Towards the political unity of the planet

CCM
Coordination Committee for the
World Citizens’ March
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To the reader

Four years after reviving the march of the world citizens towards the political unity of the planet, we feel the need to reformulate the terms of this initiative.

This booklet was written to attract the readers’ attention:

Are they aware of the institutional changes which have to take place in our global society?

Do they realise that these changes are much easier to bring about than they imagined at first?

To tell the truth, it is now up to them... and to a few millions of our planet’s inhabitants, men and women with a determined mind, to act.

The time has come for the citizens of the world to get moving towards the political unity of the planet!

The Coordination Committee for the World Citizens’ March
One planet and 197 nation states

The political organization of the planet rests on 197 nation states declaring themselves as sovereign and independent.

The history of some of these states reaches far back into history; others came into being at more recent times, either as a result of a war of independence, or through decolonisation. Some, for various reasons, find themselves with artificially defined borders: to a point that a section of their populations now claim their own status as independent nation state.

Generally speaking, these 197 nation states are ready at any time to negotiate and sign conventions or international treaties; however, they will choose to observe them only when their own interests are not actually threatened.

193 of these nation states are at this time members of a “club”: the United Nations (UN), created in 1945, after two international cataclysms, WW I and WW II, to guarantee peace and facilitate cooperation between Nations.

Thus goes the World, a world which does not acknowledge the existence of other actors than the 197 nation states forming the political patchwork of our planet.

This state of things is perhaps not final, but for the time being, it is the accepted one, inherited from the History of Humankind.

*
Mankind’s long march forward

Human being has always felt the need to live in groups, groups that have grown in size over the centuries: family cell, clan, tribe, ethnic group, nation. At the same time, and because of his nature as a carnivorous mammal, he has forever been in opposition to his equals in order to survive or to dominate them. It’s the”living together” within a community that has made this possible.

However History tells us that the only groups that have managed to survive and develop over a long period are those endowed with the three institutional components essential for their survival:

- RULES observed by all
- AUTHORITY that sees to the observance of these rules and works toward common interests.
- REPRESENTATIVES able to enact its own laws, to mandate and control the Authority: this is Democracy!

A great number of kingdoms and empires have come and gone on the surface of the earth, some absorbing others, some destroying them even, when necessary. Half way through the second millennium, a number of European countries achieved supremacy over the rest of the world through a few “major discoveries” and inventions. Their technical superiority enabled them to colonize the greater part of the rest of the world, with the notable exception of China and Japan.

Nevertheless these countries were unable to come together to form one nation; less even to have one of them impose its power over others in spite of numerous attempts from some... this is what led to the two successive
world wars of the twentieth century, with their tragic results: almost 60 million casualties, both civil and military...

Food for thought for a number of clear-headed country leaders: these saw the need to endow the international community with a possibility of concertation and cooperation between States that could ensure peace and security across the world. This led to creating the UN in 1945; which, just like the 1919 “Society of Nations”, was never able to prevent or neutralize conflicts between nations... Basically, the UN has no actual power or means to take action, even though it numbers several branches principally devoted to humanitarian activities at its disposal.

Is the cause of concertation between peoples in favour of peace bound to remain with neither reason for hope nor means of action?

*
The dawn of a new era

At the start of the 3rd millenium, humankind stands at a major turn of its history. This is not due to the action of men, less even to that of political leaders; it is due to the development of science and technology. In only a few decades, distances between men have disappeared and instant comunication have spread across the world. This trend is irreversible, with damaging consequences: local economies are destabilised, migration have spread; moreover, we are now faced with both individual and collective revolts due to the gap between haves and have nots: regional or ethnic conflicts have arisen, from the break between ancestral ties.

Under these conditions, the governments of the 197 countries of the Planet, including those of the twenty richest, do not seem ready to form a united front against this global state of things. Driven by their own native selfishness and need for self-protection, their natural reaction takes the form of “My country first!”

