



Pressing International Responsibility: A New Concept of Human Security

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*“There is no challenge beyond the reach of
the creative capacity of human beings”.*

– John F. Kennedy, 1963

Abstract

The transition to the future we long for requires moving from imposition to discussion, from power to word, from the use of weapons to mediation. And to reduce or, at least, cease to increase the arsenals of bombs, allocating all necessary resources to youth, education, health, intergenerational legacy, so on and so forth. We urgently need a new conception of security and a governance model that supports this new paradigm. It is clear that the solution will not be found in economic formulas, but rather in the timely implementation of profoundly human ethical references and examples. This article thus calls for a mobilisation of powers to fight against short-term gains and embrace long-term goals and human security.

Thanks to digital technology, human beings are now aware of everything that is happening all over the world, and they can express themselves freely. “Transforming* the world, my dear friend Sancho, is neither madness nor utopia, but justice,” wrote Cervantes. What must be done now, at last, is to put into practice the wise words found at the beginning of the Charter of the United Nations: “We the peoples,... are determined to save future generations from the scourge of war”. At that time it was too early. And “the peoples” were solely represented by States and by men.†

Equal dignity has been gradually reached with no discrimination based on gender, ethnicity, religion, ideology, sexual sensitivity... Women, with their underlying values, have an essential role to play in the transition from a culture of imposition, domination, violence and war to a culture of encounter, conciliation, dialogue and peace... The solution lies in daring to be oneself, exercising without restriction the distinctive capacities of the human species: thinking, imagining, anticipating, innovating, creating!

In 1997, the UNESCO General Conference approved a great resolution on the responsibilities of present generations towards future generations... Now at last it may

* Chomsky, Noam and Pollin, Robert, “Cambiar o morir”, Ed.Clave Intellectual, 2020.

† Declaration on the Responsibilities of the Present Generation towards Future Generations (12/11/1997). http://portal.unesco.org/es/ev.php-URL_ID=13178&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201.html

be implemented. Now, at last, women will get on the stand on an equal footing...; *young people will at last become aware of their responsibility regarding the quality of their intergenerational legacy*, and they will take firm action so that measures are taken to prevent humanity from socially collapsing and to avoid the deterioration of the quality of life.

“Scientists, academics, artists and intellectuals should, in particular, place themselves at the forefront of an overall mobilization against big powers that are exclusively driven by short-term interests, and choose not to remain blind and ignorant when faced with a situation that puts at risk the habitability of our own planet.”

Women are “the cornerstone of the new era”. That is what President Nelson Mandela told me* in 1996 in Pretoria, when I conveyed to him how disappointed I was to see how little acceptance the culture of peace had gained at that time as opposed to the culture of imposition, violence and war that had prevailed for centuries. “That is because since the dawn of time a few men have ruled over the rest of men and over all women.” President Nelson Mandela completed his statement about the central role of women saying that the reason was “that women only use force exceptionally while it is exceptional for men not to use it.”

“I have the feeling that we are living the end of many eras”, wrote Miguel Delibes who always foresaw the future. The vast majority of international leaders are still anchored in the past, without realising that, finally, after centuries of absolute male power, when most human beings were anonymous and invisible, profound transformations are about to occur in leaps and bounds, which will progressively allow everyone “to be”, to cease being impassive spectators and become actors.

Until a few decades ago a vast majority of human beings were born, lived and died confined within reduced spaces. And, consequently, they were silent†, fearful, obedient... “If you want peace, be prepared for war” was the sinister adage everybody took for granted—and irresponsible leaders still do today—confining women “to their home, their kitchen and their sewing tasks.”

“We are going to change everything!”—proclaimed millions of women on March 8, 2018. How wonderful! What great news it would be if equality without limits finally allows us to establish the new directions we have been longing for, and which absolute male power has not allowed us to reach!‡

* Blog “Madiba, siempre presente”, dec. 2013. <http://federicomayor.blogspot.com/2013/12/madiba-siempre-presente.html>

† F. Mayor Zaragoza, “Delito de silencio: ha llegado el momento. Es tiempo de acción”, Ed. Comanegra, 2011.

