

Building a world community

**mondial**

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## Introducing Dr Tawanda Hondora

I joined the World Federalist Movement – Institute for Global Policy as Executive Director in March 2019 because I am attracted by its Mission – for peace, prosperity and justice for all.

The work has been both challenging and exciting. It's a role that presents many opportunities for influencing change on a broad set of transnational issues.

Increasing threats against multilateralism and the re-emergence of virulent nationalism means positive change is going to be exceptionally challenging to achieve. The world is becoming more unstable, raising the spectre of even more catastrophic violent conflict.

Examples abound, from Mali and Burkina Faso in West Africa; Libya, Sudan and South Sudan in North East Africa; Central African Republic and the DRC in central Africa; Syria, Yemen, Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territories in the Middle East; Afghanistan, North Korea and Myanmar in Asia; and Venezuela and Colombia in Latin America.

Many of these crises have been exacerbated by the reckless behaviour of some of the major powers, not least the permanent members of the UN Security Council – China, France, Russia, United Kingdom and United States.

In tragicomedy fashion, the US currently wields the biggest wrecking ball. In April, it declared that the US would withdraw from the Global Arms Trade Treaty. And in May, unmoved by extensive evidence of war crimes in the Yemen conflict, which is a proxy war between Saudi Arabia and Iran, the US revealed over \$8 billion worth of arms sales to Saudi Arabia and two neighboring states.

The deteriorating crisis in Libya and Sudan are the latest examples of the dangers we face from the P5's use of the United Nations Security Council to further their self-interests instead of acting for the greater good.

I believe that these and myriad other challenges require civil society to focus its energies on pushing for reforms that will strengthen global governance frameworks

and institutions. These institutions must work for us – the people – and not at the instance and in the interests only of the powerful few as is all too often the case.

We also have an opportunity to invigorate domestic and regional activism and constituencies. I have always been convinced that battles are not fought and won at the UN Offices in Geneva or New York, but rather at home, in national capitals and the world's regions.

I've joined an organization that has since 1995 coordinated and provided secretariat services to several coalitions, including the Coalition for the International Criminal Court (CICC). Together with our CICC partners we are advocating for the strengthening of the International Criminal Court (ICC).

We must push for the fortification of the court's effectiveness, independence and integrity and join forces to prevent the likes of the US, which just recently imposed sanctions on the ICC Prosecutor, from destabilizing and destroying this most venerable of institutions.

The same holds true of key global institutions such as the World Trade Organisation (WTO), the UN Security Council (UNSC), the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and World Bank (WB).

It is only through the convening and opinion-shaping power of civil society that we can shift the ground from those whose defining motto is that "might is right."

We also need to consider how best to strengthen the European Union in view of its many challenges and the lessons to be drawn for other regional entities like the African Union, Organization of American States (OAS), Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN), and the League of Arab States (LAS).

These bodies can be the nucleus around which regional rules on human rights, climate change, peace, justice and human security, and trade and sustainable economic development can evolve into normative and globally binding rules, principles and values.

I am especially humbled that I come into WFM-IGP to step into the shoes of that indefatigable giant - William Pace.

Through coalition building and coordination, Bill's visionary leadership turned WFM-IGP into a formidable impact-multiplying force, particularly on international justice and mass atrocity prevention frameworks and institutions.

Building on his legacy, my team and I are exploring how best to harness – among others - the influencing capacity of two often overlooked constituencies, the corporate sector and the youth.

The business sector is critically important and highly influential. With work continuing on transforming the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights and leveraging the OECD Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises, the business sector should be more effectively roped in to influence progressive action,

including with respect to ending mass atrocity crimes, ensuring the right to privacy in a digital world, and addressing climate change.

We also need to work harder and smarter to attract the youth to the ideal of using multilateral frameworks and institutions to address global challenges. I am in this field because of one of my early experiences after I was admitted to bar in 1998.

I was appalled to discover that many people were in prolonged pre-trial detention in Harare, Zimbabwe for lack of money for bail. The injustice of the situation led me to join Zimbabwe Lawyers for Human Rights (ZLHR) through which I and others provided pro bono services to [journalists](#), [trade unionists and students](#) in addition to my day job as a commercial law attorney.

Twenty years later this experience still motivates me to work for the greater good; for the rule of law and better global institutions; and on a broad (and broadening!) spectrum of human security issues - from the Sustainable Development Goals to peace and international justice.

The members and organizations that make up the World Federalist Movement are custodians of a wonderfully rich constellation of ideas . There is much to do. It won't happen at once or overnight. But every step is progress, and together we can make every step count.