

COMPREHENSIVE

January 2022 Edition

DIALOGUE

SUPPLEMENT

Only
Together!

Finding means to pass

Humanity's

Making Peace with Nature
Living Together
Activating Inner Resources

Maturity Test

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Humanity's Historic Maturity Test



We have arrived at a threshold where we as a humanity have to take responsible leadership for our common development on this beautiful planet. It seems we have not yet grown up enough to do this responsibly. But we are running out of time, unquestionably.

Waking up to an Emergency

Fortunately the young generation has woken up. The rapidly growing global movement of young people is intuitively feeling that their very own future is in the gravest danger. But it is not only intuition that guides them but it is based on the currently best available science.

The new 4,000-page report by the International Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) states that, *"We need transformational change operating on processes and behavior at all levels: individual, communities, business, institutions and governments. We must redefine our way of life and consumption."*

This is following the two earlier warnings by the scientific community in 1992 and 2019 *"We the undersigned, senior members of the world's scientific community, hereby warn all humanity of what lies ahead. A great change in our stewardship of the earth and the life on it, is required, if vast human misery is to be avoided and our global home on this planet is not to be irretrievably mutilated."* (1700 signatures, incl. 104 Nobel laureates)

"Scientists have a moral obligation to clearly warn humanity of any catastrophic threat and to 'tell it like it is.' On the basis of this obligation and the graphical indicators presented below, we declare, with more than 11,000 scientist signatories from around the world, clearly and unequivocally that planet Earth is facing a climate emergency."

With the waking up to the climate emergency and the Pandemic and in searching for solutions the young people (and the older generation!) also realize why we have come so far. They realize the extraordinary dimension of exploitation of the earth, the extraordinary exploitation of certain countries by other coun-

tries. They are realizing the extraordinary inequalities and injustices created by the liberal business model.

The dimension of exploitation is beyond comprehension and deeply humbling. Imagine how this must be for a 14–15 year old or even younger child to realise into what a world situation they have been born.

Vision, Leadership and Action

It is crucial that we as a humanity can now develop a common vision of the world that we want. I agree with the writer Yuval Noah Harari that *"the next decades might therefore be characterized by intense soul-searching and by formulating new social and political models."* Mikhail Gorbachev says, we have *"to give expression to the eternal values that have always guided humanity. We need some new conceptual vision of the future."* This can help to find deeper meaning in life, to find our role in the cosmic drama and to develop the global identity and planetary thinking that are necessary for humanity to take its next step as a species.

The only way to do this and to save ourselves is to work together. This is enlightened self-interest. We should treasure and support the United Nations as our "home", physically and spiritually, as an important step on our way to a true global family.

There are monumental tasks ahead for all of humanity. To live up to the task we have go beyond our current capacities and develop new ways of thinking, feeling and acting. And we have to act now.

I hope that this supplement to the Diva-The International Diplomat Magazine will give you ample ideas, inspiration, courage, determination and practical guidance how to go forward.

Michael S. Karlen
Editor



The sirens are sounding. Our planet is talking to us and telling us something. And so are people everywhere. Climate action tops the list of people's concerns, across countries, age and gender. We must listen – and we must act – and we must choose wisely. – ANTÓNIO GUTERRES

The State of the Planet

by António Guterres, UN Secretary-General, New York, 23 March 2021

There is no doubt that the challenges we face today have become infinitely more complex:

- a pandemic that has brought the world to its knees;
- climate change on the cusp of the point of no return;
- biodiversity regressing dramatically;
- pollution levels reaching fatal highs, including in oceans;
- geostrategic divides and dysfunctional power relations;
- complex wars with no end in sight, frequently associated with the spread of terrorism;
- destabilizing, skyrocketing inequalities, notably for women and girls and the poor;
- the struggle for gender equality facing major pushbacks;
- inequities increasing, especially for lower and middle-income countries, and within societies everywhere;
- the shadowy side of an increasingly unhinged digital world;
- an eroding nuclear disarmament regime;
- unprecedented humanitarian and human rights crises;
- the prospect of famine rising exponentially;
- record numbers of refugees and the forcibly displaced.

The complexity, human toll and dramatic pace of these challenges and our faltering response to them expose a deep fragility in our world. Governance at all levels has become more difficult, resulting in a widespread unease, a heightened sense of unfairness and a rise in populism and inward-looking nationalist agendas that peddle simplistic fixes, pseudo-solutions and conspiracy theories.

We have seen a growing disconnect between people and the institutions that were supposed to serve them, manifested, for instance, in an increase in social movements and protests against governance structures. No part of the world has been spared this uptick in popular discontent.

The climate emergency in particular is the defining issue of our time. People around the world, in particular young people, have woken up to this reality, demanding urgent action and a fundamental reorientation of all aspects of life and our relationship with the environment. <https://www.un.org/sg/en>

Excerpts from the Vision Statement "Restoring trust and inspiring hope" - the next five years for the United Nations by António Guterres, UN Secretary-General, 23 March 2021

Making Peace with Nature

The Secretary-General's Address at Columbia University: "The State of the Planet" (Excerpts), 2 December 2020

"Making peace with nature is the defining task of the 21st century. It must be the top, top priority for everyone, everywhere. This is an epic policy test. But ultimately this is a moral test. This is a matter of equity, fairness, solidarity and enlightened self-interest. But we must remember: there can be no separating climate action from the larger planetary picture. Everything is interlinked – the global commons and global well-being. That means we must act more broadly, more holistically, across many fronts, to secure the health of our planet on which all life depends. Nature feeds us, clothes us, quenches our thirst, generates our oxygen, shapes our culture and our faiths and forges our very identity.

Indigenous knowledge, distilled over millennia of close and direct contact with nature, can help to point the way. A new world is taking shape. Mindsets are shifting. This is a moment of truth for people and planet alike. COVID and climate have brought us to a threshold. We cannot go back to the old normal of inequality, injustice and heedless dominion over the Earth. Instead we must step towards a safer, more sustainable and equitable path. The door is open; the solutions are there. Now is the time to transform humankind's relationship with the natural world – and with each other. And we must do so together. Solidarity is humanity. Solidarity is survival."

– António Guterres



Sustainable Development Goals



The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, adopted by all United Nations Member States in 2015, provides a shared blueprint for peace and prosperity for people and the planet, now and into the future. At its heart are the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which are an urgent call for action by all countries – developed and developing – in a global

partnership. They recognize that ending poverty and other deprivations must go hand-in-hand with strategies that improve health and education, reduce inequality, and spur economic growth – all while tackling climate change and working to preserve our oceans and forests. <https://sdgs.un.org/goals>



“The fundamental values of the UN are enduring and embedded in its Charter. It will be important to translate them into current and future challenges, guiding the ethics of the future and enhancing a heightened sense of responsibility, responsibility-sharing and accountability, notably towards young people and future generations. We need to explore together, including with religious leaders and philosophers, what ethics for the future means, based on the core values on which the UN was founded.”

