

Annual Report



September 2003 – August 2004



▶ PEOPLE
INSPIRING
RESPONSIBLE BUSINESS

This annual report describes the highlights of the activities of the European Bahá'í Business Forum (EBBF) during the year September 1, 2003 through August 31, 2004. It is organized as follows:

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1.- THE GOVERNING BOARD

The official meeting of the General Assembly was held during the Annual Conference on 27 September 2003. The following members were elected to serve for the year 2003-2004: Faramarz Ettehadieh, Wendi Momen, Giuseppe Robiati, Daniel Schaubacher, George Starcher, Daniel Truran, and Ezzat Zahrai. Daniel Schaubacher resigned for personal reasons.

Arthur Dahl, Rüdiger Fox, Tannaz Grant Morano, and Tammara Umbricht were seconded onto the Board for the current year and have made significant contributions during this year. The Governing Board met three times during the year: 28 and 29 September at dePoort Conference Centre, 23 to 25 January in Madrid, and 7 to 9 May in Paris.

2.- GOVERNANCE AND COMMUNICATION

A great deal of time was devoted during the January and May meetings of the Governing Board to updating the strategy of EBBF, to its governance and operating structures, and to the communication of its value proposition, branding and logo. At the January meeting, a number of decisions were taken. First, the articulation of our **seven core values** was reformulated. They are:

- Business ethics
- Corporate social responsibility
- Sustainable development
- Partnership of women and men
- New paradigm of Cork
- Consultation in decision-making
- Values-based leadership

Second, an analysis of the questionnaire survey of all members revealed an unusually **high coincidence between our core values and the values that members hold themselves**. The main conclusions are that members would like to see more about leadership and work-life balance. As a result, these subjects have been built into the forthcoming Annual Conference programme. Third, a distinction is made between groups of members with activities on a national scale, which are considered to be branches of EBBF, and localities where activities are concentrated which will be considered to be clusters. The latter are not expected to have activities in other areas or localities in the country. Fourth, Oscar Mendez Rosa and Sjoerd Luteyn of Madbox, who gave very generously of their time and professional competence, presented their study of EBBF and possible logos. These were discussed at length and **a new logo** was decided upon. At the same time, a task force was appointed and empowered to move ahead in implementing the actions decided upon, including finding a **communications consultant**. Lewis Akenji began his work as consultant in communications on August 1. The members of the task force were René Steiner, Daniel Truran and Tammara Umbricht. Both the **storyline and the layout of a new EBBF brochure** were completed. A **new PowerPoint presentation of EBBF** is also being prepared by the task force.

The decisions taken at the May meeting of the Governing Board built further on this work during a strategy workshop facilitated by Tammara Umbricht and Jonathan Menon. As a result, the Board created **steering groups to lead each of the six key initiative areas**. These are **(1) External Relations, (2) Capacity Building, (3) Communication, (4) Education, (5) Research, and (6) Funding**. These Groups have since been working on defining strategies and actions in their respective areas. It is planned that these bodies, assisted by project managers and teams to implement various actions, would be empowered and responsible for carrying out plans approved by the Governing Board. This will be a very important step toward strengthening and sharing the governance of EBBF.

During the year, the combined efforts of René Steiner and Daniel Truran brought an even **higher level of excellence in our web site**. As a result, we have been receiving many compliments on the site and it has become a very powerful communications tool. There were a total of 45,489 visitors to the website during the past 12 months, averaging nearly 4,000 per month.

