



**WORLDSHIFT 20 DECLARATION**  
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**The Mission of The Worldshift 20 Council**

The Worldshift 20 Council is composed of twenty prominent global citizens from diverse cultures and religions worldwide. The mission of the Council is to give urgent attention to the new condition of the world emerging today and provide essential orientation so that an informed and determined movement toward a peaceful and sustainable planetary civilization could be brought into being.

The Council's mission is to articulate the collective voice of humanity, drawing on the heritage of all peoples, cultures and religions. It is to transcend short-term and self-serving economic and political interests in recognition of the fact that thinking and acting in exclusive reference to narrow national or multi-national agendas cannot solve the problems currently confronting humanity. The pursuit of narrow interests are accelerating systemic breakdown in our presently unsustainable world.

The WS-20 Council intends to shift the attention of the global public and media from the increasingly intractable problems and deepening crises of our deteriorating world to the opportunities and vistas of a new world where seven billion and more human beings can live in peace, prosperity and harmony with each other and the Earth's natural systems.

**The WS-20 Declaration**

**Basic Premises**

On-going efforts by the leaders of the industrialized states to re-adjust the collapsing systems of our unsustainable world are far from a sufficient response to the current crisis. Systemic collapse cannot be either wished away or ignored. Current global systems of economics, governance, societal organization and ecological relationships between humanity and nature must be urgently re-designed based on the consciousness, values and principles which can provide peace and long-term sustainability for the human community. The 'window of opportunity' to begin such a large-scale transition may only remain open for a few years from now.

However, the international community is the prisoner of 'silo thinking' in meetings such as those of the G20. Negotiators from leading economies build upon narrowly specialized agendas inherited from the past; acting in the name of creating more economic growth to make narrowly defined economic coordination problems more negotiable.

This thinking was very evident in the G20's Seoul Summit. The Summit's Declaration reads like an emergency report of Ministers of Trade and Finance, rather than a report on the deliberations on the wellbeing of the world community by the heads of government of our twenty most powerful nations. International trade disequilibria, discriminating



exchange rate policies, and the threat of recurring financial crises occupied center stage, with scant attention to climate change, the global ecology, and the endemic poverty of nearly one half of the world's peoples. While no attention whatsoever was given to the wealth, power, and consumption orientation that dominates the aspirations of the world's influential governments, businesses, and populations.

A focus on short-term global economic and financial issues is crisis management and not an acceptable response by the world's political leaders to humanity's intensifying problems. The kind of economic growth that the G20 treats as a panacea merely bolsters the same unsustainable economic system that is now threatening the wellbeing and even the survival of vast underprivileged populations, and is altering the planet's climate and damaging its ecologies. Today's looming climate, ecology, energy and nuclear threats are neither manageable by purely fiscal measures, nor isolatable into narrow specialty areas.

The human community needs comprehensive structural reform so that our children and grandchildren can live in peace with one another and with the ecological systems that sustain human life and existence. We need to redesign our societies so that they become ecologically and energetically viable. And we need to address the major twin threats to humanity's continuing survival: global warming, and nuclear weapons.

If unstoppable, the climatic changes produced by global warming will come together with such profound synergies that no human power will be sufficient to retain them. They will inexorably synergize in spontaneous interactions and disastrous effects until, in the next 100 years, more than 80 percent of the human species would have perished due to climate-induced catastrophes, epidemics of diseases sweeping into new terrains, and human conflict and war as a result of the most massive migration of peoples in human history - hundreds of millions, even billions of climatic refugees moving across the continents. This prediction, made among others by pioneering biologist James Lovelock, merits sober consideration and urgent action.

The abolition of nuclear weapons, in turn, is no longer merely a lofty goal and noble aspiration: it is essential for human survival. Peace is impossible as long as the threat of nuclear war hangs over our heads. A Nuclear Weapons Convention prohibiting the production as well as the use of all nuclear weapons in all circumstances is urgently needed. In a democratic world, such a Convention must be constructed by awakening the public to the threat of maintaining vast arsenals of weapons that could destroy all life on Earth. Such an awakening is already in progress. In 21 countries, including the five major nuclear powers, polls show that 76 percent of people support negotiation of a treaty banning all nuclear weapons.