– António Guterres, UN Secretary-General, New York

United Nations – Our Common Home

Preamble of the United Nations Charter

PREAMBLE: We the Peoples of the United Nations determined

- to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war, which twice in our lifetime has brought untold sorrow to mankind, and
- to reaffirm faith in fundamental human rights, in the dignity and worth of the human person, in the equal rights of men and women and of nations large and small, and
- to establish conditions under which justice and respect for the obligations arising from treaties and other sources of international law can be maintained, and
- to promote social progress and better standards of life in larger freedom,

and for these ends

- to practice tolerance and live together in peace with one another as good neighbours, and
- to unite our strength to maintain international peace and security, and
- to ensure, by the acceptance of principles and the institution of methods, that armed force shall not be used, save in the common interest, and
- to employ international machinery for the promotion of the economic and social advancement of all peoples,

have resolved to combine our efforts to accomplish these aims.

Vision for the Future

Transforming Our World: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development From UN Resolution A/RES/70/1

We envisage a world free of poverty, hunger, disease and want, where all life can thrive.

We envisage a world free of fear and violence. A world with universal literacy. A world with equitable and universal access to quality education at all levels, to health care and social protection, where physical, mental and social well-being are assured. A world where we reaffirm our commitments regarding the human right to safe drinking water and sanitation and where there is improved hygiene; and where food is sufficient, safe, affordable and nutritious. A world where human habitats are safe, resilient and sustainable and where there is universal access to affordable, reliable and sustainable energy.

We envisage a world of universal respect for human rights and human dignity, the rule of law, justice, equality and non-discrimination; of respect for race, ethnicity and cultural diversity; and of equal opportunity permitting the full realization of human potential and contributing to shared prosperity. A world which invests in its children and in which every child grows up free from violence and exploitation. A world in which every woman and girl enjoys full gender equality and all legal, social and economic barriers to their empowerment have been removed. A just, equitable, tolerant, open and socially inclusive world in which the needs of the most vulnerable are met.

We envisage a world in which every country enjoys sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth and decent work for all. A world in which consumption and production patterns and use of all natural resources – from air to land, from rivers, lakes and aquifers to oceans and seas – are sustainable. One in which democracy, good governance and the rule of law as well as an enabling environment at national and international levels, are essential for sustainable development, including sustained and inclusive economic growth, social development, environmental protection and

the eradication of poverty and hunger. One in which development and the application of technology are climate-sensitive, respect biodiversity and are resilient. One in which humanity lives in harmony with nature and in which wildlife and other living species are protected.

“The future of humanity and of our planet lies in our hands. It lies also in the hands of today’s younger generation who will pass the torch to future generations.”

The future of humanity and of our planet lies in our hands. It lies also in the hands of today’s younger generation who will pass the torch to future generations. We have mapped the road to sustainable development; it will be for all of us to ensure that the journey is successful and its gains irreversible.



We Are Not Doing Enough!

by John Scales Avery, 17 July 2021



Two recent events have helped to make us realize the urgency of the climate crisis. The first is the leaking of a 4,000-page report by the International Panel on Climate Change (IPCC). The report was not due to be released until February 2022, but a copy was leaked to Agence France-Presse. The report calls for a total transformation of our way of life if we wish to avoid catastrophe.

The report states that,

“We need transformational change operating on processes and behavior at all levels: individual, communities, business, institutions and governments. We must redefine our way of life and consumption.”

The second recent event that helped to wake us up to the seriousness of the climate emergency was a record-breaking wave of extreme heat in the western part of the United States and in south-west Canada. Unprecedented

temperatures were recorded, roughly a billion tidal animals died, and many human heat-related deaths also occurred.

Two time-scales

One important reason why it is so hard to mobilize the political will needed for effective action is a contrast between two time-scales. Immediate action is essential in order to avoid feedback loops and tipping points which would make human efforts to avoid catastrophic climate change useless. On the other hand, the most serious effects of climate change lie in the distant future. We see what is near to us. We tend to confine our attention to problems that are close at hand.

John Scales Avery

John Scales Avery is a theoretical Chemist at the University of Copenhagen. He is the Chairman of the Danish National Group of Pugwash Conferences on Science and World Affairs (Nobel Peace Prize, 1995).

A worst-case scenario

Suppose that our collective efforts to avoid catastrophic climate change fail. What then? Will human society as we know it disappear? Will the human race become extinct?

Let me give you my own opinions on these questions. I think that, if catastrophic climate change is not avoided, very many species of plants and animals will become extinct. In fact, this mass extinction has already started. We are already losing species at roughly 1,000 times the natural background rate.

Will humans become extinct? Of course, we know from the geological record that every species eventually becomes extinct, but if we look only a few thousand years into the future, I do not think that humans face extinction.

What I believe will happen (if catastrophic climate change is not avoided) is the following: Most of the earth's surface will become uninhabitable, starting with tropical regions and regions that are destined to be underwater due to sea-level rise. This will lead to a massive refugee crisis, which, like the extinction of animals and plants, has already started. Although most of the earth's surface will be uninhabitable, there will still be a few regions where human life is possible, for example, the Arctic and Antarctic regions, and high mountain ranges. However, these regions will be small in comparison to our present habitable world, and the global population of humans will be correspondingly reduced.

Perhaps this worst-case scenario can motivate us to act with far-sighted vision and resolution, while there is still a small window of opportunity.

When Will Leaders Lead?

by Mia Mottley, Prime Minister of Barbados, at the Opening of the COP 26 World Leaders Summit, Nov. 1, 2021 (Excerpts)



Your Royal Highness, Excellencies, distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen,

The pandemic has taught us that national solutions to global problems do not work. We come to Glasgow with global ambition to save our people and to save our planet.

So, I ask to you, what must we say to our people living on the frontline in the Caribbean, in Africa, Latin America, in the Pacific, when both ambition and regrettably some of the needed faces at Glasgow are not present?

When will we, as world leaders across the world, address the pressing issues that are truly causing our people angst and worry, whether it is climate or whether it is vaccines? Simply put, when will leaders lead?

Our people are watching and our people are taking note. And are we really going to leave Scotland without the resolve and the ambition that is sorely needed to save lives and to save our planet?

“Our world, my friends, stands at a fork in the road; one no less significant than when the United Nations was formed in 1945.”

How many more voices and how many more pictures of people must we see on these screens without being able to move? Or are we so blinded and hardened that we can no longer appreciate the cries of humanity?

Do some leaders in this world believe that they can survive and thrive on their own? Have they not learned from the pandemic? Can there be peace and prosperity if one third of the world literally prospers and the other two thirds of the world live under siege and face calamitous threats to our wellbeing?

What the world needs now, my friends, is that which is within the ambit of less than 200 persons who are willing and prepared to lead. Leaders must not fail those who elected them to lead.

Can we with those voices and these speeches from Sir David and others, find it within ourselves to get the resolve to bring Glasgow back on track? Or do we leave today believing that it was a failure before it starts?

Our world, my friends, stands at a fork in the road; one no less significant than when the United Nations was formed in 1945. But then, the majority of our countries here did not exist. We exist now. The difference is we want to exist 100 years from now. And if our existence is to mean anything, then we must act in the interests of all of our people who are depending on us.

And if we don't, we will allow the path of greed and selfishness to sow the seeds of our common destruction. The leaders of today, not 2030, not 2050, must make this choice. It is in our hands and our people and our planet need it more than ever.

Code Red. Code Red to the G7 countries, code red, code red to the G20.

