

**PLANETARY SUSTAINABILITY IN  
THE AGE OF THE INFORMATION  
AND KNOWLEDGE SOCIETY**



**FOR A SUSTAINABLE WORLD AND FUTURE**

**WORKING TOWARD 2015**



© Gustavo López Ospina

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PLANETARY SUSTAINABILITY IN THE AGE OF THE INFORMATION  
AND KNOWLEDGE SOCIETY

HANDBOOK FOR UNDERSTANDING AND ACTION

“To gauge the scope of the 21<sup>st</sup> century’s challenges and the range of possible ways to grasp them, we must be receptive to all approaches, to all disciplines and cultures, and grant them all a forum for open discussion about the future[...] It is particularly important to keep a distance from the centrifugal forces generated by the giddy pace of change, because the ideal of ‘progress’ could easily lead us in directions that make us lose touch with human values. In this context, responses of understanding the connections among things, and relating ideas so they become coherent and make sense, become vital[...].”

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Koïchiro Matsuura

Director-General of UNESCO

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1. Preface to the book, *Keys to the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*, UNESCO, 2000

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This handbook to help understand and take action in the quest for planetary sustainability, in the information and knowledge age, aims above all to help enrich the trail blazed by the international community and offer milestones to guide us on the way to the year 2015.

We still have the power to choose – irreversible harm has not yet reached catastrophic levels and the inter-related nature of Life can give us new hope, as long as understanding becomes humans' main concern – understanding accompanied by ethical thought, with both reinforced by a potent, renewed vision of culture and education, of the primary role of wisdom, of dialogue among civilizations and cultures.

This planet's sustainability calls for a new relationship, viable over time, between humankind and our habitat, a relationship placing humanity in the forefront, precisely at the outset of a new age that will be marked by wisdom, knowledge and information, shared globally.

It becomes urgent to rise above all current systems of loyalties and beliefs, to a global ethics that can move wills toward new actions, to transcend the vision and strategies resulting from simply economic, political or technological arrangements.

These actions must be centered on achieving changes, in ways of thinking and in structures, in creative, peaceful coexistence, in human dignity and solidarity.

Commitments undertaken by the international community in vital areas for humankind, since early in the last century, are presented herein as an instructional aid, because it is essential for these commitments to be well and fully known, in order to build shared visions and actions.

Much progress and many innovative experiences can be highlighted; nevertheless, the present poses challenges and crises telling us that it is time to set forth, with all our strength, on the true quest for a sustainable future.

The necessary conditions would seem to be at hand. This book emerges in response to interest and decisions by the governments and the most diverse other stakeholders in the Americas and, in particular, in the world of the Andes – home of an ancestral civilization so widely recognized internationally – to act pursuant to firm, well-founded decisions, toward the United Nations' goals for the year 2015, along with the rest of the world.

UNESCO will be the United Nations' leading Agency in the Decade (2005-2015) for Education and Sustainable Development, and will soon be proposing the official action framework that will provide the overarching policy and cooperation orientation in such a fundamental field in the thrust toward sustainability.

A great feeling is palpable today in the international community: the planet's future sustainability will go wherever education and ethical thought can lead.

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## PROLOGUE

*“Wayfarer, there is no roadway – you make the road as you go” (Machado)*

This handbook, which we present today, is an attempt to stimulate reflection on sustainability and the planet’s future viability and, above all, to provide initial orientation for the work that must be undertaken immediately in this field, by governments and with the decided support of all societal stakeholders

The Johannesburg Summit on Sustainable Development (2003) was a substantive achievement, because the world’s leaders and Chiefs of State understood the imperious need to work collectively, above all manner of differences – be they economic, social, cultural, political or otherwise – to seek profound change, based on a clear understanding of the phenomena, challenges, problems and limits, within which it is necessary to conceive of and look to a sustainable future on this planet. This vision is enriched by the millennial goals for 2015, adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in 2002.

The great qualitative worldwide leap forward that humankind has decided to take is unprecedentedly huge and will happen, all at once, at the level of hamlets, nations, regions and the entire planet. Practically unimaginable occurrences have taken the international community by surprise as this new century begins. Society is seriously addressing the scenarios of the future, which some had been counting on as a sure thing, with the principles that have governed cooperation and assistance among peoples, with lifestyles and relations with Nature and her systems; with leadership and action by States and leadership-orientation by peoples. All this, within the profound structural parameters of Life itself, because ultimately Life itself has been jeopardized.

Documents and proposals regarding sustainability are abundant, most of them may be viewed in Internet, on such sites as the United Nations’, with its programs, funds, and agencies, including UNESCO, the World Bank, regional banks and other financial institutions. The same is beginning to happen in 10 regard to the issue of the information and knowledge society. For

this reason, key Internet sites and bibliography are offered at the end of the book, regarding sustainability.

We must trust in the enormous potential for change that has already been identified, and the international community's growing interest. Of course, longer-term scenarios (e.g. 2050) will also be examined at the same time, as political alternatives in view of the uncertainty and lack of scientific mastery and progress in essential fields.

A solid contribution is expected from the new information and communication technologies. For this reason, the World Summit on the Information and Knowledge Society (Geneva, December 2003) is being prepared by specialists from the entire world, and is expected to be a transcendental milestone.

I have had the privilege of being in charge of the leadership provided by UNESCO internationally to implement Chapter 36 of Agenda 21 (1994-2001) as director of the "Trans-Disciplinary Project" that UNESCO created at its Paris Headquarters. This project was UNESCO's main response to the new challenges posed for the international community by the "Working Agendas" and "Policy Declarations" adopted at world summits promoted by the United Nations between January 1990 (on the UN's 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary) through the August 2002 World Summit on Sustainable Development, in which I also had the honor of participating, in both the preparation / negotiation process and in the Summit itself.

This experience and the continuing close relationship with the international community and world evolution in these areas and, at this time, with the topic of the Information and knowledge society, have also motivated me to share the vision, teachings and concerns that I have been able to accrue through this direct dialogue. Human beings are a core concern of UNESCO, all human beings, and safeguarding and enriching their tangible or intangible cultural values and goods, as well as their natural systems.

The UNESCO management, headed by the Director-General, Doctor Koïchiro Matsuura, is committed to seeking and attaining these overarching goals of the international community.

This book has been made possible thanks to the decided cooperation to its preparation by the staff of UNESCO/Quito. My special recognition as well for colleagues, specialists of UNESCO and the United Nations System at large, to thinkers, leaders and professions of the region and other parts of the world; in almost interminable, highly fruitful discussions with them, we have collectively raised proposals, priorities, approaches, concerns and dreams that the reader will find here.

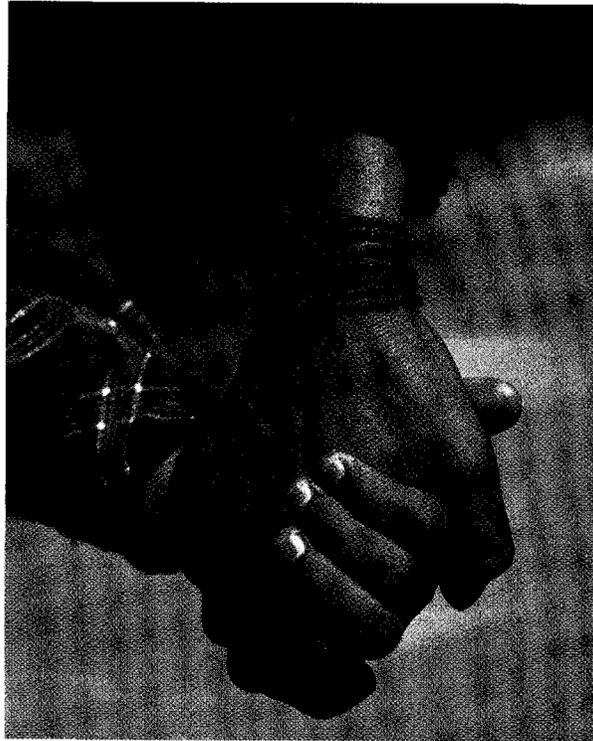
Machado has told us, "Wayfarer, there is no roadway; you make the road as you go". This book seeks, above all, to gather travelers, to pool their imagination, dreams, frustrations, potentials, experience and, more than anything else, their wisdom, to offer the best that they have to give, so that collectively we can build a viable pathway to the future, with a firm step, and ethical thinking, respecting others, and everyone. Perhaps in this way we will be able to guarantee the planet's sustainability and Life itself, in the future.

Gustavo López-Ospina.

SUSTAINABLE SOCIETIES IN THE  
AGE OF INFORMATION AND KNOWLEDGE

P A R T

*RECREATING THE VISION AND LEADING THE  
WORLD TOWARD A POLICY OF CIVILIZATION  
AND HUMANENESS, AFFIRMING TRUST IN  
HUMAN BEINGS AND CONSOLIDATING  
SOCIAL FABRIC.*



# 1

C H A P T E R

UNDERSTANDING, THROUGH TWELVE KEY QUESTIONS ON THE  
NOTION OF PLANETARY SUSTAINABILITY AND THE INFORMATION  
AND KNOWLEDGE SOCIETY.

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*THE PLANET'S SUSTAINABILITY CALLS FOR  
A NEW RELATIONSHIP, VIABLE OVER TIME,  
BETWEEN HUMANKIND AND OUR HABITAT,  
A RELATIONSHIP PLACING HUMANS IN THE  
FOREFRONT, PRECISELY AT THE OUTSET  
OF A NEW AGE THAT WILL BE MARKED BY  
WISDOM, KNOWLEDGE AND INFORMATION  
SHARED GLOBALLY.*



**A**s the present century begins, everyone – from the unconcerned citizen circulating through huge cities or isolated rural zones, to decision-makers and company owners, teachers and students, laborers and parents – everyone wonders why the planet is going the direction it is today. They read the newspapers, watch television, take part in debates or discussions, meet with friends, list to their nations’ chiefs of State or closer leaders, and understand little of the complexity surrounding them day by day.

Confusion, uncertainty, fear and despair are gradually creeping over every region of the world. At the same time, we begin to witness signs that a radical change is underway, and that we will achieve a world that progresses within parameters of greater certainty and security toward a better future, a sustainable world and future in peace.

The international community, in turn, has been making substantive efforts to promote an environment of greater solidarity and understanding among all peoples and an effective dialogue among cultures, particularly since 1990, when the United Nations System began celebrating its 50th anniversary. This has yielded a number of major agreements and worldwide working agendas regarding the issues of greatest sensitivity for the international community.

Nevertheless, alongside those efforts, developments of great economic, political and social transcendence continue to occur, deepening the concerns today of all peoples in the world. On this basis, what are the questions that most currently appear nowadays in the different regions of the world?

In an effort to concentrate these questions, we propose to make an overview of current world understanding, through twelve key questions. The intention, above all, is to highlight the “clues” that may guide us, in the field of political actions and decision-making, on our way toward the future.

**A. PLANETARY SUSTAINABILITY: SUSTAINABLE HUMAN DEVELOPMENT.**

**1. For two decades, we have heard about sustainable development, and the international community has not yet properly clarified this new vision. How to understand it as dynamic, perfectible and adaptable to the setting of each community, country and continent?**

1. The international community has finally become aware of truths that have always been in effect, orienting the evolution of life on this planet and governing, largely, its sustainability over time. They include:

- a) The planet functions as a single natural system.
- b) On the scale of human activities, all of humankind is inter-dependent in the global sphere.
- c) Increasing population and the possibility of ensuring all people a good life on this planet will always seriously challenge the human imagination and the world’s governance; by early 2004, the world will have a population of nearly 6.3 billion.
- d) Patterns of production and consumption, accompanied by economic, business and international trade policies, are the backbone of understanding phenomena of the planet’s environmental deterioration and the risks that continually threaten Life itself in the not-so-distant future.
- e) Ethical thought, grounded in principles and standards of universal behavior, will be the only possible collective “navigational chart” for the future – respecting, enriching and tapping ancestral wisdom and the contributions of all cultures and civilizations,

within an open, transparent, pluri-cultural dialogue; future viability will not result from homogenization of customs and behaviors, but from creative diversity and the contextualization of day-to-day life on the basis of historical and cultural roots.

- f) Conflicts and wars jeopardize the planet's sustainability, given their disastrous negative impacts in human terms and in deterioration, often irreparable, of Nature and the environment. It is urgent to channel all that energy and those resources, now used for destruction and death, toward resolving the serious problems facing humankind at large, which will call for arduous, continual, collective international work, for at least the first five decades of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

2. The lessons learned by the international community and all peoples on this planet, who have been witnessing, almost in real time, the major conflicts and wars that have occurred – particularly since September 11, 2001 when the Twin Towers in New York City were demolished – include a vehement, determined reaffirmation of the above truths, as well as a feeling, on all continents, of weariness and disappointment with the way the world is lurching into the future.

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Everything that dehumanizes Life and places top priority on getting and expanding blind “power”, irrelevant to the more transcendent issues of living and of Life itself, is being rejected out of hand.

It is very encouraging to see the mass understanding and awareness, by the planet's peoples and cultures, of what it will cost to continue putting off a genuine start of worldwide actions, of a structural nature, that will strike at the deepest roots of phenomena and problems. Public demonstrations and grassroots movements, at the turn of this new century, reflect highly positive signs that a planetary human era may be emerging, linked to visions regarding the world.

3. It could almost be stated that, by early 2004, we are witnessing the “implosion of individualism and planetary sectoralization, which are yielding to the collective construction of planetary viability, which is simply the search for sustainability on this planet, through sustainable human development.

The pathway ahead is immense, beset by difficulties; profound changes must be made on almost every level, with great imagination and spirit of university solidarity, in order to mold and design these changes. The models and systems that have lured the international community into this plight that must urgently be remedied are still strongly in place.

Nonetheless, major strengths are emerging with unsuspected force, taking form as the first glimmers of the world's shifting mindset, nourished by a new perception of life, of human relations, of Nature and the planet, throughout entire peoples, all the way down to the ordinary citizen on the streets or in the countryside, who is also forced to cope with an increasingly complex life.

4. Accordingly, the international community has agreed not to settle for the enrichment of mathematical thought regarding the notion of the planet's future viability that could please everyone, which would be impossible. International efforts will be channeled toward a "vision", a "perception" summoning all governments, the scientific and academic community, the private and entrepreneurial sector, the media, youth and children, politicians and leaders, and civil society at large.

Progressively, the international community will manage to focus new ideas on the realities of countries, regions and communities regarding the viability, dangers and threats that used to be perceived as farther away.

All communities and human beings are motivated to become part of a worldwide social fabric that will unveil a new lifestyle for living together, in peace and equity.

That perception involves understanding that some 5 to 7 million hectares of farmland are lost every year as soils break down and urban areas sprawl; that nearly 20 million hectares of tropical woodlands are sacrificed using inadmissible practices; that under 20% of the world's population is currently consuming 86% of total resources, pursuing a pattern of life that cannot be sustained in the future, while the planet's poorest 20% consume barely 1.3% of 18 those total resources; that nearly one billion persons have no access to clean water supply and that water (as demonstrated in 2003, *International Year of Water*) is not a part of life, but Life itself.

This list, already alarming, is lengthened every day by the radio, print media and television, around the world: famine and poverty affecting over half the planet's population; proliferation of new diseases and viruses, including HIV/AIDS; the greenhouse effect; worldwide warming and rising sea level; growth of desert zones; disappearing animal species; hecatombs of fishes and birds murdered by black tides and pollution (thousands of ships cross the ocean every day, loaded with petroleum, with all the accident risks that this entails); and hurricanes, floods, droughts and other natural catastrophes.

These and many other phenomena and problems menace, with every passing minute, the planet's viability and our own in the future. There is no single recipe for reinventing lifestyles and our relationships with Nature and all living beings. Each and every one of us, humankind as a whole, are forced to profoundly rethink our daily presence and actions on Earth.

Never before has humanity been confronted by such a harsh, dramatic reality as this, which defies and seriously compromises the possibility for new generations to live well. The time to wait has ended, and we are being driven to conscious, committed action every day.

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## 2. Does sustainable development entail building a particular world system?

5. A viable future for the planet makes it imperative to imagine, above all, relationships among peoples, on new foundations, in the hurried process of globalization among these peoples, and with their habitat, that shelters and nourishes human life; and to envision the ways to conduct relationships of interdependence: State, individual, collectivity, in the context of people and Nature.

This primary search for a new relationship, over time, between humankind and our habitat, places people in the foreground. This relationship is grounded in the needs of humans, from our origins, to associate, share, and participate, in order to make an appropriate individual and collective living. The simplest, most basic needs and aspirations, from the dawn of humanity, up to the most complex and sometimes contradictory ones of our times, have demanded and still call for codes of conduct, standards and principles for coexistence and solidarity that will assure

sustainability for all dimensions of life. The cultural foundation, the historical roots and memory of each people or society, are the inspiration for the ultimate purposes that grant character or identity to codes of conduct or norms orienting actions and commitments by States, individuals and communities.



The sum of all actions by people on this Earth must yield the universal result of harmonious relations. This is the new planetary guideline of a broader concept of policy that can facilitate fluidity and permeability among different policy concepts and phenomena, to ensure the appearance, permanence and growth of genuine rights-based societies, that can re-create and

re-affirm notions of State, autonomy, sovereignty and 20 boundaries in perfect accord with the universal ideas of world unity and planetary citizenship.

6. All political thinking has always been constructed on the basis of critical analyses of the present and past, proposals looking to the future, and ways and means of guiding the transition toward what we want or hope for. History has shown us how these analysis processes have not always been wellbalanced.

Sometimes, special emphasis has been granted, for instance, to economics, which gave rise, over 100 years ago, to Marxism (which viewed the capitalistic economic system as the center of all chaos and the challenges that humankind would have to address); and to so-called “utopian” emphases on moral order and values, stressing that all observable evils and crises were due to human moral behavior. So, progressively, a great diversity of doctrines and concepts have come along, on every continent. From their team-like viewpoints, they have continued to offer partial answers to the increasing complexity of collective and individual life on this planet.

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As for solutions or remedies resulting from analyses of the present and past, all political concepts have tended to create them on the basis of mixing peoples’ dreams and discontent, their hopes and despairs, their new visions and mistrust, their sufferings and their will to keep struggling and giving, the spreading scarcity while plenty or wealth concentrates on the few, and ignorance and knowledge accumulate.

These responses have always been colored by peoples’ disheartened desperation, and have not always been concerned with making genuine, in-depth responses to hopes. In addition, so far, each political system, essentially inspired by the purpose granted the State, the individual or the collectivity or by programmatic objectives, action methods or plans, has been crucial to implement and pursue each political concept or doctrine.

This has meant that all solutions or remedies have entailed a short-term purpose, namely to take over and get into power. Often, over history, policy has been set after getting into power, as in the case of fascism. Politics prevail over time, amidst the constant conflict when attempting to

apply or impose concepts – genuinely created or simply devised, on the basis of a given context or conditions – in other places that have nothing to do with the foundations or roots of those ideas.

This ignores or neglects the lessons of experience regarding the flowing dynamics of the unexpected, part of political life in all continents, nations or regions. For example, the speed, with no precedent in prior history, of change, the surprise and dynamics imposed by science and technology on all levels, make political concepts that once sounded progressive and advanced, now lapse into obsolescence and insignificance.

Therefore, they must disappear or be reconceptualized, but this almost never happens; there is a wide assortment of political concepts of little relevance, interested only in clinging to ephemeral power, scattered, jumbled and out of touch with national or planetary realities. Wisdom would call for radical transformations now, working from a creative, flexible platform, attentive to changes in society and the universe.

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Otherwise, one must accept that, once a given society loses the capacity for political adaptation, it must give way for other concepts and forces to take over, to continue leading changes, with the capacity to offer effective answers. At this time, more than ever before, we are forced to acknowledge that there are no magical formulas for remaining fully valid, within a given political concept.

Perhaps it would be most appropriate to accept that, in politics, what is most lasting is what is universally most accepted, which involves the transcendence and essence of human beings and the value we grant to Life, as reflected in maximum respect for the single natural system that shelters us all, our one home, and the inter-dependence of humanity on the global level.

Consequently, more than a search for a global political system that will assure future planetary sustainability, what we need is a global strategic vision grounded in principles, rights and ethical thought of a universal nature, recognized and undertaken worldwide. This could become the “navigational chart” for analyzing the economic, social, environmental and other challenges, in order to construct initial alternative solutions for each context, as a function of how people live in each setting. One capital theme, now and in the future, will remain the issue of freedoms, the

human desire for absolute freedom and the conflict of freedoms that expand by impinging on others. It would be desirable to reach an ideal compromise by training each human being, through culture and education, to act responsibly and autonomously in the context where they live.

7. Adoption of international agendas and conventions on humanity's highest-priority issues, has been the United Nations' approach since 1990, up through August 2002 in Johannesburg. That Summit adopted a Working Agenda on "sustainable development" that pulls together the top-priority elements from all the previous agendas adopted by UN Member States, and offers guidelines for universal conduct. The following chapters will refer to this Agenda.

**3. Ordinary citizens, the world over, beyond differences in their cultures, languages or political ideas, are seriously concerned about their future and that of their loved ones. In what programmatic terms could the international community agree to look toward a "viable future" for all, i.e. for the planet's long-term viability?**

8. In thinking about the planet's future sustainability, it must be clear that, from a programmatic angle, the international community must unfailingly recognize the inter-dependence between human needs and the requirements of the environment and natural systems.

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Such inter-dependence means rejecting the obsessive pursuit of a single aim at the expense of all others. Therefore, the environment cannot be protected at the cost of keeping half the human race in poverty. While the generalized poverty now apparent on all continents, it will be impossible to think about achieving a viable future for the planet.

So, eradicating poverty from the face of the Earth, over the next two or three decades, is the most significant programmatic agreement by the international community: in 2000, the UN Millennium Assembly adopted eight strategic goals geared to alleviating critical poverty in the world by 2015.<sup>2</sup> This international social gap is especially serious since almost 95% of world

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<sup>2</sup> The United Nations' millennial goals are to: a) cut extreme poverty and hunger by half; b) achieve universal primary schooling; c) promote equality between the sexes; d) reduce infant mortality; e) reduce maternal mortality; f) curb the spread of HIV/AIDS and malaria; g) guarantee environmental sustainability; h) foster world partnership for development, with goals for assistance, trade and alleviating debt burden.

population growth is in developing countries, the regions that traditionally accumulate that looming social debt of critical poverty, explicitly the absence or maximum scarcity of food, basic services, employment and education / training.

So-called “social capital” cannot be valued or cared for, but rather is lost and annihilated, although this human heritage is the only possible foundation for a decent life and integrated stewardship of life and natural systems. This conceals the possibility of identifying and stressing all the wealth and marvelous potential that poor people own. Future viability urges us to approach and appraise poor settings differently, using holistic, trans-disciplinary visions promoting identification of different scenarios and strategies, appropriate to the new times, that will be a truly enriched platform, so the great majorities will be freed, once and for all, of the feeling of marginalization and abandonment, and step up to play a leading role in re-creating their lives and their community life.

Many successful experiences in this direction indicate that this is the pathway to take, in the case of burgeoning projects inspired by the broader philosophy hinging on “micro-credit”, “solidary economics” or “social economics”.

9. Conservation of biodiversity, addressing climate and the spread of desert zones are also part of the basic international programmatic agenda. To this end, there are international conventions formulated over the last decade, amidst a process of intensive negotiations and acceptance of enormous difficulties for the industrialized countries to accept the demands and deadlines posed by these conventions for many sensitive issues.

For example, out of the over 240,000 plant species recorded by the World Conservation Union (IUCN), nearly one eighth are endangered with extinction as we begin this century. However, not only these species, but entire ecosystem chains are threatened by agricultural practices and the way forests are used and managed. The planet’s precious genetic resources are ultimate what is being wasted and killed, the pool of potential to guarantee world food supply, medicines and other materials and products that the human species will direly need in the future.

We must care for this biodiversity. As for climate, people are increasingly aware of the high temperatures that we face, increasing year by year, as we affect the Earth's climatic system. This endangers many peoples, with imminent natural hazards.

For instance, in 1998, nearly 56 million were affected by flooding in China. In Bangladesh, two thirds of the country flooded for over a month. And in Honduras and Nicaragua Hurricane Mitch destroyed 70% of their territory and killed over ten thousand people. These phenomena increasingly alarm defenseless population groups. Moreover, disaster preparedness and response systems in developing countries remain inoperative or simply non-existent. Expansion of desert zones and impoverishment of land through misuse are curtailing countries' farmland and livable area.

Along with the challenges 25 involving water, these issues are also part of the future Essential Programmatic Agenda, to work for the hopes and dreams of all people on this planet.

10. Other essential aspects that cannot be left out of this Agenda, of pressing interest on all continents, include:

- a) *corruption*, which undermines governance and democracy itself;
- b) *lack of equity and social justice*, which erode the well-being and human dignity of society at large;
- c) *the absence of minimal rights and fully functioning justice systems*, which sets the stage for anarchy and chaos;
- d) *orientation of investment and spending*, with public or borrowed funds, toward shoring up the status quo, which postpones the urgent response to the huge social debt owed to the masses;
- e) *violence*, in all its expressions, showing that humans cannot understand each other, and governments fail to channel or tap their people's strength and wealth.

All these factors move everyone's feelings and understanding, trouble us and make us feel small, defenseless, and flexible; these factors strike at the viability of decent living and call for urgent responses, regardless of the cultural basis or political concept, the social arrangement or spatial ordinances, the degree of economic progress and technical or financial availability. Above and beyond all these differences, it will always be possible, as we begin this new century, to find an appropriate way to offer encouraging responses to peoples in the programmatic issues that constitute the minimum.

**4. The UN World Summit on Sustainable Development (August 2002) was viewed as a great step forward in international community policy. What does this historical development mean?**

11. The World Summit reaffirmed, initially, the commitments, agreements and vision achieved by the international community at the UN Conference on Environment and Development (Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, 1992) regarding sustainable development. Those commitments and agreements were expanded on the basis of the world summits of the 1990s, for the United Nations' 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary, regarding issues such as: population, social issues, women, habitat II, human rights, and finally Johannesburg in 2002, to address the issue that encompasses all the others: sustainable development.

12. The most outstanding political success at the Johannesburg World Summit was to gather the world's economic, social and environmental powers and representatives, which the United Nations had never achieved, in over 50 years.

A joint, collective examination of the world's status and evolution, in terms of absolute priority areas, under a vision that integrated and brought them together – the planet's sustainability – had always seemed unattainable, but it happened in Johannesburg.

There will always be weaknesses and shortfalls in achievements, a lack of more precise economic and financial, production or business-related commitments, or clearer, higher-impact goals. However, the transcendent fact is that, from now on it will be clear that the future can never

again be viewed and analyzed, nor can viable, effective political commitments be undertaken, without gathering the top representatives of economic, social and environmental forces around the same table, along with chiefs of State and sovereign representatives of all continents, to continue perfecting, pinpointing, expanding and appropriately following up on the application of agreements, conventions, principles and norms that have been adopted, using precise indicators that are well understood by all.

The message is clear: no single sector or institution, no matter how strong, can appropriately respond to any of the highly complex challenges and problems that the world will face in achieving future sustainability, nor can this be achieved by any single nation, no matter how powerful its strength or capacity.

Only the unity of all sectors and peoples together can meet the requirements of sustainability, acting on the basis of a shared strategic vision. From the humblest hamlet to the most industrialized consumer society, all are important to future viability.

However, they must be regarded and understood as a whole, with spiritual and cultural transcendence and wealth, not only in terms of productive or consumption practices, power to save or levels of economic poverty.

So, it has been understood that there is no sector of society that is more or less important than any other, since all are called upon to contribute to achieving sustainability together, coherently, on a timely basis. Thus, it is urgent to instill new philosophy and thinking into management and administration, grounded in a global understanding of society and an integrated vision of all components involved in institutions or businesses, to be careful with the impact of services or products on host societies' overall actions and inter-relationships with the rest of the world.

A great qualitative leap forward must be taken in coming years along these lines. All the world's major academic and research centers are called upon to cooperate in this progress.

The time is past when management formulas, systems and arrangements could simply be

geared toward achieving effectiveness and yield for a few; the planet's sustainability requires, immediately, new leaders with great vision, dreams and sentiments, able to go beyond simple mechanical, isolated production or service, in order to take into account the vast chain engaging and interweaving each human activity in linkages and relationships with natural systems.

The time has come for multi-disciplinary groups to promote, in each and every arena, trans-disciplinary and trans-sectoral policies, programs and actions that will relate and coordinate all elements or aspects of each issue, object or situation. The political message of Johannesburg is that economic and financial concerns – which have heretofore acted in isolation, to achieve results that do not jibe with the lofty aims of human and planetary sustainability, their results centering on monetary profits unrelated to people's actual lives – have failed.

Johannesburg showed finally that economic and financial interests are only one ingredient of the complex interplay of forces and inputs required to move forward to a future for humankind as a whole. Economic and financial thinkers are called upon to deeply re-think their traditional conduction and management of economic affairs, turning more toward the well-being of all rather than simply protecting those who are isolated by their theories, keeping a few players safe, concentrating available, increasing wealth around them, and making any changes at a purely cosmetic level, disguising the status quo with new concepts of non-equity and injustice.

Sustainability, as discussed at Johannesburg, requires thinking and being able, globally, to enhance and highly value available “social capital” in each nation and community on this planet. Earning the confidence of peoples through measures that will present real evidence of such a long-awaited change, above all, to safeguard “everybody's home”, the Earth.

The strategic vision of the world presented in Johannesburg's Final Policy Declaration clearly shows that the most beautiful conservation or environmental projects will not provide the required future viability. Rather, this will come from serious, deep understanding by all peoples, that it is urgent to change our way of living and thinking (in sectoralized partial fragments), adopting an integrated, holistic, global lifestyle centering on the unity of Life and the solidly-grounded unity of Nature's systems.

For instance, it would be a crass mistake to imagine that the pollution of the world's oceans will essentially be controlled by de-polluting mega-projects. The major focus of daily pollution of the oceans are urban zones, city centers, though they be thousands of kilometers from the shores. Consequently, it must be a mega-project for sustainable societies that will truly respond to the oceans' current "S.O.S."



13. The Johannesburg Summit's political dimension granted top priority to these six key issues to begin the present century: energy, water, sanitation, health, biodiversity and agriculture.

In this context, the Summit concentrated its attention, to achieve an Agenda for common action to promote technical and financial cooperation in the six priority areas, offer access to scientific knowledge and appropriate technologies; and strengthen the commitment to ironclad world solidarity toward the planet's sustainability.

*Security, stability, peace and respect for human rights, plus good governance*, have been deemed the fundamental elements in the quest for sustainability.

The globalization process that is underway was viewed as a new dimension for all the challenges mentioned, while also a source of new opportunities to progress toward sustainable development. Another political issue highlighted at the Summit was the acceptance, for the first time ever, that culture plays a fundamental role in achieving sustainability and a decent life for people. It was agreed to promote cooperation among the civilizations and peoples of the world, above and beyond difference in race, religion, language, culture and traditions.

This may be considered as a major qualitative advance by the Summit, opening up unexpected hopes and dreams. Without respect, serious understanding and consideration for all peoples' spiritual, transcendent realities, it will be impossible to attain a new humanism and a new world.

**Johannesburg 2002 opened doors and pathways that must be urgently taken, to accelerate understanding by all and unity in favor of a viable future.**

**5. Can one trust and believe that world agreements and agendas reached in the United Nations or international conventions – such as those on biodiversity, climate or desertification – will be enforced?**

14. The broad range of political concepts and doctrines, such as those we have mentioned above, ideas and ideologies anchored in history and in humanity's recent past, must not be forgotten. They are part of the world's "collective memory" and, in diverse ways and degrees, remain in people's and groups' practices or thoughts. One way or another, they clear or raise obstacles to understanding, consideration and application of the United Nations' agreements or world agendas. The world of political concepts and ideas – an essential part of the humanity's cultural life – will always play a meaningful, decisive role in planetary viability.

Accordingly, it will be useful to briefly outline some of these political currents or concepts that have left their mark on recent history:

*Economic liberalism*, born in the 18<sup>th</sup> century when machines and capitalism brought industrial ideas onto the scene, and Adam Smith articulated the classical theory of laissez faire.

*Liberalism* as the philosophy of freedom, of open thinking and intellectual progress that, in grassroots political concepts, would be called “democracy”.

*Democracy* promoting “people’s sovereignty”, the right of all peoples to govern themselves, representing and respecting the rights of all. The notion most widespread at present worldwide is the phrase by US President Abraham Lincoln, of “... government of the people, by the people, for the people”.

*Communism*, grounded in shared or collective ownership of the means of production, denying the right to private property. (In Athens, Plato’s Republic had already proposed community ownership of property.) The Communist Manifesto, published in 1848, has been the world’s fundamental proclamation of communism.

*Marxism*, an economic – political analysis approach proposed by Karl Marx in his fundamental work, *Das Kapital*, published in 1867.

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Both Communism and Marxism have lent themselves to political confusion over the years. Basically both are based on the Marxist interpretation of the phenomenon of capitalism. Some conclusions may have to be discarded, along with any pretension to absolute validity.

*Utopian Socialism* took its name from Thomas More’s book *Utopía* (1516), the dream or ideal of a perfect world based on the almost-spontaneous renewal of human beings, without spelling out how to achieve it (Plato’s Republic is another example of such an ideal society).

*Christian Socialism*, centered in Western culture and greatly influenced by the Roman Catholic Church with support by all Protestant and other denominations, proposes the essential values of human beings as a reflection of divinity, with ethics grounded in individuals’ answerability to God, emphasizing profound social contents in their proposals (equality of all human beings, love, charity, solidarity ...).

*Reformist Socialism*, including revisionistic socialism and social democracy, based on a serious revision of Marxist scientific socialism. It denies the determinism of Marxism and promotes the idea that human beings are able to change the course of events and of history, to govern their own destiny and not to be simply a defenseless victim of economics, and capital. It proposes “organic evolution” (Eduardo Bernstein, born in 1850, was the main ideologue) and points to a strong, almost indestructible inter-dependence among economic, moral, religious and intellectual issues.

*Anarchism*, the political doctrine that points out the advantages of doing without any government at all, considering that governments are unable to create true societal harmony. Zenon of Zitio was the forerunner of that concept (324-267 B.C.), which was taken up again in the 18<sup>th</sup> century by William Godwin, in England (1756), who stated that “power wields, by its very nature, a pernicious influence”.

Later, Pierre-Joseph Proudhon, in France (1809-1865), broadened the consistency of these arguments and, like Godwin, believed that individual passive resistance would be enough to put an end to the capitalistic governmental system. Among others, they were followed by the Communist anarchist, Bakunin Kropatkin, who accepted the Marxist concepts of the class struggle and denial of the private property that gave rise to that conflict between classes, as well as revolution as the method to destroy the State.

*Fascism* proclaimed that inequality among classes was beneficial and advantageous, that the “best” were entitled to govern, that the State represented the elites and was therefore the foremost power, the principles of authority-hierarchy-discipline, the subordination of material values to spiritual ones, renouncing the community and welfare, and discarding the idea of equality among human beings as decadent. Benito Mussolini applied these principles in Italy as of 1919, when he presented his first national program and later, in 1922, forcibly imposed a Fascist government, getting this political doctrine rolling.

*Nazism*, with great agreements with Italian Fascism, also resulted from a historical opportunity. Its political theory was inspired by such renowned thinkers as Kant, Nietzsche, Hegel, and

Schopenhauer, and stressed such ideas as the guiding mission of the German people among all nations.

Adolph Hitler used Nietzsche's idea of the super-man, when he claimed that the world's history is made by minorities, proposing that there were "select" races or minorities. He also promoted the idea of "will", the essential force that was capable of achieving anything, regardless of calculating action by decadent rationalism. Hitler became President/Chancellor of Germany and Nazism reigned (1934 - 1945), emphasizing the State's importance.

When we observe the meaning, scope and way all political system or doctrine emerges throughout history, we see that all political thinking proclaims that they are the only ones who can achieve well-being for each human being and for the collective, regain lost or non-existent harmony among human beings, as well as seeking harmony among nations, all according to principles and norms that they feel are fair for all.

**Ultimately, what most distinguishes and separates all political thinking or doctrine is the method and way of remedying or solving the problems they see as the social situation or plight of the masses, at different points in time (excepting Fascism and Nazism).**

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15. Early in the 21st century, political thought driven by "market economics" is strongly present worldwide, emphasizing free trade, privatization and austerity, promoting government downsizing since the 1980s and 1990s.

This has almost completely swept away both inefficient public enterprises and private ones. Budgetary discipline has been pursued earnestly by the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank, financial agencies linked to the United Nations System.

The transition by Communist countries to a market economy, which began in the late 1980s with the disappearance of the system of countries led by the Soviet Union as the basis for Communist thought, has been driven by such principles, with troubling results. Nobel Prize-winner Joseph E. Stiglitz states in his recent book, *The Great Disappointment* (2002) "today, globalization is not

*working. It is not working for the world's poor. It is not working for the environment. It is not working for the stability of the world's economy".*

Obviously, the globalization process is underway, and cannot be stopped or abandoned, nor should it be. We cannot ignore the benefits that it has entailed and, as we have already pointed out, the planet's future sustainability will depend on reinforcing the unity, the world vision, the harmonious advancement of all peoples on Earth.

16. Rethinking globalization as we go is becoming increasingly urgent, as is the need to reorient international economic institutions (International Monetary Fund, World Bank and World Trade Organization). However, first of all, *it will be necessary, as Stiglitz explains in the same book, to understand why they have collapsed so lamentably.* Policies are required on every continent for sustainable growth with equity, democracy and peace, inspired profoundly by the idea of truly sustainable development.

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**Struggling for development is not to ensure that a few get rich at the expense of the rest, or maintaining non-viable companies or institutions. To attain a genuinely viable-sustainable future for all is thinking about the entire population, all communities and groups, alleviating and eliminating critical poverty and offering each party the possibility of training to grow in every domain of life, while caring for Nature's systems.**

17. So far, we have been answering this strategic question at a time, in 2003, when the whole world has questioned the validity and importance, the role and effectiveness of the United Nations System, after some Member States declared war on Iraq without the consent of the Security Council. Two main issues must be taken into consideration:

- The United Nations System was created in the 1940s, after World War II, in an attempt to address the planet's dangers and enormous diversity (of political ideas, powers, challenges facing whole peoples in basic issues of life, the reconstruction of postwar Europe...), to create an arena for ongoing dialogue, for consensus-building regarding the world's progress and evolution, to oversee the enforcement of fundamental human

rights, respect and solidarity among States, the search for joint, collective solutions to humankind's major problems, to assure an environment of peace and avoid wars and confrontations at all costs, to promote ways and means of sharing scientific and technological progress for the benefit of all human beings, to collectively safeguard peoples' cultural wealth and identity by promoting an ongoing pluri-cultural dialogue, and so on.

With such prospects, the UN system evolved, creating agencies, fund and financial institutions (IMF, WB, WTO), specialized programs and agencies such as UNESCO. To date, it has demonstrated its importance, its reason for being and specific positive contributions – as well as weaknesses, which is only natural.

In over 50 years of UN existence, the world has understood that such a system must always be present. It may be adapted, reduced or expanded, its mechanisms perfected, but must always continue helping seek the international understanding and harmony for which it was created.

- Decisions made within the United Nations System, in the General Assembly, world summits, general conferences of its Agencies (such as UNESCO, WHO, FAO, ILO), the assemblies of the World Bank or Monetary Fund, among others, have built up a solid international doctrine for understanding among States and for action regarding humanity's most crucial issues.

**This endeavor, of a greatness without precedents in human history, has made it possible to envision a different world, on the basis of global understanding. This effort has started from a huge variety of political concepts and experiences of States and communities that are very difficult to bring together, but this has been achieved in the United Nations, and will continue to be possible in the future. Otherwise, there will be no future or, any future that there might be would be uncertain and based on reductionistic, constrained parameters.**

Therefore, we can have a positive, respectful attitude regarding the subject of this question. Of course, to implement world agreements and conventions, political and cultural inspiration will continue to have an influence, the readings and interpretations of the world's economic-social- environmental evolution, building programmatic consensus during delicate times of transition, and the way that intellectual heritage influences States' handling of economic issues in this new century. These questions will have to involve a mandatory redefinition of world economic and financial factors.

6. Does the idea of sustainable development and, therefore, the planet's sustainability, involve developing countries more than the so-called industrialized ones?

18. Understanding the global changes that the world is undergoing, made explicit in issues of extremely high priority, can outline a first stab at approaching this question.

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Some of these issues are easier to grasp globally than others, which initially seem more local or regional, although the globalization process and inter-dependence of such policies and actions is enhancing their global proportions tremendously. These issues include:

a) Global Common Issues:

**climate**, climatic changes and global warming  
**oceans**, and their function in climatic change  
**the Arctic and Antarctic**, and their role in overall equilibrium  
**the Earth**, its use, degradation and impacts on the biosphere.

b) Global Resources:

**petroleum** and other energy sources  
**forests and jungles**, particularly tropical woodlands  
**food**, agricultural evolution and the use of the agricultural frontier  
**biodiversity and species**, especially endangered species.

c) Global Interdependence:

**population**, historical growth, distribution and over-population  
**water**, access, use and planetary conservation  
**health**, basic services and greater challenges, including new viruses  
**poverty**, seriously affecting over 20% of the world's population.

d) Globalization:

**economics**, and influences of intellectual heritage on its management  
**financial markets** and their impact on economic order  
**work**, with its changing implications  
**the information and knowledge society**, with Internet and the massive presence of virtual reality.

e) Universal Issues:

**urbanization**, and sustainable livelihoods  
**stratification**, and its societal impact  
**civil society**, participation, protagonism, the search for "Self".

Evidently, the first category are accessible resources, available in principle to everyone on Earth, not strictly under the control of any nation, organization or individual.

The second category involves those resources that underlie much of the prosperity of all nations, but are under the sovereignty of a nation or group of nations. Petroleum is a good example, as is the availability of a sizable agricultural frontier, such as in Argentina, Brazil, Canada and the United States, to give examples in the Americas.

The third category involves key elements of political, economic, social or environmental interdependence. Water is a highly significant example. The dramatic water crisis in many parts of the world is fast becoming universal.

The fourth category essentially takes the new realities in the world on the basis of new communications and information technologies, “virtual life”, ongoing information supply regarding thousands of subjects, in contact in real time with occurrences anywhere in the world, as well as the effects of currencies and finance in that virtual world.

The last category refers to the drastic changes happening locally around the world, without any immediate or direct impact on the rest of the planet but which evince the resounding differences among industrialized and other countries, which makes cultural issues even more powerful.

American professor M. Mesarovic, working under UNESCO on transdisciplinary global projects since 1994, with the participation of the David and Lucile Packard Foundation, has developed major contributions to the 39 international community on the topic of “Global Issues and Sustainability: Critical Thinking/Problem Solving Approach” and the “UNESCO Global-Problematic Education Network Initiative (GENIE)”.

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19. Therefore, it is clear that all States, whether industrialized or not, from North or South, oriented by whatever political concepts, religious creeds, or ancestral cultural practices – all, without any exceptions, are called upon in this 21st century to care for and make timely, effective contributions to the planet’s sustainability. Both the misuse of excess wealth and the critical poverty of much of the world’s population will always impact the planet’s future viability.

Consequently, accepting that the world is increasingly inter-connected and inter-dependent and that we all, one way or another, beyond our location on the planet, with our way of life and relationships with the environment, impact planetary life in the most sensitive fields, which taken together represent Life itself.

**A true policy of humanity should consequently be centered on safeguarding all shared planetary goods that humankind needs as a whole.**

**7. Education can be one key instrument to achieve the planet’s sustainability and a good life for all human beings. How can we understand education from this perspective?**

20. The move toward viability will depend more on a greater sense of ethical responsibility than scientific knowledge, although the latter is, of course, very important as well. Education for sustainability must consequently reinforce a commitment to values, principles, attitudes and behaviors and, more concretely, a notion of justice and equity, broadly construed, as well as the feeling of sharing a common destiny with all peoples. This education cannot, therefore, be limited to simply emphasizing those disciplines, areas or issues that will enhance understanding of the context and of Nature.

Placing a system of values, virtues and ethics at the center of all concerns of nations and the international community will be a key to coming decades.

From this standpoint, we must encourage education based on life, on the overwhelming desire for radical transformation and moral change in the character of society. We must then be concerned about promoting collective wisdom and human understanding, unveiling the new truths that have been concealed for various reasons and represent elements of scientific rationality and folklore that have built up and enriched generation after generation.

Thus, this education must express special interest in creation, innovation, experimentation, observation, critical analysis, risk, change, new options and always within the great flexibility that will open up true, concrete means for collective learning, avoiding imposition and mere transfer.

21. Such an education will seek to develop, to the utmost, human potential, throughout their entire lives, so that people can engage in self-realization and fully express themselves in the hope for a viable future. Two of the most revolutionary concepts in the educational field, over the last two decades – “Education for All” and “Lifelong Education”, are central pillars of this new vision of education, of assuming an integrated vision of the future’s viability.

This education, under all its forms, is crucial to facilitate and orient these changes. The great challenge is that, on the basis of this notion, we will be obliged to almost reinvent education on every continent. It will not be simple modifications or adjustments that will give education that new brilliance and excellence that we need from it, nor simple experimental projects or remediation of competencies.

From a global angle, we will have to reassemble and redirect everything – new contents on all levels, times and durations of programs, instructional materials and aids, trans-disciplinary contents grounded in new strengths and opening-up of disciplines, understanding and approaches to the object of learning, to problems and realities that put education in a context; also, linkages with all sectors and stakeholders in society, continually and uninterruptedly taking full advantage of all available media (television, radio, print media, Internet, etc.).

Such an education must be an integral part of all national and regional development programs and not be relegated to programming of the formal school system, which would be too restrictive. Therefore, it will always be necessary to create the overall Work Plan for education, designed to support sustainability, on the basis of cultural roots and a perspective and vision of local life, in conjunction with more universal reflection and work.

22. Along these lines, since 1994 the international community has agreed over these last years to underscore 12 key concepts, regarding education for the planet's sustainability, namely:

a) **“Lifelong learning”**: now and in the future, children, youth, adults and the elderly are obliged, without any excuse whatsoever, to learn constantly, to stay up to date and broaden their knowledge, to relate and organize the wisdom that they progressively acquire as a prerequisite for living well. From and with formal education, both informal and formal, all societies must create conditions allowing access to and the benefits of education or learning continually.

b) **“Inter-dependency”**: To understand clearly how, in a sustainable world, the objectives of economics and economic growth, environmental quality, social justice, population and growth, are all inter-connected and inter-dependent. In this way, education is called upon to build clear bridges between educational activities (classrooms or others) and the world of work and production, between education and the community, between education and globalization, and the direction the universe is going.

c) **“Inter-disciplinary-trans-disciplinary education”**: This education offers a great opportunity to put back together what specialization and isolated disciplines have broken apart or

disintegrated, in order to work for full, wellcoordinated knowledge regarding the purpose of education, seeking to understand the context of life thoroughly. Further, we shall return to this transcendental concept, when analyzing the urgency of finding a new kind of thought, and new ways of thinking.

d) **“Diversity”**: As the foundation of life, of its splendor and brilliance, education must work for respect and the utmost appreciation of human, cultural, social, and economic diversity, as well as the majestic biodiversity throughout the planet.

e) **“Rights and needs of future generations”**: The Brundtland Commission, back in 1987, defined sustainable development as caring for the needs of the present without compromising the possibility for future generations to satisfy their own needs. Education must be sure to convey this fundamental concept and must consequently go beyond concrete lessons learned. There is cultural and spiritual enrichment in all human beings.

f) **“Quality of Life”**: This concept calls for education to understand that: “It is possible to meet every human being’s needs, by adopting and universally practicing global equity and justice, grounded in true, new humanism”.

g) **“Citizenship”**: Emphasizing in all human beings the notion of citizenship, recognizing the importance of assuming individual responsibilities which, through action, will cooperate in achieving a better world. Progressing from this individual training toward the notion of planetary citizenship is the only possibility of affirming globally each human being’s responsibility for safeguarding the planet.

h) **“Multi-culturality”**: The basis for understanding the enormous wealth and possibilities of humankind to face their future challenges, to imagine and create valid pathways that will bring together political concepts and interests, social imagery, the immense wealth of religious and spiritual values, different perceptions and sentiments, fears and strengths.

i) **“Uncertainties and precaution, the unexpected and serendipity”**: The essence of understanding an ever-changing life, is that the wisest way is to be ready for the unexpected rather

than for what does not change and may be taken for granted, for what is shaped beforehand, for societies living in a constant status quo. Rather, learning must be oriented toward opening up to life in which one gets to contribute to enriching it, through constant qualitative leaps forward, especially now in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

j) **“Partnership”**: Teaching to understand that no one will save the planet unaided. This can be achieved only through a chain of handshakes, with universal repercussions. Similarly, education – if it is to achieve this new strength, inspiration and vitality that we are asking of it – must partner with multiple institutions and media, with the private sector, with non-governmental organizations, with the community and civil society, with all State institutions and enterprises.

k) **“Sustainable change”**: Understanding the limits of the planet’s resources, its weaknesses and vulnerability, all has huge repercussions in productive processes, economic policies, industrialization, trade and lifestyles.

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**From these viewpoints, education will be committed to local and global implications of adopting and maintaining given lifestyles; therefore, to the meeting of present and future generations’ needs and the interdependence and interaction of society with the economy, social issues and the environment.**

l) **“Training”**: Education that is globally oriented, at all levels / phases / times, whether formal, non-formal or informal, toward basic learning, vocational and professional training, scientific and technological learning, to prepare each citizen to act freely, autonomously and responsibly at all times to contribute to the planet’s sustainability.

**8. All peoples on the planet are aware of the immense progress of science and technology in these last decades. What will be required to orient that immense potential and available power toward safeguarding life and working for human well-being, as the top priority?**

23. Thanks to the immense progress of science and technology over the past decades, this century has begun amidst powerful inspiration, capacity for innovation, insight, fantasy and

means to motivate constant change on almost every level of life. This makes the power of science and technology explicit and broadens human hopes to “re-invent authoritarian society” in order to lead us toward societies of true liberty, featuring well-being for all.

At the same time, we agree that science, in a society, is built from the kindergartens upwards, paving a safe highway for democracy by educating citizens who are aware of their local, earthly and planetary status.

However, at the same time, this new century poses probing essential moral and ethical questions for science and freedom. Nuclear sciences, bio-technologies and information technologies, for example, are domains with critical questions un-answered. Up until recently, societies looked to science and technology with almost unlimited hope, supporting them almost without any reservations.

But today, with special emphasis on the developed countries, science and technology give rise to major concerns and radically opposing positions. Progress in genetics are admired, but also frighten people. While this happens in the North, all concerns in the South center on alleviating the poverty of the masses and improving their standard of living. This makes bio-technology the prime area of interest.

24. Science has always demanded, from its origins, *freedom for researchers to do their work*. Freedom to research has driven progress and scientific findings, but history has always recorded significant milestones in this perennial struggle between creation / innovation / experimentation and peoples’ political, cultural and social evolution.

One of history’s most famous examples of this struggle was when Galileo Galilei, was martyred on June 22, 1633 in the Minerva Convent. His legend makes him the symbol of “truth” versus vanity, of “free thinking” versus censorship, of “the greatness of science” versus blind, Dark-Ages faith.

This process was one of the most tragic moments of intolerance in history, and revealed the complex relationships interwoven between science and culture (religion) at the time, as we see at present while life itself is being manipulated.

After nearly four centuries, several lessons may be drawn out, in terms of the future of science: scientific knowledge is a different domain from religious dogma, and develops following its own way of thinking, now called the “scientific method”.

Science is not there to offer answers to, or to predict the ultimate purpose of existence. Its domain and sphere of action is essentially altogether different from, for example, religious concerns. Science cannot offer the prospect of immortality. One of its missions will always be to explain phenomena.

Regarding life, science must concentrate on protecting from and eradicating diseases, which is clear at present. Science seeks to make human biological life less painful and difficult when awaiting death, as an irreversible fact.

Another lesson is to remain alert to the risks of exploiting scientific knowledge. Freedom of thought, lack of repressions and boundaries, cultural wealth and human mobility, exchange of knowledge and experiences, are all fundamental for science to progress and fully grasped in the West.

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25. However, science is affected by political visions, economic or institutional interests. It is a key project for every civilization’s future, while suffering from the effects of ignorance. Its achievements are always unforeseeable. Just 100 years ago, no one could have imagined the extraordinary consequences of:

- The theories of relativity, tectonic movement, quantum mechanics and molecular biology;
- Transformation of energy from atoms; Albert Einstein’s theories made it possible to produce atomic energy, a brilliant discovery that has made possible progress and products of great significance to humankind, but has also been used to kill millions of human beings. Transformation of the human genetic sequence and thereby the domain of inherited traits, a complex realm on the edge of medicine, biology, economics and morality.

There are great therapeutic expectations from cloning, such as culturing human embryo cells. However, the danger of abusive application of biomolecular developments is ever-present. Therefore, States and the international community (including UNESCO) are concerned with establishing “bio-ethics” conventions.

Here emerges the issue of science’s accountability, as Rabelais said: “Science without responsibility is the ruin of humanity”. Similarly, science without innovative research will ruin society, because it will offer no answers for the enormous environmental and social problems which it is forced to address. A lack of research plays a capital role in the present and future economy.

In this century, science and technology can no longer remain aloof from the affairs of world markets, or the actions of multi-nations that can impose good or bad times upon national or world economies, or the processes of industrialization and lifestyles, or the basic needs of human beings and the planet’s workings.

26. Governments must be able and decided steadfastly to make science and research through public institutions the essential source promoting sustainability, regulating and orienting the economy, caring for the environment and social progress, and acting coherently and correctly in the advancement of globalization. Science, politics, economics and institutions form a creative ring upon which sustainability depends heavily.

**Scientists are obliged to clearly establish the values of their ethical framework.** Science and technology in the 21st century are a very dynamic activity of a universal scope, but the speed of this progress yields alarming asymmetries and imbalances, which also threatens to sweep away moral bearings and jeopardize civilization’s very future.

As humanity grows in number and diversity, the linkages between the need to share, the possibility of participating and the ability to prevent become evident. Thus, prevention and anticipation, when successful, go un-noticed. **Much of the great future task ahead, then, consists of an effort to invest in social intangibles.**

Finally, three conditions are indispensable for the “science and public authorities” symbiosis to yield good results: 1) democratic participation; 2) medium and long-term forecasting; 3) the capacity to share both knowledge and resources with responsibility and hope.

**9. How to think about culture in terms of the complexity of a different future for humankind?**

27. The notion of culture has many meanings. However, for our purposes we could say **that culture is the world of human life, consequently involving it entirely. There are two processes to bear in mind, in building this totality:**

a) **Objectivization:** Human beings humanize, create awareness, give the universe subjectivity, personify Nature and thereby objectivize their lives, their projects and create a world of reality based on subjective self-realization. Through work, the world becomes objective, with things configuring the material world. In contact with other human beings and with political, ideological, and economic practices and structures, we constitute the social world. Amidst this dual relationship, humans affirm themselves as human and continually re-create their human nature.

b) **Subjectivization:** This is how human beings construct subjective structures representation of contents, social consciousness and forms of sensitization (worldview). Processes of appropriating reality, the relations of human beings with the universe, with the world, with human beings, with Nature, with themselves. Processes to make it all our own and make it all make sense.

All forms of appropriation, whether religious, ethical, mythical, esthetic, fantastic or political, are all fraught with far-reaching significance for human beings, for society at large. They have meaning, and enable humans to find our place in the world (context) and to take a position and act in the world.

There are always highly complex, contradictory relationships between objectivization and subjectivization. Therefore, we can say that culture is the relationship among human beings in

a given community and their world context; it is in this encounter where their lives take place, totally, entirely, becoming meaningful.

28. From the standpoint of sustainability, culture becomes a very important component, due to its productive-producing nature, expressed in the dynamic notion of “*bearing fruit*”. Thus, culture not only stimulates production but also enables us to understand and think about what is produced. This gives rise to the importance of cultivating and contextualizing culture continually. The relationships between what we dominate, know, and understand, on the one hand, versus the rest of the world, on the other hand, poses co-producing patterns.

Independently of the ideas, myths, rituals, lore and goals that emerge from this complexity of culture, it is necessary to understand that culture also creates and promotes modes of action and positions vis-à-vis the world, underlying which we observe paradigms that determine thinking and acting one way or another. So, for example, simple ways of thinking lead to actions that are almost always reductionistic and one-dimensional.

This makes it urgent at present to redouble efforts to contribute to cultural production of a new type of human being, who will know and affirm their identity, recognizing that it is the outgrowth of a serious, sound relationship with our context, and would otherwise be nothing. Perceiving our relationship with our context, and that of the context with the rest of the planet, one stands in awe and fully grasps the marvelous inseparability. We will finally realize that progress in thinking is grounded in the art of organizing knowledge, gathering and interconnecting it.

Developing understanding among peoples will demand, in the future, acceptance, work and cultivation of the culture of complexity, expanding the frontiers of thinking in order to understand the complexity within which humanity, and each community, moves forward. With this vision, we can strengthen the notions of relations, coming together, and re-connecting in order to produce and expand knowledge, to weave a new social fabric of new linkages with others.

Awareness of the importance of a multi-dimensional vision of the world, then, is nothing more than awareness of our relationships with the world and local context. In turn, knowing that all

actions that are implemented will interact with others may well make some actions meaningless. This should lead people to think strategically, aware that some initiatives are pointless if we are seeking a viable future of sustainability.

29. In the above context, we must never lose sight of inter-culturality, of the presence of different cultures around us (in each State-region-community).

Inter-culturality entails accepting and acknowledging the co-existence of highly diverse ways of reasoning, of phenomenology, analytical and dialectical structure, of hermeneutics. Each way of reasoning is strongly linked to cultural expression, to profound collective or group experiences, as we see in the Andean countries (Bolivia, Colombia, Ecuador and Peru), in Latin America and the Caribbean with their immense cultural wealth and diversity, dozens of native languages and expressions.