3.- MEMBERSHIP

As of 31 August 2004, EBBF had **251 members** residing in **49 countries**. This represents a net decrease in the number of members of about 10 % during the year (compared with an increase of about 4 % the previous year). Some **49 new members** joined EBBF during the year (compared with 41 the previous year). These figures do not include members of affiliates in Russia and Turkey who are not members of EBBF. The Governing Board is pleased to note that **30 percent of its members are women** and that one third of the new members this year were women. While our membership spans the globe, **64% of members reside in eight countries:**

- United Kingdom: 36
- France: 29
- USA: 25
- Netherlands: 19
- Belgium: 11
- Germany: 10
- Switzerland: 10
- Italy: 7

It is evident from these figures that we have experienced a very high turnover of members. Relatively few of these former members, in fact only ten of them, resigned; most became inactive or simply did not find the time to pay their annual dues even after several reminders. The loss of 22 eligible members in Italy, most of whom were very active during the year, was due to a misunderstanding concerning the payment of dues. Most of the inactive members live in countries where there is little if any activity. But it is felt that with renewed efforts, at least one-half of the former members will renew active membership in EBBF next year.

4.- BRANCHES, CLUSTERS AND AFFILIATES: INCREASING ACTIVITY

Branches are composed of members of EBBF in a country who are active on a national scale; **clusters** are groups of members in a locality such as Brussels, London or Paris who often do not have the resources to organize activities on a national scale. Members of branches and clusters pay dues to EBBF and also, in some cases, to the branch or cluster. In contrast, **affiliates** such as those in Turkey and Russia are independent organizations. While they promote the same principles and values, and have similar by-laws, they do not use the EBBF logo. Many of their members are not members of EBBF.

➤ *Italy: another great year*

EBBF Italia, registered formally as a branch of EBBF, is in many ways a model branch. A completely **new web site** has been designed at www.ebbf.it for which PowerPoint presentations were created and a number of EBBF publications have been translated into Italian and posted. The **annual conferences** held in Milan have been remarkable successes with over 80 participants and extensive press coverage. EBBF has been actively involved in **business schools** in Italy for several years. Professor Girone, Rector of the University of Bari, was so satisfied with our collaboration that EBBF was asked to prepare and give a ten lecture full semester course. Seven EBBF publications have already been translated into Italian and put on their web site: Emerging Values for a Global Economy, Toward a New Paradigm of Management, Women Entrepreneurs: Catalysts for Transformation, Ethics and Entrepreneurship, A Spiritual Approach to Microcredit Projects, Socially Responsible Enterprise Restructuring, and Spiritual Dimensions of Microfinance.

If there is any one thing that characterizes the activities of EBBF Italia it is their remarkable success in bringing our core values to groups of students of business and their collaboration with **AIESEC** in achieving this. Collaboration continues with AIESEC on over a dozen university campuses. The full semester course at the University of Bari on Ethics and Economy: Towards a New World Order continues to be one of the most popular courses there.

In February 2004, EBBF held an intensive conference for 40 leaders of the AIESEC national and local chapters in thirteen universities on the theme “Developing Responsible Leadership for the Future”. It covered such CSR fields as “Values, ethics and organization”, “How to develop a responsible partnership”, “Personal vision and CSR”, and “CSR and Human resource management”. The faculty members included Beppe Robiati, Enrico Giraudi, Lorenzo Solimeme, Denise Cumella, Daniel Truran, George Starcher and Mehry Sefidvash. More recently, a new agreement has been signed between EBBF Italia and AIESEC Italy covering the contents of their partnership for the coming year. The agreement covers training in CSR, support to the exchange process, and collaboration on business school and university campuses.

A **new course in Ethical Finance** was developed and presented by EBBF Italia as part of a master’s degree programme at the University of Macerata. It was well received and will be repeated next year. More recently, EBBF Italia has signed an agreement with the Centre for Training and Services of the Chambers of Commerce (IFOA) of Italy to deliver a master’s degree course at the University in Reggio Emilia (near Bologna) on the subject “Ethics and the Company”. IFOA is one of the major institutes for professional training in Italy and is owned by nine Chambers of Commerce from across Italy and various governmental organizations.