For those who have eyes to see, for those who have ears to listen and for those who have a heart to feel, 1.5 is what we need to survive. 2 degrees, yes Secretary-General, is a death sentence for the people of Antigua and Barbuda, for the people of the Maldives, for the people of Dominica and Fiji, for the people of Kenya and Mozambique, and yes, for the people of Samoa and Barbados.

We do not want that dreaded death sentence and we have come here today to say, “try harder, try harder,” because our people, the climate army, the world, the planet needs our actions now, not next year, not in the next decade. Thank you.

Glossing Over in Glasgow – Some Thoughts on COP26

by Ambassador Anwarul K. Chowdhury

After extending the COP26 climate negotiations an extra day, nearly 200 countries meeting in Glasgow, Scotland, adopted an outcome document that, according to the UN Secretary-General, “reflects the interests, the contradictions, and the state of political will in the world today”.



Ambassador Anwarul K. Chowdhury is former Permanent Representative of Bangladesh to the United Nations and former Under-Secretary-General and High Representative of the United Nations

NEW YORK, Nov. 19 2021 (IPS) – A week has gone by since COP 26 with 197 Parties ended in the Scottish city of Glasgow on extended time last Saturday. Climate change which covers wide array of issues affecting all living beings engaged the people around the world for COP 26 in a way never experienced since COP1 was held in Berlin in 1995.

Extensive and round-the-clock media coverage, huge presence of the civil society, activism by the young people, substantive advocacy by large number of non-governmental organizations, even the creatively decorated conference venue – all gave COP 26 a profile never seen before.

Before Glasgow, 25 annually convened sessions of COPs have been held by Parties to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) adopted in New York in May 1992 which “determined to protect the climate system for present and future generations”. But never in the history of COPs there was an occasion when the Parties publicly negotiated to change the outcome document which was televised around the world as in the Glasgow COP.

As is natural for such multilateral gatherings, reactions to the question whether COP 26 was successful were different from the Parties and other entities engaged in the process. Efforts to gloss over following COP 26 left the common people uncertain and unsure whether there was really any forward movement in Glasgow.

Contradictions

What was somewhat intriguing that speaking for the United Nations system as a whole, the Secretary-General expressed his disappointment about the compromise reached in the outcome commenting “...unfortunately the

collective political will was not enough to overcome some deep contradictions.”

He even warned “It is time to go into emergency mode — or our chance of reaching net zero will itself be zero.” At the same time, Secretary-General’s rather confusing, ill-composed comment in his remarks at the conclusion of COP 26 that “We are still knocking on the door of climate catastrophe” left many wondering what he was trying to convey.

Even more intriguing is that where was his leadership as the universally accepted global leader in getting rid of those contradictions he was complaining about.? On the other hand, the Executive Secretary entrusted with the responsibility of organizing COPs was upbeat about the outcome and may be reflecting another contradiction in Glasgow. COP 26 also invited the UN Secretary-General to convene world leaders in 2023 to consider ambition to 2030 dangling the traditional carrot of expectation to the people of the world.

Alok Sharma touch

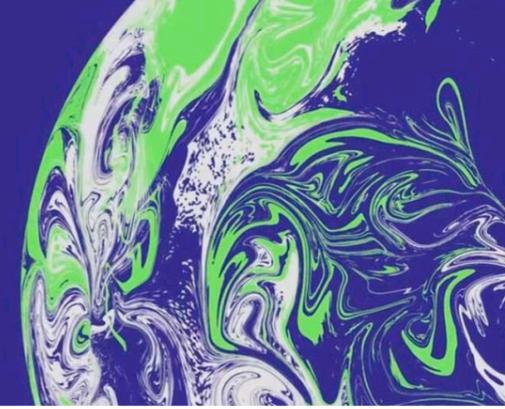
Let me bring out a very uniquely remarkable thing that happened in COP 26 as its UK-appointed full-time President Alok Sharma openly and visibly choked back tears saying “I am deeply sorry” as he banged his gavel for the adoption of the Glasgow Climate Pact.

His emotions and true feelings came out spontaneously as he was considerably upset by the proposal of India, joined by China, to change the expression “phase out” relating to coal consumption as agreed to by all till the moment of adoption.

India replaced that phrase with “phase down” thereby watering down the consensus intent of the Parties at COP 26. President Sharma expressed his apologies for the way things evolved in changing the agreed COP 26

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GLASGOW

COP26



outcome negotiated under his leadership and which he was about to gavel down. In my half a century of engagement in multilateral diplomacy.

I am not aware of any conference chair apologizing ever for his inability to protect the best interest of the participants in the outcome. Bravo to Alok Sharma for that honesty and integrity! He has shown the way to all future chairs that they can openly and courageously pronounce their failure identifying those who are dragging their feet destroying a forward-looking outcome.

It was also impressive the way President Sharma asserted the reality with his pithy comment that we have kept 1.5 Celsius alive “but its pulse is weak”.

Loss and Damage

The insensitivity of the Parties and their self-centered policy positions were starkly manifested in the decision relating to a major issue known as “Loss and Damage”. Not much media highlight was given to this very relevant item on COP 26 agenda. Even the UN’s Climate Change website does not include it in its list of topics.

I am sure many readers are picking their brains trying to recall the issue. “Loss and damage” is used within the COP process to refer to the harms caused by anthropogenic climate change. Establishing liability and compensation for loss and damage has been a long-standing goal for vulnerable and developing countries in the Alliance of Small Island States and the Least Developed Countries Group in negotiations.

However, developed countries have resisted this. At Glasgow, the developing countries lamented the outcome on loss and damage. They had called for a financial mechanism for loss and damage, but the outcome on loss and damage only included strengthening the existing technical support functions, and expectedly more empty and rejectionist talks to convene from 2022 to 2024.

The existing UNFCCC mechanism created by COP 19, the Warsaw International Mecha-

nism for Loss and Damage, focuses on research and dialogue rather than liability or compensation.

Tasneem Essop, Executive Director, Climate Action Network succinctly described COP 26 as “a clear betrayal by rich nations – the US, the EU and the UK – of vulnerable communities in poor countries.”

She went on to say that by blocking the proposal of the developing countries representing 6 billion people, on the creation of a Glasgow Loss and Damage Finance Facility “rich countries have once again demonstrated their complete lack of solidarity and responsibility to protect those facing the worst of the climate impacts.

Referring to close-door pressure tactics, Saleemul Huq, Director, International Centre for Climate Change and Development (ICCAD) regretted that “The COP Presidency has overnight been bullied into dropping the Glasgow Loss and Damage Finance Facility. The UK’s words to the vulnerable countries have been proven to be totally unreliable.”

Natalie Lucas, Executive Director, Care About Climate very forcefully spoke about the loss and damage issue and expressed total disappointment commenting that “Developed nations, including the US, have not risen to the challenge to do what is necessary to protect people. We have missed the train on mitigation, on adaptation, and now it is colliding into the most vulnerable people.”

Tasneem Essop, Executive Director, Climate Action Network: “rich countries have once again demonstrated their complete lack of solidarity and responsibility to protect those facing the worst of the climate impacts”.

At the end the Glasgow Climate Pact pitifully agreed “to enhance understanding of how approaches to averting, minimizing and addressing loss and damage can be improved”. It clearly reflects how the “powerful” of the



world impose their totally irrelevant and illogical position on the poorest and most vulnerable humanity.

