life expectancy is the age a person can achieve. A boy who was born in the year of 2010 in Germany, can expect that he will become 77.5 years old on average. A girl will become even 82.6 years old. (Source: Statistisches Bundesamt Germany, [www.destatis.de](http://www.destatis.de))

To get details of the life expectancy in the vicinity of the nuclear power plant Hamm-Uentrop, I recorded the year of

continued on page 12

Table 2: Life expectancy in the vicinity of the NPP

Name	Distance to the NPP in kilometers	Number of deaths	Average age
Uentrop kath.	2,2	217	71,60
Geithe	3,6	74	68,82
Hamm Berge	4,4	662	73,36
Lippborg	5,4	608	71,92
Dinker	5,5	137	69,43
Süddinker	6,0	51	69,15
Welver	6,2	705	71,50
Werries Uentrop	6,2	922	70,79
Hultrop	6,9	167	73,03
Ostwennemar	7,7	1107	71,14
Ostwennemar kath.	7,7	188	71,49
Stocklarn	7,8	22	79,13
Westünnen	7,9	606	75,15
Hamm Mark	8,1	870	75,48
Bad Hamm	8,6	1569	76,38
Beckum Hammer Str.	8,6	986	73,10
Dolberg	8,7	520	73,12
Beckum Elisabethstr.	9,1	1943	75,56
Ahlen Ost	9,2	2190	71,15
Scheidingen	9,2	173	69,25
Hamm Heessen	9,5	1748	72,94
Rhynern kath.	9,5	605	72,84
Borgeln	9,6	53	74,01
Wambeln	9,6	46	72,94
Rhynern ev.	9,7	257	73,99
Braam	9,8	334	72,95
Hamm Süden	9,9	2146	74,61
Ahlen Süd	10,0	2142	71,24
Oestinghausen	10,1	172	73,56
Sönnern	10,6	86	72,84
Beckum Roland	11,3	1767	70,15
Kattrop	11,6	18	73,61
Hamm Johannisstr.	11,8	663	70,73
Ahlen West	11,9	2440	73,96
Hovestadt	12,0	214	69,83
Werl	12,0	2195	71,68
Hamm Kötterberg	12,2	947	71,91
Westönnen	12,3	424	75,17
Schwefe	12,4	396	75,29
Herzfeld	12,6	669	72,55
Average	8,9		72,7
Total		31039	

Table 3: Life expectancy at great distances from the NPP

Name	Distance to the NPP in kilometers	Number of deaths	Average age
Oestereiden	44,0	205	73,72
Lippstadt	24,4	1945	73,87
Hoinkhausen	43,0	171	75,61
Rüthen	45,0	107	76,71
Timmendorf	396,0	677	76,81
Average	110,5		75,3
Total		3105	

**"Has the decommissioned ..."**

continued from page 10

birth and death in a radius of 15 kilometers in all graveyards. I considered dates of death after 1980 only, because the power plant was put into service in 1983. Then I subtracted the year of birth from the year of death on the computer and calculated the average. I've sorted them ascending based on the distance from the power plant. [table 2]

Also for comparison I researched cemeteries in a greater distance. The results are listed in the following table [table 3].

**5. Conclusion**

The radioactivity in air and soil was between 0.14 and 0.27 micro Sievert per hour. This is in the normal range.

Under the microscope, I discovered black spherules and wonder where they are coming from, what they consist of and how far they are spread. This should be investigated urgently. In particular, it should be checked whether these spherules are dangerous.

26 March 2011

I have chosen locations for taking soil samples on a map, tagged them and went there with my supervisor and I viewed the area around the nuclear power station.

9 April 2011

I recorded the death dates in the cemetery of Scheidingen.

23 April 2011

I recorded the death dates in the cemetery of Welver.

30 April 2011

I recorded the death dates in the cemetery of Sönnern and Wambeln.

7 May 2011

I recorded the death dates in the cemetery of Dinker and Süddinker.

I noticed that in the vicinity of the nuclear power plant the average of life expectancy was lower (72.7 years) than further away (75.3 years). It is striking that low values are found only within 7.8 km distance from the power station. I know that many people had died from car accidents or other similar causes, but at 35,000 examined dates of death it is not normal that the mean value is so low. This should be addressed further.