But opposition is still strong. Nuclear weapons are about power, and governments have not given up what they perceive as a source of their power. Powerful military-industrial complexes are trading on a fear that has been purposively foisted on the public. In the mainstream media there is a virtual blackout on this subject, which makes it difficult to bring about the consensus needed to democratically initiate measures that could eliminate the nuclear 'Sword of Damocles' that continues to hang over our heads.

## **An Alternative Philosophy**

### **A Conscious Leadership**

There is no longer any time to waste if civilization on this planet is to endure and prosper. It is the responsibility of the people to choose leadership that is knowledgeable and wise, and the responsibility of the leadership to move forward in ways that preserve the viability of the social structure into the future by respecting appropriate global principles.

Conscious leadership is called for by those in positions of decision-taking at every level of society today. National political leaders need the ability to bring what are seen as oppositional forces into collaboration; promoting new skills that can match our inner capacities to the outer complexities of life and integral solutions that honor psychological, biological, social, cultural and environmental dimensions so as to navigate the changes that are upon us; developing new skills, including cultural competencies, social and emotional intelligence that can make it possible to work well together.

We now have the capacities to create integrated planning processes that can lead to new perspectives on every aspect of human endeavor. A global system of enterprise can invite creative breakthroughs. A fresh new approach to governance can invite greater participation from all segments of society. An interconnected web of global commerce can be grounded in a set of priorities that allow for competition in the embrace of cooperation. Business can flourish by putting people first, designing systems of global synergy that can move our world's cultures to new levels of prosperity. Through conscious leadership, we can encompass individual and global needs as an interrelated, interdependent whole.

The leaders of the developed countries need to ask a paramount question: "What good is it to be rich in a sick world?" Having done the most to increase their wealth at the expense of a depleted planet, the leaders of the G-20 should focus on bringing about a well planet for coming generations. Economies everywhere need to be peaceful, fair, sustainable, and healthy on all levels. With global wellness in mind, we can unite to bring the ecology back into balance, eradicate pandemic disease, lift up the dispossessed, and curb military aggression.

Only global thinking can accomplish these ends, but to date the lingering effects of nationalism and tribalism block real progress. Nonetheless, even if we cannot yet think of ourselves as one people, we can agree that we live on one planet. A sick planet is just a few steps away from a dying planet. Once that truth sinks in, effective programs for global wellness have a chance. We may be able to survive in a drastically depleted world, but we cannot be fully human in such a world.

### **A New Consciousness**

We need to leave everything we know behind in order to get to where we need to go. This might seem counterintuitive but it is actually essential, given Einstein's observation



that the consciousness that produced the problem cannot get us out of it; only a new consciousness can. This means that there must be a systemic thorough reinvention of every aspect of humanity - the birth of a new consciousness.

There are many crises affecting humanity and many others are yet to come. All these crises are effects of the same cause: the lack of a “planetary consciousness.” We lack a holistic perspective that embraces both humankind and the ecosystem. In a democracy the majority rules, decides and imposes its laws and behavior, and people with a planetary consciousness are still in the minority.

We need a consciousness that recognizes that wide-ranging cooperation based on solidarity and oriented toward fundamental transformation is the basic precondition for human peace and sustainability. We need a consciousness that inspires and motivates cooperation not only in the economic and financial domain, but also in the domain of the ecology, as well as in technology, education, public information, and cultural communication. We need a planetary consciousness that unambiguously apprehends the interdependence and the Oneness of all People on Earth, and the Oneness of our destiny.

The leaders of the G-20 did not create the world’s problems but perpetuate them by basing their interactions on a limited and narrow level of consciousness. A lack of gratitude toward the environment, exploitive treatment of animal life, plant life and the world of nature, discrimination against people, cultures, and nations - these kinds of destructive behaviors do not originate solely from the minds of a small group of leaders. They also arise from the consciousness of billions of individual human beings. We must support the efforts of each global citizen, whether in a leadership role or not, to take responsibility for uplifting their consciousness thereby safeguarding the future of our human society and the Earth.

