

Letters from the President (2010-14), Michael Burawoy, to ISA members

September 2010

Dear Colleagues,

I am pleased to present the [first issue](#) of the ISA Newsletter, *Global Dialogue*. You can access it in four languages at <https://globaldialogue.isa-sociology.org/>. This is but one of a number of initiatives to increase communication in our midst as well as with communities beyond sociology. The success of *Global Dialogue* will depend on your cooperation, your willingness to submit short articles to me Burawoy@berkeley.edu. You can also enter your own comments on the blog. Let us try to make this a lively exchange!!

On the main page of the ISA website you will also find the “Universities in Crisis” blog <http://www.isa-sociology.org/universities-in-crisis/>. So far we have over 60 articles from about 35 countries, showing indeed that there is a crisis in universities across the globe. We need to understand this better. Please send me articles on your own university.

Over the next year we will be redesigning the ISA website to include a series of new projects, so keep tuned.

Happy Blogging,

Michael Burawoy, ISA President

November 2010

The second issue of the new ISA Newsletter, *Global Dialogue*, is out. It features a dialogue between Ulrich Beck and Raewyn Connell on global sociology as well as reports from around the world – research stories from China and Bangladesh, election assessments from Brazil and Belarus, and conference reports from Germany, Kyrgyzstan, Indonesia, and Poland. It also contains the Program Committee for the Yokohama Congress, provides news and history about ISA publications, and an obituary of Mattei Dogan. *Global Dialogue* #2 at <https://globaldialogue.isa-sociology.org/archive/issue-1-2-november-2010> can be read in 5 languages or as individual articles. Send any queries, submission, suggestions to Michael Burawoy at burawoy@berkeley.edu.

Michael Burawoy, ISA President

February 2011

Dear Colleagues,

I'm pleased to announce the publication of the [third issue of *Global Dialogue*](#) – longer, more combative, and now translated into 2 more languages, Japanese and Portuguese. That makes 7 languages in all, the result of a devoted partnership of teams of young sociologists across the world. You can find this latest issue of *Global Dialogue* below or at the ISA homepage, <https://globaldialogue.isa-sociology.org/>.

There we have also posted a new section called “digital dialogues,” including previous issues of the newsletter itself, the *universities in crisis* blog, and *sociology in action* (the repository of films and videos of the everyday life of sociologists). The boldest experiment of all – *Global Sociology Live!* – is an open and on-going collaboration, based on an undergraduate course at Berkeley, drawing in sociologists from all over the world for debate and discussion on video, now made available to everyone at the ISA website. Take a look at <https://www.isa-sociology.org/en/publications/isa-digital-worlds/videos/global-courses/global-sociology/global-sociology-blog/course-syllabus>.

Let me also mention the next PhD Laboratory in South Africa as well as the next Forum (2012) in Buenos Aires where the theme, fittingly enough, will be *Social Justice and Democratization*. You can find information about this and other announcements and news on the website.

I cannot end this short letter without saluting the unfolding popular movements in North Africa and the Middle East. A tribute to human strength, courage and determination, we have here the waves of protest we write about but rarely observe. Whatever else, the world will not be the same again.

Best wishes to you all,

Michael Burawoy, ISA President

April 2011

Dear Colleagues:

These have been tumultuous months since [Global Dialogue](#) last went to press in February. We are trying to keep up with history, so that the [fourth issue of *Global Dialogue*](#), just released, carries reports from the Middle East and North Africa about the insurgencies of the last few months. We also have a moving report on the Japanese tsunami. In the debate section we continue to probe the notion of cosmopolitanism with a perspective from India. In pursuit of greater openness, we include an account of the main decisions made by the ISA Executive Committee at its annual meeting, which was held at the National Autonomous University in Mexico City. It took place alongside an exciting International Conference on Inequality. In our conference section, we publish reports from *Sociologists without Borders*, from the European Sociological Association, and from the Turkish Sociological Association. We have begun a new column on human rights violations, and in our history corner we tell the story of the 1982 ISA World Congress in Mexico City. I'm delighted and amazed to announce that *Global Dialogue* will now appear in no less than 9 languages – English, French and Spanish, Arabic, Chinese (traditional and simplified), Portuguese, Japanese and most recently Hindi. We also have an alluring, user-friendly brand new design. The ISA has opened its own [Facebook page](#) so now you can click and “like” us. We have completed our first video series [Global Sociology, Live!](#), featuring sociologists from all corners of the earth. Everything is available from our [home page](#). Please enjoy GD 1.4!