About the Glasgow outcome, globally respected eminent economist Jeffrey Sachs rightly opined “That leaves us stuck between the reality of a devastating global climate crisis and rich countries’ nationalist politics...” He articulated further that “The financial failures at COP26 are both tragic and absurd ... Financing for “losses and damages,” that is, to recover and rebuild from climate disasters, fared even worse, with rich countries agreeing only to hold a “dialogue” on the issue.”

Kowtowing to the obstinacy of the developed countries, UN Secretary-General insensitively tried to console the developing world by his non-committal words saying “I want to make a particular appeal for our future work in relation to adaptation and the issue of loss and damage.”

He was oblivious that the Climate Change Convention of 1992 of which he is the depository asserts that “The extent to which developing country Parties will effectively implement their commitments under the Convention will depend on the effective implementation by developed country Parties of their commitments under the Convention related to financial resources and transfer of technology and will take fully into account that economic and social development and poverty eradication are the first and overriding priorities of the developing country Parties.”

Civil society

At Glasgow, the civil society engagement and advocacy for forward-looking actions fell on deaf ears of the leaders and negotiators. The civil society was separated from the so-called Blue Zone at the conference center where the wheeling-dealing was taking place.

If the civil society seriously wants a space to be heard and make an impact on the outcome of COP processes, it should ask for that opportunity clearly offered to them in all future climate negotiations. Protesting outside and commenting on the social media have limited value in influencing the decision-makers.

Even Greta Thunberg’s disparaging slogan “blah, blah, blah ...” was laughed away by the leaders. COP 26 outcome proves that in a terribly frustrating manner. For COP 27 next year, the mode of operations for the civil society participation needs to change.

American climate scientist and author Peter Kalmus articulated that “The one thing the

climate summit in Glasgow made clear is that human society remains in business-as-usual mode, with no meaningful curb on fossil fuel use. The soft pledges made at COP 26 might have been acceptable decades ago, but not now.”

He went on to highlight that “Unless COP26’s failure is recognized as failure, there is no way to learn from it. Allowing global leaders to feel that what happened in Glasgow was acceptable – and spinning it as some sort of success – would be a disastrous mistake.”

He went on to highlight that “Unless COP26’s failure is recognized as failure, there is no way to learn from it. Allowing global leaders to feel that what happened in Glasgow was acceptable – and spinning it as some sort of success – would be a disastrous mistake.”

The whole COP process is flawed if the powerful Parties can brush aside the wishes of countries representing a huge majority of the world population just like that. Developing countries need to join together to stop this circus and find another approach.

“Phase down” – the new mantra

There has been strong criticism of the last-minute and veto-like proposal to replace “Phase out” by “Phase down” at the final moments of the Glasgow gathering. But “phase down” has always been the position of the worst and historically responsible polluters of the world who would prefer to follow their own pace for addressing the climate crisis.

Be it emissions control, be it fossil fuels, be it financing, be it adaptation, be it mitigation, be it loss and damage, be it transfer of technology, “phase down” mode has always been the preferred way of doing business by the developed world. India has only taken a dubious lead in actually introducing the phrase in a formal COP outcome.

The global community would find more and more such instances as the climate change negotiations evolves in the coming years. “Phase down” is the new mantra of the climate change negotiators. Be prepared for that. Sorry!



Towards a New Civilization

by Mikhail Gorbachev – Selected texts from his writings relating to the current world situation.



“I believe in the cosmos. All of us are linked to the cosmos. So nature is my God. To me, nature is sacred. Trees are my temples and forests are my cathedrals.”

Learning from the man who changed the world

Finding the will to act

I believe that the environmental challenge is the number one problem on the [international] agenda. If we don't succeed, then no theory,



no system will matter, all the current disagreements will seem like peanuts compared with the destructive impact of the conflict between man and his environment.

We need a new global consciousness, an environmentalization of consciousness. Consciousness is the main problem, because it will affect politics, business, the legislative process and culture.

It is critical that we find a way to bring about a rapid, sweeping change in human consciousness and actions worldwide.

A new way of thinking, a new world order that is based more on justice and equality and less on profits is needed. Nature is giving us all the signs we need to develop a common vision for the future; we must grasp this message and act now.

While there are an increasing number of bold initiatives led by government and corporate leaders to protect the environment, I do not see emerging the leadership and willingness to take risks at the scale we need to confront the current situation.

While there are an increasing number of people and organizations dedicated to raising awareness and provoking change in the way we treat nature, I do not yet see the clear vision and united front which will inspire humankind to respond in time to correct our course.

I remain an optimist. I reject defeatism and frustration. But I also reject the view that things will somehow work themselves out. I am convinced that mankind can meet the environmental challenge if all of us join this cause, if all of us act.

Beyond the consumer society

Admittedly, neither general nor specific concrete measures taken by governments and international organizations will succeed in coming to grips with the struggle against poverty, ending armed conflict, dealing with the results of war or protecting the environment if the mentality of the consumer society does not change. This mentality is advancing everywhere in tandem with globalization. It will have to be confronted, for it is corrupting people everywhere and bringing them into conflict with nature.



We shall have to admit that our consumer society has outlived itself. If we do, our quality of life will improve and we will be living in harmony with our conscience instead of beyond our means. For this to happen, however, the turnaround in social awareness which is already perceptible will have to come fully into play.

A new and higher quality of world politics is required.

A renewed vision and political will are needed. The leaders of today should not bend in the face of challenges.

The global world requires new rules of behavior, another morality. And apparently world leaders do not embrace such changes. I think that this is the main reason for today's global turmoil.

Whether we like each other or not, we will have to live on this planet together. Hence our most important task is to master the art of getting along together. And since this situation will be around for quite a while, we have to learn to live side by side in a civilized manner.

Relations between the great powers have been deteriorating for several years already, and supporters of the arms buildup and the military-industrial complex are rubbing their hands. We must extricate ourselves from this

situation and return our focus to preventing war, curtailing the arms race, and reducing arsenals. The goal should be to agree not only on the levels and ceilings of nuclear weapons but also on missile defense and strategic stability. In today's world, wars must be outlawed. After all, none of the problems of the global world — poverty, ecology, migration, population growth, limited resources — can be resolved militarily.

Recognizing the world's unity and its common destiny

The future is challenging us. But humanity is capable of meeting the challenge. We will meet the challenge if we become aware of the world's unity, of humankind's common destiny.

The recognition of the world as an integral whole calls for a change in our value system,

“The future is challenging us. But humanity is capable of meeting the challenge. We will meet the challenge if we become aware of the world's unity, of humankind's common destiny.”

President Reagan and Soviet President Gorbachev signing the INF Treaty in the East Room of the White House, Dec. 8, 1987. This treaty eliminated and permanently forswore all of their nuclear and conventional ground-launched ballistic and cruise missiles with ranges of 500 to 5,500 kilometers. (Photo: Ronald Reagan Presidential Library)

or to put it more precisely, for actualizing the initial values that are inherent in the nature of the human being as a social and spiritual entity. In one form or another, and in varying degrees, those values are reflected in the world religions and in the great humanistic doctrines.

