

Minutes: AMI Open Forum Day 1 – 12 April 2007

André Roberfroid – Opening Remarks

This is a very important meeting. We are at the beginning of the second century for Montessori. We have made some commitments during the first century – this is the opportunity to put them into action – it is up to you. The success of AMI and Montessori is only realistic if the constituents buy in and become the actors. The constituents have to have the will to take up the challenge. We need to build a relationship of trust and confidence. We are in this together. There is no top and bottom just a network operating as one to be successful. You will need to take risks and there will be a lot of work for all of you. In the first 3 months of this year I have been meeting around the world. The expectation from all Montessorians is that they expect us to lead. They want it, they ask it and they beg us to deliver leadership. Montessorians around the world want to work together. There is a demand for our leadership – not from Amsterdam – from the whole network – it is critical we need to hear what you see as our future. We need a 10 year broad plan – a lot of work has already been done by the ODPC, in the annual report and Charlene Trotcha's document in 1982. If you read this it looks like it was written last week. It is visionary. Please join the common reflection – let us know what you expect – we will let you know what we can and cannot do – we need to be realistic – the challenge is to make us a leader of a world-wide Montessori movement – it is up to you to do it – the work is yours.

Lynne Lawrence – Human Resources Committee

This is a historic moment. We have the whole range of people here – many elements are involved – the AMI board, Executive committee, the advisory committee, head office staff, Centenary committee, Affiliates, training centres, teachers, schools, parents, manufacturers and contributors.

We will be joined tomorrow and Saturday by many more- 100 are expected on Saturday. First we have to look back to place ourselves in the context. We start with Dr Montessori's vision – AMI established in 1929 – around the millennium people started to say where are we now – are we serving the cause in the best way – can we accommodate ourselves better to the needs of the environment. The strategic planning committee was set up – a bold act by AMI. People who were not on the board were asked to look at the general workings of AMI from the outside. 2003 – the ad hoc strategic planning committee presented its report – the movement needed to be dynamised in some way – a new architecture to serve the community and vice versa. In 2004 the board decided to consult the membership – SWOT analysis – wanted to see where the membership felt there were things to be done – there was 5% response but this is about what is expected. In 2004 the board set up a board committee to continue the work of the ad hoc strategic planning committee. The ODPC began meeting to try to focus AMI attention on what needed to be done to bring about change. ESF meeting in Burgos ended with a challenge to AMI and a call for responsibility if we are to become a real movement advocating for the rights of the child. 2005 swot results – strengths – international forum, originates from Dr Montessori, high standards of training teachers well, conferences, knowledgeable people with deep commitment. Weaknesses – others didn't know enough about AMI, bad PR for training centres and trainers, better communication needed and listening to the members ideas, communicate with members, connect with more schools and teachers, fearful of change. ODPC call for action number 1 – 2005 – serve all national and international Montessori organisations, all partners and children, a resource centre, training and study centres, promote schools. The vision statement was written – To place all the children in our world at the centre of society and to assist them in becoming the transforming elements leading to a harmonious and peaceful humanity.

Proposed a renewed structure reorganising the centre to be more responsive to serve the constituency – new committees were set up. At the Sydney congress we promised to 'Champion the Cause of all Children' whilst still putting them at the centre. The second call for action was then written by the ODPC which focuses on how can we network with all the people who are AMI. It stresses the need to build on strengths and create better networks. The Affiliated Societies questionnaire is still out there. Each is a representative of a large number of members – 3 have responded – the answers are interesting all the same. We urge the others to do it. The second call for action says: "The wealth of AMI is neither its board nor its secretariat. It is made up of the thousands of Montessorians around the world; it is founded on the millions of people who have been exposed to Montessori one way or the other. Furthermore, AMI has the potential and the will to reach the millions of citizens who have no knowledge of Montessori education." "AMI should establish a network for contact and communication with all the members, all Montessori schools and all other institutions in order that the grassroots can be reached and heard." "AMI desires to be open to anyone in the outside world, we want to include everyone but ensure quality. AMI shows leadership by disseminating knowledge based on the depth of its pedagogical principles which originate from a continuing study and research of the

Montessori philosophy. This is why AMI is recognised as an authentic standard for quality. AMI must do this by involving all the AMI training centres, AMI Affiliated Societies and ESF. We must also interact with the other Montessori Associations and World organisations to share knowledge and must continue to strive for excellence whilst remaining sensitive and adaptable to the changing world. We have to accommodate within our structure a mechanism for disseminating excellence so that children of the world can benefit. In doing so we assert our leadership.”