Click below for *Global Dialogue* in your desired language (Arabic and Hindi are still to come):

[ENGLISH](#)

[FRENCH](#)

[SPANISH](#)

[CHINESE \(Traditional\)](#)

[CHINESE \(Simplified\)](#)

[PORTUGUESE](#)

[JAPANESE](#)

Arabic and Hindi will be available soon.

Michael Burawoy, ISA President

July 2011

Dear Colleagues,

With this fifth letter I am sending you the [new issue of *Global Dialogue*](#), now appearing in 10 languages, the latest addition being Persian. It includes articles on real utopias, accounts of global labor from South Africa, China and Mexico, water politics from Latin America, land politics from India, the real democracy movement in Spain, counter-terrorism in the UK, sociology in Iran and Catalonia, a celebration of Robert Merton, the technique of cow-dung sampling from Africa and much else. The articles can be read below by clicking on the corresponding article, or at the ISA [website](#) or on [Facebook](#). The translation work has been done through an amazing collaboration of dedicated teams of sociologists across the world. In this issue we introduce you to the Paulista team from Brazil. This concludes the first year (volume one) of *Global Dialogue*. It has progressed by leaps and bounds and I am open to further suggestions as to how it might be improved. The experimental course, *Global Sociology, Live!* has also been completed successfully and can be viewed on video at [the ISA website](#). All these items on [Digital Worlds](#) are free and open to everyone so please spread the word, and share them with your colleagues. Good reading, good viewing!

Michael Burawoy, ISA President

September 2011

Dear Members,

With this email I am sending you the link to *Global Dialogue* Volume 2, No.1. <https://globaldialogue.isa-sociology.org/archive/issue-2-1-september-2011>. Now in 11 languages, it contains articles on global inequality, social protest in Europe, migrants in Malaysia, the hegemony of English, reports from conferences in Brazil and Canada, accounts of sociology in Romania and Peru, women's movements in the Caucasus, education in South Africa, moving tributes to former ISA President Ulf Himmelstrand, and the changing status of women in the ISA.

This issue initiates the Executive Committee's second year in office. In our first year we launched many new projects of a digital nature, including our electronic journal *eSymposium*, a course on *Global Sociology*, a blog on *Universities in Crisis*, a webpage called *sociotube*, which includes videos from Congresses, and most recently an exciting new series of interviews, [Journeys through Sociology](#), with members of the Executive Committee. All are available at our website <https://www.isa-sociology.org/en>.

We are planning new ventures, such as a website for recent and in progress PhD theses, so that we can all learn about new and exciting research. Next semester we will also begin a new program, *Public Sociology, Live!* that will bring together some of the most exciting projects across the world. I am hoping it will be the basis of courses and seminars conducted across the globe.

With three more years to go, we can look forward to the ISA Forum of Sociology in Buenos Aires (August 1-4, 2012), and the ISA World Congress of Sociology in Yokohama (July 13-19, 2014). I have had a very busy travel schedule, promoting sociology in different places and venues, always coming away encouraged by the youthful energy propelling our discipline forward, tackling the pressing issues of our time. We are now on Twitter so that you can keep up with our ever-expanding range of activities:

https://twitter.com/isa_sociology.

Best wishes to you all,

Michael Burawoy, ISA President

November 2011

I'm sending you the [latest *Global Dialogue*](#) (2.2) that contains articles on Islamophobia, Islamic populism, civic protest in Israel, climate change negotiations, international labor, the raging debate around global sociology, the continuing civil war in Chechnya, as well as reports from Latin American and European Congresses, and an interview with retiring editor Devorah Kalekin-Fishman. *Global Dialogue* now appears in 12 languages.