Inter-culturality values above all the diversity of world-views, of axioms, underpinning the answers emerging for the essential questions posed by daily life and Nature **ontological** questions about relations, **epistemological** questions about knowledge of this context, and **methodological** questions about the dimensions and prospects of knowledge.

Inter-culturality is a top priority topic in the Americas and, of course, on the other continents as well. UNESCO heads other academic and research agencies and institutions, actively involving citizens from all groups and cultures, in an arduous task of reflection and consensus regarding this crucial, sensitive issue. Its elucidation will increasingly contribute to the planet's sustainability and the wisdom of daily living as the most authentic, concrete expression of culture.

Looking, from an intellectual perspective, at different ways of reasoning, with the aim of generating a dialogue among them, among the different ways of thinking, different visions and proposals, respectfully and sincerely, accepting the legitimacy and ancestral or historical validity of all, will be the only true way to make headway toward sustainability. The better we understand the culture of complexity, the better we will understand the complexity of the world's culture as we move into this new century.

10. **The world is said to be undergoing a complex mutation. How can this mutation be represented, and what type of knowledge, individual and collective, will be required to cope with it?**

30. The masses, on every continent, can hardly speculate, because they experience, in their day-to-day lives, painful situations and outcomes of the harsh changes that catch them unprepared and poorly informed. The worst 51 hardship situations confront the poor and unprotected, but the more fortunate are also affected by anxiety and alarming worries.

Panic sometimes engulfs major groups, including those displaced by violence and internal conflicts in their countries, by dozens of political and other conflicts that result in millions of refugees, who are forced to emigrate far from their cultural roots and from the setting where they were born and absorbed their cultural ancestry.

Others observe with great concern how opportunities for their children and the coming generations are waning in essential fields, such as education, or the fast-moving changes in the notion of employment itself, with new demands and requirements in order to perform even poorly-paid jobs. New professions or trades appear unceasingly, but will demands that are hard to meet, with the increasing complexity of the tasks of daily existence.

Data on everyday life alarm people, from the lack of essential basic services to the lack of quality and cleanliness in these services. For example, the unhealthful water that millions of people are condemned to using; difficulties in getting from one place to another, and the time lost in doing so, in rural and urban settings, how much more in the gigantic traffic jams in mega-cities; violence, terrorism, wars that give every people a feeling of ultimate impotence and annihilation.

Increased intolerance and racism; lack of acceptance of groups of huge cultural significance for humanity as a whole; rising prices in every economy; scarcity of products on the world's stock markets; unexpected, drastic changes in the value and significance of currencies; in sum, the economic breakdown that stalemates, in a matter of months, the growth and well-being that a country has built up over decades. A case in point is Argentina's recent crash, but there

are others in the Americas and elsewhere. Standards and quality of life erode, inexorably and without any meaningful explanation, the world over.

People wonder whether this is all by chance, or the well-deserved effects of known causes, or without any clear relationship. Or, by contrast, are all these elements and occurrences part of a whole that is driven by some special logic? All opinion polls indicate that the grassroots and entire peoples understand and feel that something has failed, that we are going the wrong direction. They cannot explain just what, and this confuses them more, and makes them more anxious and unstable. This happens even with people who are highly schooled, which is even more alarming.

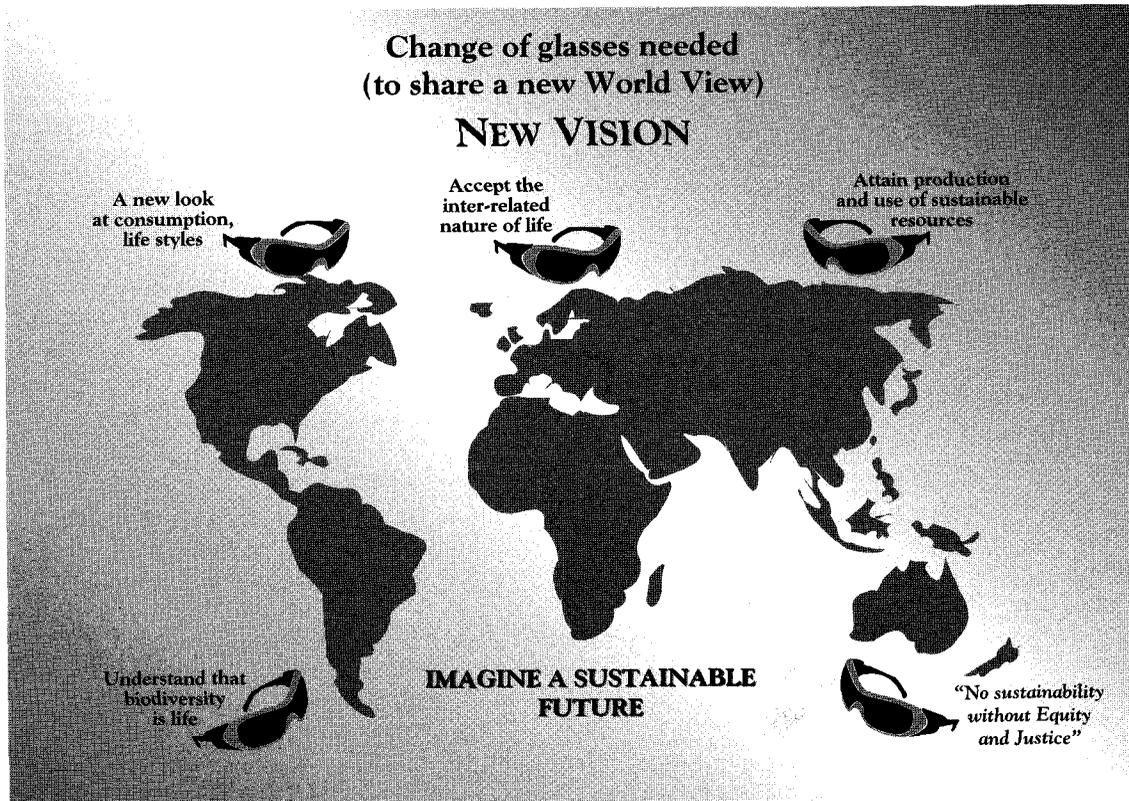
A percentage of the population, not so sizable, nestle into unbridled consumerism to console their anguish and despair at feeling powerless to cope with their surroundings in which the only progress is to accumulate, waste and use up products and services (television and Internet flaunt all kinds of electronic appliances, models and brands of clothing, etc., parading a chain of almost unlimited goods and services).

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And, in the face of what the media broadcast, in the press, on the radio and television, via Internet, everyone without exception wonders: what truth is there in all of this? Why? What is being concealed from me? Why is it so hard to truly contextualize all these facts, data or ideas? Why so many contradictions in the information they broadcast? Who can I believe? These are hard questions to answer, with so many factors involved, in addition to the fantastic speed of shifting from one topic to the next, from one catastrophe to another, from one example of corruption to further examples, from one robbery to more, kidnapping after kidnapping – as if humanity were traveling in one of those famous “bullet trains” (that go 400 kilometers an hour, which would have been unthinkable several decades ago) and, in the twinkling of an eye, we see, we ignore, we encounter thousands of images and data, often interlinked and overlapping, which fill the multitude with troubled discontent, both rage and grief.

The only consolation is to keep waiting, although the deep-seated fear is that the world will be no better for our children, for the new generations: no different, no kinder, no safer, no more predictable, no simpler, no more cheerful or relaxed.

No, the future is now and the present becomes past with each fleeting moment, time has united and this is also cause for humanity's concern. What will it mean to be on this planet in the future? Why keep going in this great journey we are all invited to take when we are born?



31. Definitely, the world, as described above, is undergoing a great mutation. All the symptoms we have mentioned are not manifestations of causes because they ultimately just reflect a way of thinking, of the reasoning underlying action, practices and attitudes, values and beliefs, myths and representations, dreams and challenges, which are used and expressed in all domains of life – political, economic, social ... which have led and still will lead humankind to the status and situation we see today. This situation is becoming increasingly grandiose, driven

by the globalization process, of local and planetary living as well, thanks to the significant revolution of technologies in the communication and information media.

Planetary sentiments and sensations are now becoming the business of regular people, as are facts with actual universal transcendence. Bit by bit, humankind is looking through new eyeglasses, looking over the entire Earth, with ears that can hear the outcry and voices of those who are suffering or lamenting anywhere on the planet. However, this technological progress that creates worldwide platforms for communication also face humankind as a whole with the dire challenge of genuinely understanding it all, with happenings one after another, to safeguard diversity, inter-culturality, and truly eliminate the causes of so many troubling symptoms, to seek out collectively (all States, all peoples, with the force and potential of all cultures) solutions for the problems and constraints that arise in this great mutation that we are undergoing.

Humanity wonders how to understand fully and cope with:

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World population growth, which will top seven billion by the first decade of this century. How to change the current distribution (over 60% of the population is now concentrated in Asia, over 60% in just nine countries, over 60% near the coastlines) and how to remedy growing critical poverty?

How to deal with pressures brought by the current industrial model, by intensive use of non-renewable resources, by intensive farming methods?

How to cope with constant violation of human rights, of inequalities and non-equity, of ailing democracy, ethnic and religious strife?

How to depend less on chemicals that seriously harm Nature and the quality of land, plants and animals, causing the daily disappearance of numerous species, whittling away at biodiversity – chemicals that never existed in Nature before?

What to do in industrialized regions whose use of fossil fuels, the pivot of current civilization, increases soil acidity and wreaks unsuspected destruction on marine, lake and forest life?

How to boost production per hectare in developing countries as their agricultural frontiers shrink due to population growth, urban sprawl and domestic conflict?

How to promote a peaceful world in which humanity can advance in solidarity when, since the 1990s, most conflicts, struggles and violence have been happening within States rather than between countries – and most casualties are civilians and not military personnel?

32. Consequently, how to lead the planet's people to understand these mutations, and endeavor to behave differently and appropriately, to lead lives better suited to the requirements of human live on this planet?

This could almost be the question that sums up this whole book, that pulls it all together. Of course, there is no single, precise answer, nor will the future hold answers that do not entail moving to other scenarios. There will always be doubt, uncertainty, haunting images of past facts to remind us that there must be another way. We will work in a setting of increasing complexity, as we have already seen, but in settings open to imagination and risk-taking.

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One clear starting-point will be to consolidate the notion of citizenship, of citizenry, of belonging, of ownership, of identifying in and with the context, of being integrated human beings. No longer will we be a human cog in a system or model; a consumer or a utilitarian unit; an individualist or a sleepwalker; uprooted and uncommitted; unaware and uninterested.

This gives us a line on the new duties of leaders, organizers, and trainers, to contribute to truly achieving **politically literate societies**. New generations of theoretical and practical developments are urgently required in all fields – beginning with the one that we demand the most of, education.

We will formulate new paradigms and conceive of new approaches, to be able to grow beyond those that we know all too well and which have failed to contribute to the longed-for change.

This will call for massive action and mobilization of all society's resources, oriented toward all population groups, from children in playschools, to youth, and adults who can grasp the new orientation, applying their cumulative knowledge and experience, to hold inter-generational dialogue and fruitful actions. In other words, we must devise strategies that will revisit and reinvent the flow of wisdom, knowledge and practices that each community and society contains.

Science can offer an outstanding contribution to this vast task, so scientists and experts must be summoned to come out of their laboratories and mingle with the people, using the media, engaging in selfless dialogues in parks and auditoriums or in schools alongside teachers, learners and their families. University professors and researchers must also be invited to demolish the walls and barriers that isolate academics from real life and from collective, progressive construction of the knowledge and information we sorely need.

Media professionals could be at the service of humanizing of humans on a daily basis, aware of their strategic importance in production and results of society's culture. Businesspersons could contribute to reinventing economics, production, and effective contact among peoples by exchanging goods and services, meeting basic needs, with a new vision and perspective that now has more to do with collective learning and sharing than with individual or household success, although this will remain a key issue.

Prescriptions for universal knowledge or information will be impossible to construct, and those who offer them will be lying. Infinite variants will always be grounded in the cultures and experiences of peoples and communities – their ideas and ideals, their expectations or sentiments, their real times.

Where we can always reach agreements will be in the over-arching directions, principles, major goals and objectives, as already outlined internationally under the United Nations. So, **it is time to start this hard work of safely creating this new human social fabric, that will enable us to move onward to a new vision of the future and act accordingly.**

**11. Does it make any sense to think about changing lifestyles, in the industrialized and developing countries, at the beginning of this century?**

33. New trends and principles that the international community has begun to share, particularly in economic terms and in progressively valuing natural systems, would encourage us to be optimistic. Such optimism would draw from the absolute need to be optimistic, and from the evidence that all human beings are intelligent and sensitive. Let us examine some revealing examples:

PAST POSITION	PRESENT POSITION
a) The only cost of an object, a process or other items was the economic cost. Ecological, social, or psychological costs were considered by economists and politicians as external and irrelevant.	a) All costs must be taken into consideration: biological, economic and social. Costs include all environmental impacts of production, use and disposal. Social and psychological costs, among others, are also considered.
b) Population growth must be encouraged. It helps domestic markets prosper, increases employment and the labor force, and helps accumulate wealth.	b) Population growth must be carefully observed, in view of its multiple impacts and demands upon natural resources, capacities to manage pollution and wastes, actual availability of vital factors, such as water, energy, etc.
c) High energy consumption and pollution are secondary, because economic growth is more important (more buildings, vehicles, machines...).	c) Renewable energy sources must be a priority: solar, geothermal, biomass, wind energy... Traditional modes of production and energy use have heavy ecological impacts and must be limited. Ever-more programs and projects in this direction open up new options in rural and urban areas.
d) Only present generations matter to society's economics and dynamics.	d) The effects of each action taken today must be taken carefully into account regarding several generations to come.
e) People's importance and recognition of their status depends, above all, on their consumption capacity and access to superfluous, sophisticated or	e) More than owning material goods and distinguishing themselves by ownership, having access to certain brands of goods that identify and label users, then to dispose of them, almost unused, in order to remain in the euphoria and torture of newness, new trends favor rare goods that are unaffordable for the majority. intellectual growth, expansion of creativity, of honesty, of spirituality, of reunion with Nature, of genuine commitment to a different world that we gradually understand must be different.

These trends involve youth groups and other ages, but they are the first to better understand the opportunities, demands and needs for adaptation in the nascent information and knowledge society.

Mastery and use of new technologies, ceaseless exploration and surfing Internet and other networks incorporating new, virtual culture; mastery of several languages; the urge to be able to communicate and express ourselves, meet and learn about other cultures; probing the unknown, the force of images and symbols from faraway lands that trigger true interest in discovering the planet – this is the revolt against the status quo, non-equity and injustice.

This is all beginning to blossom powerfully at this point in history; civil-society movements regularly demonstrate about the way sensitive issues are handled by international leaders; it is heartening to see multitudinous youth in public squares on recent occasions. These are signs that times are changing, that change is being accepted and demanded, albeit drastic. This is an orientation toward international relations more amenable to a sustainable world. It shows we are tired of and reject positions and concepts from the past that cannot lead to an acceptable human world.

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34. Amidst the above positive, optimistic reflection, we must never lose site of the interplay and confrontation of interests. The role of institutions and enterprises with the capacity to act and influence the world's directions today; of influential groups with world scope, often comprising representatives of multiple nationalities and situations; the power of money and capital that flows and concentrates disproportionately; the universal presence of the media and companies expanding the sales of their merchandise everywhere, very successfully.

This struggle, for an audience – sometimes for all audiences – is based on goals and objectives we must understand and expose. Their aims will not always be supportive of sustainability.

We could naively ask whether we could imagine a situation in which someone or some group could today oppose measures or actions entailing catastrophic results for some population group – of course not. **The crux of the matter is and will always be that what is good and meaningful for all may be quite costly or bothersome for some.**

Often, in the past and surely in the future, highly rational, quantified proofs of the harmful impact of certain measures or behaviors have not been good enough – no, objections have been overridden and implementation has continued.

An example is the electric power sector, systematically opposing in many places any strong control on the emissions of “greenhouse” gases. The proof is on hand, it is convincing, but they ignore it, and keep dangerously changing the atmosphere, leading to progressive warming, with all the incredible negative effects that entails.

This shows how vital it is for the public to understand these phenomena and their causes, to watch over, participate actively, mobilize and complain. Laws can also be enforced more readily, when there are laws, or they can be enacted, consolidating new concepts and thoughts regarding lifestyles.

Advocating points of view and interests is an integral part of peoples’ lives. New proposals and visions must be amply discussed and examined throughout society, to build solid support at all levels and in all sectors. Working with international movements and networks fighting and working, day by day, toward a “sustainable world”, a “world without poverty”, a “world in peace and equity” ... will always be a top-priority strategy. Thanks to Internet, and the expansion of virtual life, these possibilities are more forceful with every passing day.

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Difficulties, the position of constant watchfulness by many groups monitoring sensitive, critical issues, private resources available for aggressive international advertising campaigns at certain times on given issues, unconditional support by certain politicians and leaders for certain causes or proposals – can never be underestimated.

In the case of the Convention on Climatic Change, many industrial and private interests are involved, acting with great intelligence and force, but governments and various groups also accompany them.

In the field of producing pollution, resulting from intolerable lifestyles and production, for instance, similar situations are also evident.

One can be optimistic about changing lifestyles in the future, but it will always be necessary for the public to be well informed, alert, demanding, responsible, cooperative and solidary. For example, it is no accident that certain industrialized countries are now backing the Climate Convention; this coincides with their well-informed people, who are mobilized, demanding and attentive to international and national goings-on. **This is a direction that is created collectively or not, hopefully by the time when it is required to meet such goals.** All positive local or community contributions will always be important and necessary, and even more desirable when networked with others.

**12. The recent past and the present enable us to understand that a new context is being constructed, which suggests certain hopes and expectations. What can be considered as the most encouraging, for regular citizens to regain hope?**

35. When we mention the most encouraging forces at present, in the quest for future viability, we must always start with children, with the life and magical thoughts that guide them, with their dreams, their innocence, cheerfulness and total devotion to simply living. Everywhere on our planet, there is evidence of this reality.

One can always present stories, experiences and projects in which children display all their freedom and creativity, expressing their feelings just right, the ways they see the context that they live in, talking about their country and imagining and perceiving a fruitful relationship with children in the rest of the world.

The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) has abundant material, initiatives on the way, and examples of the above.

UNESCO, for education and the WHO for health are also close allies of UNICEF in this marvelous work; accompanied by countless non-governmental organizations and institutions the world over. They are all concerned with safeguarding, as intelligently and untouched as possible, the future of each country, i.e. its children.

The major concerns always include children forced to work prematurely, abuse and violence, total abandonment of many children by their parents, the impossibility of access to basic services (including health care and education), their involvement in national and international networks of prostitution – in sum, their solitude when their home is the street and they are at risk. A desolate, heartbreaking situation, the sign of decadence, of social disintegration, of alarming decomposition throughout all societies. The portrait of a present that murders the future and makes it non-viable.

Normally, approaching any child, regardless of his or her situation or conditions, is uplifting, generating positive feelings, energy and hope. At least this has always been my experience and that of many other persons with whom I have had the opportunity to talk on all continents and many cultures and settings. When I was working with UNESCO in Paris (1994-2001), as director of the International Trans-Disciplinary Project on “Educating for a Viable World”, I had the opportunity to create and support projects for children in every region of the world.

One was entitled “Planetary Society”, seeking to identify children’s creative projects in all areas (dance, painting, music ... ) and their relations with other children in the different regions of the world, in their areas or topics of interest. This project has taught UNESCO and the international community many lessons but, above all, it has demonstrated this creative force without the limits of childhood.

I would like to share a meaningful experience with children that took place in Medellín, Colombia under an international projects supported by the World Bank and UNESCO, among others, known as “CONNECTIONS”. This project has sought, through new information technologies since mid-1994, At the EAFIT University campus, leading substantial changes in grassroots education in that region and working for greater cultural, intellectual, and affective development by children.

That project decided to hold a contest of short stories about peace, networking (using Internet) with the idea of finding out what vision children had about their country’s reality. Their longings had been submerged in blind violence for years, as adults ignored children’s interests when deciding about their own future and that of everyone else.

This contest traced the outline of how these children imagined their ideal realities, as they began their lives, forced to share irrational, unjust, inhuman models that they cannot accept; this sounded exciting and special. In other words, we were searching for hope from the dawning-point of new possibilities and options, as affirmed in the foreword to the book resulting from this experience, which concluded just over two years ago.

One of the stories, with very appealing illustrations, was entitled “The Magic Dreamland”,<sup>3</sup> authored by a little girl named Sara Saldarriaga-Jaramillo. In sum, her message was:

*Once upon a time there was an imaginary country, that curiously every country dreamed of; but every time they imagined it, it was as if they were seeing it, because it was their own imagination, and you could shape it yourself. One day, Pepe, a boy just ten years old, who lived with his grandfather, was sleeping and, suddenly, a strange image began to pass through his mind.*

*It was an image that made him feel as if a whirlwind had grabbed him, and spun him around and around; it was as frightening as if his grandfather stopped loving him someday, and looked as real as when, the day he was born, he felt his mother’s kisses for the first time; it was all very strange, until everything began to clear up and the most splendid image passed before his eyes.*

*It was a country so big, so beautiful, full of lovely Nature, with villages, homes, parks, churches and hills all so pretty that they were like springtime in places that never existed; but there was something very strange: the people could fly, and they could do magic. They were very happy people, hardworking, loving, kind, tolerant and nonviolent; they could see people’s hearts and their feelings, thanks to their own purity, but Pepe could see that the people were not satisfied – this amazed Pepe, and led him to wonder:*

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<sup>3</sup> EAFIT, CONEXIONES, UNESCO Un País Mágico, primer concurso en la Red [A Magical Country, a First Contest on the Network], EAFIT publishers, Colombia 2000.

*Why aren't they contented if this place is perfect? This is strange, he thought. Then he also began wandering around, and he noticed that they were bored, and this worried him. So, he approached a little old lady who did nothing but complain all the time, saying "Why is this place perfect?" Then Pepe came closer and said to her, "Excuse me, ma'am, why are people like that, when the situation is so wonderful as this place it?" "First of all," she answered, "I am crying because this country is perfect, so our dreams cannot become a reality. Secondly, people here are like this because, since this place is perfect we get bored; since there are no problems, we don't have to think, or solve problems, or struggle, and that bores us, and we are not contented; we don't have achievements, or goals, or aims, or challenges, or improvements, because everything is all done for us. So, what can we be happy about?" "That is terrible, now I understand why people act like that".*

*"The world would be horrible if it were perfect, and all the people would be sad, not happy as we wish we were, and – worst of all – our dreams would not become realities". "Yes", said the old lady, "the worst thing that has happened is that our greatest dream has not come true, for us all to have a magical, marvelous, splendid country, where dreams become a reality, where love reigns, where there is no violence, but where things are not perfect – and do you know what we would call it? ... the magical dreamland".*

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Children are brought up to contribute, to make efforts, to create, to give their best, to understand very well that everything can be perfected, and to center their demands on crucial values leading to sustainability, such as love, tolerance, happiness, transparency, non-violence and justice. A world with room for dreams, for ideals, poetry, brotherly embraces for others, for everyone. What could be more encouraging for the future than children? But children must be properly understood, assisted and oriented.

Herein may lie the greatest present challenge, as Brazil's Minister of Education, Cristovam Buarque, stated this April, describing the status of children's education in his country as tragic:

Over 33 million Brazilians cannot read, although they were given literacy training ... half the teachers do not feel motivated to do their work ... this tragedy is the legacy of 500 years and, if we begin working seriously and profoundly today, it will take us at least the first 20 years of this century ...

These few words appeal dramatically for almost all developing governments to work for their children, for their future.

36. When the need to act becomes increasingly strong and becomes evident on every continent, along with the demand to begin thinking in new ways, with new concepts and methodologies, to more seriously explore cultural roots, to acquire greater skills in the domains of knowledge, naturally and spontaneously, to set the objects, facts and data aside for a moment and read in tune with the present moment, the context in which we are acting, then we can see, internationally, the encouraging signs of growing civil society mobilization. Great expectations ride with this new rising tide.

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Confronting these signs of the times, the brutal things we observe, the human and natural catastrophes, intolerance, violence and conflicts, misuse of advertising in seriously questionable campaigns, the persistence of poverty and mistreatment of the people, adoption of excluding, unethical policies: in Europe, in the Americas, in Asia, in every corner of the world, evermore significant groups are arising and marching, talking to the media and progressively making their mark to build the new direction that they are calling for out loud.

Although the pathway ahead is not clear, whether there is a model or direction to follow, or not – civil society can perceive the danger, the risks, and the defenselessness when we are isolated and disorganized. They also know that they contribute to the states of violence on city streets, when individualism and selfishness take hold of the majority.

They know that winning and keeping peace entails keeping “doors and windows” open, to intensely live together, for all time, partaking of the fullness of life that happens in this context, linking even if we didn’t want this the space where each person lives (their home, their dwelling

... ) with the streets, the corners, the parks and neighborhoods, amid a human flow of forces that we are part of, without understanding much about it yet.

From this vision, which progressively expands in civil society, activities and organizations appear, group initiatives and networking, oriented toward multiple issues and sensitive, top-priority areas. Thousands of experiences and projects have emerged in the last decade oriented toward sustainability. They have tapped contributions and resources from highly varied origins, and their impact and outcomes clearly reflect the expression of cultural force, which was not always so explicit before.

Consultation among diverse cultural groups, in a single zone, among people of different social status or economic power, among multi-disciplinary groups, among followers of diverse political leanings, among people from one zone and from other remote areas, are increasingly frequent and contribute concrete results.

Civil society, anguished at receiving no answers to the urgent clamor from all sides, is now taking action, striving for results, no longer willing to wait, to gamble on a future we no longer understand and which looms awesomely, no longer ready to believe baseless promises.

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Politicians, scholars, strategists, educators, bankers, businesspersons are submerged and suddenly confronted, as we begin this new century, with a shakedown, and the growing mobilization of civil society, of the people, something they never expected, since it was believed that they had been “tamed”, with support from the prevailing models for living and the media, to forestall any such possibility.

But suddenly, the call went out and all United Nations summits, since January 1990, were opened up to active participation by society, and then to taking part in implementing the Work Agendas adopted, beginning to yield very positive results.

The United Nations in New York, the World Bank, the United Nations Development Program, UNESCO, to name but a few, have all opened their doors to civil society, to the so-called NGOs, and are implementing their cooperation programs along with them.

It is no longer conceivable to think, build consensus, provide international, regional or national guidelines, without listening to and acting with representatives of civil society. In preparing for the Summit on the Information Society (Geneva, December 2003), work is underway on every continent to encourage dialogues and consensus-building among governments, academicians, businesses and civil society.

With the experience acquired over these last years, that process is progressing more satisfactorily, although still incipiently the world and the international community are called upon to perfect this field much more. **However, recent experience has shown, historically, that without the perception, wisdom, force and genuine contributions from civil society, there will simply be no future.**

Governments and their members will continue to rotate unceasingly; the programs and projects by which they seek to differentiate themselves from each other will also transpire and be forgotten, though they leave major destruction in their wake, often worsening programs and heightening dangers; agencies and institutions will be created and closed constantly; stock markets will continue to raise their warnings; the media will continue reporting for a long time to come about undesired facts and situations; only civil society will always remain, as a great “lighthouse” and “thermometer”.

With increasing strength and decision, the presence of civil society will be required, with its summary, its sentiments, to make its “THAT IS ENOUGH” heard effectively and lastingly, for the “BEGINNING OF A NEW DIRECTION” to set forth and continue. **The great adventure is in our hands, interwoven and linked until the handshakes and awakened minds manage to move and act as a planetary society.**

37. The impact and possibilities offered by new communications and information technologies offer a great hope of spreading appropriate knowledge and information, tools and means to so many millions living and suffering in poverty. They also offer the hope of effective support for constructing a more related, participatory world, that knows about others, about other peoples.

Tremendous potential and applications are emerging continually in this field. There is the sensation that, although very significant headway has been made, this field has yet to be fully discovered, and humanity will witness qualitative leaps forward in quality of life, thanks to these unsuspected technologies. Every walk of life is besieged. Therein lies our hope, as well as our profound concern.

The speed of changes brought by the new technologies offers great encouragement, but also leaves us breathless when we have to answer these questions: Are we ready to use these nearly-miraculous tools? How can we incorporate them into our daily life without becoming their servants and being swept away by their dazzling current? What shall we do? Where can we begin? Or would it be correct to stay away from them, granting greater priority to other issues or demands? Under what circumstances could this be true?

This issue is so important in the 21st century that it calls for special analysis. For this reason, this book has taken it as the central concern and proposal. The second part of this first chapter will be devoted to further exploring and understanding this issue in greater depth.

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38. Other aspects could also be mentioned as encouraging, although not as powerfully as the three presented above. Of course, the perception will also depend on the region or area of the world where this reflection is made; the significance and priority of these aspects that are affirmed as positive for the common people could vary. For this reason, we have limited the issues to those already listed. However, as we have stated, this short list is not exclusive or complete, but only a suggestion for reflection on building ongoing strategies for more global efforts to urgently involve universal currents of concern and action.

Experimental, innovative projects will continue to be key to achieving sustainability, just as small and large community and even family-level actions will remain meaningful, but the true challenge, **which the international community must face, is to visualize planet-sized policies, strategies, and lines of action in order to find, at that level, the continental and national specificities.**

The absence reflected in this last challenge is what leaves people without hope, makes them vulnerable and cripples them. The purpose would be to simply give up, declaring ourselves unable to achieve this. For that reason, people are beginning to take to the streets in their cities.

## **B. THE INFORMATION AND KNOWLEDGE SOCIETY.**

**The fundamental problem posed by information and communications technologies (ICTs) is whether they are being used to democratize people's economic possibilities and progress, or on the contrary they are polarizing development opportunities increasingly between richer and poorer countries.**

**1. What is the main contribution of information and communications technologies to peoples' development?**

39. Internationally, it is increasingly clearer that the social and human dimension must constitute the key focus and the center of concern in collectively constructing a technological, communicational and economic platform that will make it viable to offer all communities and every human being the opportunities for appropriate access to the so-called information and knowledge society.

Considering new information and communication technologies, governed at present and since their outset by the rules of the market and stock markets, must be lightened in terms of management and international democratic governance by firmly incorporating ethical principles and values that will recognize that it is only by seeking intellectual, spiritual and cultural progress for all peoples that humankind can be prepared for the advent of a more balanced, equitable, fair world, to assure a good life for all.

The interesting thing about the above, and I would like to say this as an economist, is that from this standpoint the world economy would benefit much more than it is currently benefiting and providing profits for a few. Unfortunately, the great thinkers of economics are only just beginning to approach this perspective and attempt to understand the cultural, human and planetary dimensions that the globalization process has confronted us with.

40. If we had a scenario in which it were possible to immediately offer all communities, homes and institutions in a country, and the countries on all continents, complete communication (power, telephone, computer, television, radio, etc.), the simple logic and observation of the conditions prevailing in the world's different regions and the transition the world is currently undergoing, we would have to reach the conclusion that it would not be timely or advisable to promote this. Social and cultural issues tell us, when we carefully explore the vision and notion of the information and knowledge society, about a profound perspective that approaches human beings and their true selves, which we must urgently recover. This leads us to immediately think that, rather than speaking of a "digital gap", we would be obliged to worry about the huge "social gap" and economic gap affecting most peoples on this planet.

41. In the information society, information and communications technologies ought to constitute an essential element to contribute to recovering the meaning of life, the human features of self, of living in harmony with Nature; to promote pathways in seeking wisdom, specific knowledge, rather than isolated information or trivial communicational actions; to attempt to recover lost knowledge and experiences, from our ancestors, and to compare them with the present, in order to foster a dialogue with that knowledge that will enable us to find answers today to key areas of life, but will not yet answer the basic questions and major challenges of the future, such as those posed by the areas of Medicine, Energy Sources, and Biodiversity, for example.

Consequently, information and communication technologies must be used and managed in a society in order to humanize and democratize thought in society, rather than to enhance economic profitability and efficiency, achieved for better or for worse using sophisticated administrative and management programs grounded in *different realities* from those that were the basis for their original creation. Never before have we been so obliged as now, to humanize human activities, and ICTs can be a very useful tool.

## 2. What should developing country governments do to use ICTs appropriately?

42. Developing country governments, more than those of industrialized countries, are obliged to create and pursue a vision of the significance, scope and strategies of the information

and knowledge society. This is because the constraints upon them, the multiplicity and diversity of priorities they must address, the high percentage of poverty among their populations, in general (over 80%) not to mention other aspects, pose doubts and questions for these governments every day, that prevent them from maintaining the required continuity of aggressive programs that, in my opinion, they should launch or maintain if already launched to favor the “social collectivity” of a country, in line with my answer to the preceding question.

43. Now, humankind and every country are obliged to join together what has splintered us apart, often in the search for unnecessary specialization; to integrate what sectoralization has separated and continues to separate day by day, preventing integrated responses to society’s major problems; to achieve an integrated impact using all available resources when group or thematic policies lead to partial benefits and answers.

In this context, one of the greatest obligations of developing country governments is to achieve massive mobilization of all sectors, societal stakeholders and community groups, involving workplaces and production centers, educational systems, cultural networks, television and radio stations and print media, gathering them for national action and a joint position that will seek, above all, to train each person and institution for self-realization and the full use of their freedoms in this new society.

This would affirm the process of appropriate social cohesion in each country, a powerful force to respond globally and completely to all society’s problems.

This vision that I am proposing for ICTs should be a great technological platform that would make it possible for human beings, communities and resources in general to liaise and correspond, in the quest for sustainable human development.

44. Independently of the above, I would like to point out that the new information and knowledge society has undermined, in these last few years and this beginning of the new century, all international and national legal frameworks. This calls for urgent action by all governments, to be able to obtain the benefits that society deserves, in this phase of worldwide structuring of

new legal and normative ways of thinking, for trade and cooperation. This is the time for a great national legal mobilization that will revisit existing laws and standards domestically, as well as the role that each country will play within the international community.

It is time to avoid dependency or minimize it time to negotiate new rates for world telecommunications time for new partners time, finally, to reinvent national and international settings in the fields of technology, telecommunications and economic and social affairs, seen in the context of that new society and world opportunities in the future, accepting that the present is already part of that future, as well.

Ultimately, we are in a period of union and convergence of all times: past – present – future, which is something new for the international community.

### **3. What should developing country governments demand from developed ones in order to close the so-called “digital gap”?**

45. Demands must be grounded in universally-accepted principles, such as: democratization of knowledge and expertise in all domains of human activities, including sciences, among others; collective search for solutions to the major problems facing humankind as a whole at present; guaranteeing a strong public domain for information; preservation and promotion of cultural diversity, including multi-lingualism (at present, most information in new technologies and networks is in a single language, English); and freedom of expression, as the maximum guarantee of world governance and the existence of strong 74 democratic systems to support societies where rights are enforced, where all human beings and groups have the possibility of fully expressing their goals, proposals, ways of viewing life and thereby of affirming cultural identities and living well in harmony.

On that basis, the demands for developed countries to alleviate the “digital gap”, which as we have said must be understood in the developing countries as the essential outcome of a “social gap”, must be framed within a planetary ethical vision placing human beings in the center of concerns and economics at the service of this new future orientation.

The heart of these requirements will be to urgently reorganize the economic model governing ICTs, with a new perspective geared toward peace and genuine understanding among all human beings, to promote them and use them massively in creating a different world.

If we take into account the actual costs of producing a computer or the necessary tools for ICTs, we will see that market pricing yields gigantic profits, not always justified. This is leading different parts of the world, including the United States and Canada in the Americas, to urgently seek formulas for democratizing ICTs, through what we could call “social pricing”. This could generate even higher volumes and greater profits than producers are making today.

46. Finally, and this may be the most important, when these demands are made of the outside world, we may be fully convinced that **the true power of developing “national social connectivity” must be and will always be the outgrowth of governmental policy and mobilization of societies from within.**

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**The new situation in each country, in this field of the information society, is more closely linked to internal qualities and potential than to external dependency.**

Since there is no valid technical reason for the worldwide digital gap, the ultimate responsibility for that situation falls solely to policies and to the political will **that, directly or indirectly, adversely affects the results of the development process in the less favored countries. It is urgent, then, to have public policies in the industrialized countries that will guarantee universality and equality in access for all people on all continents, particularly for the least protected and most excluded, as well as policies promoting the incorporation of developing countries into the globalization process, with competitive advantages and conditions.**

4. This December, the World Summit on the Information Society will be held in Switzerland. Why are peoples and international agencies concerned about addressing this issue with such dedication and preparation?

47. The opportunities offered by ICTs and all processes leading to the firm creation of the Information and knowledge society, as we have seen, are clearly recognized as central concerns by government officials, the political class, academicians, businesspersons, youth and children, non-governmental organizations and community leaders, all of whom are aware that this is a way to move forward in alleviating critical poverty on this planet, quickly and peacefully.

Independently of the opportunities, the world's situation in terms of actual availability of ICTs has become a major concern of all developing country governments because of the immense distances that have increased progressively over the last two years, a situation described accurately by US President Bill Clinton in 2001, before finishing out his term of office:

*“One out of every two persons in the United States has a computer; in Southeast Asia, one out of every 250 persons has one; in the United States, a computer costs the equivalent of one monthly salary; in Bangladesh, that same computer costs eight years' salaries; 20 hours of Internet access in the United States costs 1% of a person's average monthly salary; in Mexico, it costs 15% of an average salary ...”*

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It is estimated that, by the year 2010, the world's 11 main industrialized economies will have 72% of their inhabitants connected, whereas the world's bottom eleven economies will have only 4% of their people connected... These data, simple but brutal, show why the entire international community and all peoples in the world are currently so enthusiastic and dedicated to preparing to participate in the First World Summit on the Information Society, catalogued by many, in different regions of the world, as the most difficult World Summit and the one from which the most is expected, out of all the ones that the United Nations has organized since celebrating its 50th anniversary in the early 1990s.

**Note that, when this issue so fundamental to humankind in the future is discussed, a great debate surfaces, as it must this December in Geneva, regarding the coming-together of civilizations and cultures and the appearance of a new civilization.**

5. **What role must the peoples of Latin America play at that Summit?**

48. In the case of Latin America, some figures will show the urgency for our countries and peoples to discuss this issue internationally in December 2003: just over a year ago in this region, only 15% of the population had fixed telephone service, 13% had cellular telephony, and 6% had Internet, while quite a majority had television and radio.

Similarly, 74% of the world's telephone lines belonged to 20% of the world population, represented by the wealthier countries, whereas the world's poorest 20% (including many Latin Americans and Caribbeans) had only 1.5% of the phone lines.

Further, the 1999 United Nations Human Development Report (just over two years ago) stated that only 2.4% of humanity had Internet access, and that this 77 population group was mostly concentrated in the industrialized nations, while 80% of networking communication was done in English.

The Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) recently reported that Latin America and the Caribbean represent 8% of the world's population, contribute 7% of the world's Gross Domestic Product, account for 1% of the world's electronic trade (Brazil represents 70% of that figure) and has a 4% share in cyber-space.

In view of the above, we must acknowledge that this region has developed ICTs and Internet very fast over the last two years, compared to other regions of the world. As ECLAC put it: **"We are in a bad position, but we are not doing so badly"**.

So, the December 2003 World Summit will be a great opportunity for the region to help create principles, criteria, directions and grounds for negotiation and world exchange, **to achieve access to international networks, facilitate access for the majority to national or local networks, based on integrated, multiple management of the different possibilities for developing countries to assure the social connectivity that we have referred to. It is becoming clear in international spheres that this is what matters, more than simply owning hardware.**

The second World Summit, scheduled for Tunisia in 2005, will be largely for negotiating specific projects, grounded in the achievements of the December 2003 Summit.

**6. It is said that information and communication technologies can give individuals, communities and countries the capacity to improve their lives to unprecedented levels. How can this be achieved in communities without access to even minimal public utilities, such as electrical supply, telecommunications, etc?**

49. Over 600 thousand towns on this planet have no electrical service. This is a terrifying figure, when we compare with the conditions and quality of life that more industrialized places have had for many years now.

Public services must be understood, planet-wide, as the minimum essential foundation for achieving good, sustainable, basic quality of life. This must be a top-priority concern of all political leaders and businesspersons in the world. When a community has utilities and is allowed to act freely and organize, this facilitates the alleviation of the essential problems of life tremendously, as is being seen in Colombia, Brazil, China, Cuba and other places, and has been the case in all nations that are now industrialized.

In the field of energy sources, essential for developing and applying ICTs, great efforts are being made and must be promoted on a large scale in solar energy, with highly positive results. Satellite facilities are also being used to provide contact for isolated towns and municipalities in rural areas, mountains, deserts, and between different continents, to solve concrete problems, exchange experiences, pilot projects, training and other services.

These facilities are being used for distance education and training programs in special skills that will assure genuine training for all communities where, for one reason or another, this knowledge has not reached them previously, or all the basic services mentioned in this question have not yet been made available. A revolution in work, in company creation and production is underway.

50. Mobile cellular telephone services is progressively revolutionizing agricultural areas, through effective specific techno-agricultural projects, production and trade linkages with national and international networks. This revolution is being supported by people, who are showing that they are more holistic and therefore better prepared to act properly in a global world that the urban world, for well-known reasons.

As a concrete answer to the question and in view of financial constraints, especially, there are enormous possibilities in the so-called “tele-centers” that 79 are appearing for multiple purposes in both urban and rural communities, encouraging communication with families, schools, health centers, specialists and people in general within these areas.

At present, in Central and South America, there are nearly 13 thousand telecenters, many of them networking, favoring tens of millions of persons and thousands of institutions.

I have mentioned briefly these elements of response an indication of the new scenarios for operations offering a concrete solution to isolated population groups, which in the case of Latin America and the Caribbean are still a significant proportion.

At the same time, in view of the vital urgency of all developing countries' need to assure governmental presence in every corner and community of their territories, it would seem that the most effective, immediate way to achieve this would be to take full advantage of ICTs through public programs and policies, and everything that virtual reality offers at this time.

In other words, there are reasons beyond just social ones modernization of the State, affirmation of democracy, intensive, appropriate utilization of all resources available in national territory, sharing borders in a solidary, effective way with other countries, especially when these borders are located in areas of great natural wealth and biodiversity.

The urgency of strengthening the notion of citizenship and citizens' responsibility for the country's image and future in a global world means that governments are obliged, on all continents, to grant top priority to these new opportunities that the world of technology and science offer for everyone's wellbeing.

**7. The traditional concept of politics involves people living within a town, i.e. a polis. That is, politics conceives of people as fundamentally 80 social beings. What is anthropology, considering people as the pivot of all development?**

51. The challenges now facing our planet, where there is even clear awareness of greater dangers than those that can be seen, which compromise the future presence of Life itself, provide a more than sufficient reason to go beyond politics and considerations of human beings as an element of society.

Such a partial consideration of being human and therefore of the scope of the words “humanism” and “humanity” have led the world community to managing entire peoples without any relation to fundamental issues, anchored rather in instrumental, secondary matters. We can see this all around us, when even on the tiniest scales we witness the extinction of living beings, the disappearance of rivers, and in general a serious decrease of the biodiversity that sustains life on this planet.

For this reason, the only possibility for the future is for every government, everywhere, **rising above different policies and political stages that their countries are in, to promote an anthropological awareness recognizing unity in diversity; an ecological awareness, i.e. awareness of living with all mortal beings in a single living sphere; civic-earthly consciousness, responsibility and solidarity with all children of the Earth; spiritual awareness of the human condition, that will enable us to understand each other and be self-critical locally, nationally and universally.**

It is time to civilize and solidarize, which humans can do only in a dialogue, an appropriate relationship with all other living beings and all expressions of Nature. Again, I emphasize, that in view of the way that humanity has lost its way for several past decades, with the disastrous results that we see today, we now face the gargantuan task of humanizing humans (which entails multiple dimensions), to go beyond the social consideration of humans and, using the great wealth that will always be inherent in love, the force that will reveal understanding, the true challenge of all societies in this 21st century, one of the purposes in using ICTs.

52. With the above, we would like to recall that the contemporary world is proposing the construction of alternative, non-excluding epistemologies, that are not polarized at either end: language games, complex thinking, conceptual ecology, etc. **Two concepts appear: rationality and uncertainty, which implies a huge revolution in the conception and redefinition of the contents of a society, of its imagery, of mindsets, and also a great challenge for knowledge and information.**

Simplistic thought and therefore simplistic governance of a State or society refer to the great paradigm of the West, formulated by Descartes and imposed by the development of European thought since the 18th century. The Cartesian paradigm separates the subject from the object, assigning each its own domain.

Philosophy and reflexive research fall to the subject, and objective research and science for the object. This division has split the entire planet from end to end: a) subject-object; b) soul-body; c) spirit-matter; d) quality-quantity; e) purpose-chance; f) sense-reason; g) existence-essence. This thinking grounded in dualism, in the elementary relationships of opposition and excluding polarization, causes “*cultural imprinting*”, a fingerprint from the womb, stamped on the mind of each citizen or person. “Conformity” leads to “standardization”, leaving nothing to discuss, if it cannot be included in the laws of science or in the standard, etc.

This “*cultural imprinting*” is received from birth on, and is reinforced in school, at the university and as one performs in society. What is new, as opposed to the above, are and must be the higher relationships expressed in multi-dimensional terms, such as: a) order-disorder-organization; b) thought-word-action; c) yesterday-today-tomorrow; d) infrastructure-superstructure-structure; e) subconscious-superconscious-conscious; f) liberty-equality-fraternity.

This thinking has been amply considered in the book, “*Seven Complex Lessons in Education for the Future*”<sup>4</sup> published by UNESCO, coordinated by thinker Edgar Morin, under the International Trans-Disciplinary Project to “Educate for a Viable Future” which I had the honor of directing (1994-2001).

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<sup>4</sup> Edgar Morin. *Seven Complex Lessons in Education for the Future*, UNESCO-Paris, 2001.

A new worldview is urgently required in order to appropriately visualize chaos, disorder, regulations, circularities, dissipation, squandering, waste, consumerism, etc. as they take place today in order to return to the future the splendor and vitality of multi-dimensional reality, in which humankind interacts with Nature.

**8. Why this contrast of living in a society of knowledge and technology, but without wisdom?**

53. We must recall that the “*cultural imprinting*” mentioned above has been happening for the last three centuries, marking our ways of thinking, our theories, interpretations, ways of seeing reality, of reading situations, of acting. **This has all produced what we could call a “trivial worldview”, a simplistic form of logic that has always, to this day, overshadowed the more complex view of life, leading us to lose wisdom from our lives.**

Therefore, it is urgent to reinvent, almost entirely, peoples’ education, as a catalyst to change the cultural imprinting anchored in simplistic cognitive structures, with dualistic, excluding relationships. We need to educate “observer-creators” with true wisdom to observe observers with threedimensional sight and action, observers of the human condition, of culture, of the environment.

Observers who unveil the secrets of their own complexity, discovering essences and manifestations; observers with the sole certainty of “rational uncertainty” (each new bit of knowledge, as French thinker Edgar Morin has described it, entails a non-knowledge); observers who know that they cannot see what they do not know.

So far, the appearance of the information and knowledge society, underpinned by the ICT revolution, has made it possible for the masses to have access to partial knowledge and information, in almost unlimited amounts. However, this does not mean that such greater availability in the hands of many is the same as the appearance of a new mindset in the world or new humanism, as I am calling for.

**Moving along pathways of wisdom or to higher states of human evolution entails a profound, structural evolution in all societies, supported by the cultural and natural wealth that the planet already has.**

I would like to quote the famous maxim by Thomas Elliot: *“Where is the wisdom that I lost to knowledge, and where is the knowledge that I lost to information? What and who am I?”*

**9. What do the concepts of understanding and participation mean in this new civilization?**

54. The new civilization that is progressively arising worldwide, under the signs of supporting human activity, which is shifting toward the immaterial and intangible, reveals quite substantive elements in regard to these two concepts of understanding and participation. (UNESCO is leading preparations for a World Convention on Humankind’s Intangible Heritage, in order to be ready for these new times.)

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Understanding is the means and the end of human communication. Internationally, it is still absent in general from our societies’ teachings and, therefore, we talk about the demands for an in-depth reform of mentalities. This task is also the primary job for education in preparing for the future.

In this case, we must not forget the impact the ICTs **are having in severely changing the structure of thought and human forms of understanding and action.** Therefore, a study of human failure to understand, from its historical, cultural and also affective roots, is urgent in every society. Such studies will lay the foundation of culture and education for peace, as UNESCO has been promoting for over a decade internationally. Peace, to which we are all linked, as human beings, by our essence, our calling and our destiny.

To understand is to know something perfectly, in order to master all components or elements comprising an idea, or which occur in the context of our lives, for example. Therefore, understanding makes it possible to understand a language, the actual contents of communication,

as well as images, symbols in a culture, in order to fully participate, consequently, in the complex life that all human beings are forced to face every day.

Understanding, the total support for discernment, of unraveling something, of finding the rationale or natural justification of a fact or action, the process of conception and creation, of respect and tolerance, of genuine cooperation and solidarity among human beings, supported by ongoing pluri-cultural dialogue.

Understanding, viewed in this way, would be the medicine to cure the errors and illusions that we almost all fall into in all human cultures, often as an escape from actual reality (which is too often cruel, irrational, inhuman, and violent), or as the result of a very limited or directed upbringing or mentality.

Only understanding illuminates and makes it viable to apply ethics, principles and universal values and for them to prevail. However, we are still a far cry from this, universally speaking. Little headway has been made in understanding that, above all, we are planetary. Nor has sufficient progress been made in teaching human ethics, which should lead to anthropo-ethics, considering three-faceted human nature: “individual-society-species”.

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Thinker Edgar Morín has written in this regard that:

*Individual-species ethics calls for mutual control of society by the individual and of the individual by society, i.e. democracy. Individualspecies ethics calls for earth citizenship in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.<sup>5</sup>*

Here we find new clarity and force regarding the meaning of the notion of participation by each human being in society, to attempt to live well, in peace.

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<sup>5</sup> Edgar Morin, *Seven Complex Lessons in Education for the Future*.

**10. How can scientific and technological knowledge be used wisely to prevent humankind from destroying itself?**

55. Always referring to the idea of the information and communication society, we could find ways to facilitate orientation toward wise use of available knowledge. For example, we can start by accepting that the information society is characterized by plurality, interactivity, virtuality, globality and individuality and that all sectors of a country's or society's life converge around information, all acting in a borderless virtual space, conserving and respecting citizens' rights. From this perspective, those citizens assuming their responsibilities, we would have in such a society the spaces and energies flowing together holistically, making collective and individual use, wisely, of all available resources and means, including knowledge and information.

The information society is grounded, and has its reason for being in the promotion of free, voluntary participation by citizens in political decision-making processes and channels opinions, always with the support of a pluralistic legal framework that will guarantee plural and global forces as essential contributions to living wisely in society.

The information society starts with individuals, with citizens, users, final beneficiaries and target audience, which does not interfere with the social dimension. On the contrary, it strengthens it by breaking forcefully and positively in situations of severe inequality, discrimination or lack of equity (which prevent full enjoyment of everyone's rights in Latin America and the Caribbean and other continents as well). It will be a force supporting the actions of a society with wisdom.

The information society promotes the appearance of virtual cultures that are changing people's sensibility, their ways of understanding the planet and the world community as well, ways of creating and maintaining relations with others, as well as categories to grasp the context, to read authentic reality, as Nobel Prize-winner Gabriel Garcia Marquez puts it. The very notions of time and space change this new society that will rapidly contribute to returning wisdom to the center of all societies' and all governments' concerns.

It will no longer be simply the manipulation of resources, means or institution, administrative decrees or other orders, that will support the search for wellbeing for all, which is multiply super-complex. It is urgent to again reflect on schools, workshops, companies, parks and all environments, regarding what it is to know and how, through normal actions and common sense, which has been lost for many decades, we can again affirm good living in peace and wisdom.

56. This leads us to conclude that educating in ICTs and in the information society calls for giving the new technologies a meaning that *will not disconnect production from sense-content, individual and collective ... This production must be nourished by people's own culture and affirm their cultural identity...* Promoting the encounter between technology and culture, between the outside and our own, will have to use education to move from the media to mediation.

Finally, the virtual is a mediation between culture and technology. This will enable technologies to gain more in the concept of social and cultural goods than simply considering them mere merchandise or commodities.

#### 11. What are the mainstays to develop social actions in order to share knowledge?

57. In the late 1990s, the International Commission created by UNESCO on the topic of education, chaired by ex-chairman of the European Commission, 87 Dr. Jaques Delors, proposed to the international community four basic pillars to construct a new social pedagogy: 1) *learning to be*; 2) *learning to know*, 3) *learning to do*; 4) *learning to live together*.

Since then, these four pillars have given rise to studies and reflection in every country, and I feel it is important to keep them in mind when we discuss the information and knowledge society.

However, when we refer to this new society, we see that increasingly, worldwide, there is a new perception regarding what knowledge and training entail: a) The great question for people is currently where to learn, rather than the traditional question of what to teach? b) When to learn, rather than how to teach; c) Lifelong learning rather than initial education for given periods of life; d) Inclusive knowledge rather than simply knowledge; e) Having appropriate,

holistic knowledge rather than differentiated knowledge, as in the past – knowledge for the poor or the rich, or for urban or rural people, etc.

58. Moreover, this new age of humanity, profoundly marked by the advent of the information and knowledge society, has recently faced the world with a major paradigm shift, centered especially around: a) perception of values; b) lifestyles; c) ways of creating; d) organization of work; e) processes of production; f) models of business management; g) sources and production of knowledge. All of this is linked with intangibles rather than tangibles. The human brain is granted all importance that muscular power used to enjoy; diversity is accepted naturally rather than the massification proposed since the last industrial revolution in the past century; persuasion plays a central role in governing all societies and institutions rather than simple commands; knowledge is beginning to override capital; opening and meeting is becoming global; diversity is winning out over closed or bounded areas or countries.

Finally, world, national and community networks are in the fore, rather than continuing to pay homage to the hierarchical authorities and accepting whatever was forthcoming from them.

59. These elements would each call for an entire article to elucidate them, but I would finally like to point out that a pillar for developing social actions and sharing knowledge in a society and the world over is ETHICS.

*Seeking sustainable human development can be guaranteed only by new ETHICS, which must grant a true sense to education and training, to seeking a new mindset, and to affirming ways of coexisting in every country. Without this navigational chart, it will always be very difficult to find our way. New communications and information technologies will give us huge possibilities to progress toward new humanism.*

A new ETHICS is more than simply negotiating political agreements or grouping diverse proposals. It entails accepting, with all the implications this contains, that we are required to understand all over again what it means to be human, to respect this and to offer full development and progress to this true humanity, for all time. *Again, ETHICS will involve understanding, in order to assure the human condition and to be able to humanize humans.*

**12. There is talk of plurality as the maximum creative expression. How can we understand this concept if we see the creative process as an individual act of internalizing a reality or experience?**

60. The concept of understanding has pointed to the need for a holistic, global vision of collective and individual life, without which we can hardly expect to live properly. Pluralism leads us to the concept of plurality, which will be the system in which various or all tendencies in a society co-exist, assuring genuine presence and participation by all groups and stakeholders in a country.

We could also understand this from the philosophical doctrine that recognizes the existence of multiple and individual selves. Academically, plurality involves the various disciplines through which one works and progresses in knowledge through topics or areas.

In turn, each human being has an innate creative power of expression, of enjoyment and happiness, of ways to approach life and the context where it is or is going. We all have feelings and a spiritual power distinguishing and making each person unique, i.e. simply the quality of being human in all the splendor of our individuality.

When living in community, in a specific setting, human beings must enhance their individuality to the utmost and meet in society, through proper actions, as planetary citizens and local citizens, obliged to embrace the plural/plurality, because life and self-realization happen naturally amidst the plural.

The creative process, considered as an individual act of internalizing a given context, is called upon to grow boundlessly from an individual plural position that will facilitate embracing the universe's beauty and wealth, in a borderless dialogue with Nature, with all living beings, penetrating the depths of human sentiments and existence.

In this way, we can imagine the creative march of all human beings, in a perspective in which violence, inhuman actions, irrational, chaotic factors will all be gone; eliminated from the face of the earth forever, forgotten by humans along the pathway we have described, of a profound transformation in the structure of thought, of human thinking, and of positioning vis-à-vis life.

Therefore, only optimism, creative force and art can prevail, understood broadly as the strategic forces helping humankind overcome the impasse and the uncertain transitional process we are undergoing.

*This will take us the next 50 years but, when we finish the 21st century, humanity will be living quite differently than at the end of the 20th century, or even now as we begin the- 21st.*

In conclusion, the information and knowledge society opens its doors for us to genuinely construct, collectively, a sustainable future for the entire planet.



## RECONQUERING WISDOM

P A R T

THE GREAT STRENGTH OF MODERN WISDOM LIES IN UNDERSTANDING AND NOT IN CONDEMNATION ... THE GREAT LINES OF WISDOM ARE FOUND IN THE WILL TO ASSUME HUMAN DIALOGUES, SAPIENS-DEMENS DIALOGUES, PROSE-POETRY DIALOGUES ... KNOWING THAT WISDOM CONTAINS AN INHERENT CONTRADICTION: IT IS MADNESS TO LIVE TO WISELY.<sup>6</sup>

EDGAR MORIN

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<sup>6</sup> Edgar Morin, *Seven Complex Lessons in Education for the Future*.