Most recently we have had the work of Centenary committee. What better year to work out how we can work better together. The 2009 Congress will focus on the search for the right action.

Centenary Report was given.

Lynne Lawrence: We need to make a path for the next 10 years - where we would like to be and some practical steps.

Megan: outlined the discussion questions. Any idea is a good idea. We are not deciding anything today so all ideas can be considered. We want to produce a synthesis of the ideas and a draft of the 2017 action goal to be tabled to the board. The goals need to be identifiable, achievable and ambitious goals – they will be presented as a draft on Saturday and then to the board. The ground rules are that we hope that collectively we will see pathways we would not have seen on our own. If all constituents get together to work on a plan – the intention is that something amazing will happen. We are not going to be negative – we are going to talk about possibility and the future. We are talking about the goals for the Movement not AMI. Everyone has a contribution – we must all listen for where the ideas could contribute.

Question 1: If there were no boundaries or restrictions, where do we want the Montessori Movement to be in 10 years time? What are our aspirations and dreams? What will the Montessori Movement look like? What will its impact be?

Dinny Rebild: To reach out to all children in the world who need us badly –to support them and their parents – poor parents don’t have access to the web – how are we going to get to them?

Sally Connellan: 10 years is not very long, we should consider a longer timeframe

Patty Wallner: Combine and help other Montessori groups to get their standard up to ours – work with these groups

Charlotte Parker: Scientific acceptance of the process – governments want proof – more scientific studies that say it works.

Pilar Ulibarri: Montessori can cover all Latin America – they are forgotten – to promote Montessori to help the children in Latin America

Joan Rafter: In 10 years time a level of awareness outside Montessori circles – so we don’t always have to explain ourselves

Charlene Trochta: Spirit and fire – re-inspire our individual teachers – the ones doing the day to day – the person to person rapport is what puts Montessori to work. Another way that our children will change the world – former Montessori children – what are they doing – it needs to be researched

Teresa Schjetnan: We need a lot of trainers – it is beginning to be addressed by the new pilot.

Lynne Lawrence: There is also a core knowledge course – to be delivered to parents, bus drivers etc. – can be given by Montessori teachers

Molly O’Shaughnessy: more outreach programmes – people who are interested in children – we need to be in these forums – e.g. using principles with adult learners – outreach can reach a different audience

Noele McEvoy: only parents who can pay can go to Montessori – we need to make it available to everyone

André Roberfroid: may go way beyond the schools – Dr Montessori was a medical doctor. In Geneva I heard a specialist in diabetes. These patients have to change their lifestyle. The medical doctor recognised Dr Montessori as a colleague and looked at Montessori principles – need to make the person responsible for himself – help people in another way other than standard medication. He had extracted 10 key Montessori ideas and applied them to the patients.

Victoria Barres: Many people in other walks of life are our allies – when bridging with these people we need to have the stories to tell – we need to compile them – stories of good practice that have made a difference to children and to people in a policy paper format

Mark Berger: We need a communication network – central place – network – internal press release to our own community to share these stories

Felix Bednarski: In the process of the Centenary we are building bridges with other communities – as a result there is a lot of traffic – possible to develop a package to unite us as one Movement

Nancy Wallner: To reach out to those who know that Montessori has something. They put the name in the name of the school – but don't really know what it is – parents think they are getting Montessori but are not.

Christian Schjetnan: In business life you have to have goals – but we also need to look at our vision – e.g. to be a decisive force in the education of the child to achieve peace

Silvia Dubovoy: To be with children at risk or to be in Latin America – for each of these we have to say what is the vision? If the Montessori name was not there even – what do we want for humanity? We must be realistic about our ideals – which things can be a priority – which action will make a difference – each of us needs to think – what will I be doing? What can each of us contribute from what we have already done and experienced.