➤ *Brussels: An active second year*

Following the creation of a **cluster in Brussels** last year, the core group has continued to organize stimulating **bi-monthly business lunches** around themes related to the core values of EBBF. The year got off to an excellent start with a meeting on the theme of Corporate Governance at which EBBF member Shervin Setareh spoke. This was followed by another meeting with Andy Tamas on “Consultation and Team Dynamics” and in February Carolyn Dare spoke on “Innovation and Communities of Practice”. In March Beatrice Dewandre, a colleague of Richard Barrett, spoke on “Values-driven Leadership: Liberating the Corporate Soul”. These meetings have fostered maintaining contacts with AIESEC Belgium, the facilitation of traineeships, and the distribution of numerous EBBF publications.

Daniel Schaubacher, EBBF Representative to European Organizations in Brussels, has developed a large number of **external contacts and friendships**, and EBBF has been invited to attend an increasing number of conferences organized by these new contacts. These organizations have included AIESEC, the European Partners for the Environment, Friends of Europe’s Fairer World Forum, Responsible Consumers NGO, and Generation-Europe.

➤ *EBBF Paris celebrates another successful year*

Over twenty EBBF members and participants met in June to celebrate another successful year of activities which included **five conferences** attended by an average of 25 participants and of course the concluding annual dinner. The dinners were of special interest because they combined both a speaker and the presentation of a case study. A presentation of the year’s activities, the annual conference, and EBBF’s European achievements were made. Participants all expressed their sincere appreciation for work done by EBBF. Newcomers were impressed by the spirit of the organization and the level of commitment by members working in the field of sustainable development and CSR. They left looking forward to the annual conference and to the Paris group’s fall programme which will begin with a talk on “Emotional Intelligence in the Workplace”.

Eric (Ezzat) Zahrai continued his activities with the **Cercle d’Ethique des Affaires**, a Paris based association promoting business ethics, and attended an important seminar on CSR organized by the **Observatoire de la Responsabilité Sociale de l’Entrepise (ORSE)**. Yves Garenne has maintained contacts with **ORSE** through which he was able to make contributions to the Global Reporting Initiative.

➤ *Luxembourg opens its doors*

The **first gathering** of the Luxembourg branch of EBBF was on 7 October. Seven EBBF members were present.

➤ *Netherlands sponsors an EBBF Tranquillity Zone*

About 700 executives, managing directors and human resource managers attended the **third conference on Motivation at Work in The Hague**. The programme consisted of two plenary sessions, workshops, an “Inspiration square” with booths and the Tranquillity Zone. Over 75 people visited the **Tranquillity Zone** which was organized by Marga van Lujtelaar as an EBBF sponsored event. Many of the visitors took an EBBF leaflet away with them and indicated that this was a very special experience for them.

➤ *Spain is emerging*

Spain is opening up to EBBF following Daniel Truran's marriage and move to Madrid. Numerous **external contacts** have been made, membership has increased from one to five, and the **first official EBBF Spain meeting** was held on 10 November in Madrid. We can expect Spain to soon join the ranks of active EBBF branches.

➤ *Turkey*

Following the very successful and intensive two week visit by Arthur Dahl last year, the Turkish affiliate is now considering another series of **meetings** this fall with an outside EBBF speaker.

➤ *The United Kingdom opens its doors to EBBF*

After a series of internal meetings devoted to defining its vision and programme, the London cluster held its **first external event in November**: a talk and workshop by EBBF member Augusto Lopez-Claros on "Globalization and the Future of the New World Order". **Regular meetings focusing on EBBF values** have since been organized in London with an average participation of 20 to 25 people.

Externally, EBBF was **represented at a number of occasions and institutions** (the CSR and Social Enterprise Conference 2003 at the London Business School; the World Business Academy conference organized jointly with the International Business Leaders Forum; a workshop on Small and Medium Sized Enterprises, Social Capital and Civic Engagement at Brunel University; and a workshop on CSR at Warwick University). In May the Task Force and the Advisory Group met with the representatives of the EBBF Governing Board in London to consult on its future plans and strategies. Manouchehr Yazhari represented EBBF London at **three conferences at Wilton Park**: "Business Ethics" in October; "Making Corporate Governance a Reality" in May; and "Love thy Neighbour: Do the World Religions Help or Hinder?" in August. Collaboration with AIESEC UK and active participation in their two national events were very successful.