I fear that the nuclear power plant in Hamm-Uentrop has greatly affected its environment.

**6. Annex (experimental logbook)**

21 May 2011

I recorded the death dates in the cemetery of Lippborg.

28 May 2011

I recorded the death dates in the cemetery of Hultrop and Hovestadt.

3 June 2011

I took soil samples and measured the radioactivity south of the Lippe.

4 June 2011

I took soil samples and measured the radioactivity north of the Lippe.

11 June 2011

I recorded the death dates in the cemetery of Uentrop and Geithe.

I have summarized the results of my studies in a model.

(Translation *Current Concerns*)



The model with the results of the investigation  
(picture Samantha Seithe)

25 June 2011

I recorded the death dates in the cemetery of Stocklarn, Borgeln, Hattrop and Schwefe.

2 July 2011

I recorded the death dates in the cemetery of Herzfeld.

9 July 2011

I recorded the death dates in the cemetery of Werl. But we have not finished yet.

16 July 2011

I recorded the remaining death dates in the cemetery of Werl.

6 August 2011

I recorded the death dates in the cemetery of Westönnen.

continued on page 13

**"6. Annex ..."**

continued from page 12

*19 August 2011*

I recorded the death dates in the cemetery of Rhynern and brought those from Tim-mendorf back from my holidays.

*20 August 2011*

I recorded the death dates in the cemetery of Werries.

*23 August 2011*

I recorded the death dates in the cemetery of Ahlen Süd.

*25 August 2011*

I recorded the death dates in the cemetery of Ahlen West.

*27 August 2011*

I recorded the death dates in the cemetery of Dolberg.

*29 August 2011*

I recorded the death dates in the cemetery of Ahlen East.

*1 September 2011*

I recorded the death dates in the cemetery of Beckum Elisabethstrasse.

*3 September 2011*

I recorded the death dates in the cemeteries in Ostwennemar.

*10 September 2011*

I «dispersed» and strained the test sample 3O.

*11 September 2011*

I microscoped the test sample 3O.

*12 September 2011*

I converted the microscope with additional lamps and continued to microscope further on. I found grains of sand and black balls.

*13 September 2011*

My supervisor looked at the balls and said, that I must not work further on the soil samples, because it might be dangerous.

*17 September 2011*

I recorded the death dates in the cemetery of Westünnen.

*24 September 2011*

I recorded the death dates in the cemetery of Braam. Friends have brought me the death dates of Oestinghausen, Oestereiden, Lippstadt, Hoinkhausen and Rüthen.

*25 September 2011*

I calculated the death dates' average values. In the vicinity of Hamm-Uentrop, the people live shorter. There are still many data from cemeteries in Hamm and Ahlen missing.

*1 October 2011*

I recorded the death dates in the cemetery of Hamm Berge.

*8 October 2011*

I recorded the death dates in the cemetery of Hamm Mark.

*22 October 2011*

I recorded the death dates in the cemetery of Hamm Kötterberg.

*24 October 2011*

I recorded the death dates in the cemetery of Hamm Johannisstrasse.

*25 October 2011*

I recorded the death dates in the cemetery of Bad Hamm.

*26 October 2011*

I recorded the remaining death dates in the cemetery of Bad Hamm.

*29 October 2011*

I recorded the death dates in the cemetery of Hamm-Heessen.

*31 October 2011*

I recorded the remaining death dates in the cemetery of Hamm-Heessen.

*3 November 2011*

I recorded the death dates in the cemetery of Hamm Süden.

*4 November 2011*

I recorded the remaining death dates in the cemetery of Hamm Süden.

*5 November 2011*

I recorded the death dates in the cemetery of Beckum Roland.

*12 November 2011*

I recorded the death dates in the cemetery of Beckum Hammer Strasse.

*19 November 2011*

I have calculated all average dates and their distances to the nuclear power plant.

*26 November 2011*

I wrote my report.

*3 December 2011*

I wrote my report.

*10 December 2011*

I finished my report.