Whereas each and every one of us should understand that the area in which we now stand has changed in size: the Global Community has become a reality! But it has not yet acquired the three institutional components it needs to insure its survival and development and it now faces five major challenges.
Five major challenges for our time

The first planetary challenge which we are already facing is, of course, global warming. But it is only part of a much wider challenge, that of the preservation of our planetary environment.

At a time when the world population is constantly growing, and will not stop until it reaches an approximate 10 billion in 2050, the relation between the human species and its environment (terrestrial, maritime, vegetable and mineral) has become a crucial factor for the survival not only of mankind but of the planet itself. Not to mention dwindling sources of fossil energy and the disappearance of essential elements such as clear water.

The second challenge on a planetary scale is, of course, the persistence of armed conflicts: economic, ethnic or religious, and their many side effects. People who until now felt safe within their national borders and managed to barricade themselves behind them, now feel threatened. The multiplication of classic and nuclear armaments just amplify matters.

The third planetary challenge we now face on a personal scale is the globalisation of economy and its effects on local economic systems that were safe until then. Worse, it tends to favour the rich and disadvantage the poor.

Our fourth planetary challenge, consequently, the insufferable disparity between the haves and the have nots across the world. Events that were unseen or hardly noticeable due to the long distances between communities are now regarded as scandalous by large numbers of the public, pleading for brotherhood and solidarity. To wit,
migrant crowds who now flee their countries to escape hardship and poverty.

The fifth challenge the human community now has to face is that of public health. The very preservation of mankind is at stake. Protection against pandemics is already being carried out with some effect; but we must observe caution against any possible excess concerning scientific research and biological experimentation.

Confronted with these five challenges, where does mankind stand today?

*
A powerless international community

The media and political leaders like to speak of the “international community” as of a moral person able to act efficiently and change the state of things in the world. This is not so: the “international community” does not exist as an organised body and the present “concert of nations” clearly demonstrates its inefficiency, faced with the five planetary challenges of our time.

Day after day, every state, every “power” on earth strives to develop and widen its sphere of influence as though nothing had changed in the rules of international in a the past hundred years.

Diplomats negotiate, armies take action when necessary: Defense budgets of richer countries grow larger, and the sale of arms flourishes all over the world.

Whenever a general agreement is eventually reached, as was the case in 2015 after lengthy negotiations on a subject as delicate as global warning -- the COP 21 Paris agreement following the failure of the Copenhagen meeting four years earlier - it is acclaimed as a major world event, although its objectives are notoriously insufficient, and will be denounced less than 2 years later by one of the most polluting countries of the planet.

There is no use in deploring once again the UN’s lack of power when dealing with regional conflicts: its resolutions go no further than mere wishful thinking, providing they have not been “vetoed” by one of the five winning powers of World War II.

Indeed nothing seems to have changed in the world for centuries and it is generally thought that nothing will ever come to change in the relations between peoples and nations.
Worse still, we live in “an illusion of democracy”: with the exception of a small number of countries who openly declare themselves as dictatorships -- be it under the rule of an individual, a clan or a party -- it is acceptable for any State whatever its leadership, to claim their system as a democracy. But it is too often a carefully maintained illusion: in actual fact, and even after supposedly “free” elections, personal power takes over with reference to a “providential man”, supported by corruption and the manipulation of public opinion.

The cause of this state of things is probably the shortsightedness of our elites and the cynicism of the rich. This is a serious accusation, but it must be made.

Our intelligentsia, our politicians and the media are the victims of a strange form of shortsightedness. There is a name to it: short-terminism.

A number of reliable experts and researchers try to attract our attention to the mid- and long-term consequences of our behaviour. However none of the people responsible for our collective choices and decisions seem to pay any attention.

You may find a well-known professor of political science talking to his students about the subtle art of politics and the workings of international relations; however he does not mention the perspective of any predictable change in the global political system surrounding us.

You may read books by reliable authors tending to prove that no improvements in international relations are to be expected for the time being, as international relations have always been made of rivalry and opposition, today more than ever.
As for the media, whatever their status and their mode of expression, they merely keep to commenting current events, aware of adverse comments from the social media.