➤ *Norway*

While EBBF does not yet have a cluster in this country, Gunnar Johsson created an excellent **section on the Bahá'í home page called "Economy and Management"**. In this section he has placed a number of articles and news stories about EBBF activities and a Norwegian translation of "Emerging Values for a Global Economy". He has also included links to several EBBF publications. More than **50,000 people visit this site** each year. Riaz Rafat has spoken and written articles about EBBF and was recently invited to talk to the **Oslo Rotary Club**.

➤ *Russian anthology to be published soon*

The first affiliate of EBBF was created in Russia in 1995 for the Russian speaking world (now known as EBBF-Eurasia). For a variety of reasons there has not been much activity during the past year. Olya Reusche is directing the publication of an **anthology of Russian translations of EBBF articles** as well as a new article on values-based management, together with interviews with two EBBF members managing businesses in Russia. It will be published soon by the Russian affiliate. It will be distributed to university campuses and civil groups. The Governing Board of EBBF contributed \$1300 in support of this anthology.

The Russian language translation of "Socially Responsible Enterprise Restructuring," a collaborative activity between the ILO and EBBF, was attractively published by ILO with a prominent display of the EBBF logo on the cover. It is being widely distributed in Russia.

➤ *Bulgaria*

One of the major accomplishments this year in Bulgaria was the **translation and publication of the article, "The Challenge of Sustainable Development and Prosperity" by Arthur Dahl**. Theodore Bourilkov was the translator and managed the publication of this important paper.

➤ *Hungary*

Our Hungarian representative, Annamaria Nagy, organized a very **successful evening meeting in Budapest** during the visit of George Starcher on the occasion of the "Reinventing Europe" conference described below.

➤ *Launch of the New York City Bahá'í Business Forum (NYCBBF)*

The New York City Bahá'í Business Forum's (NYCBBF) **inaugural event, "Toward a Responsible Business Paradigm"**, was held at the Princeton Club of New York on the evening of Thursday, 8 January. About **100 participants** from various organizations including banks, consulting firms, Fortune 500 companies and NGOs attended the event, including representatives of UN agencies, Spirit in Business, Spirit at Work, the World Business Academy and the Bahá'í International Community. Many graduate business students from NYC also attended with keen interest in the programme. Judging from the feedback of the participants and organizers, the event was truly a success and proved to be a fantastic opportunity to further a network of people in New York City interested in practicing and promoting moral and ethical values in business.

Tannaz Grant Morano, founding member of the NYCBBF, explained the vision, mission and core values of the organization. George Starcher recounted how 2003 was a banner year for corporate scandals and listed many examples of organizations involved in the scandals. He also presented the history and background of EBBF and some its accomplishments. Jane Nelson, an honorary member of EBBF, a Senior Fellow at Harvard University Kennedy School of Government's Centre for Business and Government, and Director of Business Leadership and Strategy, Prince of Wales International Business Leaders Forum, provided an insightful and enthusiastic presentation on how we can reach a Responsible Business Paradigm.

In May, the NYCBBF **co-hosted an evening event with the NYC Chapter of the Association for Spirit At Work** featuring Dr Judi Neal, founder and Director of ASAW. Some 50 people heard Dr. Neal's presentation on "Spirit in the Workplace: Practices That Cork". She was assisted by Steven Hall, board member of NYCBBF, who introduced the event with a brief explanation of the history, significant growth and range of activities of EBBF. EBBF member Elisa Mallis of Accenture, who is heading the NYC chapter of ASAW, gave a description of ASAW and introduced Dr Neal.