### Vorarlberg's complaint against Mühleberg

On 31 May 2012 the Austrian federal state of Vorarlberg took a civil lawsuit against the Mühleberg nuclear power plant in to the Regional Court of Feldkirch.

The lawsuit of Vorarlberg concerning an increased deriving from the nuclear power plant Mühleberg is based on an expertise by the Austrian Ministry of Life.

[...] Besides the action in Austria the state Vorarlberg also prepares a lawsuit in Switzerland: Bern's lawyer *Rainer Weibel* is working on a motion demanding the withdrawal of the operating permit. This motion which is to be filed in Switzerland and which aims at an operating termination, is to be submitted during the summer.

The operator of the nuclear power plant Mühleberg BKW FMB Energy AG has now four weeks to respond to the action in Feldkirch.

Source: M.A. by state of Vorarlberg, state correspondence, 31 May 2012.

(Translation Current Concerns)

## AFRICOM established

### “Lessons from Afghanistan” are drawn / new mix / “fight of terrorism” continued

by John Ryan, deputy editor of “Army Times”, Washington D.C.

*cc. Actually, the US should ask themselves, who – in the late 80s – talked them into marching out into the world with their big wars, ruining their national economy that way. The enlargement of their money stock by more than factor three compared to 1990 is of no use, not even to their own economy, let alone that of anybody else. In case they had moved about in the world in sense of their old utilitarianism, during the last twenty, they might be popular today and the world a highly sophisticated garden ... Meanwhile, they have drawn “Lessons from Afghanistan” and already integrated them into their “AFRICOM” strategy: first and indispensable an alliance with local forces; incorporate humanitarian elements; bases not in the center, but on the periphery; training of local forces outside the country or in the United States in a safe area. Does the empire want to senselessly lead even more wars now? Just because its IT-specialists don’t manage to create a computer model that is able to change from a wartime to a peacetime economy? To move from the position of the leading world power to a position of equals among equals would be possible with some more “grandezza”. In utilitarian terms it could sound somewhat like that: “The circumstances of our economy require a shift from wartime to peacetime economy.” This announcement would cost the US President no more than five minutes. The world would breathe again and work together with them on the most beautiful development projects within one year.*

A brigade will deploy to Africa next year in a pilot program that assigns brigades on a rotational basis to regions around the globe, the Army announced in May.

Roughly 3,000 soldiers – and likely more – are expected to serve tours across the continent in 2013, training foreign militaries and aiding locals.

As part of a “regionally aligned force concept,” soldiers will live and work among Africans in safe communities approved by the US government, said Maj. Gen. David R. Hogg, head of US Army Africa.

#### How to get there

To serve on the continent, soldiers can:

- Volunteer for duty with US Army Africa.

- Join an office of security cooperation for the region.
- Apply and become a foreign-area officer.

Tours could last a few weeks or months and include multiple missions at different locations, he said.

The Army has not announced which brigade would deploy or where the soldiers would come from.

As the Afghanistan war winds down, the new readiness model affords Army units more time to learn regional cultures and languages and train for specific threats and missions.

Africa, in particular, has emerged as a greater priority for the US government because terrorist groups there have become an increasing threat to US and regional security.

Though US soldiers have operated in Africa for decades, including more than 1,200 soldiers currently stationed at Camp Lemonnier, Djibouti, the region in many ways remains the Army’s last frontier.

“As far as our mission goes, it’s uncharted territory,” Hogg said from his headquarters in Vicenza, Italy. But “I’m not there to win their wars or settle their differences,” he added.

Instead, with more soldiers, US Army Africa will continue to strengthen ties with regional militaries and governments by teaching military tactics, medicine and logistics, as well as combating famine, disease and terrorism in secure environments. The Army currently allows conventional soldiers to enter only 46 of the 54 African states due to security risks.

The State Department and US special operations commands handle activities in the other countries, including those amid conflict.

Active-duty soldiers, guardsmen and reservists have helped quell regional violence, assist sick and injured Africans and feed the famished in East Africa.

During a recent annual training exercise, US soldiers taught Ugandan forces how to deliver supplies by air to comrades in the bush chasing rebels from the *Lord’s Resistance Army*, a militia accused of atrocities in central Africa.