Dinny Rebild: Educate young people who go out into war zones with no knowledge of how they will work with young children – children at risk are difficult to work with – so some of them give up – we need to be able to give them core knowledge

Charlene Trochta: AMI to be the repository in the whole world of Maria Montessori's writings – there is a lot of material that has never been translated

Alexander Henny: We are trying to gather all the information – there is a lot of information outside AMI but what we have is digitised and referenced – at the stage where it can be made available – and publish more works – but getting archive material to AMI is not that easy – because Maria Montessori left material all over the world

Cheryl Ferreira: Spirit to be lively in us – we need the physical means to carry out – the training centres can provide the spirit – but the training centres are small – the spirit comes from the body – you can talk about Montessori yourself you don't need the badge to do it

Salma Imtiaz: Re-inspire ourselves – working in collaboration with anyone who is working with children – training centres can help those who have trained with them – we need quality not quantity

Charlotte Parker: A huge body of educators and teachers who do not know what Montessori is – we need information to feed them – to give them a small introduction – we can spread by latching onto a body that already exists

Silvia Dubovoy: We need to look at the steps – in 10 years we need 1 training centre in each country – we know the vision – we need to find the steps to get there

Takako Fukatso: The more I reach traditional teachers the more I see that they don't understand us – but the neuroscientists understand us straight away – because they understand development. It is common sense – the vision is that we don't have to say the word Montessori.

Alexander Henny: Starting with the parents – because if we reach them they are going to demand things – and from the demand comes the ability to create the tools – try and see what we can do to get this parent support programme off the ground

Joerg Boysen: Montessori Movement – what kind of Movement would historians see us as being – e.g. do we believe it is the only way of doing it – or do we want to be a movement when we only just have to look at each other to know what we mean – how we see the movement has an influence of how we move forward

Phoebe Allen: More information about special education as it relates to Montessori ideals – how as Montessori AMI schools should we be approaching this – a policy and links to good website. Secondly, more about core knowledge – ambassadors of cosmic education – to enable AMI trained individuals to take the core knowledge into the medical profession and other groups and to non AMI training centres – someone who makes themselves available to speak – someone in every city – we can't just sit back and think anyone else is doing it.

Jerome Richter: Talk about Montessori to universities – young people do not know what it is – we need to get into these forums

Jacki Eibert: Would like to see the training of trainers programme simplified – we must work at it harder

Megan Tyne: In Australia we are hoping that government will see that there is a good practice model to be used in indigenous communities – Montessori is participating on early childhood forums. In 10 years time Montessori is accepted from 0-18 – you can have Montessori for your child's whole education.

Riza Weinstein: Recognise that Montessori is education for all people – we need to invite people in so that they can take it back to their own communities

Lynne Lawrence: To do something with the diploma so that the pride that we have in it is recognised by others – formal certification – that has the possibility of straddling more than one age range – we need to set the pace as to what the grading would be

Christian Schjetnan: Vision goals – a decisive force in education in the world centring on the children for peace – how do we become a decisive force? We come to the conclusion how many schools we need – then how many trainers do we need to do this? How do we promote to parents that we exist and that we are a good solution. The goals have to be congruent with the vision i.e. if we want to be a decisive force then what are the goals – we should not have too many goals.

Charlotte Parker: A film – with the message and the story

André Roberfroid: One thing is interesting – we agree on everything we are saying here – no one has different positions – 3 major areas:

- Goals related to practical achievement – teachers, trainers, schools parents
- Addressing other Montessorians – this will increase the number of people exposed to the real Montessori – we need an arm to do this – multiply the Affiliates – all this will allow us to increase the inner circle – the circle of real excellence – the real message, the spirit – to be seen and known as a real agent for change – this is a different approach to our usual – to be not shy – to be present in the circles that are deciding on the future of education – universities
- Spirit – people dealing with children have a spirit – we need them to realise that there is way to do it better – an operational network that is driven by a combination of our common expertise – not driven from the top – our passion can drive this.