‡ María Novo, “El coraje de decir NO”, Ediciones Panacea, 2019.

Women will no longer be the spouse of X and the mother of Y. They will be themselves, because their unique and unrepeatable life shall never again be dependent, hidden, postponed... *Women's equality is a precious and irreplaceable prerequisite for the new age.*

One of the distinctive faculties of human beings is their capacity to anticipate, to use knowledge to foresee, and foresight to prevent. Today, at the dawn of the 21st century and the beginning of the third millennium, this prospective capacity has become more relevant than ever because, for the first time since the dawn of time, mankind must face global challenges that could lead to points of no-return if they are not dealt with *in due time*. All inhabitants of the Earth must be held responsible for this potential irreversibility. However, scientists, academics, artists and intellectuals should, in particular, place themselves at the forefront of an overall mobilization against big powers that are exclusively driven by short-term interests, and choose not to remain blind and ignorant when faced with a situation that puts at risk the habitability of our own planet. Not only do these powers maintain their hegemonic ambitions, but they also make use of the huge media power to turn most citizens into a passive and indifferent audience.

At the end of the two great “hot” wars, in 1918 and 1945, two prominent American Presidents, Wilson and Roosevelt respectively, tried to establish a global order based on the power of reason rather than the reason of power. Unfortunately, on both occasions the perverse adage “If you want peace, be prepared for war” was applied without restrictions, always driven by the big weapon manufacturers and, as it had for centuries, security prevailed over peace. In 1919, President Wilson had come from New York to Brest, horrified by the terrible war of exhaustion, bringing a message of peace to the world: the “*Convention on Permanent Peace*” would allow conflicts to be resolved through a Society or League of Nations having its headquarters in Geneva. Simultaneously the Permanent Court of International Justice would be created. The reaction of his own country did not take too long: the President had not been elected to be the champion of peace but rather the champion of war. And the interdiction even led the United States—a huge contradiction that has to be taken into account from a historical point of view!—to refrain from joining the Society of Nations created by the American President himself.

Everyone knows what happened next. Germany rearmed itself, Nazism and fascism adopted dictatorial ways of acting and in 1939, World War II broke out. It was a terrible confrontation with the Holocaust, genocide, and a complete contempt for basic humanitarian standards that somehow relieves the most horrendous aspects of military conflicts. Germany and Italy were joined by the Empire of the Rising Sun which completed its incredible and ambitious “Tanaka Plan” by attacking the United States Navy in Pearl Harbour on 7 December 1941.

In 1944, when the end of World War II seemed to come to an end, President Roosevelt made a great proposal to achieve worldwide peace: assistance for the defeated with the Marshall Plan; funding for reconstruction and development by the World Bank... and the creation of international agencies whose field of expertise could be very effective for the United Nations: food (FAO); science and culture (UNESCO); health (WHO); labour (ILO);

promotion of development (UNDP); children's protection (UNICEF)... But it did not take very long for "the peoples" to be supplanted by the States as members of the UN General Assembly; soon the victors led by America replaced the vote with the veto and international cooperation—the verb "to share" should have been the keyword for a new future—was superseded with exploitation. Another failed opportunity, because the Universal Declaration of Human Rights adopted 3 years later clearly stated the glittering standards that could *efficiently lead humanity as a whole towards a new era where the very foundation of these standards would become true: the equal dignity of all human beings.*

The third opportunity, also spoiled by the Republican Party of the United States, with the United Kingdom as a coadjutor, came immediately after the end of the "Cold War". In 1989, when there were signs of peace everywhere, the Soviet Union became—thanks to the talent of Mikhail S. Gorbachev—a Commonwealth of Independent States ready to start their long march towards public liberties; when the racial *apartheid* was eradicated, thanks to the extraordinary magic of a prisoner who went out of prison with open arms and, instead of calling for revenge, cried out for reconciliation and forgiveness and did achieve them; when peace was reached in Mozambique, and in El Salvador ... and the peace process was restarted in Guatemala ...