# 2

C H A P T E R

## A NEW MINDSET AND NEW ETHICAL THINKING

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*THINKING TO LIFE AND LIVING TO THINK, THE COMMITMENT  
TO LIVING WELL AND BEING IMPASSIONED BY THOUGHT, AS  
THE BASIS FOR A CULTURE OF COMPLEXITY THAT CAN BUILD  
SOLID ETHICS.*



## A. A NEW MINDSET

### Perceiving life as a process:

61. The principles ordering metaphysical history in the West are: the rationality of scientific knowledge, the effectiveness of technical production and the persuasiveness of religious, social and artistic values. This perception leads to prevailing, dominating models at the basis of interpersonal relationships, which are ranked according to their hierarchical importance, in terms of operational capacity they entail or involve.

Division and exclusion of differences grants security for normal operation. So, essential notions appear, such as true or false, good or bad, effective or ineffective, operational or non-operational, important or insignificant, profitable or unprofitable, safe or unsafe, timely or untimely, dispensable or indispensable, questionable or unquestionable, etc.

All these notions or routines, when operating and applied, run up against their own limits and rigidities, so they are considered weak. So, when differences arise, they are no longer viewed as threats, but as dreams and promises of salvation.

Life, understood as a process, has its beginnings and endings, times and moments that are always joined to links of subordination. Accordingly, just as we proposed in the first part of this book, life becomes more complex and harder-looking, referents are missing, intensity and strength are lost in those areas in which they were the foremost guides.

The experience of disorientation, of chaos and non-viability, takes shape and settles in: a great incapacity to progress in life, which calls for including those who have always been excluded,

contrasting and adding up the differences and diversity. This is the main lesson with which the 21st century is beginning.

However, at the same time, there is a powerfully emerging awareness that diversity is the great foundation of life, of freedom. That law, rights and norms guiding us are also the result of what humans understand or fail to understand. Thus, peace can arise only from acceptance of others, from genuine tolerance.

True peace does not result from decrees or declarations of equality, as we have been able to see in preceding decades, to refer to just one part of human history. Violence arises when we decide or attempt to eliminate the free play of contradictions and contributions of differences, or being different, of those who are different.

In this life experience, in which science and technology have been placed on a pillar, contents, knowledge, and analysis become totally relativized, fractured and split. Unifying thought disappears.

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Operational actions and pragmatic calls promote control over the process, decreasing or eliminating plurality, homogenization, as we have already warned. On the basis of this simplicity in guiding society, everything tends to be accepted without any discussion, without understanding, simply because it is proposed by the established power; in this way, domination mechanisms progress. As long as control works, as long as it is operational, regardless of the model, which is not necessarily the only one.

Human beings currently pursue their maximum purpose of “producing at any cost”, but would like to accurately determine what is real and in this way ground our history in very specific definitions. For this purpose, we work with reason, rationality, which can produce anything: real or unreal, true or false, etc.

Innovation, creation, contemplation and leisure are all rolled into a single package by this devouring machine of production. Everything must be subordinated to business. However, it is urgent to recall Aristotle’s pronouncement in *his Politics: Leisure is the point upon which all human achievements hinge.*

When the idea of business surrounds and goes beyond the most sensitive fields of this human walk into the future, such as cloning, genetics, virtual life, recycling (a key principle for the environment), humankind must be profoundly concerned.

How can business go along with leisure? Is it feasible for business, in the future, to finance leisure? How can we get over the status quo, repetition, reiteration, mistakes made into behavioral norms?

Many other questions come up in this context. For example, will it be possible for critics to build a different road from the apocalyptic one we have described and which appears with increasing frequency? If we continue praising differences, will this run the risk of serious isolation? Will cultural pluralism be condemned to the giddy race toward globalization? What will remain of subjectivity, of culture in a virtual world? Ultimately, in the future, can values, quality, speed and results be reconciled? Will it be timely, at this point, to take a look at art-techno-science interactions? If development today is the fruit of “competing values”, will it be possible to make it sustainable and lasting? How can we encourage thought grounded in wholeness, covering west, east, north and south? Herein lies one of the most exciting challenges of our time, that of re-conquering what could be called “universal wisdom”. Can this be possible?

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62. By contrast with what we have just said about the West in general, we are aware of other ways of approaching life, such as the ancestral communities of Latin America and the Caribbean (or the other multiple manifestations of life, with incalculable wealth, in other parts of the world). They still remain in force, to a large degree, to this very day. It is necessary to value them greatly, get to know them, meet them halfway, for a frank dialogue to strengthen new collective visions.

This was UNESCO’s purpose, under the Trans-Disciplinary Project, in conducting two major research projects, which resulted in the publication of two books, which we strongly recommend.<sup>7</sup> Indigenous communities and organizations were involved, with their own wise men and women,

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<sup>7</sup> UNESCO. *El vuelo de la Serpiente* [The Flight of the Serpent], Editorial Siglo Hombre Editores.

UNESCO. *Poder, Sabiduría y Comprensión: América se repiensa desde sus Orígenes* [Power, Wisdom and Understanding – Re-Thinking the Americas on the Basis of Their Origins], Editorial Siglo Editores, 2002.

and outside experts and academicians, who have been devoted to studying and living with these communities. This tapped topics of tremendous importance: the overall concept of society and social organization; territory; power and representation; political power and representation; local and governmental power and the conflicts it entails; political power and spiritual representation, since spirituality, the sacred sense of the world, lies at the heart of their cultures; the idea of developing one's own way and possibilities of contributing to enriching western thought.

One of the most outstanding aspects was to discover that all communities are based on a "law of origin", which they respect profoundly and which is the basis of their law, and norms for daily living. This "law" is grounded in something very un-western, and can help exorcise the gods and hold humans up higher.

From the "law" emerges "Higher Law" which opposes the law governing the countries where they live.

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**The Earth** is an essential part illuminating that law. They feel that the Earth is their Mother, "Pacha Mama", holding the origin of each person and community, giving a real meaning to belonging and an orientation / purpose to life.

The territory is sacred and non-negotiable because it holds the order of the world inside it, supported by the rituals. White people, according to their ways, remove the sacredness from the territory, disturbing it and leading their mother's earthy body into chaos.

In turn, **the spiritual** is the center-point of their life plans and profound respect for operational experience, as represented by the elders in their communities. Consider that the world comprises two dualities, male and female, which are complementary and not opposing, as the West would take them to be.

Ways of settling conflicts and re-creating harmony happen through reciprocity and dialogue, consider others as a mirror of ourselves and getting to know ourselves through others.

Ongoing methodical observation of deities, Nature and the human community has enabled these peoples to understand that we are indissolubly part of the magnificent fabric of life, joined, interwoven, in cycles of expansion and contraction, where dialogue and reciprocity become unequalled means of acquiring and growing in **wisdom**, enabling us to be, live, recreate the disturbed world, through simple, common, everyday actions.

This observation is immersed within a profound social and poetic matrix, fabulously enriching the intangible heritage of the Americas. Since the old days, dialogue between generations has been a very clear function of shamans, wise men and women, the elders, symbols, myths and gestures.

In this way, they nourish their culture and dreams, ensuring the possibility of living together in brotherhood, in daily life. The many faces of God have set the majestic warp and woof of these cultures, becoming part and contributing to individual or collective creation.

The living process weaves a fabric of many threads, which comprise the rich, interwoven basis for existence.

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The spoken word and gestures have had a magical, divine nature, and gave rise to the written word, as an image or material body trapping the wind and filling it with meaning. This comprised, from the beginnings, a special language, oriented toward people who could bear the challenge of facing the esthetic and getting it into motion.

This representation used graphical images with great symbolic meaning, esoteric language protected by the meaning of its hidden mysteries. The books of the Mayas or the Nahua culture, known as codices, were pictographic, then ideographic and later phonetic.

They constantly stewarded a holistic view of the universe, so the graphics they constructed had that poly-functional value in which colors, associations and other small features offered different readings for different levels of meaning. In this way, they kept and applied codes of values.

Knowledge is a dialectical process comprising three levels that enrich each other: emotion, intuition and reason. Once the emotions are connected and interested, intuition would show the way. Once intuition revealed the sources, in awe at the universe's inherent language, reason could reflect on it, constructing reality and materializing the search, till the answer appeared.

Then they would say: "emotion without intuition is a pointless urge; intuition without reason is knowledge without an anchor; reason without intuition or emotion is vain knowledge ..."

The basis of daily learning has always been the same: to acquire wisdom and affirm values by multiple experience, in which people and communities recreate life and all its expressions through their work and community activities. Culture becomes the warp on which all learning is woven throughout life.

Thought, knowledge and promotion of values have existed and taken multiple complementary forms. Temples, monasteries, churches, libraries, where people gathered and still gather codices, scrolls, engravings, carved stones, manuscripts, drawings, weavings, music, books, etc.

In our times, schools, universities and learning institutions have always been associated with these repositories. At present, in the virtual age of growing globalization, this notion is expanding forums and institutions without any spatial constraints, media and networks for contacts and work, citizens interacting on a planetary basis, taking time as a continuum, without fractions or periods, all of this providing a marvelous framework especially suited to an ongoing representation of the world.

### **When ideologies die, another category arises, the ideology of reality**

63. In the early 21st century, there is some concern about the exaltation of reality, as the great key to constructing new thought that will lead to the planet's sustainability, acquiring almost the status of idol-worship.

Worshiping reality entails a monotheistic vision of reason; excluding, dogmatic reason, on the basis of which irrational assumptions are often made about those who do not share that vision. This worship raises clamorous voices calling for pluralistic reasoning, which they consider the maximum achievement of this century.

Plural reasoning suggests one way of directing the processes of constructing thought and relevant tasks that is quite different from the one posed by the ideology of reality. It proposes complex understanding of reality, destroying borders and the constraints impinging on western reason, in particular.

From the perspective of the complex understanding of reality, many contradictions and antagonisms must be revisited, e.g. “ours” vs. “theirs”; “it is that way” vs. “it has always been that way”; “it cannot be otherwise” vs. “it must not be otherwise”; “we have always done that” vs. “why do it differently”; “it is surely the lesser evil” vs. “anything else would be worse”. These antagonisms and evolution will yield both “order” and “disorder”, the cosmos versus the chaos.

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Revisiting the above antagonisms is necessary to understand complex reality. For instance, in ours vs. theirs, borders that are set and invented, we have seen during recent history how this has re-drawn geographical borders, burying the traces of powerful identities, contributing great strength to the West, among other results. Now, we have to overcome this touchy antagonism, by redefining spiritual geography.

If irrationalism is dangerous, so is unbounded exaltation of western reason, as history has shown. To make the future viable, this distinction must be made. Thus, it will be very dangerous to play “the triumph of the West”, because this would entail, as well, its own defeat.

Concerns along these lines arise when we observe actions regarding exogenous or external aspects we consider deadly for western progress in terms of freedom, in particular free markets. Once these barriers have been demolished, the free market will not be endangered by anything. Those who uphold and defend this type of rationality, calling it “democratic”, do so from the

perspective, quite often, of exporting this product, like any other market commodity. This entails the risk of impoverishing the meaning of reason and freedom, which always require spiritual tension and full inspiration by the laws of actual reality, in order to avoid becoming simply servants of a given fad in history.

This is the foundation for those who superficially believe or propose that, when ideologies die, one must simply deal with simplistic reality. However, that perspective, with the above ingredients, may prove perverse or pernicious.

The greatest warning is that, in this direction, visions are proposed or created for the world's development that are alarming and either contradict or require serious analysis in terms of other perceptions and proposals grounded in the affirmation that "*there must be some other way*" or "*there may be some other way*". If we do not make such an analysis, we will 100 always be stuck back in passive acceptance of what there is, which ultimately will always be compared with "*what could have been*". The great challenge is to work for sustainability from where we are now.

Those who defend reason claim they are right, and do not respect others because their own starting reality is the proper one. However, where does reality start? In the above terms, insistence on a position would seem to lead to the notion of "current-ness". So, would we be struggling to defend and produce the present?

This obliges us seriously to be very careful, because such a direction could very readily be detoured from the true, profound thinking about constructing genuine thought, leading to simple enrichment of the present, uncritically, because "that's the way it is" and "that is enough". This is a challenge for thinkers, intellectuals and experts, especially.

To isolate oneself, to stay away, to withdraw from present realities will always be useful. From that distance, one can observe reality in depth, to unravel it, reveal it, make it truly transparent and accessible for all.

We must think about the present from an awareness of impurities, of traditions, illusions and errors and not only from the “barriers-bordersfortresses” that are claimed as the only guidelines or possibilities for proper life. Staying at a distance from the free play of market forces, from market rules, to better understand the plural, complex nature of reality and life does not entail a return to living in caves. Rather, it simply entails the clear presence of historical accountability and the will to cooperate in building a viable world.

### **Thinking at the service of what?**

64. The reasoning part of knowledge is a way of being and not the only way to think, grounded in the transformations that civilization must undergo. Thus, throughout western culture, thinking has been, at the outset, **at the service of being**; at the end of Antiquity, it was **oriented toward service belief**; by the end of the Middle Ages, the Renaissance, it was at the service of knowing; and, now, in this new century, many advocate placing it at **the service of understanding, of wholeness.**

Thinking at the service of understanding must not exclude or repress anything special in order to come into its own. It need not be understood as a special victory, but rather as a waiving of all plans to dominate, giving up power for power’s sake. This would require becoming free of particular hang-ups, in order to move confidently toward the unknown and the uncertain, living fully alongside reality or the context.

Such thought is not an exercise, or doing anything in particular, but something we reach bit by bit, by stages. There will be no special process, or methodology, to achieve this. It will basically require giving and accepting the light that comes into the setting where one is or acts.

It entails continual discovery of the entire environment, not as a summation of things, or a joining of parts. Or example, the action of calculating better, of devoting the reason to calculation, at which point thinking stops, because it accepts only that which is precise, can be determined or synthesized; it puts together vehicles with precision-machined parts, with fragments, but losing view of the simple whole. This is analytical and synthetic, but partial.

The context is that whole thinking for understanding. This integration, interweaving realities, reassembles and links to integrated life experience.

The greatest difficulties in reaching this lie in the constraints imposed on thought when at the service of knowledge. It generates a way of being as a person, which could be called being for knowledge; the other approach is integrated, or even radical.

Acquiring skills and abilities, information or data, making rules or models, helps in the desire to know, and people do not have to change anything 102 about what they are or do. The above can include skills for calculating, establishing relationships, making tests, and so on. Thus, learners will have what they need to produce and to grow in knowledge, but their being will never have to transform, and will always remain the same, but with a greater pool of knowledge.

Philosophical, scientific, natural knowledge seeks above all to be precise, clear, operational, effective, and never has any purpose of changing people themselves. The subject and object of knowing remain unaltered in the process of producing knowledge.

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Devoting thought to the search for understanding does not require so much knowing, mastering, or know-how. It appears, it begins the process of knowing, mastering or learning something, and there consolidates changes and transformations in every way possible. Many minds (or heads) are full and need to start thinking about understanding. They may still have room for knowledge and information.

Thinking for understanding, which is required to promote the planet's sustainability, calls for new human qualities, such as approaching and reading the context and phenomena differently. It also proposes another level of action, different from those actions required by knowledge when at the service of production for operational, pragmatic purposes.

This also calls for tremendous patience and capacity to wait and give of oneself. Heraclitus, in ancient times, stated: **“Expecting the unexpected is a prerequisite to be able to find it”**.

Just as seeking human greatness is difficult and complex, so are maturing and growing. Thus, attempting to think in order to understand can also be painful, difficult, confusing and complex. The first step will be to open up, to express the will to change, to transform ways and attitudes of individual and collective behavior.

### Complex thinking

65. Complex thinking has a special purpose: contributing to producing a new human being – a human being with a sense of relations, of relationships and dialogues; who will always know that, to grow in identity, one must strongly interact with one's environment; and that, without that relationship, practically nothing will happen; who knows for sure what a relationship with the local context means, and the relationship between the local context and the planetary context, and how profoundly inseparable they are; who is convinced that all sciences, disciplines and philosophies are organizations of knowledge and wisdom that belong to a whole, and are not isolated.

Similarly, whoever has experience will acknowledge that thinking is the art of organizing knowledge, reconnecting it, as the art of thinking. It seeks to cultivate the capacity to understand the complexity of life, to perceive it, in such a way as to cultivate the culture of complexity, which is the only way to reach understanding.

Complex thought entails an ethics and the expected outcome is indestructible solidarity among all human beings. It avows that there is no explanation without understanding, or understanding without the explanatory dimension; that logic and coherence are essential to understanding, but also *spiritual clarity*; recognizes diversity in unity and unity in diversity. Complex thought calls us to universality, to a dialogue among cultures and among human beings.

66. Educator Edgar Morín has put his energy and enthusiasm into the ideas driving his foremost proposal, **The Method**, a five-volume compendium to date. The sixth and last is in progress, addressing the issue of *Ethics of Understanding*, the work and leadership that UNESCO has been pleased to promote since 1994, in the field of trans-disciplinarity and thinking for a sustainable future (see, in the attached bibliography, Morin's main works).

Other thinkers, on the different continents, have also contributed to this difficult task undertaken by UNESCO, which must continue with redoubled efforts through 2015.

This year 2003, UNESCO has presented another book on complex thinking, the outgrowth of an outstanding process of reflection and study under way in Colombia, with the participation of specialists from a number of countries in this region, including Professor Edgar Morín himself.

This book is entitled: **Manual for Beginning to Teach Complex Thinking**.<sup>8</sup> This Manual attempts to examine the different trends in complex thinking, as a textbook that will be amended continually. It highlights the elements of the different concepts, such as systemic thought, cybernetics and information theory, pulled together so that all studies about human experience will be multi-faceted and multi-referential.

**This is a simple invitation to stop seeing simply and stop approaching the context or environment as parcels or fragments, as already mentioned.** This book took almost three years of continual efforts to reflect, with trans-disciplinary representatives of a huge range of professions, skills and disciplines. Nearly 12,000 people attended reflection workshops to seek appropriate directions. We recommend the Manual.

Another book, also the outgrowth of these efforts to reflect on complex thinking, also happened during this same 2000-2002 period: "*Educating during the Planetary Age*"<sup>9</sup>, involving Edgar Morín. This book has already been translated into several languages.

The purpose of that book was to continue exploring complex thinking, education, and the proposals made in the book on *Seven Complex Lessons in Education for the Future*, already mentioned in part one of this book.

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<sup>8</sup> Published by UNESCO/Quito, with input from various Colombian institutions, 2003

<sup>9</sup> Edgar Morín, Emilio Roger & Raúl Domingo Mott, *Educación en la era Planetaria*; UNESCO-University of Valladolid- Spain; IIPC International Institute for Complex Thinking; USAL University of El Salvador, Vice Rector for Research and Development (first edition).

These two books, under the Trans-Disciplinary Project by UNESCO, have attempted to propose ideas, driving forces and new directions, in particular, for education. Doubtlessly, this purpose has been achieved amply, but it will be necessary to continue devoting enormous efforts and resources to thinking in general, to thinking about and by education during this planetary age, for the 2005-2015 decade.

Without an exception, all academic, research, and training centers, thinkers and specialists, politicians and directors of institutions, companies and nongovernmental organizations are invited to join in these efforts and contribute richly to them.

It is not only the most sophisticated thinking by pure scholars that we need today, when we have to reinvent processes and modes of collective learning. Above all, **we must collectively, on a world scale, interest every human being in thinking as a way of understanding and therefore to achieve sustainability.**

67. Production of tools and materials, plays, musical shows, animated books, opening of cultural activities, public discussions simply getting people together, this will all help greatly in this all-encompassing voyage that humankind must take together. Along these lines, many outputs have been sponsored by UNESCO, UNICEF, UNFPA, WHO, UNDP and other United Nations agencies. Non-governmental organizations have also played a remarkable role.

To mention one of these outputs from UNESCO, which has contributed and is contributed greatly on all continents, is the one called Humanity on the Planet, a new world vision based on the construction of a new world map or chart, coordinated for UNESCO by French professor Daniel Noin<sup>10</sup>, under the Trans-Disciplinary Project.

Work based on this new World Map has begun to achieve a greater level of detail in this proposal for each continent.

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<sup>10</sup> Daniel Noin , L' Humanité sur la Planète , , Carte Mondiale, Editions UNESCO, Paris, 1997

This work has been done, by UNESCO/UNFPA, for Africa and the Arabic region. These two institutions intend to complete this effort in the other regions. This instrument will also require tools and the academic textbook with guidelines for politicians, planners, researchers, educators and others.

This instrument also includes the mathematical model prepared by professor Mesarovic of the United States who, with a significant group of specialists from all over the world, addressed the task of complex reading of any place on the planet, through a mathematical model with 500 main variables. This model has been applied in several African countries, and is being used to support a redefinition of secondary schooling in several countries.

## **B. NEW ETHICAL THINKING**

### **New awareness of ethics**

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68. The subject of ethics plays a leading role in the planet's sustainable future. Readers have seen that "ethics" is a strategic referent in our proposals and discussions so far.

UNESCO, as the guiding agency within the United Nations System for affairs involving human beings as a whole, human affairs, humanism, living beings and all that which comprises and represents the planet, as an expression of sacred unity, grounded in laws recognized by all, unchangeable in their perfect balance and stability must unavoidably address a revaluing and enrichment of the topic of ethics, and has done so since its creation.

This world movement in progress has returned ethics to the place it must occupy in any society and in international relations. The appearance of the very concept of sustainability clearly shows that there is a clear awareness centering attention on ethics and concerned about ethical issues.

There can be no doubt that we are moving seriously toward a new world ethics rooted in the consciousness of what is sacred in life, in the mortal dangers now surrounding life, in the inter-related nature of living which transcends all systems of loyalties and beliefs current on this

planet, with profound respect and admiration for them all, since they are the true foundation and driving force for this new ethics.

The new ethics must have fantastic appeal, power to motivate, impact and clarity, simplicity and coherence so it can be followed worldwide. It must also be the driving force and common thread in the adaptations that we must make in the rules and norms for living grounded in an expanded notion of **governing societies**.

Ethics must also be the beacon for convergence and consensus regarding study and decisions in all sensitive issues regarding sustainability by the international communities during the first two decades of this new century.

It must plant the seeds that will progressively bear fruit in this marvelous voyage of the 21st century, especially when the future is enshrouded by such uncertainties and instabilities. This is an addition argument to continue working eagerly in this ethical context.

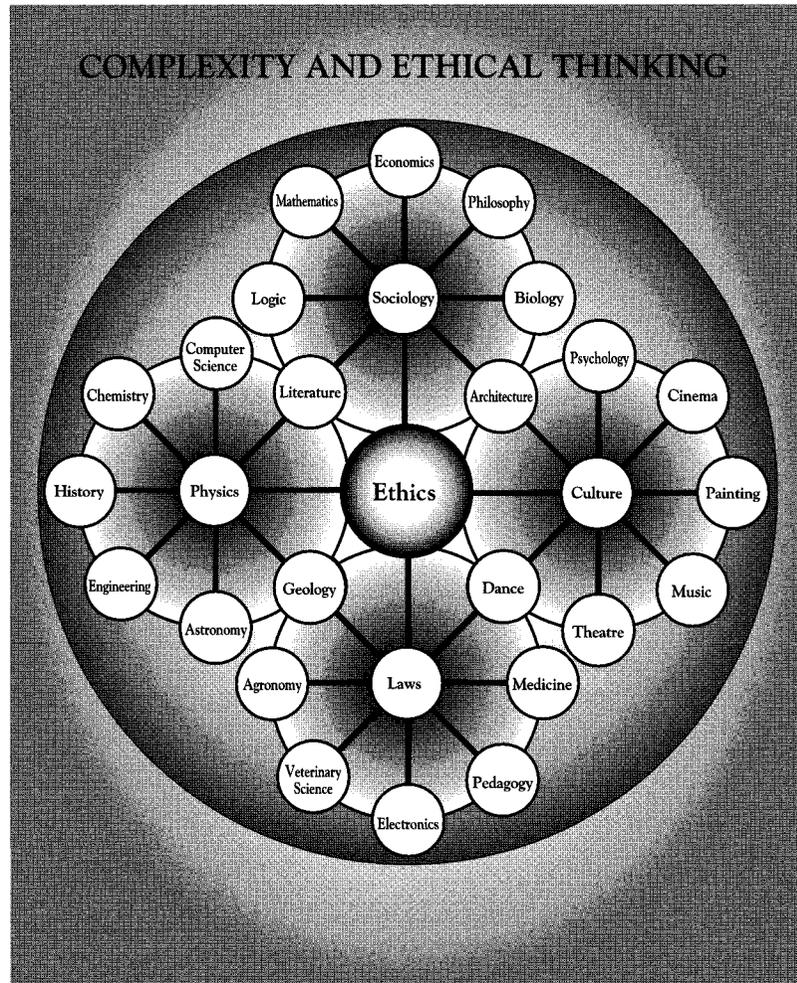
Humankind never thought, at the beginning of the 18th century when the industrial revolution began, or was at all prepared for it, mentally or technically. However, having accepted, at this starting-point of working for a more organized society, more inter-related in its daily life, and to create and accept certain rules and principles for living in society, has produced without having proposed it or thought about it, this wonderful leap forward in history: today, certain uses of this new thinking have concerned us and enabled us to discuss new visions of the world, and understand better how they work.

With this background, humankind must be aware of the agreements being made now, on a global scale, in the fields of ethics, morality and values, which can and must lead, without any doubt, to changes that are now unimaginable and unsuspected.

Although in coming years or decades, the human race must confront catastrophes, gigantic crises, worldwide confusion, despair and even the paralysis of entire peoples, this will all be just the manifestation of planetary life viewed as a process of adjustment, of review, of acceptance of errors, of introducing new inventions and innovations, bold responses, by the entire world

population—and that the world's population will be increasingly united and anxious to learn, to take part in and adapt to the ongoing changes.

Well-grounded universal ethics will be the lasting lifesaver in these painful throes of the history of the future, times when undesired effects break drastically and violently into the pool of human wisdom.



**Accepting these times, in the future, with wisdom, patience and a certain reflexive, creative distance, will be the behavior not of acquiescence but of proactive rejection.**

Peoples have great capacity to understand and even anticipate risks, dangers and limitations and to prepare, insofar as possible, to cope with them. Where they do show great shortfalls, in every region of the world, is in seeing and recognizing the potential that they have, in the resources surrounding them, in their available installed capacity, to reorganize, discover, innovate, correct and create new solutions for their livelihoods.

For example, a movement has recently arisen to reflect and act on poverty to achieve a world without poverty an ethical issue of great significance.

Within this movement, which UNESCO is supporting through its transdisciplinary actions, particular stress is laid on new readings of the phenomenon of poverty, and the use and discovery of aggressive new policies and tools.

We witness the success of applying the idea of micro-credit, as a strategic tool for helping eradicate poverty, and for mandatory convergence of many services and sectors working for the poor.

Professor and thinker Muhammad Yunus, President of the Grameen Bank of Bangladesh, is the world authority on this topic, and has been working since the 1990s with UNESCO in efforts to achieve sustainability on this planet, and with the World Bank, in particular. The first regional meeting in the Americas on micro-lending was organized with these agencies in 2001.

In Puebla, Mexico (November 2001) and then in New York (November 2002), UNESCO cooperated in holding the first World Micro-Credit Summit, to see how to accelerate the international community's efforts toward a world without poverty, currently the planet's greatest ethical challenge. 2005 has been declared by the United Nations as International Micro-Credit Year.

Regarding the notions of consumption, energy use, water use, safeguarding the seas, protecting air quality and eliminating pollution from mega-cities and elsewhere – all these sensitive issues affecting everyone’s lives involve ethics, as the great inspirational source of information for political, scientific and social convergence.

### **Steps toward global ethics**

69. At the end of the previous century, UNESCO decided to present a guide for common work to the international community for 21st-century ethics, based on intensive research by UNESCO and consultations over much of the past five-year period. It was prepared as a contribution to 2001, declared by the United Nations as the International Year for Dialogue among Civilizations.

This working guide presents ideas pushing for “universal ethics”. These ideas are grounded in the central principles agreed upon by the international community during the world summits organized by the United Nations since 1990. They particularly stress the six central principles adopted in “Agenda 21” 111 at the Rio de Janeiro Summit on Environment and Development (1992). They also highlight the ten commandments from the Social Summit (1995) oriented toward ensuring quality of life worldwide.

The international community has progressed, particularly, in this sensitive area. Studies and research have supported the debate on the need for and ways to create universal norms, values and principles, in order to accelerate and strengthen positive, creative interactions among all nations, seeking to prevent conflicts and crises, and to redouble collective efforts to attain prosperity for all and lasting peace.

One of these efforts made a “**global civic ethics**”, as the foundation for cooperation among all societies and cultures to address the world’s global problems. The report was entitled: **Our Global Neighborhood: an “ethical code”**, based on a key body of values, included: absolute respect for life; justice and equity; mutual respect; integrity; reciprocity, considered the golden rule. The report presents a list of rights and responsibilities, as the basis for creating a “**global civil society**”.

In turn, the International Commission on Culture created by UNESCO, under the former Secretary-General of the United Nations, Javier Pérez de Cuéllar, also presented in 1995 the report entitled *Our Creative Diversity*. It advocates, like the other report, global ethics, a group of essential common values and minimum moral guidelines, to conduct the world's most sensitive issues.

It appeals to creative policy, social imagination and cultural pluralism. It indicates that the body of global ethics could comprise human rights and responsibilities; democracy and elements of civil society, such as freedom of the press and information and regular, transparent elections, freedom of assembly; protection of the rights of minorities; precise agreements to resolve conflicts and organize negotiations and equity with and among generations.

In 1993 in Chicago, U.S.A., the World Parliament of Religions, representing over 120 religions, adopted a major declaration oriented toward promoting global ethics.

The difficult consensus achieved by the Parliament stressed un-negotiable values, standards and fundamental moral attitudes. Two principles concern all world religions: **“all human beings must be treated humanely”** and **“what you want or expect others not to do to you, don't do that to them”**. These two principles are a moral guideline for all religions and also agree on the commitment to: a) a culture of non-violence and respect for life; b) a culture of solidarity and a just economic order; c) a culture of equal rights for all and gender equity, with true solidarity between women and men.

In 1997, the International Inter-action Council, comprising 30 chiefs of state, presented a document entitled “Universal Declaration of Responsibilities” to all chiefs of state, to the United Nations and to UNESCO. This declaration consists of 18 articles and five major areas of concern, which are the fundamental principles that should orient humankind (4 articles); non-violence and respect for life (3 articles); justice and solidarity (4 articles); tolerance (4 articles); mutual respect and sharing (3 articles). This declaration used, in general, the same format as the World Parliament of Religions.

The Institute for Global Ethics, based in the United States, published a report in 1994 entitled *Shared Values for a Troubled World*, with many values acting as cross-cutting issues in cultures: love, unity, liberty, tolerance, responsibility and respect for life, truthfulness, impartiality and justice.

The so-called “Third Millennium Project” presented UNESCO in 1999 with a Declaration on Human Rights and Responsibilities, to commemorate the new century. This Declaration has 12 chapters and 41 articles, as follows: a) general issues (2 articles); b) the right to life and human security (7 articles); c) human security and an equitable international order (6 articles); d) meaningful participation in public affairs (1 article); e) freedom of opinion, speech, assembly, association and worship (4 articles); f) the right to physical personal safety (5 articles); g) equality (5 articles); h) protection for minorities and 113 indigenous peoples (2 articles); i) rights of children (2 articles); j) work with quality and standard of living (2 articles); k) education, art and culture (2 articles); l) the right to healing and health.

Research into global ethics is promoted by almost every sector of society. Financial institutions including the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank and the World Trade Organization, have all created a group of principles and standards, which they continue to reinforce progressively. Many multi-lateral and continental or regional agreements are oriented toward this same concern, which is increasingly visible and present worldwide, as the globalization and trade process accelerates, with demands and results not always shared by all.

International cultural conventions adopted under the UNESCO’s aegis go in this same direction: affirming principles, norms and essential values for humankind. UNESCO has completed, this year, the process of negotiating a World Convention on “Intangible Heritage of Humankind”, another very delicate issue, very current and sensitive. Scholars, thinkers, political scientists, representatives of different religions are all concerned about such a key issue for the planet’s sustainable future.

Civil society has also mobilized around the issue of ethics in this last decade. Since 1992, a major international movement, supported by non-governmental organizations, has been working on preparing a proposal to share their concerns and directives for universal conduct.

In 2001, the **Earth Charter** was concluded, as a very thorough universal charter of ethics. It was presented to the chiefs of state at the Johannesburg Summit (August 2002). It is currently being carefully studied on every continent.

Finally, in the work guide that UNESCO has presented to the international community on global ethics early this century, four major areas of concern continue to orient actions: a) relations with Nature; b) human endeavors; c) individual-community relations; d) justice. Along with this, there is the work being done by Commissions under UNESCO, including the important Bio-Ethics Commission.

### **Constructing the ethics of the future**

70. As we study and pursue global ethics, we see in the very notion of understanding this concept, that ethics is summarized in the art of living and understanding in a totally disinterested manner.

This vision would not expect any “reciprocity” or “retribution” since it would be able to understand the failure to understand others, by others. It rejects nothing, does not excommunicate, centering its attention on arguing and rebutting.

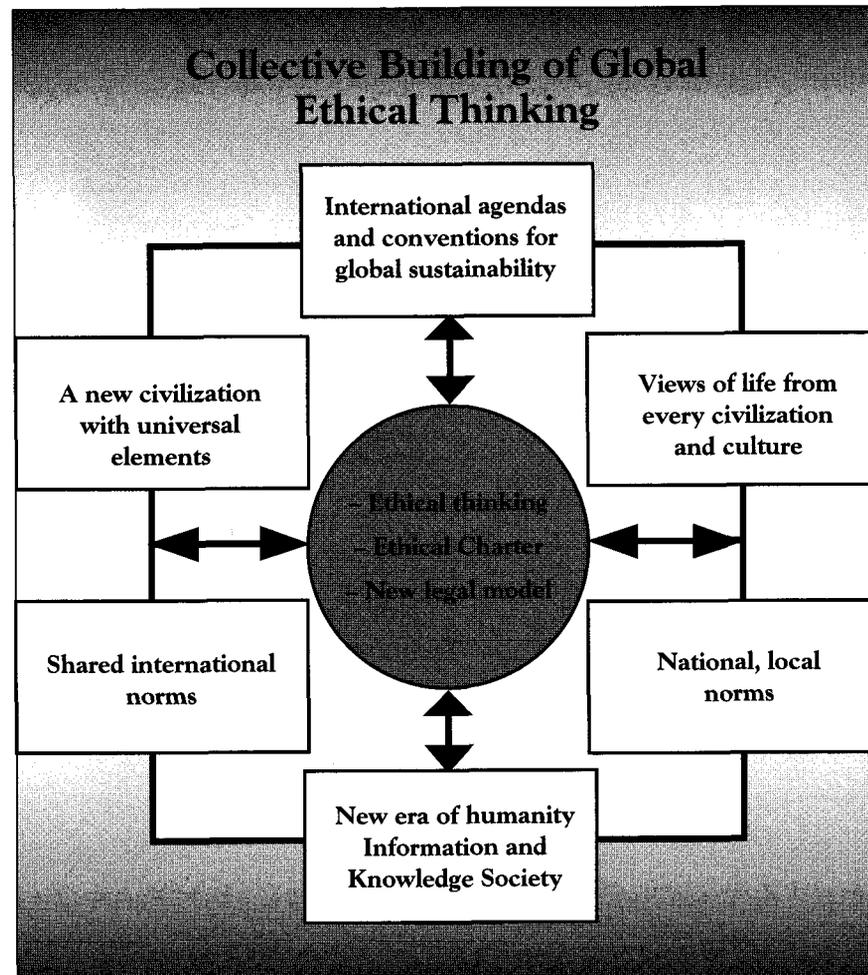
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Consequently, such strong notions that have caused such damage in the recent past as “**traitor**” and “**treason**” can disappear, because it is more useful to find out what mistakes and deviations have occurred than to place the blame. Nor can “condemnation” figure among priorities, since the primary idea will be to pave the way for human interests, humanization of society, which begins with relationships, with a handshake, with interest in others, about others.

Tolerance, in this context, is an ethical choice assuming a profound conviction regarding life and acceptance, without scales or limits, of difference, of contraries, of others’ ideas or proposals unlike our own way of thinking. Democracy is nourished and strengthened by differing viewpoints, clashing ideas and opinions; tolerance refers above all to the world of ideas and thought, not to violent actions, murders or aggression; nor does this call for respecting that which is outside the notion of nobility.

The most transcendent meaning of globalization involves progress in understanding among human beings, along with authentic moral and intellectual solidarity, for which all cultures must remain open to unending learning. This assumes, moreover, openness by all societies to facilitating exchanges, possibilities for adjustments as we go, as we more clearly see the errors or drifting from course. Cultural manifestations (music, theater, literature, poetry), with the help of new information and communication technologies, are powerful vehicles for this opening-up that we need so urgently.

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71. The ethics of the future, as proposed by UNESCO in the book *Seven Complex Lessons in Education for the Future*, Chapter VII, must be conceived of in totally human terms.

This will contemplate individuals, society and humankind in full interaction, giving rise to human consciousness and spirit. The above would “assume the human condition individual-society-humankind in the complexity of our times” to “achieve humanness in ourselves, in our personal consciousness”, and to “assume human destiny with all its antinomies and fullness”. This would require:

- Working to humanize humanity.
- Making a dual pilot trial on this planet: obeying life, guiding life.
- Achieving planetary unity in diversity.
- Respecting others’ differences and their identity with themselves.
- Developing the ethics of solidarity.
- Developing the ethics of understanding.
- Developing the ethics of the human race.

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This vision proposes the great hope that humankind can achieve “**planetary citizenship and consciousness**”. Individual consciousness must go beyond individuality. Ethics, in these terms, assumes will and aspiration, and an acceptance of the uncertain and the unsuspected.

In the quest for planetary sustainability and especially in this age of information and knowledge, the notion of humankind is no longer something abstract, but quite concrete – a fundamental, vital reality, which is now threatened by serious dangers, “threats on its life”. This has given us a common destiny. Saving the human race by contributing to human self-realization is the great challenge. “Humankind, from now on, is an ethical notion driving everyone.”

”We have no keys to open the doors to a better future. We do not know which way to go. We will have to make our road by traveling it”.

The mission for a reinvented, renewed United Nations System could be stated in such terms, as we begin this 21st century.

# 3

## CHAPTER

### A NEW CIVILIZATION

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*A PROPER POLICY FOR CIVILIZATION IS ONE LEADING  
HUMANITY TOWARD UNDERSTANDING AND LIVING WELL,  
REINVENTING CURRENT NOTIONS OF WELL-BEING AND  
MATERIAL ACCUMULATION.*



### **Civilization, in singular and plural**

72. Bit by bit, the “common goods” of humanity at large have grown. Writing, fire, mathematics, domestication of livestock, are no longer the property of a single civilization, but part of universal collective property. The spread of these goods is growing and, in modern times, for example, technologies that have arisen in the West are taken throughout the planet, used and welcomed.

Highways, airports, gigantic buildings, railroads, television, radio, all massively used on every continent could they homogenize the world? Many feel that we are at the threshold of building a new, universal civilization, at a time when civilization (in singular) is opening out and upgrading through contributions and parts shared by all peoples, attempting to find a new life.

However, industrial “civilization”, although it has expanded many elements and ways of life, is not accepted fully in all dimensions and proposals. In the history of civilizations, it is very clear that it has happened amidst tremendous sharing and borrowing, which has enriched the different civilizations, renewing as well as affirming them.

Of course, in our times, thanks to the immense development of information and communications technologies, the situation is changing. It would seem that, for the first time, we are witnessing a new phenomenon, with a civilization thrusting itself with great force and capacity for imposition and action upon the rest.

So, we observe profound impacts, shaking up the basic structures of existing civilizations. However, although this phenomenon continues with as dynamically as we have said, there is also the widespread conviction that there will continue to be widely differentiated civilizations for a long time yet to come.

Historians, thinkers, scholars and experts from many disciplines categorically agree. Hence the importance of promoting effective, ongoing dialogue among the various civilizations, and respect and appreciation for them above and beyond any political or strategic considerations.

### **Civilized, a notion opposite to barbaric or inhuman**

73. The word “civilization” emerged in the mid-18th century, out of necessity. Up until then in the West, in Europe, words were used that applied to the proper ways of current usage, such as “civil, civilized, police”, etc. The idea of police was oriented more toward the notion of social order.

In England (in the 18th century), the word “*civility*” was adopted, approaching the broader, *substantive* notion of civilization, that was urgently required. In France, Holland, Germany and Italy the notion expanded rapidly during that same century.

Two words began to be used, without very clear distinctions: “culture” and “civilization”. Sometimes they were treated almost as synonyms. Later, in the 19th century, the distinction between the two notions became clearer.

Civilization was linked to moral and material values, including more than the spirit, everything acquired by human beings: science, art, virtues, behaviors, order, etc. However, the notion varied according to countries, thinkers, ideologues and periods of time. For example, in 1935, Alfred Weber felt that culture was related to values, to normative principles, to ideals, to matters of the spirit, and civilization he related to technical and practical knowledge, and ways to act upon Nature.

So, a number of thinkers and historians warned about the possibility that civilization could one day destroy culture.

In the 18th century, there was ample recognition of the notion of civilization, though this gave rise to many difficulties. Anthropologists, for example, when they began studying primitive societies in the 19th century, used the term “primitive cultures”, in contrast to the notion of civilization based on observation of more complex societies.

Around 1850, the adjective cultural appeared in Germany to resolve the difficulties, to this very day, that arose. This term relates the contents of two terms: civilization and culture. That is, cultural goods, representing a cultural space, cultural history, cultural borrowing and enrichment.

However, at the end of the day, civilization will be understood better within the concept of continuity, through history. This concept represents, provides consistency and expression over lengthy periods of history, as if the evolution of societies and human beings happened in a spiraling pattern, without any marked stop-off points. This is a major challenge or historians, sociologists and anthropologists, among others.

A civilization can be understood through societies over time, over economic phenomena or systems, over generations. Human history will definitely be the history of civilizations. Finally, the most concrete way to understand the term is through concrete case studies of civilizations identified over history.

As a consequence, the notion of civilization covers the notion of societies. Both notions have major contents, transforming power, tensions and values that are very well defined and strong, with future images and ideals. Social tensions and efforts impact the vision of the world and the future appearing in each civilization, since ultimately this reflects what societies are, what they emphasize and what they hand on.

*Cities*, arising as a great dividing line among cultures and civilizations, from the more primitive rural peoples or scattered villages, to the dynamic present and promising future, have been

founded and have spread the world over as the clearest exterior sign of differences between the two notions. We recognize, of course, their boundaries and also their possibilities for exchange, inter-relationships and contributions to nearby areas, and that they are linked by communications networks that prevent destructive isolation.

The notion of civilization also includes the idea of collective ways of thinking, mindsets shared by many, where religion appears at the center of daily life in many societies. Christianity thus appears as a fundamental reality in the life of the West, as do the other religions in other parts of the world.

Economic, technological, demographic, biological data all relate to the notion of civilization as all societies. The destiny of civilizations is clearly related to all of them.

Human beings are the true builders of this reality, day by day shaping it through the way we interact with each other and with Nature and all living beings. We have shared this function since the 18th and 19th centuries, when the industrial revolution and machines made a radical cutoff in the evolution of history and human contributions to evolution and safeguarding life.

Economic fluctuations, rapid economic growth and expansion of economic activities have had a determining impact on civilizations and clearly will continue doing so in the future. This will better reveal and explain the appearance and handling of currency and the resources that gave rise to the poor, marginalized, or moneyed, bourgeois classes, etc., to explain the daily lives of people or societies.

Economics and technology began to suggest, by the early 20th century, a particular destination for the different civilizations and, as already mentioned, the idea of a more universal civilization.

Today, the great discussion and reflection involves the idea of an emerging global civilization leading to genuine quality of life for all human beings, that will be sustainable in the future. Not a terribly expensive, unaffordable civilization, such as the one currently based on unbridled consumerism for the very few, for under 20% of the world population, when the remaining 80%

has pressing basic needs unmet, in a serious, unjust situation that is tending remain unchanged for many years.

*Working properly for the planet's sustainability will definitely call for us all to understand the contribution and enormous force of the term "civilization", as a means for cohesion and coherence in building the history of the future and thoroughly understanding the interplay among cultures.*

### **Dialogue among civilizations**

74. The dialogue among civilizations is one of the issues that have awakened the greatest interest over the last few decades. The political dimension of the dialogue, especially, has revealed the great opportunity to examine the many viewpoints held on the different continents in order to resolve, those existing disagreements reflected in intolerance, racial discrimination, migratory issues and displacement of peoples, social issues and poverty, ignorance, among others.

For example, in the International Conference for Cooperation Among Cities and Citizens of the World in Favor of an Eco-Society (1998, Tokyo, Japan), sponsored by the United Nations Secretariat and UNESCO, was held under the Trans-Disciplinary Project to "Educate for a Viable World".

That Conference addressed the issue of civilizations in regard to the building and appearance of sustainable societies and cities "Eco-Societies" and "Eco-Cities". This poses the urgent need to reflect about the values, attitudes and lifestyles dominating evolution at this time.

The traditional culture of production, with all its excesses, excessive consumption and excessive waste, were dominant issues at the Conference, which recommended drastic policies and actions in all States.

*The Eco-Society was understood as the society in which sustainable human development is assured; in which people live according to values that ensure comfortable maintenance and protection for the*

*environment, promoting economic growth with a lesser environmental impact; and in which people are materially, spiritually and culturally happy.*

The international year recently proposed and celebrated by the United Nations on the “Dialogue Among Civilizations” (2001), in which UNESCO played a leading role, was one palpable demonstration of this topic in order to understand in depth the visions going around about the world’s future and present, which makes them more collective and unifying.

The potential and difficulties involved in the enormous task of finding directions to take, within the sustainable human development concept, in the current course of globalization and the meeting (some would say “clash”) among civilizations and cultures.

One major reflection involving that International Year was promoted by UNESCO (Tokyo, Japan, 31 July – 3 August 2001) on the political aspects of that dialogue. Not only was its relevance observed, but also the urgent need for greater clarity.

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It is considered an ethical imperative to defend cultural diversity inseparably from defending human rights themselves, as stated by the UNESCO Director- General, in his opening address to the Conference.<sup>11</sup>

The Director-General added: “Dialogue is often the last linkage between peoples in conflict and the first step toward reconciliation and peace. It is the vehicle to link the past, present and future in human affairs. It is the source of creativity linking the new to the unexpected”.

Dialogue will always be the bridge joining the *shores* of a society or societies, no matter how far apart and inaccessible they may be. This will call for creativity, re-reading of reality, singular, renewed positions, maximum flexibility and openness in political ideas or concepts, focusing on the essence of genuinely building *solidary humanism*, which can be the light of sustainability in future societies that are respectful of rights.

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<sup>11</sup> *Dialogue among Civilizations. The Political Aspects of the Dialogue of Civilizations*, UNESCO, United Nations University /Tokyo, 2003.

Abandoning practices and demands that may have ceased to make sense, that have become insignificant and marginal, abandoning violence as a means of seeking equal standing in a dialogue among parties, looking ahead to avoid absurd, unnecessary situations of confrontation leading to civilian casualties, especially this all invites us, essentially, to a dialogue in the present.

This acquires greater force when we see that current conflicts and confrontations have continued for decades, both within States (mainly) and among them, as recorded by the United Nations on all continents.

Without dialogue, humanity is condemned to decadence, to a lack of spiritual and material creative power and brilliance in societies, until they actually fade away. There is a vital need for contact, for coming closer, for interaction, for exchange, and for sharing among civilizations and cultures on a basis of equality, respect, consideration and tolerance.

Reconciliation and solidarity will be essential to cope with the major challenges now presented by globalization and sustainability on this planet. Thus, the existence and observance of practices, norms and responsibilities, clearly and well-understood by governments and leaders, educators and thinkers, those responsible for the media, writers and others, is urgent and capital.

The United Nations System, aware of this urgency, is pressing with the support of Agencies such as UNESCO, to design and build consensus regarding legal instruments, principles and criteria to solidify this dialogue increasingly.

Recent developments in this direction include the adoption, at UNESCO's General Conference (November 2001, Paris), of the **Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity**, considered the founding text inspiring a new vision and notion of human progress, in order to attain a sustainable future, as emphasized at the recent Summit of Chiefs of State (Johannesburg, August 2002) on sustainable development.

Other instruments and texts of enormous importance are in the process of drafting and negotiation, since the world's leaders, politicians and peoples have understood to a great degree that the current direction of events, which occasionally falls into barbarian, blind terrorism, cannot continue it is time to say "stop".

Peoples and societies would seem to have touched bottom in their resistance and acceptance of facts and situations that all become, in the long run, hazards for them. Many say, "Yes, we can wait, but how much longer? And why?" Many have been waiting for decades without seeing anything or useful for human living to show for their waiting, although we all, without exceptions, are entitled to these improvements.

Consequently, we are obliged to agree that there are no civilizations or cultures that are more important than others, nor any entitled to dominate or annihilate or oppress others, in order to colonize them or even make them disappear.

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Nor can the notion of civilization be understood as synonymous with exclusion, since at the base inspiring each, their spiritual and intellectual nourishment, lies the essential need to *learn to live together*, as the UNESCO World Commission on Education, chaired by Jacques Delors (1995), proposed as one of the four major pillars for humanity's future progress and understanding.

This context makes it particularly crucial to consider ethical thinking that will orient world governance; as already proposed, for science and technology to care for and enrich cultures and effective, creative dialogue among them, continually.

This also emphasizes the importance of all cultural expressions (music, literature, theater, dance, poetry, games, rituals and myths, customs, handicrafts, architecture, ways and means of communication, the immense intangible heritage of all humankind). These all bear witness to the exuberant wealth of civilizations, throughout time, and cultures' strength for renewal and creation, as well as the enormous potential and possibilities available at this time to address such a changing, complex, uncertain world.

Latin American civilization and Andean, European and other civilizations elsewhere, over history, have shown their strength and made tremendous contributions to human evolution. We are now obliged to value them once more and to learn much from them in order to create future responses.

Doubtlessly, education and support for solid, ongoing learning remain singular tools in this process of life that we want to attain. We must understand fully that diversity and difference are not and will not be ever, now or in the future a deadly danger, because they make explicit and comprise the foundation of grandeur and evolution, permanence and sustainability of life itself.

The international community will have a major occasion in 2004 when the “*Encounter of Civilizations and Cultures*”, which UNESCO will be involved with, will be held in Barcelona, Spain for six months.

### **Values, daily food for the evolution of societies**

75. Values drive and contribute to ongoing enrichment of life, of existence, for full development of each person’s capacities, acting freely and fully in each person’s education and actions, through each intellectual or bodily decision or choice.

In a world where material and current factors are overriding, as are relations of domination and exploitation, human beings are impoverished, as are social relations and the overall human social fabric.

To value is to create. However, one must be careful with creators, because the creation process includes annihilation and transformation of existing values, which are sometimes essential.

To live is to create values. To assign meanings is to evaluate and, in this way, to try to objectify the life that creates things. In this existential process, one can never forget human will, since it is will that orders things and gives them different meanings, configuring existence in multiple directions, enhancing life continually, without strictly rejecting anything there is, enriching and creating cultural realities cultures themselves constantly.

In addition to will, there is desire, a very strong dimension of human nature. Being, say many thinkers, entails lacking, and desiring, as a constant subject of unconscious desire. This lacking takes form in terms of others. The lack appears, and takes form, on the basis of others. The object of the other's desire makes desire a social product.

Human beings can understand each other, consequently, as producers of values, and subjects of values. The existence of values depends on socialization and is understood as ways of preferring what is considered best.

It is urgent to grant the necessary importance to the issue of values in each civilization and culture. Working on values will always be an exercise in making materializing reality, the daily life of the society we aspire to create, the society we are searching for in the present that will be sustainable, just, equitable and peaceful in the future.

This daily life must make it possible to incorporate practices and attitudes that will lead to enforcement of rights and responsibilities. This work will favor and deepen democracy, in its fullest expression, facilitating true nation-building, in close relationships and solidarity with the rest of the world.

### **A new civilization is emerging, with global proposals**

76. As readers have seen, there are many indications that humankind is already rapidly building a civilization with global characteristics, that will be influencing all existing ones. Although, to fully understanding this universal phenomenon will require along time, it would seem that this requirement has been shortened in view of more integrated, coordinated readings, that can be made with the support of communications and information technologies.

Universal contact, being able to live almost in real time alongside actions and phenomena happening anywhere on the planet, the speedy exchange of images, data, information and knowledge, the great power of synthesis regarding the essential issues and processes of life these all undoubtedly facilitate the understanding of these more qualitative changes of societies and their overall inter-relationships.

The current *globalization process doubtlessly marks the creation of a new civilization*. The transformations, changes in processes, in all domains of society's life, touching on individual and collective aspects, relations of human beings with time and space, employment and work, social relations, power and values, clearly show the transition to a civilization shared, in many domains, by the peoples of this planet. This is the consequence of the changing vision of the world and the future.

The main responsibility for this mutation is mainly attributed to the new information and communications technologies; these ICTs change the conditions of memorization, of treatment and transformation, of presenting information in fact, they touch on information in all fields of knowledge and its use.

*Human activity has begun to use virtual reality as an essential support*. A networking system is unceasingly spreading and consolidating worldwide. In this way, the economic and technological globalization phenomenon can be allied effectively and complementarily.

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The sources of inspiration for the new vision of the world come from the immense quantity and capacity for discoveries in just a few decades. Theoretical mathematics, astrophysics, quantum physics, and other sciences, such as biology, genetics and information science (informatics, cybernetics, automation ...) with their colossal recent progress are essential drivers of the movement underway of this civilization.

If many considered the last 50 years as the age of physics, the next 50 years, until the mid-21st century, will be the age of biology, of the human brain. Humanity can expect, without a doubt, unimaginable leaps forward in qualitative respects, in the spirit, the intellect of societies. Herein lies one of the great hopes for a different future.

Although human beings acquire unequalled power based on science, in order to act on Nature and ourselves, we are called upon to become fundamentally humble in order to continue learning from the unforeseeable and uncertain of the future.

It is true that science channels values about the truth and rigor, offering foundations for freedom of thought. Sometimes, almost always, science also supports ethics based on always acting with the aim of the greatest well-being and comfort for our fellow humans. However, unexpected reactions from Nature as often happen can lead to a feeling that science is irrelevant or pointless, to orient human complexity over time.

In any event, in view of the constant dangers entailed by innovations in sciences and technologies, the pillars or barriers of ethics and understanding must be raised. For example, this is necessary for the fields of using nuclear energy and biology.

In all this, the world's peoples, public and regular citizens feel displaced and left out of the fundamental debates and considerations for the planet's evolution and the search for sustainability.

It is clear, consequently, that the emerging global civilization cannot encounter greater harmony or coherence without strengthening dialogue and relationships, sharing and contributing with cultures that can project themselves only feebly toward others; with personalities in science and engineering; with thinkers, writers, communicators and those responsible for laws and standards; with those involved in the art of politics and the profoundest manifestations of peoples' souls; with those responsible for major multi-national corporations, in all areas, and with those assuring governance and sustainability for societies.

Anyway, one of the new ingredients in this transition toward a new civilization is complexity. The philosophy of uncertainty strongly undermines the idea of certainty that has promoted very diverse political concepts.

Individualism, capitalism, markets all progress toward maturity at this time. They are one of the most alarming phenomena in promoting the planet and all societies in their move toward sustainability.

The market is no longer considered solely an exchange of goods and services that are sold, but the place where solutions and answers must be found for all human activities, regardless of their nature.

Globalization currently imposed the notion of the market on everything: education, health, communication services, cultural affairs, etc., and political powers can do nothing about this.

Fortunately, many still hesitate to fully accept this new dialectics or trend. These holdouts are supported by a solid social philosophy of redistribution and equity, which is considered one of humankind's greatest achievements of many centuries and the basic foundation of civilizations and cultures (in Europe, for example).

Thus, the idea of "*social economics*" and "*solidary economics*" can be put into practice, on the basis of sound laws that increasingly implement these notions.

The idea of humanly sustainable development in this evolution emerges, therefore, within enormous demands and constraints. Otherwise, the current progress of the civilization being constructed could increasingly close or impede the way. Adjustments in direction, imagination, sensitivity, innovation, would seem, then, to be just in time for this first decade of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

# 4

CHAPTER

## BUILDING CHANGE

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*HARMONY CAN NEVER BE ACHIEVED IN A SOCIETY WITHOUT  
A PERCEPTION OF THE FUTURE. THE FUTURE IS THE OBJECT  
OF KNOWLEDGE, DREAMS, IMAGINATION, AND ALSO THE  
DOMAIN OF FREEDOM, UNCERTAINTY AND THE UNEXPECTED.*



### **What orients change toward the future**

77. Above all, we must work for “a world with a human face”. What does this mean?

It means putting an end to the situation in which over half the world’s population, nearly 3 billion persons, live with under two dollars a day, and 70% of the poor are under 15 years of age.

According to the World Bank, by 2015 if current trends continue there will be over 2 billion people living under the absolute poverty limit of the equivalent of one dollar a day.

In 25 years, nearly 85% of the world’s people will live in developing or transitional economies. During these 25 years, the countries located to the south of this planet will have to create a billion jobs. In addition to this effort, those looking for their first job will have to be integrated into the economy.

These countries, to maintain their people’s current standard of living, already deficient, will have to hold a sustained growth rate over 2% per year, for these next 25 years, until 2025.

It will be urgent to correct the concentration and mis-distribution of resources, which seems to be getting worse at present. The gap between the benefits enjoyed by the world’s richest 20% compared to the poorest 20% has gone from 30 to 1 in 1960, to 74 to 1 by the end of the 20th century, and continues to widen.

- Nearly one billion persons are chronically under-nourished in the developing world, more than the total population of Europe and North America combined.

135 The 1996 Summit on Food, attended by some 186 countries, made the commitment to reduce malnutrition year by year. Early this century, some eight million have managed to overcome malnutrition per year. If we do the arithmetic, it is clear that, to reduce malnutrition significantly over the next 15 years, more like 20 million will have to overcome this critical state every year.

