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The Journal for Global Citizens Creating the New Civilization



THE CHANGING NATURE OF HUMAN SECURITY

Global Risks in the 21st Century and What We can Do About it
citizen participation in war and peace | ecosystem restoration
freedom and democracy | the commons | second axial spirituality

SPECIAL FEATURE | Toward a Common Theory of Value

Editorial

The world is in serious trouble and we care. When one billion of us do not have safe water to drink and one billion of us go hungry every day, it is time to *ACT*. It is time to act when degraded and eroding soil is destroying 38,610 square miles of productive land every year. Many of us left the solution of such travesties to our governments, only to discover that the political establishment promotes economic greed and a politics of self-interest and domination—a vision far behind that of the people who value justice, sharing and altruism.

Many of us think that by changing ourselves we can change the world, while Second Axial Spirituality recognizes the expanded need to change the way the world worked so that it expresses our basic values. Alone, we are disempowered and victims of mass media propaganda—designed to scare us into numbness in order to preserve the system. We urgently need to link our global efforts in a spirit of cooperation, as people in every country wake up to the reality that all issues are interdependent and need to be connected. Even more importantly, it is up to you and me to change the world—not alone, but together. Whereas the average person is appalled at the worsening situation and feels helpless to do anything about it, let's consider that there are so many more of us—let's find our place in this era of need. Let's find out what amazing things we can do together. Help ignite the worldwide protests!

What would happen if we widened our vision, deepened our ideas, focused our strategies and experienced our felt-compassion to embrace the plight of every single individual on the planet? What if we were energized by the possibility of making a difference rather than being defeated by incessant bad news? What if we designed new systems that expressed a higher turn of the spiral of our human potential?

We were inspired by participating in The Caux Forum on Human Security 2011 and their solutions to five pressing cross-border challenges.

Poverty. Inequality and poverty are increasing both within and between countries. Inequality fosters crime, violence, disease and other social ills, while growing consumption in the wealthy countries does not increase happiness or overcome social divisions. Humanity has the capital and knowledge to ensure that everyone has enough. Economically enfranchising the poor will boost well-being worldwide.

Hunger. After falling in the 1990s, the number of hungry people has risen to more than a billion. Yet in most wealthy countries obesity has become an epidemic, and up to half the food purchased is thrown away. Enough is produced each year to feed everyone on earth well. Increasing production through sustainable agriculture—which restores soil and conserves water—can ensure that this continues to be the case.

Climate Change. The planet is warming fast, and rising sea levels and shifting rainfall will drive millions of people from their homes, slash harvests and disrupt societies. The clean technologies needed to combat it already exist. Developing them will do much to produce the sustainable growth required to ensure a future of low carbon prosperity.

Resource depletion. Over-exploiting land, water, fisheries, forests and other natural resources will result in scarcity and growing conflict. This threatens to get worse as the population rises to nine billion over the next few decades. Just an eighth of global defence spending would provide massively enlarged programmes to reduce poverty, pollution, population growth, protect biodiversity, rebuild soils, restore fisheries, protect forests and stabilize water tables as we reorder our relationships with each other and nature.

War and conflict. After a short decline at the end of the Cold War, world arms spending is rising rapidly, encouraged by deeply entrenched vested interests. There must be a new determination to resolve conflict, especially in the Middle East. Reconciliation and justice are interdependent. We must genuinely commit to human rights for all and address injustice and oppression, enabling us steadily to reduce arms spending and progressively to eliminate nuclear weapons.”

Nothing short of a paradigm shift will bring us full circle towards the world we long for. If we are aware of the scientific evidence that people are basically good, we no longer buy into economic greed based on the belief that self interest is our primary motivation. If we experience the fundamental goodness of most people, we no longer accept a ‘realism politics’ based on military force and double standards, rather than listening, understanding and justice. This is not to deny genuine threats from real enemies of the good, often denied by well-meaning folks.

Human security is a defining issue of our times and an emerging new paradigm for protecting people from harm. It is based on an expanded vision of security that includes environmental, economic and social security. It places people rather than states at the center and engages civil society in providing security at all levels. As it becomes painfully obvious that war engenders more war and violence—now killing up to 90% civilians in its unsuccessful effort to secure peace—the need to find a new way is urgent.

Can we come together and create the kind of world we long for? Great changes are brought about by movements of conscience and concern. Do we care enough? We have yet to generate the critical mass required for a decisive change of direction. A world wide coalition of people of conscience is urgently needed to unite all our efforts and multiply our effectiveness.

Kosmos is ready to act. We will be initiating a Global Citizens Movement (GCM): A Global Community of Conscience, Integrity and Action soon. We invite you to participate in its formation. If you care about one billion hungry people without clean water to drink. If you care about the 100,000 Iraqis who died in a war they never wanted. If you care about unpiloted drones killing people without human guidance and much more, please join the GCM at www.kosmosjournal.org.

We care—do you?

Nancy Roof