For each of these points there is much work to do.

Question 2: What are the challenges and obstacles facing the Montessori Movement?

Charlotte Parker: The rest of the world think differently – we need to change the mindset of other people

Jennifer Davidson: It is difficult to communicate our message in a short time – Montessori doesn't attach immediately to the principles

Charlene Trochta: Montessorians don't read anything else other than Montessori – sometimes what we do is well reflected by someone else – we need to translate what we know into ways that other people can understand it – jargon puts them off

Noele McEvoy: That there are so many approaches and training centres is an obstacle – this is an obstacle when dealing with government

Nancy Wallner: Availability and expense for training and for children who can't afford it

Joan Rafter: Recognition of teachers is really important – we will never be taken seriously until we have some graded recognition

Joerg Boysen: Difference between AMI and the movement – so many people doing good things without AMI approval – but they feel they are being looked down on because they are not AMI – they are still doing something right because their schools are growing – we need to bridge the gap otherwise they are going to pass us by.

Phoebe Allen: Bridging of the AMI gap with other training – we have been insular for a long time – but we have now the possibility to reach out – many of the lecturers in these training centres are AMI trained – we need to approach them so that they can convert their centre to an AMI training centre – Affiliates offering conferences and workshops – we don't need to be exclusive and not allow people in who are not holding an AMI diploma – there is a possibility of crossing the gap – maybe Affiliates can also offer things to non AMI trained people – that give the core knowledge to parents – to non AMI trained teachers – so they can hear the AMI message and encourage other people to get AMI training.

Patty Wallner: In some countries they have their own training – and we are not allowed to work with them at present – I would really like to see that you could travel back and forth between groups without damaging working with AMI

Charlene Trochta: Precedent exists – NAMTA – anyone can attend or join as a member. As for the cost of training – university costs money – if you want a degree you have to find the funds to do it – sometimes schools can fund a student – a no interest loan.

Beverley Maragh: In London – we work with other training organisations and – for training we have to start with the schools and universities so that they know what Montessori is.

Lynne Lawrence: There has been a myth that has evolved and a misunderstanding of the articles – the Affiliates have to support the aims of AMI – they do this by membership and they can affiliate to AMI – anyone can speak to anyone – it cannot be diminished by sharing what we know – if we want to give them an AMI certificate then it has to be for people with AMI diplomas – that isn't to say that you couldn't give an open conference to anyone who wants to listen. AMI trainers can speak to anyone – you just can't offer an AMI diploma – the knowledge you have benefits the children

André Roberfroid: The worst kind of censorship is self censorship – there is no problem to bring anyone into your training centre or affiliate anyone who is not AMI diploma holders – this was the past – we need to send out a strong message that this is not the case anymore

Phoebe Allen: You cannot train people in a non AMI programme

Patty Wallner: As an AMI trainer you cannot train for another organisation

Christian Schjetnan: Our strength is we know the principles etc. Our weakness is we don't have the numbers – we don't have enough people studying the trainers course and the teachers courses and we have trouble convincing enough parents to bring the children to Montessori schools – how do we convert our strength? There are no obstacles – we just have to determine where we want to go and decide what work we have to do – we have an important strength in knowing the real Montessori – but we are insulated because we don't know how to spread the word

Megan Tyne: It is not easy to open a Montessori school – capacity, money and materials – handmade materials are a labour of love. We have to explain how Montessori meets government requirements before we can open a class.

Ulla Wikkefeldt: In Sweden we are always open for everyone – two day courses – they are grateful that we are sharing and that we give a clear picture – then they come back and ask for more.

Charlene Trochta: If we are going to be AMI we need to decide if we are really going to choose everything – we cannot transfer a classroom from the west into an undeveloped country – it is not fair to them to expect them to produce what we can do in the west where we have money – there is a lot we can do without the materials

Noele McEvoy: It should be a directive to all training colleges to be open to everyone – not everyone does it

Silvia Dubovoy: When the refresher courses used to be open the trainer had to explain things to the others and AMI diploma holders got bored. Other training organisations have asked what is the difference and they say that we have the philosophy and they have materials – they invent materials. We can make available the philosophy – Montessori invented a philosophy of life – she created a system for the method. Most of the people go to the material without the system – i.e. the method and not the philosophy. Montessori is beyond the albums – when you understand the philosophy you realise you can do Montessori even without the materials.