- Taking a look at the above figures, and the drastic, striking features of the way the world is evolving, the international community decided, at the outset of this century, on the following most strategic goals for change, in the United Nations Millennium Assembly:

- Reduce to half, by 2015, the proportion of persons living in extreme poverty.
- Enroll all children in primary school by 2015.
- Advance toward gender equality and empower women, eliminating disparities between genders in primary and secondary education by 2015.
- Reduce the child mortality rate by two thirds by 2015.
- Provide access to reproductive health care services by 2015 for anyone who requires it.
- Stop the propagation of AIDS, malaria and other diseases.
- Guarantee environmental sustainability.
- Encourage worldwide partnership for development with goals for assistance, trade and alleviation of the debt burden.

Aside from these aims, the international community has set many others in the other world summits. In the attachments to this book, the relevant commitments can be consulted systematically for the most pressing issues.

We must understand them all, as a whole, as a sign pointing the way for the changes we need, although sometimes they do not agree altogether, or fit together as a coherent body. In the field of matching up global goals in all areas, much remains to be done. However, the current awareness of the urgency of taking action is clear – the need for radical changes in critical issues for all humankind.

### **Science at the service of knowledge, knowledge at the service of sustainability**

78. Science, as UNESCO sees it, is only one of the many systems of knowledge existing on this planet. Available knowledge in the world has not all necessarily come through science.

All societies have developed a great variety of approaches and perceptions to understand and act on their surroundings, known as *traditional ecological knowledge* or indigenous or local knowledge. All these approaches have contributed, one way or another, to enriching modern science. Ethno-botany and ethno-zoology are good examples, from the colonial period.

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This lore is the main referent today for farmers in Africa (70 to 90% and over 60% of the sub-Saharan population).

We are amidst a civilization that depends heavily on science, technology and, therefore, specialized, specific knowledge, which ought to be at the service of achieving desired changes. De-mythifying science in this context would seem to be one of the first tasks to undertake, to place science at the service of qualitative improvement of education and ongoing learning.

Understanding that the risky mix of ignorance and power is a hazardous fuel for our collective planetary journey, which calls for correcting and finding answers for serious environmental and social problems.

Science, in its leadership of changes, highlights pressing responsibilities for this new century:

- Understanding complexity and globality, e.g. climatic change.
- Finding a solution to the gigantic fresh water crisis (fresh water is only 2.5% of the water on Earth).
- Curbing the loss of species and conserving biodiversity.
- Managing renewable energy sources.
- Keeping an appropriate vision of biology and neuroscience.
- Developing biotechnology and genetic engineering.
- Progressing toward an “ethics of science”.
- Offering options to share knowledge better on a planetary scale, truly democratizing knowledge and lore (science’s social commitment; dissemination of findings; contact between scientists and society; fighting scientific and technological illiteracy in the digital age; international collaboration in science...).

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Modern science poses the challenge of the irreversible. Therefore, we are obliged to develop a clear conscience and recognize the need to limit technical power through ethics, through ethical thinking. This will reconcile knowledge, wisdom and the exchanging of their bounties.

The most palpable example at this time involves the progress being made in molecular biology and computing science, on a large scale, which has made it possible in 2003 to completely unravel the human genome. The applications will yield answers to many current health problems. **We are approaching the possibility of a new concept of health in the not-so-distant future.** Something similar is expected in many other fields of life by the year 2050.

79. An overall look at the planet shows that, on the universal scale, we have the basic elements of a very powerful communications and information exchange system; an economy and markets that are interconnected and act specifically, non-stop; of cultures that engage in dialogues and come closer, 138 enriching and progressing, borrowing from each other, supported by a global civilization with features emerging progressively.

Accordingly, the solid appearance of certain essential aspects takes shape increasingly, including: the notion of planetary citizenship; the mentality and consciousness of being an integral part of the planet; governance and appropriate orientation of the world's evolution; a harmonious, well-balanced vision of the notion of power; interaction among powers; the presence of institutions / companies that cover the entire Earth with their decisions, products or services; the role of currency and world finance.

This shows, with plenty of evidence, that the orientation of change is necessarily plural and includes a complex range of topics, areas and fields of action, all sensitive and strategic. The notion of change must also rise above limited traditional concepts of development, from the focus on ecological stewardship to the technical and economic focus grounded in the well-known growth indicators, or the basic human needs such as health care, housing, water, education, energy and so on.

For the future, change must take into account, in the notion of development, the existential qualities of human beings, qualities of life, of the environment, of solidarity. Here we find concepts appearing that are traditionally neglected, such as the quest for happiness, cheer, love and avoiding suffering, pain and anguish among peoples.

Going beyond economic indicators that continue to offer little at this time in order to lead humankind, the planet, complex, changing societies in an uncertain, unexpected manner. New indicators must be found, as soon as possible, to be able to support and appraise the management of community, national and global change.

As a political and philosophical inspiration of plural change, we could mention the following dimensions in order to enrich the solidary world dialogue now, through these seven major directions:

**Provide a policy for humankind.**

This goes beyond the notion of development and opens broader doors for a secure, viable future, as thinker Edgar Morin has written. This will provide a policy for civilization. The planet must

find the way toward genuine solidarity and exchange, with ways to protect, conserve and take advantage of common planetary goods (water, petroleum ...).

**Provide a policy for civilization.**

This should eliminate, as soon as possible, the weak points of western civilization and attempt to learn, in intense relations, from contributions and essential inputs from other civilizations of the East, the South, etc.

A policy of civilization must orient sound, beneficial expansion of the spreading global civilization, that is currently based on what happens in the West. It is urgent to relieve it of the notions currently leading it and to answer pressing questions: technical issues, financial profits, calculations, the quantitative overriding the human, the market over the human. This must be guided by notions of justice and equity, fully respected worldwide.

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**Understand that change requires maintaining clear control over the four pillars currently sustaining human evolution and progress: capitalism, science, industry and technology.**

Solid ethics can be the strategic guide so that major changes will be managed with proper control over a plural economy, and especially of science, industry and technology.

**Provide a democratic vision of global governance, as the direction for change.**

With clear directions, mechanisms, navigational charts for all key issues for the future and the emergence of true humanism, with powers working transparently and effectively to cope with such deadly dangers and threats as nuclear weapons, biological means of mass extermination, terrorism, including measures in the economic field that endanger life on the planet itself, etc.). Here we observe the importance and services of a world body such as the United Nations with its agencies, funds and programs.

**Shine a light for change, for the appearance of a new mindset, behaviors and human attitudes.**

With this, the rest will be assured, Change management must watch this gradual process, of complex construction and constant continuation of multiple forces, that will always be opposing or attempting to thwart it. This is part of societies and human nature. Therefore, change must always be viewed over considerable timeframes.

In general, one talks of two or more generations. Now we are working on a first phase, to 2015 and thence to 2050. Fifty years is not a very long period of time in comparison with the tremendous changes in direction and qualitative nature required. From the educational standpoint, industrialized countries have recent experiences indicating that their profound interventions in their educational systems and governmental policies on education have taken as long as 100 years to show effects.

Moreover, human history shows how some concepts, now essential to human understanding and exchange, have taken several centuries to be understood and adopted. This shows how careful we must be. The very notion of sustainability will take years to be shared, integrally, by all regions and societies in the world.

This shows, although we now have the extraordinary service of communications and information technologies, that speaking of 50 years could be too short-term to be able to attain such complex results as we are hoping. In any event, we must make the attempt, but redoubling our efforts and care immediately, without losing any time.

One decisive focus will be to strengthen ideas of civic ideals in all societies and communities, and around the world. This is simply to work, humbly and tirelessly, for robust understanding and solidarity.

We must not wait, as previously in human history, for gigantic catastrophes of all kinds, or barbaric actions of considerable magnitude, to be the only thing that will move us to decide for changes and to change. If, once again, we allow things to continue like this in the future, during this age of humankind, it may be too late and the opportunities to act may shrink enormously, placing all generations in absurd danger.

**Accept that urgencies must not guide change through imposition and force.**

Force will never be sound or timely, especially when we are obliged, by the more powerful nations, to rethink security issues, to control progress in the future. With the wisdom of all peoples, it will be necessary to rethink the notion of time, of times, since we must not lose the inspiration of what we are wisely obliged to promote, in order to get to the deepest roots of humanity, so life can gain splendor and sustainability.

**Understand that the change process must always be enriched by utopias and dreams, which create the poetic guidelines for change.**

Both start with feelings and the soul of societies and peoples, as the utmost expression in working for the human side. Starting with cold calculations, data, or projections from the past, will never enable us to take the huge “leaps of society” that the universe is now calling for; this is an instrument of partnership offering certain kinds of security to get around. Thus, change urgently requires thinkers, artists, poets, dreamers, so that their minds, acting holistically, will cooperate in building the greater guidelines that will make it possible to advance collectively toward embracing the universe.

Constructing change is all of the above and more. Everywhere on this planet, the process is underway. Let us strengthen, then, the means guiding us to come together and appropriately grasp progress and developments, as well as adjustments to be made.

**Four strategic notions to consolidate change.**

**80. The four notions that could provide strategic contents for change would be: relevant knowledge, rational uncertainty, the ethics of understanding and the notion of planetary citizenship.**

These four notions are part of the *Seven Complex Lessons in Education for the Future* already mentioned. The other three are:

- Teaching earthly identity;
- Confronting uncertainties;
- Teaching understanding and enabling the ethics of the human race.

In this process of change, these four notions must be underscored from dynamic perspectives that can significantly support the complexity in which actions are taken.

Special interest must be taken at all times in identifying the origin of errors, illusions and blindnesses. Thus, the concern for the availability of relevant knowledge, to use in guiding change, could center on the *contextual, complex, multi-dimensional and global aspects*.

- The *context* for elements that interact within it, ensure that all actions acquire a particular character that is appropriately interwoven with other realities and with all the rest. Contextualizing education, for example, is one of the urgent challenges of our time.
- *Complexity* is a great guide when the different elements comprising the whole are inseparable. It enables inter-dependence to blossom among the object, the knowledge and the context; also, the parts with the whole, the whole and the parts, and the understanding of union between multiplicity and unity.
- *Multi-dimensionality* offers a key, ongoing orientation by considering humans as a biological, psychic, social, affective and rational being. At the same time, it considers society as historical, economic, religious, sociological and political.
- *Global* notions care, at all times, for the set of parts, in this case the planet, as the overall perspective: regions, States, all parts linked together inter-retroactively and organizationally.
- *The notion of rational uncertainty* calls us to constant alertness. This notion was proposed over a century ago by Heisenberg and incorporated into quantum physics. Opposing the eternal, permanent truth, a rationality is proposed that evinces a watchful, self-critical attitude of analysis and reflection.

This watchfulness is a virtue in scientific work and a safeguard against false illusions, the shortcomings of finished work, the impositions of absolute fundamentalisms, dogma, and other monopolies of knowledge.

Rationality/uncertainty entail an enormous revolution in the concepts and redefinition, for example, of educational contents, of imagery, of the process of changing human mindsets. This also becomes a special challenge for knowledge, because they have to find epistemological alternatives respecting diversity, particular and singular aspects. Rationality must be a minimal critique that makes it possible to prepare rigorous, flexible explanations, that clearly reveal the meaning and significance of natural and social occurrences.

In the future, change must encourage and propose the construction of alternative, non-excluding epistemologies, that are not polarized at the ends.

Both concepts have such radical force that, if today's education uses them and seeks to grasp them, education can simply rid itself of the atrophied foundations of its basic structures of cognition and understanding. This could lead to changes in longstanding paradigms grounded in simplistic, one-dimensional thinking.

Morín wrote: "Uncertainty destroys simplistic knowledge and becomes the antidote purifying complex knowledge". Simplistic thought refers to the great Western paradigm, formulated by Descartes and imposed by the development of European thought since the 18th century.

- *The ethics of understanding* is concerned with interactions among individuals, who produce society and, in generic terms, culture emerges from such interactions, giving them value and cooperating in their materialization. Democracy allows, in turn, the rich, complex relationship between individuals and society, so they can incorporate themselves, regulate, control and develop each other.

Democracy proposes conflict. Diversity is therefore a complex system of civil organization, with policies that support and are supported by autonomy of spirit, freedom of opinion, of speech, of

civic idealism nurtured by and nurturing other ideals such as liberty and equality. In the process of change, educating people in political culture could become one of the main strategies.

In the above perspective, this developing civilization must have zero tolerance for dehumanization of humans, disinformation, disrespect for differences and individual singularities. A civilizing force must create strong dynamics to facilitate destruction of authoritarianism, privilege, selfishness and monopoly.

- *Planetary citizenship* must facilitate interaction among citizens of the world, to build wisdom and imagery on a planetary scale. Strengthening the idea of a world civilization will provide the stage for communicating, interacting, associating and rejecting what will not fit in global codes. People must become citizens of Earth, not of a single culture. This change will civilize and solidarize the Earth, strengthening the authentic appearance of new societies.

### **Change amidst failure to understand economic phenomena**

81. Economic science is currently undergoing heavy criticism of its theory and practice. Huge efforts are being made by different schools of thinkers and specialists to find solutions to the constant financial and economic crises, the weighty external indebtedness of the less developed countries or the gigantic internal deficit in industrialized countries. Markets and trade practices, operation of stock markets and their magical influence on prices, profits, closures of companies or unsustainable inflation of hopes.

Classical, neo-classical and monetaristic economics are seen almost as ideologies at the service of those who dominate financial markets, particularly. Accordingly, some economists seek to construct an economic theory that, supported by trans-disciplinary vision, will offer sustainable solutions to social and environmental challenges, including critical poverty.

For economists who think more traditionally, the important thing is to find a “balance”, in a world that is moving forward on the basis of constant imbalances. As an example, the costs of raw materials, inflation, economic growth rates, etc. The new current of economists, on the

contrary, think about urgent solutions to *unemployment*, relief for *human costs*, to *pollution*, on the way to achieving *sustainable development*.

They are sure that, if they do not soon find changes in orientation and structures for economic and monetary systems, humankind may face unimaginable catastrophes. These judgments are a great challenge for desired change processes.

Traditional economic thinking is grounded in a one-dimensional vision of economics, a discipline based on mathematics (macro-economic models, very limited indicators that explain little about economic phenomena) as a complementary science.

Change requires a new vision of economics, grounded in solid relationships with history, sociology, anthropology, psychology and other sciences. That vision must concern ethics, ecology and the environment, and the emerging global civilization.

One of the most controversial topics of economic science has always been the overuse of mathematics, when economics attempts to address complex phenomena in the real world and is exposed to the flagrant contradictions in the facts or situations that arise.

Nobel Prize-winner in Economics Leontief once stated: "... seldom in modern positive science are such elaborate structures built on such narrow, superficial concrete foundations..." and that: "... situations are analyzed, most of them hypothetical, that are far removed from the real problems one wants to solve...".

Traditional economics hardly touches on authentic human beings, only *consumers*, *producers*, *customers*, notions that fit in mathematical models. Desires, longings, freedoms, human tendencies that fit in random processes that are not readily quantifiable, are part of societies' more complex evolution. The real world does not fit so neatly into mathematics, but rebels and escapes.

A very strong criticism by many economists and thinkers considers economics to be the cause of the *new barbarianism* in the world. This explains the great crisis in human terms, in humanism, in environmental degradation, etc.

Such paradoxes include those posed by the technological and industrial revolution, imagined to be at the service of plenty and human well-being, have resulted, on the contrary, once applied, in unemployment and extreme poverty of the great majorities. In other words, progressive, almost silent construction of gigantic social conflicts that ultimately may lead to a confrontation of *capitalism against capitalism* (in the words of Lester Thurow, Dean of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology School of Business, intellectual heir of Keynes). In this context, the failures in constructing socialism and communism come to mind (these political concepts were discussed in Part I).

In the globalization process, economic science is called upon to create and develop new instruments and specific working methods. The complexity we see in the world comprises new, huge forces that are uncontrollable, using the old ways of leading and managing the economy. National governmental criteria have been overwhelmed by the reality of the tremendous powers of multinationals or trans-nationals and other economic groups with a world presence.

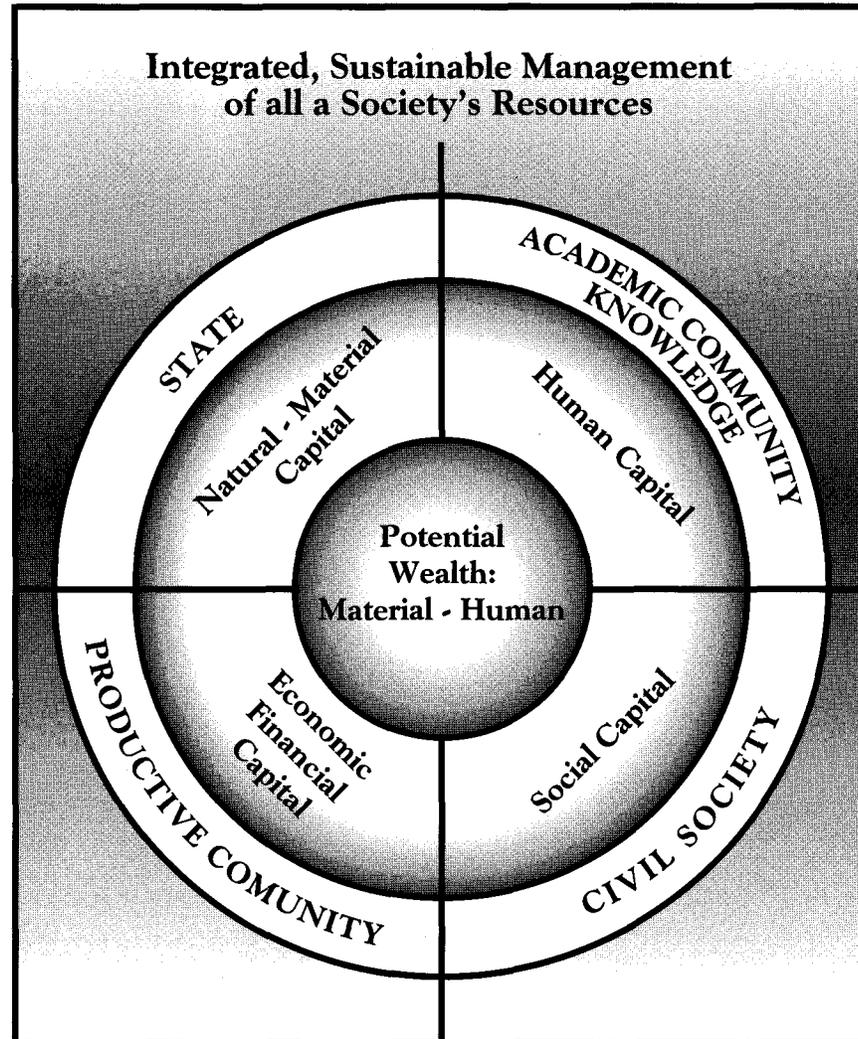
On the way to *virtual states*, such as the industrialized countries, with intensive use of communications and information technologies, a large part of their total industrial production is not done within their borders (Germany, Japan, the United States), but comes from abroad. The large companies that require labor leave the industrialized countries and set up in developing ones.

In turn, banks and stock markets manage, day by day, monetary flows or masses of billions of dollars, that go from one continent to another, nation-less capital masses, traveling constantly, escaping any controls and settling wherever they do best monetarily. Their concern is not production, creating companies. It is difficult in this way to achieve the famous *balances* that economics has always sought from its origins.

Governments have also lost much of their real capacity to regulate their national economies. So, how can a politically appropriate orientation of economic development be assured if, anyway, under globalization, economic management or control is irreversibly supra-national?

It is necessary to emphasize the outstanding work under the United Nations that distinguished economists, including practically all Nobel prize-winners in Economics, have been doing, to attempt to find new orientations and visions for economic phenomena and ways to cope with social aspects.

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In this context, the work of the United Nations Development Program, directed by Pakistani expert Mahbub ul Haq, presented in the Human Development Reports, contains major indicators to monitor progress in the nations of the world, in the most crucial aspects of peoples' quality of life and well-being.

From the early 1990s to date, these indicators, provided yearly to the world, have been emphasizing fields of great importance, such as poverty, communication and information, education, science and technology.

This has sensitized politicians and government officials regarding how to manage the challenges of development and nations' sustainability.

One of the Nobel prize-winners in Economics who has contributed the most to the innovative work by the United Nations has been Amartya Sen, who was a friend of ul Haq and has carried on the above efforts since the latter's passing in 1998.

Professor Sen is outstanding internationally because of his attention to the role and inter-connections among fundamental instrumental freedoms, including economic opportunities, political freedoms, social services, guarantees of transparency and protective security.

He also researches in depth the social mechanisms influencing such institutions as the State, the legal system, political parties and groups, the market, the media, pressure groups and virtual groups with international projection, to see to what degree and from what viewpoint they contribute or could contribute effectively to guaranteeing individuals' fundamental freedoms, conceived of as the true change agents and not passive receivers of services or assistance, as the market-centered view would see them.<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> Amartya Sen, *Desarrollo y libertad* [Development and Freedom], Editorial Planeta, Barcelona, Spain, 2000.  
 Mahbub ul Haq, *Reflections on Human Development*, Oxford University Press, New York, 1995.  
*World Development Report*, World Bank, Washington D.C.  
*World Development Report*, World Bank, Oxford University Press, New York, 1993

The trans-nationalization of economics seems not to provide any real solutions at this time to problems that have appeared in the past and still provoke identity crises. The above leads us to think that political and economic globalization must advance hand-in-hand on many levels, such as social rights, the notion of democracy, of public liberties, of national sovereignty and borders, migratory policies, and safeguarding biodiversity on the planet.

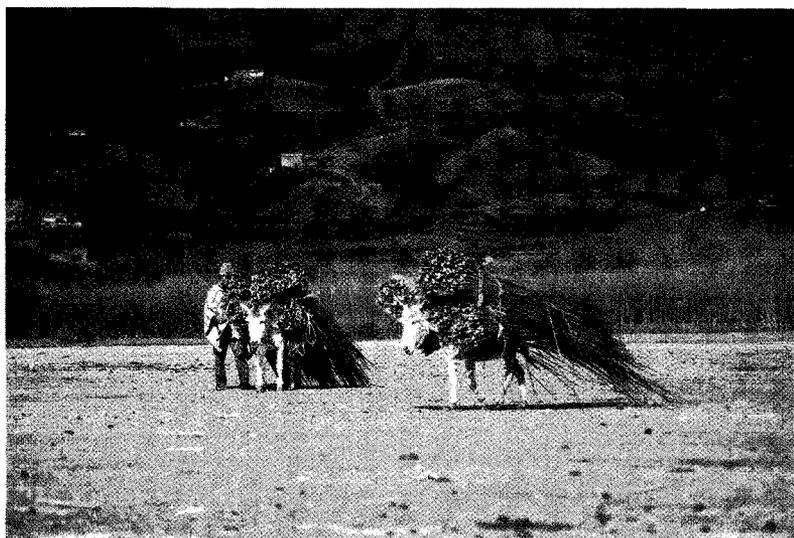
This could contribute positively to setting up new institutions, avoiding homogenization, supporting creativity and innovation. Cultures would benefit from such thought and actions in each State, as would the emerging civilization.

**While the world economy is becoming more complex, economic science seems to remain in a very restrictive, limited, simplistic framework.** The market is a reality and a concrete concept, impossible to eliminate, which the change process must distinguish. However, society must always be above such concepts, with all its interests and needs. Economics must be re-founded to truly serve human beings, rather than the other way round.

ON THE WAY TO 2015:  
CREATING A SUSTAINABLE FUTURE

PART

*THE PLANET'S FUTURE SUSTAINABILITY  
WILL GO AS FAR AS EDUCATION AND  
ETHICAL THOUGHT PROGRESS.*



# 5

## CHAPTER

### VIABLE STRATEGIC FRAMEWORKS FOR ACTION

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*IT IS URGENT TO OVERCOME ALL CURRENT SYSTEMS OF LOYALTIES AND BELIEFS, IN FAVOR OF A NEW ETHICS THAT WILL RECOVER THE INTER-RELATED, SACRED NATURE OF LIFE, IN ORDER TO MOTIVATE AND MOVE WILLS FOR NEW ACTIONS. THIS MUST TRANSCEND THE VISION AND STRATEGIES RESULTING FROM JUST POLITICAL, -ECONOMIC OR TECHNOLOGICAL ARRANGEMENTS. ACTIONS MUST CENTER ON MAKING CHANGES IN WAYS OF THINKING AND IN STRUCTURES, IN CREATIVE, PEACEFUL CO-EXISTENCE, IN HUMAN DIGNITY AND SOLIDARITY.*



### **Today, the new element of action is its irreversibility**

82. An assessment of alarming present-day trends on all continents shows how many are almost irreversible. This is so momentous that it is moving the international community to reach consensus-based agreements seeking to drastically reorient these trends before it is too late. Very sophisticated diagnoses are on hand, readily updated and extended; appropriate remedies can also be identified in almost every sector of human life.

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The great challenge lies in deciding, genuinely, to adopt the tough corrective measures that are required, even if they are unpopular or geared toward ending or reducing traditional privileges of certain population groups, whether national or international.

Such corrective measures, as already outlined in the first two parts of this book, must be based on a more overall concept of life and society, and on their close, continual relationships with the rest of the world. All societies, today, face the moral imperative of acting in this way, because one of the foundations of the irreversibility of observed phenomena is the lack of clear awareness of the impact of our isolated sectoral actions, those simply driven by market trends or by the stock markets.

Corrective measures must also respond to certain logic over time, in ways and places of application. When a society, or the world, face so many anguishes, problems and challenges at once, it will always be difficult to find the will to adopt more effective, lasting corrective measures that will really benefit everyone. There will always be arguments to maintain privileges, to assure the *status quo* or keep changes lukewarm, palliative and un-transcendent despite the situations

that call for boldness, risk-taking and profound structural reforms. Added to this are the “*party alliances*” concerned with short-term effects, easy benefits, or simply the fatigue of so much pointless debate and argument. Thus, if we think about new frameworks for action to achieve sustainability, we must overcome these constraints and build consensus for change based on a different mindset, motivated by understanding the irreversibility facing us.

From the simple acceptance of “**the ethics of time**”, there is no more time to wait. It is a crime against humanity to continue postponing urgent, well-known measures because of the simple fear of losing privileges, not to agree to share the planet’s wealth with all or to rely on group ideas or political concepts.

Notions of **anticipation and prevention** assume, in view of the reality of risks and social and natural catastrophes announced for the future, a privileged role in the daily work of governments, scientists, experts, businesspersons, financiers, educators and regular citizens. Academic and training institutions are obliged, more than ever, to overhaul their programs and contents; they must shake down their structures – there is no time to waste if effective cooperation at all levels is to be achieved.

Pressure-group practices, without objectives, are short-sighted and irrelevant to changes and visions of the future, causing damage to the movements that we would rather expect results from.

The notion and feeling of irreversibility hamstring traditional methods and means of identifying, programming and implementing actions thus conceived. Now we must learn to read reality differently, integrately and holistically, in relation to other contexts that also affect or influence it, and centering on the actual causes of phenomena, not simply their manifestations.

**It will be urgent to make 2005 a historic cut-off point in every region of the world, with the iron will to collectively create a better, different world for all and not simply to decide to redecorate the trappings of today’s process of life that entails such risks for everyone.**

Here emerge concerns when we undertake action, under the inspiration of all the worldwide

agreements created with United Nations cooperation, in almost every major area and sensitive, high-priority topic, to orient humanity's current direction.

One outstanding tactical element in this regard will be to use more the notion of risk, of crisis, of the irreversibility factor, of lessons learned in the recent past, of the potential we have, of natural wealth that is still intact or sound, of the power of art, imagination, poetry, sports, as means that all help positive seduction of our fellow humans, of world leadership, of leaders at all levels, of educators, to revisit national, regional and world frameworks for action, in reality and not just marginally or randomly. This work of sensitization will always need to use the new communications and information technologies.

The great challenge is to get underway what everyone needs. To find a real reconciliation with the march toward the future. To put an end to the uselessness of empty answers, almost always anchored in the past, to new, complex problems and challenges. To anticipate the needs of all, of haves and have-nots, North and South, and stop doing what we have been, which is simply to reinforce the *status quo*, blandishing among others mathematical models, financial or economic formulas, all inspired precisely in the concepts and models that urgently require revision.

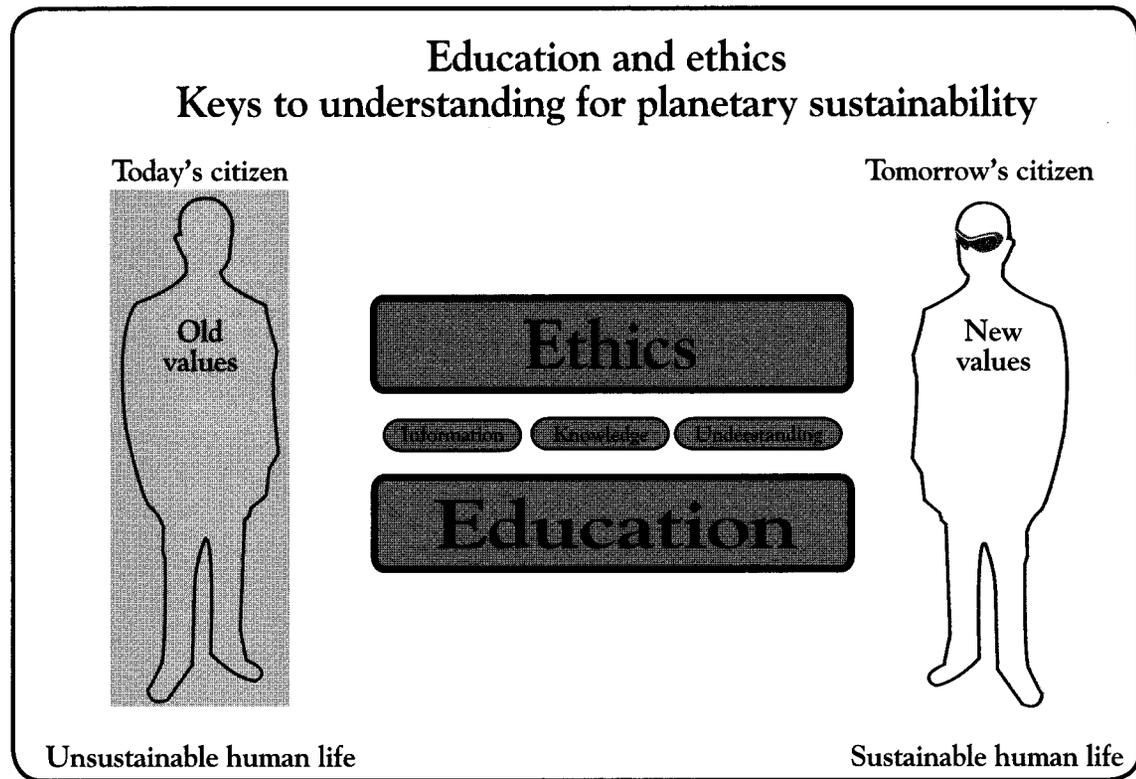
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Therefore, those who are really aware of the irreversibility factor of the serious symptoms now encircling the globe will be losing sleep. It is urgent, it is crucial, to think about a campaign, worldwide, to sensitize about these issues.

There are proposals going this direction. One of these initiatives has emerged with the support of Canada and has been discussed within UNESCO. This initiative is called Enrolling the World in Sustainable Development-Building a Project Blueprint (initial formulation discussed in New York, in July 2003, and prepared by the J. Walter Thompson Company of Toronto, Canada).

This is an invitation to the world's great multinationals, national companies and institutions, and media the world over to join in this common action, which could pave the way, awaken consciousnesses, create and affirm wills for the planet's sustainability. Further, to achieve a coherent, sound framework for action in order to address the challenges of the future.

The principles, criteria, foundations of this great framework are found in the multiple international agreements and conventions already in place (see Part V of this book). What is urgent is to coordinate them, bring them together, make them compatible and harmonize them. And how better to do so than through “education and ethical thought”.



The first major change in building the new direction for action, as of 2005, will be to stop understanding education and ethics as two separate fields, in order not to see humanity's future sustainability as isolated sectoral situations. These situations are quantified, and responsibilities are given for orienting them to isolated groups that are sometimes quite far from actual use of power.

No. Education and ethical thought must be at the center of all concerns, because they can indestructibly join this new social and natural worldwide fabric, which we must urgently weave. This is the only way to eliminate the current thrust driving the irreversible process that could put an end to life itself on this planet.

**The inter-related nature of life calls for acting on the basis of wisdom, rather than compromises and deals.**

83. Simplification, as a pragmatic principle for action, is a fraud, a false premise. Equally, distribution of scarce existing resources without criteria of equity and social justice is false democracy that will find no solutions or specific answers for any problems. The indiscriminate application of efforts and resources in a society is no guarantee of solidary collective future construction.

The absence of continued support for efforts aiming to provide a solid answer to critical situations that have historically been present does not reflect genuine innovation by those now in power, or the presence of new political groups leading societies.

Attempting to act only quantitatively, materially, measurably and with easily achieved political aims to please the electorate will very surely impede true human progress. People will be marginalized and the splendor of gigantic steel, iron or cement monuments will become the great symbols of progress. The search for gigantic material forms will become unimportant, fragile, in view of the forgotten greatness of all human beings, of humankind at large, of living beings.

Alarming, excessive attention to disposable products or goods, which have created a culture of disposables and pastimes, are a false step in building a sustainable new model for the future. Placing meaningless entertainment in the forefront, without any message beyond violence – individualism – or no values at all, as we see in today's world, is playing with death, with the vacuum, expecting that hope and lost faith will be reborn from chaos and perversion to create a new tomorrow.

To simply follow principles of effectiveness and efficiency, amidst atrocious, pitiless competition, covering educational and training processes as well as the production of goods and services, will

not lead to integrated human growth, which we require for the planet's sustainability, much less for the creation of a solidary, equitable world.

The force of world massification is appropriate for essential commodities, such as in health care, vital medicines for curing diseases or attacking a fastspreading virus. But it will never be the common rule for all peoples; their creativity and imagination are essential ingredients of humankind's future.

The inter-related nature of life, vis-à-vis the gigantic scale of current problems, shows that the peoples of the world can survive in the present only by wasting or neglecting the enormous wealth around them, which could offer happiness and a life of plenty. Why have societies, over many years, ignored or neglected the notion of integration, focusing on the trivial aspects of life and co-existence, giving free rein to actions unrelated to any context or overall foundations?

As many have pointed out, this is a difficult time for governance, which is now attempting to pull fragments together, and use a few basic principles, universally accepted, and no longer fit into the settings that call for serious transformation. It is not that these efforts or attempts are vain or trivial, but they must go further in seeking to integrate life into society.

It is urgent to accept that integration entails accepting the complexity of living to seek the solutions to all problems or achieve goals or objectives. Complexity must be conveyed, even if this is not appealing to politicians, experts or leaders of institutions or societies.

Outlining and determining all elements and dimensions that act in a given setting or situation, accepting all relations and inter-relationships, making use of the historical or collective memory, are ways to progressively explore management that will be suited to the present and future of all societies.

Simplification or sectoralization of actions will only create false hopes and expectations, with everything else remaining unchanged. It will be like pedaling a stationary exercise bicycle, making great efforts, spending energy, but without getting anywhere.

Recently, within the United Nations System, exercises reflected on what has been achieved by world agreements and declarations since the early 1990s, and findings have disappointed the international community. The symptoms detected in preparing for such important summits are still there, and achievements are seen as insignificant and weak.

The processes of major universal change have not clearly appeared and there are complaints and concerns, both in the industrialized countries and in those burdened by an immense foreign debt and crushing problems. Who is responsible for this situation?

No one in particular. The responsibility lies in an inadequate, obsolete way of thinking, that cannot generate the iron will required for change and for fundamental ethical commitments. Acting in a cold, calculating, methodical manner, entangled in indicators and accountability systems will yield change magically.

When we act, there is no thought as to whether the intensity or amplitude of what is done or offered is what is really needed, if the orientation is appropriate, if the times and target population are right.

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Often we act just for action's sake, cooperating to cooperate, receiving aid as a handout, applying resources without involving the life process of peoples or historical or cultural directions.

Worshiping the market like a golden calf, insisting on constructing action agendas around it, will never provide integrated leadership to build action platforms. Understanding this by the international community led to the Summit on Sustainable Development in Johannesburg.

The international community has accepted that the major flaw in the achievements to date has been the lack of meeting around the same table, all at once, with the representatives of economic, social and environmental powers, to begin constructing a new look at how the world works, at globalization and a frontal attack on the problems besieging humanity.

This is the great beginning that the international community must not waste, but must replicate

on each continent and in each country. No more projects and financial programs concerned solely with economic performance or Gross Domestic Product. Few ever understand what this really means in terms of alleviating conflict and despair, which continue growing. This feeling has been expressed by the World Bank's President, in Washington, when the Bank organized an International Conference to Alleviate World Poverty.

No sector or institution by itself has the answer to any social or international challenge or problem. The inter-related nature of life makes it mandatory to consider peoples' destiny, not only the bureaucratic force of institutions or technical power to manipulate data or forecasts, but the force of knowledge, of wisdom, the maximum expression of any community or person, reflected in their gaze, in their capacity to contemplate, to internalize and seek internal, individual coherence, in their smile and handshake. Thus, we need to reach people's sentiments, with a radical proposal for change, because otherwise this will never happen.

People will never change by decree, or through rhetoric. Collective wisdom will always be present to distinguish, select, remove or unite.

Current failures are the result of rhetoric (in many international agreements) going one direction, and actions changing only from the standpoint of demands to cooperate or sophistication to present the outcomes achieved from that cooperation.

Again, the game is supply and demand, catch-as-catch-can, follow me or be left out, and whoever is not with me is against me. Ultimately, this direction is very frustrating, but little has been done to overcome these limitations. Johannesburg is the first hope for correcting this direction.

Reflection by the international community to implement the declaration and agenda adopted in Johannesburg is historic. But any real results will depend more on a new way of thinking than on meaningless alliances or compromises, lists of actions, distribution of responsibilities, among countries or institutions. A new setting must appear for dialogue, understanding and commitment, to ensure success on the way to 2015 and beyond.

The actual agreement to include, more than the exclusion or marginalization of the parties, will guide action toward acceptance of rights-respecting societies on all continents, of new governance worldwide, and a globalization grounded in a new concept of life and living, which will inspire the appearance of a planetary society and true humanism. Otherwise, we run the risk that, in 2015, the international community will have to admit that it has failed to meet its goals, or met them only poorly.

At this time, it is hard to set goals for 2050. Why? These goals will be set, if those established now for 2015 should fail, in a setting of greater chaos and world anguish. Might this finally move world leaders and peoples to act correctly, according to the inter-related nature of life and close linkages with the planet? Why not take advantage of this time, when the 21st century is witnessing the emergence of a new age and the information and knowledge society is offering such powerful means to achieve it?

**Inter-generational relations have created an ethical link over time to guarantee sustainability.**

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84. Each action provides the direction for its own creation this has always been so. However, at this time, humankind is facing an unprecedented qualitative challenge, which is imposed by the present. Never before has it been so crucial for the future, almost as if the future were impinging on the present, and the planet's viability depended largely on this present future.

This gives humanity great power (with progress in science and technology) to correct the orientation of life and the enormous responsibility to future generations, for the as-yet unborn, who join the ranks of human population second by second. They will always be forced to accept the world we have left them and to continue supporting creation, re-creation or chaotic stampede.

This moral responsibility to coming generations is capital but oft-neglected, as is rapid population growth and distribution worldwide. We are in a race against enormous challenges that only scholars have been asked to understand, being run by powers programmed to focus on passing or opportunistic profits. Meeting the rest halfway, to support the planet's destiny, has no part in the interpretation of political times or conservation of isolated practices.

Inter-generational issues and the ethical linkage of time, past-present-future must be involved in building collective frameworks for action. It will be essential to be willing to strike balances and continuity in acting to negotiate such frameworks.

We must not settle for including action issues, or pointing out dangers, or the time to prepare a new report or assessment. No. What must be identified and agreed first of all is the appearance of new balances, concrete manifestations of social equity and justice, concrete elimination of certain risks and crisis situations, the vital manifestation of solidarity, with active alleviation of critical poverty in Africa, for example.

The social sciences could also make a worldwide commitment, economics above all, to urgently work to reinvent these sciences the world over, to lead the search for a new humanism. However, this task cannot be left to a few select groups or centers, hand-picked by international financial institutions. A worldwide invitation to creativity and innovation must be raised urgently, if we expect to meet the inter-generational commitment, which will outline explicit, complex responsibility for present generations to construe past-present-future 163 together, keeping a distance from timeframes, as well, in order to build their thoughts on wisdom and human greatness.

The inter-generational demand was proposed in the late 1980s by the Brundtland Commission. What is new now is the urgency of reflecting this ethical imperative in lifestyles that are too much grounded in the prevailing consumer culture.

It is pressing to understand the ethics of consumption, to define its foundations and clarify its missions. For example, a new, responsible buying power must be created, now that international trade is attempting to associate ethics with environmental, social, technological and economic issues.

How will this ethics based on trade benefit citizens of this planet as consumers? How can these initiatives be supported by economic and trade agents to make them truly sustainable, able to change and enrich behaviors and attitudes in these areas? Citizens can contribute greatly by changing their investments and purchases, by making ethical thought soundly their own, with the profound conviction that they must contribute to the common good.

Ethics, seen in this light, is a living element, continually present, in business, in economic stakeholders, or in regular citizens, and not simply the pronouncement of a norm or criterion. Thus, the importance of concrete examples to illuminate and pave the way, of elements of knowledge that can sustain change.

It is not enough to simply condemn current consumerism and propose that humankind return to previous ages. Nor is the idea to reject current human progress altogether, or accept it completely without any analysis. However, it is necessary to collectively find the best way to respond to all humankind's basic needs.

Simple rejection pushes people into states of nostalgia and apathy that contribute nothing to change, making people reactionary, conservative, 164 unchanging. Acceptance without limits, without any barriers or questions, on the other hand, makes people docile and easy to manipulate, to allow anything in the name of science and technology, without any ethical or moral awareness that could set boundaries or distinguish between what is useful and what is not. So, consumerism can push humans into a future that we cannot recognize or prepare for, and the dangers grow threateningly.

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The force of ethical and moral reflection on values is influencing more than ever the achievement of tangible actions that will make the planet sustainable from a realistic, concrete inter-generational standpoint.

The action framework must consequently emphasize such human qualities as respect for others, sharing, equity, solidarity, right living and being, freedom, equality, respect for differences and diversity, which involve the essential values for co-existence among responsible planetary citizens.

In the action framework, the United Nations must include ethical guidelines (indicators) to monitor social and environmental achievements, the progress of societies in relation with the environment, with changing consumption habits.

One specific possibility in this field would be to progress in defining information that makes it

possible to evaluate *products, goods or services*, taking their *ethical value* (social and environmental) into account. Associating objectivity and subjectivity to this study will always be palpably crucial, to avoid losing sight again of ethics for the benefit of the object, the economy, as we have seen.

We must reward all business efforts in this direction, as a strategic decision, as well as encouraging responsible consumers and all initiatives geared toward transforming the economy in depth. This must open the way to solidary economies, to trade based on equity, free circulation of goods and raw materials, distribution and sharing of available wealth.<sup>13</sup>

Thus, the destination of coming generations will depend on current problems (e.g. consumerism, poverty, exclusion, unemployment, technological and material under-development, discrimination and environmental threats) and on the drastic decisions we make today. This is one of the greatest challenges in building the action platform, in following up on the Sustainable Development Summit and on all other agendas adopted by the international community.

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UNESCO adopted, in its 1997 General Conference, a beautiful text entitled “Declaration on the Responsibilities of Current Generations to Future Generations”, with the main aim of assuring that actions taken at present will ensure a viable, sustainable future for coming generations.

This Declaration has 12 articles, formulating specific proposals regarding what to do. This instrument will be very important in finding the fertile directions for innovative actions involving such sensitive issues, so difficult to address.

### **Achieving sustainability requires global strategy**

85. By the year 2030 the world population may increase by nearly three billion more people. Environmental pressures will increase to almost unsuspected limits; the demand for essential foods will escalate; basic services (water, power, communications, etc.) will be in great demand;

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<sup>13</sup> In 2002 the Ethical Consumption Agency (ACE) was created in France, involving highly prestigious European figures, including Edgar Morin. This Agency is currently working along the above lines.

needs for appropriate housing will soar exponentially; and offering quality education for all, decent, well-paying employment and, in general, a decent life, will be a crucial challenge for governments, civil society leaders and institutions.

How can we prepare adequately to face such challenges, already clearly anticipated in future scenarios, constructed by experts in different disciplines? How can we increase humankind's capacity for livelihoods, alleviate environmental pressures and foster sustainable development at the same time? How can we do this when the search for such balance starts from a disastrous situation of maladjustments, incoherencies, injustices and environmental disorder?

To avoid fostering serious additional environmental damage, production methods must change significantly. Fortunately, there is already a growing awareness in this regard. Production of pollutants, particularly in urban areas (e.g. transport) must be rigorously controlled to avert greater degradation of atmospheric quality.

New technologies ensuring the above must be universally accessible and used, but how can we achieve this without first introducing radical changes in the concept and management of economies and trade practices? In the agricultural sector, great progress is expected, to produce more food in smaller croplands, without having a negative impact on the environment.

Massive use of new information and communication technologies must support the rapid dissemination of knowledge, tools and innovations worldwide, at all levels of life.

Much can be expected from science and technology, but it would be naïve to expect that they will provide all solutions and answers to the growing multiplicity of problems and new crises. For example, in the field of health, humankind is exposed to rapidly evolving complexity.

We must once again believe in the force and capacity of people to reach agreements and react to new demands and challenges, providing there is a strong dose of understanding of the status, motivation, security and decent treatment. Human beings, when called upon by circumstances, always display enormous capacity to provide answers and solutions to life's problems.

This leads us to conclude that the global strategy called for to achieve the planet's sustainability must be designed essentially on the basis of understanding available cultural wealth in all regions; of essentially believing in human beings as the creators and primary builders of their own destiny; of a body of values orienting sustainable lifestyles for all; of a balanced planetary concept of all sorts of resources, including spatial distribution of the world population and its vital relationship with soils that will provide an appropriate place to live (e.g. availability of water supply, of croplands, of basic biological diversity...).

At present it would seem obvious that, as humanity, with these evolutionary features, moves towards the future, countries that now have strongly-defended boundaries will tend to come together, giving way to a more realistic vision of the planet's human condition and its constraints, regaining an enriched holistic understanding of the community, of local strengths, as the only way to make the whole planet truly sustainable in the distant future.

But where and how will we create a global strategy as the age of information and knowledge is emerging? What basic characteristics are explicitly present? Let us examine them in the following schematic terms:

- The notion of State is projecting internationally, beyond geographical boundaries, spreading planet-wide in broad terms;
- Strategic scientific knowledge and information are oriented by market rules worldwide;
- Material resource usage remains continual and intense, limited by the characteristics of current demand;
- Innovation and creativity are driving the constant expansion of product, goods and services supply, with increasing diversification and appeal to individual or group desires and tastes;

- Human capital is continuing to move and supply and ongoing training possibilities are increasing unsuspectedly.
- Mobility of production factors is increasing considerably, with no restrictions in practice;
- The Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of a country depends increasingly on services, especially in industrialized nations, rather than on industrial production of goods. 70% of the increase in the US GDP is driven by services, as 84% of Hong Kong's GDP growth (with only 8% manufacturing production). This is assisted by the intensive use of information and communications technologies; there is already talk of *Virtual States*.
- Great social demands or problems are expected to be solved by excess abundance, naturally resulting from this new economic management;
- Culture is viewed as a force for the penetration and imposition of Western culture values and proposals, spreading worldwide, assisted by information and communication technologies;
- Laws and norms require a new international juridical paradigm. Many aspects of international life are now threatened by the appearance of the new information and knowledge society.

This society is based on the free play and action of multiple factors and human responsibility and autonomy. How can we validly follow up on this evolution when the present-day world demands the promotion of a different direction, structural corrections, and critical changes in mindset and action? This will be necessary to achieve true planetary sustainability. When can we quickly achieve, worldwide, thorough wisdom in all persons and communities, so that they will naturally take the new pathway toward sustainability? And then, can we continue to allow everyone to freely continue expanding the current concept of this new human age? Will we be risking too much again, without any firm hopes of a sustainable future?

These characteristics clearly outline the contents of a world strategy in full expansion, while the international community is taking giant steps to reach agreements and declarations that will allow common collective action, to 169 achieve planetary equity and sustainability. How can we focus a global strategy that will take the planet's sustainability fully into consideration?

We feel that the major contents of the answers to this question are clear. However, some of the main issues are:

- The State must genuinely approach other States and the rest of the world, to share responsibilities and efforts for planetary sustainability;
- Strategic scientific knowledge and information are at the service, first of all, of a good life for all humankind, and second to solve the problems that most directly affect human security;
- Natural resources are used differently, in harmonious coordination with all human beings, with Nature and living beings, in order to ensure life, in all its splendor, on this planet;
- Innovation and creativity are at the service of emergence of sustainable, peaceful societies;
- Social capital is primary in constructing all social agendas and global change processes;
- Production factors are managed together with international economic sustainability policies and expansion of the benefits of human progress;
- Social demands are met through humanity and civilization policies, wherein humans regain their rightful place and economics is the tool used to ensure this;

- A new planetary civilization is encouraged, as the greatest inspiration of all civilizations and cultures on the planet, to search for future sustainability;
- A new international juridical paradigm is accepted as the driver of expected changes, encounter and exchange, dialogue and sharing among all human beings, States and communities. It is an active instrument in human understanding and the appearance of global ethics;
- The meaning of life is valued integrately and holistically. This reverses the roles and the exaggerated value granted to the market and capital, valuing more highly lasting culture and not the culture of waste. Connectivity among people stresses the value of solidarity among generations, as a prerequisite for sustainability.
- Goods are used as long as possible, in a concern to reduce the multiplication of wastes, and to transform wastes into new products. The search is how to most effectively use non-renewable energies and materials or inputs, and how to prolong products' usable life. Consequently, a real perspective of the idea of sustainability will investigate how to create awareness and collective mobilization for sustainability;
- The search for human understanding will be paramount, rather than simple accumulation and manipulation of data, knowledge or instruments. This change in mindset, in attitude will be primarily concerned with human behavior.

Once different directions have been identified in the contents of these two global strategies, that exist side by side and have unconditional supporters on both sides, how can we get a decision for the future to settle these differences and construct an effective action platform for 2015? How can we tap the potential and enriching flows of both proposals? Will it be possible to continue indefinitely in this direction, with two directions at once, without jeopardizing the achievement of the millennium goals by 2015, or the most outstanding results expected with all agreements and world declarations in place? How to make use of both strategies to attempt to find a middle way, that could be realistic and effective in the short term?

The international community will focus on the answers to these transcendental questions. Future sustainability and the outcomes expected by 2015 will largely depend on the decisions that are made.

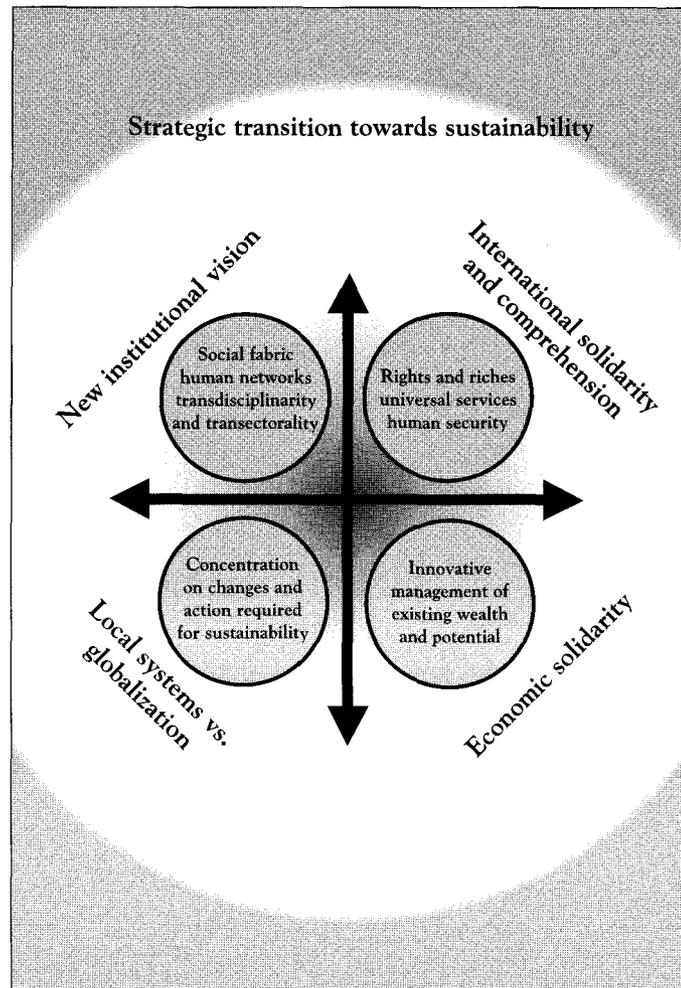
There is no point in speculating on the intermediate-term strategy. The dynamics of international dialogues and cooperation are now so large, and take place within such imagination and uncertainty, changing so fast and influencing unexpected, unimaginable factors, that this will shed unsuspected richness on the basis of which hope and optimism will strongly resurrect day by day. With these expectations, the international community will surely be able, in the coming months, to adopt a solid global strategy opening the doors and setting realistic horizons for sustainability in every region of the world.

#### **Political realism and planetary sustainability**

86. In the 21st century, the idea of the Nation-State remains a major factor for organizing human beings so that they can decide on their collective fate, clearly coordinating with other humans.

The Nation-State, despite the globalization process so powerfully underway, the conflicts on many levels (ethnic, religious, ...), the trans-national or regional pressures has not succumbed. No, it is resisting and clarifying its role for the future. It would seem at this time that no other institution could readily supplant it, perform its basic functions, and ensure the strengthening of the immense cultural wealth that, from the community and local level, is kept in all nations worldwide. There is talk of a crisis in the Nation-State notion, but political realism would force us to be more even and balanced in analyses and perceptions of the future, in collective work for sustainability.

Although we now observe, in the process of globalizing the economy and trade, that directors of multi-national corporations have to take better care of their relations with their shareholders than with the government, or that virtual movements of large masses of financial capital circulate freely, from one end of the planet to the other, without much control by governments.



Nation-States are grounded in and oriented largely by the will, desires and expectations of citizens, which is a sphere in which democracy acts and becomes stronger, not just in industrial, cultural or religious issues.

States will continue their sound intervention and attempts to meet and have effective dialogues at all levels. However, again, in this new age, the reorientation of interests and values toward

what could be called *Humankind's Intangible Heritage* is beginning to occupy the world's mind, in its already complex relationships and inter-relations. Interest no longer focuses on conquering territory geographically; rather, it is the domain of knowledge, of wisdom, of intangible goods, of the virtual world, that matters and counts.

The smooth flow of such goods internationally, with strategic production factors, progressively opens up the world's national economies, creating market alliances we could never have imagined before. This gave rise to gigantic continental marketplaces for circulation of goods, services, products, such as in the case of Europe, the market planned for the Americas as of 2005, and progress in the Asian, African and Arab worlds.

The above, with stunning political realism, demands that Nation-States create relations, norms, coherent cooperation instruments, to facilitate these new processes of ordering the flow of goods and certain management of international economics. It also demands great capacity for internal innovation and imagination, in order to be able to assure clear protection for their markets, for their citizens' good lives, for employment, for safeguarding their cultural identity and proposal for civilization.

The early 21st century hold the great promise that the human race might undertake an actual process of peaceful transformation, laying solid groundwork to achieve sustainable planetary stability and progress.

The new center of gravity for the international economy has shifted toward the world of knowledge, of information, of human input, of social capital and capital in general. The role of industrialized products and industrialization in general will not decline the difference that now excites us is that human beings are becoming more important as we move toward the future. People will no longer have to primarily adapt to machines and tools rather, people are not the heart, a vital, central part of production.

It is as if people managed to shake loose, definitively, from that steel or metal shell that we have been enclosed in since the industrial age began. We are no longer punished in the industrial

world for being out of the imposed specifications or by the rigid production process; rather, now we are rewarded and paid for being able to go beyond specifications to innovate or create, to alleviate and make those processes more healthful and sustainable.

This is a huge change, achieved almost without noticing or trying, in the world of economics or industry, since explosion and penetration in the world of production of cultural force. This creative drive that all human beings have and that cannot be stopped or annihilated by misconceived management or administration or by the application of principles expected to buffer or extinguish it. This is essential for a global action platform in the voyage to sustainability.

Political realism now also asserts that Nation-States, in the new information and knowledge society age, are becoming more fragile and sensitive than before. Why? They can no longer, strictly speaking, offer and commit to economic results for their constituencies, for example, as they could just a few decades ago.

Nowadays, expected positive economic results depend or are linked to achievements in cooperation and coordination established with other Nation-States in the political sphere and with foreign production factors in the world of economics.

Politics pave the way, open the doors for the economy, nationally and internationally, to act flexibly and freely to offer expected results. Thus, political realism, pursued boldly and intelligently, should be able to silently take care of cooperation and closeness with other Nation-States in order, among other things, to achieve proper operation of markets, as a basis for implementing social and human security agendas.

On this level, **the notion of inter-dependence among Nation-States has gained a lot of ground with the international community.** This notion has become common or familiar. With it, several dimensions have increased in importance:

- Only those societies that effectively open to meeting with others internationally become winners, grow, create, share and compete appropriately.