When there were signs of peace everywhere, President Reagan and Prime Minister Thatcher set off *a globalizing neoliberal system that replaced democratic principles with the laws of the market, and the United Nations by plutocratic groups (G6, G7, G8...G20).* In just a few years, there was a real ethical and economic debacle. Markets became the masters of the situation and relentlessly pressed and excluded political power. The consequence was inequality, poverty, arms race, the degradation of the environment, thousands of deaths every day from hunger... dreadful "collateral effects" of a system where the poor become poorer and the rich become richer. In terms of budget figures, we must insist on this and be ready to mend reality—every day millions of dollars are invested in weapons and military expenditure while many thousands of people die from hunger*.

We were all expecting that, once the "Cold War" ends, we would at last see the beginning of a new era of peaceful coexistence and global conflicts would be solved through strengthened international institutions. The last events favoured—as I have already said—this hypothesis: the collapse—symbolized by the Berlin Wall—of the entire Soviet Empire without a single drop of blood, thanks to the magic of Mikhail Sergeevich Gorbachev, and the elimination, as in a dream, of racial *apartheid* in South Africa, thanks to another unparalleled personality of the 20th century: Nelson Mandela.

Unfortunately, in each of these three opportunities, the United States Republican Party, guided by hegemonic ambitions, prevented peace initiatives from reaching a positive conclusion.

The drafting of both the United Nations Charter and the Constitution of UNESCO, its intellectual branch, was entrusted to thinkers with great ethical and political clairvoyance.

* <http://federicomayor.blogspot.com/2016/05/y-la-sociedad-del-bienestar-mirando.html>

As I have already mentioned at the beginning, *the Charter of the United Nations begins with the following words “We the peoples ... have decided to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war”*. This sentence summarizes the solutions the world as a whole is calling for today, because they should allow us to effectively tackle the serious challenges we are currently facing. It is certainly the peoples, who must take the reins of our common destiny into their hands. And by doing so, they shall commit themselves to the succeeding generations, assuming a responsibility that is today one of the most serious deficiencies of international political action. And they shall succeed in building peace because to avoid war they will demand from the United Nations the peaceful resolution of conflicts; by means of diplomacy, encounter, reconciliation...

“The supreme commitment of each generation, according to President Nelson Mandela, is to take into account the following one.” Intergenerational responsibility comes to the fore, at a time when we are obsessed with the present but realise that we have forgotten what is most important: the well-being of our children and descendants, the habitability of the Earth, the quality of an ecological context in which all human beings, who can now be identified, who are visible and able to express themselves, can fully exercise their distinctive faculties.

But the hegemonic neoliberal ambitions—triggered by President Reagan and Prime Minister Thatcher—have frustrated the aspirations of mankind as a whole. They indeed marginalized the United Nations—neglecting UNESCO and then launching the International Trade Organisation outside its scope—and they replaced—what is even worse—ethical principles with the laws of the market, and moral values with those of the stock market.

And, thus, the aim of “globalizers” was that the destiny of mankind be decided by plutocratic groups made up of 6, 7, 8 and, later on, 20 most prosperous countries instead of a democratic multilateral system accepted by everyone.

Despite such adverse circumstances, the United Nations continued to set guidelines for action and terms of reference for appropriate planetary governance: Education for everyone during their whole life, in 1990; the Agenda 21 on the environment, as a result of the Earth Summit in 1992; social development, in Copenhagen, in 1995; women and development, in Beijing, in the same year in which the *Declaration on Tolerance* was also made public, whose Article 1 establishes the main lines along which international coexistence based on the equal dignity of all human beings should run in the future.