Through State Department initiatives, soldiers have also trained African troops headed for peacekeeping missions in Somalia on convoy security and countering improvised explosive devices.

On medical missions, Army doctors have replaced eye lenses of cataract patients in Malawi and Zanzibar, who danced and beamed after seeing, in some cases for the first time. Medical soldiers have also handed out mosquito nets to protect locals from malaria, the No. 1 killer in Africa, Hogg said.

Army chaplains teach Africans in classes about dealing with post-traumatic stress and running family readiness groups.

#### Lessons reality teaches

A brigade combat team has the capability to satisfy more than two-thirds of these missions in Africa. The rest will require skilled specialists – mechanics and logisticians – from the National Guard and Army Reserve, Hogg said.

Each week, US Army Africa operations personally affect 300 to 400 locals, he said.

“I’ve seen some of these missions where the battalion commander down there could probably run for governor,” he said. “That’s how close of a relationship they have with some of their counterparts, both on the military side and with the local civilian community. “It gets out the indirect approach [toward] some of these violent, extremist organizations that will talk bad about the Americans and the U.S.,” he said. “It leaves behind a lasting effect over time.”

From African forces, US soldiers have picked up real-world lessons about tropical diseases, international cultures and foreign military tactics.

In the future, US soldiers might also attend military courses in Africa, such as the French desert survival school in Djibouti and African jungle schools in Ghana and Gabon.

Still, the Army has no plans to construct permanent bases across the continent, and the mission does have its limits, Hogg said. “For all the challenges that happen and sprout up across Africa, it really comes down to, it has to be an African solution. We are here to enable, where wanted, the African forces to figure out and solve their own problems,” said Hogg, who has visited more than 20 countries. “We are not trying to reproduce the United States Army in the 54 countries in Africa,” he said.

Source: <http://www.armytimes.com/news/2012/06/army-3000-soldiers-serve-in-africa-next-year-060812/>

## Help that goes from heart to heart

**With great success the Swiss aid organization “Good Hearts Organization” (GHO) helps the poorest of the poor in the Kibera slum of Nairobi**

*Interview with Alex Weigel, founder and managing director of GHO*



Alex Weigel  
(picture thk)

*thk. If one wonders what a useful and successful development cooperation should look like one finds a model in the aid organization “Goodheart’s organization” which embodies the essential*

*principles of successful Swiss development cooperation, as the organization is primarily oriented towards the needs and conditions of the population living there.*

*The founder and managing director of this organization is the Swiss Alex Weigel. With a lot of passion he has started to build up a school for slum children out of nowhere, which is very successful.*

*Although Kenya is not a priority country for Swiss development cooperation, he also gets support from official Switzerland.*

*That motivated Alex Weigel to emigrate to Nairobi, and in the interview below he will tell us according to what principles he has established and runs his school, the “KidStar Academy”.*

*Mr Weigel, you are the founder and managing director of the aid organization “Good Hearts Organization” that runs a school and a medical care centre in Kibera, the largest slum in Nairobi. How did this happen?*

That is a long story. During my high school years I had the privilege to be able to travel to Mexico, where for the first time I saw real poverty with my own eyes. I was deeply touched, and I said to myself, some time in your life you will do something about that, one day you will try to counteract this and to help people who are affected by poverty, hunger and exploitation and by everything that is connected to it. I’ve actually always been interested in social issues, but I finally started a career at an insurance company which was taken over by a bank over time. I have never forgotten my original intention, namely to commit myself to development cooperation. So I got the opportunity to lead the customer-service department of a globally engaged aid organization for a couple of years, and hereby I moved a little closer to my wish to help people in the Third World. This desire became even

stronger, the more I gained insight into the conditions. The impression was reinforced when I was in the fortunate position to lead a tour of mentors and sponsors to Latin America. There we visited in particular projects in Nicaragua. Thereby my wish again grew stronger to do something about it, directly. I had already visited other projects on other continents, I had been in Asia, but had never visited the African continent. After I had already set foot on several continents several times, the time had come for me to visit Africa. When my daughter was 18 years old, we decided to make a holiday journey to a very different place. The trip did not take us to California this time nor on the Island of Crete, but to Kibera, the largest slum in Nairobi. There we had no big plans, except for a four-day safari in the Masai Mara, and to spend the rest of the time in Kibera, the most densely populated slum in Africa.

