

**Globalisation for the Common Good:
An Interfaith Perspective
Seventh Annual International Conference**

**From the Middle East to Asia Pacific:
Arc of Conflict or Dialogue of Cultures & Religions?
30 June- 4 July 2008
Trinity College, University of Melbourne
Melbourne, Australia
www.gcgmelbourne2008.info**

It is with great pleasure and deep honour that I announce that our 7th Annual International Conference will be held in Australia and in the great city of Melbourne.

We live in difficult and troubling times, facing unprecedented global challenges in the areas of climate change and ecology, hunger and infectious disease, international relations and cooperation, peace and justice, terrorism and war, armaments and unprecedented violence. It is precisely in times like these – unstable and confusing though they may be – that people everywhere need to keep their eyes on the better side of human nature, the side of love and compassion, rather than hatred and injustice; the side of the common good, rather than selfishness, individualism and greed.

People need to see that there are serious alternatives to the world's present failing policies, rules and institutions, and that there are likeminded global citizens who share a vision of hope and common values that can lift them out of the deep sense of powerlessness and despair that is now affecting so many parts of the world.

We are grateful to be contributing to that vision of a better world.

Globalization for the Common Good Initiative (GCGI) has come a long way over the past six years. Six successful annual conferences and an increasingly influential journal and web site mark our progress. We have cultivated a diverse group of scholars, leaders of civil society, religious and spiritual leaders, and global activists for intense explorations of a value-centred vision of globalisation and the common good. *We invite all others who share our mission to join us on this path to a new global future and participate in the 2008 conference in Melbourne, Australia.*

Melbourne and the historical Trinity College (our host) at the University of Melbourne, are preparing a welcome in the friendly Aussie tradition for all our participants.

In the past few decades, Australia has become an important economic, political and cultural gateway for the Asia-Pacific region, and Melbourne has been a key to that success. A proudly multi-faith, multi-lingual, and multicultural city, Melbourne is home to indigenous and aboriginal spiritualities, as well as diverse world religious and spiritual traditions. In fact, the city will host the 2009 Parliament of the World's Religions gathering, for which our Conference will serve as an important prelude.

All of these factors make Melbourne the ideal location for the 7th Annual Globalisation for the Common Good Conference, the first in our series to be held with a clear Asia-Pacific focus. Our conference theme, 'From the Middle East to Asia Pacific: Arc of Conflict or Dialogue of Cultures and Religions?' seeks to explore the far-reaching ramifications of conflict in the Middle East for the religious, cultural and political landscape of the Asia-Pacific region, especially after September 11.

I would very much like to thank my conference co-convener, Prof. Joseph Camilleri, Director of the Centre for Dialogue at La Trobe University. Joe has been a beacon of support and I am grateful to him for all his assistance in bringing the GCGI to Melbourne. I am most grateful also to our many supporters and sponsors in Australia, especially the Australian Catholic University; Asia-Pacific Centre for Inter-religious Dialogue, Melbourne College of Divinity; Trinity College, University of Melbourne; and Centre for Dialogue, La Trobe University.

How well we succeed in changing our world for the better, so that we can build a world that is just, free and prosperous for all, will depend on our collective capacities to mobilise interest and master enthusiasm around our common vision and our collective action. This call to action should be heard loud and clear. So please share our message with all of your colleagues and friends: *Melbourne 2008 will be the place where we will come together with a positive global focus, inviting all to march with us along the path of justice, peace and the common good for all.*

In anticipation of a warm welcome and an exciting programme, I invite you to join us in Melbourne in 2008 to participate in and contribute to this major international conference and to meet with peers and colleagues from around Australia and the world. I can assure you that the forthcoming Globalisation for the Common Good Conference will be a truly enriching dialogue, a great cultural experience, and a motivational springboard for further global action.

With warmest regards,

Kamran Mofid

Founder, Globalisation for the Common Good Initiative

www.globalisationforthecommongood.info

Conference details:

www.gcgmelbourne2008.info