In 1999, the *Declaration and Action Plan on a Culture of Peace* was the preliminary step. Just at the beginning of a new century and a new millennium, of the *Earth Charter*, surely it was one of the most glittering documents that was no doubt needed at a time of such gloomy omens, together with the global objectives that had to be achieved from the year 2000 onwards.

But it finally came to nothing. Neo-liberalism—which believed peace had to be a mere invocation, a greeting or a prayer—still reinforces “territorial security” in the countries that are members of the wealthy quarter of the global village, *investing staggering figures on weapons and military expenditure (4 billion dollars), while—I never tire of repeating it—thousands of people die of hunger, most of them boys and girls between the ages of one and*

five. This and no other was the bitter balance sheet facing the whole Planet at the beginning of the year 2000, during which the disproportionate relocation of production—“due to greed and irresponsibility” in the words of President Obama—further disrupted the situation of countries with very low labour costs, turning China in particular into a “factory of the world”, turning a communist country into a greatest capitalist country on Earth. All these incongruities cannot be regulated by plutocratic groups or by the Nation-States which are progressively becoming weaker for the benefit of gigantic multinationals.

“In order for “We, the peoples” and “intergenerational responsibility” to play the central role in the new era, it is essential to regulate the huge and expanding power of large technological companies.”

In the supranational context, total impunity is the rule, allowing criminal trafficking of all kinds—weapons, capital, patents, drugs, people...—without any possibility of implementing a set of generally respected legal standards.

The same situation is found with regard to the environment, whose clear deterioration cannot be stopped or slowed down by a globalizing machine exclusively focused on profits filling to the brim tax havens, and displaying a huge lack of social solidarity.

We are facing the advent of the Anthropocene—human activities have an effect on the environment—and the transition from force to word must prevail once and for all. But the big global corporations continue to base the “progress” of humanity on fossil fuels.

In just a few years’ time, we will have to favour the recapture of carbon dioxide by phytoplankton in the seas, find alloys that can transport large quantities of electricity, promote renewable energies (photovoltaic, geothermal, solar thermal, wind power..., panels in houses and buildings, hybrid and electric cars, etc.) by investing once and for all in *life safety*, a share—30-40% would be enough—of the expenditure currently devoted to military security, which covers only 20% of mankind.

*Now, specific transitions that seemed inconceivable a few years ago have become possible. We cannot miss another opportunity, now in the Anthropocene. The power of citizens will, in a few years’ time, drive the transition from a culture of imposition, violence and war to a culture of conciliation, understanding, alliance and peace. The Declaration and Programme of Action on a Culture of Peace, approved by the United Nations General Assembly in September 1999, is the new path that will no doubt allow humanity to reach a “new beginning”. The transition from subjects to citizens, with the advent of a new world as a result of the implementation of the four “Contracts” I proposed, at the end of my mandate as Director General of UNESCO in 2000 : a new social contract; a new natural contract; a new cultural contract; a new ethical contract.**

* Mayor, F. “Un mundo nuevo” (“Un nouveau monde”; “The World Ahead”), Circulo de Lectores, Galaxia Gutenberg, 2000.

Let's review history. Let's review what has happened and let's make sure that what deserves to be repeated happens again and what should have never happened does not occur never again. *Let's never forget, in our everyday behaviour, the past which is vital to allow us to make the right decision on tomorrow's paths.**

It is clear that *the only solution lies in the promotion of genuine democracy at all levels. The Universal Declaration of Democracy†* includes sections dealing with *social democracy, political democracy, economic democracy, cultural and international democracy.* Article 11 deserves special attention because it states that *all dimensions and features of economic democracy shall be subordinated to social justice.*

“Today, with no further delay, a new concept of security is needed.”

A new beginning. The same response? Absolutely not.‡ It is necessary and urgent to create a new world. And it will be the power of citizens that will make possible the implementation of the radical changes that are about to occur.