What about politicians? Conditioned to compete in the struggle for power and eager to hold higher responsibility for their country, they cannot evade the constraints of the political system they belong to, that is, the obligation to obtain short-term results in response to their electors’ demands. Short lapses of time between election periods simply make things worse.

Meanwhile, some manage better than the rest: those who are able to use “global unrest” to forward their own private interests. They know well enough how to use State borders to optimise their financial transactions. They can invest or withdraw wherever they choose as they have only themselves to answer to, if only for the pertinence of their choice. As long as they follow the rules, they are free to act as they please, as they are not directly in charge of the fate of humankind... Isn’t that a bit cynical? Well, perhaps it is.

*
The march towards unity

It all goes back to Ancient times: Aristotle spoke of himself as a Citizen of the World, but his world only stretched as far as the coasts Mediterranean sea...

It is toward the end of the XIXth century with the industrial era and the rapid development of land and sea travel that Mundialistic thought emerged, by opposition to narrow nationalism and exaggerated patriotism.

At the end of World War I, forward-looking state and government leaders started to consider setting up a “supranational” institution: among them President Wilson, as early as 1918, but also Winston Churchill, Jawaharlal Nehru, Leopold Sedar Senghor and many others; encouragements came from personalities from the scientific and literary worlds such as Mahatma Gandhi and Albert Einstein. The first steps towards the unity of the Planet were thus taken, with the creating of the Society of Nations in 1918 and that of the United Nations in 1945.

At the same time, the idea emerged among the public that, if peace were to last, it could only do so with abolishing national borders and establishing a world government...

In 1947 a former member of the French Resistance, Robert Sarazac founded a “Centre of mondialist research and expression” and the “Human Front of World Citizens”. Simultaneously, a former bomber pilot of the US Air Force, Garry Davis, publicly denounced his American nationality and declared himself a “World Citizen”, then, taking advantage of the United Nations General Assembly in Paris, he made his presence known through the press and by writers and intellectuals. His most spec-
tacular action was to disrupt the UN General Assembly on November 19th 1948 by declaring: “In the name of the peoples of the world not represented here today, I am interrupting this meeting” which is the beginning of a text by Albert Camu, and ends like this warning: “I call upon you to summon a Global Constitutive Assembly at once... If you fail to do so, stand down immediately, a General Assembly of Peoples will rise from the masses to set it up”. In 1949 there were 400 000 “World Citizens” in 76 countries!

However, time was not ripe, and history soon took up where it had left in the midst of a cold war between the US and the Soviet Union, soon joined on the international stage by China and other emerging States. Since then, an appeal in 1966 from thirteen people of worldwide repute and, more recently, a “Manifesto for Global Democracy” issued by a number of well-known and reliable personalities have not had any effect.

Meanwhile, those who refer themselves to “world citizenship” or call themselves “World Citizens” tend to keep to the cultural and humanist or humanitarian aspect of the expression, forgetful of its greater and more essential implications, which are political. Indeed, in a few World Citizen associations still in existence, there only remain a few nostalgic individuals with memories full of heroic debates from the post-war era.

The World Citizens’ March towards the political unity of the planet regained some activity when a few French militants decided in 2013, when Olivier d’Argenlieu published « The amazing power of World Citizens », to give the movement a new start. Encouragements came from such personalities as Boutros Boutros-Ghali,

former Secretary General of the United Nations, the philosopher and sociologist Edgar Morin and Stephane Hessel, the author of the best-seller “Indignez-vous”.

Today, the world Citizens’ March is “a global civic movement where men and women across the planet work together to bring the representatives of their countries to sign a new Charter of the United Nations giving birth to a World Federation of Nations”. Starting from France, the country of the rights of Man, the “World Citizens’ March” has now branched out across the five continents. It soon took position in favour of a federal form of organisation to take the place of the present United Nations. The model chosen is the federal model, as it is best able to give the global community the three institutional components that are sadly missing today. It allies the necessary primacy of general interests and the principle of subsidiarity, ensuring the balance of power between various levels of responsibility within a community.