5.- EXTERNAL AFFAIRS AND NETWORKING

There has been a **considerable increase in our external activities** this year. This has included collaboration with two sister networks, the International Environment Forum and the Bahá'í Business Form of the Americas, as well as a number of other associations and networks. This has been made possible only by the increasing number of EBBF members actively engaged in promoting EBBF and its core values. Some of the highlights are described below:

➤ *AccountAbility*

The Institute of Social and Ethical AccountAbility is the pre-eminent international professional body supporting organizational accountability and sustainable performance. Simon Zadek, honorary member of EBBF is President. EBBF is one of a dozen partners in “**Conversations with Disbelievers**”, an initiative of AccountAbility and the Centre for Corporate Citizenship at Boston College to provide a resource base of evidence and arguments that demonstrate the business case for CSR through the web site: www.conversations-with-disbelievers.net. As a partner, **EBBF has supplied several case studies** which are on this site, including that of Ethico (Enrico Giraudi) and Phenomenex.

➤ *AIESEC*

Close collaboration has continued with this network of 30,000 students of business and economics in 87 countries. **EBBF is now listed in the Annual Report of AIESEC** and on its web site as a “Co-operation Partner” along with the International Business Leaders Forum, the International Labour Office, The World Bank, UNESCO, and the World Business Council for Sustainable Development. This relationship is made possible by the active involvement of many EBBF members throughout the world. **Other significant events** with AIESEC during this past year include:

- George Starcher was invited to join the International Advisory Council of AIESEC International (AI) and to participate in several events at the International Conferences in Yugoslavia in September 2003 and in Hannover, Germany in August 2004.
- Daniel Schaubacher was active in his role as liaison with AIESEC International.
- AIESEC sent two of its international board members to the EBBF Annual Conference 2003 where they made a presentation about AIESEC.
- The Italian branch of EBBF signed a partnership agreement with AIESEC Italy and participated in a major way in the annual conference of AIESEC Italy through presentations by Beppe Robiati and Sandra Luschi. The Acuto Conference was a successful innovation in EBBF's collaboration. Requests came for EBBF to provide talks on a number of university campuses.
- Several EBBF members advised AIESEC UK on the concept and programme of their National Conference and Arthur Dahl was a keynote speaker on Sustainability.
- Mahmud Samandari spoke at several AIESEC conferences in Ecuador, counsels with the National Committee, and was appointed as national adviser to AIESEC Ecuador.

➤ ***Association for Spirit at Work***

There is a **protocol agreement** between EBBF and the Association for Spirit at Work (ASAW). This agreement covers initially such actions as linking memberships and web sites, sharing publications, and sharing resources and information on activities. ASAW is a global non-profit association of people and organizations who are interested in the study and/or practice of spirituality in the workplace. Its mission is to provide community, information and education for those who are integrating their work and their spirituality. As a result of this partnership, EBBF was invited to be one of four partners in the International Spirit at Work Award, along with ASAW, the World Business Academy, and the Spirit in Business Institute. Both Steve Hall and Shervin Setareh were active members of the **award committee** this year, and the company founded by EBBF member Fasha Mahjoor, Phenomenex, Hill receive this award at the Spirit in Business World Conference in Zurich on October 1, 2004.

➤ ***Bahá'í Business Forum of the Americas***

Daniel Truran represented the Governing Board at the **annual conference of BBFA in San Francisco**. He gave a plenary presentation on EBBF and on the new paradigms of ethical finance. A stand was dedicated to EBBF where publications and materials were distributed. Participants showed much interest in our Forum and as a result several of them planned to become members and attend the EBBF Annual Conference.

➤ ***Economic and Social Council of the United Nations (ECOSOC)***

EBBF has **submitted an Application for Consultative Status** with ECOSOC and is very hopeful that such accreditation and recognition will be forthcoming. To support the application a detailed description of EBBF collaboration with such United Nations agencies as the ILO, UNECE, UNRISD, and UNESCO was included as well as a list of the UN conferences at which EBBF participated.

➤ ***European Commission (EC)***

EBBF continued its collaboration with the EC in Brussels. Daniel Schaubacher and George Starcher were among some 60 participants invited by the EC to a seminar on CSR and SME mentoring. The seminar included a report on the results of a study on how large French companies engage SMEs in CSR practices. During the second part, the speaker, Mallen Baker, Development Director of Business in the Community (UK) mentioned that he had drawn on the excellent research by EBBF on Responsible Entrepreneurship.