Phoebe Allen: I am not suggesting that a refresher course should be open to non AMI people but perhaps a parallel class that focuses on philosophy – we begin to get enquiries from people teaching in adolescent programmes who have no training because there is no training – we would like to see the adolescent training linked into the Elementary training – a special session on the side for those who are not trained

Megan Tyne: We approached AMI about the refresher courses in Australia – we are pretty much an AMI community. We are trying a model for the refresher course this year – anyone can come who is trained or teaching at that age level – AMI and non-AMI together – a lot of people who do those courses go on to train with AMI

Joerg Boysen: The organisation world-wide is fragmented – poor financing – in Germany we had to find common ground with regional and national organisations – the other thing is that I believe that other courses offer good training – when we have to provide education there is a lot of other things to consider – we have standards for courses but not for institutions – there should be a world standard – so everyone can draw from it

Felix Bednarski: Fragmentation makes us weak – there is a lack of AMI recognition of national difference – teachers are opening schools and they are being told that they have to have 28 children or they won't be recognised even though they have everything else – so the schools are going to other organisations – the guidelines have to allow people to meet them. In Canada we have a requirement at elementary level to provide French language – elementary trainers cannot advise us because they don't understand the national differences

André Roberfroid: This is a major obstacle – not just national difference – it is the difference between what we propose and the state system – we cannot reconcile with this so we stay out of it. In France the system is rigid – a young teacher reading about Montessori tried to do what was acceptable within the limit – she managed to get the hierarchy to look at it with a positive eye – that young lady is looking for support – but we cannot help her because she is not a diploma holder – and yet she is the only person who has managed to get the French authorities to look at Montessori.

Nancy Wallner: An AMS elementary teacher gave up teaching in Montessori school because she was not making enough money and worked in a public school – she is doing it without materials in the classroom and making a positive impact

Elisabeta Negreanu: Renewing our enthusiasm – it is good to recognise that your problem is my problem and that my vision is your vision. Some way to support the work that she is doing In Romania even though there is no training centre there.

Lynne Lawrence: The challenge is to look at more flexible training and to look at ways of validating quality work even though it is not a training centre

André Roberfroid: The message is that we need to come out of our box and start having an interaction based on mutual respect – we should stop saying we are the best we should say we are good – there are others who are good also – how do we address the outside world – how do we make it part of our duty – not just permission to do it – but to be encouraged to do it and move closer to public systems – we have to accept that we need to give and take with the public system

Lynne Lawrence: Is it quality or quantity – we must keep this in mind

Question 3: What is AMI's role in leading the Montessori Movement?

Carol Potts: We have talked about relevance of accreditation for AMI diploma – in NZ – we are undertaking the accreditation of the diploma process – AMI could have a template for accreditation of the diploma

Megan Tyne: In Australia – reformatted national group – schools accreditation – we want to be a national body and we believe AMI is a source of strength – because it is an international network – we are going to provide services to everyone – we can lead without being a threat and still be up front about it

Nancy Wallner: The role is to focus on leading the Montessori movement and not the AMI movement – stay focused on promoting Montessori – like the Centenary did and through this so much has been made available for everyone

Charlene Trochta: AMI was founded to protect her work – we can do this and still reach out to people – the work needs to reach out without being exclusive – but never to be anything other than AMI.

Megan Tyne: Working with others – when planning the Congress we tried to work with everyone. We built successful and lasting relationships with individuals and school but we came across institutional barriers and agendas with some of the other Montessori organisations. We have found that the best approach is to be transparent and to acknowledge the wealth that is to be AMI and lead with the name while remaining open to all.