In contrast to the short-sighted heads of government who cannot see beyond the bleak horizons of today, let's hear the voice of the scientists, the voice of the peoples in favour of changes that can still allow us to leave behind an adequate intergenerational legacy.

As Obama and the Pope have reiterated, time is running out, as it usually happens. In order to fulfil our pressing intergenerational responsibilities, a few specific commitments have to be made regarding the right ecological behaviour on a global scale.

“We, the peoples”. Now at last: now the peoples: civil society shall play the role it is expected to play. “We, the peoples...” is the best expression of democratic multilateralism, the sole global governance formula that can eradicate plutocratic groups that have been imposed upon us by neoliberalism and have led to a deep-seated systemic crisis.§

In order for “We, the peoples” and “intergenerational responsibility” to play the central role in the new era, it is essential to regulate the huge and expanding power of large technological companies.¶

The transition to the future we long for requires moving from imposition to discussion, from power to word, from the use of weapons to mediation. And to reduce or, at least, cease to increase the arsenals of bombs, allocating all necessary resources to youth, education, health, intergenerational legacy...

At this specific time, the fact that some of the phenomena are potentially irreversible *implies an additional intergenerational responsibility, which is now at the very top of the*

* Capdevila, Gustavo. “Otra tarea para la ONU en 2020: los oligopolios digitales”, Other News, 30.1.2020 <http://www.ipsnoticias.net/2020/01/otra-tarea-la-onu-2020-los-oligopolios-digitales/>

† Declaración Universal de la Democracia <https://declaraciondemocracia.wordpress.com/>

‡ F. Mayor Zaragoza, “¡Basta”, Ed. Espasa, 2012.

§ Inaplazable pacto mundial sobre las personas refugiadas y migrantes (Mayor Zaragoza, Federico, Sept.2019). <http://federicomayor.blogspot.com/2019/09/inaplazable-pacto-mundial-sobre-las.html>

¶ Anuario CEIPAZ 2016-2017 <https://ceipaz.org/anuario/seguridad-internacional-y-democracia-guerras-militarizacion-y-fronteras/>

list of inescapable values that should inspire world governance. The possibility of reaching points of no return, specific situations that would allow us to say, based on good reasons, “this is hopeless”, is the most powerful “human” lever for action, for mobilisation, for great popular clamour.... Our descendants will understand many things, many decisions and hesitations... except those having irremediable consequences.*

Today, with no further delay, a new concept of security[†] is needed. Today, with no further delay, we must implement—through an efficient multilateral system—the 2030 Agenda and SDGs.

When we see the radical difference between investments devoted to potential conflicts and resources available to face recurrent natural disasters[‡] (fire, floods, earthquakes, tsunamis...), we are horrified to realize that the concept of “security” that is still favoured by major weapon manufacturers is not only obsolete but highly prejudicial for mankind as a whole, and that radical changes must be made without delay under the close scrutiny and direct involvement of the United Nations. *We will not reach a new era if we do not build a new concept of security.*

We see hundreds of US military bases scattered around the world and the arsenals filled with rockets, bombs, planes and warships, submarines and we turn our eyes towards the thousands of human beings who are dying of hunger every day, and towards those who live in conditions of extreme poverty without any access to adequate health services. We are appalled to observe the progressive deterioration of the Earth’s habitability conditions, though aware that we should take action without delay because points of no return are about to be reached in essential issues connected with our intergenerational legacy. We must not forget that if only a reasonable part of the daily expenditure in military expenses and weapons was dedicated to increasing aid for an endogenous sustainable and human development and the environment, ensuring that the irreversible deterioration of the Earth’s habitability does not take place, the bleak horizons of today could become brighter. *Efficient international cooperation would allow the implementation of the big priorities of the United Nations (food, water, health, ecology, education, peace...) and should enable the “new beginning” requested by the Earth Charter, which is today more necessary and pressing than ever before.*

It seems that we are still lacking evidence despite the social gap. Having become much bigger due to a speculation-based economy, despite the relocation of production and the war, and with the COVID-19 pandemic it has become clear that *a new concept of security is urgently needed.* It should not only deal with the adequate defence of the territory, but also with the security of human beings living in these well-protected territories: food, drinking water, high-quality health services, environmental care, education and peace.