In February, at the initiative of EBBF member Antonella Demonte, then serving as a trainee at the European Commission, a **conference** was organized in Brussels on “**CSR and Corporate Governance: Two Mutually Reinforcing Concepts**”. She was instrumental in the invitations to George Starcher to chair the conference and to Shervin Setareh to be one of the keynote speakers.

➤ ***European Parliament***

EBBF European representative Daniel Schaubacher and several EBBF members from Belgium, France, the United Kingdom and Slovakia **participated in the “Unity in Diversity” Exhibition staged by the Office of Public Information of the Bahá'í International Community in Strasbourg** at the invitation of Member of Parliament Sarah Baroness Ludfork (UK). Some 30 members of the European Parliament, policy makers,

representatives of Parliamentary commissions and political groups, and hundreds of passers-by guests, visited the EBBF exhibition stressing social responsibility in business, the role of spiritual principles applied to the solution of economic problems, and a redefinition of the meaning of work.

➤ *Global Reporting Initiative*

EBBF is now an **Organisation Stakeholder in the Global Reporting Initiative**. The GRI, founded in 1997 and with world headquarters in Amsterdam, collaborates with a worldwide network of stakeholders concerned with corporate accountability. Just as generally accepted accounting principles have existed for many years to guide financial reporting, the GRI has developed Sustainability Reporting Guidelines to enable organisations and their stakeholders to assess the economic, environmental and social performance of companies. George Starcher represented EBBF at a meeting of European members in Geneva in December 2003.

➤ *International Environment Forum*

Arthur Dahl, President of IEF and member of the Governing Board of EBBF, has served well as liaison between these two networks. EBBF collaborated closely with IEF at the **World Summit on Sustainable Development in Johannesburg**. We shared a booth at the Civil Society Forum and distributed a large quantity of EBBF publications including *Emerging Values for a Global Economy in Zulu*. A joint EBBF/IEF seminar on “Multiple Dimensions of Globalization” was very successful. Arthur Dahl prepared an impressive joint final report on our participation there.

➤ *International Labour Office*

The 120 page **joint ILO/EBBF Working Paper on “Socially Responsible Enterprise Restructuring”** continues to be reprinted in English and Russian and distributed by the ILO and EBBF . The report continues to serve as the basis for training sessions organized by the ILO. George Starcher was invited to speak on this subject several times at the ILO Training Centre in Turin, Italy.

➤ *Microfinance*

EBBF continues to be a **member of the Council of Advocates of the Microcredit Summit**. No new activities were reported during this year.

➤ *Omusema Unity Foundation, Namibia*

Nabil Robiati has been appointed liaison between the Omusema Unity Foundation and EBBF and keeps us abreast of its activities. The primary mission of Omusema is the **empowerment of people and the betterment of life in rural communities in Namibia**. Omusema will promote moral leadership, the fundamental characteristic of which is the spirit of service and justice. It will advance the fundamental skills of numeracy and literacy as tools for realising individual and collective potential. It is committed to the equality between men and women at every level of society as central to the success of all its development efforts. Omusema envisages its evolution into a Rural University where modern science and human tradition can meet with dignity and interact harmoniously.

➤ **Redesigning Europe**

This **conference in Budapest on 15 and 16 May** was organized by EBBF member Andras Laszlo, President of Eurovisioning.org and included participants from government, business, academia and NGOs from both the old and newly admitted member countries of the European Union. It opened with messages from Romano Prodi and Viscount Etienne Davignon, President of CSR Europe and included talks by nearly 50 speakers and panellists. There was **considerable consultation on the future of Europe**, its values and its place in the world. Two of the speakers were EBBF members: Joseph van Keulen and George Starcher. George also moderated an afternoon session on CSR. It is anticipated that the conclusions of the consultations will provide the basis for a 'blue paper' and the proceedings will be published in the autumn and offered to EU leaders

➤ **Renaissance Europe**

Two EBBF members, Marcello Palazzi and Daniel Truran, were among the organizers of an initiative, Renaissance Europe, which is acting as a **catalyst and an enabler of innovation stemming from Europe**, with the global well being and sustainability of the world as the ultimate objective. EBBF was seen by the organisers as one of the examples of doers and a change agent actively engaged in bringing about a more responsible business sector.