Silvia Dubovoy: Take away AMI and there is no leader – AMI can have the security in the philosophy – we do not need to be afraid we will lose it – the challenge is how can we be inclusive but still AMI's standards are maintained – AMI is an asset – we must incorporate it

Joerg Boysen: I think AMI has a role to play – a public presence and an inspiration – you can't have a movement without a head – the principles are clear – but we must be allowed to move on – to disseminate materials. Montessori Europe conference is an opportunity to make this point of working together

Christian Schjetnan: A question to the Executive – does AMI want to play the role of leader – how can we accomplish that?

André Roberfroid: Why is AMI needed – to preserve the method – to be the body where the best practice continues to be developed – the inner circle of excellence will never be everywhere in the world – if we think that the movement can only grow with that level of excellence then we will fail – if we can spread the

Movement we will help children – we need someone like AMI with the quality to open up and share so people can take whatever they can – through this we will get people who will join the inner circle of excellence – we can and must face the world – with our excellence – we must be a source of energy – it is warmer at the centre – no one else in Montessori has the quality and capacity – this gives us responsibility – we have the heritage and we need to make it work for the children – it is not a choice for us – it demands that we keep the core of excellence but we do not need to oblige everyone to be like us.

Silvia Dubovoy: We need to have more research – we have to listen to other people and we become enriched by others – each of us here has something to give – we need to be more open and to experiment – we can only support Montessori in the way she did – each classroom is a laboratory

André Roberfroid: When you say AMI – this is not the Executive Committee or board – it is everyone – members, trainers, teachers – centres of expansion need to be multiplied

Lynne Lawrence: There are many kinds of leadership – if we apply the Montessori philosophy – then leadership is not top down – we try to provide in them the ability to be leaders and to make a difference – we need to find a way for all our constituents to provide leadership – leadership is by guidance and inspiration and by allowing other people to do what they can do and make them feel that they are good at what they are doing.

Barbara Waller: The movement is a process – the process is developing quality – to be committed to the children

Takako Fukatso: AMI's role – what is unique about AMI – in Japan there are many courses given – their aim is to increase the number of Montessori schools – we should not limit ourselves to this – we should aim for the social change

Jennifer Davidson: Our primary goal as a training centre is to educate adults on the principles of childhood – this could be one of our core roles – we are talking about children

Joan Rafter: It would be practical for Affiliates if AMI could make an appearance at our conference – to reach out to members to have someone from AMI human resources to speak briefly and say this is what we are doing – before I came to the AGM I knew very little about what AMI is doing

Elisabeta Negreanu: The AMI logo - the first circle is the scientific experiment – the discovery of the child, second circle is that AMI was created to protect the child. Third circle – other Montessorians who work with AMI for children. Together the 3 circles create the Montessori movement. Without the first circle the rest lack meaning. The leader in the Movement needs to be the instrument, to show the way, to prepare the environment and the tools by which the scientific experiment becomes possible. This central scientific experiment will spread outwards. Each person who believes in Montessori benefits the child.

Megan Tyne: By providing a pathway and some tools during the Centenary people who we didn't even know did amazing things to support the Montessori vision

Silvia Dubovoy: A new trend to have universal primary – offer a national certification

Diana Bradley: A lot of solutions are being thrown up and if we share these we have it – Leadership – if AMI were to act like a parent or Montessori teacher – be empowering – the force of the people who we are serving will show us how we want to be lead.

Question 4: What capacity, services, capabilities and resources will we need to carry out our leadership role and achieve the goals we envisage?

Joerg Boysen: Money – anything sustainable will require money – we can't rely on volunteers – how do we get the money – through establishing legitimacy – and people think this is worth paying for

Megan Tyne: Providing professional staff and infrastructure – we need people whose job it is to think about it every day – imagine if we had 3 people who's job it is to support ESF projects

Lynne Lawrence: Money – we won't be able to raise sufficient through membership alone – people don't want to belong for the sake of supporting – people want something for their money – we need to look at other ways of harnessing resources

Charlotte Parker: Write a proposal and go to organisations that give out money to people who are going to do something worthwhile with it