If humanity is being more and more united, why not devise guidelines for a system of



Mikhail Gorbachev: The World Leader

President Mikhail Sergeyevich Gorbachev (born 2 March 1931) was General Secretary of the Soviet Union from 1985 until 1991. He was awarded the Nobel Prize for Peace in 1990 for his leadership role in ending the Cold War and promoting peaceful international relations.

During his Presidency important disarmament treaties were signed with the USA and 85 percent of all nuclear weapons accumulated at the height of the Cold War were eliminated.

Gorbachev was also widely praised for introducing new political freedoms in the Soviet Union, and tolerating both the fall of Marxist-Leninist administrations in eastern and central Europe and the reunification of Germany.

Ecological Engagement

In October 1987, five years before the first Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro, Mikhail Gorbachev addressed a gathering in the Arctic city of Murmansk, and for the first time linked the concepts of environmental protection, nuclear disarmament, broader security concerns and development.

On January 19, 1990, in Moscow during an address to the Global Forum on Environment and Development for Survival, Mikhail Gorbachev suggested creating an "international Green Cross that offers its assistance to States in ecological trouble." Green Cross International (GCI) was formally launched in Kyoto, Japan, on April 18, 1993. Today the Green Cross Network operates in more than thirty countries.

Together with Maurice Strong, he initiated in 1987 the Earth Charter Project, described further towards the end of this magazine, described further on page 24.

humanitarian education based on the moral experience of all humankind and the moral wisdom of all religions. Ultimately, we might write a textbook on world history relating not wars but moral deeds.

Vision for a new civilisation

Many people do not realize that mankind has come to a threshold, that it needs to make a choice and that the only way to save ourselves is to work together.

Surmounting the crisis that has overtaken civilization, I believe, implies a transition to a new paradigm of human existence, a new civilization based on the importance and dignity of human beings and directed toward the full realization of their most ample characteristics – in other words, a transition to a civilization that is truly humanist, one that not only overcomes the current dangers and threats to the existence of the human family, to the very survival of our species, but also creates the necessary conditions for the dignified existence of current and future generations.

To build this new civilization, a higher level of responsibility and mutual trust is required among individuals embracing the new order of things. Senior statesmen, current political and spiritual leaders, business executives, scientists, artists, youth, and intellectuals must improve their interaction at both national and international levels.

In new ways, therefore, our current political leaders are challenged to provide the framework for stability and regulated human interactions; our moral leaders, to give expression to the eternal values that have always guided humanity.

We are all in need of some new conceptual vision of the future. It can be defined as global humanism. I am not the first to use this term, but it seems to me a good definition of the "meta-ideology," if you will, that will help us find a common language for the largest possible number of socially conscious people.

I should like to believe that our hopes will be matched by our joint efforts to put an end to an era of wars, confrontation and regional conflicts, to aggressions against nature, to the terror of hunger and poverty as well as to political terrorism. That is our common goal and we can only reach it together.

<https://www.gorby.ru/en/>

President Reagan and Soviet General Secretary Gorbachev shaking hands at the arrival ceremony on the White House south lawn, December 8, 1987. (Photo: Ronald Reagan Presidential Library)



Nature and Peace

An Inner Approach to Harmony with the Earth and Each Other
by Sri Chinmoy (taken from his book "Listen to Nature")

"Each individual has a special role to play in the protection of our small planet. It is the illumination of the individual mind and spirit that will precede the awakening of a new collective awareness. The change in individual attitudes will be the precursor of a change in institutional policies, and the result will be a greater respect and love for our planet Earth."

Sri Chinmoy (1931–2007) was a spiritual leader, poet, philosopher, musician and athlete who dedicated his life to the pursuit of an integral vision of peace and harmony in the individual and the world.

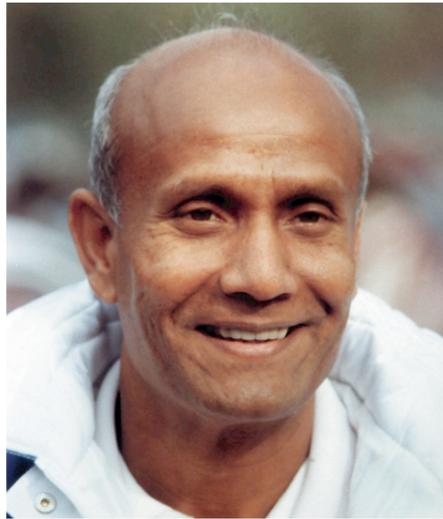


Photo: K. Misani, Zurich

The Root Cause of World Problems

Over-population is not good; pollution is not good. But why are they happening? Because people are ignorant.

"We have to go to the root cause of world problems, and the root is human ignorance."

When I become good, automatically there is one more positive force and one less negative force on earth. If I can transform my own ignorance into light, then the quantity of ignorance on earth has already decreased.

While we are modernising the whole world with our technological capacities, we are destroying the inner beauty and simplicity which Mother Earth embodies. This is an act of unpardonable stupidity and callousness. We are actually limiting ourselves in the name of transforming or improving Mother Earth.

Mother Nature is being polluted and destroyed by the un aspiring realities of life. It is very sad. Mother Nature has become so helpless, and so many people who say they are trying to preserve Mother Nature are in no way helping. They are only talking, talking, talking! Governments also are only talking. They come forward and say, "Yes, we want to preserve Mother Nature, the trees and fields," but their actions produce the opposite effect.

Because we human beings see enemies all around us, because we are afraid someone will come and attack us, we use all our money and energy to make ourselves powerful. To make ourselves powerful enough to fight our enemies, we cut Mother Nature into pieces and take her resources. We give importance only to scientific advancement, which does not allow Mother Nature to remain beautiful or powerful. As long as there is fear on earth, Mother Nature will never be able to fulfil her divinity. It is only when we no longer see others as enemies that we shall be able to keep Mother Nature intact.

The Ancient Dream of Cooperation

World-unity is of paramount importance. If all the countries join together for a positive common goal, the very act of their being together is something laudable. Only this approach will eventually save the world and the planet. It is the united force of all the nations, big and small, that can and will bring about a oneness-world-family.

The ancient dream of cooperation is not just a human dream that has nothing to do with reality. This ancient dream, to be precise, is not a dream at all but a faultless and divine vision — an unhorizoned vision that is slowly, steadily and unerringly shaping our individual



Photo: A. Inkei, Geneva

and collective destiny as humanity marches towards its supreme goal of universal oneness and transcendental newness.

World-Evolution

Nature is the evolving phenomenon, while Consciousness is its guide in evolution. At each stage, nature transcends the limits of its own species and presses forward to new conquests. The world is constantly evolving towards a higher standard of life. It is not moving in a straight line, but rather in a spiral. Therefore, at times this progress is not immediately noticeable. To our human mind it may seem confusing and baffling. But on the strength of our inner oneness with the world situation and world evolution, we can see unmistakably the world's slow and steady progress.

"This world of ours has two choices: one is to establish friendship, brotherhood and oneness. Another is to try to conquer or destroy others. When we adopt the second approach, ultimately, we destroy ourselves. What we, as human beings, actually want is joy, happiness and satisfaction. These qualities we can only get by uniting ourselves with other human beings. These human beings are nothing but an extension of our own reality. When we establish our oneness with the rest of the world-family, we get joy and this joy lasts forever. But when we conquer someone by using superior strength and power, by hook or by crook, we cannot get

permanent joy. Only through union do we get joy, not by division."