These last two months have seen the intensification of fiscal crises in Europe on the one side, and the burgeoning occupation movements, crying out for sociological analysis. We will be following these events as well as the Second Arab Spring, movements in the Americas and Asia. On the ISA front we are getting ready for an exciting Forum in Buenos Aires, August 1-4. Abstracts have been flooding into the Madrid office – the deadline is December 15th. I'm pleased to say that half the interviews with the executive committee have been posted on the ISA Website at <https://www.isa-sociology.org/en/publications/isa-digital-worlds/videos/journeys-through-sociology/>. I think they demonstrate just how diverse our leadership is! The other half will be posted in the next two months.

Next semester there will be a new global, open access course, *Public Sociology, Live!* Keep your eyes on the ISA website's Digital Worlds to see how you can participate in this course.

Best Wishes,

Michael Burawoy, ISA President

February 2012

Dear All,

I am sending you the [latest *Global Dialogue*](#) (GD2.3) – our magazine that now appears in 13 languages – the latest addition being Ukrainian. It contains articles on the unfolding of events in Egypt, Latin American sociology, Polish migrants in Germany, the continuing debate about global sociology, reports from 8 other countries, obituaries of John Rex and Kurt Jonassohn, criticism of ISA election rules, and much else.

In other news, the ISA Forum in Buenos Aires looks like being one of the best attended events in ISA history, sure to be a memorable tangling of ideas and practices. In preparation for the theme – social justice and democratization – I've been running a

seminar series called [Public Sociology. Live!](#) It involves filming conversations of diverse Berkeley students with distinguished sociologists from all over the world, recording and posting these conversations, which are then watched by classes in 8 different countries – each class contributing to further discussion on [facebook](#) and a blog. Just click on [Public Sociology. Live!](#) and you too can watch them, participate in the evolving debate.

[Journeys through Sociology](#) is another social media experiment – interviews with members of the ISA Executive Committee that explore their paths to sociology, the challenges they faced as well as what excites them most in their work. You too can watch their fascinating conversations with TV celebrity Laleh Behbehani.

Social media can be abused to degrade education, but they can also be used to enhance learning by making available that which was not available before, and thereby contributing to a global community of sociologists.

Best wishes,

Michael Burawoy, ISA President

May 2012

Dear Colleagues:

I'm happy to announce the publication of the latest issue of *Global Dialogue* (volume 2 number 4). You can find it by clicking: <https://globaldialogue.isa-sociology.org/archive/issue-2-4-may-2012>. It appears in 13 languages (Polish and Hindi will appear imminently), the new language of the issue being Turkish, which embraces not just Turkey's vibrant sociology but many countries in Central Asia where Turkic languages are spoken.

Topics in GD2.4 include the future of Chinese society and Chinese sociology, violence and protest in Latin America, the sociology of celebrity, the history of French-speaking sociology, a profile of the Iranian team of editors, as well as reports from Lebanon, South Africa, Poland, India, and Turkey. We report on the ISA film series "[Journeys through Sociology](#)," featuring members of the ISA Executive Committee, and we are now thinking about how to develop a second series that will focus on ISA Research Committees, Working and Thematic Groups. We are also hoping to get RC/WG/TG more involved in *Global Dialogue* following the model of Markus Schultz who reports on "Democratizing Futures" for RC07 Futures Research.

I am pleased to announce the completion of the second, ISA open-access global course – [Public Sociology. Live!](#) – that brings together sociology classes in 7 countries to discuss public sociology practiced in different regions of our planet. Finally, I don't have to remind you that our exciting Forum opens on August 1st in Buenos Aires and that its programme is already available on-line at <http://isaconf.confex.com/isaconf/forum2012/webprogram/start.html>. I look forward to meeting you all there and then!