Silvia Dubovoy: The goals will propel what resources we need

Megan Tyne: There are working models in some countries for some of these things

Silvia Dubovoy: More research to prove that Montessori works

Mark Berger: Tapping into scientists who independently recognise what Montessori has to offer – coming up with a position statement – when we want to start looking for funds we have independent corroboration – this is not expensive to generate but would be hugely useful

André Robefoird: We need to start from what we have – we need bigger capacity for training – simplifying the way we go about training trainers. Research – we need to make a link with what is going on in the schools – we need also to make links with university – they will then fund the research – if we have agreements with university we will have ways of raising funds. Money can also come from foundations who are funding research projects. This will not come from the centre – it will come from people on the ground who are in touch with universities – these people are better equipped to make these connections than the centre is.

Noele McEvoy: There are grants available for umbrella organisations – the Affiliates are resources for work – we need to hand the tasks to these people to go away and do specific things

Megan Tyne: Big corporations – in the schools there are many people who are on the boards of large companies and firms – we get help from them pro bono – big firms should want to be associated with us – we are a prestigious and worthy organisation

Silvia Dubovoy: We could have a manual for applying for a grant

Charlene Trochta: In order to go and seek funds we have to have something specific we are seeking it for – e.g. study centre – it would be easier to seek funds for this if someone is interested in this. One of the things that we encounter is why is this place called Montessori but it doesn't look like your school – we need to come up with some standards that the general public can look for

Megan Tyne: Consistency of message is important – central message – we can borrow from each other – because no one in another country is going to see it – things done really well can go to all countries

Jennifer Davidson: A consistent message is really important – a need for more support for the administration of training centres and schools – not enough knowledge of how to promote ourselves – the feasibility study would be useful – what can you do to maintain the training centre or school – the communication network is important so we all stay connected

Felix Bednarski: We are not good business people – we concentrate on our work with children – we don't promote ourselves – we are not good enough business people – association of administrators in Canada has full time paid staff and has been able to achieve so much. Affiliates are all volunteers – we need to generate business plans so that we get a more professional level.

Lynne Lawrence: Seconded – all Affiliates need to move towards paid staff so that the person is responsible for doing the work as their primary aim

Megan Tyne: Our communication network is working well at the first level – but we need to take it to the next levels i.e. the first level is sending it to Montessori training centres and societies, the next level is sending it on to the schools and alumni – the next level is that it goes from the schools to parents – the cascading down is not yet working. We have used this communications network three times during the – Angeline Lillard's research – press release about Centenary and the 100 Steps The more we can strengthen this multi-layered network the more will be possible e.g. when launching the aid to life website – communicate directly to parents.

Silvia Dubovoy: Accountability – when we give something we need to have some idea of who is using it.

Christian Schjetnan: We are centring on the resources – are we able to make the big numbers work – if each school brings in 5 members then we would swell our funds considerably

Megan Tyne: Sue Birdsall was saying no one will have any issue with AMI leadership if we provided services and solutions – that will require connecting of services – the provision of services is the best way we can lead – trepidation dissolves if they get service.

Charlene Trochta: We each have the duty to provide service to another school or person – we can all do this

Megan Tyne: We need to make sure someone answers the phone all the time – it may be in someone's home – but we need to be constantly available or they will go someone else. Technology can be utilised - gathering of information and connection can be made through technology – these kind of resources could be given as template or package.

Silvia Dubovoy: Application for training centres – templates

Jennifer Davidson: Training centre package – here is what you do – this would be a way to ease the problem of setting up a training centre – so that we actually get more training centres and therefore more teachers

Felix Bednarski: There are a large number of hits on the website – how can we tap these numbers of people?

Lynne Lawrence: Training centres and Affiliates linked to AMI website and vice versa is important

Charlotte Parker: Donating money from use of credit card. Voluntary work is not sustainable – paid staff is essential

Megan Tyne: This has to be duplicated at the national level – it is no good increasing capacity at AMI if we don't do it at local level. The education route has never proved a successful one – since we set up the Children's Foundation we have had more success because we are helping underprivileged. Some of the biggest benevolent organisations in the country do not know what to do with their money whereas one of Montessori's strength is practical implementation in any setting.