- Sovereign thought and deliberation blur or become frail in this increasing, obliged sharing, which is the positive basis for solidary work toward planetary sustainability.
- All sovereignty is linked to recognition of others. Therefore, it represents a sort of logical inter-dependence.
- The security of each Nation-State is appreciated and understood on the basis of weaknesses and threats hanging over the weakest or least favored.

The principle of inter-dependence transforms the game and international competition quite radically. Within the idea of international political realism, utilitarian fundamentals appear regarding the opening of Nation-States or societies. For example: world collective goods, such as air and water, are 176 understood and imposed increasingly as fundamental symbolic goods in the planet's sustainability. These goods are set within a vision transcending geographical borders and going on to meet world, planetary levels, becoming goods of humankind.

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A strategic aspect of great value in this context is the **mobility of transnational flows**. Globality and mobility are linked and joined to give rise to the universe of regulation and self-regulation, which seek to optimize the benefits of the proliferation of inter-dependency on all levels, highly decentralized, using new information and communications technologies.

These inter-dependencies touch on each human being and community, which are encouraged so that, in an increasing process of self-regulation, they can achieve their human realization and support, on that basis, sustainability in their context, nation or planet.

Of course, there is a major counterpart to the above. This is sharing resources of all kinds and achieving a common agreement on essential human needs, starting with the consideration of those who have the least or are the weakest. Sharing weaknesses and strengths of Nation-States, as their wealth and progress accumulate.

On the basis of that notion, and recently since September 11, 2001, with what happened in New

York, the international community has begun to share the idea that any expression of lethal insecurity anywhere on the planet, directly or indirectly, is a way to harm security everywhere.

The notion of health is updated in this game of interactions among Nation- States almost infinitely. Similarly, the notion of health has gotten stronger in 2002 with the appearance of new viruses unknown to the scientific community, causing dozens of deaths and moving quickly all over the face of the earth.

AIDS is one of the clearest examples of this shift in perception of the world and of international political realism. Environmental security has also gained ground and, with all this, the idea of an urgent world action platform to work for sustainability.

Recent economic crises have created alarming signals regarding the need to work, similarly, for planetary economic security. A possible crisis or destabilization in Asia would threaten stability in the United States or Europe, along the front line of effects, and the same would happen with a crisis in Eastern Europe with Latin America, not to speak of the impact of a possible crisis in the United States on the rest of the world.

There is now full awareness in the international community of these possible and feasible scenarios. Therefore, there is a collective movement contributing ideas, affirming will and exchanges to avoid such crises and, above all, create a process that will pave the way for a new sustainable world economic reality and lead the way to planetary sustainability.

However, even more determining than economic security is the desire to achieve political security. Conflict or war in one Nation-State follow conflict or war in another neighboring country in the region. Physical, economic, food, health, or environmental security expand in the awareness of all citizens, of all Nation-States and the world as a whole, at alarming speeds, thanks to the virtual world in which things move forward.

Thus, the world agendas we have referred to here are gaining ground, expanding continually the issues of concern to the entire international community. This is a good time to create a major

world action platform, multithematic and complex but also realistic and oriented toward essential concerns, such as each human being, life represented in all species, and cultural wealth.

### **The new meaning of alliances**

87. In the future, alliances among States will play a capital role but this will continue to involve essentially market features, power and profit. Acceptance and application of rules orienting trade and technologies could work, if tacit agreement is elicited from the great powers to play their role, on an equal standing with the world's States.

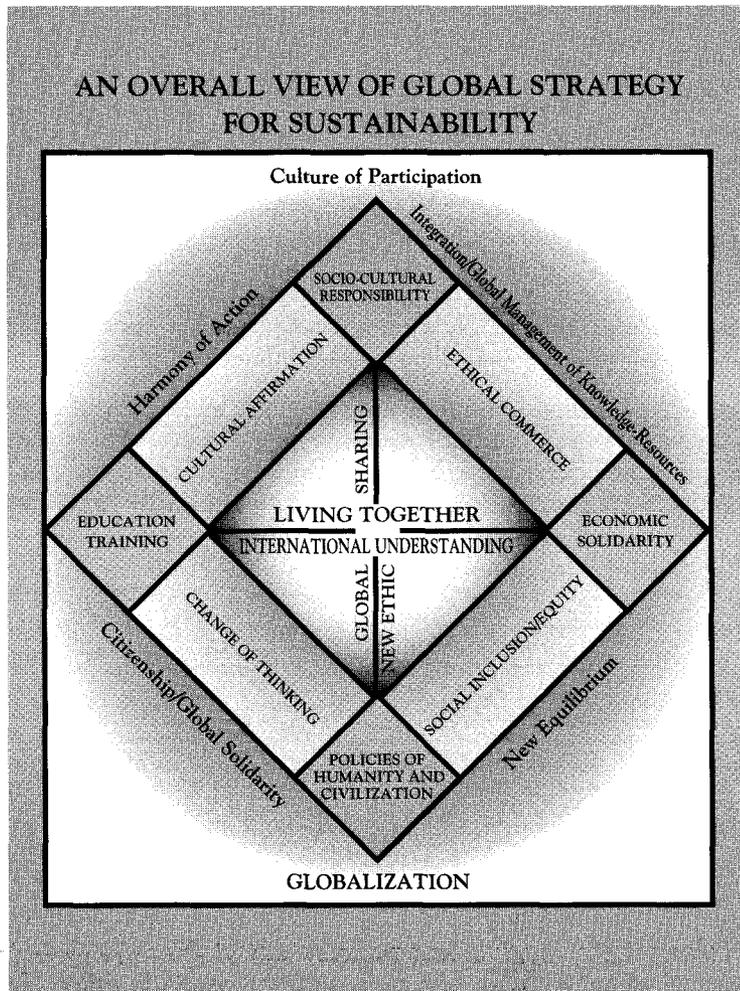
This is evident within the United Nations system, where these powers are joined together and could do much to strengthen such bodies as the Security Council in order to care for the world's solid political stability, the ECOSOC to promote coherent action in regard to social, economic and environmental issues, based on a renewed vision of the role of the Sustainable Development Commission, the body responsible for reflection and trans-sectoral, complex action, on the basis of all the Agendas and declarations adopted by the international community.

In financial, monetary and investment issues, such institutions as the World Bank and the International Monetary fund, as well as different world funds such as the United Nations Development Program (UNDP), the Children's Fund (UNICEF), the Population Fund (UNFPA), the Environmental Program (UNEP), the Women's Fund (UNIFEM), and the global instrument for financing special environmental projects (GEF).

Today these countries, with the support of the international community, are working for greater integration and coordination under the idea of concentrating efforts and resources for the millennium goals, but also for other essential issues geared toward urgently working for sustainability.

This new vision is joined with greater coordination with efforts promoting regional or sub-regional financial institutions, such as regional banks: in the Americas, the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), the Andean Development Corporation (CAF), the Central American Bank and the institutions related to the Caribbean and MERCOSUR. Something similar is happening in other regions (Europe, Africa, Asia and the Arab States).

The alliances of greatest concern at present are oriented toward those issues that could benefit their citizens the most, including those already mentioned: collective goods (water, air, biodiversity ...) and human security. Normative instruments and cooperation have in many cases been grounded in the new 180 information and communication technologies. Illicit traffic and the theft of cultural works and goods, for example, is another issue of enormous concern in alliances among States.



Another area of rapid but very careful progress is the use and participation of new information and communications technologies, a new aspect of strategic care in this sector is security and reliability.

In alliances, the topic of global security is capital at present. This is understood as a collective good that benefits everyone. The issue that is beginning to appear is who will pay for it, and whether the peoples involved in the more powerful countries can accept and tolerate sustaining massive investments all over the world, outside their own territories, in order to guarantee that world security that, in the long run, will directly benefit them. Here we are making allusion to international concerns such as terrorism, drugs and weapons of mass destruction.

Less favored States must make huge cuttings in health and education programs for their peoples in order to have resources left for national security. Otherwise, they run the risk of remaining isolated and taking little part in these world processes of producing and marketing the goods and services already mentioned.

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Something similar is happening with the fast-expanding tourism industry. Offering good means of communication, transport and, above all, security have become essential elements for all States in the process of modernizing. However, the high costs that this entails pose the need and urgency of strategic alliances among States. Otherwise, it will be impossible, isolatedly and independently, to obtain positive results in such complex, sophisticated, demanding fields undergoing rapid change.

In the midst of the above, compliance with economic, trade, technological or other contracts is becoming an issue. Often, citizens or institutions from strong countries break contracts for various reasons, among them security. This is serious because it creates mistrust and fear in relationships, associations or alliances among States.

Resorting to national tribunals to settle conflicts does not always offer the positive results expected, or simply such courts are not used. So, new alliances among States and institutions internationally demand redoubled efforts from the international community in order to provide international laws that can be efficiently enforced, with full consent of all States.

This singular pathway toward the future is also in agreement with the major sacrifices that many States must still make. However, there is full agreement, grounded in true security (in the broadest sense of the term) on the universal scale. The planet's sustainability will be imperfect until this is achieved.

For alliances to meet and happen in a setting that reinforces all necessary balances, responsibilities and rights for all equally, it will be urgent to work on balancing existing forces and powers and strengthening mutual trust among all States in order to broaden the basis of the coalition. The balance of forces will keep any State from acting or using its power outside the group of States. The strengthened coalition will be the product of sharing political objectives and aims, and precise common goals.

Trust is growing among States and sharing human values is becoming easier. Therefore, the market trend of all States to attempt to unite or gather to consolidate the world economy and the information and knowledge society is seen as positive. This, obviously, entails enormous advantages and positive results.

For the information and knowledge society, alliances are oriented, particularly, toward paying greater worldwide attention to population groups and therefore expanding areas of action; to strengthening human networks of scientists and experts in favor of developing science and research; to achieve greater control over exchanges and quality in goods and services; to encourage the alliance among all technologies oriented toward human connectivity television, radio, press, Internet to favor progress in and solution of specific problems; to expand the force of conception, innovation and design as effective means of coping with uncertainty, crises, the new and different; to facilitate transport and contact among peoples and cope with the complex world of finance and currencies.

The idea of sustainability leads the way in strategic alliances among States, emphasizing the achievement of *social connectivity*, strengthening of the social fabric and social capital of States; affirmation of cultural diversity, of human beings' and communities' identity, progress of civilization; appropriation of universal ethical thought and universal values and principles

underpinning sustainability; affirming trust; sharing and collectively building planetary sustainability; the natural presence of human wisdom, grounded in, but not weighed down by, knowledge and information; conservation of biodiversity and protection of humanity's collective goods; achievement of new lifestyles and the rule of harmony rather than competition, excellence, elitism, separation or isolation.

Consequently, we see that alliances, from the perspective of the information and knowledge society, are viewed more as a step or result in the chain of impacts of the technological domain on societies, rather than as the explicit response to the tremendous challenges that humankind has to face at present.

These challenges have more to do with the ethical or cultural domain, contents (training, educational levels ...), thought (mental structure and mindset) and specialized dialogue among political and strategic concepts, civilizations and cultures. Here we observe the great importance of the upcoming World Summit on the Information Society. This will be a historic moment for revisiting world alliances and giving them a very particular orientation in the virtual world.

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**Rights: a framework of inspiration for understanding and co-existence.**

88. In the Preamble to the United Nations Charter, signed on June 26, 1945, the States of the world made the commitment and reaffirmed their "faith in the fundamental rights of man, in the dignity and value of the person, in the equality of men's and women's rights ..." They also expressed their will to "promote social progress and raise the standard of living within a broader concept of freedom".

Now more than ever, the importance and transcendence of these rights is at stake internationally, especially when working collectively for planetary sustainability. So, working for a culture of full respect for the rights of all human beings appears in an outstanding position on all international agendas and commitments.

Social exclusion, non-existence or deterioration of social contracts, generalized violence, all

types of racism and non-acceptance of differences or different persons, the search to eliminate political concepts or groups that pursue their human realization from very different visions or perspectives, are all underlying, alarming causes for the constraints and obstacles that appear at this time, to prevent fully enforcement of the rights of all persons, communities or nations.

All these causes reinforce each other and worsen their effects. Overcoming these constraints and people's ensuing despair and fear is a task involving entire societies and States.

This is not just the job for governments and authorities, institutions or experts, but an effort entailing constant vigilance by us all, calling for reinforcing hope and transparency in all human activities on the basis of a solid, active, bold, resolved citizens' position. Nothing can be achieved positively from passiveness, isolation, individualism, or simple stoic acceptance of situations or actions that are intolerable or unsustainable.

It is necessary for education, in its contents, in all its levels and programs, in schools and elsewhere, to always carry the banner of human rights, as the backbone of constructing a new humanism and a sustainable life for all in the future.

The international community's global action platform by 2015 must be illuminated and guided by this un-replaceable beacon of rights, shared by the international community.

Civil and political rights, economic, social and cultural rights constitute a framework of protection and inspiration for understanding, co-existence and the good life for humankind.

These rights are inherent for every one on the planet, and are not received or granted by any particular State. Rather, they are international and each State makes the commitment to promote and defend them. Care and vigilance in the enforcement of these rights correspond to the international community, through the United Nations system.

Efforts to improve the enforcement of human rights correspond to governments and citizens. Governments are both watchful over and accountable for rights. The United Nations, with

annual reports on the status of rights worldwide, support the custodial work of governments and civil society, making good on the commitment to support responsible agents.

### **Universal human rights contribute to and guarantee planetary sustainability**

**Right to life:** “All persons are entitled to life, liberty and security” (Article 3 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights).

**Civil and political rights:** “The will of the people is the basis for political power” (Article 21) which entitles the constituency to actually participate in the government.

The main causes for violations of civil rights are concentration of wealth and instability in the rules of play and mechanisms for political allocation of resources. Difficulties for citizens’ participation, lack of accountability by governments and the absence of solid ethics open the doors to corruption and undermine political rights.

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**Right to legal protection:** “All are equal under the law and have, without any distinction, the right to equal protection by the law...” (Article 7). The objective of all justice systems will be to guarantee legal protection for all citizens’ rights.

**Right to freedom:** “No one shall be subjected to torture or cruel, inhuman or degrading penalties or treatment.” (Articles 5 and 13).

**Economic, social and cultural rights:** Development is a right implying that the benefits of progress will be enjoyed by all. Lack of equity and social exclusion undermine these rights, as does the lack of social protection. The basis of sustainable human development lies in fulfillment of these rights.

**Right to minimal protection:** “Right to security..” (Article 22) This right is universal and solidary in its coverage. It assures minimal income for all human beings.

**Right to subsistence income and employment:** The right to adequate economic and social

protection, during unemployment, illness, maternity, raising children, widowhood, disability or old age (Social Development Summit, 1995).

**Right to education:** "... the right to education is nothing more than the right to take part in the life of the modern world". (UNESCO 1996)

**Right to health:** "Health is a complete state of physical, mental and social wellbeing and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity". (WHO).

**Right to sexual and reproductive health:** "Reproductive health care programs must provide the broadest possible services without any sort of coercion ..." (International Conference on Population, Cairo, 1994). The right to reproductive and sexual health is directly associated with several essential human rights.

**Right to nutrition and food security:** Governments are obliged to "adopt measures to comply with their duty of achieving food security for present and future generations." (Food Security Summit, Rome, 1996).

**Right to a healthful environment:** Human beings... are entitled to a healthful, productive life, in harmony with Nature. Environmental protection must contribute as an integral part of the development process. (Rio Summit, 1992).

**Right to housing and equitable human settlements:** "...the right to have the same opportunities for access to housing, infrastructure, health services, food and water in sufficient amount, education and open spaces..." (Habitat II World Conference, Istanbul, 1996).

### **New Social Contracts:**

89. Holderlin wrote that "where danger grows, salvation also grows". Therefore, in 1945, at the end of World War II, the governments of the time, with a clear vision of the future and the way to confront the huge political, social and economic challenges of that turbulent time,

decided to create the notion of the Province-State, complementing wage advantages, to create a “**social contract**” grounded in negotiation, security and social protection. The costs of this old social contract have risen greatly, its impact has been questioned and the principles under which it was founded have been attacked.

Market dynamics, supported by new technologies, proclaimed the success of the market society just a few decades ago. From this perspective, society would self-regulate, with the consequent decrease in or elimination of political, social and cultural mediations traditionally used. This also assumed a certain State downsizing or disfiguring.

Today, that utopia is history, since more recent economic and social crises, on the different continents, have shown the urgency and timeliness of regulation. Nevertheless, the complex evolution of societies, the un-numbered changes that have happened in the world on all levels, since 1945 up to the present, clearly show that the concept of the social contract from those times must change substantially.

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The appearance of a society progressing in immense human networks, vindicating forcefully the freedom and maximum strengthening of each human being, requires a new social contract projected toward the future, offering all guarantees of good living for all.

The economic system in effect at present yields very exciting results and profits, all based on the broad notion of freedom but forgetting the notions of equality and solidarity. Its quantitative success is all the while a political failure, from the ethical and moral standpoint, since it lacks higher purposes.

From this dimension, we have seen the limits of economics and also of the State. For this reason, a new orientation is proposed of humanizing the current progress in globalization, in which process the State would get back its strategic functions of protecting society, and the market would return to its more instrumental role regarding the production of goods and services.

Recent historical experience has also shown that a State attempting to do everything is headed

for questionable results and often for failure, just as if the weight of all solutions or answers that society requires are left to the market.

Founding a planetary society, and planetary citizenship, calls for working with the idea of new social contracts, cooperating in humanizing life, humanizing human affairs, and the appearance of a great human project supporting a scenario of planetary sustainability.

What we have said so far is enough to identify the parties to these new social contracts, that will contribute greatly to pedagogical, political, economic, social, cultural, environmental and ethical progress, affirming the sustainability of all societies and therefore of the entire world.

The contracts that have most powerfully been emphasized by the international community lately and have been presented for the consideration of the United Nations, on the occasion of the Millennium Assembly, have been:<sup>14</sup>

- **A natural contract:** Grounded in a central alliance of science with development and environmental preservation. Agenda 21, adopted at the Rio Summit in 1994; international conventions on biodiversity, climate and desertification and dozens of other instruments and international norms would be the foundation for creating this contract.
- **A cultural contract:** Grounded in a quality education for all, throughout their lives; in democratization of knowledge and lore; in pluralism and coexistence among cultures; in respect for all cultural and human manifestations; in real access to the new information and communications technologies; in concrete policies for humankind and civilization.
- **A social contract:** Grounded in the search to reconstruct the social fabric; in the

<sup>14</sup> In 1999, just prior to the Millennium Assembly, the UNESCO Director-General presented a book to the international community: *A New World*, Paris, Publisher Odile Jacob, outlining UNESCO's vision of such contracts.

solidarity to eliminate critical poverty from the planet; the emergence of equity and social justice without precedents in recent history; the disappearance of exclusion and all forms of rejection or marginalization of human beings or certain groups; strengthening of inter-culturality and coming-together of peoples, through common goals and purposes; the inclusion of all, respect for dignity and legitimate aspirations of all; stable, equitable gender policies; genuine sharing of the planet's wealth and political will to ensure solid agendas for social protection of the entire population.

- **An ethical contract:** Grounded in teaching the ethics of the human race and the ethics of understanding. The essential concerns would be to strengthen democracy; the presence of a stable, lasting peace; sharing and equitably redistributing the benefits of globalization underway; environmental safeguarding and sustainability of the planet; strengthening of the expression of the human spirit, of immaterial values, of human wisdom.

#### **Understanding and prosperity are antidotes to the idea of ongoing conflicts.**

90. International policy and cooperation, after creating the United Nations system, have always worked against continuing conflicts. This may be observed in the last 60 years, in which peace and economic stability, collective efforts to achieve well-being for the entire population by rising above political concepts, have gained ground.

Population groups have raised their awareness, as have policy-makers, that where there is chaos, violence, scandalous social exclusion, and critical poverty, there are no minimum conditions for appropriate governance or to lay the foundations for a sustainable future.

Taking a look at the international sphere, many could affirm that the conflicts of the present, that international political maladjustments, that terrorist practices and violent groups, are contradicting what the community has learned over these past six decades. However, what should be understood is that conflicts will continue to occur for a long time as of yet, unfortunately. They will progressively decrease in intensity and dangerousness, insofar as human understanding

and grandeur make their appearance more stunningly, with signs that our lighthouse has been sighted, and has been demonstrated above in this book.

Suffice it to look, for example, at the great hopes placed on the international community in this year 2003, in cases such as the actual acceptance of creation of a Palestine State, something that, just a few months ago, amidst struggles and violence, did not seem viable. Something similar is observed in international community agreements regarding handling and control of weapons of mass destruction.

The international community, peoples in all regions, are tired of the absurd presence of indiscriminate violence and are orienting their energies and thoughts toward true eradication of situations of poverty, environmental damage and dangers that so seriously impede full human self-realization.

These new trends, like progressive achievements in the scope of generalized human prosperity, become an antidote, and a relief valve for tensions among States, radical divisions between them and the unbridled struggle for ephemeral powers. Good sense is gaining ground, sanity, sharing goals and purposes, resources, skills and knowledge.

In this, the role of the media is considered highly valuable; as peoples open their doors to get to know the details of culture, customs, ways of thinking and major concerns of neighboring or distant peoples; soap operas perform this role exquisitely. This is a time in history when humankind needs to know itself, get closer to itself, understand itself, and shake hands with itself, free of any distinctions whatsoever.

As for the economy, competition will continue among States, since this is part of the implicit and explicit rules of markets, but will be upheld by the crucial use of instruments guiding that competition and providing a healthful, solidary environment among the different stakeholders, recognizing, above all, that the common good, the good of all, must prevail in possible conflict situations.

Virtual links among States and peoples will continue to be affirmed and expand, bringing

them closer together. This virtual world will not substitute for contact between people and governments, direct dialogue, the fraternal embrace, which are the sure remedy for preventing, clarifying or alleviating conflicts.

The virtual makes it possible to live in real time through things that happen at a distance, images or dialogues that, if not contextualized, could cause many difficulties and errors in perception among peoples and governments.

Taking special care in using and coming close to the virtual poses the need for prudence and discrete waiting.

Integration of democratic processes, strengthening of political institutions is vital when thinking of conflict management, relief and elimination. This is particularly so when confronting issues touching on delicate issues, such as crisis and insecurity, drugs, indiscriminate sale of weapons or toxic substances.

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Conflict may often be the occasion or opportunity to probe the impulse for more drastic or radical changes and interventions. Support and understanding by majorities or communities will be strategic. Transparency in acting, offering believable information, not partial or incomplete, will be the key to success. We will have to avoid, then, sudden or unexpected changes in direction, in actions, without offering much explanation or creating distractions through other topics or facts.

Peoples now show that they have acquired greater capacity to conserve their memory, live and relate facts and actions, evaluate and demand. These qualities, through education and sensitization of the public, must be encouraged more in the future in order to be able to have communities that are more decided, participatory and oriented toward changes.

### **New management of knowledge and competencies**

91. Acceleration of technological changes, in the new age of the information and knowledge society, along with the constant explosion of knowledge and new tools, all amidst growing

complexity in scientific work, will carry all communities toward so-called cognitive societies. There, new ideas and behavioral principles will be spread, such as the culture of success; of super-specialization and expansion of human cultural training, of zero defects, and so on.

Knowledge that is spread throughout and available in many places worldwide can be linked and inter-connected to global processes thanks to the use of new technologies. Knowledge may be required to create new dynamics and possibilities in new areas of scientific or technological research or to answer specific unresolved problems.

The dialogue between ancestral knowledge and lore, and the products of work grounded in western reason and systems, in vital issues (medicine, energy, biodiversity ...) has become fashionable nowadays.

Humanity urgently requires not only to unveil certain unresolved mysteries but also to cause great qualitative leaps forward in science, favoring greater wellbeing for humanity and secure sustainability.

At the same time, the educational standard and quality of knowledge and mastery of techniques and instruments by the people are urgently required. This is the result of multiplication of networks, autonomous learning networks and, in general, the positive impact of culture-education with the massive use of new information and communications technologies.

Learning to learn in a setting of constant change, in which it is necessary and urgent to build partnerships, contributing persistently to *collective projects transcending traditional borders*, in which one no longer knows necessarily who or what supports or drives these processes this is a new model for managing knowledge and competencies that contributes greatly to rapprochement and solidarity among cultures, multiple contributions to expression and specific contents on cultural values and goods, in favor of the appearance of a policy on brotherhood.

All information, production, exploitation and marketing technologies can be used for educational purposes and to promote culture globally. Those for treating information play, for example, a very special role in our societies because they offer the possibility of investigating, keeping

and managing data, information, and knowledge in ways that we could not use before; this is accompanied by the use in societies of such media as cellular telephony, fax, Internet, television, producing a gigantic cultural change in the setting where each person, theoretically speaking, has actual access to knowledge, and intangible cultural goods and values, for example.

This takes us toward a new culture of networking, which enables the *constant appearance of virtual learning networks*, which often arise due to the urgency and need to exchange knowledge, data to confront problem situations or to continue creative processes or new searches.

And here we witness two trends:

- There are *sedentary nomads*, supported by durable, flexible linkages required by world competition and the laws of the marketplace;
- *Individualization*, the outgrowth of that new virtual society in which major companions, people's tangible material company, are the telephone, the monitor and the keyboard.

New logical approaches are appearing in relations of knowing in all societies that threaten traditional functions in settings of knowledge, including, as already mentioned, schools and universities.

An approach of self-education with network support; the appearance of virtual micro-groups devoted to topics, areas, and solving society's problems; greater development of curiosity, research, exchange of knowledge and know-how ... all of this would be making the work of support and assistance more important in regard to languages and modes of learning than the objects of learning and their own reason for being.

The loss, in any event, of the educational monopoly over producing competencies is a great revolution, which in turn is giving rise to new fields of knowledge.

Of course this all calls for transformation of traditional places for learning, to make them more

dynamic, and their contribution more effective in a society that increasingly interconnects everything, reconnects knowledge again as the only way to regain unity in life, to take full advantage of all life's wealth and assets, beginning with that invaluable wealth that is in people themselves. Here we have new directions from culture and education that could succeed in giving us urgent answers to the greatest challenges of sustainability.

### **Key questions orienting action and a strategic vision**

92. In both the construction and negotiation phase of action frameworks and adoption of strategies, as well as in their implementation, it will always be timely to have an overall pedagogical guide to serve as a north star for orientation. Constant results and evaluations will always offer us valuable elements, but a constantly vigilant attitude implies, above all, having a sound capacity to react in order to take action in crises and emergencies, and when the unexpected and uncertain happen.

This thinking, reflexive attitude could be expanded and encouraged constantly, on the basis of a small set of questions to facilitate decisions, follow up on the global strategy, reach a conclusion about the relevance or not of something, and contribute to establishing relations or inter-relationships in order to understand the context and the whole.

This matrix of guiding questions would include:

- **Where are we?**
  - Situation.
  - Limitations.
  - Opportunities.
  - Potential.
  
- **Where do we hope to go?**
  - Objectives.
  - Goals.
  - Overall aspirations or ideals.

- Why get only that far?
- What will it entail to think about going farther that way?

- **How to get there?**

- Viable, strategic action frameworks.
- Alliances.
- Necessary realism (political, legal, cultural, sociological...);
- New opportunities, new paradigms.
- Confronting old opponents and mobilizing new generations.

- **How to know that we got where we wanted to go?**

- We achieve greater overall understanding.
- We achieve greater sensitivity.
- Attitudes and behaviors changed, values have been reaffirmed.
- New developments and progress in areas / issues have happened.
- Critical problems have been eliminated or improved (poverty, exclusion ...)
- Levels of commitment and participation have increased.
- Human networks have been strengthened: social fabric, social capital and social protection.
- Brotherhood has expanded over geographical boundaries.
- There are examples of the application of iron-clad ethics (elimination of corruption )
- Everyone has access to education.
- Cultural expression has increased and markets perform their instrumental function.
- New technologies (ICTs) are in a process of true massification, for access to all.
- Violence is waning or disappearing, conflicts are decreasing.

- **How to confront the conflict and disagreements?**

- Political perceptions and consensus.
- Sharing benefits and knowing how to let go.

- Waiving non-essentials in favor of what is essential and vital.
- Human progress and greatness.
- Policies for humankind.

- **How to stay on course?**

- Understanding and acceptance of the complex.
- Constantly reunite and reconnect.
- The force of priority issues and danger of trying to please everyone.
- Leadership and solidarity.
- Accepting error, introducing change constantly.
- Recognizing achievements, adding them, maintaining them, expanding them.

### **Toward the Decade for Education and Sustainable Development (2005- 2015)**

#### **Lessons learned from 1992 through 2003.**

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93. The international community has acquired great experience in education and development for sustainability since the concept of sustainable development was coined in the late 1980s and Agenda 21 was adopted in the World Summit on Environment and Development (Rio de Janeiro, 1992). Agenda 21 included, in its chapters, one on education, training and public sensitization, number 36.

It goes without saying that all summits to date, since 1990 up through the most recent in Johannesburg (August 2002), have agreed that education, training and sensitization are the greatest instruments for the change we seek in order to achieve the planet's sustainability. With the main elements from these 14 years of work and concern in these areas, we could draw the following guidelines:

- All declarations and action agendas adopted by the international community include these three strategic action areas, within the global strategy, explicitly, without any

reservations, in precise, clearly orienting contexts. They have entire chapters (e.g. Agenda 21, Agenda on Population and development, international conventions). In the case, for example, of the Agenda or Action Program on Population and Development, the word that appears most often, following the word “government” in that text is the word “education”, which appears in almost every essential paragraph of that Agenda.

- All governments of the world, without any exception, know and accept that the only serious, effective way is through education, through collective learning, new thinking and a new mindset in the world. Without this, nothing will make any progress in that demanding, complex, difficult voyage toward sustainability.
- Every government has accepted, over these 14 years, that all, without any exception, Northern and Southern, powerful or with serious limitations on their resources, on one continent or another, with different economic models or lifestyles, all are urged to incorporate drastic changes of direction in regard to these essential issues and, at the same time, changes in vision, contents, processes, pedagogical models, educational practices materials, reading and approaches to contexts where they operate, teacher and educational stakeholder training, administration and evaluation, practices 198 for recognition of knowledge that has been mastered, and knowledge sometimes certified not so rigorously, etc.
- On every continent, the educational, academic, scientific and political communities agree that they must achieve greater presence, act more decisively, broaden and deepen scientific and research work, urgently change paradigms in order to effectively support the process of reinventing education. Networking, nationally and internationally, is encouraged progressively in this regard, which is highly positive.
- There is general agreement on the major topic of concern, i.e. quality and contents, as to the ability to overcome initial burdens and concerns that in the recent past and

for many decades have been simply administrative, managerial, salary-related, and the huge deficiency in attention to quantitative issues.

This was confirmed at the International Conference at Dakar-Senegal (2001), ten years after the Education for All Summit (Jomtien, 1990).

- It has been agreed that education calls for a holistic vision of society and the future. For this reason, governments, leaders, businesspersons and civil society must be concerned with all ways to promote, sustain and strengthen it.

Education, training and sensitization involve all sectors and institutions of a society. Of course, the ministries of education play a particular role in regard to initial, classroom-based basic education (the 9 to 11 first years). There is a demand regarding actual availability of “**State Policies on Education**”, for the long term, rather than the policies of each government administration in turn, with frequent, sudden changes that do not allow the required sustainability for overall, far-reaching transformations during two or more decades of continued work.

- It has been concluded that experimentation and special projects play an important role in the search for different formulas and modes of acting properly, but the great challenge lies in being able to promote serious global changes, that will affect all educational institutions, all stakeholders, at all levels, in all ways and modes (in-school, non-formal, informal) in programs oriented toward all population groups, without any exception.

Since this should happen worldwide and in every State of the international community, States ought to mobilize, almost without any limit, all necessary resources. Obviously, such resources will be much less than those required for other activities that are not so vital for sustainability or that may directly interfere with it.

Hence the urgency of being able to change traditional paradigms that societies have

applied to these issues. To be able to think differently, to move away from traditional planning and management practices and techniques that cannot satisfy the demands of the future, and achieve new preparation of human beings that will affirm, day by day, the sustainability of life.

There are many other lessons worldwide, but the above seven appear to be the most evident and strategic.

### **What is most disconcerting at present?**

94. Now that the international community is preparing to create a concrete, effective action platform to address the challenges of this decade from 2005 through 2015 (which the United Nations Development Commission originally attempted in 2003) there are questions as to what has happened and been achieved in the last 14 years. This is a totally valid exercise and should be useful for streamlining directions and truly committing the international community. What concerns us? There are seven main concerns:

- Not seeing clearly the benefit of adopting a working program, under the United Nations Commission for Sustainable Development (inspired by chapter 36 of Agenda 21) which UNESCO led internationally from 1994 through 2002.

Many institutions and persons concerned with education have this perception, particularly non-governmental organizations, for two reasons: a) the ineffectiveness of the United Nations system and, with it, UNESCO, in publicizing its achievements in a timely, coherent manner, although the multiple developments may be of great value; b) the real impossibility for non-governmental organizations in particular and other institutions to have the means, time and capacity to examine, understand and assimilate such rich experiences worldwide.

This situation becomes somewhat dangerous, because it is sometimes used to discredit each other needlessly, calling for decisions that make no contribution to the shared

goals, which dis-coordinates, atomizes and trivializes efforts and resources. This effect favors the status quo and therefore the expansion of conflict and imbalances.

- Not having a clear perception of the impact achieved by the actions proposed and implemented, many amidst great efforts and constraints. States, non-governmental organizations, financial institutions, the private sector and even independent leaders have attempted, in the United Nations system and otherwise, to carry forth innovative ideas and projects with youth, adults, women, the elderly, politicians, academicians.

There is the sensation that much remains to be done and that it may be necessary to think differently. So, constant change is installed and projected, continuity of efforts is lost, connectivity with other efforts and undertakings blurs, the upscaling to national or other levels fails and, finally, everything seems to stay the same and energy outlays are neutralized...

- Having to concentrate on promoting and doing what one can and not what is needed on striving for goals that one can afford with available resources rather than an entire target population, that could have an impact on others, until a universal positive impact is achieved, with everyone participating openly.
- Constant changes in stakeholders with power, which would prevent getting to the bottom of political implications and raising of options that would make it viable to do what is needed. The feeling that each new United Nations or international meeting makes only minor progress, sometimes insignificantly – that one is waiting for the missing step or decision, the consultation that never happened, the main stakeholder who was unable to be present, the report that is being prepared, or the evaluation or visit that was not made.

In view of these concerns, one must continue to insist on the original project that was not fully funded, the additional application for the resources needed to achieve

something important. This is a chain of events, going and coming, one after another, on every scale.

- The real feeling of non-connection between actions and, therefore, of no effective response to challenges and problems. Things are done halfway, there is always a sector that was not mobilized or did not contribute, institutions with other priorities, governments with too little time in power or different interests, or the national or international financial institution concerned with the profitability of resources and timing to apply them.
- Presence and quick emergence of new demands, new data and information, greater complexity in interventions, presence of other stakeholders who were not considered, the need for greater scientific or technological expertise to interpret the phenomena. This inspires despair and a feeling of powerlessness.

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This is especially valid when greater efforts are made, of a qualitative and structure nature, such as a change in academic programs, in-depth restructuring of the university, or creation and adoption of a new law for education.

- New media on hand to promote changing world mentality, and with them the new role of information and communication trends, appearance of the virtual world and all opportunities and challenges that this entails.

On the one hand, it is as if, in this new age, traditional institutions and States themselves were suddenly replaced and all of humankind ended up in the hands of this great force and continual assertive capacity of the media day by day, relating and reconnecting the whole planet. What to do? How to act? What is the real value of the contribution made in this direction? What is the scope of each network created, even if it comprises 4000 universities around the world, with tens of thousands or a million adolescents working together, when there are nearly three billion in the world?

This is the constant doubt of the impact, of the use of energy and resources, of unbreakable decisions willing to give and offer everything, who continually wonder: where are we really? What is this good for? Where are we going? Will tomorrow really be different? What am I really passing on to my children, to all children, to the new generations?

These feelings grow with access to data showing how little quantitative and qualitative progress has been made in the last 14 years. Who is to blame? What can we do?

### **What position should we take for the future and for immediate responsibilities?**

95. As we have clearly written in this handbook, the programmatic view of the future must start with a holistic overall vision, with little reference to the past. This can be used, above all, to channel expectations and energies toward the positive side of lessons learned not to promote, as many claim, more of the same, or changes that keep everything the same or progress only a little.

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To participate creatively in the current flow of possibilities, without individual or institutional exclusions or protagonisms, calling everyone to offer their input and active presence. This would be a valid, proactive position.

In particular, the following must be taken into account:

- No institution, sector or person can unaidedly be the sole party responsible for any fundamental change, of those changes perceived as indispensable for the planet's sustainability. Nor can one party be so influential worldwide to be the only one transforming humankind as a whole. Only persistent, patient, understanding, humble cooperation by all can manage to strengthen the world social fabric required for sustainability.
- From an isolated individual perspective, nationally or internationally, resources

will always fall short in attempting large-scale impacts until universal coverage is achieved. The only valid, realistic position will be centered and based on joining forces with others, pooling results, creating new broadened programmatic concepts, i.e. the global collective vision that will make viable all isolated proposals, although made by States or financial institutions of great international standing.

- Designing innovative policies and action programs at all levels, based on major world consensus, as outlined, must center more on detail and application on national and local levels than on the attempt to differentiate from other States or introducing unnecessary competition, being different just for the sake of being different.

It is necessary to strengthen close dialogue simply to avoid repeating processes and finding results that others have already experienced and discovered. Experience in action on all continents calls for an end to isolation, and the decision to participate actively in the globalization process that is underway.

- The enormous multitude of initiatives and institutions promoting them, on international – national – local levels (there are thousands on a single issue in a single country, and this figure is multiplied exponentially on the international level) are very important for mobilization and early warning. Their impact on change at the local and community levels is unique and irreplaceable.

They must remain independent and autonomous, but with rigorous thinking, ethics, values and overall culture. Then they can be the *lighthouses* leading the way into future change. Strengthening social capital, the social fabric and social protection will be essential concerns.

- Economics (private sector, financial institutions), environment (consumption, lifestyle, productive processes) and social issues (poverty, relations and inter-relationships among peoples and cultures) taken together will be the qualitative guide for the way forward. Therefore, only a genuine proposal for education, training and public sensitization can progress and be viable in the future, essentially by 2015.

- The great force for proposals and innovations will always belong to peoples and communities. Contributing to creating the foundations and means for them to join together, conceive ideas, create and adopt decisions, get involved seriously and continually in what has been agreed, remain alert and active, able to adjust the direction when necessary without traumas, will always be strategic in the future.

Eliminating all attitudes that seem like charity, handouts, paternalism, or gifts is urgent throughout the world. It is necessary, as soon as possible, to return people's dignity and worth, without involving poverty or the crisis situation.

We must not forget that, above all, working for sustainability is to elicit a new universal humanistic project. Therefore, the interplay and interrelationship of human projects and humanizing actions must be inspired and motivated by the force of education—not just educating for education's sake, or training just to train.

In the future, 2015, all educational action, every lesson learned will be part of a great ascending spiral, which will reach its peak when wisdom, understanding and human brotherhood are achieved.

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### **What is new about the present?**

96. What is new today can be found in the political agreements and global agenda adopted in Johannesburg (2002). The new is also inspired by the new age of the information and knowledge society, which was not so clearly conceptualized in the early 1990s. That is, new features of the 21st century appear on two main levels.

a) A broad vision, more integrated and holistic, trans-disciplinary and transsectoral, transcendent and future-based, for development and sustainability on this planet, progress and a good life for all humankind; and

b) The immense possibilities that the new age of the information and knowledge society offers us all, without any exceptions, to help solve the problems and challenges now menacing

humanity at large. The expanded vision has been proposed in this handbook (please see section seven in Part I) along with the new direction and scope of education for this new 21st century and the twelve key concepts orienting it, namely:

- Lifelong learning for all.
- Inter-dependencies.
- Inter-disciplinarity/ trans-disciplinarity/ inter-sectorality.
- Diversity.
- Rights and needs of present and future generations.
- Quality of life.
- Planetary citizenship.
- Multi-culturality/ inter-culturality.
- Uncertainties and precautions, the unexpected and serendipity.
- Partnership, associations and networking.
- Sustainable change and ethics.
- Specific training in favor of sustainability.

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From the standpoint of the opportunities presented by the new age of the information and knowledge society, the new major guidelines directly influencing an action platform to be created in favor of education would include the concepts and strategic orientation referring to:

- **Contents** (all types of contents, scientific confidentiality).
- **Connectivity** (technological platforms, access, software).
- **Understanding** (training, refresher courses, upgrading ...)
- **Control** (security, vigilance, regulation..).
- **Sharing** (specific applications).

Accordingly, the major issues concerning the world of private parties and governments would be:

- **Availability and management of hardware** (of a social nature...)

- **Software** (social and massive licenses..).
- **Service providers** (Internet, satellites, tele-centers..).
- **Cultural management** (local contents, TV, radio, press..).

In view of these new challenges, the role of States must involve:

- **Transformation of technology** (platforms, technologies..).
- **Industrial property** (patents, products, services..).
- **Intellectual property** (stressing the role of authors ...)
- **Rates and market segmentation.**

The above role of States would ultimately be geared toward ensuring that technologies would not determine or slant contents, or be the government's (markets', civil society's) sole interest. Therefore it is very clear, when considering sustainability in the age of information and knowledge, from the standpoint of education, it is necessary for every State to have a national information and communications structure, which must essentially emphasize cultural, social, political, scientific, technological, historical memory and economic issues.

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In this structure, the role and strategies for integrated, coherent management of telecommunications must be clearly established, with the telecommunications and media infrastructures. On that basis, different models for action must be promoted and developed, at the service of communities or municipalities, such as cyber cafés, tele-centers, cyber-communities, digital cities, all the way to the most globalizing notion, the so-called *virtual States*.

The distinction between social or purely commercial action becomes a priority in this process. Playing with both, in a parallel manner and without distinctions, may give rise to major mistakes and to expectations that will not be satisfied.

In any event, it is necessary to recall that the pathway of hard technologies, hardware and other materials, has already been traveled on various continents and the markets are open. The dilemmas and negotiations are happening in regard to the social dimension and contents.

This could lead us to think about giving special priority to key policy issues, such as:

- Politics and governance;
- International, regional and national strategies;
- Capacity-building and training;
- Resource mobilization;
- Access and connectivity at low costs for all;
- Entrepreneurial businesses;
- Convergence of visions with other States, with the rest of the world.

In the conception and application of this group of policies, governments will work collectively with scholars, the private sector and civil society. Current efforts in preparation for the Information Society Summit in 2003 will devote special attention to the above issues.

#### **What are the overall goals to achieve in formal education?**

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97. Achievements required from education, training and sensitization must be subjected to broad reflection. The idea is not simply to request preparation of national plans or outline special indicators to meet; some countries would have trouble approving this in regard to the international community.

Thus, what may be most interesting about the future would be the adoption of goals to be achieved progressively, under complete independence, but with real linkages to a worldwide commitment to achieve them. Each State will make efforts to reach this level, taking advantage of its resources, special features, political status, cultural force and level of the starting situation.

In the case of schooling, its global re-invention is a key goal, as understood in this handbook, and it must be careful with:

**Essential basic knowledge:** Using sciences (social and natural) we need to understand the ideas underlying sustainability, principles, values, ancestral contributions, and how to implement them.

**Re-connect disciplines and knowledge:** The four main disciplines are defined by their “object” and “method”. Thus: a) natural languages, the element and vehicle of all cultures; b) formal languages (mathematics, logic, etc.); c) experimental sciences, as a foundation for the theoretical language confronting the outer object (life and matter sciences); d) human sciences focusing on human beings.

The four fields have interfaces between them and are related in a global context that give them direction and broader meaning. They assure preparation, teaching lessons for life.

**Concern about the permanent part of progress:** Permanence encompasses training throughout life, encloses it without reducing it; both through contents (all human, social, cultural or professional activity) and through duration (education never ends).

Keeping the principles that re-create the act of education: Education, rather than imposing knowledge and special tools, must find out what is interesting and concerns the learners, each age group, as well as the challenges posed by their context. This will not only favor certain types of responses, but also to stimulate creativity, and the search for new questions.

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Each person must be allowed to work alone and in groups. This way, there will be a broad variety of responsibilities in education and the stakeholders must understand this in order to get training in a timely manner.

**Promoting the functions of basic education:** These functions have been identified as: a) learning for life, concerning the pedagogy of projects and overall education, in order to encourage learners to take an active part in their own education; b) socialization, to be able to acquire and exercise autonomy as subjects able to live appropriately in society; c) skills training, understood as learning means, tools and capacities to grasp, select, recognize bounds and constraints, prepare and continue one’s own project of insertion in society; this social skills training includes professional or vocational training as well.

**Conceiving education as acquiring knowledge and social practice:** Knowledge is more than

accumulating information and data – it is being able to act in all situations wisely and coherently. This knowledge grows progressively, not linearly, is affirmed with and from action, commitment, knowing how to know, how to be and how to do.

Knowing must be useful, and motivation is fundamental for this, especially now that the central concern is sustainability. Knowing is useful for subjects, rooted and inspired in them, and also involves others, humankind at large.

Passive transmission of knowledge will no longer make sense in educational oriented toward sustainability.

There will always be many effective methods to motivate and encourage learners, according to the projects and aims for which concrete answers are sought.

**Promoting education as the plurality of answers:** Expanding the selection of social fields to the utmost, to make it possible to multiply and diversify learning situations.

The notion of equal opportunities in education leads to the notion of the right to actually acquire education of the expected quality. Being flexible in regard to the directions to take in order to get where one wants, to use a great variety of pedagogies and find the most appropriate one, and the same for methods to use and diversified contents to work with.

The use of new technologies will be especially careful: the social dimension makes it mandatory for schools to be able to facilitate access. Otherwise, there is the risk of supporting dual communities and imposing exclusion through money and the capacity to manipulate the technologies.

**Seeking results from the new approach to educational quality.**

In general, the following results are expected (in countries such as Canada, citizens have expressed this very clearly):

- *Essential mastery of:* Knowledge and skills, including analytical, critical thinking, problem-solving capacities, coping with situations of uncertainty, reacting appropriately to new-diverse-different situations; preparing for decision-making and handling day-to-day life, on ethical foundations and values.
- *Esthetic appreciation and creativity:* Development of sensitivity to the esthetic dimension of the natural and human world, development of the imagination and creative-innovative thought, active participation in society and expression.
- *Communication and collaboration:* Clear, well-grounded expression, preparation to listen to others, to communicate with others; efficient, appropriate use of new technologies; cooperative work and search for collective objectives.
- *Information management:* To be able to select, distinguish, integrate information correctly into the daily process of living, to construct ways of seeing and reading such a changing reality, contextualize it and evaluate it. To get information to serve as a support for knowledge and not the trigger for destroying it or incorporating it into constant doubt, insecurity and fear of acting and growing as human beings.
- *Responsible citizenship:* Solidary, fraternal performance in the context where one lives, in relation to the nation one belongs to and the planet as a whole. To urgently strengthen the notion of planetary citizenship, accompanied by ethics for the human race.
- *Values:* Illuminating and orienting the actions of individual and collective life; respect for human rights and ongoing contribution to their implementation in all communities and societies.

Educational quality, seen as above, involves life as a process, organizing life, constructing thought and a mindset, preparing to understand the universe and people, with a pedagogical vision of complexity and thence of life and of current human progress.

The traditional vision of measuring school or academic achievement is altered to favor education in its direct relationship with life and living, which is what the planet's sustainability requires.

Emphasizing inter-dependencies among the different forms of life on the planet, among natural systems, among peoples. There is concern for priority messages, to make them useful and effective. Curricular plans, pedagogical methods, teacher training, management all must be grounded in a global perception and strategy that integrates and probes.

From this perspective, we understand that education to make a sustainable future viable, for example, educational actions up till 2015, will not be sufficient or appropriate if we refer solely to *environmental education*.

In the early 1970s, environmental education was stressed, as a curricular component. It has evolved conceptually and sought impacts over the last 30 years.

After Johannesburg (2002), it has been definitively clear that this is not a reliable way to imagine and produce a curriculum, for example, that is integrated, global and geared toward a new concept of living and life on the planet, although it has much to contribute.

- **Leadership through policies:** It is recommended to prioritize the following:
  - Recovery of public policy to generate rights and universal goods.
  - Configuration of social rights and social protection overall, so enable the new legal paradigm to emerge and national and international legislation to provide solid backing to the new concept of education.
  - Encouragement and support for the transition to a new planetary society, a world society.
  - Reinforcement of trans-disciplinary creation of knowledge and mastery, as a

- way to make knowledge and wisdom more important.
- Ethics as the main driving force of sustainable life, of preparation and learning, both individual and collective, to become part of life, including gender equality.
  - Respect for cultural diversity, identity and participation in progressive construction of the new civilization and, with it, the new age of the information and knowledge society.
- **Principles orienting the method in complex thinking:** In the book we have already mentioned, Educating in the planetary age, the following principles are proposed, for continued international work:
    - **The systematic or organizational principle:** relating knowledge of parts with the knowledge of the whole and vice versa.
    - **The hologram principle:** Society and culture are present as a whole in cognitive spirit and knowledge.
    - **The principle of resourcefulness:** The self-producing and self-organizing dynamics create a process that produces, reproduces itself, but must be nourished from a source, a reserve or flow from outside.
    - **The principle of autonomy-dependence:** Incorporating the idea of selfeco-organizational processes. All organizations, to maintain their autonomy, need to be open to the eco-system from which they are nourished and into which they are transformed. Autonomy is not possible without multiple dependencies.
    - **The principle of dialogue:** Cooperating in thinking, in a given mental space, with logical approaches that complement and exclude each other.
    - **The principle of cognitive re-introduction into all knowledge:** Reintroducing the role of the observing, conceptualizing, strategizing subject into all knowledge

and computations. The observer does not reflect reality, but constitutes it through the principles mentioned.

Thus, the method in education can become vital, if we recognize and start with a subject who is looking, knowing, thinking and experiencing.

### **Potential of non-formal and informal education**

98. Non-formal and informal education will be increasingly protagonistic in the future, with the rapid development of ICTs. Educational computing, for example, opens up huge possibilities to innovate networks and hence the cooperative projects that can enrich learning environments in all societies; directly supports the development of all curricula, training or refresher courses, discoveries or incursion into a new thematic area or working subject, relationships among disciplines or multi-thematic fields; changes pedagogical practices, making them more flexible and linking them with specific demands and capacities of learners and educational stakeholders; strengthens the basic competencies of citizens, day by day, in an indeterminate manner, so that they know better how to live well, grow and make a concrete contribution to sustainability in the most transparent, collective, democratic, solidary manner.

Consequently, society's purposes can be fostered, such as:

- Reinforcing people in the foundations and value for the present and future of sustainability;
- Encouraging effectively a change in mentality, attitudes and behaviors on the basis of the major principles that must orient the quest for planetary sustainability, incorporating them into ongoing daily decisions and therefore into lifestyles;
- Offering realistic foundations in a society in order to flexibly achieve specific learning as it evolves and becomes complex, getting involved in the progressive current of globalization;

- Creating cultural and educational environments that will support interaction and collective progress, development and the appearance of proactive thought about the future and sustainability.

For this all to happen in the decade from 2005 through 2015, the decade of education, it will be necessary for the **notion of sustainability to be truly adopted as a constructive, strategic concept, positive and involving, mobilizing and integrating all sectors and fundamental aspects of life in society**, e.g. economic, environmental and social aspects.

It must also be **adopted as a real international, national and community priority**. This will elicit specific support from the media, industry, nongovernmental organizations, scholars, the world of politics and governance, society at large, particularly children, youth and women.

**It must be understood as a great opportunity to reorient the direction of humankind**, on the basis of specificities, challenges and potential of each continent and region of the world.

**We must be convinced that the new concept and vision of human progress demands renewed cooperation**. This cooperation must be at all levels and in all possible directions, among disciplines and areas of knowledge, among sectors, among peoples and regions, among all types of institutions, among international working agendas or social contracts.

**The perception of a clear, operational vision of sustainability is strategic for the future**, since, in the past decade, competition among multiple definitions and approaches to the more global, basic concept has been the cause of difficulties and delays in implementing and continuing with policies, innovative actions and projects, sometimes considered highly significant.

For instance, some thought that sustainability was not a major, effective, profitable opportunity for productive systems and processes. Today, this feeling has been alleviated with very promising, encouraging results, that point to highly significant changes over the coming two decades.

This perception will be the essential guide to promotion, via the communications media, for example, of timely, mobilizing messages proposing and encouraging coherent actions or positions for the future, for different population groups and the international community.

**Understanding individual and collective sustainability must be continually achieved with solid, decided support from the new communications and information technologies, in all possible communications media.** This understanding must facilitate the individual decision to join in a community and universal current aiming and working day to day for specific results; to understand that this makes sense, that what we seek is feasible and also close by, that not changing entails considerable risks over time for ourselves and others, for new generations as we look to the future.

In the above context, **promoting the sense of urgency, with enthusiasm rather than melodrama, grounded in a solid structure of collaboration by multiple media and under the orientation of powerful, effective ways of communicating and reaching people.** This way, human beings will progressively acquire, through their normal lives, the values and living method that will accompany them in their work, leisure and recreation, at home and in community life, when traveling and while tourists, in all their expressions and times.

From a realistic vision and thinking about pragmatic actions with impact, nothing of the above overall orientations and possibilities will have any positive effects at all without relevant, reliable information, particularly about the degree of acceptance, expansion and implementation of elementary thinking about a sustainable society and future.

Each State, region of the world and community will live according to different time scales and with different concerns or challenges; their perceptions of life, as clearly established in this handbook, are influenced by civilizations that have inspired their ancestors and specific cultures that strengthen their own identities; the space or earth where they live largely determines their sustainable conditions and quality of life; political concepts, social organization and stratification, level of social exclusion – inclusion, equity and justice, offer both a given situation for governance and create the trigger for positive changes for all; opening outwardly, with

linkages in all fields and not just marketing and products-services, offers qualitative conditions that facilitate currents of supranational and international change; accepting or not the new currents of thought, especially those that are gaining more followers nowadays and those whose universal, scientific nature is recognized, will be an essential indicator in a world moving toward new intellectual, spiritual and material referents.

The answer to the key question: “**where are we?**” already suggested above, becomes fundamental. Observing on the basis of clear foundations to see the level of internalization, understanding and projection regarding the daily tasks of achieving sustainability? From there, we can begin analyzing the contributions of sectors with strategic roles in achieving that level, such as education, training and public sensitization; norms and proposals for conduct inspired and grounded in a widely varied range of other sectors and activities, such as health, industrial and agricultural production, transport, urban affairs and housing, general land use and natural resources, sports, tourism and trade, among others.

All, without any exception, promote specific contents for life; sustain and affirm values and behaviors; divide or break up the possibility of coherence to achieve a totality-gathering-linkage in a community or society; sustain or not the great chain of actions and appropriate use of raw materials or goods; impede or interfere with the quest for sustainability by maintaining their purposes in other directions than achieving sustainability, such as the market, profits, easy, fleeting opportunities or simply power.

We cannot be so naïve to continue thinking that, to take a new direction on the road to the future, it will be enough to act on education, training and public sensitization. This will always be very important, but never sufficient. In turn, it is now recognized, when entering the new age of information and knowledge, that human beings are in fact influenced at all times, to the depths of their beings and feelings, by an invaluable possibility of sources and stakeholders, who, at the same time, give them and confront them in their autonomous growth and performance as planetary citizens belonging to a place on the planet.

Self-regulation in the process of individual and community life, a principle promoted in this new

age, makes people increasingly conscious and determined to take and assume their own decisions and positions vis-à-vis life. Thus, educational programs, special campaigns and messages oriented toward sensitizing population groups and the international community about these complex, sensitive topics of sustainability and the future, are extremely demanding in terms of contents, images conveying the facts to which they allude, the way they are promoted, the time used and the timing of when they are offered.

There are no obvious answers to this special range of challenges. The important thing would be to recognize that, from now on, the idea is not to try to change things for change's sake, to adorn traditional forms that fail to offer success in achieving results, to go overboard with colorful or out-of-context, aggressive images. We must understand that the good examples, the positive experiences, the sustainable practices, when amply disseminated, will be an efficient, timely way to involve people without serious obstacles. In this work, non-governmental organizations can always play an outstanding role.

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This perspective could lead us to think that, during the Information Society Summit, we will achieve a worldwide agreement that will be binding not only on governments, academicians and non-governmental organizations but also on multiple partners (businesspersons, bankers, traders, consumers and representatives of the media and advertising) on the roadway to sustainability. This road may be driven by education, training and public sensitization, as phases for implementing the two-year process beginning in 2004-2005, which the United Nations has declared as the biennium for water, to follow up on the 219 Johannesburg 2002 Agenda. All must place their emphasis and interest on conceiving things and doing them well, promoting practices, behaviors and attitudes in line with sustainability.

**Being willing to construct continually and adopt progressively an ethical thinking that will offer everyone a referent in action will be essential. One of the central outcomes of the Information Society Summit will be to seek world consensus on an Ethical Charter in the negotiations phase (Tunisia 2005).**

In preparation for this charter, it is hoped that other instruments already adopted by the

international community or in preparation (including those mentioned in Part V of this handbook) will contribute significantly:

- The resolution by the UNESCO General Conference regarding access to information in cyber-space;
- The charter on safeguarding numerical heritage, to be adopted under UNESCO;
- The convention on crime in outer space, prepared by the European Council;
- The Standard law, prepared by the United Nations Special Commission on electronic trade (e-commerce);
- Directives on the responsibility of multi-national companies, prepared by the OECD in Europe.

In other words, the rules of play in the era of the information and knowledge society must be very clear and understandable in their application and must grant priority to solidarity, rather than the law of the strongest, or simple free, autonomous, uncontrolled activity by the market or by life guided only by the law of supply and demand.