*What has been the decisive factor to relocate from Switzerland and to move to Kibera, to exchange an orderly life for a lot of uncertainty?*

We met so many people there and talked to them and saw so many things that I said to myself: Now you have to do something. If I do nothing now, I have been discredited to myself. I terminated my previous position. Just before Christmas that same year I traveled to Nairobi. There, I contacted the people I had met in the slum on the first occasion, and assessed what could be meaningfully done.

*How was the idea of founding a school born?*

I probably had in mind that we could start an aid organization, but first we had to see, if and how such a thing was possible. After some time in early January, we started the school. I had done a walk through the slum and evaluated several areas. And I realized that the area where Raila, Gatwekera and West Soweto meet, is probably the poorest one. I met elders of the area under a tin roof and discussed things with them in order to find out what they needed most.

*What did these people suggest?*

We filled an entire A4 page with desirable projects and activities. Finally, once again we took much time together to prioritize. The first priority was a hospital operating 24 hours per day and 7 days per week. I had to tell the people, that I could not

start with this project, because at that time this exceeded my limited financial possibilities as a private person. But already in the second place was a school namely for rather young children, of three years and above. It the kids go to school, the parents can take up a paid employment, while we care for their children during the day. This was within my possibilities, and it would also open the door to the families and their problems. So let us start with that.

*I imagine that this is not easy for a stranger to build up a school in a slum for the poorest of the poor. One arrives at a totally different culture and there one meets people, who are living on the dark side of life. How did you proceed?*

I contacted a lady teacher, whom I met on my first visit with my daughter and her friend.

*How did you get to know this teacher?*

That happened completely by chance. We had contact with a youth group in the slum, which organized a “slum cleaning”. We were happy to help as visitors, and the teacher was also there just at that time. We got into talking. She was a teacher at a Montessori school established in the slum. There, she had been without pay for seven months. So she was ready to build up something new. We then engaged another female volunteer, a teacher who was also looking for a job. That’s how it all started.

When I returned to Switzerland in April, we already had started the project with more than 20 students. But there was still no organization.

*This means that you started the whole thing by a personal impulse, and that you shouldered everything by yourself, including the cost?*

Yes, that is correct. This was done from necessity. If you consider what is necessary down there you just can’t help it. I used my modest means to do that, I made some serious errors with my own money whereby I learned a great deal. In the first year, I paid both operationally and financially almost everything out of my own pocket, then I wanted to start an association in order to put the whole project, which was growing steadily now, on solid feet. When I had the certainty that I was able to lead the project on a long-term basis, and when my own person-

continued on page 16

### "Help that goes from heart to heart"

continued from page 15

al money ran out, the association came into play. So everything went relatively quickly, and I am grateful to all who have helped me. For the drawing up of the statutes and the structure of the association, for example, I was able to make recourse to friends from my time at a charity organization.

*How then is the status of the school, how has the project developed? How do local people react?*

In Africa, I was always received very warmly. The Kenyans who do not know me, who may not have a wide horizon, may see a white man like me as a cash-box. In addition, there are many people, especially children, who set great hopes in white people; for most whites who come to Africa and really get in touch with the people, want to help. This has made the start very easy. Sometimes you cannot fulfill the expectations of people who think a little shortsightedly. Many find this is a white man, and he should now give me some money. We do not.

What has facilitated the start, was that we worked with local people from the slum. It was a perfect symbiosis. My explanation to the chief there was like this: It's like chocolate! It is composed of the best African agricultural products, which went into the chocolate, combined with a bit of technology invented in Switzerland, in Zurich. And the synthesis of these two ingredients makes the best chocolate that we all like on both sides of the globe. That is what we can achieve if we give our best on both sides. Exactly like this we built the school. The people's acceptance helped us that the doors were opened to us very simply, even by the local authorities. We really pushed into open doors. You get problems only in case the authorities think they can get money from you, but we are very consistent: we do not support any corruption. We don't do that on principle, my Toggenburgish stubbornness is very helpful in this case.