Does this model have any chance to be adopted by the global community? The answer is simple enough.; in each country across the world, its people must pronounce themselves freely in favour of its adoption. To this effect, all the energies and political forces need to be mobilised.

When a sufficient number of our 197 countries, speaking for approximately one half of humankind has taken position in favour of this model, it will be time to set it up to replace the present UNO.

Inevitably, populations of a number of countries and not the lesser ones, may not be willing at first to join a global federation of nations. But the process will gain momentum once a significant number is reached... for nations, are like people : they hate to be left behind!
The stakes are high and the success of this major change for humankind depends largely on the quality of the message sent out. The contents and the language used in the formulation of the "New Charter of the United Nations" are vital.

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The New Charter of the United Nations

As was said by someone who knows that period well,* the 1945 version of the United Nations Charter was written in a very short lapse of time, by a small group of experts brought together at Dumbarton Oaks in Washington, DC. Given the impact it will have on the global community, the New Charter of the United Nations will have to be written with much broader outlook than in in 1945, while observing the same dynamic style. This is why the well known preamble of the original Charter may be kept untouched: “We the peoples of the World...”

However the idea today is not to set up an “agreement for cooperation” between the governments of independent States but to institute an “agreement between peoples” leading to global democracy. Consequently, the two key elements in the new UN Charter will be:

• The repartition of areas of competence between the Federation and the member states.

• The process of setting up a democratic Representation of the Peoples of the world.

On these two points the World Citizens’ March has already given its views in previous issues of our yearly magazine, from 2014 to 2017, and we shall continue to do so. But we clearly stated our wish in 2017 to bring together all searchers, politicians and militants who wish to take part, so that we can benefit from their competence and motivation.

* Pr René Wadlow, President of the Association of World Citizens.
Up to you!

This is mainly for you, between 17 and 25, who have got in most countries of the world the full possession of your civic rights, that this booklet has been wrote.

It is also destined to those of us who can, through their age and experience, work firmly towards more solidarity and brotherhood across the world.

We must keep a sense of awareness and responsibility towards our country. One can never be too concerned or too careful on matters of national community. However, we must also stay aware and responsible as citizens of the World Community which has now come into reality.

Global sovereignty is yours: do not let go: join the World Citizens’ March towards the political unity of the planet!

Those who led the World Citizens’ March from 2014 to 2018 send you their greetings. They are now ready to hand over to you.

The Bureau of the March

O.A. - P.A. - B.L.
Approval and support form

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for first registration only

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Citizen of the World!

Any human being claiming the status of World Citizen is someone who:

• Is aware he/she belongs to, not only to a local, regional or national community, but also to the global community, which has now become a reality.

• Proclaims all men and all women are equal in rights and must stand together in the face of present planetary challenges.

• Claims global sovereignty on an equal standing with all inhabitants of the earth.

• Is ready to militate so that the world community sets up Institutions able to maintain peace, protect the environment and encourage nations to develop in harmony with each other.

• To this purpose, supports the Project for a “World Federation of the Nations” based on a democratic Representation of the people, with a World Authority responsible towards this Representation.

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A pressing need

Because it has become a reality and because it has to face five major planetary challenges, the Global Community needs to be equipped with three institutional components without which no human community can survive and develop durably:

• Rules observed by all

• Authority that sees to the observance of these rules and works toward common interests.

• Representation of the population able to enact its own laws, mandate and control the Authority: this is Democracy!

Who will enact this?

For the time being, national leaders are too busy with their short-term objectives, i.e. maintaining power and meeting the immediate needs of the population. Therefore, it belongs to the people themselves, that is, the inhabitants of the Earth, to bring about the conditions for this necessary change.

This is what the members of the World Citizens’ March are striving for. It is designed to bring together all men and women of our time in a global civic movement intent on incite the representatives of their countries to sign a New Charter of the United Nations, designed to give birth to the World Federation of the Nations.

Initiated in France in 2014 the World Citizens’ March counts representatives on all five continents. Do not hesitate to join us, you will be warmly welcomed.

World Citizens’ March

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