Synthesis

There must be a great synthesis between the inner life and the outer life. The inner life wants love, and the outer life wants power. Now we are all exercising the love of power. But a day will come when this world of ours will be undated with the power that loves. Only the power that loves can change the world.

<https://www.srichinmoy.org/>

A Spiritual Approach to the Environmental Crisis

from Selected Writings of Sri Chinmoy

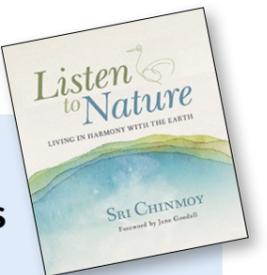
The book reveals insights on the roots of the environmental crisis and what each of us can do, offering a message of hope, oneness and compassion.



Photo: A. Inkei, Geneva

Foreword by Jane Goodall, the renowned primatologist and UN Messenger of Peace.

Sri Chinmoy and Jane Goodall meet in Queens, NY in April 2003.





The late Mother Teresa holds the torch high to the enjoyment of members of her Missionaries of Charity.



President Nelson Mandela and his wife Graça Machel have shared the torch with Sri Chinmoy, the founder of the Oneness-Home Peace Run.

Running for Peace

*"Peace reveals
The absolute excellence
Of human life."*

The Sri Chinmoy Oneness-Home Peace Run is a global torch relay that embodies humanity's universal aspiration for peace. Since its inception in 1987 the Run has traversed over 150 nations and territories and touched the lives of millions of people. Since 1987 the torch has been carried over close to 400,000 miles (650,000 km). The Peace Run does not seek to raise money or highlight any political cause, but simply strives to create goodwill among peoples of all nations. The Relay Run is organized by an international network of volunteers inspired by Sri Chinmoy's vision of a more peaceful world. Coordinators in each country partner locally with schools, community groups, sporting organizations, city and state government departments.

For more information please visit <https://www.peacerun.org/>

*"Only the peace-dreamers,
Peace-lovers and peace-servers
Can transform the world."*

– Sri Chinmoy

Beethoven's 9th Symphony The Anthem of Humanity



"For 250 years, we have tried to find the secret behind the untouchable music of this divine architect and to comprehend the enormity of his timeless philosophical, spiritual, and human message." Leonard Bernstein, Composer and Conductor

A Global Ode To Joy

From a Carnegie Hall production, New York
When Beethoven incorporated Friedrich Schiller's "Ode to Joy" poem into his Ninth Symphony, it was a radical call for equality, freedom, and brotherhood.

With its expansive length, mold-busting design, and the inclusion of solo singers and chorus, he was proposing nothing less than a philosophy for humanity.

Beethoven, the composer-philosopher, was a man who suffered more than we can imagine and yet he retained optimism and a sense of hope that we can admire and even envy. He believed wholeheartedly in the goodness of humanity, the power of love, joy, unity, tolerance and peace to overcome and endure.

Beethoven's Ninth has become synonymous with many important political and social events over the course of the last century. In 1985, European Union leaders chose it as the official anthem of the E.U. Outside Europe, the "Ode" has been tapped as a protest anthem from demonstrators in Chile, who sang a version of the famous tune during protests against the Pinochet dictatorship, to the more recent Occupy Wall Street-driven gatherings in Madrid.

During the 1989 Christmas holiday, Leonard Bernstein, conducted a version of Beethoven's Ninth at the Brandenburg Gate to celebrate the fall of the Berlin Wall where he changed Schiller's word "Freude" (joy) to "Freiheit" (freedom). It is exactly this universality that makes the "Ode to Joy" so special in expressing our desire for happiness and brotherhood.

This message, filled with optimism and a fundamental faith in what is best in humanity, could not be more relevant today, when we see far too much disorder, misunderstanding and extremism. [Beethoven's 9th](#)



Beethoven's 9th Symphony



Earth Charter – Vision for a common Future

As never before in history, common destiny beckons us to seek a new beginning. Such renewal is the promise of these Earth Charter principles.



Initiated 1987 by Mikhail Gorbachev and Maurice Strong, the Earth Charter is probably the currently most widely spread statement of common ethical values towards sustainability, that recognizes humanity's shared responsibility to the Earth and to each other.
earthcharter.org/



Preamble

Earth, Our Home

Humanity is part of a vast evolving universe. 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.

The Global Situation

The dominant patterns of production and consumption are causing environmental devastation, the depletion of resources, and a massive extinction of species. Communities are being undermined. The benefits of development are not shared equitably and the gap between rich and poor is widening. Injustice, poverty, ignorance, and violent conflict are widespread and the cause of great suffering. An unprecedented rise in human population has overburdened ecological and social systems. The foundations of global security are threatened. These trends are perilous – but not inevitable.

The Challenges Ahead

The choice is ours: form a global partnership to care for Earth and one another or risk the destruction of ourselves and the diversity of life. Fundamental changes are needed in our values, institutions, and ways of living. We must realize that when basic needs have been met, human development is primarily about being more, not having more. We have the knowledge and technology to provide for all and to reduce our impacts on the environment. The emergence of a global civil society is creating new opportunities to build a democratic and humane world. Our environmental, economic, political, social, and spiritual challenges are interconnected, and together we can forge inclusive solutions.

Universal Responsibility

To realize these aspirations, we must decide to live with a sense of universal responsibility, identifying ourselves with the whole Earth community as well as our local communities. We are at once citizens of different nations and of one world in which the local and global are linked. Everyone shares responsibility for the present and future well-being of the human family and the larger living world. The spirit of human solidarity and kinship with all life is strengthened when we live with reverence for the mystery of being, gratitude for the gift of life, and humility regarding the human place in nature. <https://earthcharter.org/>

Responsible Global Governance

by Vladimir Petrovsky; Ten steps to create a framework for a sustainable world in peace and security



Vladimir Petrovsky, CDAC Founder and former Under-Secretary-General of the United Nations, Director General of the United Nations Office at Geneva (1993–2002) and Deputy Foreign Minister of the Soviet Union (1986–1991)

1. Re-focus on the UN and its Charter

If the world is going to become a better place, and I believe it is, then there is an important role for the UN to play. The first century of the emerging human-oriented civilization – can be envisaged as the realization of the idea of interdependency. Diversity will be its wealth; unity, its force.

2. Incorporate moral and ethical foundations

There is a need to merge law and ethics in international politics and create a political mentality of a new kind, which will unite rather than divide people, and produce a feeling of solidarity amongst them. In particular I am referring to the mentality of the political leaders—those few people who determine the course of events.

3. The sovereignty of the human being

The supremacy of international law in all directions presumes the protection of the human being, his or her rights and his or her dignity. It can be asserted that Kant's vision of what is now referred to as responsible global governance really is a final "realization of Nature's secret plan to create a perfectly functioning state as a single condition of complete development of man's natural capacities."

4. Reform executive culture

Effective multilateralism depends primarily on political will, more so than it does on structures or procedures. Political will demands responsible behavior from all those participating in the global interaction, beginning at the state level. The state is in no way a monolithic, impersonal structure. The actions of one and the same state often depends on who personally is in power.