Best wishes,

Michael Burawoy, ISA President

August 2012

Dear Colleagues,

With this letter I would like to congratulate the organizers of the second ISA Forum of Sociology in Buenos Aires – the President of the Forum, ISA Vice-President for Research

Margaret Abraham, the local organizers, led by Alberto Bialakowski and Alicia Palermo, and the ISA Secretariat, led by Izabela Barlinska. The Forum was a stunning success, four days of intensive debate involving 3,700 participants, opening new relations between Latin America and the ISA. There is now a new website dedicated to the theme of the Forum, Social Justice and Democratization, at <https://socialjustice.isaportal.org/>. With the energy of the Forum behind us we can now look forward with great expectations to the World Congress in Yokohama in July, 2014.

I'd also like to announce the 10th issue of our magazine *Global Dialogue*, now appearing in 13 languages: <https://globaldialogue.isa-sociology.org/archive/issue-2-5-august-2012>. In this latest issue Zygmunt Bauman tells us what sociology means to him, we celebrate Izabela Barlinska's 25 years as Executive Secretary with an interview about her life with the ISA, and we learn of the world dissemination of the children's television program, Sesame Street. There are articles on stratification in Latin America, feminism in Western Europe and the Ukraine, essays on national sociologies in Russia, Britain and Japan, a special column on sociology at the UN and a photo essay on the death of migrants in the Arizona desert. If there are matters sociological that you want to convey to the world don't hesitate to get in touch with me.

As part of the program of Digital Worlds, we are about to embark on a new video series, "Controversies in Sociology" in which different Research Committees will present divergent views on matters of public import. If your Research Committee wants to participate let me know.

Best wishes,

Michael Burawoy, ISA President

November 2012

Dear Colleagues:

With this message I'm sending you the latest issue of *Global Dialogue* (Volume 3, no.1) <https://globaldialogue.isa-sociology.org/archive/issue-3-1-november-2012>. GD3.1 contains an editorial on the question of language, former ISA-President, Margaret Archer's view of sociology as a vocation, an interview with Izabela Barlinska about the last 25 years of ISA's consolidation and expansion, an intense debate about modernity and Islam, reports on anti-feminism in Russia, on the January protests in Romania, on the dangers of Open Access publication, on the last three years of *sociopedia.isa*, on conferences from all over the globe as well as portraits of the Indian *Global Dialogue* team and a photo-essay from South Africa.

I am delighted to announce the introduction of Romanian as the latest language of *Global Dialogue*. In the beginning I was warned that we'd be very lucky to have *Global Dialogue* in three languages, and now we are up to 14! Most important we are building a network of young, dedicated sociologists across the planet, all engaged in a common project. I've had far less success in getting Research Committees involved, probably because their leaders are already over-committed. I'll be writing to Presidents individually. Don't miss our new cyber-platform on Social Justice and Democratization (<https://socialjustice.isaportal.org/>).

Finally, and most important, even as Buenos Aires is just behind us, the World Congress in Yokohama is already approaching. January 15 is already the deadline for submitting proposals for ad hoc, integrative, and associations sessions. Please see <http://www.isa-sociology.org/congress2014/deadlines.htm>.

I'm always happy to hear from you, complaints and suggestions.

Best wishes,

Michael Burawoy, ISA President

February 2013

Dear Colleagues

I'm writing to you to announce the publication of *Global Dialogue* 3.2 which contains articles by sociologists focusing on Portugal, Chile, Taiwan, and Bulgaria among other places; an interview with a prominent Libyan sociologist who lived through the Gadhafi era; a Palestinian's view of Israeli Universities; and two divergent views on sociology's place in society one from India's André Béteille and the other from South Africa's Jackie Cock. You can find the issue contents below in English as well as in 13 other languages at <https://globaldialogue.isa-sociology.org/archive/issue-3-2-february-2013>.

I'm also delighted to confirm Toronto as the venue of the ISA 2018 Congress. At the moment we are focusing on preparations for next year's Congress in Yokohama, which promises to have an exciting program, bringing Asian sociology to the world and vice versa.

Two important announcements: First, May 1st is the deadline for submitting papers in the Worldwide Sociology Competition for Junior Sociologists. The authors of up to 5 winning papers will receive a free trip to Yokohama. For details see <http://www.isa-sociology.org/wcys/index.htm>. Second, May 30th is the deadline for nominations for the ISA's major new award for Excellence in Research and Practice.