As was the case with other manifestos and global calls (*the Statement of Nobel Peace Laureates*,[§] *Barcelona, December 2015; the Campaign on “Disarmament for Development”*,

* Gabriel, Markus. “Ética para valores universales para el siglo XXI”. Pasado y Presente Ediciones, 2021.

† Mayor, Federico (11/09/20) <http://federicomayor.blogspot.com/2020/09/menos-bombas-mas-bomberos.html>

‡ Mayor Zaragoza, Federico. “Inermes frente a las catástrofes” (“Público”, 05/06/10) http://fund-culturadepaz.org/spa/03/2010/ART-Inermes_frente_a_las_catastrofes.pdf

§ <https://declaracionconjunta.wordpress.com/>

at the initiative of the International Peace Bureau, Berlin, September-October 2016), any eventual echo to the Paris Statement was silenced by the gigantic media power, which is always keen to favour a submissive and misinformed attitude from audiences.

“We must now move from having a Charter to implementing it. We have to yearn for “better” and not for “more”.”

Coinciding with the “International Day of Peace” in October 2021,* on the occasion of the 76th anniversary of the founding of the United Nations and UNESCO, the Spanish Federation of UNESCO Centres (FECU), with the Culture of Peace Foundation and the DEMOS-PAZ Institute of the UAM, and the initial support of organizations and individuals already committed to promoting the radical changes that the 2030 Agenda and SDGs endorse. launched an *urgent appeal on multilateralism, compliance with the 2030 Agenda and democracy to the Secretary General of the United Nations*, to citizens,—men and women—communities, educators, educational institutions at all levels, students, the media, employers’ and workers’ unions, political parties, governments, parliamentarians, national and international NGOs, organisations of the United Nations System... and in particular well-known and respected figures in the cultural, sporting, artistic, scientific, academic, literary fields...

The Paris Agreements on Climate Change (COP) that were reached during United Nations’ meetings on this subject, as well as the proposal of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) for the period 2015-2030 came about as steps in the right direction. On the contrary, the “non-binding” commitments of the recent meeting in Glasgow—what a nerve, if they are non-binding they cannot be commitments!—have given rise to uncertainty and despair because it is clear that a big share of the conscious citizenry is aware that the last chances to confront and redirect the current situation have disappeared. Will all these wise appeals be once again shelved in the drawers and in the minds of those in power?†‡

There is no doubt that the solution to the serious problems mankind is facing today lies in moving—against the wind—from confrontation to conversation, from imposition to dialogue. According to a well-known saying, “the best way to understand one another is by talking to each other”. The terrible balance mentioned above—the huge daily expenditure on weapons while thousands of people are dying from starvation, is a covert genocide of neglect and oblivion. It must be firmly resolved by the “peoples” through *the mobilisation of citizens who—once they become aware of their power—will give rise to a historical shift and, at the dawn of the century and the millennium, will allow the yearning for peace to become a reality.*

* For the 75th anniversary of the United Nations: radical and urgent reforms for the governance of a new era (Mayor Zaragoza, Federico. Anuario CEIPAZ 2019-2020). <https://ceipaz.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/3.2020-FedericoMayor.pdf>

†F. Mayor, Blog “Glasgow, Nosotros los pueblos” <http://federicomayor.blogspot.com/2021/11/glasgow-nosotros-los-pueblos-compelidos.html>

‡ F. Mayor, Blog “Glasgow, conciencia global para cambiar de rumbo” <http://federicomayor.blogspot.com/2021/11/glasgow-conciencia-mundial-para-cambiar.html>

The huge power of social nets shall be the corner stone of the great transition from subjects to full citizens, from force to word. The digital revolution shall be, due to its scope and depth, the most important since the dawn of time. In anthropological, social and economic terms, the world will no longer be as it was. Increased longevity will allow us to have at our disposal the knowledge and experience we need to make come true the universal dream of equal human dignity. The prosperous neighbourhood of the global village will expand in such a way that the asymmetries and inequalities that blur the horizon today will shrink and finally disappear.