### **Re-Orientation in the Public Sector**

Since the publication of the *Limits to Growth* in 1972 many events and movements have rung the alarm bell in the world loud and clear, yet the situation of the planet has not changed for the better. We know that many authoritative international organizations, such as the United Nations and the G-20, have made efforts for bringing about change, and that countless NGOs and grassroots groups have done so as well. However, these efforts have been fragmented and have not been implemented quickly and effectively enough. A Concrete Action Plan is urgently needed for the passengers on Spaceship Earth for spreading and sharing planetary consciousness, and thereby producing the foundations for a new way of living and acting in society.

We need to replace the obsolete notions of nation-states, where national governments are in charge of ensuring the national interest, which they conceive as achieving the objective of bringing about “recovery,” “renewed stability” and “balanced growth” in their own economy. Instead of attempts to re-vitalize the current intrinsically unsustainable and terminally crisis-bound system, a thorough transformation of current structures and practices is required.



We need a new social function based on partnership between Governments, NGO's and Civil Society to connect and communicate 'breakthroughs' wherever they occur in the global community. The requirement is for a new function to enhance social synergy and cooperation of all that is creative and emergent leading and able to motivate a whole-system shift. Through the Internet we can scan for, map, connect and communicate what is working in the world, country by country and community by community.

The debacle of Copenhagen last December demonstrated the inability of intergovernmental organizations to transcend national and corporate interests and deal objectively with critical global issues. This tragic failure was due to a lack of understanding that the global crisis is actually a whole-system crisis of the human spirit. By ignoring the spiritual dimension of human reality and continuing to reduce everything to economics, the world will only spiral toward greater and greater catastrophes. The G-20 perpetuates this failure of perspective. We are at a point in time when the spiritual dimension must become paramount in issues of decision making. World leaders should be committed in their decision-making processes to spiritual principles higher than monetary politics, and to the realization that the planet is a whole system and that, therefore, all decisions for the global good must be made on that basis lest the human species forfeit its future.

It is fundamental for leaders to encourage widespread support for the discovery of a deeper meaning of life, an inner joy that is not dependent on circumstances and a compassion that leads to care for other beings. We need to co-create a world in which we can live together free in harmony with our surroundings based on a collective awakening, and governed by wisdom and compassion rather than by greed and fear.

Governments need to consider whether the entire concept of spirituality needs to be rearticulated in the light of a global society. Spirituality cuts across barriers of race and religion, sex and nationality, and is therefore best suited for a global community. We need to re-articulate certain universal concepts that will enable us to cope with the challenges and hazards of globalization. Many of these concepts are in the great religious traditions of humanity. They need to be rediscovered and reaffirmed in the context of the contemporary world.

### **Urgent Institutional Steps**

Nation-States must work together to address critical challenges. All states should establish an office for the specific fulfillment of the Millennium Development Goals and establish a regular reporting system on the progress of each state's plan to fulfill its Millennium Development Goal commitments. Capital is a means to that end, not an end in itself. Capital must be protected as other property rights, but not in derogation of adverse impacts on the rights of individual people and biological systems that have existential value beyond the market. Life itself must be understood as sacred and revered. A new bottom line must be established which incorporates the well-being of the environment and of people as part of the social bargain of society as a limited liability

entity. We must implement a proper valuation of the natural world independent of human interests at all levels of wealth measurement. National sovereignty must be balanced with universal norms and values based on principles of harmony with nature, identification of shared interests in peace amongst states, and the rule of law.