Michael Burawoy, ISA President

May 2013

Dear Colleagues:

Just two weeks ago the ISA held a highly successful meeting of National Associations at the Middle-East Technical University in Ankara, Turkey. Nearly 50 countries were represented. We learned how similar and yet how different sociology can be around the globe. We learned much from our Turkish colleagues, not just about sociology and politics but also their dancing. We left as the protest movement against the AKP government was just beginning. As I write now it looks like the continuation of the Arab Spring on new territory. Some have traced the Arab Spring to Iran's Green Movement of 2009, which is analyzed in the [latest issue of *Global Dialogue*](#) along with an account of the Arab Winter in Egypt – the violence of counter-revolution. We continue our series on “sociology as vocation” with the visions of Raewyn Connell and Randolph David. You will also find accounts of the way universities are operating today as profit centers in India and how brave German sociologists have bucked their ranking system, how violence is normalized in Mexico. As you can see from the clickable contents below, there's plenty to chew on in GD3.3, now appearing in 15 languages, the latest being Ukrainian.

Let me remind you that the on-line submission of abstracts for the World Congress in Yokohama is now open. You should also know that we have introduced a policy to make our meetings accessible to all. You can find it here: <https://www.isa-sociology.org/en/about-isa/policy-statements>.

Finally, in a few days you will be hearing from me again as we will be participating in a novel democratic process that will decide on important structural changes to the ISA that affects how we prepare for our World Congress.

Always happy to hear from you,
Michael Burawoy, ISA President

August 2013

Dear Colleagues:

I am sending you the [latest issue of *Global Dialogue*](#) (GD3.4), which contains Fernando Henrique Cardoso's reflections of a sociologist as President of Brazil; the life and times of a great Malaysian sociologist, Rahman Embong; sociology as a vocation as seen through the eyes of the Japanese feminist, Chizuko Ueno, and of the Russian doyen, Vladimir Yadov; an exploration of cinematic sociology with French sociologists, Joyce Sebag and Jean-Pierre Durand; favela tourism in Brazil; the garment sector in Bangladesh; three articles from a new generation of sociologists in Bulgaria; how your published papers are being outsourced to the Philippines, and why this means ISA books are going to be cheaper. And much more! You can find it all [here](#) in 10 languages (with 5 more arriving imminently) as well as below.

I have a few other announcements. First, the Executive Committee voted to make Vienna the location for the next ISA Forum of Sociology (2016). The Austrian LOC is already planning to make special efforts to embrace sociologists from Eastern Europe and Africa. Second, Immanuel Wallerstein is the winner of the new ISA Award for Excellence in Research and Practice. Congratulations to Dr. Wallerstein who will be at the World Congress in Yokohama to receive his award. Some of you are asking where Yokohama is – it is a beautiful bay suburb of Tokyo with easy connections to Tokyo's airports. Don't miss this opportunity to visit Japan while the yen is weak. And don't forget abstracts for the Congress are due by the end of this month, September 30, 2013.

Last but not least September 14th is the last date to send in votes for or against the restructuring of the ISA. You can consult and contribute to the on-going debate at <http://www.isa-sociology.org/restructuring-of-the-isa/>. Please make sure your representatives, that is heads of National Associations and Research Committees, vote on this important matter and, thereby, contribute to this experiment in virtual democracy.

Best Wishes,

Michael Burawoy, ISA President

November 2013

Dear Colleagues:

With this letter you will find the [latest issue of *Global Dialogue*](#) (GD3.5) which has Immanuel Wallerstein and Elizabeth Jelin on sociology as a vocation, Manuel Antonio Garretón on sociology under the Chilean dictatorship, articles on protest in Egypt, Turkey and Brazil, essays on China in Africa, on the life of seafarers, on falling inequality in Latin America, on basic income grants in India and much more. You can see it all below in 10 languages with a further 5 arriving soon.

Let me tell you about two other initiatives. In an attempt to build a community of young sociologists we have a new site <https://www.isa-sociology.org/en/junior-sociologists/dissertation-abstracts> for posting abstracts of PhD dissertations either in progress or completed in the last 5 years. These can be searched in multiple ways. I urge all junior sociologists to post their abstracts and learn what others are doing in different places. I urge supervisors to encourage their students to submit abstracts. I'm hoping this will be the beginning of an exciting global exchange.