The challenges we are currently facing are unparalleled. The same goes for the solutions. We have to think them through, discuss them, invent new solutions. Only if we become aware of the reality and the existence, for the first time in history, of potentially irreversible global processes, will “We, the peoples” be able to put into motion the actions that can preserve our common destiny under acceptable conditions. And, for this to happen, I must insist that we have to participate in such a way that we are not only counted but also taken into account. The leadership of the scientific, academic and artistic communities is absolutely essential, because only through knowledge, with the rigour of judgement that is indispensable to redirect current trends in time, will we achieve the desired inflexion.

Those who believe we are facing a short-term crisis and that the previous “order” has to be restored are missing the point. We have reached a historical turning point that will allow *all* human beings, and not only a few of them, to live a life that is worth living. We must now move from having a Charter to implementing it. We have to yearn for “better” and not for “more”, and the “asymmetric wealth” must be replaced by a freely chosen moderation shared by all.

We are facing moments for decision-making that cannot be postponed. This is how the Earth Charter begins: “We stand at a critical moment in the Earth’s history, when the community must choose future... We must join together to bring forth a sustainable global society founded on respect for nature, universal human rights, economic justice, and a culture of peace”. We must take action at once, with no further delay, especially when irreversible processes are at stake. We have been living, especially in the last few decades, in the midst of an extraordinary conceptual confusion, ecological degradation, extreme poverty, unjustified inequalities, nuclear threat, lack of an efficient multilateral approach..., disaster, that is, in money- and short-term-oriented system.

In his introduction to a recent issue of “*Futuribles*” entitled “*From one Era to Another*”, Hugues de Jouvenel emphasizes how wise the Club of Rome was, under the leadership of Aurelio Peccei. In 1972 it already stressed the “limits of growth” and the urgent need—and duty arising from our inter-generational responsibilities—to replace as much as possible the natural resources we are consuming, and to avoid environmental degradation.

What is most important is a transformation, a new lifestyle adopted by all human beings. Each one of us should have the right to know and the right to decide. The right to have a good knowledge of reality and to invent the future. In this respect, the use of digital technology and the “*big data*” is essential... but natural intelligence must always prevail over “artificial”

intelligence. I remember what Prof. Hans Krebs told me at Oxford in 1966, when I insisted that we should obtain all accessible data of his perfectly equipped laboratory instruments, in comparison with the ones I had available in my Chair in Granada: “Investigating is being able to see what others also see... and thinking what nobody has ever been able to think!”. “*Sapere aude!*”, daring to know, said Horace. Yes: dare to know... and knowing how to dare, by fully using the distinctive faculties of the human species, and putting into practice the conclusions with nerve, resolution and urgency, in order to fulfil our responsibilities towards the next successive generations.

“Be the change you wish to see” was the big challenge put forth by Mahatma Gandhi. Now, there will be thousands of millions who will gradually embrace a global awareness, a global citizenship, who will freely express their opinions, in particular young people.

It is clear that the solution will not be found in economic formulas, but rather in the timely implementation of profoundly human ethical references and examples.

I would like to conclude by reading a few verses I wrote in August 2003:

***“Here I am,
away from the turmoil,
alone, facing myself,
ready to proclaim
surrounded by silence
calmly and firmly,
that I shall not kneel,
I will keep standing up
driven
by the soundless
clamour
of a million voices
yearning
to change course,
once and for all,
and live
to be up
to the equal dignity
of all human beings”.***

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