

A New Culture of Peace:

Can We Hope That Global Society Will Enter Into a Harmonious Information Age?

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Abstract

Can we hope that global society will enter into a harmonious information age, as Russian sociologist Leo Semashko suggests? Or is this nothing more than an illusionary wish? Currently, the gap between rich and poor widens, both locally and globally, and the haves-nots watch how elites overindulge in luxury goods. We live in a *ramshackle global village*, resembling what John Stewart Mill in the nineteenth century called a *ramshackle state*. In many ways we face the anarchic world that Robert Kaplan (1994), describes in *The Coming Anarchy*, with overpopulation, resource scarcity, terror, crime, and disease compounding cultural and ethnic differences and rendering us a chaotic, anarchic world.

A central question of our times is whether the deplorable state of the *global village* is an expression of the *essence* of *globalisation* or a *side effect* that can be remedied. My proposition is that the current obscene state of the world is indeed a *side effect* and that we need *more* globalisation and not less, however, that we have to create a new kind of globalisation, namely globalisation wedded to what I call *egalisation*. I believe that we have a chance to build a *decent global village*, following the call for a *decent society* by Avishai Margalit (1996), if we manage to harness globalisation with egalisation.

I suggest that we need to begin by looking at human history in a different fashion than is usually done, namely by using a larger time horizon. William Ury (1999), anthropologist, and director of the *Harvard University Project on Preventing War*, drew up a *simplified depiction of history*. He pulls together elements from *anthropology*, *game theory* and *conflict studies* to describe three major types of society: a) *simple hunter-gatherers*, b) *complex agriculturists*, and c) the currently emerging *knowledge society*.

Samuel L. Gaertner and John F. Dovidio show in their research that an environment that is defined by win-win framings is more benign than environments of win-lose conditions. A win-win situation lends itself to cooperation, while zero sum circumstances increase the likelihood of divisions among people. If we take Ury's historic picture, we find that a rather benign period of hunting-gathering (the resource being wild food, rendering a win-win frame) was followed by a comparably malign period of agriculture (the resource being land, forcing people into a win-lose frame), leading up to today's benign promise of knowledge rendering a win-win frame. In other words, the innovative ideas that push modern technologies that in turn power globalisation render a benign win-win push towards cooperation. As invisible as this benign trend might seem at the current point in history, it nevertheless does rest at the heart of what we call *globalisation*.

Another benign aspect in globalisation, aside from knowledge fostering a win-win frame, is the waning of out-group bias. Humankind is being freed from destructive biases in tact with the emergence of the idea and reality of *one single family of humankind* who

is jointly responsible for their tiny home planet Earth. A host of destructive *biases* arises when we engage in polarising “us,” or our in-group,” from “them,” or our out-groups. Globalisation, or the coming together of humankind, or what anthropologists call the *ingathering* of the human tribe, by creating *one single in-group*, does away with destructive psychological biases.

There are other benign trends hidden within globalisation. For example, in tact with the coming-into-being of one single in-group, the so-called security dilemma wanes, a destructive dilemma discussed in international relations theory. Or, the coming-into-being of one single in-group also fosters the benign promise to all human beings that they are invited to use their full capacities instead of being pressed into social prisons of domination/submission designed to fight out-groups.

However, we ask, if all this is correct, how come that we live in such an obscene world where a few indulge in conspicuous over-consumption and the majority lives in squalor?

In order to disentangle negative and positive elements at the current historic juncture that brought “globalisation critics” to the fore, I coined the word *egalisation*. Egalisation is meant to match the word *globalisation* and at the same time differentiate it from words such as equality, equity, or egalitarianism. The main point is *equal dignity* as stipulated in the Human Rights Convention. The first sentence in Article 1 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights reads, “All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights.” Human rights ideals oppose hierarchical rankings of human worthiness that were once regarded as “normal” – and are still “normal” in many parts of the world.

What are the solutions? What do we have to do to “save the world”? I propose that we have to a) discard some old assumption that are wrong, b) we have to develop world views that are both more adapted to the new reality of a globalising interdependent world and more apt to promote constructive strategies for further development, and c) we have to learn the skills to implement our new insights, and d) build institutions that give structure to our new strategies.

Some peace advocates indulge in unrealistic expectations and are continuously astonished that the world is “bad.” They seem to believe that the world ought to be “good,” full of love and harmony, and wallow in indignation at its lack, spending their time and energy on ranting. They resist recognising that the situation is much more complicated. Indeed, love may even lead to violence and war. It needs everybody’s efforts to make the world “good.” We need a fair amount of revolutionary optimism to accept the task of “making the world good.” Pessimism and indignation-entrepreneurship are luxuries that can be afforded only in good times. In times of emergency, they represent a suicidal death sentence because they drain the very drop of energy that might save the situation.