*Let's talk more about the school. How does the daily school life function? What experiences did you make?*

From the very beginning, we had many challenges in daily school life. So we learned that you must give a lunch to the children as well. We knew that we would give them a breakfast, but it was soon clear that we must also provide a mid-day meal. The children could certainly go home for lunch, but then they just get nothing to eat, because there is nothing there. And I had a touching experience. Because we basically want to work in a participatory way, which means that

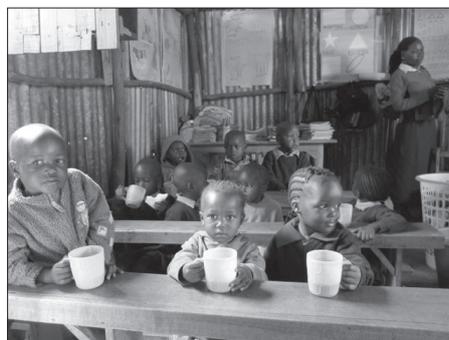
the people themselves should contribute something, i.e. we bring the plates and the food, but we want the children to bring a spoon to eat the food. The spoon stays at the school of course. Two parents told us that this is not possible, and when I asked why not, one mother said: You know, that's our only spoon and I need it to cook the evening dinner. We then share this spoon when we have dinner. We are an eight-member family.

That is the way people live. I was ashamed and had to hide my tears, but I was grateful for the honesty. Obviously, we have learned a lot from that.



Playground in front of the school. (picture ak)

The school has grown, more and more parents or relatives brought their children. So we got a deeper insight into the world of the people here and were confronted with many of their problems. Not only when a student is sick, but also if somebody of the family falls ill, the parents or those who are responsible for the care of children or siblings, need urgent medical attention, because otherwise all would soon suffer and "our" child would not be able to attend school for a long period. So we still had to add a medical program. This means that every day, I or an assistant carry a few children to our doctor *Dorah* who is a qualified doctor having worked long in the most prestigious hospital in East Africa and who is now head-



Breakfast before school. (picture ak)

ing two slum clinics and a maternity clinic. They are busy around the clock. *Dorah* is a wonderful person.

*It's amazing what you set up in so little time. Is the future of the school secured?*

We have grown and could grow on and on, but unfortunately the space is limited. We must now limit ourselves to just 80 students, and so the quality does not suffer. The fact that we offer medical aid and carry a nutrition program as part of the FAO, WFP, we are currently helping 800 of the neediest people in the slum. These are the parents, siblings and relatives of our children and some very poor families, which we know because we have already been here for 3 years. The WFP is familiar to us because we care for the people properly, directly and adequately, and we keep a correct record about the delivered food and the health state of the children. This is how things are today. We serve 800 people, but the school should be able to continue to grow. In that case we would be able to reach many more people. We would also like to offer a clinic and build a program for people with HIV and AIDS on this side of the slums. We also take care of them, but not as extensively as we would like to. We saw very bad cases for which we want to do more. There should also be an opportunity for the many orphans, enabling them to stay in a safe place. It often happens that families are torn apart and the children are put somewhere where they probably will neither go to school nor develop well. We want to develop these opportunities for and with the people. We have planned all this for some time, but we were always confronted with the ignorance of the government, for the simple reason that I am not ready to feed corruption. When I present our concept, and I did it four times, I do not fork out a couple of bucks, although I am aware that the other side expects it. I'm not doing that, anyway.

*You are still facing further impassibilities.* We currently have the situation that our school and housing for a further 6000 people are to vanish because of a road project, and for the simple reason that a few corrupt offshoots of high government officials have been attributed a lot of land, and therefore, a very large road will be built differently, than was originally planned. This is also evident on the city maps. Now very soon five schools, two hospitals, three churches and a lot of flimsy slum dwellings are to be destroyed, and of course nobody will compensate for it.