5. Develop a global Balance of interests

The time has come to develop a planetary way of thinking which subsumes the definition of national interest within the global context. The logic of a planetary way of thinking brings to the foreground the task of providing not a balance of power, but a qualitatively new balance: the balance of interests of all the countries of our planet.

6. New approach to collective security

The international community has at its disposal a set of tools to build the system of cooperative collective security. Peacekeeping, peacemaking and preventive diplomacy, development and humanitarian assistance, diplomatic and humanitarian intervention, continued disarmament, strengthening of international law, together with close cooperation among the international organizations and between them and civil society.

7. Need for constructive parallelism

In the new world there is no place for such techniques as "linkages" often used during the Cold War. On the contrary, the multilateral disarmament fora, including the Conference on Disarmament, can rely more on the principle of constructive parallelism, which presupposes that progress in one area facilitates efforts undertaken in another sphere.

8. Cross-section partnerships

A cross-section partnership with a variety of politicians, businesses, civil society groups, religions and professional communities, international and non-governmental organizations, academic institutions and artists is essential. Political will, practical steps and partnerships have to be combined with a renewed spirit of global cooperation and solidarity.

9. Comprehensive dialogue

I deeply believe that the idea of dialogue among civilizations is no mere catch-phrase or trite political slogan. It is an invitation for us all mentally to leap over our ancient cultural divisions and to understand better not only one another's world view, but also our irreplaceable respective contributions to our common cultural heritage.

10. No globalization without a human face

The 21st century will achieve a new and radiant definition of progress if we can manage to put a human face upon our world. It seems clear to me that a holistic approach will continue to be the guiding force towards problem-solving at the international level. <https://www.comprehensivedialogue.org/vladimir-petrovsky-1>



Climate Action

Everyone can help limit climate change. From the way we travel, to the electricity we use and the food we eat, we can make a difference. Start with these ten actions to help tackle the climate crisis. (United Nations Act Now Campaign)

Start with these ten actions!

Save energy at home

Much of our electricity and heat are powered by coal, oil and gas. Use less energy by lowering your heating and cooling, switching to LED light bulbs and energy-efficient electric appliances, washing your laundry with cold water, or hanging things to dry instead of using a dryer.

Walk, bike, or take public transport

The world's roadways are clogged with vehicles, most of them burning diesel or gasoline. Walking or riding a bike instead of driving will reduce greenhouse gas emissions -- and help your health and fitness. For longer distances, consider taking a train or bus. And carpool whenever possible.

Eat more plant-based foods

Eating more vegetables, fruits, whole grains, legumes, nuts, and seeds, and less meat and dairy, can significantly lower your environmental impact. Producing plant-based foods generally results in fewer greenhouse gas emissions and requires less energy, land, and water.

Consider your travel

Airplanes burn large amounts of fossil fuels, producing significant greenhouse gas emissions. That makes taking fewer flights one of the fastest ways to reduce your environmental impact. When you can, meet virtually, take a train, or skip that long-distance trip altogether.

Throw away less food

When you throw food away, you're also wasting the resources and energy that were used to grow, produce, package, and transport it. And when food rots in a landfill, it produces methane, a powerful greenhouse gas. So use what you buy and compost any leftovers.

Reduce, reuse, repair & recycle

Electronics, clothes, and other items we buy cause carbon emissions at each point in production, from the extraction of raw materials to manufacturing and transporting goods to market. To protect our climate, buy fewer things, shop second-hand, repair what you can, and recycle.

Change your home's source of energy

Ask your utility company if your home energy comes from oil, coal or gas. If possible, see if you can switch to renewable sources such as wind or solar. Or install solar panels on your roof to generate energy for your home.

Switch to an electric vehicle

If you plan to buy a car, consider going electric, with more and cheaper models coming on the market. Even if they still run on electricity produced from fossil fuels, electric cars help reduce air pollution and cause significantly fewer greenhouse gas emissions than gas or diesel-powered vehicles.

Choose eco-friendly products

Everything we spend money on affects the planet. You have the power to choose which goods and services you support. To reduce your environmental impact, buy local and seasonal foods, and choose products from companies who use resources responsibly and are committed to cutting their gas emissions and waste.

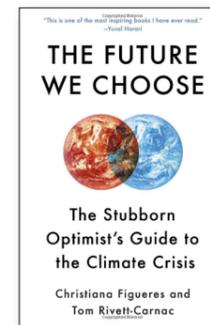
Speak up

Speak up and get others to join in taking action. It's one of the quickest and most effective ways to make a difference. Talk to your neighbors, colleagues, friends, and family. Let business owners know you support bold changes. Appeal to local and world leaders to act now.

<https://www.un.org/en/actnow/>

The Future We Choose

This Action Plan is part of a growing movement of climate activists committed to fulfilling the vision of a regenerative world. We can only do this together and we hope you will join us.



Taken from the book "The Future We Choose" by Christiana Figueres, Tom Rivett-Carnac, Knopf Doubleday Publishing Group

Take a deep breath

- Take a deep breath and decide that collectively we can do this, and that you will play your part. You will be a hopeful visionary for humanity through these dark days. From this moment, despair ends and tactics begin
- Decide that you will be part of the politics of the future. You will vote for, campaign for, and support candidates who champion emissions reductions. Reject the politics of nostalgia .
- Commit to reducing your impact on the climate by more than half of what it is today by 2030. Aim for 60 percent.

Today or Tomorrow

- Determine where your principal elected officials stand on climate change; write to

them about your commitments and let them know. Tell them you are watching.

- Choose at least one day of the week to go meat-free, and decide how soon you will add more days to that commitment.
- Think big. How do you most impact climate change, and what big things can you do to effect a regenerative future?
- Tell others about your commitments, in person or on social media. Don't be shy! Invite others to follow suit. Your example will motivate them.

This week

- Share your personal plan to reduce emissions by more than half with your partner, kids, and friends, and invite them to do so as well. Preserving the future of all life should be joyful. Have fun with it.
- Take some actions and stick to them over time – it will give you momentum. Reduce daily energy use, bike instead of driving a car, switch your energy supplier to 100 percent clean. It's all good and all needs doing.
- Go outside and look around. This world is damaged and hurting, but it is also beautiful and intact and whole. Pay attention to something you have forgotten – emerging leaves in the spring or frost on dead leaves in winter. Feel the gratitude we owe the Earth for her bounty and beauty.

This Month

- Find out who in your vicinity is organizing political action involving climate change. Attend meetings and meet the concerned citizens. Go to demonstrations and marches! Allow yourself to be inspired by the miracle



of committed groups intent on changing the world.

- Start a conversation with someone who is not active on climate change with a view toward understanding their stance and gently enlarging their awareness of the crisis from their perspective.
- Enact your commitments: What precisely will you do this year? How will it affect you and your family? How will you begin to apply the changes you plan to make?
- Challenge your consumerism. Look at what you have bought, and ask yourself whether

it brings you joy. Question your impulses to buy more, and begin to see how liberating it is to buy less.

- Start a mindfulness practice, perhaps a breathing exercise of gratitude. Do it every day, if only for a few minutes. Learn to create a gap of light between yourself, the world, and your reactions.
- Plant trees. As many as you can. Look for a local group doing tree planting. Get out there when you can, and when you can't, support others to do so.
- Understand your privilege in relation to others, and commit to helping level the playing field for all.