➤ **Spirit in Business Institute**

The Spirit in Business (SiB) Global Institute was founded in the United States in May 2001. It organized a large international conference in New York in April 2002 (see report on EBBF participation in Balance Sheet, vol. 11, no. 2 of June 2002). SiB Europe was established in 2002. EBBF members Marcello Palazzi and Daniel Truran are board members and are among the organizers of a Spirit in Business World Conference to be held in Zurich on 30 September – 2 October. Several other EBBF members have been asked to share their unique perspective on the new spirit that business success requires. **SiB's mission is to enhance business performance and personal inspiration by integrating ethics, value and spirit in leadership and every day business practice globally.** SiB goals are to aggregate knowledge domains, to facilitate learning events, to communicate information and knowledge, and to incubate selected new ventures. Through such activities it seeks to build a global community of 100,000 business leaders and 100 business partners.

➤ **Social and Economic Development Conference, Orland, Florida**

Members of EBBF Italia flew specially to Orland to lead a **workshop** on each of two days on **“A business approach to assist the success of SED Projects”**. The contributions of EBBF members Daniel Truran, Steve may and Alessandra Bonezzi introduced many participants to EBBF and gave an overview of new financial models being introduced to shift the perception of developing countries from donor dependant groups to countries with great entrepreneurial and cultural potential.

➤ *Triple Bottom Line Investing Conference*

The fourth annual TBI conference was held on **6 and 7 November 2003 in Amsterdam**. Nearly 500 members of the global socially responsible investing community met to attend plenary sessions and a large number of parallel workshops. The focus of the programme was on **socially responsible investing (SRI) and corporate governance**, a subject of greatly increased interest and importance to fund managers, financial analysts, executives, consultants, foundations and others present. Plenary keynote presentations and panel discussions covered the subjects of the outlook for sustainable investing, the human aspects of corporate governance and the role of governments in stimulating CSR and SRI. This memorable event was organized by SRI guru Robert Rubinstein, a member of EBBF. George Starcher moderated a workshop on “The Meaning of Money”.

➤ *UNECE conference on SMEs in Eastern Europe*

The United Nations Economic Commission for Europe invited George Starcher to **present the results of EBBF research on Responsible Entrepreneurship** at a conference it organized at the Palais des Nations in December 2003 in Geneva focusing on Corporate Social Responsibility and on small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs) in Eastern Europe. Over 100 copies of the EBBF publication of this same title were distributed at the conference.

➤ *UNRISD conference on CSR and Development*

The United Nations Research Institute for Sustainable Development invited EBBF, represented by George Starcher, to attend a **conference on CSR and Development** held at the Palais des Nations in Geneva in November 2003. Nearly 200 officials of various UN agencies, research institutes and civil society participated. George was among the few participants from business.

➤ *World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS)*

EBBF put itself on the global ICT road map by presenting a **workshop** on the role of **good governance and good business practices** to bridge the digital divide. Its high level panel, all of whom are EBBF members, was chaired by Daniel Schaubacher, and included Arthur Dahl, senior UNEP advisor, Augusto Lopez-Claros, Chief Economist at the World Economic Forum, and Ramin Khadem, CFO of Inmarsat.