We need to create a Social Harmony Index in every nation of the world. It is to consist of an environmental index, armament index, human rights index, honesty index, freedom index, democracy index, free flowing information index, government public affairs index, public security index, rich poor gap index, urban rural index, education popularization index, national physical condition index, creative ability index, social security index, as well as others. By integrating these data over decades we get the Social Harmony Index (SHI), a composite evaluation of every society and its rating in the world. By integrating the SHI of all countries, we get the World Social Harmony (WSHI) and can perceive its pattern of change year by year. These indices need to be evaluated, integrated and re-issued every year by a special organization attached to the United Nations or to the G-20. They will serve as a frame of reference for every country's development and by spurring the rectification of deviations, enhance the impact of public opinion on the government. Every Nation should now be looking to intensify SHI competition and weaken GDP competition in the world.

Everyone benefits from healthy eco-systems, financially sound institutions, and thriving human communities. Thus rethinking the design assumptions of the regulatory framework of capital markets and rebuilding trust is an urgent global priority. Principles to be urgently implemented include:

- democratizing finance and widening the debate on reform by including all stakeholders and the innovations of experts and groups advocating deeper restructuring and reforms;
- reframing global finance as a commons;
- economic theory informed by breakthroughs in a wide range of social and biological sciences;
- a commons approach where markets, as tools, can be designed to allocate indivisible "non-rival" public goods and infrastructures for equitable access and opportunities for human development.
- drawing attention to the many innovations that serve our common needs in stabilizing climate and creating equitable tools;
- energy solutions may not be in the new production of renewable energy. They may come from research on energy efficiency. This could allow us to avoid the production of nuclear energy, to eliminate energy from coal and other non-renewable sources, and the need for production of new energy;
- creating a vision of the world in which the financial system serves a flourishing and sustainable human future.

We must make sure that the interdependence of financial markets become just, equitable, stable and sustainable. In this context we need to shift to a more mature "invisible" form of capitalism. This means shifting:

- from an Operational Economy based on the concept of mechanical systems to a Complexity Economy based on living systems;
- from a Knowledge Economy based on visible capital to an Empathy Economy based on invisible capital generated by trust and empathy among people with an awareness of invisible "trade-offs" between present and future generations;
- from a Monetary Economy to a Voluntary Economy as the chief economic principle;
- from a Beneficiary Economy to a Participatory Economy reflecting the real needs of citizens; and
- from the illusion of an Unlimited Growth Economy to the shared reality of a Global Environment Economy.

Taking a whole system approach for this, the most critical time in human history, the decisions we make over the next few years will determine whether we grow or die, whether the 13.8 billion year experiment that resulted in our lives will end within the next century or two. What the world so desperately needs at this time is patterns for peaceful, passionately creative and effective societies. And with it peaceful, passionately creative and effective people - in other words the possible human in the possible society. In other words, the growth of consciousness as the paramount key to the necessary transition to a world that works for everyone and most particularly for the Planet.

We are called to take initiatives that until recently would have seemed unlikely, if not downright impossible. But now the world has been rearranged, the reset button has been hit. We no longer have the luxury of sloth or continuing in the same world destructive patterns. We must now become stewards of the planet filled with enough passion for the possible to partner one another through the greatest social transformation ever known.

We glimpse in this new century, the coming of a Planetary Society which heralds the end of ancient and modern enmities (including that towards Nature) and the birth of new ways of using and honoring our common Humanity and its various cultures. In fact, we need a gathering of the potentials of the whole human race and the particular genius of every culture if we are going to survive our time.

This is a tremendous change, and once it is in full flower, the world will have turned a corner. Sadly today, however, we have a situation where culture has become a satellite to economics instead of economics being a satellite to culture; where the economic and governance systems we have designed and implemented are effectively blocking our collective creative potential and the possibilities for the needed transformation; where national leaders remain the gatekeepers of the old and disintegrating rather than collaborative pioneers of the new and transformative.

For the first time in human history, planetary consciousness, world peace and global sustainability are attainable goals. There are more women now in decision-making positions, and non-physical participation is made possible by the modern technologies of communication. All together, we can now create the world of which we dream.



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The Worldshift 20 Council Declaration was co-created with the input of all 20 Members, and co-crafted by Ervin Laszlo, David Woolfson and Claudia Welss.

**<http://worldshiftcouncil.org>**