**Forum 4: THE ECONOMY BETWEEN PEACE AND WAR**

**Katherine Marshall, Moderator.**

"Development is the name of peace". That statement contains much experience and wisdom, and is the central theme of today's Forum. It calls for us to explore both the significance of the two words: development and peace, and the deep roots of their interconnections. There is little to dispute in the direct and indirect impact of war and conflict which affect billions each and every day. And the deep and universal longing for peace is the essence of the spirit of Assisi. So we have a feast of exploration before us.

First the process for this morning. I have been asked to do a brief introduction, and will keep it brief. Each speaker has ten minutes. I will introduce each briefly, but full bios are available on the Sant'Egidio website. I may interject brief questions but the main questions will come from participants, who should put questions on pieces of paper. As is now a common appeal, please phrase statements in the form of a question. We must conclude by 1230.

As I noted before, the destruction of war, its futility, and the pain surrounding it seem obvious to us, yet as speakers noted yesterday the "blast of war" (as Shakespeare called it) and its appeal to what seem necessities and even virtue seems to take on new life. Meanwhile there is a tragic loss of commitment among many leaders for development, or what I call human progress. Yet we live in a time when we have in at least my lifetime witnessed the extraordinary modern miracle (to cite Andrea Riccardi) of better lives for all. Development spending is declining, institutions wiped out, and the topic is up for endless debate. But to me and I think to us here, the fact that progress and better lives for all is so possible is a moral imperative. We must return to, revive, revitalize the spirit of human progress for the common good.

That was the sense of a meeting of the G20 Interfaith Forum that met last week in Utah, with constant reminders of the lived commitment of so many religious communities to helping their neighbors and working for peace and progress. What we have here, in today's Forum and in the special Sant'Egidio community, is the raw reality of the economic, social, political, and moral consequences of war and conflicts. We need also to celebrate the miracles of progress, what better health and education can achieve, how jobs for men and women support families and hope for the future. A better world for one and all is possible and it is within our grasp. But the many devils that lead to war and conflict need to be witnessed and addressed and defeated.

As we begin this session I suggest four imperatives for our challenge, which is epitomized in the ideal of turning swords to plowshares.

First, we must witness the experience of war, however distant it may seem in everyday lives. The stories are critical and so is the knowledge. Data on consequences are part of witness and it needs to be constant. There are remarkable indicators both of the realities and progression of conflicts and of their consequences. Those facts need to be more widely understood, and extended also to the social unrest we see in many world regions.

Second, the crisis of the peace making and peace building communities is too apparent, with too few successes to trumpet. In the complex, never ending conflicts we see today, what are the paths towards settlement and peace. It calls for understanding the causes of conflict far better and for the relentless effort for peace that Sant'Egidio exemplifies.

Third, we need new thinking about the next phases of development: beyond today's malaise and cruel budget cuts for health, education, permission for debts to mount. What comes next? Yes, it must be

community led, well governed. And national governments need to give robust attention to social cohesion, to addressing anger and despair. But international compassion and rigorous attention and persistence are vital.

And finally, how can we align the ancient calls to compassion, charity, and caring with the need for rigor and professionalism? The two: charity and realism, are not imcompatible, and far beyond the early days of Effective Altruism. AI can help our best causes, health and education for example.