6.- FOURTEENTH EBBF ANNUAL CONFERENCE 2003

The 14th Annual Conference was held on **26-28 September 2003 at the dePoort Conference Centre in The Netherlands**. Over **135 people from 20 countries** attended, breaking all previous attendance records. In addition, there were many day visitors, bringing the number of participants to over 150. Once again the conference was marked by the quality and variety of the programme, the feeling of energy generated by the many young professionals, the active participation of a large number of new members and not-yet-members of EBBF and by beautiful summer-like weather. The participation of eight executives of Phenomenex added greatly to the intellectual content of the conference and shared practical experience of the application of EBBF core values. The generosity of Phenomenex also enabled us to invite a number of guests from Eastern and Central European countries and we were pleased to welcome participants from Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Hungary, Kosovo, Poland, Russia and Slovakia as well as from China. Their participation is indicative of the importance and relevance of our core values in these emerging economies. The presentation of AIESEC International once again underscored the importance of this partnership to both EBBF and AIESEC.

There were many highlights The two keynote addresses were both full of energy and information. Richard Barrett, a familiar and popular speaker at EBBF conferences, not only gave us news of the outcome of the "Values Survey" in which many EBBF members collaborated, but gave a thought-provoking keynote address on Values-Based Leadership. This was followed by a well-attended workshop on the "Evolution of Consciousness".

Larry Miller's dynamic keynote address on consultation looked at "Dialogue" as the most effective method for decision-making and problem solving. His workshop was linked directly to the keynote and provided an interactive application of the principles he outlined.

The Sunday morning presentation by the Young Professionals was a highlight once again. The panel gave practical examples of the application of EBBF core values in the work place and provided valuable insights into the challenges - and successes - faced by all business people who try to put ethics into practice.

A number of workshops and panels allowed an exchange of opinions and of interaction between all the participants. A panel on globalization brought together experts from three dimensions of globalization. Arthur Dahl looked at the environmental aspects, Augusto Lopez-Claros at the economic implications and Catie Thorburn spoke about the effects on young people.

Georgianne Lamont from SpiritWorks and Marcello Palazzi and Daniel Truran from Spirit in Business gave insights into the work of these two organisations and their impact on growing numbers of business people.

7.- KNOWLEDGE BUILDING AND PUBLICATIONS

The Governing Board feels that a much greater effort is needed to deepen our knowledge in emerging areas of concern and interest related to our core values. One of the efforts launched last year and continued this year has been on **Responsible Entrepreneurship**. Following a special interest group session at the Annual Conference last year, the Governing Board approved a new initiative to involve EBBF in the promotion of Responsible Entrepreneurship. This can be translated as engaging entrepreneurial enterprises, mostly SMEs, in social and environmental responsibility. The focus this year was on beginning to exploit the results of our research externally and at the same time continue research on various initiatives on this important issue. These efforts included leading a workshop on at the AIESEC International Conference, for which both a presentation and a publication were prepared, followed by presentations at the UNECE conference in Geneva and at the Rebuilding Europe conference in Budapest.

The only **new EBBF publication** this year was “**Responsible Entrepreneurship: Engaging SMEs in Socially and Environmentally Responsible Practices**” by George Starcher. “Emerging Values for a Global Economy” was revised and, along with “Responsible Entrepreneurship” came out with a new cover design by Rene Steiner. Two new translations were published: the French and Bulgarian translations of “The Challenge of Sustainable Development and Prosperity” by Arthur Dahl

Several EBBF members are presently engaged in the preparation of papers on consultation, values-based leadership, globalisation, business ethics, and a new paradigm of work.

8.- THE YOUNG PROFESSIONAL TASK FORCE

The Governing Board appointed **five members** to the YPTF. They are Denise Cumella, Sarvenaz Enayati-Ettehadieh, Rüdiger Fox, Adrian Kielhorn and Monis Sheikh. The major activity of the YPTF during this past year has been the organization of the **Sunday morning programme** at the forthcoming Annual Conference.

IN CLOSING

This has been an **eventful year** for EBBF. Our external presence and contributions are increasingly recognized among like-minded organizations. As readers can see from this report, **change is in the winds**. A number of measures are under way to involve more members in contributing to our mission, goals and activities. The opportunities are unlimited and permit members of varying talents and interests to find their place in our network. The benefits of becoming more involved are increasingly evident. We hope each member will give serious consideration to answering the question, ***how can I best contribute to EBBF?***

Respectively submitted,

The Governing Board

September 2004

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