This Year

- Be political in your daily life. Seek collective opportunities to advance the cause of emissions reductions. It will inspire you and help you feel you are part of a shared endeavor. Engage regularly in direct action if that is possible where you live. VOTE!
- Be consistent. You may have changed your electricity supply to 100 percent renewable energy, rethought your commute, changed your air travel habits, and altered your diet. If you can sustain your effort for the first year, you stand a good chance of doing so every year. Recognize your accomplishment.

By 2030

- Deliver on your plan to cut your emissions by more than half. Celebrate your achievement.
- Finance others to plant more trees as a symbol of the fact that you still have some way to go. Trees are good, and the world needs more of them.
- Ensure you have voted in line with these priorities in national and regional elections and been vocal about the fact that you have done so.
- Continue to practice the other new habits you have developed.
- Encourage those closest to you – family, friends, loved ones – to be climate conscious.
- Start the plan to reduce your emissions again by more than half over the next decade.

<http://www.globaloptimism.com/the-future-we-choose>



Tom Rivett-Carnac and Christiana Figueres authors of "The Future We Choose"

**A new story.
A story of survival.
And of a thriving existence.**

At this moment, when we have reached the limits of the planet's ability to sustain life in the form in which we know it, we have also reached the limits of the stories that define our lives. Personal achievements through individualistic competition, continuous consumption, skepticism about our ability to come together as humanity, and an inability to see the deeper impacts of what we are doing to the planet—all are no longer useful. Now we must move toward understanding our shared existence on this planet, not because it is a nice addendum to what we do but because it is a matter of survival.

Tackling the Climate Crisis

The Glasgow Financial Alliance for Net Zero (GFANZ) was launched in April 2021 by Mark Carney, UN Special Envoy for Climate Action in partnership with the UNFCCC Climate Action Champions, the Race to Zero campaign and the COP26 Presidency.



Mark Carney
Co-Chair, GFANZ

Bringing together existing and new net-zero finance initiatives in one sector-wide coalition, GFANZ provides a forum for leading financial institutions to accelerate the transition to a net-zero global economy. The members currently include over 450 financial firms across 45 countries responsible for assets of over \$130 trillion.

GFANZ is focused on broadening, deepening and raising net-zero ambitions across the financial system and demonstrating firms' collective commitments to supporting companies and countries to achieve the goals of the Paris Agreement.

GFANZ membership is predicated on science-based commitments to net zero

Race to Zero is the UN-backed global campaign rallying non-state actors – including companies, cities, regions, financial and educational institutions – to take rigorous and immediate action to halve global emissions by 2030. All members are committed to the same overarching goal: reducing emissions across all scopes swiftly and fairly in line with the Paris Agreement, with transparent action plans and robust near-term targets. All actors must meet stringent criteria.

Access to GFANZ is anchored in the Race to Zero campaign to ensure credibility and consistency. This means GFANZ firms' net-zero commitments must use science-based guidelines to reach net-zero emissions by 2050, cover all emission scopes, include 2030 interim target settings and commit to transparent reporting and accounting in line with Race to Zero criteria.

GFANZ's workstreams are about turning commitment into action

GFANZ is focused on moving the needle on 7 key areas critical to the net zero transition; these include:

- **Sectoral pathways:** catalysing alignment between financial institutions and major global industries on sector-specific pathways to reach net-zero emissions
- **Real economy transition plans:** accelerating decarbonisation in the real economy by describing financial sector expectations of transition plans from the companies the sector engages with and finances
- **Financial institution transition plans:** driving convergence around sector-wide best practices for financial institutions in designing and implementing credible net-zero transition plans
- **Portfolio alignment measurement:** supporting the development and effective implementation of portfolio alignment metrics for financial institutions and driving convergence in the way portfolio alignment is measured and disclosed
- **Mobilising private capital:** supporting the mobilisation of private capital to emerging markets and developing countries through private sector investments and public-private collaboration
- **Policy:** advocating for the public policy needed to accelerate investment in net-zero aligned activities and organizations
- **Building commitment:** broadening the nature and number of financial firms that are credibly working towards net-zero.

<https://www.gfanzero.com/>

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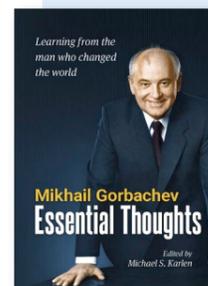
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Mikhail Gorbachev "Essential Thoughts"



This book sets out the ideas and ideals, the spirit and vision that guided Mikhail Gorbachev in his world-changing agenda, in a concise form.

It also offers Gorbachev's insights into how each of us can help to restore humanist values and personal responsibility as the foundation of global politics.

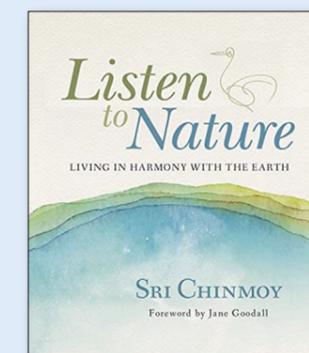
This wealth of wisdom is an invaluable resource for overcoming the huge social and environmental challenges that humanity faces today. The boundless optimism and confidence of this colossal world figure can inspire each of us to play our role, large or small, in helping to create a sustainable and peaceful future for our planet earth and all its inhabitants.

[To order, please click here \(Electronic Version\)](#)

Sri Chinmoy "Listen to Nature"

A Spiritual Approach to the Environmental Crisis from Selected Writings and Talks by Sri Chinmoy. This volume has a foreword by Jane Goodall, the renowned primatologist and UN Messenger of Peace.

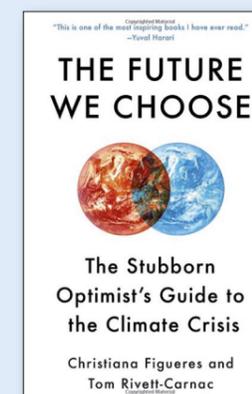
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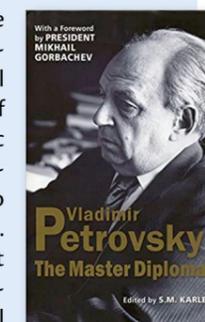
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To understand the multiple present-day crises in our global civilization, we can best view them as a result of the tensions of the transitional period between childhood and adulthood, in which dying thoughts and obsolete practices clash with dimly-recognized but emerging signs of maturity. – Baha'i Faith

Civilizations around the Earth are heading toward collapse because of powerful forces we have unleashed, ranging from climate disruption and resource depletion, to enormous inequities and the mass extinction of species. No longer can we take the well-being of the Earth for granted. Now the human community must rise to a higher level of maturity and cooperation – choosing to work together for the well-being of the entire Earth - or lose it as a healthy life-support system. Choose it or lose it! Now is our time of collective choice and cooperation.

– Choosing Earth: Humanity's Great Transition to a Mature Planetary Civilization, Duane Elgin

The human race has collectively traversed infancy and childhood. We, the current generation, have witnessed the turbulence and commotion of the world as humanity is struggling to come of age. We are witnessing the emergence of global consciousness around the importance of humanity's interdependence and inter-connection. We are witnessing nothing less than the organization of human society as a planetary civilization, possibly the last and highest stage in humanity's collective life on this planet. – The 2020 UNDP Human Development Report