The second initiative is a new series of *Journeys through Sociology* – interviews with former Presidents of the ISA about the challenges they faced, what they accomplished and what they wanted to be when they grew up. These can be found at <https://www.isa-sociology.org/en/publications/isa-digital-worlds/videos/journeys-through-sociology>.

The good news about the World Congress in Yokohama (July 13-19) is that the number of abstracts submitted was twice the number submitted for the last Congress in Gothenburg. So it will be an exciting week in which we will also elect the new officers of the association. Nominations for President, Vice-Presidents (4) and members (16) of the Executive Committee have to be submitted by January 31st. The process is simple – any nomination simply requires the support of two members of the ISA in good standing. Details can be found at http://www.isa-sociology.org/about/isa_elections_2014.htm so please step up, think about whom you want to run your association, and make your nominations.

All best wishes for any holidays coming your way,

Michael Burawoy, ISA President

March 2014

Dear Colleagues:

With this letter you will find the [latest issue of *Global Dialogue*](#) (GD4.1) with essays on sociology as a vocation by Alain Touraine and Kalpana Kannabiran, and interviews with Simon Clarke and Manuel Antonio Garretón. We have four articles on the wonders of Uruguay's social democracy and three articles on Hungary's rightward surge; two reports from the field in Africa – one from South African mining and another from Ivory Coast, and much else. You can see it all below in 9 languages with a further 5 arriving soon.

The ISA World Congress of Sociology in Yokohama (July 13-19) promises to be another exciting event with twice as many abstracts accepted as in previous record breaking Congress. [Register now while the discounted rate is available until April 1st](#).

Let me draw your attention to the complete set of [Journeys Through Sociology](#) interviews of former ISA Presidents. The new website for recent and ongoing PhD dissertations has been a great success. The number of abstracts grows daily and they can be found [here](#). If you are working on your dissertation or have completed it in the last 5 years then submit your abstract [here](#).

Best wishes,

Michael Burawoy, ISA President

June 2014

Dear Colleagues:

This is my last letter as President of the ISA. It has been an honor and privilege to serve as your President. These last four years have been both interesting and challenging. They culminate in the XVIII World Congress of Sociology in Yokohama, Japan. There will be a record attendance of some 6,000 sociologists, ready to discuss the theme: "Facing an Unequal World: Challenges for Sociology" – an issue that has become ever more salient, both in sociology and in the public eye. Many have made important contributions to the success of the Congress, but I would like to make special mention of the Japanese Local Organizing Committee, headed by Koichi Hasegawa; the Program Committee headed by Raquel Sosa; and the ISA Secretariat in Madrid, headed by Izabela Barlinska.

With this letter you will also find the [latest issue of *Global Dialogue*](#) (GD4.2) that examines the theme of the Congress with essays on sociology as a vocation from Dorothy Smith and Herb Gans, an interview with Peruvian sociologist-politician Nicolás Lynch. We have articles from Latin America on the coloniality of power and on the 20th anniversary of the uprising in Chiapas; and from the Middle East on life in Syrian prisons and the ambiguous progress of Iranian women. We have two articles from the heart of the Ukrainian Maidan; two articles on the politics of climate change; three articles on land expropriation in China; a Polish retrospective on former ISA President, Jan Szczepański, as well as articles on reform of higher education in Poland. At the moment GD4.2 is available in 10 languages but 4 more will be arriving soon.

Whether and in what form *Global Dialogue* will continue will be decided by the next Executive Committee. If you have any thoughts on this matter please send them to the Executive Secretary, Izabela Barlinska isa@isa-sociology.org.

I look forward to meeting many of you in Yokohama and for those who cannot come we will keep you in touch through video-streaming of some of the major sessions. Finally, let me thank all of you who have hosted my many visits and seminars across our planet these last 4 years, and for all your contributions to *Global Dialogue*.

Best wishes,

Michael Burawoy, ISA President