



LAZARUS UNION
UNION CORPS SAINT LAZARUS INTERNATIONAL
ECOSOC General Consultative Status (632158), ZVR: 023914681

Dear officers and members of the Lazarus Union,
Honoured knights and dames of honour,
Dear comrades and companions
Dear friends of the Lazarus Union!

At the threshold of the new year I turn to you with a retrospect and an outlook.

REVIEW

In May of this year the General Assembly expressed its confidence in me as the new General Representative of the Lazarus Union, for which I would like to thank all members most sincerely. I will do my utmost to justify this. A central concern for me is to prevent the Austro- or Eurocentrism of the Union - apart from legal necessities as an NGO registered in Austria - and to make our international activities visible also in the acting persons. Here I would like to thank Jiří Kopal, our Deputy Secretary General from Cesky Krumlov, and Steve Thurling, the new Commander of the Navy Corps from Australia, who make this possible. But my thanks and appreciation also go to all other members worldwide.

Let us shape our Union from within. We need the many voices - so that the full sound fills the room. We call this harmony. And we know that harmony is not unison. In harmony, everyone simply sings the same.

After two difficult Corona years, which brought us great restrictions, we can now be active again personally. But it remains a time of many. War in Europe, an energy and inflation crisis and global supply chain problems, as well as stresses from climatic events.

274 million people worldwide were in need of humanitarian aid in 2022: from Afghanistan to Ethiopia and Yemen to Myanmar and Syria. 20 countries cover 10% of the world's population, but account for 89% of the world's people in need of humanitarian assistance.

The role of women was also under pressure in 2022. There is still trafficking, exploitation and disenfranchisement of women in 2022. They are married off as children, held captive in marriages from which there is no escape. They experience sexual violence, mutilation. They starve, die in childbirth. They are the ones who toil in the fields to feed their families, but at the same time have poorer access to soil, water and agricultural techniques. As those responsible for food, they are ultimately also much more affected by the rampant destruction of ecosystems.

The ecological crisis is thus also the mirror image of the social crisis. The richest 10 percent of the population cause 48 percent of CO2 emissions. The poorer half of the world's population produces



only 12 percent of CO2 emissions. Altogether, the CO2 footprints of 125 billionaires calculated by Oxfam add up to an emission volume roughly equal to that of France.

In 2022, however, preparations for the activities of the Lazarus Union in East Africa (Kenya and Uganda) have also started and are well advanced. This would not have been possible without our diplomatic envoys Edith Predorf and Thomas Eggenburg. Many thanks!

OUTLOOK

In the year 2023 we will continue and complete the reorientation and adjustment of the Lazarus Union to the multiple crises.

In the effort to make a contribution, the union aligns itself in the future to the lastingness goals as well as to the global Compact program of the United Nations. This framework gives us the opportunity to implement comparable but also individual programmes and campaigns in all countries where the Union is represented.

New tools such as a redesigned homepage, social media accounts and the use of video conferences will also contribute to this. But all these tools are not a one-way street. Some suggestions will come from the Union Command, but we also ask all country commands, group members and individual members to become active themselves and bring in suggestions. The General Secretariat will be happy to process and distribute them.

The United Nations Days of Action and Remembrance provide a date reference. In future, proposals for selected days of action - whether as graphic campaigns or concrete event proposals - will be prepared and distributed by the General Secretariat at the appropriate time.

As pilot project for the field work 2023 in Uganda & Kenya projects are implemented, which convert this requirement also into practice.

The Lazarus union is a comparatively small NGO but it enjoys general adviser status with the United Nations. This gives us the opportunity to recognise problems, to name them, to point them out and to create awareness, and thus to take a share in the solution.

So I am in good spirits for the new year, knowing that we can achieve great things. In doing so, let us preserve what defines us: our connectedness with each other!

With best wishes for 2023


O.M. Gruber-Lavin
Chief Representative