As stated by thinker Adama Samassékou, President of Preparation for the world Summit on the Information Society: "... a first stone will be laid for the home of all humankind, the home of universal solidarity and peace". The time in humankind's life between the Johannesburg Summit (2002) and the Information Society Summit (2003-2005) must significantly contribute to adopting an action plan for the first great stage until 2015, then projecting into the future (2050), representing a better way to life on this planet and for all humankind to be better off.

**The Ethical Charter will offer the necessary credibility for all peoples and the entire international community.** Groups and professionals must be invited to take part, along with institutions whose conduct is firm and respectable, in order to generate the forces of change and reunion, progressively, of multiple partners and followers.

The creation of a great innovative, mobilizing platform, to guide processes, produce innovative campaigns, formulate creative programs and projects, prepare tools and materials, will always be a solid foundation for the proposed actions overall, in each society or State.

We must make the strategy to be followed the property of the masses, like the transforming methods that must lead to the great mobilization of all, over a considerable time period (15 years, till 2015). We must translate ideas, suggestions and messages, in tactical proposals, according to target population groups. Finally, we must not forget to work with different scenarios and hypotheses, and to test them. Nor can we neglect experience and recent or historical results; sometimes people have a short memory, especially when dealing with consumption or sensitive topics involving sustainability.

**Glances that will always be a solid guide for education.**

99. With what we have proposed in the text, all the lessons learned since 1992 (section 93), we could look for guidance in conducting education, training and public sensitization in these directions:

- **From the standpoint of functions:**
  - **Cultural:** Beginning with the context, the concrete reality in which we live, to facilitate understanding, to be able to judge, to take a distance and to plan a life projects. To prepare to live responsibly and progress autonomously and creatively, knowing one's limits and adapting to changes, to the unexpected, in the age of the information and knowledge society.
  - **Economics-social:** Valuing every person's competencies and capacities; offering concrete training and learning, without any pretension, strictly speaking, to adapt human beings to employment; understanding the globalization process that is underway; preparing for societies that will offer people more free time in the future.

- **Democracy:** Favoring, in schools, programs, or elsewhere, learning about democratic life and citizenship; learning to share, to live with others, collectively, to be citizens of the planet.

These three functions immediately indicate that it is necessary to be concerned always with singular principles: aiming for equality and fraternity for all human beings; to affirm, at all times, the notion of citizenship; to develop personality holistically and revalue manual capacities and activities. In this way, we will work for vertical and horizontal coherence of lessons and notions learned from infancy until higher education, through concrete learning situations. We will flexibilize modes of evaluation, what is mandatory and what is not in the domain of knowledge or tools within disciplinary fields or when addressing complex problems or situations, or the domain of specific knowledge or know-how.

- **From the standpoint of contents-knowledge**

It is urgent to put an end, everywhere, to the simple summation or piling up of data or knowledge in education. All contents, together, must be re-grounded on the basis of the coherent totality and according to well-defined, assumed criteria and principles, for several reasons:

- What we know is a result of progressive effort, not linear. Thought and action are inseparable. There is no knowing without knowing how to be or do.
- Knowing is not a simple accumulation or management of knowledge, information, data or tools.
- Knowing must be useful and make sense. This is vital for real motivation of human beings and to achieve a greater commitment to the change that will lead to sustainability.

The above will always imply a new way of thinking about learning, to reconnect knowledge and disciplines again. Each discipline must provide its own methods and specific objectives (language and cognitive tools) and facilitate real comingtogether among the disciplines so they can look closely at each other.

Human beings will be, consequently, the center of the educational action, rather than the contents, instruments or machines, teachers or animators. And all sources of knowledge will be taken into account and utilized unceasingly and indiscriminately: environments, media, groups, collectives, etc. The objectives of learning will be detached from complex reality, no longer from disciplinary summation. Accumulating is no longer in agreement with the high degrees of abstraction that learners must achieve, which makes it hard to understand and therefore to take the right actions.

Education must take the responsibility, as already suggested, to offer plurality of answers in order to achieve common objectives. The great diversity of learners calls for diversity of proposals, answers and support. The notion of equal opportunities will be replaced by the right to acquire knowledge, know-how and data.

Different pathways will be used, appropriate pedagogies, varied methods and contents. Learners' maximum creative expression will be fostered in order to get back to key issues for the future, such as the sciences, to get to know how learners perceive and master concepts, from childhood on, in these thrilling fields of knowledge.

The use of new technologies in education is gaining ground and privileged power, but understanding how to use them and appropriate social dissemination call for stable, coherent public policies.

Accordingly, there are issues of particular concern that have not yet been resolved in many States or governments: decentralization, diversified attention to different groups or sectors in similar educational settings; coordination and adaptation of education and training to such diverse needs and challenges as cultural, social, individual and collective education; the response to evolution of the economy, scientific and technological needs and changes in mentality and even in the way people think, thanks to the growing impact of new information and communications technologies; opening up to globalization, to an immense range of possible partners, attention to multiple agreements and conventions, international and national.

Thinking appropriately about the decade for education and sustainable development (2005-2015) is one of the great opportunities of the current age of humankind, providing we are able to overcome the boundaries of traditional thinking, and to move toward the powerful agglutinating forces of renewed humanism, planetary sustainability, universal ethical thought and the enormous opportunities provided by new communications and information technologies.

- **From the standpoint of resources**

Three central concerns could guide the political reflection and consensus among bankers, financiers and educational leaders or stakeholders:

- Creating “local issues” as a starting point for complexity, multiplicity of resources, potential and stakeholders, for a sense of belonging and ownership of the context in a global vision, turning toward serving and understanding people in their totality and their relations with others, offering the technical, administrative and consensus-building conditions and the flow of all types of resources to favor the highest educational and cultural level for all. These systems shall be grounded in clear policies of State decentralization and de-concentration; of autonomy for public agencies to be oriented; of high participation by citizens, institutions and local sectors and the search for timely, positive application of all resources.

Practices and instruments such as micro-credit; family enterprises; “minga” community work parties in indigenous villages, may be successfully taken advantage of. In turn, such opportunities as tele-centers, community communications centers, and public conversation meetings, among others, will encourage collective growth.

- Having “State policies and national action platforms” that are integrated and coordinated, grounded in each sector or major program of the State, inspired in the real desire to achieve the results expected pursuant to international agreements and conventions, stable and conducted by more than one government administration; they must be creative to take advantage of every opportunity to achieve major quantitative or qualitative leaps forward, according to the goals established.

**A State's capacity for indebtedness must be limited in the future quite flexibly, with special facilities for repayment, when investment involves human capital or social capital. This would be true world economic solidarity pursuant to the commitment to creating a new Sustainable Global Human Project. This could be one of the least costly ways to alleviate the presence of terrorism and so many other dangers.**

- Priority must be given to adopting “Shared guidelines for understanding and action by continents or regions”. On this basis, ways of communication may be created, networks and exchange arrangements, banks of experiences and projects, etc. to foster international comingtogether among the world's continents and regions. All current treaties and agreements should be taken advantage of to facilitate this collective, solidary dimension. Real mechanisms for encounter and joint work must be created, with the great variety of networks and organizations that, from multiple fields (religious, cultural, political concepts, etc.) are acting in favor of human unity and progress.

These guidelines will be the points of union and exchange for more integrated, innovative action in favor of sustainable partnerships of international financial institutions working at the world, regional, subregional and even national level, and to apply great masses of capital provided directly by the private sector. These points of union will be more solid and stable if they are born of a re-invention and appropriation of new concepts, considered as leaders in the types of societies in which they arise: profits, benefits, welfare, production, consumption and so on. In the world of economics, business and banking, promising progress is being observed in this direction, which should indicate that this is indeed possible to do.

# 6 CHAPTER

## GUIDING INDICATORS

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*BEFORE IT IS TOO LATE, IT IS IMPERATIVE TO ACT, EVEN IF THERE IS NOT YET ANY CLEAR DIRECTION OR WELL-DEFINED PATHWAY, TO LEAVE THE HIGHLY DANGEROUS, HARMFUL WAY WE ARE GOING NOW. THEREFORE, WISELY PROTECTING A CONSENSUSBASED COLLECTIVE WORLD MARCH CALLS FOR UNDERSTANDING AND SHARING MEANS THAT WILL SHED LIGHT ON THE WAY, UNTIL WE CAN FIND CLARITY AND TRANSPARENCY TO MAKE IT EASY FOR EVERYONE TO SEE CLEARLY.*



### Efforts to understand global challenges

100. Since the late 1980s, the international community has been making efforts to provide common elements, shared by all, to show the results that are progressively attained in the joint struggle and action, to face enormous challenges, on all levels, worldwide. The most outstanding include:

- **Indicators seeking to measure human development in all States.** The great effort led by the United Nations Development Program (UNDP), mentioned above, manages to establish, every year, an index ranking each State in meeting the basic requirements for human development.

Obviously, these indicators monitor achievements and shortcomings in the most sensitive fields, including education and health. It is recommended to examine this important system in detail, with its enormous data base and specialized references on sensitive topics. Every year, it is published with a particular reflection on one of these subjects.

These indicators have been very useful to raise the consciousness of governments, the financial, academic and civil communities, regarding deficit priorities and lack of equity, especially in social areas. They have been useful as orientation and references, for over a decade, to channel resources and target them, to encourage cooperation among countries and to study in greater detail their contents and meaning.

From the outset of this work, it was soon concluded that it would be urgent to improve data gathering internationally and contribute seriously to data reliability and treatment. The different agencies of the United Nations, coordinated by the Secretariat-general, began a process in the late 1990s of organizing and coordinating in the field of statistics and indicators.

UNESCO, supported by the United Nations system and, in particular, by the World Bank and the Government of Canada, created early this century the 228 International Institute of Educational Statistics, with its headquarters in Montreal, Canada.

This calls for all States, with their institutions and bodies specializing in these subjects, to modernize or update, in order to responsibly assume follow-up and findings about human development within the international community. The United Nations and bilateral cooperation among countries and nongovernmental organizations have undertaken to participate in this great task. Substantial support has been provided by using new information and communications technologies and new tools for data treatment, dissemination and conservation.

One of the areas that has most benefited from the above has been governance, consolidating from this perspective the knowledge and management of problems and challenges, priorities and strategies to be adopted, reliability in regard to constituencies and transparency, the most appropriate evaluation of efforts made and accountability.

Of course, despite the progress listed above, there is still much to be done in these areas. However, the discipline and rigor that have been installed bit by bit in every region of the world are sufficient to be optimistic in incorporating substantive changes in these domains.

- **International indicators produced by the World Bank, United Nations regional economic commissions, regional banks and other financial institutions.**

Financial and economic institutions have always had a basic concern, from the beginning, with constant production of data and indicators to show where they stand and where they

are headed, for the States or regions that they serve, by major fields of economic, social, environmental, political and general cooperation activity.

Many institutions have their own ways of gathering and verifying information. The degree of detail and sophistication, depending on the requirements of each area or topic, vary considerably. With this body of data and indicators, they build policies for financial support and cooperation, mainly for needy States, through sectoral projects or specific fields. For example, a new one is the information and knowledge society (loans for technological platforms, hardware acquisition, communications infrastructure in general, etc.).

That policy of financial institutions has contributed greatly to more orderly follow-up on financing, development and economic, commercial and social evolution.

- **Indicators prepared on the basis of special agreements or treaties for regional or sub-regional cooperation among States.**

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In the Americas, for example, there are various treaties for special monitoring of the development of States and their relationships, e.g. NAFTA (Canada, the United States and Mexico); CARICOM (grouping the English-speaking countries of the Caribbean, in particular); Central American Common Market (six countries); Andean Community of Nations (five countries); MERCOSUR (five countries).

Something similar is happening on other continents and regions of the world, e.g. the European Community, which will have 25 member countries in the upcoming months.

From this programmatic and cooperation standpoint, States and institutions that assist them produce information, data and major indicators.

- **Indicators produced by research centers and institutions or special research centers.**

This type of indicators includes special efforts oriented toward fields of human activity related

to cultural expressions; enjoyment of human rights; 230 status of population groups under particular conditions (refugees, displaced by violence or conflicts ... ), human behaviors, etc. These topics are of great value and lead to reflection and more in-depth knowledge of societies' being and human beings, which is essential for planetary sustainability.

Consequently, one could say that there is already a broad range of indicators, backed by leading institutions in the international and academic world, responsible for providing tracks and lights in terms of their people's development.

### **United Nations reform looking for a new perspective.**

101. Since the first moment, in the 1990s, reflection began on the importance of re-creating or reforming the United Nations System, for its 50th anniversary. Many steps have been taken since then, and the crises that the world has undergone recently have strengthened and reinforced that feeling.

In the new look at States and its closeness and service to them, the United Nations has been promoting effective coordination of all agencies and programs under the System, with each State the UN cooperates with, since 1997. Resolutions 47/199, 50/120 and 50/227 cover the new vision of countries, the General Assembly mandate. In 2003, this new policy is being experimented with in five countries, one of them in the Americas being Ecuador.

Two collective tasks are used to strengthen the approach to the country and among System agencies: detailed global reflection on the evolution and trends, and another oriented toward programming actions and lines of behavior regarding cooperation. Both call for major technical efforts, each expressed in terms of information, data and indicators.

In this context, from the present until 2015, a great innovative effort is monitoring results and status, by areas and thematic fields; it would seem that traditional data and indicators no longer satisfy or appropriately explain the complex evolution of societies and States. So, a general conclusion today is the lack of explanation why the developing countries, clearly immensely

rich (biological diversity, minerals, water resources, fertile land ...) are impoverished amidst enormous inequalities and lack of equity.

States' very viability is threatened, they are at the verge of a major social explosion and, nevertheless, their development models and social organization would seem eternal, well sustained by external policies that coincide with their advancement (economy, markets ...) at present. It is urgent to design, from another angle and reading of reality, drastic interventions that will be effective and sustainable and benefit everyone.

This conclusion recently led to centering attention in the field of human rights, since they express the ethical framework, along with the situation of exclusion and lack of equity in each country. Challenges are examined in the three groups of rights: a) the right to life, a basic condition for existence; b) economic, social and cultural rights, an essential condition for living well; c) civil and political rights, a fundamental condition for coexistence and solidarity.

This examination requires gathering information and treating it specially to obtain a well-balanced, neutral reading in proper perspective, in order to create new scenarios and verify feasibility.

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In the above context, a new effort is also required, to identify new potential; surveying all types of resources, particularly those that had been overlooked previously in poor communities precisely because they were poor.

**The idea is no longer solely to conduct academic or technical exercises with the information and data, but to attempt to find and define an effective direction for national action, for a Sustainable Humanistic Project to bring countries up to world standards, using all stakeholders, resources, institutions, possibilities and potential.**

So, situations arise progressively that could lead to major progress in the field of following up on the evolution of States, peoples and the planet. This may assure a better real idea of the meaning, scope and progress in expected changes. For this purpose, the willingness and contribution of all international agencies, especially funding agencies and economic bodies will be a basic, irreplaceable condition and contribution.

### **The millennium goals, with 18 points of arrival and 48 indicators**

102. As already explained in this handbook, the objectives adopted by the world's governments in 2000 during the United Nations Assembly have as their main message the proposal of a world collective move toward achieving urgent results in the most sensitive fields of life and human suffering, and conservation with quality of life.

The United Nations has already stated that, although many data and indicators are available, there is a great lack of reliable statistics in vital fields, all of which creates huge difficulties for the work of world management of these praiseworthy aspirations. Questions arise immediately such as: What States will attain these goals by 2015?

There is a general agreement to affirm that much of the explanation will depend on the progress and growth achieved in the last decade and whether these results can be sustained until 2015, or changed radically if they were not encouraging.

A specialized group of the World Bank, in consultation with other specialized agencies of the System, prepared and proposed this year a battery of indicators to monitor the millennium goals appropriately through 2015.

In the Americas, ECLAC, the IDB, UNDP and the World Bank have signed a working agreement in May 2003 for a serious, detailed monitoring of the millennium goals, to contribute to States' monitoring and action platforms. It will grant particular importance to equity and social protection; considering global environmental services provided by this region; expanding the millennium goals to other crucial areas; and improving the capacity to produce relevant, timely information these are some major strategic thrusts through 2015.

Other continents and regions have similar priorities, but with clearly determined specificities, such as natural resource scarcity, population concentration and growth, and others.

In any event, the millennium goals perspective also opens up new interests regarding follow-up on actions and results, and therefore the production and availability of special indicators.

- **Indicators oriented toward following up on sustainability**

103. Planetary sustainability and monitoring call for construction and implementation of a diverse range of indicators and signals clearly showing how humankind is doing in this direction. Six main groups may be distinguished:

- **Sharing the set of goals regarding where we are to reach, over large periods of time.**

These will be the *global framework* to define the expected sustainability and position of the international community, for each period, in terms of major challenges and critical issues. There must be some balance in the expected outcomes, given the inter-related nature of life. Focusing on the internal, true, primary causes of phenomena will also avoid simply concentrating on eliminating the manifestations of effects.

The millennium goals to 2015 are part of this global reference group but, as is well known, the international community is also urgently pursuing other achievements that cannot wait, expressed in agreements and conventions that orient decision-makers and governments. They must also be specified strongly at this time (on climate, biodiversity, cultural diversity ...).

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- **Locating indicators in a global context.**

Finding their true meaning amidst the generation of multiple relations and interrelationships among available data or those consciously gathered. At times, growth rates of phenomena may show acceptable decreases, but the situations may remain unsustainable, alarming or intolerable.

In areas such as demographics, it will always be necessary to be very careful in understanding the patterns of growth, distribution and composition. Relations among food production, market behavior and use-availability of irrigated or fertile areas will also be future sensitive topics.

Ozone emitters, pollution growth, new diseases in those living in high-density urban areas,

and means of transport come together strategically to explain and guide populations toward truly sustainable situations.

Rapid loss of species (the list of endangered species numbers several thousand and increased continually), reduction of woodlands, loss of thousands of hectares due to logging, and limited water resources seriously jeopardize humanity and require rigorous global monitoring.

- **Having indicators that show decision-making power to change direction or not.**

Optimism and enthusiasm to achieve sustainability must be grounded in concrete realism understood and shared by all. We suspect or know that the world is in bad shape, but we are not in such bad shape to announce total catastrophe or immediate irreversibility in all fields.

This is the great intellectual force and feeling that is beginning to move people, but data and indicators must be urgently constructed and disseminated widely, to clearly show whether the choices we make today make sense rationally.

There are enough resources in the world to cope immediately with the answers that humankind expects in essential fields of life, but they are allocated for other purposes. Consequently, showing scenarios and options for using resources in favor of the dispossessed majorities, could be done without necessarily making any change in the quality of life or acquisition of others who are privileged.

It is urgent, and is an ethical and moral obligation, to be imaginative and proactive, not just to settle for easy follow-up on what was simply granted or given and observing how it was used, to then verify shortfalls or deficits without any emotion that would be released by seeing thousands and thousands of children die every day of malnutrition or entire peoples in irreversible situations of risk.

- **Using indicators that will provide signals about how to keep efforts going the right way toward sustainability.**

Simply waiting for information and data on the application of efforts and resources over certain periods of time (one year or more, for example), requires, given the sensitivity and complexity of the set of measures and actions to be taken, having additional signals that will facilitate understanding the solidity of the direction taken or timely changes in direction.

Application of mass resources, locally accompanied by strong decentralization policies could be a good direction, but experience with corruption or malfeasance shows that this will not work. One must press on, take a risk, raise the cry of warning and provide for corrective measures. What must not be done is to maintain the *status quo* that is often in the best interests of others.

A great diversity of situations could be mentioned in more fragile States, where governance is a huge challenge. Playing with actual change toward sustainability entails magnanimity and control, risk, innovation and giving new opportunities constantly.

- **Having indicators that orient about when to move away from certain goals or objectives in order to foster harmony.**

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Safeguarding species and biodiversity will always be an ideal first objective, but the defense and safeguarding of human life will remain the top priority at all times; in jungle regions, where crocodiles abound in the rivers, for example, this prevents fishing and, therefore, a balance in feeding entire communities. There are hundreds of situations like these, every day, which is why ethical thinking is important and transcendent, to illumine individual and collective daily life.

- **Giving due importance to more qualitative indicators reflecting changes in human mentality, and adaptation / resistance to new, different things.**

As proposed in this handbook, the profound change entailed by seeking sustainability on earth poses the urgency of making a commitment to get to know human beings in greater depth, their capacity for adaptation, their resistance to changes, their giving and sharing with others, their openness to other ideas and cultures, to other ways of life, their perception of life, their fears and strengths.

In the unbridled race that the age of the information and knowledge society would seem to place all human and institutions in, there would seem to be times or means to ask and wonder: Who are we? How do we look and understand each other? How can we position ourselves in regard to others on the planet? Where do we want to go? How?

Most times, media and advertising conduct simple, quick opinion surveys to get to know people's primary feelings and therefore provide orientations to govern, decide, provoke or place to one side. Sustainability requires a lot of work in this direction, since it will decidedly support the formulation of truly sustainable human development projects.

In the background of the different classes of indicators or signals clearly suggested, one can understand the role of education, training and public sensitization. Naturally, this is the case of school-based education. For example, it would be worthwhile to reflect innovatively on the immediate future so that the progressive changes introduced in regard to sustainability will be properly conducted and evaluated. The new UNESCO Institute of Educational Statistics in Canada has begun reflecting this year in this direction, as this process begins in many other places as well.

It would be important to joint forces, in such a delicate, urgent area, in order to progress more rapidly in construction and share findings internationally.

Many of the new findings regarding education may be identified, on occasion, more readily, including construction and interpretation of indicators and data not directly related to it. For example, observation of changes in behavior and lifestyles, improvements in human security and citizen participation is relevant.

The new vision of education for action aiming for sustainability has been explicitly presented in the previous chapter, yielding ready orientation about the direction and scope of new guiding indicators in the educational field.

Various indicators and signals previously proposed would seem to suggest, on the face of it, hard work that is difficult to undertake internationally, nationally or locally. Nonetheless, special

basic progress is expected on the levels mentioned that creates the necessary environment and collective / institutional force for serious follow-up, observation, consultation and exchanges.

Internationally, since outstanding work is already underway regarding the millennium goals, this could be taken advantage of to expand findings and move toward what is required for more global support of policies and actions geared toward sustainability.

In the national field, parallel with the formulation and adoption of action platforms, conducting and regulating them, arrangements could be created for follow-up and ongoing evaluation in accordance with what has been adopted internationally, but tightly coordinated with local and community levels.

The local systems suggested here could be the basis for greater diversity of information, data and indicators, recalling that the most substantive, fundamental undertakings must be created with the support of, and be maintained by the citizenry.

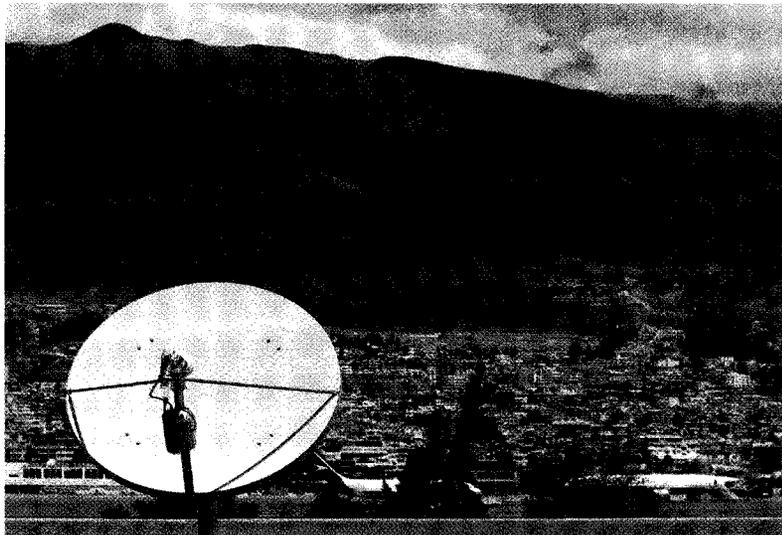
**The great new worldwide social fabric to be created will emerge from multiple local, collective and individual contributions, if global expectations are to be met.** For example, the market will always be ready to offer and create new consumer needs, since that is the market's function in order to continue existing. It will only be the consumer who can ultimately break the infernal chain of producing goods in the accurately-termed culture of waste, of passing and trivial elements.

Nelson Mandela, Nobel Peace Prize-winner and great African leader, states, "It is not necessary to be phenomenal as a person to do or promote something phenomenal". **Sustainability calls for the continual production of phenomenal actions by each human being.**

COMING TOGETHER IN OUR  
PLANETARY HOME

PART

*THIS COMING TOGETHER WILL TAKE FORM, GUIDED BY UNDERSTANDING OF THE CONTRIBUTION AND ENORMOUS FORCE OF THE DIALOGUE AMONG CIVILIZATIONS AND THE IDEA OF THE BIRTH OF A GLOBAL CIVILIZATION, NOW BEING ENGENDERED, THAT MUST SEEK TO ASSURE A SUSTAINABLE FUTURE AND QUALITY OF LIFE FOR ALL. ALL CULTURAL MANIFESTATIONS WILL CONTRIBUTE TO THIS ENCOUNTER: RITUALS AND MYTHS, MUSIC, THEATER, DANCE, GAMES, LITERATURE, POETRY, CUSTOMS, HANDICRAFTS AND THE IMMENSE INTANGIBLE HERITAGE OF ALL HUMANKIND.*



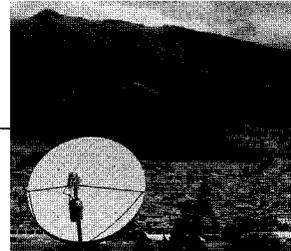
# 7

C H A P T E R

## THE SPIRIT OF SOLIDARITY IN THE AMERICAS

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*ONLY ONE COMMON SUSTAINABLE DIRECTION IS  
POSSIBLE, UNDERSTANDING AND SEARCHING FOR A  
GOOD LIFE IN PEACE.*



**Understanding the complex interaction of components that has given rise to present societies.**

104. When Christopher Columbus reached a Caribbean island in 1492, a new continent arrived and changed the direction of humankind. Amerigo Vespuccio, ten years after Columbus' arrival, requested that it be called the New World. Asia had been discovered five centuries earlier, and Henry the Navigator of Portugal had already extended links around the African continent.

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Europe turned toward the New World, which very soon began to be called America, by sailing the Atlantic, with the essential idea of conquest. The opposite happened when Europe connected with the Orient, where dealings were essentially trade, exchange, purchasing spices, condiments that improved Europe's quality of life. Pepper, for example, was one of the mainstays of sophisticated food and medicine around the year 1050, both in Florence (one of the key centers of trade with the Orient) and the rest of Europe.

After discovery, in the first 40 years expeditions visited from Labrador to the Straits of Magellan, traveling along the great rivers (Mississippi, Amazon and River Plate) in North and South America. They visited the Andes, the jungles, the high-altitude páramo grasslands, the pampa plains and catalogued thousands of islands in the Pacific and Atlantic. Indigenous civilizations were trampled. Europeanize, Christianize, culturize – those were the clear commands. So, there are now millions of descendants of the Europeans in the Americas. Three languages readily developed: English, Spanish and Portuguese, as well as French on a smaller scale (Haiti and Canada, mainly).

Like the languages, laws, religion and ideas were also transferred. In five centuries, this did not happen between Europe and Asia, but half a century was enough for the Americas. This transformed the West. The so-called Old World woke up.

With the discovery of America, philosophers and thinkers began to dream of ideal places for life and social arrangement. Thomas More, for example, wrote *Utopía*, thinking of the Americas as the possible land for new socialism. This produced one of the most profound changes in the history of thinking. In the Americas, one could dream of utopia.

The fantasy took shape and led many Europeans to rapidly travel to America. In the first 80 years, it is calculated that nearly 150 thousand crossed the Atlantic and in 1650 there were calculated to be over 250 thousand English. Nearly 70 million Europeans came to America between the mid-1800s and the beginning of World War I a century later.

Brazil received nearly five million Europeans up to 1940 and Argentina a bit more. Further, in the 17th century 900 thousand people arrived from Africa to Central and South America to boost the mestizo population.

As we begin the 21st century, the Americas hold three of the 15 most populous countries in the world: United States (285 million), Brazil (172 million) and Mexico (100 million). The total population of the Americas is calculated (early 2002) at 843.6 million and UNFPA/UN calculates that, by 2050, the total will reach 1.2432 billion.

The average growth rate in the United States and Canada is 0.9% and, for Latin America and the Caribbean, 1.4%. The percentage of urban population is 77% in the North and 75.4% for the rest of the Americas.

At present, the average age in the world is 26 years, with Japan at one end (41) and Yemen at the other (15). The mean age in the United States and Canada is 35.2 and, in South America, 23.9 (under the world average).

Colonization of the Americas and West Indies favored development and growth of European civilization. Western Europe began accelerating its population growth, favoring cities, ports, manufacturing and commercial centers; the rural people were left by the wayside.

The 18th century and the industrial revolution caused a profound change in living conditions and also in population growth. It took millennia for the world population to reach 600 million in 1680, but only a few more years to reach the current figure of ten times that: 6.2 billion.

Later, the word “independence” entered political language to refer to the Americas, becoming something progressive. When the French Academy incorporated this word for the first time, it was defined as: “The War of Independence of the United States”; in Italy (1869) it was defined as the independence war of the Americas. Again, the shake-up in the Americas revolutionized European thinking.

A people became free for the first time, taking its own laws and pursuit of happiness. Then, human rights were defended with force, fearlessly. Thomas Paine published his book on the “Rights of Man” in London, and it quickly became the best-seller of its time. These new ideas spread through every corner of the Americas and then extended to Europe and elsewhere.

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The Americas were emancipated from Europe, when independence was proclaimed in 1810. Haiti proclaimed its independence from France before the Spanish and Portuguese of the Americas. This movement joined all races together.

The 18th century contained many revolutions, including the French (14 July 1789). The Spanish Revolution dates back to the early 1700s; the Bourbon reign appeared and it was felt that everything in the Old World ought to be remade. In the 19th century, millions of Europeans moved to the Americas. During that century, different kinds of States arose in the Americas, and with them a new style of domination. These States, new poor nations, began as republics on the basis of the leftovers of the wars of emancipation and in a certain degree of disorder, opening new directions for governance and justice in the Americas.

The great Colombian writer, German Arciniegas, states in his book *When America Completed the Earth*<sup>15</sup> that the world accelerated when the Americas came on the scene of history. Columbus' voyage located the Earth in space. It began to whirl around the Sun. What he describes is something more than the Americas, it is the Universe.

A serious study of human evolution on each continent or region of the world, offers an irreplaceable perspective and vision, when the search for understanding and dialogue hinges upon a collective action platform for the future. Respect and value for each and every contribution made by each people grow, admiration and confidence join permanently and new human projects emerge almost spontaneously.<sup>16</sup>

It is worth consulting the General History of Latin America and the Caribbean, nine volumes promoted by UNESCO in the last few years, which studies the region from original societies through the present. Volume IV, American Processes up to the Redefinition of the Colony, studies the 18th century, from 1700 up to the beginnings of the independence movements. It outlines the overall evolution in the metropolises and the processes in the Americas. This volume is essential to understand Latin American societies of the present.

### **Search for a complex understanding of diversity in the Americas.**

105. The Americas have experienced, for a long time now, mechanisms and forms of joining and integration of States in order to cope with evolution and challenges. These include the creation of the Organization of American States (OAS), which has existed for over 50 years, and the Inter-American Development Bank, also in existence for several decades. The Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC/CEPAL) has also played a key role for many years.

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<sup>15</sup> Germán Arciniegas *Cuando América Completó la Tierra*, Villegas Editores, October 2001, Colombia.

<sup>16</sup> We recommend the book entitled, *History of Humanity*, by UNESCO, published in the 1960s after taking nearly ten years to write. That history centers on the evolution and contributions of the world's civilizations and cultures, and scientific and technological development.

These institutions have been joined by others on a sub-regional level: NAFTA (Canada, United States and Mexico), CARICOM (Caribbean countries, mainly English-speaking), ODECA (Central-American countries), CAN (Andean countries), MERCOSUR (Brazil, Argentina, Chile, Paraguay and Uruguay). From a sub-regional perspective, there are also financial, economic, cultural, educational, telecommunications, research and other institutions.

Many integration and cooperation initiatives happen in terms of these entities and they have all worked, over the last few years, to strengthen exchanges among sub-regions and with the rest of the world. This has led to thinking about new, continental mechanisms. Thus, the “Americas Initiative” appeared in 1994, leading to cooperation policies and programs in almost every area, involving all States of the American Continent. This initiative is supported by the OAS, as the main promoting agency.

Since 1994, in addition to summit meetings of chiefs of State for such groups of countries, a number have been held under the Americas Initiative, touching on essential issues such as eliminating critical poverty, and achieving sustainable development.

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The Americas have a range of agreements and programs, adopted through the various consensus-building mechanisms, and feeding into policies and actions one way or another that are strengthened, sometimes, from this many-faceted array, and sometimes complement each other.

One burning issue at present involves the Free Trade Agreement of the Americas (FTAA/ALCA), an idea born in December 1994, when 34 countries of the region decided to set up such an area, due to commence in January 2005. The treaty foresees gradual decrease of customs tariffs, disappearance of export quotas and establishment of a transparent mechanism for dispute resolution. In 2002 (Quito, Ecuador), negotiations began regarding market access and the modes and methods were agreed on for final negotiations.

In 2004, the fourth Summit of Chiefs of State of the Americas will meet in Buenos Aires, Argentina, and negotiations are set to end in January 2005, with December of that year as the

deadline for implementation. Several cities are candidates to host the FTAA headquarters: Puebla (Mexico), currently the pro tempore headquarters, Miami (USA) and Panama City.

It is expected that over 90% of all technical aspects of the FTAA will be negotiated by 2003. So, the movement to trade incorporation of the hemisphere is deemed irreversible, tangible and real. The challenge lies in the fact that most of the people seem not to be involved in or understand this radical movement. Its implications are far-reaching and will shake up State structures forcefully, demanding aggressive policies and very innovative programs in all fields.

Meanwhile, many countries are undergoing very delicate economic, social and political conditions, and considerable segments of their populations are living under extreme poverty. Exclusion and inequity at present make the quest for balance even harder. In the implementation of scenarios better suited to the complex range of demands on all levels, imposed by the FTAA, one involves education, training and public sensitization.

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**Under these conditions, the Americas are one of the most demanding and significant laboratories to keep an eye on, in terms of understanding in diversity, future sustainability in all areas and levels of life, projection and solidary encounter with the rest of the planet.**

The Americas' encounter with the rest of the world, through markets and the production of the current political vision underlying them, calls on all countries to have sound national industries based on technologies and knowledge, as well as sophisticated operations; it will require true competitiveness and a good business climate; it will call for knowing how to target whole countries' efforts toward sectors or areas that can really become successful; economies' technological development will have to increase; labor markets will have to become more flexible and conditions will have to foster entrepreneurship and 247 free competition; innovation, research and labor force training will be encouraged; it will be imperative to achieve high standards in educational quality and cooperative work among companies, academic institutions and research centers.

In the Americas, the absorption of the ICTs as a result of progressive opening of economies to international trade offers positive signs. For example, in the last few years, the growth rates in

non-traditional exports have exceeded the world average, faster than in the previous decade. The rate of ICT absorption is among the world's highest.

At the same time as the above, recent economic performance in many countries in the Americas is highly questioned, as are the economic reforms undertaken since the past decade. Local markets are small, which prevents companies from taking advantage of scale economies, and they lack continual strategies for cooperation among stakeholders in order to join the current of economic globalization, among other factors.

This has discouraged multi-national companies from making major investments in many countries of the region. Thus, countries' ability to maintain and grow in the incorporation of technologies is affected by limits on foreign investment; facilities for promoting new business; and the technological contents of exports.

Further, the region's products are subject to fluctuations in the terms of trade on more developed countries' markets; protectionism for industrialized countries' products also worsens the situation for most countries in the Americas. This has broadened the gap separating Latin America and the Caribbean from the rest of the world over the last ten years. Eastern Europe and Eastern Asia, among others, have grown faster during that period.

Today, one out of every three Latin Americans lives on less than two dollars a day, and most of the wealth is concentrated in 5% of the population. To close this gap, Latin America and the Caribbean are obliged to take a giant step over the coming years, up till 2015, tapping ancestral lore and the knowledge and 248 technologies that can try to put greater added value into all economic and service activities. The region will have to take advantage of all the facilities that the information and knowledge society can provide, and seek effective relations with the rest of the world, beginning right here in the Americas.

The enormous biodiversity, natural resources and oceans will be strategic sources for re-inventing the Americas to build a good life for all their peoples, and contribute to planetary sustainability. Globalization, trade, technology, financial resources, politics, the cultural force

of the continent's peoples appear as essential vectors, which play in a complex manner, and not always coherently or consistently these days, in the search for unity in diversity in the Americas. The main humanistic project will be to strive for a sustainable future, in a believable, effective dialogue with and approach toward the other peoples on this planet.

Power and capacity for making proposals are overflowing in the Americas, in science, technology, culture and communications, on the world scale. But within, there are contradictions, imbalances, lack of equity and injustices that could very feasibly be resolved, as soon as the firm will of those holding power makes human beings the center of their concerns, safeguarding life and thinking in terms of the future. No longer must financial capital override everything else.

In this perspective, the drive toward greater cooperation and solidarity for sustainability may be viewed in the following aspects:

- Alleviating the great differences in power, further reinforced in the highly diverse interplay of interests and passing situations;
- Greater attention to the impact of globalization and current phenomena in developing countries to become more proactive and relevant in the movement of international processes of negotiation and strategic cooperation, essentially in the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean;
- Stressing appropriate entry and cooperation points and issues regarding the United States and Canada as a starting place for fostering confidence and effective coming-together, to favor social agendas and involvement in the processes of globalization, security and democratic stability with peace;
- Utmost valuing of cultural roots, lore and ancestral knowledge and heritage, wiser relationships among living beings and natural systems, striving for more sustainable lifestyles, encounter and pluri-cultural dialogue with the rest of humankind and the planet.

Many practical difficulties might be mentioned in the move toward a general environment as is proposed. However, reaching an agreement in greater international, governmental and human trust and security, could be a great way to seek sustainability and a good life for all.

Sharing principles, inspired by a humanistic vision, codes of conduct and rules of play observed by all, will always provide a firm, stable foundation for changing toward the future. Here, again, education and ethics will play a leading role in the age of the information and knowledge society.

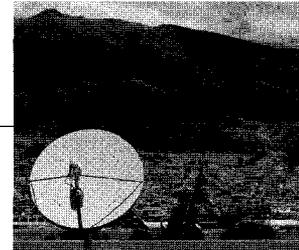
# 8

## CHAPTER

### BROTHERHOOD AMONG CONTINENTS AND REGIONS OF THE WORLD FOR A SUSTAINABLE FUTURE

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*THE PLANETARY HOME WILL MAINTAIN ITS  
STRENGTHS IN SUPPORTING LIVING BEINGS  
UNTIL ALL ITS PARTS STOP UNDERSTANDING THE  
MANDATORY SOLIDARITY THAT IS IMPOSED BY OUR  
UNIVERSAL HUMAN COMMON DESTINY.*



## Globalizing issues<sup>17</sup>

106. In the search for a new way to look at the planet, that will facilitate understanding the major phenomena and forces driving us toward the future, it is useful to distinguish those that are most determining and encompassing. In other words, configuring an effective global strategy on the international level poses the urgency of concentrating efforts on those aspects that would most enable a believable impact for decision-makers, scientists and the population at large.

Moreover, the trans-disciplinary, trans-sectoral multiplier effect will make it possible to address complexity from a satisfactory operational perspective, the chain of results, with a demonstrative effect and as experimentation, could be fostered by the new communications and information technologies, intercontinental networks and facilities created by implementing a new legal paradigm, that would seek to bring the planet's societies and peoples together amidst a globalization process in which, as never before, local and community players, each person or group of people come together and unite.

Accordingly, a first listing of those possible major globalizing issues could be organized as follows:

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<sup>17</sup> We recommend consulting, "Knowledge for a Sustainable Development-Encyclopaedia of Life Support Systems, three volumes, brought out in 2002 by UNESCO Publishing/EOLSS Publishers, Oxford, United Kingdom (<http://www.eolss.net>).

- **Cities urban issues.** In 1995, out of the 38 cities with over five million inhabitants, 28 were located in the South. By the year 2015, out of the 71 cities with that population, 59 will belong to the South. Urban areas are where very contradictory forces co-exist and have a promising future: globalization of markets, finance, technologies, violence, creation and innovation. Rapid changes in production structures, the nature of work or employment, the notion of human security, all find their basis for action and representation in cities. The affirmation of multi-culturalism, ethnic, religious and cultural movements, social integration or exclusion, are all expressed fully in urban areas. Challenges in regard to wastes, air, noise, water, pollution, transit, degradation of the earth, deterioration of infrastructure, loss of public spaces all interact on a daily basis in every city in the world.

The costs of congestion due to intense traffic and accidents also entail huge burdens for the Gross Domestic Product in States of the North, amounting to as much as 4% of the GDP. Therefore, environmental health is one issue of great worldwide concern.

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One hope is that by 2015, urban growth will concentrate in cities of one to five million. There is a slight decline in numbers in cities with under 500,000 and mega-cities with over ten million. Now, it is accepted that this is a period of out-and-out transformation of urban space and cities. **Achieving cities with quality of life for all inhabitants is the great challenge of the current millennium.**

In other words, the challenge is to humanize cities. Shakespeare asked: "What is a city but its inhabitants?" **Transforming the city is transforming life itself and making the future sustainable and viable.**

The quantitative challenge is to create, by 2040, over 1000 cities of nearly three million persons, mostly in the South. The great dilemma will always be the qualitative results, people in that rapid process of construction, ordering and confluence of multiple forces and factors. Global action for sustainability involves cities and urban development. A lasting life on this planet must be inspired in the heart of cities, confronting the holistic inspiration that comes from the rural world, closely linked to Nature (forests, mountains, rivers, snow-

capped summits ...). Creating viable ways toward progress that will favor everyone involves a collective vision and handshake.

How can cities deal with inter-dependence, massification and homogenization? Modes of production and consumption are still at the core of concerns about sustainable cities. Technological resources and others that are required to solve or respond to many urban challenges are available how can they be placed at the disposal of the great majorities of this planet who live in urban areas or cities? What can be done with over one billion persons who currently live in urban areas without a clear right to “a decent room or home”...? Shelter is a space for identity, freedom, reunion, project and dignity for human individuals and families. It is more than an ethical imperative. Housing makes all human rights viable and enables humankind to project toward the future with peace of mind.

In urban areas and cities, solutions or answers will never be permanent, but undergo a continual process of mutation and change; environmental issues, for example, refer to family routines, all the way up to the behavior of huge producing companies. This makes it mandatory to have policies designed for multiple objectives, operating across sectors.

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**No planetary project for sustainability will have the expected results if it does not succeed in cities.** This requires thinking about inter-continental chains of success and experimentation that will commence in each locality and must be perpetuated. How can we transform this vision into reality? How to take advantage of new ideas for massive change? All answers will lead us to human beings, to their mindset and behavior, values and ethics, perception of the new and the future, and there the great instrument will be education, to trigger and join the multiple efforts and intentions that come together at each moment.

- **The oceans.**<sup>18</sup> Oceans are a habitat that is also being destroyed and must therefore be an essential part of planetary concern for future sustainability. Residential development

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<sup>18</sup> We recommend consulting the Catalanian Encyclopedia, Biosphere, published in the 1990s with UNESCO / MAB program support. Its 10 volumes cover the Earth, forests, savannahs, deserts, broadleaf forests, the Mediterranean system, pulp plantations, meadows, tundras and islands, coastal regions and oceans. Published by Industria Gráfica S.A., Barcelona, Spain

on coasts, increasing pollution of cities and urban areas and intensive fishing constantly decrease marine ecosystem life.

Many centuries went by before humankind realized that this enormous, almost unlimited wealth could be harmed as a consequence of the lifestyle in different parts of the Earth. Now we know that this is not true and that, although the damage is already considerable, it is not too late to act. If a new way of thinking and approaching life spreads worldwide, the coming generations can be assured of abundant marine life and flourishing coastal communities, with healthy fish and shellfish, clean beaches and so on.

High rates of industrialization near coastal areas explain the heavy pollution there. In turn, concentration of certain contaminants; the influence of fertilizers, pesticides and herbicides, increasing over the last few decades, are determining factors for marine life. Decreased biological diversity is following the progressive destruction of ecosystems.

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The United States, to name just one example, with 11.7 million square kilometers of coastal economic zone, 200 nautical miles (370 km) from its coastlines, has just completed studies conducted by the Pew Commission for the oceans, over three years' time, concluding that it is necessary to draft an integrated national ocean policy law that will "... include a commitment to protect, maintain and reestablish the living oceans".

Over half the US population lives along a coastal strip and millions of others go to the shore every year. This vision and perspectives are also present in many other parts of the planet, recalling that almost 70% of the human race lives near coastal zones. Direct and ongoing relations and inter-relationships among seas, coastal zones, ecosystems and most of humankind happen all the time. Moreover, there is a direct linkage between what happens in the heart of cities and the oceans. Highpriority ocean pollution abatement programs must begin in cities and major urban centers.

The great threats looming in the immediate future (by 2015) are pollution, hotel and home building in coastal areas, climatic change, over-fishing and introduced species from other

ecosystems. Urban coastal infrastructure, which outpaces the population growth rate in many areas, unnecessarily destroys the habitat for wild flora and fauna and degrades water quality, as confirmed by the US Pew Commission. The greatest danger in coastal water pollution comes from toxic substances and nutrients produced in streets, homes, croplands and so on.

The seas need concerted worldwide action along with policies on urban development, city growth, industrialization and, in general, lifestyles. UNESCO is responsible for the International Oceanographic Commission, which makes yeoman efforts in this field, supported by oceanic observatories and long-term research and education programs.

- **The planet's green belt (habitat, forests and biological diversity).** The United Nations states that, in the last 40 years, the forested land area per capita on Earth has been reduced by 50%, from 1.2 hectares to 0.6 ha. Per person. This is due to two main factors: population growth and decreased tree-planting. These losses have happened, by order of importance, in Asia, Africa and Latin America.

Through forestry, agriculture and other activities, the planet's population is using an estimated 50% or more of the planet's biological production. Tropical forests, the planet's green belt contain nearly 50% of the remaining biological diversity. If current deforestation rates do not change radically, the primary tropical forests may have disappeared by 2050, which would seriously compromise world biodiversity.

Recent studies show that human population density and forest cover loss are closely correlated with local, national and district systems, both in protected zones and elsewhere.

Different new approaches to sustainable forestry, for example, show very positive possibilities for reducing the destruction of habitats and species. However, population growth in many countries will force very difficult decisions in the future regarding land use, preserving forests, habitat and biodiversity, and human uses involving food and fuel production.

Accordingly, it is urgent to have an integrated, coherent vision from this overall globalizing

area, to take care of: the planet's land degradation; depletion of water resources; deforestation; air quality and carbon emissions; exhaustion of biodiversity and obviously connections with cities and urban areas.

UNESCO's worldwide programs: a) Man and the Biosphere (MAB) and b) International Geological Correlation, have made outstanding contributions to the world community and project future actions of great strategic value, oriented toward sensitizing people on these topics, as well as the scientific community and the productive sector.

One major issue in earth studies is volcanic activities and their risks. In the Andes in the Americas, for example, there is significant volcanic activity. Just in Ecuador, nearly 300 volcanoes have been inventoried, of which 27 are still active. UNESCO is working with the authorities on sensitization and education programs, above all, for overall comprehension of people's future sustainability.

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- **Water.** Water defines the boundaries of sustainability – as is often said, water is life itself. There is no substitute for water, and the amount available on the planet is highly precarious. Only 2.5% of all water on the planet is fresh water, which is necessary for most human uses (5% is underground water or accessible surface water). In turn, the amount of water varies from one region or country to another. Generally, countries or regions with greater progress have higher average rainfall than developing regions. Better management and storage of water is also correlated with countries' income levels.

From the mid-1900s to the present, water use has multiplied six-fold and the population has almost tripled. At this time, the demand for water tends to grow with the population. Nearly 80 million persons are born every year, and require, according to the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), approximately the amount of water that flows in Germany's Rhine River. However, the amount of fresh water on this planet remains the same and will continue to do so.

Over the last 50 years, industrialized countries have substantially increased their efficiency

in water use, for industrial and agricultural purposes. It is urgent to make these technologies available to all countries and for intensive education and training programs to accompany a process like this, to eliminate cultural barriers or behaviors that could pose problems.

Many countries have water shortages, with under one thousand cubic meters per year, so they face major environmental and growth problems. In 2000, water shortage affected over 500 million persons in 31 countries. By 2025, it is calculated that nearly 3000 million persons will live in countries with serious water shortages.

The world's main river valleys involve more than one country. At present, nearly 2.3 billion persons live near those who are suffering from water stress. Some 1.7 billion persons live in watersheds with scarcity of water. The basic water requirement (BWR) established by experts is 50 liters per capita per day. This standard does not consider needs for agriculture, industry and protecting ecosystems.

If, then, we take an approximate measure of 100 liters per day per person for all needs, some 80 countries in 2000, with nearly 3.7 billion persons, were under that level. These same countries will increase their populations to 6.4 billion by 2050.

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Moreover, water quality is far from adequate the world over. The WHO reports that there are over 1.4 billion persons who do not have access to uncontaminated water. Nearly 3 billion persons (almost half the planet's population, do not have access to sanitary toilet facilities.) All these deficiencies are even more serious in rural areas.

Technological solutions are always important but limited. At the same time, there is great uncertainty about the effects of global warming and water availability. The great challenge will continue to be decreasing use of water supply in agriculture, which currently uses nearly two thirds of available fresh water.

Water is consequently one of the most alarming global issues regarding planetary sustainability and its challenges largely summarize the depth and complexity of the huge task facing humanity over the coming years.

UNESCO, through its International Hydrological Program, promotes valuable actions for the world community, supported by different centers specializing in the topic, in the various regions and continents, seeking to have a positive influence on State policies, research programs, transsectoral activities and education and sensitization.

Other outstanding issues include energy; health; consumption; food; biodiversity; and climate. In human considerations, the world's children, youth and women are each special groups requiring special care to safeguard their future and work for sustainability.

Further, new information and communications technologies could be included because of their major global impact. Above all, these highpriority issues entail very clear elements of analysis in documents and Internet sites proposed in Part V of this handbook.

**A new vision of world cooperation, a starting-point for the possibility of universal human understanding.**

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107. The notion of cooperation among States has always been linked to the economy and the prevailing vision of development in each period, particularly during the last 60 years.

After World War II, in the 1950s, all social problems in developing countries were viewed as symptoms of deficient or inappropriate economic policy.

At that time, international aid or cooperation policy arose among States, of an essentially economic focus. Purposes such as alleviating social injustice or lack of equity were relegated while achieving appropriate economic growth rates was viewed as mandatory. Social transformation would depend on economic transformation, which would drive or induce the expected social achievements and development would appear. Consequently, the first thing to take care of was expanding production capacity and improving efficiency and material wellbeing.

This concept prevailed with few innovations until the late 1980s, when very progressive concepts and visions came on the international scene, such as sustainability and human

development (this latter term was coined by the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) in the early 1990s).

This new approach to development favored basic needs, which were viewed as essential by various schools of thought prior to the 1990s. The priority granted to production capacity and material aspects was then relegated, and human beings were given the leading role, as the ultimate purpose of any development process or model. Now, the great concern for development would be to expand individual and collective human capacities.

The new vision of development implied that it would address, above all, a social project. Expanding people's freedom, consolidating and assuring their rights and the full enjoyment thereof, was the great challenge for all governments and international cooperation in general. The rationale for development or for a given model was no longer that higher economic growth would bring the people more well-being.

In the 1990s, development aimed to broaden scenarios and future options for States and communities. There was agreement that development and wellbeing were no longer the privilege of a few States but the direction that all were invited and obliged to travel. Since that time, the development/underdevelopment division or dichotomy no longer meant anything. Since the process of expanding human capacities has no limits, goals to attain would be flexible.

Complexity was accepted as a normal concept that any State or society would have to live with. So, at the same time, it was important and necessary to consider plurality of dimensions under the new idea of development, rather than just economics. Among the most outstanding dimensions, there were the following, which one way or another inspired the selection and organization of the topics for world summits of chiefs of State sponsored by the United Nations since the early 1990s:

**Environmental sustainability:** This dimension entailed the principle of intergenerational equity; a holistic view of the context and the planet, which prevented further degradation and assured constant sustainability in the future.

**Social equity:** This dimension assured the benefits of development, fruits of progress, for all human beings. The marginalized and most vulnerable, or those in situations at risk, ought to receive care or special priority attention. Therefore, the struggle to put an end to critical poverty in the world and achieve gender equity became a fundamental concern.

**Human rights:** This dimension, along with social participation and democracy, became the main key to open human capacities. Human beings were called upon to appropriate their own destiny, to undertake, as main protagonists, the quest for the solution to their great needs and aspirations. All political concepts were invited to open up and strengthen these processes that would lead to the appearance of responsible, proactive citizens, aware of their own destiny.

**Economic growth:** This dimension invited people to work for socially balanced, sustainable economic growth. Continual expansion of production capacities must be assured, but also the consolidation and expansion of social capital.

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**Dialogue and cultural respect:** This dimension values all cultural expressions as the great wealth of all peoples, contributing the dynamics of unity, force and real human perspectives to development. Creation, innovation, criticism, analysis, confrontation of ideas, thinking and thought, in general were here to stay as dynamic, explanatory parts of the notion and achievements of development.

Humankind received the new 21st century with a very different idea regarding human issues, society, living on the planet, economic, environmental, rights and norms, cultural, tangible and intangible heritage and such issues. This created very positive signals, different from the concepts of cooperation among States and peoples in the past. That is the situation where we now stand.

To better understand where we are at present, it is necessary to describe the treatment and evolution of certain economic variables that have influenced the behavior of international cooperation worldwide, and therefore the economic strategies and ways of applying them.

In the 1950s, eminent economists stated that savings and investment were the factors explaining

economic growth and playing an essential role in social change. Thus, international cooperation was urged to contribute to this task, offering favorable conditions in acquiring goods and services, and offering part of the financial resources that countries required (channeled toward external savings). With the low rates of savings observed, it was believed that economic growth was also closely linked to the capacity to have foreign exchange in order to progress.

The imports required by countries have not always been accompanied by strongly dynamic exports, so there was a foreign trade imbalance that curbed the economy's sustained growth. International cooperation was charged with covering both fronts: *offering the part of resources* that could not be obtained by domestic savings, and the gap created by weak resource generation capacity.

In the 1960s and 1970s, that vision was questioned seriously, calling it simplistic and linear. It was clear that the role of capital in promoting growth was minor. In the 1980s, the so-called new economic growth theory came along.

This incorporated new concepts, such as human capital (training and education of people), social capital (level of social confidence, civil awareness, cultural values and participation – partnership), natural capital (natural resources in general), the existing institutional and normative framework, and good governance.

Knowledge, lore, collective wisdom came to be very important in explaining growth and achieving development (the new growth theory required the presence of factors that could be accumulated in the long term, required by the economic growth process, and found and expressed them that way).

The role assigned to the State in the past for growth was strategic and protagonistic. The State had to intervene in everything, in investments, production and markets; with paternalistic interventionism, because of a lack of trust in the private sector and markets' capacity to act efficiently. The State was the main party responsible for development. That philosophy and vision of development regarding the actions of stakeholders, was broadly studied and discussed, up till the current situation.

Today, the State is granted a major function in setting norms, adopting policies and programs oriented toward achieving social equity, growth and stability, and management of public goods. The private sector is acknowledged to play an active role in promoting economic and entrepreneurial initiatives and projects, in sustainability and expansion of the production process (generating profits, channeling investments, taking care of employment and participating in social protection).

Civil society is granted a vital role, that of strengthening the social fabric, through solid democracy and citizens' participation; in this context, the role of non-governmental organizations, as intermediaries between the State and citizens, is considered to be essential.

Therefore, international cooperation must now make sure to work comprehensively and openly in a situation that obliges such actions to be integrated and holistic, coordinated and transparent, with the three main protagonists in the search for all development: State, private sector, citizens (via NGOs).

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Cooperation is now more than acting in the single public policy framework; globalization incorporates new elements that make it mandatory to think about and take into account the policies on civilization and humanity that all States and peoples on the planet are interested in. This will grant greater strategic importance to some topics, including: **social equity and cohesion**, without which the world's pathway toward sustainable development will always be very fragile and move amidst many dangers; **education, training and public sensitization**, considered not only as a primary human right for all inhabitants of the planet, but as an indispensable means to achieve sustainable human development; **institutional and normative frameworks** suited to facilitating both effective management of conflicts, confrontations and disputes and also as a solid foundation for the huge changes in the process of humankind's new age, driven by the information and knowledge society; **democratization of access to knowledge and technologies**, essential to accelerated progress toward planetary sustainability and mastery of the most alarming challenges and problems concerning humankind at this time.

Here is considered that what could be called digital social fabric, as the possibility for social

expression, and consequently the massification of this new social language, would be one of the challenges for the future for us all; **protection of all fundamental goods and resources for future planetary sustainability**, such as water, biodiversity and environmental health, which call for continued efforts, consensus-building and global monitoring by the international community.

International cooperation has always sought impact and efficiency through these elements and times have changed over the last few decades. Initially, resources were incorporated in countries with the belief that they would always yield a positive economic balance and complement State efforts.

In the 1970s, this position was criticized because of the possible distortion introduced by cooperation in national efforts. It began to be viewed as more substitutive than complementary. It was argued that part of the cooperation resources were geared toward consumption and not investment, which was shown in studies through over 30 countries. However, that debate was understood more as an accounting issue than as a dynamic, conclusive position.