Victoria Barres: Capacity building – we need to strengthen collectively and individually the ability to build services

Eva Greer: Thank you to the Centenary committee and to AMI for all they have done over the last few years. I hope we can reach out and change people's attitudes to AMI – to be more inclusive and yet keep the quality.

Question 5: How can we maximise the contribution of the various stakeholders and what steps can we take to harness the individual efforts of all those working for the Montessori Movement?

Victoria Barres: Important to benefit from lessons from other organisations. As we expand we can think of building partnerships with people who have IT skills for example but don't have the Montessori skills. This is another way to reach out and explore

Megan Tyne: We need to think how to attract young people into the movement

Charlotte Parker: The core knowledge – doing the milk rounds – going to schools and universities and recruit. Take a workshop and materials that the children can use.

Mark Berger: Guidelines and templates – here's what to do and here's how to do it – this seems to be a recurring theme. Picking up on Charlotte's idea we could also visit job fairs

Jennifer Davidson: AMI USA is developing those templates – there is a perception that AMI is someone else – even members don't think they are AMI

Noele McEvoy: Our schools can't say that they are AMI schools – this is only accredited in Canada and US

Ulla Wikkefeldt: We can say run by AMI staff

André Roberfroid: We are in trouble in this area because right now we don't know how to say that a school is AMI – one day children need to be able to say I am in an AMI school

Annette Haines: A new training has been agreed – a seminar format – anyone who wants to be a primary trainer. Trainers will be required to attend two AMI courses and five 15-day seminars. Associated course people will just attend seminars. The paper writing component will still be there of course. The trainers will be international and high quality. It will be in Amsterdam – important symbolically.

Tuition will be nominal – MM75 fund are giving project funding for it – AMI are giving money to support it.

Elementary trainers – will be something that will happen when we iron out any teething problems.

Formulating Some Goals

Research

The next report or book ready in 2 years time. Goal would be that in 10 years we have research books written – we have to see what society is looking for – we do the research to satisfy what is happening now.

Related to policy questions that people working in Ministries of education need – measure love of going to school and learning – millennium development goals and the education for all initiative – UN have established and have specific goals set already.

UN asks us to give a Montessori school in a box.

There are already students at university doing research on Montessori

Steven Hughes is an example of someone who we can partner with and can help us network university connections.

The first goal is to become partners – the natural body that people come to who want to research Montessori

We have to start nationally before we can go to organisations like UN

We have the controlled environment for the research – the prepared environment is a controlled experimental laboratory – training is the same across cultures and around the world – this unites us as a research network

Goals for AMI

Membership

Target for number of members

We need to find a way to keep our members

Affiliates and Training centres – target to have so many in 10 years

Qualification - to have it recognised as a degree

Core Knowledge Course

Core knowledge course happening on every continent. The goal is the number of people we reach.

Parent Support Initiative

Parenting programme of choice

Communication

All the fundamentals in place for operational communication resources

Public Recognition of Montessori

Film – Hollywood based

Build up a media capability

Any topic on children the media should choose to ask us

André Roberfroid – Closing remarks

My overall impression is that the change has already happened by what has been said to say – we are in the new century – the mindset is a new approach – the three circles – First circle – preservation and development of the method. Second circle – AMI – how do we further develop our training capacity and how do we allow more teachers etc. in the core of AMI – this will lead to goals that should be coming from regional or national goals – ask every Affiliate and every training centre to look at their capacity then the goal will have a meaning. AMI to be recognised as an intellectual partner. Communications should be subscribed by universities and they will feed us with materials to publish. Third circle – supporting the expansion of the Montessori movement with the legitimacy that will come from the second framework.

If we look at this kind of framework when making our plans we can think about which circle does it belong to. You have made my year – this is what the Centenary year must be – looking forward – moving into new territories – being sure of ourselves – we can be afraid of the future but we are solid in the present. We are ready to go. There are many more like you all around the world. The capacity is much more – intellectual capacity, experience and a field in which we are acting which means the sky is the limit.