*And what about the school then?*

On the one hand, there is an imminent threat because you never know exactly when the bulldozers will come. This situation has already robbed the residents and me some sleep. The boundary stones have been displaced, and in one to two months, everything will be destroyed there. The

continued on page 17

**"Help that goes from heart to heart"**

continued from page 16

whole country has been surveyed by a Chinese construction company that will be carrying out the work under the protection of two special police units that do not spare using guns and tear gas.

What I have learned in Africa is to recognize our opportunities therein despite all the problems. We submitted an application to the highest authority, the prime minister, demanding land that we chose as a substitute. The piece of land is very steep, and so far no one has been interested, because it is very difficult to build on this site. For this reason the plot of land is still free as if it had been waiting for us. Everything else is constructed area, every plot where it is possible to build. Partially the cabins are situated on a slope, and people have to sleep on the hillside, which is quite terrible. In addition there is sewage flowing through this area.

*How can you farm this site then?*

Let us come back again to the chocolate. Let us do something that we know with our technology and combine it with the available opportunities and resources on site. We need to terrace the land, and on these terraces, we can then situate the individual projects. We, people from Switzerland are experienced in that kind of thing by our mountain areas, even in Zurich, lots of buildings are on steep hillsides. For engineering, we get professional help from Switzerland. Together with the many unemployed people on-site, we can then terrace the plot. There we can build everything that is needed: a larger school, a hospital, a community center, an HIV-AIDS center and many more things including a greenhouse in order to grow food for our own use, and a biogas plant, which can use the waste water from the slums for generating energy and at the same time will provide good soil. There is no shortage of plans, but the property still needs to be attributed to us.

*What are the chances that you get the land?*

We are confident because other organizations would most likely not be able to do something there. Somehow, this country is just determined for us. Besides it is just an election year in Kenya and the Prime Minister wants to become president. Our project is located in his constituency district. Looking at it objectively, it is practically not possible for us to get the land and realize all the necessary projects un-

less a lot of people support us who have a heart, so that the aid from heart to heart goes on. That is our motto concerning development cooperation. We do not want to implement projects, but we want to build relationships. We consider the building of relationships between all parties crucial for successful aid. We regard these local relationships as something that must be expanded, so that there is a network that is sustainable, so that people can survive in dignity. It is our view: from person to person, from heart to heart. So we can build good development cooperation, which may claim to be truly sustainable. As a result, donations, whether large or small, will really become actual investments. What we have seen over the last three years there, shows us that this is the right way to go into a future that is better for these people and concomitantly is for us in Switzerland. The more problems people have in the developing world, the more problems we have here in Switzerland. Our world is linked economically, politically and in so many ways that we (the West) should not deceive ourselves into continuing to maintain a cheese dome thinking. And if the other people feel better, and the songwriter *Mani Matter* has already known that, we also feel better. "Those who feel well would even feel better if those who feel less well would feel better."

*I think, with everything you reported, the biggest respect is due to you and your team for the everyday commitment you perform for the poorest of the poor. I can imagine that one faces great human challenges over and over again ...*

I have to say, except from those who work directly in Kibera we receive the biggest support from Switzerland. However, we are also supported locally by biofarmers who bring us a few cabbages or sometimes cooking bananas or beetroots, or whatever providence has ready for us making our menu for our children even more varied. In addition, we are very happy of course about the visits and the support by the Swiss embassy in Nairobi. This year they help us with a great donation, so that we can pay the very high food prices and the extremely exploded prices in the medical area and also the wages which we had to adapt accordingly. This has given us thus a basic security that we were able to make our planning reasonable further on. The school and its programmes can go on in such a way, especially now where we prepare to move to a new place. The whole thing is strongly

sustained by relationships, e.g. the support of the ambassador, his personal assistance which is important for me. He makes me say over and over again: "No, Alex, there are many things and many forces which work against it, but you must not capitulate, there is a way." Thus I can deposit the difficulties which I find in my work, at a competent place and meet understanding. The Swiss embassy in Nairobi is a big blessing for us. And: God always supports the poor, that is why he supports us.

*Mr Weigel, we wish you all the best for the future and that the school can continue its beneficial work further on. Many thanks for this interview.* •

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