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Then studies began regarding relationships between cooperation and national savings. Thus, in the 1980s, there began a period of greater care and more complex analyses of cooperation. In the 1990s, studies on cooperation were oriented toward observing its effectiveness, improving data bases and monitoring mechanisms, impacts were compared with the endogenous growth that was sought; the impact of cooperation on economic growth was relativized, admitting the possibility of decreasing yields on resources offered (due to current political regimes and those to be assisted, institutional frameworks, etc.).

At present, all studies and concerns about cooperation hinge upon theoretical frameworks of endogenous growth and global relations and inter-relationships. In view of the difficulty of finding better ways to measure the effectiveness of 265 cooperation, attention has been concentrated more on how to do it, at what time and with what timing, in addition to being careful to better integrate resources and instruments of cooperation into the context and vital specific needs.

The conduct moving donors is more notable than the economic conditions, for example, of those receiving support. Therefore, there is insistence on continuity and sustainability of cooperation, to avoid uncertainty that arises otherwise, and consequently decrease the disastrous negative effects for countries and for the international community.

International cooperation is also dynamized and expanded digitally, networks are created continually on specific topics or actions, institutional networks (private sector, civil society, governments and academicians), financial and monetary networks, networks promoting all types of business, sometimes with the sole purpose of making a profit, without any ethical value or principle at all (pornography, prostitution, arms sale...).

Progress in new information and communications technologies completely revolutionize old notions of links, relations, access, dialogue, sharing, giving or receiving, among others, opening an immense range of new possibilities for contact, living in real-time situations happening thousands of kilometers away; participating actively in global living in which all types of resources - possibilities - agents appear, influencing individual, collective or State life.

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In this context, there is a great hope for a better world but also the great concern regarding the enormous challenges that world society and each citizen observes, because there is no ethical thought or charter of ethics to guide that almost unlimited force moving humankind at present.

Despite that concern, we must insist on the urgency and need in the world of direct, properly oriented cooperation from the group of countries known as the large donors (22 countries). Resources from this cooperation are declining alarmingly and are not overcoming certain limits. In 2002, they were calculated at some 50 billion dollars.

The Monterrey, Mexico Conference on Development Financing (early 2002) offered certain guidelines in this regard, but left tremendous concern about the future in such a key area. Donors were seen to use scanty portions of their GDPs for international cooperation, when they had committed decades before to making greater progress.

A great example in the history of world cooperation was the US Marshall Plan in Europe (1947-1951), which applied 2.5% of the US GDP (almost 25 times more than now being allocated for the entire world). Some 0.2% of their GDP is what the major donors are allocating for cooperation overall. So, cooperation with Africa has dropped over the last few years from 17 to about 12 billion dollars, while the more industrialized economies (after the September 11th attack) eagerly multiply their investments and resources in weaponry, security and all types of controls.

How long will this trend last? – ask 80% of humankind who are living in poverty and the great majority of States. Will there be resources that humanity requires in the immediate future and up till 2015 to attain certain goals, such as the millennium goals? It is realistic to think about progress in international cooperation policy? What will happen with the great variety of proposals, quite innovative of course, in some cases, to achieve greater funding?

Nearly 22 years ago, Willy Brandt proposed for the International Monetary fund (IMF) to actually fund development and proposed to create a fund of nearly 200 billion dollars – he was considered irresponsible. American economist and Nobel Economics Prize-winner (1981) James Tobin, a financier, proposed the creation of a surcharge on international trade to support the world's progress and alleviate the huge problems of poverty and extreme poverty; depending on the rate, this fund could generate, in just 20 days, the equivalent of the world GDP (in 6 days, the US GDP). Another idea has been to levy a fee on foreign currency dealings, making foreign exchange a commodity, facilitating the handling of operations and collecting the resources generated.

The idea is to act on a large, worldwide scale, with the international market as a whole, which is possible thanks to computing. By acting on the market, we could think about leaving 50% of revenues in the country and the other 50% for a Global Development Assistance Fund, to fulfill, for example, the millennium goals or other issues of great concern to the world at large.

The above all shows that there is progressively a belief in the feasibility of radical change in thinking and in the amounts allocated to international cooperation. This change will assuredly

appear in the next two decades, when faced with a world that is simply unsustainable, if such changes in direction that cannot wait are not made.

International cooperation, viewed as an instrument at the service of global governance and the acceptance that problems require urgent solutions through concerted support and efforts by the international community, are an effective framework for unleashing highly positive efforts in favor of planetary sustainability.

The notion of worldwide goods and a considerable range for the coverage of benefits in this context will facilitate appropriate management and the involvement and convergence of different stakeholders and multiple resources. The sphere of action may be global, regional or national and their influence may be a determining factor in achieving international equity and the change in mentality in favor of sustainable human development.

In this context, education will play a determining role by facilitating the appearance of a new global way of thinking, new ways of reading the planet's reality and that of each society and region, of appropriating principles and values that will underpin sustainability, fostering behavior and conducts in accordance with the global collective march toward the future in which valuing, utilization, enrichment and conservation of global goods becomes essential.<sup>19</sup>

Investing in education on the basis of a vision of human greatness, of wisdom and wisely shared power is a way to get ahead of all future phenomena and challenges, by investing strategically in the direction that humankind earnestly desires.

The destiny of humankind and safeguarding all the planet's natural and cultural wealth cannot be left in the hands of market forces or indiscriminate use of new information and communications technologies.

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<sup>19</sup> This is why the initiative launched by the Government of Japan at the Johannesburg World Summit on Sustainable Development, to contribute quite considerable financial resources every year starting in 2005 up through 2015, to support the UN Decade for Education and Sustainable Development is a major, step forward and an example that many other donor countries will surely follow. There is no better way to work globally and ensure an increasing positive accumulative impact than to invest in education.

**What elements could orient international cooperation policies toward the future with an eye to planetary sustainability in humankind's new age?**

108. The current transition regarding contents, practices and management of international cooperation creates, at the same time, the necessary spaces for innovative reflection and the taking of converging positions that can directly impact planetary sustainability and greater understanding among all peoples.

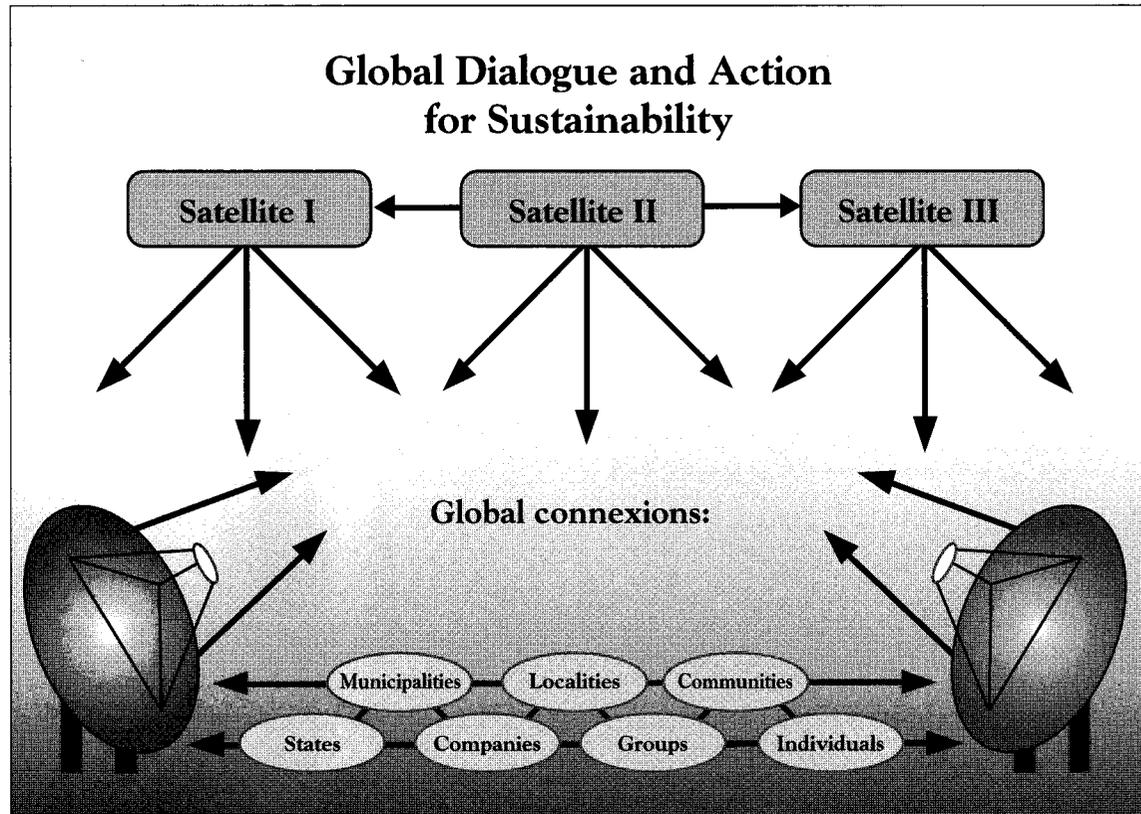
As already proposed, the world has sufficient resources, technological capacity and means in general to deal with all the complex challenges that humanity is obliged to address over the coming decades without taking into account the gigantic human capacity to create, observe, experiment, gather, integrate and adapt.

Therefore, a profound change in mentality would seem to be on its way, resulting from global vision and strategies for leading the world, so that decision-makers and those holding the power on a large scale can build, with an iron will, the most appropriate conditions for that journey leading humanity toward a sustainable future and true peace.

With the new vision, the following elements could be considered:

- **Having international ethical principles and orientations to promote ethical thinking on a universal scale.**

The international community has the necessary foundations to achieve this and has made very praiseworthy efforts in this direction in past years. It has experimented with policies and practices that have yielded concrete lessons, sometimes at an extremely high cost to the human species in particular. Gathering available knowledge and experience around the proposed perspective could facilitate that great leap forward in understanding by governments, politicians and those holding power, for the good of us all.



- Conceiving of cooperation policies from the universal notion providing more profound, harmonious dynamics and impact.

From a universal aspect, answers and actions are conceived of more equitably, transparently and smoothly. The overall resources and possibilities appear more clearly. The call to collective mobilization may be more effective and results to be attained are achieved in a shorter time. This is possible, at present, thanks to the use of new information and communications technologies.

- **Affirming universal human solidarity from the first, elementary acceptance that all problems and major challenges (poverty, biodiversity, climate ... ) involve everyone and also commit us all to cooperation.**

This will entail progressing within an institutional and normative context (new legal paradigm) facilitating management of the goods that sustain us all now and in the future, preventing risks and dangers.

- **Accepting that the first, fundamental citizenship of all human beings is planetary.**

Before belonging to a community in any region, one is part of the whole, of the planet. This will greatly facilitate understanding of the interplay of relations and inter-relationships between bilateral and multilateral cooperation, as well as the administration of the interplay of powers and visions of the society and the future that arise in that setting, naturally, on a daily basis.

- **Assuming, as co-responsible parties for success of international goals, orientation and use of resources.**

This invites us to gather and converge the sustained efforts by the international community around all essential issues and crises. Consequently, we must avoid discretionary or individualistic policies or attitudes, and rather come together around collective efforts, jointly reading and interpreting the context. The application of simple accounting systems to find out what happened with cooperation, what went undone or how it was implemented is no longer enough. It is urgent now to mobilize everyone and act on the basis of genuine co-responsibility.

- **Starting with the inspiration offered by human rights and their effective enforcement.**

Enjoying a good life, well-being, is a right to which all human beings are entitled; the

right to progress is one dimension of human rights. This suggests that cooperation should not be understood as an act of generosity by some people for others, or for the international community. When, working for sustainable economic growth, scientific and technological progress in all walks of life, and in living itself, we observe an inter-relationship and profound relations between the whole and the parts, humankind-planet, the dependence is clear. Therefore, cooperation can be understood solely as a central responsibility of all peoples toward the international community.

- **Concentrating all efforts on a great worldwide agenda for collective action.**

The complexity, constant intervention by multiple agents and sectors in the daily life of all societies, the necessary convergence of actions and acts in a solidary march, mean that multiple agendas cannot be maintained in each State or region of the world, cross-referenced by good intentions or weak bonds of encounter or exchange. Confronting and supporting multiple sectors and topics in the search for an integrated global strategy becomes a fundamental prerequisite for proper action in the future, to address the unknown and the uncertain.

- **Fostering trust, on all levels, among the world's peoples.**

This has become one of the greatest challenges for dialogue and understanding among all peoples. Trust cannot emerge from isolated situations, but from the ancestral convergence of values and cultural interpretations marking human sentiments and minds almost definitively.

The aim is not uniformity, but a basis of independence and diversity as essential elements of managing a new direction for viewing the universe and living. Nor is the idea acceptance or divergence, but only the 272 understanding of the multiple directions and options, knowing that nothing can be achieved, neither independence nor mastery of truth, but only liberation and autonomy as authentic forms of citizen coexistence.

- **Eliminating imitation as a means of massifying the superfluous and trivial.**

The throwaway culture of pointless consumption, of living just to live, or simply to exist, must clearly be left in the past. Now, we are obliged, everywhere in the world, to question, to find out, why are we citizens of the planet and why are we here? Why must we be solidary and share? Why is it meaningless to sometimes isolate ourselves and why is there no foundation for feeling that we are superior? Why feel like just another product or object on the market, immersed in the play of trifling values that mean nothing to our planet?

Participating and being part of the superfluous is the simplest, easiest condition that some people pursue endlessly. Others, on the basis of society's poverty and marginalization, cannot yet understand what they are called upon to do in order to return to the process of seeking out the true grandeur of each human being, through being simply human.

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- **Strengthening the notion of the State as the main vehicle for all stakeholders in a society.**

The social fabric that all societies must cherish for the future, in each State, must protect the bridges and connections with all others in the rest of the world. In the future, there will no longer be only national social fabrics, but it will be possible to weave a worldwide human fabric bringing us all together, hand in hand and eye to eye, traveling toward a greater purpose, each human being, and the planet as a whole.

- **Recreating life itself and the future on the basis of local and community systems.**

Understanding the universe and life, beginning from the simple level of each point on the planet or each person in a community, all the way to the convergence and gathering of humans from different perspectives. Local levels will always be the point of inspiration and convergence of all efforts and desires of the human race.

Great notions and contents to guide humankind in the future will be recreated and elicited from these disjointed experiences, sometimes apparently meaningless and pointless, that happen every day, everywhere, when human beings are present.

Supra-national, extra-State levels, independent and free of all power, will always be there, flowing together with the positive guidance of art and the meaning of living well; with the need to safeguard the human species.

- **Taking a different look at the potential and wealth existing amidst the majority who are considered marginalized and poor.**

On the day when world cooperation accepts that material things are not all that count, not only the goods accepted by financial and accounting institutions, as the only thing that makes a difference or makes sense in a market economy, that day will be the great awakening that will illumine the new age of humanity as a new creation.

Agreeing to link all the wealth existing among the so-called poor and dispossessed of the world (valuing their goods) on markets and according to the rules of play of financial and monetary institutions will be the greatest event of the 21st century. It will mean a giant step toward true humanism and leaving aside, and no longer assuming that material things are the only essential element representing life.

- **Orienting toward connectivity with international markets the national goods and proposals of the weakest, neediest States.**

Large-scale cooperation will always be on the side facilitating the connection with the real world that collectively seeks the greatest benefits and growth, and not assistance and support with no clear purpose.

More than beneficence or monetary handouts that will soothe feelings or moral or

ethical challenges, equity and true justice must prevail; human rights and the right of every State to participate equitably in the international concert of nations must always remain in effect in the future.

- **Enriching, on the basis of diversity and differences, the times in which each society lives, with its challenges and desires.**

A great value to capitalize on in the future, universally speaking, is intangible and immaterial. This will shed new light and human contents on present-day forces, guided by the market. It will be the possibility of a sincere, genuine encounter of human beings in the quest for a viable, sustainable future that will benefit everyone.

All these elements can lead to enriching the way toward finding universal human understanding. Cooperation and solidarity will be unfailing lights guiding the recovery of hope for a better world, sustainable and in peace.

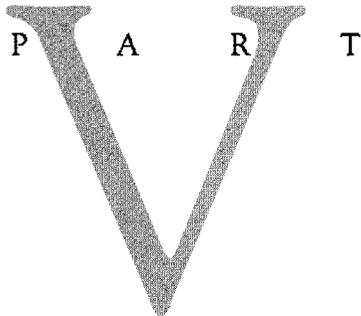
Changes will remain rapid and forces driving them will act, increasingly, in complex, uncertain ways.

Preparing for the unexpected and uncertain will become the primary obligation for all societies and human beings.

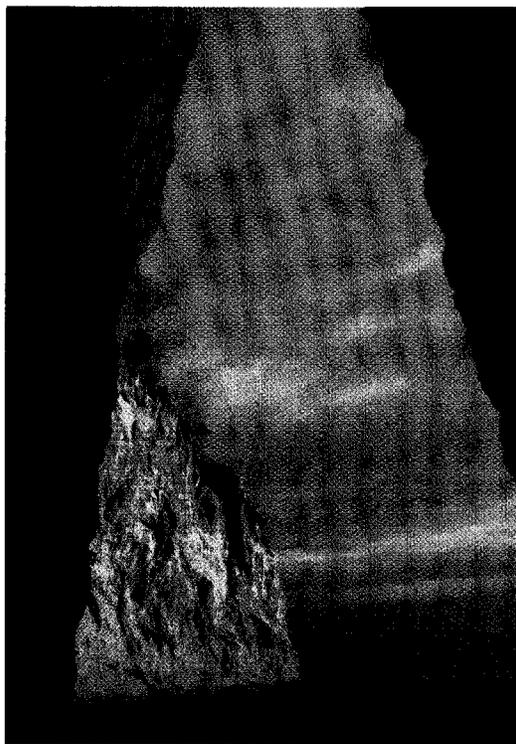
Universal ethical thought will be the great constant guide for correct collective action pursuing new human projects and humanizing the human. So be it.

Gustavo López Ospina

## TOOLBOX



- I. INTERNATIONAL AGREEMENTS AND COMMITMENTS OF RELEVANCE TO PLANETARY SUSTAINABILITY
- II. SCIENCE ALWAYS OFFERS UNEXPECTED OPPORTUNITIES FOR SUSTAINABILITY
- III. INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTIONS AND NETWORKS CONCERNED WITH SUSTAINABILITY AND THE INFORMATION AND KNOWLEDGE SOCIETY
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- No.2 DECLARATION ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT, 2002
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TUNISIA 2005

No. 1

## GOALS OF THE MILLENNIUM

<http://www.undp.org/millennium/report/>

The world-wide leaders who have participated in the Summit of the Millennium of the United Nations, held from 6 to 8 September 2000, drew up eight development objectives to be obtained by 2015:

- Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger
- Achieve universal primary education
- Promote gender equality and empower women
- Reduce child mortality
- Improve maternal health
- Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases
- Ensure environmental sustainability
- Develop a global partnership for development UN

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Secretary-General Kofi Annan has asked the UNDP Administrator, in his capacity as chair of the UN Development Group, to be the coordinator of the Millennium Development Goals in the UN system helping to make them an integral part of the UN's work worldwide.

This is a priority within the overarching UNDP mission to assist developing countries in reducing poverty. UNDP and many partners, including other UN Development Group agencies and the World Bank, are already well underway with a number of pilot projects to lead country teams in monitoring and reporting on goals. The effort began with Tanzania last year and continued with Cambodia, Cameroon, Chad, Madagascar, Nepal and Viet Nam.

It is expected that by the end of 2004, every developing country will have produced at least one such report in time for the Secretary-General's global round up on Millennium

Development Goals progress in 2005. The reports on the Millennium Development Goals are based on two principles:

1. Consultation and close collaboration with pertinent institutions, especially the United Nations Group for Development and other UN associates, the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and, the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), as well as regional financial institutions such as the *Inter-American Development Bank*.
2. The implementation of national strategies for poverty reduction presented in the Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSP), the Common Country Assessment (CCA) and the National Human Development Reports, which place emphasis on a consultative process among the development associates.

The primary objective of this collaboration is to ensure a common method of evaluation and an overall understanding of the status of the Millennium 279 Development Goals at national and global scale. Consequently, the reports will help to reinforce the global agreement implicit in the Millennium Declaration and the Monterrey Conference, such that the developing countries might better enhance their governability, reform their economic policies and focus on the needs of the poor, while their donors increase their support in the aid, commerce, debt relief, new technologies and investments funds that contribute to the achievement of the Goals.

These efforts will also support the Plan of Action, principles and objectives adopted at the Summit on Sustainable Development in Johannesburg, in August 2002, as well as the new commitments to be made by the international community during the First World Summit on the Information Society, which will take place in Geneva in December 2003.

No. 2

**THE JOHANNESBURG DECLARATION ON  
SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT, 2002**

[www.treatycouncil.org](http://www.treatycouncil.org)

**From our Origins to the Future**

1. We, the representatives of the peoples of the world, assembled at the World Summit on Sustainable Development in Johannesburg, South Africa from 2-4 September 2002, reaffirm our commitment to sustainable development.
2. We commit ourselves to build a humane, equitable and caring global society cognizant of the need for human dignity for all.
3. At the beginning of this Summit, the children of the world spoke to us in a simple yet clear voice that the future belongs to them, and accordingly challenged all of us to ensure that through our actions they will inherit a world free of the indignity and indecency occasioned by poverty, environmental degradation and patterns of unsustainable development.
4. As part of our response to these children, who represent our collective future, all of us, coming from every corner of the world, informed by different life experiences, are united and moved by a deeply-felt sense that we urgently need to create a new and brighter world of hope.
5. Accordingly, we assume a collective responsibility to advance and strengthen the interdependent and mutually reinforcing pillars of sustainable development economic development, social development and environmental protection at local, national, regional and global levels.

6. From this Continent, the Cradle of Humanity, we declare, through the Plan of Implementation and this Declaration, our responsibility to one another, to the greater community of life and to our children.
7. Recognizing that humankind is at a crossroad, we have united in a common resolve to make a determined effort to respond positively to the need to produce a practical and visible plan that should bring about poverty eradication and human development.

### **From Stockholm to Rio de Janeiro to Johannesburg**

8. Thirty years ago, in Stockholm, we agreed on the urgent need to respond to the problem of environmental deterioration. Ten years ago, at the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, held in 281 Rio de Janeiro, we agreed that the protection of the environment, and social and economic development are fundamental to sustainable development, based on the Rio Principles. To achieve such development, we adopted the global programme, Agenda 21, and the Rio Declaration, to which we reaffirm our commitment. The Rio Summit was a significant milestone that set a new agenda for sustainable development.
9. Between Rio and Johannesburg the world's nations met in several major conferences under the guidance of the United Nations, including the Monterrey Conference on Finance for Development, as well as the Doha Ministerial Conference. These conferences defined for the world a comprehensive vision for the future of humanity.
10. At the Johannesburg Summit we achieved much in bringing together a rich tapestry of peoples and views in a constructive search for a common path, towards a world that respects and implements the vision of sustainable development. Johannesburg also confirmed that significant progress has been made towards achieving a global consensus and partnership amongst all the people of our planet.

## The Challenges We Face

11. We recognize that poverty eradication, changing consumption and production patterns, and protecting and managing the natural resource base for economic and social development are overarching objectives of, and essential requirements for sustainable development.
12. The deep fault line that divides human society between the rich and the poor and the ever-increasing gap between the developed and developing worlds pose a major threat to global prosperity, security and stability.
13. The global environment continues to suffer. Loss of biodiversity continues, fish stocks continue to be depleted, desertification claims more and more fertile land, the adverse effects of climate change are already evident, natural disasters are more frequent and more devastating and developing countries more vulnerable, and air, water and marine pollution continue to rob millions of a decent life.
14. Globalization has added a new dimension to these challenges. The rapid integration of markets, mobility of capital and significant increases in investment flows around the world have opened new challenges and opportunities for the pursuit of sustainable development. But the benefits and costs of globalization are unevenly distributed, with developing countries facing special difficulties in meeting this challenge.
15. We risk the entrenchment of these global disparities and unless we act in a manner that fundamentally changes their lives, the poor of the world may lose confidence in their representatives and the democratic systems 282 to which we remain committed, seeing their representatives as nothing more than sounding brass or tinkling cymbals.

## Our Commitment to Sustainable Development

16. We are determined to ensure that our rich diversity, which is our collective strength, will be used for constructive partnership for change and for the achievement of the common goal of sustainable development.
17. Recognizing the importance of building human solidarity, we urge the promotion of dialogue and cooperation among the world's civilizations and peoples, irrespective of race, disabilities, religion, language, culture and tradition.
18. We welcome the Johannesburg Summit focus on the indivisibility of human dignity and are resolved through decisions on targets, timetables and partnerships to speedily increase access to basic requirements such as clean water, sanitation, adequate shelter, energy, health care, food security and the protection of biodiversity. At the same time, we will work together to assist one another to have access to financial resources, benefit from the opening of markets, ensure capacity building, use modern technology to bring about development, and make sure that there is technology transfer, human resource development, education and training to banish forever underdevelopment.
19. We reaffirm our pledge to place particular focus on, and give priority attention to, the fight against the worldwide conditions that pose severe threats to the sustainable development of our people. Among these conditions are: chronic hunger; malnutrition; foreign occupation; armed conflicts; illicit drug problems; organized crime; corruption; natural disasters; illicit arms trafficking; trafficking in persons; terrorism; intolerance and incitement to racial, ethnic, religious and other hatreds; xenophobia; and endemic, communicable and chronic diseases, in particular HIV/AIDS, malaria and tuberculosis.
20. We are committed to ensure that women's empowerment and emancipation, and gender equality are integrated in all activities encompassed within Agenda 21, the Millennium Development Goals and the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation.

21. We recognize the reality that global society has the means and is endowed with the resources to address the challenges of poverty eradication and sustainable development confronting all humanity. Together we will take extra steps to ensure that these available resources are used to the benefit of humanity.
22. In this regard, to contribute to the achievement of our development goals and targets, we urge developed countries that have not done so to make concrete efforts towards the internationally agreed levels of Official Development Assistance.
23. We welcome and support the emergence of stronger regional groupings and alliances, such as the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD), to promote regional cooperation, improved international cooperation and promote sustainable development.
24. We shall continue to pay special attention to the developmental needs of Small Island Developing States and the Least Developed Countries.
25. We reaffirm the vital role of the indigenous peoples in sustainable development.
26. We recognize sustainable development requires a long-term perspective and broad-based participation in policy formulation, decision-making and implementation at all levels. As social partners we will continue to work for stable partnerships with all major groups respecting the independent, important roles of each of these.
27. We agree that in pursuit of their legitimate activities the private sector, both large and small companies, have a duty to contribute to the evolution of equitable and sustainable communities and societies.
28. We also agree to provide assistance to increase income generating employment opportunities, taking into account the International Labour Organization (ILO) Declaration of Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work.

29. We agree that there is a need for private sector corporations to enforce corporate accountability. This should take place within a transparent and stable regulatory environment.
30. We undertake to strengthen and improve governance at all levels, for the effective implementation of Agenda 21, the Millennium Development Goals and the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation.

### **Multilateralism is the Future**

31. To achieve our goals of sustainable development, we need more effective, democratic and accountable international and multilateral institutions.
32. We reaffirm our commitment to the principles and purposes of the UN Charter and international law as well as the strengthening of multilateralism. We support the leadership role of the United Nations as the most universal and representative organization in the world, which is best placed to promote sustainable development.
33. We further commit ourselves to monitor progress at regular intervals towards the achievement of our sustainable development goals and objectives. Making it Happen!
34. We are in agreement that this must be an inclusive process, involving all the major groups and governments that participated in the historic Johannesburg Summit.
35. We commit ourselves to act together, united by a common determination to save our planet, promote human development and achieve universal prosperity and peace.
36. We commit ourselves to the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation and to expedite the achievement of the time-bound, socio-economic and environmental targets contained therein.

37. From the African continent, the Cradle of Humankind, we solemnly pledge to the peoples of the world, and the generations that will surely inherit this earth, that we are determined to ensure that our collective hope for sustainable development is realized.

We express our deepest gratitude to the people and the Government of South Africa for their generous hospitality and excellent arrangements made for the World Summit on Sustainable Development.

**No. 3****WORLD SUMMIT ON ENVIRONMENT AND  
DEVELOPMENT AGENDA 21, 1992**

[www.un.org](http://www.un.org)

The synthesis of the world commitment was expressed this way by the governments:

1.1. Humanity stands at a defining moment in history. We are confronted with a perpetuation of disparities between and within nations, a worsening of poverty, hunger, ill health and illiteracy, and the continuing deterioration of the ecosystems on which we depend for our well-being. However, integration of environment and development concerns and greater attention to them will lead to the fulfilment of basic needs, improved living standards for all, better protected and managed ecosystems and a safer, more prosperous future. No nation can achieve this on its own; but together we can - in a global partnership for sustainable development.

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1.2. This global partnership must build on the premises of General Assembly resolution 44/228 of 22 December 1989, which was adopted when the nations of the world called for the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, and on the acceptance of the need to take a balanced and integrated approach to environment and development questions.

1.3. Agenda 21 addresses the pressing problems of today and also aims at preparing the world for the challenges of the next century. It reflects a global consensus and political commitment at the highest level on development and environment cooperation. Its successful implementation is first and foremost the responsibility of Governments. National strategies, plans, policies and processes are crucial in achieving this. International cooperation should support and supplement such national efforts. In this context, the United Nations system has a key role to play. Other international, regional and sub-regional organizations are also called upon to contribute to this effort. The broadest public participation and the active involvement of the non-governmental organizations and other groups should also be encouraged.

1.4. The developmental and environmental objectives of Agenda 21 will require a substantial flow of new and additional financial resources to developing countries, in order to cover the incremental costs for the actions they have to undertake to deal with global environmental problems and to accelerate sustainable development. Financial resources are also required for strengthening the capacity of international institutions for the implementation of Agenda 21. An indicative order-of-magnitude assessment of costs is included in each of the programme areas. This assessment will need to be examined and refined by the relevant implementing agencies and organizations.

1.5. In the implementation of the relevant programme areas identified in Agenda 21, special attention should be given to the particular circumstances facing the economies in transition. It must also be recognized that these countries are facing unprecedented challenges in transforming their economies, in some cases in the midst of considerable social and political tension.

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1.6. The programme areas that constitute Agenda 21 are described in terms of the basis for action, objectives, activities and means of implementation. Agenda 21 is a dynamic programme. It will be carried out by the various actors according to the different situations, capacities and priorities of countries and regions in full respect of all the principles contained in the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development. It could evolve over time in the light of changing needs and circumstances. This process marks the beginning of a new global partnership for sustainable development.

The Agenda 21 social and economic dimensions are explained in 29 chapters that refer to the most prior topics of intervention. Among them: combating poverty; changing consumption pattern; demographic dynamics and sustainability; protection of the atmosphere; science for sustainable development; promoting education, public awareness and training.

**No. 4****CONVENTION ON BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY, 1992**

[www.undp.org](http://www.undp.org)

The Agreement was based, among other outstanding arguments, on: the conscience of the world community; the intrinsic value of biological diversity and of the ecological, genetic, social, economic, scientific, educational, cultural, recreational and aesthetic values of biological diversity and its components; the importance of biological diversity for evolution and for maintaining life sustaining systems of the biosphere; the conservation of biological diversity as a common concern of humankind; that States have sovereign rights over their own biological resources, and; that States are responsible for conserving their biological diversity and for using their biological resources in a sustainable manner.

The objectives of this Convention, to be pursued in accordance with its relevant provisions are:

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The conservation of biological diversity, the sustainable use of its components and the fair and equitable sharing of the benefits arising out of the utilization of genetic resources, including by appropriate access to genetic resources and by appropriate transfer of relevant technologies, taking into account all rights over those resources and to technologies, and by appropriate funding.

No. 5

## CONVENTION ON CLIMATE CHANGE 1992

[www.mct.gov.br/clima](http://www.mct.gov.br/clima)

Over 150 States signed the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change in June 1992 at the Rio “Earth Summit”. In doing so they recognised climate change as “a common concern of humankind”. Their goal was to forge a global strategy “to protect the climate system for present and future generations”. Governments will seek to achieve its ultimate objective of stabilising “greenhouse gas concentrations in the atmosphere at a level that would prevent dangerous anthropogenic [human-made] interference with the climate system.”

The Convention emphasises that developed countries are mainly responsible for historic and current emissions and must take the lead in combating climate change; that the first priority of developing countries must be their own economic and social development, and their share of total global emissions will rise as they industrialise; that states which are economically dependent on coal and oil will face special difficulties if energy demand changes; and that countries with fragile ecosystems, such as small island states and arid countries, are particularly vulnerable to the expected impacts of climate change.

By becoming Parties to the Convention, both developed and developing countries accept a number of commitments. These include:

- Submitting for review information about the quantities of greenhouse gases that they emit, by source, and about their national “sinks” (processes and activities that remove greenhouse gases from the atmosphere, notably forests and oceans).
- Carrying out national programs for mitigating climate change and adapting to its effects.
- Strengthening scientific and technical research and systematic observation

related to the climate system, and promoting the development and diffusion of relevant technologies.

- Promoting education programs and public awareness about climate change and its likely effects. Developed countries accept a number of additional commitments specific only to them. Some of the most important are:
- Adopting policies designed to limit their greenhouse gas emissions and to protect and enhance their greenhouse gas “sinks” and “reservoirs”. They will seek to return to their 1990 emissions levels by the end of this decade and will submit detailed information on their progress. The Conference of the Parties will review the overall implementation and adequacy of this commitment at least twice during the 1990s.
- Transferring to developing countries financial and technological resources above and beyond what is already available through existing development assistance, and supporting efforts by these countries to fulfil their commitments under the Convention.
- Helping developing countries that are particularly vulnerable to the adverse effects of climate change to meet the costs of adaptation.

No. 6

**INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION ON THE CLIMATE**

**KYOTO PROTOCOL**

**December 11, 1997**

[www.undp.org/conferences](http://www.undp.org/conferences)

The Kyoto Protocol was conceived of by the International Community as the main instrument to achieve the ultimate objectives of the Convention on the Climate Change. It is one of the tools that has caused the most controversy and polemics within the International Community given the drastic measurements taken and the strict follow-up process on the main agreements on this topic.

No. 7

## UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE ON DESERTIFICATION 1992

[www.unccd.int/convention](http://www.unccd.int/convention)

The first calculated measure against desertification was taken by the international community at the end of the widespread drought and famine that took effect in Sahel from 1968-1974, which caused the deaths of 200,000 people and millions of animals.

The United Nations first addressed the problem at worldwide level in 1977, at the United Nations Conference on Desertification (UNCOD), held in Nairobi, Kenya and adopted a Plan of Action to Combat Desertification (PACD), which classified desertification as a major economic, social and environmental problem of concern to many countries in all regions of the world.

As a result, the question of how to tackle desertification was still a major concern for the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED), which was held in Rio de Janeiro in 1992. The Conference stipulated, in Agenda 21, a relevant roll to the fight against desertification using preventative measures in lands that have not been affected by degradation, or affected minimally. In chapter 12, Agenda 21 attempts the necessity of fostering wide-ranging programs to fight desertification and the integration of these programs within national agendas for development and environmental planning, thereby promoting social participation at all levels. It also called upon the United Nations General Assembly to initiate negotiations for the preparation of a Convention to Combat Desertification.

On June 17, 1994, the United Nations Conference against Desertification in Countries affected by an Intense Drought or Desertification, particularly in Africa (CCD) was signed. The Conference is renowned for its innovative approach, which recognizes the importance of the physical, biological and socio-economic aspects of desertification, and the participation of the people.

The objectives of this Convention are:

- To combat desertification and mitigate the effects of drought in countries experiencing serious drought and/or desertification, particularly in Africa, through effective action at all levels, supported by international cooperation and partnership arrangements, in the framework of an integrated approach which is consistent with Agenda 21, with a view to contributing to the achievement of sustainable development in affected areas; and
- To involve long-term integrated strategies in affected areas that focus, simultaneously, on improved productivity of land, and the rehabilitation, conservation and sustainable management of land and water resources, leading to improved living conditions, particularly at the community level.

No. 8

**UNITED NATIONS INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE  
ON POPULATION AND DEVELOPMENT (ICPD)**

**Cairo, Egypt, 1994**

[www.iisd.ca/lingakages/cairo](http://www.iisd.ca/lingakages/cairo)

The present Programme of Action recommends to the international community a set of important population and development objectives, including both qualitative and quantitative goals that are mutually supportive and are of critical importance. Among these objectives and goals are: sustained economic growth in the context of sustainable development; education, especially for girls; gender equity and equality; infant, child and maternal mortality reduction; and the provision of universal access to reproductive health services, including family planning and sexual health.

The principles are related to the fact that all human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights. Everyone is entitled to all the rights and freedoms set forth in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, without distinction of any kind, such as race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status. Everyone has the right to life, liberty and security of person.

In the principles it is stated that human beings are at the centre of concerns for a sustainable development. They are entitled to a healthy and productive life in harmony with nature. People are the most important and valuable resource of any nation. In considering the population and development needs of indigenous people, States should recognize and support their identity, culture and interests, and enable them to participate fully in the economic, political and social life of the country, particularly where their health, education and well-being are affected.

According to principles, advancing gender equality and equity and the empowerment of women, and the elimination of all kinds of violence against women, and ensuring women's ability to

control their own fertility, are cornerstones of population and development-related programmes. The human rights of women and the girl-child are an inalienable, integral and indivisible part of universal human rights. The full and equal participation of women in civil, cultural, economic, political, and social life, at the national, regional and international levels, and the eradication of all forms of discrimination on grounds of sex, are priority objectives of the international community. States should take all appropriate measures to ensure, on a basis of equality of men and women, universal access to health-care services, including those related to reproductive health care, which includes family planning and sexual health.

Reproductive health-care programmes should provide the widest range of services without any form of coercion. All couples and individuals have the basic right to decide freely and responsibly the number and spacing of their children and to have the information, education and means to do so.

No. 9

**WORLD SUMMIT ON SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT**  
**Copenhagen, 1995**

[www.undp.org](http://www.undp.org)

In the Summit on Social Development, celebrated in March of 1995 in Copenhagen, the governments reached a new consensus on the need to grant people the main role within development.

The Social Summit constituted the greatest meeting of world-wide leaders up to that time. They expressed the will to consider the eradication of poverty, the objective of the total use and promotion of social integration as the most important development goals.

The Summit urged financing organisations to take radical measures of support and new initiatives for the relief of poverty in the world.

No. 10

**THE WORLD DECLARATION ON EDUCATION FOR ALL**  
**March 1990 - Jomtien, Thailand**

[www.un.org/spanish/conferences](http://www.un.org/spanish/conferences)

The international community concluded in this Conference that:

- More than a 100 million children, including at least 60 million girls, have no access to primary schooling;
- More than 960 million adults, two-thirds of whom are women, are illiterate, and functional illiteracy is a significant problem in all countries, industrialized and developing;
- More than one-third of the world's adults have no access to the printed knowledge, new skills and technologies that could improve the quality of their lives and help them shape, and adapt to social and cultural change; and
- More than 100 million children and countless adults fail to complete basic education programmes; millions more satisfy the attendance requirements but do not acquire essential knowledge and skills.

Based on the above, has proclaimed the following World Declaration on Education for All: Meeting Basic Learning Needs, with the fundamental purposes:

1. Every person, child, youth, and adult shall be able to benefit from educational opportunities designed to meet their basic learning needs.
2. The transmission and enrichment of common cultural and moral values. It is in these values that the individual and society find their identity and worth.
3. Basic education is more than an end in itself. It is the foundation for lifelong learning and human development on which countries may build, systematically, further levels and types of education and training.

As elaborated in Articles 3-7, the expanded vision- encompasses:

- Universalizing access and promoting equity;
- Focussing on learning;
- Broadening the means and scope of basic education;
- Enhancing the environment for learning;
- Strengthening partnerships.
- The realization of an enormous potential for human progress and empowerment is contingent upon whether people can be enabled to acquire the education and the start needed to tap into the ever- 295 expanding pool of relevant knowledge and the new means for sharing this knowledge.

The Education for All Decade culminated at the World Education Forum (26-28 April 2000, Dakar, Senegal) which adopted the Dakar Framework for Action Education for All: Meeting Our Collective Commitments. This document commits governments to achieving quality basic education for all by 2015, with particular emphasis on girls' schooling and a pledge from donor countries and institutions that "no country seriously committed to basic education will be thwarted in the achievement of this goal by lack of resources".

No. 11

**FOURTH WORLD CONFERENCE ON WOMEN**  
**Beijing, September 1995**

[www.un.org](http://www.un.org)

The Fourth World Conference on Women, gathered in Beijing in September 1995, the year of the fiftieth anniversary of the founding of the United Nations, reaffirm the commitment to: defend the equal rights and inherent human dignity of women and men and other purposes and principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations, to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and other international human rights instruments; in particular, the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women and the Convention on the Rights of the Child; as well as the Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women and the Declaration on the Right to Development; and, ensure the full implementation of the human rights of women and of the girl child as an inalienable, integral and indivisible part of all human rights and fundamental freedoms.

Likewise, among other commitments adopted by the Conference was to: Ensure women's equal access to economic resources, including land, credit, science and technology, vocational training, information, communication and markets, as a means to further the advancement and empowerment of women and girls, including through the enhancement of their capacities to enjoy the benefits of equal access to these resources, inter alia, by means of international cooperation.

No. 12

## CONVENTION ON THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD

January, 1990

[www.unicef.org](http://www.unicef.org)

The World Summit on the Rights of the Child, held in New York in January 1990, which strongly supported the Convention was, in a real sense, the first globalization action for its application.

The Convention is the most universally accepted human rights instrument in history it has been ratified by 191 countries in 1997, all but two and therefore uniquely places children centre-stage in the quest for the universal application of human rights.

Like a Convention, this is supported by the governments that have legal status, and does not simply represent a moral obligation that members must fulfil. Article 24 of the Convention speaks clearly of the governments' obligation: "the participating Members – reduce infant mortality and fight disease and malnutrition, taking measures that assure that all sectors of society, in particular families, "have access to an education and be supported in the use of basic children's health knowledge and the advantages of breastfeeding..."

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### The Commission on the Rights of the Child

The Member States must report the progress that they have made under the Convention's requirements, to the Commission on the Rights of the Child. The latter must review progress to-date and make recommendations. In the case of Article 24, the national breast-feeding programs, and the implementation of the state of the Code, constitute one of the measures to be examined. The report processes are long-term, and NGOs such as IBFAN have an important role to play in contributing to national reports and monitoring government actions.

"UNICEF stresses that all the concerned parties be united to UNICEF in order to request that the Commission on the Rights of the Child require the governments to report on the Convention and the fulfilment of the International Code. (UNICEF press release, January 14, 1997)."

No. 13

## WORLD DECLARATION ON HIGHER EDUCATION FOR THE TWENTYFIRST CENTURY: VISION AND ACTION

[www.unesco.org/education](http://www.unesco.org/education)

UNESCO convoked the international community to analyze the great topic of higher education, after stating that on the eve of a new century, there is an unprecedented demand for and a great diversification in higher education, as well as an increased awareness of its vital importance for socio-cultural and economic development, and for building the future, for which the younger generations will need to be equipped with new skills, knowledge and ideals.

Everywhere higher education is faced with great challenges and difficulties related to financing, equity of conditions at access into and during the course of studies, improved staff development, skills-based training, enhancement and preservation of quality in teaching, research and services, relevance of programmes, employability of graduates, establishment of efficient co-operation agreements and equitable access to the benefits of international co-operation.

At the same time, higher education is being challenged by new opportunities relating to technologies that are improving the ways in which knowledge can be produced, managed, disseminated, accessed and controlled. Equitable access to these technologies should be ensured at all levels of education systems.

Owing to the scope and pace of change, society has become increasingly knowledge-based so that higher learning and research now act as essential components of cultural, socio-economic and environmentally sustainable development of individuals, communities and nations. Higher education itself is confronted therefore with formidable challenges and must proceed to the most radical change and renewal it has ever been required to undertake, so that our society, which is currently undergoing a profound crisis of values, can transcend mere economic considerations and incorporate deeper dimensions of morality and spirituality. The international community adopted in Paris an outstanding frame of action with a long-term vision, which considers the first decade of the 21st Century.

No. 14

## THE ISTANBUL DECLARATION ON HUMAN SETTLEMENTS

3-14 June 1996

[www.eurplace.org](http://www.eurplace.org)

The international community, assembled at the Second United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II) held in Istanbul, Turkey, from 3 to 4 June, 1996, took this opportunity to endorse the healthier, more liveable, equitable, sustainable and more productive. The deliberations on the two major themes of the Conference, adequate shelter for all and sustainable human settlements development in an urbanizing world have been inspired by the Charter of United Nations and are aimed to reaffirm existing and forging new partnerships for action at the international, national and local levels to improve the living environment. They committed to the objectives, principles and recommendations contained in the Habitat Agenda and pledge their mutual support for its implementation.

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In Istanbul a new era in cooperation commenced, an era of a culture of solidarity. They moved into the twenty-first century, and offered a positive vision of sustainable human settlement, a sense of hope for the common future and an exhortation to join a truly worthwhile and engaging challenge, that of building together a world where everyone can live in a safe home with a promise of a decent life of dignity, good health, safety, happiness and hope.

No. 15

## WORLD FOOD SUMMIT

November, 1996

[www.fao.org/wfs](http://www.fao.org/wfs)

The international community being convinced that the multifaceted character of food security demands concerted national action, and effective international efforts to supplement and reinforce national action, the following commitments were made:

- To ensure an enabling political, social, and economic environment designed to create the best conditions for the eradication of poverty and for durable peace, based on full and equal participation of women and men, which is most conducive to achieving sustainable food security for all;
- To implement policies aimed at eradicating poverty and inequality and improving physical and economic access by all, at all times, to sufficient, nutritionally adequate and safe food and its effective utilization;
- To pursue participatory and sustainable food, agriculture, fisheries, forestry and rural development policies and practices in high and low potential areas, which are essential to adequate and reliable food supplies at the household, national, regional and global levels, and combat pests, drought and desertification, considering the multifunctional character of agriculture;
- To ensure that food, agricultural trade and overall trade policies are conducive to fostering food security for all through a fair and market-oriented world trade system;
- To prevent and be prepared for natural disasters and man-made emergencies and to meet transitory and emergency food requirements in ways that encourage recovery, rehabilitation, development and a capacity to satisfy future needs;

- To promote optimal allocation and use of public and private investments to foster human resources, sustainable food, agriculture, fisheries and forestry systems, and rural development, in high and low potential areas;
- To implement, monitor, and follow-up this Plan of Action at all levels in cooperation with the international community.

No. 16

## UNITED NATIONS LITERACY DECADE 2003-2012

[www.unesco.org/education](http://www.unesco.org/education)

The fifty-fourth session of the General Assembly of the United Nations adopted a Resolution (Resolution A/RES/54/122 of 17 January 1999) to consider proclaiming a United Nations.

Literacy Decade The World Education Forum (Dakar, Senegal, 26-28 April, 2000), organized by UNESCO, was seen as a key opportunity for a first round of feedback on the document and consultation on the overall project of a UN Literacy Decade Despite tremendous and steady progress, universal literacy remains a major quantitative and qualitative challenge for both developing and industrialised countries.

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The 875 million illiterate youth and adults and the 113 million children who are still out of school and who continue to nurture every year the world's illiteracy statistics. They are the poorest of the poor and most of them – two thirds of the adult illiterates and 60% of the out-of school children – are female. The fact that the map of illiteracy continues to overlap with the map of social, gender and ethnic inequalities, makes the struggle for literacy a struggle not only for education goals but for social justice and for human dignity and empowerment.

Prospects for universal literacy are not encouraging. According to the latest UNESCO estimates, and if current trends continue, by the year 2010 the adult illiterate population would represent 830 million people and the proportion may decrease only from 20% to 17% (namely one in every six adults would still be illiterate). On the other hand, meeting the basic literacy needs of children, young people and adults has become an increasingly complex endeavour, in the context of increased education levels required by modern societies as well as the more complex nature of literacy in order to deal with its more sophisticated applications, including the emergence of new information and communication technologies.

## LITERACY FOR ALL: A RENEWED VISION

The Literacy Decade is internationally understood as:

- A renewed vision and a renewed commitment from all: national governments, national societies, local communities and international agencies.
- It transcends age groups, is the foundation of lifelong learning and is a key element of inter- and cross- generational learning.
- It includes all: children and adults, girls and boys, women and men, rural and urban, countries in the South and in the North.
- It means ensuring effective and sustainable literacy levels. This implies ensuring adequate conditions and opportunities for literacy development in the family, the community, the workplace, the school system, and the media.
- It implies active policies and collective efforts not only towards literacy acquisition, but towards plural and meaningful uses of literacy as a means of expression, communication and lifelong learning.

No. 17

**UNITED NATIONS DECADE OF EDUCATION FOR  
SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT 2005-2015**

[www.un.org/spanish/conferences](http://www.un.org/spanish/conferences)

The General Assembly of the United Nations, in its Fifty-seventh Session, adopted the Resolution A/C.2/57/L.45 on “United Nations Decade of Education for Sustainable Development 2005-2015”, proposed by the World Summit on Sustainable Development held in Johannesburg, in August, 2002.

The General Assembly, recalling chapter 36 of Agenda 21, on promoting education, public awareness and training, adopted at the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, in 1992, as well as the work performed with UNESCO leadership, to implement this chapter; and, emphasizing that education is an indispensable element for achieving sustainable development, decided to proclaim the ten-year period beginning on 1 January 2005 as the United Nations Decade of Education for Sustainable Development.

The United Nations Education, Scientific and Cultural Organization, UNESCO, was designated as the lead agency for the promotion of the Decade, and requested to develop a draft international implementation scheme, clarifying its relationship with the existing education process, in particular the Dakar Framework for Action adopted at the World Education Forum and the United Nations Literacy Decade, in consultation with the United Nations and other relevant international organizations, Governments, non-governmental organizations and other stakeholders, with a view to providing recommendations for Governments on how to promote and improve the integration of education for sustainable development in their respective educational strategies and action plans at the appropriate level.

All worldwide Governments were invited to include urgent measures to implement the Decade in their respective educational strategies and action plans by 2005, taking into account the international implementation scheme to be prepared by the United Nations Education, Scientific and Cultural Organization; which plan was to be approved by the United Nations General Assembly.

No. 18

**WORLD CONFERENCE ON SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY  
Budapest, July 1999**

[www.unescdoc.unesco.org](http://www.unescdoc.unesco.org)

The Conference emphasizes the following relevant aspects:

1. Science for knowledge; knowledge for progress
2. Science for peace
3. Science for development
4. Science in society and science for society

**The Action Plan proclaims the following:**

1. Science for knowledge;

Knowledge for progress Role of fundamental research; the public and private sectors; sharing scientific information and knowledge.

2. Science for peace and development Science for basic human needs;

Science, environment and sustainable development; science and technology; science education; science for peace and conflict resolution; science and policy.

3. Science in society and science for:

Social requirements and human dignity, ethical issues; widening participation in science; modern science and other systems of knowledge.

No 19

## INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION ON CULTURAL DIVERSITY

31st General Conference of UNESCO

Paris, November 2001

[www.unesco.org/culture](http://www.unesco.org/culture)

Although cultural diversity has always implicitly been an object of interest for UNESCO, it could be said that it has become a major concern since the Intergovernmental Conference on Political Culture for Development, held in Stockholm in 1998. It is pertinent to remember some quotations taken from the Plan of Action, which was adopted during this conference, and that clearly demonstrates the growing importance that has been given to cultural diversity.

UNESCO is aware of the efforts that are required to confront the challenges of cultural development and the preservation of cultural diversity, as described in the report of the World Commission on Culture and Development, titled “Our Generative Diversity.”

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UNESCO would like to emphasize the need to simultaneously embrace universal values, recognition of cultural diversity, national efforts directed at maintaining national political cultures in harmony and the necessity of preserving the plurality of cultural initiatives at their bases. All of this in order to promote harmony and mutual understanding, as well as respect and consideration between individuals and between nations facing the risks of discord and conflict; (...)

Focusing on the above factors, consider the principles that are cited here; (...)

Cultural creativity is the source of human progress and cultural diversity. It is a treasure of humanity, and one of the indispensable factors for development.

The new trends, particularly globalization, can produce longer ties than ever and enrich

interactions among cultures, but can also be detrimental for our creative diversity and pluralism present in cultures; thus, said trends make mutual understanding more imperative.

The Director-General of UNESCO, Sr. Koichiro Matsuura, expressed his desire that the text of the Declaration could “someday gather the same strength as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights”. The Declaration confirms the specific character of the goods and cultural services that, “by being carriers of identity, of values and meaning, should not be considered consumer goods in the same manner as the rest.” The Plan of Action that accompanies the Declaration has as its objective to guarantee the its implementation of this and proposes that “...the reflection continue on the opportunity of one international judicial instrument on cultural diversity.”

In this respect, since the Fall of 2002, many international forums have adopted, among their priorities, the principle of elaboration of an international executive judicial instrument destined to protect and promote cultural diversity, and declared that it should be UNESCO that should assume responsibility for this instrument.

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Everyone agrees with the fact that UNESCO has legitimacy to act as the host of said international judicial instrument due to its responsibility for matters of culture, as does WCO in matters of commerce. This was expressed by the participating Ministers of Culture, at the Ministers’ meeting at the International Network on Political Culture (INPC) held in Paris, to Director-General of UNESCO, Mr. Koichiro Matsuura, on the 6th of February, 2003.

During the aforementioned encounter, the Ministers reaffirmed the importance that these matters have due to UNESCO’s responsibility for organizing a convention on cultural diversity.

No. 20

**THE UNIVERSAL DECLARATION ON THE HUMAN GENOME  
AND HUMAN RIGHTS**

**Twenty-ninth session of UNESCO General Conference  
Paris, 1997**

[www.unesdoc.unesco.org](http://www.unesdoc.unesco.org)

This constitutes the first universal instrument in the field of biology. It assures a balance between the guarantee of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms and the need to guarantee freedom of investigation.

This text is the proof of a world-wide conscience concerning the need for an ethical reflection on sciences and technologies, in order to safeguard all life support systems and types of life on earth.

In its first article, the declaration reiterates that “the human genome underlies the fundamental unity of all members of the human family, as well as the recognition of their inherent dignity and diversity. In a symbolic sense, it is the heritage of humanity”. In addition: “...in its natural state, it cannot give rise to financial gains” (Article 4).

The recent mapping of the DNA chain plus all progress observed in genetic matter has reached a point in which the human being is debated in ethical codes, since the law still has not developed procedures on its serviceable and strategic aspect.

No. 21

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON FINANCING FOR DEVELOPMENT  
Monterrey, México 2002

[www.un.org/ffd](http://www.un.org/ffd)

Heads of State gathered in Monterrey (Mexico), have resolved to address the challenges of financing for development around the world, particularly in developing countries. The goal is to eradicate poverty, achieve sustained economic growth and promote sustainable development as an advance to a fully inclusive and equitable global economic system.

They recognized that the main moral and humanitarian problem of our times is to counteract the increasing polarization between the privileged and the dispossessed. Yet the solution to this problem also constitutes an issue of benefit to our own interest. The globalized economy must work for all of us; otherwise, it will not work for anybody.

That is the ineluctable corollary of interdependence, and the hopelessness of the majority in a moment becomes a pressing problem for all.

The Conference committed to defend the following principles of good economic and social management on a world-wide scale:

- **Fairness.** To correct the asymmetries and the unbalances in the distribution of costs and benefits in the present international economic system.
- **Solidarity.** To take care of the special needs of those countries and social groups those are vulnerable and marginalized.
- **Common responsibility.** To improve the supply of common public goods, while preventing that national measures, especially internal economic decisions, impact negatively upon other nations.

- **Forecast.** To assure an adequate balance between the answers to the pressing necessities in the short term and development considerations in the long term, among other things, by means of appropriate preventive measures that reduce to the minimum the risks of financial crises.
- **Participation.** To try to achieve participation among all international community members, especially those of developing countries, in the decision-making process and establishment of economic norms on a world-wide level.
- **Individuality.** To recognize the diversity of circumstances and national and regional cultures and to respect the autonomy of economic policy strategies and of national development.
- **Association.** To encourage all the interested actors, both public and private, to undertake national, regional and international measures mutually reinforced each other in favour of financing for development.

With these principles as a foundation, the Heads of State committed themselves to achieve United Nations' potential to bear leadership and to promote cooperation so that globalization may work for a sustainable human development and that its benefits reach all peoples.

No. 22

## THE EARTH CHARTER SUMMIT

Declaration agreed by the International Civil Society, 2001

[www.upeace.org](http://www.upeace.org)

“Earth, our home, is alive with a unique community of life. The forces of nature make existence a demanding and uncertain adventure, but Earth has provided the conditions essential to life’s evolution. The resilience of the community of life and the well-being of humanity depend upon preserving a healthy biosphere with all its ecological systems, a rich variety of plants and animals, fertile soils, pure waters, and clean air. The global environment with its finite resources is a common concern of all peoples. The protection of Earth’s vitality, diversity, and beauty is a sacred trust.

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Principles:

1. To safeguard humanity in its complete integrity it is necessary to reconcile unity and diversity.
2. The recognition of others is the basis of any relationship and of any peace to be had.
3. The acceptance of the limitations linked to the preservation of the common good is necessary to the exercise of freedom.
4. Material development is at the disposal of human development.
5. Innovation is not an aim in itself, but is at the disposal of service of the development of humanity and safeguarding the planet.

International Community responsibilities:

1. The Charter preserves the common good, the partnership of control and life, and the integrity of ecosystems.
2. The Charter is a guarantor of diversity in societies.
3. The Charter distributes and redistributes the rare goods ... and speaks of utilization of these goods (biosphere).
4. The Charter seeks to observe the evolution of humanity and ecosystems evolution in reference to behaviour codes and procedures.
5. The Charter is educational.
6. The Charter is an arbiter between procedures and behaviour codes.
7. The Charter is a judge in that the private and public actors, especially the super national ones, assume their responsibilities, as affirmed by Pierre Calame, General Manager of the Alliance for a Responsible and Unified World.

No. 23

**WORLD SUMMIT ON THE INFORMATION SOCIETY**

**UN-Geneva 2003, December 2003 (First Phase)**

**UN-Tunis, November 2005 (Second Phase)**

[www.un.org/spanish/conferences](http://www.un.org/spanish/conferences)

The World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS), which will be carried out in two phases (Geneva 2003 and Tunis 2005), will be the culmination of a global discussion process oriented towards identifying common visions, to adopt political initiatives and to define action plans that give form to the Information Society.

With its tripartite character, the conference will gather government representatives, the private sector and civil society in order to promote an effective growth of the Information Society and the reduction of the digital gap.

In the World Summit on the Information Society adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in Resolution 56/183, the United Nations recognized the urgent need to direct the potential of knowledge and technology for promoting the eight objectives stated in the Millennium Goals.

The intention of the WSIS is to define principles and actions to orient the development of the Information Society the achievement of its objectives. To this end, the WSIS will launch two documents: Principles Declaration and a Plan of Action. These documents will serve as basis for governments of the United Nations member countries in the development of Information Society.

The WSIS preparatory process began in 2002 and, has been sustained by means of regional events as well as world-wide conferences.

PrepCom I, was centred in defining rules and procedures for participation for the different actors who convened at the WSIS. The regional conferences were established for consolidating, in their respective documents, the proposals of countries of each region in relation to principles and plan of action. In this way, conferences in the following locations were executed: Bamako (Africa), Bucharest (Europe), Tokyo (Asia and Pacific), Beirut (Middle East) and Bavaro (Latin America and the Caribbean). Meanwhile, the main intention of PrepCom II was to advance in the elaboration of documents of the Plan of Action and the Principles Declaration.

The Summit is being held under the high patronage of Kofi Annan, UN Secretary-General, with the International Telecommunication Union taking the lead role, in cooperation with other interested UN agencies, as well as UNESCO, which has an important role in its content.

The Summit will occur in two phases:

The first phase of the World Summit will take place in Geneva hosted by the Government of Switzerland from 10 to 12 December 2003. It will address the broad range of themes concerning the Information Society and adopt a Declaration of Principles and plan of action, addressing the whole range of issues related to the Information Society.

The second phase of the World Summit will take place in Tunis hosted by the Government of Tunisia, from 16 to 18 November 2005. Development themes will be a key focus in this phase, and it will assess progress that has been made and adopt any further plan of action to be taken. Also, there is the idea of adopting an International Ethical Chart.

The third meeting of the Preparatory Committee for the WSIS will take place in Geneva from 5 to 26 of September 2003. There will be a period of meetings between PrepCom II and PrepCom III (Intersession Period) dedicated to polish the working documents of Principles Declaration and Plan of Action.

The first informal meeting of the Period between Meetings will be carried out from 21 to 25 of July 2003 in Paris-France. The WSIS offers an opportunity so that the different actors involved

(governments, private sector, civil society) develop a better understanding of the information revolution and information and communication technologies, and its impact at a national, regional and world-wide level, with the perspective of developing information societies based on inclusiveness, equal opportunities and cultural diversity.

The WSIS is seen by different actors from civil society as the opportunity to strengthen and stimulate regional and national reflection processes, debates and actions around interests, needs and visions oriented to the construction/development of the information societies.

**Importance of the Summit:**

This Summit, will define the essential aspects that will shape the information society in the years to come. The adopted resolutions will have direct impact on all the regions of the world. In addition, there are other reasons for which participation by civil society is essential: although this meeting seems to be just another Summit of the United Nations, it has certain particularities that we must not lose sight of. The Information Society is a phenomenon of deep social, cultural, economic and, political implications.

Beyond the Summit, this conjuncture is the opportunity to provoke public debate and to dynamize the discussion towards the centre of countries on the social changes of this era and to work in a democratic manner on the construction of incidence mechanisms, and on the design and implementation of public policies centred in human rights. The Information Society is a society in formation. This implies the construction of coalitions and participative, democratic and transparent forms.

On every Continent, consultation and experts meetings will continue, with the presence of Governments, private sector, academy and civil society on most strategic and sensitive topics, until the end of 2005. From this moment, until 2015, will be the period of execution of the World Agenda for actions adopted.

## Declaration Project of Geneva's Summit (December 2003)

The Declaration Project of the Summit will rely on a “preamble”, in which the international community will emphasize the strategic relevancy of the world information society, the opportunities that it offers in all spheres of life, and the challenges and options and how this emerging tool demands great attention from of all States, communities and individuals.

The Declaration will propose a search for a “common vision“that distinguishes the basis, principles and major criteria for performance by consensus and coordination by the international community. It will affirm that this society will have to be centred on human beings and for the service of humanity as a whole. It will help to eradicate effectively the major problems affecting the world, such as poverty and environmental sustainability of the planet. The preservation of cultural identity and linguistic diversity will be essential attributes of this society. Likewise, the presence of independent and free mass media in accordance with the juridical classification of every country will be repeated as an essential principle of freedom of expression and the guarantee of information plurality.

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Concerning the “fundamental principles”, it will be emphasized that the Information Society, as its principle objective will be to facilitate the full use of ICTs, in all the societies and levels, in this way contributing to the sharing of social and economic benefits by all people, and the preservation of diversity and cultural patrimony. Gender issues and special situations of small developing island States will be emphasized, in order to contribute in a better way to them. The well-being of all will be a topic of concern.

For the Plan of Action formulation, the Declaration will offer clear orientations on the following aspects:

- Information and communication infrastructure.
- Access to information and knowledge.
- The role of governments, the business sector and civil society in the promotion of ICTs for development.

- Capacity building: human resources development, education, and training.
- Security.
- Enabling environment.
- Promotion of development-oriented ICT applications for all.
- Cultural identity and linguistic diversity, local content and media development.
- The ethical dimensions of ICTs.
- International collaboration and other matters.

In the “*Plan of Action*” preparation, the negotiation work carried out in 2003 emphasizes several themes considered as top priority, as already indicated in the Declaration. Among these is found the issue of funding and investment, accessibility, and development and sustainability in the field of information and communication infrastructure; human resources development, education and training; the role of the private and multinational sector.

On the other hand, attention is focused on the obstacles stopping the progress of society from a human perspective, and strategies, programs and methods of application. Likewise, the Plan of Action will propose the adoption of important mega-projects, according to needs and priorities of different continents and regions of the world. For example, Africa is suggesting three important projects: “multilateral African television net”, the creation of an “African Linguistic Academy” and, “To digitalize African files and libraries “.

## II. SCIENCE ALWAYS OFFERS UNEXPECTED OPPORTUNITIES FOR SUSTAINABILITY

Some of the greatest discoveries of the Twentieth Century

- 1900 Max Planck discovers energy quanta and develops quantum theory.
- 1901 Guglielmo Marconi receives the first telegraphic signal sent from Cornwall (Great Britain).
- 1903 The Wright brothers succeed in carrying out a motor-propelled flight.
- 1905 Albert Einstein publishes the theory of relativity.
- 1909 Paul Ehrlich discovers a cure for syphilis.
- 1913 Nils Bohr and Ernest Rutherford discover the structure of the atom. Henry Ford develops mass-production for automobiles.
- 1920 First radio broadcast.
- 1920's First production of electronic appliances for the home.
- 1922 Fredric Banting and Charles Best discover insulin.
- 1923 Vladimir Zworykin invents the first television camera.
- 1926 First television broadcast made over radio waves.
- 1927 Georges Lemaitre develops the Big Bang Theory to explain the origin of the universe.

- 1928 Alexander Fleming discovers penicillin.
- 1929 Edwin Hubble develops his theory of uniformly expanding universe.
- 1930 The British Broadcasting Corporation launches its television programming.
- 1932 James Chadwick describes the atomic nucleus as composed of protons and neutrons.
- 1935 Invention of nylon and plastics.
- 1942 Enrico Fermi demonstrates the first controlled nuclear reaction.
- 1945 Detonation of the first atomic bomb in New Mexico. One month later, two more bombs are dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki:
- 318 Demonstration of the first electronic computer. (note: it used so much electricity that the lights almost went out).
- 1947 William Shockley invents the transistor.
- 1948 Percy Julian synthesizes cortisone.
- 1950 Gertrude Elion develops treatment for leukaemia.
- 1952 Jonas Salk formulates a vaccine for poliomyelitis. Henri Laborit discovers chlorpromazine as useful for a treatment for mental illness.
- 1953 James Watson and Francis Crick discover the double-helix structure of DNA, the building block of life.
- 1954 First successful kidney transplant.

- 1957 The Soviet Union launches the Sputnik satellite.
- 1960 Peter Medawar constructs a unified theory of the origin of the universe.
- 1960's Discovery of restriction enzymes, the "scissors" used by genetic engineers to splice genes.
- 1961 The Soviet Union puts the first cosmonaut into orbit.
- 1967 Christian Barnard performs the first human heart transplant. 1969 Apollo astronauts arrive on the moon for the first time.
- 1970's Computerized topography (CT9 scanner to examine soft tissues).  
American universities connect through a computerized network (ARPANET).
- 1971 Gilbert Hyatt and Intel produce the first commercial microprocessor (computer).
- 1974 Bill Gates and Paul Allen develop programming for the Altair computer and subsequently found Microsoft.
- 1975 Discovery of endorphins, natural painkillers of the brain.
- 1980 Tim Berners-Lee, consultant at CERN (a European laboratory), develops the initial programming that will drive the INTERNET.
- 1980's Discovery of prions, infectious agents of a new type of virus (e.g. mad cow disease).
- 1983 Luc Montagnier and Robert Gallo isolate HIV, the virus that causes AIDS.
- 1987 Discovery of fluoxetine (Prozac) as a treatment for depression.

- 1989 The World Wide Web (www) is born.
- 1990 Launch of the Hubble space telescope.
- 1996 The sheep “Dolly”, produced by cloning a single cell, is born in Scotland.
- 1997 Scientists accurately predict the coming of the “El Niño” phenomenon, drastically reducing the social and economic effects of the subsequent floods and droughts.
- 2002 Scientists conclude that not only is the universe expanding but also that the rate of that expansion is growing (British and Australian astronomers).
- 2003 Completion of the human genome decoding.

### III. INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTIONS AND NETWORKS CONCERNED WITH THE SUSTAINABILITY AND THE INFORMATION AND KNOWLEDGE SOCIETY INTERGOVERNMENTAL BODIES

#### INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTIONS

**United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO)** The main objective of UNESCO is to contribute to peace and security in the world by promoting collaboration among nations through education, science, culture and communication in order to further universal respect for justice, for the rule of law and for the human rights and fundamental freedoms which are affirmed for the peoples of the world, without distinction of race, sex, language or religion, by the Charter of the United Nations.

#### UNESCO-WORLD CULTURE REPORT

The UNESCO World Culture Report series arises from an awareness of the need to delve further into the multilayered concepts of cultural diversity, conflict resolution and pluralism. These reports provide information from experts, statisticians and artists, as well as providing some analysis of new concepts, insights and policy recommendations.

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#### UNESCO-WORLD EDUCATION REPORT

A broad analysis of the progress made towards the implementation of the right to education in different regions of the world and a full set of World Education Indicators on key aspects of education in over 180 countries.

#### UNESCO - WORLD SCIENCE REPORT

Authoritative and readable, the World Science Report 1998 is an invaluable collection of facts, figures and analysis for all those with an interest in understanding how science is shaping around the world, be they decision-makers, science watchers or active participants in the scientific enterprise.

**United Nations Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD).**

The Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD) was created in December 1992 to ensure effective follow-up of UNCED; to monitor and report on implementation of the Earth Summit agreements at the local, national, regional and international levels. The Commission on Sustainable Development consistently generates a high level of public interest. The Commission ensures the high visibility of sustainable development issues within the UN system and helps to improve the UN's coordination of environment and development activities. The CSD also encourages governments and international organizations to host workshops and conferences on different environmental and cross-sectoral issues.

**United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).**

UNDP's mission is to help countries in their efforts to achieve sustainable human development by assisting them to build their capacity to design and carry out development programmes in poverty eradication, employment creation and sustainable livelihoods, the empowerment of women and the protection and regeneration of the environment, giving first priority to poverty eradication.

**United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP).**

UNEP's mission is to provide leadership and encourage partnerships in caring for the environment by inspiring, informing and enabling nations and people to improve their quality of life without compromising that of future generations.

**United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM).**

UNIFEM promotes women's empowerment and gender equality. It works to ensure the participation of women in all levels of development planning and practice, and acts as a catalyst within the UN system, supporting efforts that link the needs and concerns of women to all critical issues on the national, regional and global agendas.

**United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA).**

UNFPA extends assistance to developing countries, countries with economies in transition and other countries at their request to help them address reproductive health and population issues,

and raises awareness of these issues in all countries. UNFPA's three main areas of work are: to help ensure universal access to reproductive health, including family planning and sexual health, to all couples and individuals on or before the year 2015; to support population and development strategies that enable capacity-building in population programming; to promote awareness of population and development issues and to advocate for the mobilization of the resources and political will necessary to accomplish its areas of work.

#### **United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF).**

UNICEF advocates and works for the protection of children's rights, to help the young meet their basic needs and to expand their opportunities to reach their full potential. Their site provides information about their projects, the latest news on issues that effect child welfare and rights, a list of UNICEF publications and statistical data for indicators of child welfare and rights listed by region or country.

#### **Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO).**

FAO is active in land and water development, plant and animal production, forestry, fisheries, economic and social policy, investment, nutrition, food standards and commodities and trade. It also plays a major role in dealing with food and agricultural emergencies. A specific priority of the Organization is encouraging sustainable agriculture and rural development, a long-term strategy for the conservation and management of natural resources. It aims to meet the needs of both present and future generations through programmes that do not degrade the environment and are technically appropriate, economically viable and socially acceptable. Their site includes information about their projects as well as statistical information on agriculture, nutrition, fisheries, forestry and food quality.

#### **World Food Programme (WFP).**

WFP is the frontline United Nations Agency whose mission is to provide: Food for LIFE to sustain victims of human-induced and natural disasters; Food for GROWTH to improve the nutrition and quality of life of the most vulnerable people at critical times in their lives; and Food for WORK to help build assets and promote the selfreliance of poor people and communities, particularly through labourintensive works programmes.

**World Health Organisation (WHO).**

WHO promotes technical cooperation for health among nations, carries out programmes to control and eradicate disease and strives to improve quality of life. Their site 321 contains many project reports, publications and other information sources about health and the work of WHO.

**The World Bank.**

The World Bank is the world's largest source of development assistance. Their site provides extensive information on their projects and about development issues in general.

## OTHER INTERGOVERNMENTAL BODIES

- IDB** **The Inter-American Development Bank.** The oldest and largest regional multilateral development institution was established in December of 1959 to help accelerate economic and social development in Latin America and the Caribbean.
- CAF** **Corporación Andina de Fomento (CAF)** is a financial multilateral institution whose mission is to support the sustainable development of its stakeholder countries and regional integration.
- OAS** **Organization of American States.** On April 30, 1948 - 21 countries of the hemisphere met in Bogotá, Colombia, to adopt the “Charter of the Organization of American States” (OAS), which affirmed their commitment to common goals and respect for each nation’s sovereignty. Since then, the OAS has expanded to include the nations of the Caribbean, as well as Canada.
- CAN** **Andean Community.** The precedents of the Andean Community culminated on May 26, 1969, when a group of South American countries of the Andean region signed the Agreement of Cartagena, also known as the Andean Pact, with the intention of establishing a customs agreement for a term of ten years.
- ECLA** **The Economic Commission for Latin America (ECLA).** The Spanish acronym is CEPAL- was established by Economic and Social Council resolution 106(VI) on 25 February 1948 and began to function that same year.
- SELA** **The Latin American Economic System (SELA)** is a regional intergovernmental organisation, with headquarters in Caracas (Venezuela), comprised of 28 countries of Latin America and the Caribbean. Created on October 17, 1975, by means of the Constitutive Agreement of Panama.

- CERLALC** **Regional Centre for Book Promotion in Latin America and the Caribbean (CERLALC).**  
Created in August, 1984 by an Agreement of Cooperation between the Government of Colombia and UNESCO. CERLALC is an international organisation comprised of nineteen Latin American countries.
- IOCARIBE** **It was created in 1969 by Decree 763, by then-current President of the Republic of Colombia, Dr. Carlos Lleras Restrepo. It is a regional subsidiary body of the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission (IOC). It is responsible for the promotion, development and co-ordination of IOC marine science research programmes, ocean services, and related activities, including training, education and mutual assistance in the Caribbean and adjacent regions.**
- MERCOSUR** **On March 26, 1991, Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay and Uruguay subscribed and signed the Agreement of Asunción, creating Mercosur, which constitutes the most relevant international project in which its member countries are involved.**
- CARICOM** **The Caribbean Community Secretariat was in created in the bosom of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) Secretariat.**  
CARICOM, SELA, SICA and SIECA have promoted beginning of the Caribbean States Association; the experience of CARICOM, SELA, SICA and SIECA will enrich the works of the Council of Ministers and of Special Committees.
- FTA** **The Government of Canada, the Government of the United Mexican States and the Government of the United States of America, resolved to strengthen the special bonds of friendship and cooperation among their nations. It is an administrative entity similar to the Bi-national Secretariat established accordance with the Agreement of Free Trade between Canada and the United States (FTA). In 1994, in accordance with the obligation of the Parties in the**

TLCAN framework, FTA decided to establish permanent offices that work as national Sections in every country, the Bi-national Secretariat. That means that the national sections of Canada and the United States were converted into the Sections of Canada and of the United States of the TLCAN Secretariat, with the addition of the Mexican Section.

## NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS

### **Amnesty International.**

Amnesty International is a worldwide campaigning movement that works to promote all the human rights enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and other international standards. In particular, Amnesty International campaigns to free all prisoners of conscience; ensure fair and prompt trials for political prisoners; abolish the death penalty, torture and other cruel treatment of prisoners; end political killings and “disappearances”; and oppose human rights abuses by opposition groups.

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### **Bangladesh Centre for Advanced Studies (BCAS).**

BCAS is an independent, non-profit making non-governmental research organization. It serves as a think-tank or a policy institute to address three themes from a Southern perspective: Integrating Environment and Development, Governance and People’s Participation, and Appropriate Economic Growth. Centre for Alternative Development Initiatives.

### **The Centre for Alternative Development Initiatives (CADI).**

CADI is a Philippine-based civil society organization (CSO) dedicated to the study, encouragement and implementation of sustainable development. Centre for Science and Environment. The Centre for Science and Environment is one of India’s leading environmental NGOs with a deep interest in sustainable natural resource management.

### **The Earth Charter.**

The Earth Charter is a declaration of interdependence and responsibility and an urgent call to

build a global partnership for sustainable development. It sets forth some of the fundamental ethical principles for a sustainable way of life. The Earth Charter Initiative began in 1997 with its secretariat based at the Earth Council (see below) in Costa Rica. By 1999, over forty national Earth Charter committees had been formed, and numerous Earth Charter conferences were held.

#### **The Earth Council.**

The Earth Council is an international NGO which aims to promote and advance the implementation of the Earth Summit agreements. This site provides links to other resources on sustainable development as well as showcasing the Earth Council's programmes and initiatives. Earthwatch Institute. Earthwatch Institute is an international non-profit organization which supports scientific field research worldwide to improve our understanding and management of the Earth. The Institute's mission is to promote sustainable conservation of our natural resources and cultural heritage by creating partnerships between scientists, educators, and the general public. Through the participation of volunteers in field research, Earthwatch helps scientists gather vital data that empowers individuals and governments to act wisely as global citizens.

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#### **ENDA Third World.**

Environmental Development Action in the Third World is a South-based (Dakar, Senegal) international organisation working in collaboration with local organisations to help community initiatives in sustainable development. Their site profiles their current and past projects. In English, French, Spanish and German. Green Cross International. The world's largest humanitarian organisation. Their site provides contact information to the national bodies of RC in over 170 countries, many of which have a presence on the Internet. Many of their publications can also be accessed online from this site as well as reports on specific work areas and projects of RC around the world. International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies. The world's largest humanitarian organisation. Their site provides contact information to the national bodies of RC in over 170 countries, many of which have a presence on the Internet. Many of their publications can also be accessed online from this site as well as reports on specific work areas and projects of RC around the world.

**International Institute for Environment and Development (IIED).**

An independent, non-profit organisation with a mission to promote sustainable patterns of world development through collaborative research, policy studies, consensus building and public information.

**International Institute for Sustainable Development (IISD).**

The IISD meets the challenge of sustainable development by advancing policy recommendations on international trade, economic instruments, climate change and natural resource management to make development sustainable. Their site describes their programmes and allows you to read their many publications online.

**IUCN - The World Conservation Union.**

IUCN was founded in 1948 and brings together 78 states, 112 government agencies, 735 NGOs, 35 affiliates, and some 10,000 scientists and experts from 181 countries in a unique worldwide partnership. Its mission is to influence, encourage and assist societies throughout the world to conserve the integrity and diversity of nature and to ensure that any use of natural resources is equitable and ecologically sustainable. Within the framework of global conventions IUCN has helped over 75 countries to prepare and implement national conservation and biodiversity strategies. IUCN has approximately 1000 staff, most of whom are located in its 42 regional and country offices while 100 work at its Headquarters in Gland, Switzerland.

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**National Library for the Environment.**

The NLE provides links to many online resources including full-text publications and journals, as well as providing links to other databases of environmental and sustainable development resources on the Internet.

**The Natural Step.**

The Natural Step (TNS) is a non-profit environmental education organization working to build an ecologically and economically sustainable society. TNS offers a framework that is based on science and serves as a compass for businesses, communities, academia, government entities and individuals working to redesign their activities to become more sustainable. TNS

encourages dialogue and consensusbuilding, a key process of learning organizations. It is based on systems thinking, focusing on first-order principles at the beginning of “causeeffect” relationships. It recognizes that what happens in one part of a system affects every other part, often in unexpected ways.

### **Redefining Progress.**

Redefining Progress is a public policy organization that seeks to ensure a more sustainable and socially equitable world for our children and our children’s children. Working both within and beyond the traditional economic framework, RP generates and refines innovative policies and ideas that balance economic well-being, the environment, and social equity so that those living today and those who will come in the future can have a better quality of life. Rio+5. The Rio+5 global campaign proposes to translate sustainable development from agenda (ie. the agreements that came out of the ‘Earth Summit’) to action.

### **Society for International Development.**

The Society for International Development (SID) is a global network of individuals and institutions concerned with development which is participative, pluralistic and sustainable. SID has over 6000 members in 115 countries and 75 local chapters. It works with more than 200 associations, networks and institutions involving academics, parliamentarians, students, political leaders and development experts, both at local and international levels. This means that SID has a holistic, multidisciplinary and multisectorial approach to development and social change. Sustainable Development International. Sustainable Development International aims to educate its readership by providing a showcase for strategies and technologies for local-global Agenda 21 implementation.

### **UNED Forum.**

UNED Forum is an international multi-stakeholder organization, committed to the promotion of global sustainable development. UNED’s primary objective is to promote sustainable development through facilitating the involvement of major groups and stakeholders in the policy work of the United Nations and other intergovernmental institutions. UNED is the National Committee for in the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) in the UK,

and UNED activities also support the work of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the United Nations Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD). However, UNED is not an official body of the United Nations.

**Women's Environment and Development Organisation (WEDO).**

WEDO is a global organization working to increase women's visibility, roles and leadership in public policy-making through peace, gender, human rights, environmental and, economic justice campaigns; through advocacy nationally, regionally, at the United Nations and in international financial institutions; and through local actions.

**World Business Council for Sustainable Development (WBCSD).**

The World Business Council for Sustainable Development (WBCSD) is a coalition of 125 international companies united by a shared commitment to the environment and to the principles of economic growth and sustainable development. In broad terms, the WBCSD aims to develop closer cooperation between business, government and all other organizations concerned with the environment and sustainable development and seeks to encourage high standards of environmental management in business itself.

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**World Resources Institute.**

World Resources Institute provides information, ideas, and solutions to global environmental problems. Their mission is to move human society to live in ways that protect Earth's environment for current and future generations and their programme meets global challenges by using knowledge to catalyze public and private action. Their site contains news, publications, a Business Centre, an Education Centre, a Library and Information Centre and a sustainable development information service. You are also able to access information sorted by topic or by region.

**Worldwatch Institute.**

Worldwatch believes that information is a powerful tool of social change. Hence, it seeks to provide the information to bring about the changes needed to build an environmentally sustainable economy. Worldwatch's mission is to raise public awareness of global environmental

threats to the point where it will support effective policy responses. Worldwide Fund for Nature's (WWF) Living Planet Campaign. The goal of the Living Planet Campaign is, through campaigning, to mobilize conservation action on a global scale, using the transition into the new millennium to encourage positive, responsible use of the natural environment and to achieve major conservation success. As part of this campaign an annual index presenting the most reliable data available on forest area and populations of marine and freshwater species worldwide is produced. This report also examines human consumption of critical resources.

#### IV. WEBPAGES OF RELEVANCE FOR CONSULTATION

##### 1. UNITED NATIONS AGENCIES, PROGRAMMES AND ORGANIZATIONS

Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO)

[www.fao.org/](http://www.fao.org/)

International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA)

[www.iaea.org/worldatom/](http://www.iaea.org/worldatom/)

International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD)

[www.infad.org/operations/regional/pf/index.htm](http://www.infad.org/operations/regional/pf/index.htm)

International Labour Organization (ILO)

[www.ilo.org/](http://www.ilo.org/)

UNAIDS

[www.unaids.org](http://www.unaids.org)

UNICEF Voices of Youth

[www.unicef.org/voy/research/reshome.html](http://www.unicef.org/voy/research/reshome.html)

United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)

[www.unicef.org/](http://www.unicef.org/)

UNIFEM [www.unifem.org](http://www.unifem.org)

United Nations Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD)

[www.un.org/esa/sustdev/](http://www.un.org/esa/sustdev/)

United Nations Cyber School Bus  
[www.un.org/Pubs/CyberSchoolBus/index.html](http://www.un.org/Pubs/CyberSchoolBus/index.html)

United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM)  
[www.unifem.undp.org/](http://www.unifem.undp.org/)

United Nations Development Programme  
[www.undp.org/](http://www.undp.org/)

United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)  
[www.unep.org/](http://www.unep.org/)

United Nations System  
Web site with news, direct transmissions, documents, publications, general information, conferences, events, photos and data base  
[www.un.org/spanish/](http://www.un.org/spanish/); [www.unsystem.org](http://www.unsystem.org)

United Nations Organization for Education, Science and Culture (UNESCO)  
[www.unesco.org](http://www.unesco.org)

United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA)  
[www.unfpa.org/](http://www.unfpa.org/)

World Bank  
[www.worldbank.org](http://www.worldbank.org)

World Food Programme (WFP)  
[www.wfp.org/](http://www.wfp.org/)

World Health Organization (WHO)  
[www.who.int](http://www.who.int)

World Meteorological Organization (WMO)  
[www.wmo.ch](http://www.wmo.ch)

World Trade Organization  
[www.wto.org](http://www.wto.org)

## 2. UNITED NATIONS INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCES AND AGREEMENTS

Agreement for the Implementation of the Provisions of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea of 10 October 1982, Relating to the Conservation and Management of Straddling Fish Stocks and Highly Migratory Fish Stocks  
[www.fletcher.tufts.edu/multi/texts/ilm1542.txt](http://www.fletcher.tufts.edu/multi/texts/ilm1542.txt)

Agreement on the Conservation of Polar Bears  
[www.sedac.ciesin.org/pidb/texts/polar.bears.1973](http://www.sedac.ciesin.org/pidb/texts/polar.bears.1973)

Bahia Declaration on Chemical Safety  
[www.who.int/ifcs/forum3/index.html](http://www.who.int/ifcs/forum3/index.html)

Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and their Disposal  
[www.basel.int/](http://www.basel.int/)

Bonn Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals  
[www.wcmc.org.uk/cms/](http://www.wcmc.org.uk/cms/)

Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety  
[www.biodiv.org/biosafety](http://www.biodiv.org/biosafety)

Code of conduct for Responsible Fisheries  
[www.fao.org/fi/agreem/codecond/ficonde.asp](http://www.fao.org/fi/agreem/codecond/ficonde.asp)

Conference on Environmental Impact Assessment in Transboundary Context, Espoo, Finland  
<http://ciesin.org/pidb/texts/environmental.impact.assessment.1991.html>

Conference on Global Consultation on Safe Water and Sanitation for the 1990,  
New Delhi, India  
[www.wsscc.org/resources/briefings/ndelhi.html](http://www.wsscc.org/resources/briefings/ndelhi.html)

Conference on Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change  
[www.ipcc.ch](http://www.ipcc.ch)

Conference on the Conveyance of Hazardous, Waste across Frontiers. Basel, Switzerland  
[www.basel.int/](http://www.basel.int/)

Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS)  
[www.wcmc.org.uk/cms](http://www.wcmc.org.uk/cms)

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Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES)  
[www.sedac.ciesin.org/pidb/texts/cites.trade.endangered.species.1973](http://www.sedac.ciesin.org/pidb/texts/cites.trade.endangered.species.1973)

Convention on Nature Protection and Wildlife Preservation in the Western Hemisphere  
[www.sedac.ciesin.org/pidb/texts/wildlife.western.emisphere](http://www.sedac.ciesin.org/pidb/texts/wildlife.western.emisphere)

Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Water-courses and International  
Lakes, supplemented by its 1999 Protocol on Water and Health  
[www.sedac.ciesin.org/entri/register/reg-167.rr.html](http://www.sedac.ciesin.org/entri/register/reg-167.rr.html)

Convention on Wetlands of International Importance Especially as Water Fowl Habitat,  
Ramsar, Iran  
[www.sedac.ciesin.org/entri/register/reg-056.rrr.html](http://www.sedac.ciesin.org/entri/register/reg-056.rrr.html) <http://ramsar.org>

Declaration on the Trade-related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights  
[www.wto.org/english/thewto\\_e/minist\\_e/min01\\_e/min-decl\\_trips\\_e.htm](http://www.wto.org/english/thewto_e/minist_e/min01_e/min-decl_trips_e.htm)

Fifty-first World Health Assembly, Geneva, Switzerland  
[www.who.int/inf-pr-1998](http://www.who.int/inf-pr-1998)

First Petersburg Round Table-International Dialogue Forum, Peterberg/Bonn, Germany  
[www.dse.de/ef/peterb.hotm](http://www.dse.de/ef/peterb.hotm)

First World Water Forum, Marrakech, Morocco  
[www.cmo.nl/pelpe7/pe-772.html](http://www.cmo.nl/pelpe7/pe-772.html)

Fourteenth International AIDS Conference  
[www.aids2002.org](http://www.aids2002.org)

Global Consultation on Safe Water and Sanitation for the 1990s, New Delhi, India  
[www.wsscc.org/resources/briefings/indelhi.html](http://www.wsscc.org/resources/briefings/indelhi.html)

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Global Programme of Action for the Protection of the Marine Environment  
from Land-based Activities  
[www.gpa.unep.org](http://www.gpa.unep.org)

Groundwater 2000-International Conference on Groundwater Research, Copenhagen,  
Denmark  
[www.isva.dtu.dk/grc/gw2000](http://www.isva.dtu.dk/grc/gw2000)

Helsinki Rules on the Uses of the Waters of International Rivers, Finland  
[www.internationalwaterlaw.org/IntlDocs/Helsinkin\\_Rules.hmt](http://www.internationalwaterlaw.org/IntlDocs/Helsinkin_Rules.hmt)

Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change  
[www.ipcc.ch](http://www.ipcc.ch)

International Code of Conduct for Plant Germplasm Collecting and Transfer  
[www.fao.org/biodiversity/CCPGCT-en.asp](http://www.fao.org/biodiversity/CCPGCT-en.asp)

International Conference on Freshwater, Bonn, Germany  
[www.water-2001.del](http://www.water-2001.del)

International Conference on Water and the Environment, Dublin, Ireland  
[www.water-2001.del/conferences/default4.asp](http://www.water-2001.del/conferences/default4.asp)

International Conference on Water and Sustainable Development, Paris, France  
[www.iisd.ca/sd/frh2o.html](http://www.iisd.ca/sd/frh2o.html)

International Convention for the Regulation of Whaling  
[www.sedac.ciesin.org/entri/register/reg-004](http://www.sedac.ciesin.org/entri/register/reg-004)

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International Plan of Action  
[www.fao.org/fi/ipa/ipae.asp](http://www.fao.org/fi/ipa/ipae.asp)

International Plant Protection Convention  
[www.sedac.ciesin.org/pidb/texts/intl.plant.protection.1951](http://www.sedac.ciesin.org/pidb/texts/intl.plant.protection.1951)

International Convention for the Protection of New Varieties of Plants  
[www.upov.int/eng/index](http://www.upov.int/eng/index)

International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture  
[www.fao.org/ag/cgrfal/News.htm](http://www.fao.org/ag/cgrfal/News.htm)

International Tropical Timber Agreement  
[www.sedac.ciesin.org/pidb/texts/tropical.timber.1983](http://www.sedac.ciesin.org/pidb/texts/tropical.timber.1983)

Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer  
[www.unep.org/ozone/](http://www.unep.org/ozone/)

Rotterdam Convention on the Prior Informed Consent Procedure for Certain Hazardous Chemicals and Pesticides in International Trade

[www.pic.it](http://www.pic.it)

Seoul conference on International Groundwaters, Republic of Korea

[www.internationalwaterlaw.org/Int/Docs/Seous\\_Rules.htm](http://www.internationalwaterlaw.org/Int/Docs/Seous_Rules.htm)

Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs)

[www.chem.unep.ch/scl](http://www.chem.unep.ch/scl)

TRIPS Agreement

[www.wto.org/english/tratop-e/trips-e/t.am0.e.htm](http://www.wto.org/english/tratop-e/trips-e/t.am0.e.htm)

United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea

[www.sedac.ciesin.org/entri/register/reg-125.44.html](http://www.sedac.ciesin.org/entri/register/reg-125.44.html)

United Nations General Assembly Special Session on Children

[www.un.org/ga/children](http://www.un.org/ga/children)

United Nations General Assembly Special Session on HIV/AIDS

[www.un.org/gal aids/coverage](http://www.un.org/gal aids/coverage)

United Nations Forum on Forests (UNFF)

[www.un.org/esa/sustdev/forestsmandate.htm](http://www.un.org/esa/sustdev/forestsmandate.htm)

United Nations Water Conference, Mar del Plata, Argentina

[www.undp.org/sed/water/strategy/4.htm](http://www.undp.org/sed/water/strategy/4.htm) 42

Regional Seas Conventions

[www.unep.org/DEC](http://www.unep.org/DEC)

Second World Water Forum & Ministerial Conference, The Hague, the Netherlands  
[www.worldwaterforum.net/index2.html](http://www.worldwaterforum.net/index2.html)

Seoul Conference on International Groundwater, Republic of Korea  
[www.internationalwaterlaw.org/IntlDocs/Seul\\_Rules.htm](http://www.internationalwaterlaw.org/IntlDocs/Seul_Rules.htm)

World Charter for Nature  
[www.netspace.net.au/~jnevill/World\\_charter for nature](http://www.netspace.net.au/~jnevill/World_charter_for_nature)

World Conference on Disaster Reduction, UN, Geneva (marks the end of the International Decade on Natural Disaster Reduction 1990'99)  
[www.unisdr.org/unisdr/intention.htm](http://www.unisdr.org/unisdr/intention.htm)

World Conference on Disaster Reduction, Yokohama, Japan (Midterm Review of the International Decade on Natural Disaster Reduction-IDNDR)  
[www.unisdr.org/unisdr/yokostrategy.htm](http://www.unisdr.org/unisdr/yokostrategy.htm)

World Conference against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance  
[www.unhchr.ch/html/racism/Durban.htm](http://www.unhchr.ch/html/racism/Durban.htm)

WTO Agreement on Agriculture  
[www.wto.org/english/tratop-e/gatt-e/gatt-e.htm](http://www.wto.org/english/tratop-e/gatt-e/gatt-e.htm)

World Trade Summit in Doha  
[www.wto.org/english/thewto\\_e/minist\\_3/min01\\_e.htm](http://www.wto.org/english/thewto_e/minist_3/min01_e.htm)

### 3. SUSTAINABILITY

Bangladesh Centre for Advanced Studies (BCAS)  
[www.bcas.net/](http://www.bcas.net/)

Brod Hage  
[www.brodhage@emse.fr](mailto:www.brodhage@emse.fr)

Centre for Alternative Development Initiatives  
[www.cadi.ph/](http://www.cadi.ph/)

Colección de Artículos y Publicaciones  
[www.globalizacion.tripod.com](http://www.globalizacion.tripod.com)

Earthwatch Institute  
[www.earthwatch.org/](http://www.earthwatch.org/)

Environmental Organisation Web Directory  
[www.esdtoolkit.org/](http://www.esdtoolkit.org/)

Get Net Wise  
[www.worldbank.org/worldlinks/english/index.html](http://www.worldbank.org/worldlinks/english/index.html)

Global Environment Facility (GEF)  
[www.gefweb.org/Projects/](http://www.gefweb.org/Projects/)

Green Cross International  
[www.gci.ch/](http://www.gci.ch/)

Green Teacher  
[www.greenteacher.org/](http://www.greenteacher.org/)

International Institute for Environment and Development (IIED)  
[www.iied.org/](http://www.iied.org/)

International Institute for Sustainable Development (IISD)  
[www.iisd.ca/](http://www.iisd.ca/)

IUCN - The World Conservation Union  
[www.iucn.org](http://www.iucn.org)

Japan for Sustainability  
[www.japanfs.org](http://www.japanfs.org)

Learning for a Sustainable Environment  
[www.ens.gu.edu.au/ciree/LSE/INDEX.HTML](http://www.ens.gu.edu.au/ciree/LSE/INDEX.HTML)

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Learning for a Sustainable Future  
[www.schoolnet.ca/vp-pv/learning/e/](http://www.schoolnet.ca/vp-pv/learning/e/)

Les actes de la journée d'étude "Regards critiques sur les enjeux de la mondialisation"  
[www.octares.com](http://www.octares.com)

Living Planet Report 1999  
[www.panda.org/livingplanet/lpr99/](http://www.panda.org/livingplanet/lpr99/)

National Library for the Environment  
[www.cnie.org/nle/](http://www.cnie.org/nle/)

National Strategies for Sustainable Development  
[www.nssd.net](http://www.nssd.net)

New Sustainable Life Approach  
[www.geocities.com/combusem/INDSP.htm](http://www.geocities.com/combusem/INDSP.htm)

OECD-DAC, The DAC guidelines  
[www.sourceoecd.org](http://www.sourceoecd.org)

One World Network  
[www.oneworld.org/](http://www.oneworld.org/)

Prácticas Sensatas Costeras para el Desarrollo Humano Sostenible  
[www.csiwisepractices.org](http://www.csiwisepractices.org)

Programme 21  
[www.un.org/esa/sustdev/agenda21sp/index.htm](http://www.un.org/esa/sustdev/agenda21sp/index.htm)

Redefining Progress  
[www.rprogress.org](http://www.rprogress.org)

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Revista Especializada en Temas de Recursos Humanos y el Estado de Bienestar  
[www.recursohumano.cl/mainnot.htm](http://www.recursohumano.cl/mainnot.htm)

Revista Mensual de Economía, Sociedad y Cultura a Nivel Mundial  
[www.rcci.net/globalizacion/](http://www.rcci.net/globalizacion/)

Rio+5  
[www.ecouncil.ac.cr/rio/](http://www.ecouncil.ac.cr/rio/)

Society for International Development  
[www.sidint.org/](http://www.sidint.org/)

Sustainability in Latin America and the Caribbean Area  
[www.rolac.unep.mx/johannesburgo/cdrom\\_alc/indice.htm](http://www.rolac.unep.mx/johannesburgo/cdrom_alc/indice.htm)

Sustainability Web ring  
[www.nav.webring.org/hub?ring=sustainability;list](http://www.nav.webring.org/hub?ring=sustainability;list)

Sustainable Development International  
[www.sustdev.org/](http://www.sustdev.org/)

Sustainable Life  
[www.vidasostenible.com](http://www.vidasostenible.com)

Sustainable Development Organization  
[www.sustainabledevelopment.org/](http://www.sustainabledevelopment.org/)

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Teaching for a Sustainable World  
[www.ea.gov.au/education/publications/tsw/index.html](http://www.ea.gov.au/education/publications/tsw/index.html)

The Argus Clearinghouse on “Sustainable Development”  
[www.clearinghouse.net/cgi-bin/chadmin/viewcat/Environment/sustainable\\_development?kywd](http://www.clearinghouse.net/cgi-bin/chadmin/viewcat/Environment/sustainable_development?kywd)

The Earth Charter  
[www.earthcharter.org/](http://www.earthcharter.org/)

The Natural Step  
[www.naturalstep.org/](http://www.naturalstep.org/)

225 issues on sustainable development  
[www.ecologistaenaccion.org/2002/documentos/225\\_medidas.pdf](http://www.ecologistaenaccion.org/2002/documentos/225_medidas.pdf)

UN DESA, Indicator on Sustainable Development

[www.un.org/esa/sustdev/isd.htm](http://www.un.org/esa/sustdev/isd.htm)

Women's Environment and Development Organisation (WEDO)

[www.wedo.org/](http://www.wedo.org/)

World Business Council for Sustainable Development (WBCSD)

[www.wbcsd.ch/](http://www.wbcsd.ch/)

World Confederation of Teachers

[www.wctcsme.org/](http://www.wctcsme.org/)

World Links for Development (WORLD)

[www.worldbank.org/worldlinks/english/index.html](http://www.worldbank.org/worldlinks/english/index.html)

WSSD-Youth Caucus

[www.leif.holmberg@lsu.edu](mailto:www.leif.holmberg@lsu.edu)

WSSD-Education Caucus

[www.ctrlaltesc.org/](http://www.ctrlaltesc.org/)

World Wide Web Virtual Library on "Sustainable Development"

[www.ulb.ac.be/ceese/meta/sustvl.html](http://www.ulb.ac.be/ceese/meta/sustvl.html)

Worldwide Fund for Nature's (WWF) Living Planet Campaign

[www.panda.org/livingplanet](http://www.panda.org/livingplanet)

WWF-UK Education

[www.wwf-uk.org/education/index.htm](http://www.wwf-uk.org/education/index.htm)

#### 4. ECONOMY

Accounting Resource  
[www.The Accounting Resource Index.com](http://www.TheAccountingResourceIndex.com)

Economic Indicator  
[www.Economyweb.com](http://www.Economyweb.com)

Economic Information  
[www.FatLink.com](http://www.FatLink.com); [www.Guíame.com](http://www.Guíame.com)

Economic Orientation  
[www.Grail Search.com](http://www.GrailSearch.com)

Economic Magazine  
[www.ciberzoo.org.uy](http://www.ciberzoo.org.uy)

Economy and Business  
[www.economyweb.com/](http://www.economyweb.com/)

ENDA Third World  
[www.enda.sn/](http://www.enda.sn/)

International Monetary Fund (IMF)  
[www.imf.org](http://www.imf.org)

Iniciativa Interamericana de Capital Social, Ética y Desarrollo  
[www.iadb.org/etica](http://www.iadb.org/etica).

Interamerican Development Bank (IDB)  
[www.iadb.org](http://www.iadb.org)

Japan International Trade Organization (JETRO)  
[www.jetro.go.jp/](http://www.jetro.go.jp/)

Latin American Economic System (SELA)  
[www.sela.org](http://www.sela.org)

Market Information  
[www.Financewise.com](http://www.Financewise.com)

Trade and Sustainable Development  
[www.ictsd.org/monthly/puentes.htm](http://www.ictsd.org/monthly/puentes.htm)

U.S. Department of Commerce  
[www.doc.gov](http://www.doc.gov)

## 5. EDUCATION, CULTURE, SCIENCE AND COMMUNICATION

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ALCA-America  
[www.americas.flu.edu](http://www.americas.flu.edu)

Centre for Health Policy Studies Faculty of Social Science and Humanities  
[www.sexualitycourse.com](http://www.sexualitycourse.com)

Centre for Science and Environment  
[www.oneworld.org/cse](http://www.oneworld.org/cse)

CLAES, Latin America  
[www.ambiental.net](http://www.ambiental.net)

Communication and Social Sciences  
[www.ehu.es/](http://www.ehu.es/)

Communication Initiative Partnership  
[www.comminit.com](http://www.comminit.com)

Cool Planet for Kids  
[www.oxfam.org.uk/coolplanet/](http://www.oxfam.org.uk/coolplanet/)

Cool Planet for Teachers  
[www.oxfam.org.uk/coolplanet/teachers/](http://www.oxfam.org.uk/coolplanet/teachers/)

CRE - COPERNICUS  
[www.cre-copernicus.de/](http://www.cre-copernicus.de/)

Digital Libraries  
[www.bdiegitaes.ucol.mx](http://www.bdiegitaes.ucol.mx)

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Digital Library on Education  
[www.campus-oei.org/oeivirt](http://www.campus-oei.org/oeivirt)

Digital World Network Library  
[www.educanet.net](http://www.educanet.net)

Education and Social Sciences  
[www.aldeaeducativa.com/aldea/genoma.asp](http://www.aldeaeducativa.com/aldea/genoma.asp)

Education Network in LAC  
[www.edescolar.ilce.edu.mx/](http://www.edescolar.ilce.edu.mx/)

Education, General Information  
[www.educaweb.com](http://www.educaweb.com)

Educational Material for Peace and Human Rights  
[www.sgep.org/indexsp.htm](http://www.sgep.org/indexsp.htm)

Educational Material  
[www.edu.kipelhouse.com/](http://www.edu.kipelhouse.com/)

EELink  
[www.nceet.snre.umich.edu/index.html](http://www.nceet.snre.umich.edu/index.html)

IIEP/Buenos Aires  
[www.iipe-buenosaires.org.ar](http://www.iipe-buenosaires.org.ar)

Information Society Programme for Latin America and the Caribbean (INFOLAC)  
[www.infolac.uscol.mx](http://www.infolac.uscol.mx)

Info-ethics  
[www.unesco.org/webworld/news/infoethics.shtml](http://www.unesco.org/webworld/news/infoethics.shtml)

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Institute for Global Communication  
[www.igc.org/](http://www.igc.org/)

International Association of Universities  
[www.unesco.org/iau/](http://www.unesco.org/iau/)

International Baccalaureate Organisation (IBO)  
[www.ibo.org/](http://www.ibo.org/)

International Council for Science  
[www.icsu.org/](http://www.icsu.org/)

International Education  
[www.ei-ie.org/](http://www.ei-ie.org/)

International Institute  
[www.geopolitica.org/](http://www.geopolitica.org/)

Latin American Network of Radio Stations for a Culture of Peace  
[www.radipaz.org](http://www.radipaz.org)

Network of Daily Newspapers of Latin America for a Culture of Peace (REDIPAZ)  
[www.redipaz.ucol.mx](http://www.redipaz.ucol.mx)

Projects for the International Programme for Development of Communication (IPDC)  
[www.unesco.org/webworld/com/strength/strength01.shtml](http://www.unesco.org/webworld/com/strength/strength01.shtml)

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Social Sciences Information  
[wsws.org/es/](http://wsws.org/es/)

Telecenters and Infocenters  
[www.tele-centros.org/comunidad/encuentros](http://www.tele-centros.org/comunidad/encuentros)

The Communication Initiative Partnership Global Forces Local Choices Critical Voices  
Telling Stories  
[www.comminit.com](http://www.comminit.com)

UNED Forum  
[www.unedforum.org/](http://www.unedforum.org/)

UNESCO International Centre for Technical and Vocational Education and Training, Bonn  
[www.unevoc.de](http://www.unevoc.de)

UNESCO International Institute for Capacity-building in Africa, Addis Ababa  
[www.unesco-icba.org](http://www.unesco-icba.org)

UNESCO Institute for Education, Hamburg  
[www.unesco.org/education/uie](http://www.unesco.org/education/uie)

UNESCO International Institute for Higher Education in Latin America and the Caribbean,  
Caracas  
[www.iesalc.unesco.org.ve](http://www.iesalc.unesco.org.ve)

UNESCO Institute for Information Technologies in Education, Moscow  
[www.iite.artstyle.net](http://www.iite.artstyle.net)

UNESCO Institute for Statistics, Montreal  
[www.uis.unesco.org](http://www.uis.unesco.org)

UNESCO International Bureau of Education, Geneva  
[www.ibe.unesco.org](http://www.ibe.unesco.org)

UNESCO International Institute for Educational Planning, Paris  
[www.unesco.org/iiep](http://www.unesco.org/iiep)

UNU Centre-Tokyo  
[www.unu.edu.ctr.htm](http://www.unu.edu.ctr.htm)

Water Links Worldwide  
[www.unisdr.org/unisdr/dirwater.htm](http://www.unisdr.org/unisdr/dirwater.htm)

World Information Society Summit, 2003-2005  
[www.itu.int/wsis/index.htm](http://www.itu.int/wsis/index.htm)

World Heritage Centre  
[www.unesco.org/nwchc](http://www.unesco.org/nwchc)

World Resources Institute  
[www.igc.org/wri/](http://www.igc.org/wri/)

## 6. REGIONAL INSTITUTIONS AND PROGRAMMES

ALCA Americas  
[www.flaa.alca.org](http://www.flaa.alca.org)

Americas Integration Process  
[www.geocities.com](http://www.geocities.com)

Asian Pacific Economic Corporation  
[www.apecsec.org.sg](http://www.apecsec.org.sg)

Asian Southeast Nations  
[www.asean.org](http://www.asean.org)

Caribbean Community (CARICOM)  
[www.caribecom.org](http://www.caribecom.org)

Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (CGIAR)  
[www.cgiar.org](http://www.cgiar.org)

Convention on Biological Diversity Secretariat - (CBD)  
[www.biodiv.org/programmes/areas/ago/default.asp](http://www.biodiv.org/programmes/areas/ago/default.asp)

Economic Commission for Africa (ECA)  
[www.uneca.org/programmes\\_home.htm](http://www.uneca.org/programmes_home.htm)

Economic Commission for Europe (ECE)

[www.unece.org/trade/agr/welcome.htm](http://www.unece.org/trade/agr/welcome.htm)

Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC)

[www.ecla.org](http://www.ecla.org)

Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP)

[www.unescap.org/pop/division.htm](http://www.unescap.org/pop/division.htm)

Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA)

[www.escwa.org.lb/divisions/environment/nrs.html](http://www.escwa.org.lb/divisions/environment/nrs.html)

Economic Integration Secretariat

[www.slcea.org.sg](http://www.slcea.org.sg)

European Parliament

<http://www.europarl.es>

European Union

[www.alfaproj.com/](http://www.alfaproj.com/)

Environmental Network for LAC

[www.medioambienteonline.com](http://www.medioambienteonline.com)

Latin America and the Caribbean Integration Institute

[www.jadb.org/intal](http://www.jadb.org/intal)

Latin America Integration Association (ALADI)

[www.aladi.org](http://www.aladi.org)

Latin America Policy Evolution  
[www.mundolatino.org/i/politica](http://www.mundolatino.org/i/politica)

MERCOSUR – South America  
[www.fau.edu.uy/mercosur](http://www.fau.edu.uy/mercosur)  
[www.algarbull.com.uy/secretariamercosur](http://www.algarbull.com.uy/secretariamercosur)

North American Free Trade Association (NAFTA)  
[www.lancta.ape.org](http://www.lancta.ape.org) 337

Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development  
[www.oecd.org](http://www.oecd.org)

Organization for American States (OAS)  
[www.sice.oas.org](http://www.sice.oas.org)

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## **7. GENERAL INFORMATION**

Agropolis Internacional  
[www.agropolis.fr/jdd2003/](http://www.agropolis.fr/jdd2003/)

Amnesty International  
[www.amnesty.org/](http://www.amnesty.org/)

Editions Octares  
[www.octares.com](http://www.octares.com)

El Mundo  
[www.el-mundo.es/ladh/](http://www.el-mundo.es/ladh/)

International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies  
[www.ifrc.org/](http://www.ifrc.org/)

Mediaterre  
[www.agora21.org/FORUM/forumb.html](http://www.agora21.org/FORUM/forumb.html)

Mundo Latino (Directorio Comercial e Informativo de América y España)  
[www.mundolatino.org/i/politica/tratados/caricom.lifm](http://www.mundolatino.org/i/politica/tratados/caricom.lifm)

Museum and Library Web Sites  
[www.worldbank.org/worldlinks/english/html/museum.html](http://www.worldbank.org/worldlinks/english/html/museum.html)

Portal de Historia  
[www.portaldehistoria.com/](http://www.portaldehistoria.com/)

SDGateway  
[sdgateway.net/noframe/start.htm](http://sdgateway.net/noframe/start.htm)

Small Island Developing States Network  
[www.sidsnet.org/](http://www.sidsnet.org/)

Third World Network  
[www.twinside.org.sg/](http://www.twinside.org.sg/)

Worldwatch Institute  
[www.worldwatch.org](http://www.worldwatch.org)

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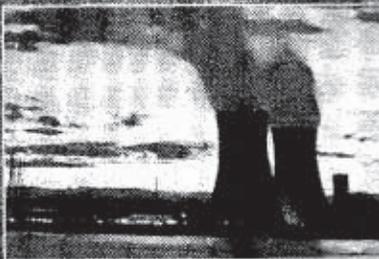
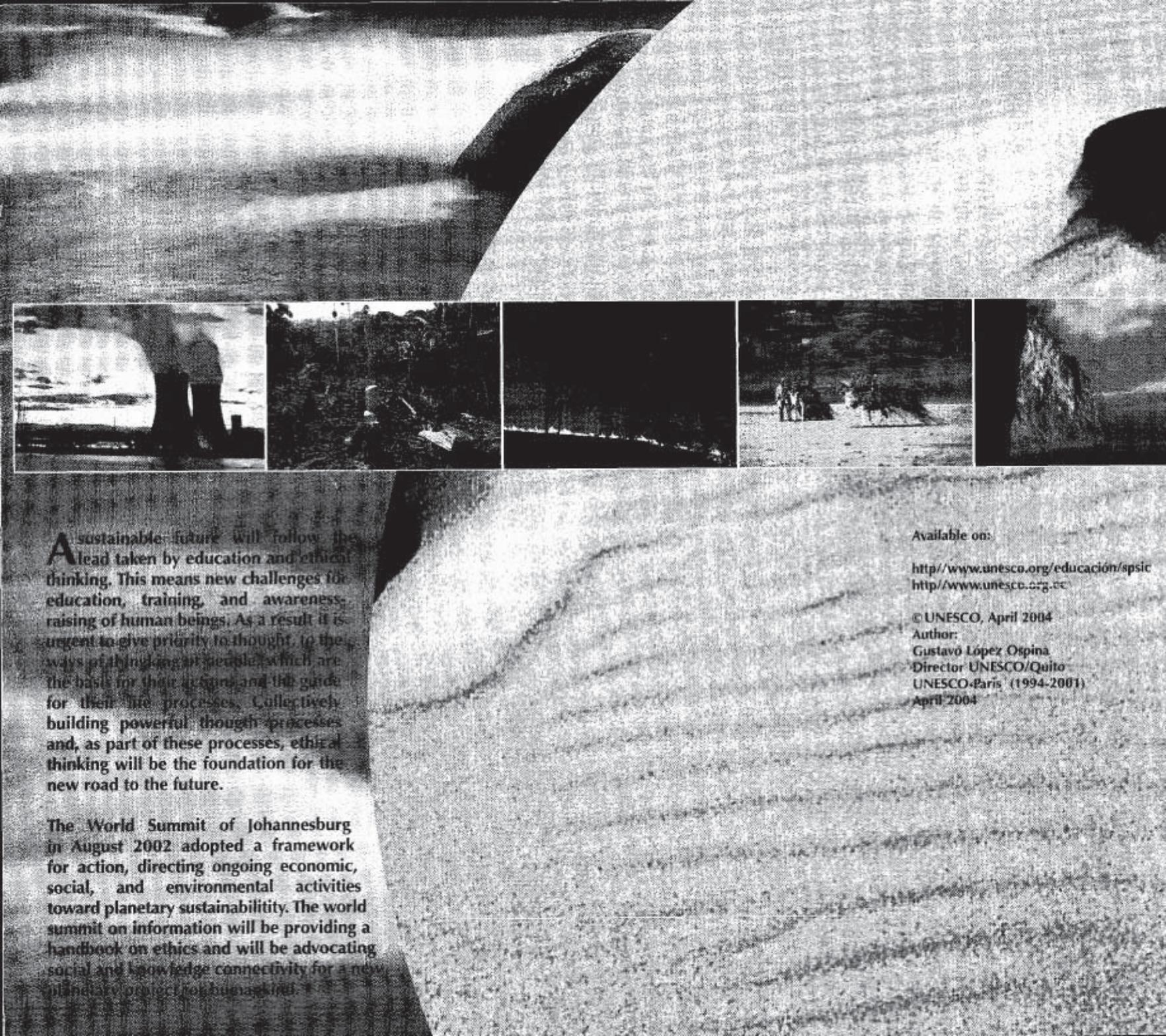
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A sustainable future will follow the lead taken by education and ethical thinking. This means new challenges for education, training, and awareness-raising of human beings. As a result it is urgent to give priority to thought, to the ways of thinking of people, which are the basis for their actions and the guide for their life processes. Collectively building powerful thought processes and, as part of these processes, ethical thinking will be the foundation for the new road to the future.

The World Summit of Johannesburg in August 2002 adopted a framework for action, directing ongoing economic, social, and environmental activities toward planetary sustainability. The world summit on information will be providing a handbook on ethics and will be advocating social and knowledge connectivity for a new planetary project for humankind.

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