I believe that a *benign future* lies ahead for the *global village*, if we manage to steer clear of the *malignancies* threatening in the short term. Those threats are largely linked to the phenomenon of humiliation. If not curbed, the dynamics of humiliation could undermine all the benign tendencies. Our hope lies in the fact that many countries have learned to tame their internal tendencies toward Hobbesian anarchy, and in the process have created models that can be followed at the global level. These models operate from the benign belief that *one single interdependent in-group* can exist where differences are not divisive but diversity is embedded into mutual respect. We need to realise such models on the global level. And we need to imbue them with a worldwide commitment to

overcoming the lack of egalisation that currently humiliates humanity. To capitalise on the benign tendencies of the *global village*, we must call for a *Moratorium on Humiliation*. If we succeed in doing all this, I believe, we indeed can hope that global society has a chance to enter into a harmonious information age.

Introduction

Is there a “harmonious era” in sight for global society in an information age? Sociology professor Leo Semashko from St. Petersburg in Russia suggests this in his *tetrasociological studies* (www.peacefromharmony.spb.ru)? Many doubt it.

I agree with both, the doubters and Semashko, yet in different ways. I believe that Semashko’s view has value as a long-term guiding vision, while the doubters have a point in the short-term. I believe that humankind has a chance in the long-term if we manage to steer clear of the minefield that loom in the short-term.

Let me first turn to the doubts. A consultant to the corporate sector, working globally, expressed his qualms to me (in a personal email, 1st May 2006), explaining that he does not see any benefits flowing from global society in an information age:

I am not convinced of the shrinking of the world, outside of the minds and horizons of Western Europeans, North Americans and a few others. I recently was confronted with the fact that 70% of the people on this planet have never used a telephone, let alone a computer. And I don’t think there’s anything bad or wrong with that. I don’t think the technology has improved human life to any significant degree. In Western societies most people today are significantly more affluent and significantly less happy than they were almost a century ago. In recent years I have begun to notice the most disgusting smell emanating from the concept of “business” and corporate enterprise as it is practiced within the global mercantile system. It seems to me that the ingrained humiliation foisted upon us by our own rendering of the oils of commerce has resulted in a general depravity of spirit and vision. And I believe the world needs a new model.

An American scholar wrote to me (in a personal email, 25th April 2006):

Sadly, competition has been referred to as a “secular religion” in the US; see, for example, Alfie Kohn (1992), *The Case Against Competition*. The US has developed an economic system that is rooted in the quest for domination (new frontier mentality), rather than cooperation and mutually-beneficial co-existence. ...The free market in the US is driven by “self-interest” and competition. Here is what the US Department of State says: “By following their own self-interest in open and competitive markets, consumers, producers, and workers are led to use their economic resources in ways that have the greatest value to the national economy – at least in terms of satisfying more of people’s wants” (<http://usinfo.state.gov/products/pubs/market/mktec6.htm>). Despite what the government says, I think the US market system promotes the destruction of the environment as well as the exploitation of workers. In addition ... the American market-driven ethic of self-interest and cut-throat competition encourages disrespect.

Indeed, doubts are legitimate. We currently live in a *ramshackle global village*, resembling what John Stewart Mill in the nineteenth century called a *ramshackle state*. In many ways we face the anarchic world that Robert Kaplan (1994), describes in *The Coming Anarchy*, with overpopulation, resource scarcity, terror, crime, and disease compounding cultural and ethnic differences and rendering us a chaotic, anarchic world. *The Affluent Society* was a book written by John Kenneth Galbraith (1958), the famous liberal economist, who just died at the age of 97. He staunchly criticised the current state of affairs where *private wealth* is combined with *public squalor*. And indeed, a 2006 opinion poll in England by Gfk NOP (Growth from Knowledge, <http://www.gfknop.co.uk/>) provides evidence that Britain's happiness levels are declining – a trend already well documented in the United States (see http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/programmes/happiness_formula/4771908.stm for an overview).

At this point, should we lose hope? Should we become even more unhappy and depressed? Is the best choice we have diverting depression by spending our last days having some fun? Is it futile to work for a *decent global village*, following the call for a *decent society* by Avishai Margalit (1996)? Is it hopeless to think that it is at all possible to create a decent *global village* with *sturdy local and global institutional structures* that heed principles of *good governance* and *transparency*, both locally and globally, and provide *quality of life to all its citizens*, not just to a few?

The situation might be hopeless, yes. However, if we do not try to save it, we will never know whether it is possible. If we give up prematurely, we guarantee failure. We need a fair amount of revolutionary optimism if we are to have a chance. Pessimism is a luxury that we can afford only in good times. In times of emergency, pessimism represents a suicidal death sentence because it drains the very drop of energy that might save the situation.

A central question of our times is whether the deplorable state of the *global village* is an expression of the *essence of globalisation* or a *side effect* that can be remedied. When a strategy fails or a development goes wrong, is it because we have too much of it and better stop it, or is that that we have not yet enough of it and have to push for more of it? Or do we have to bring our strategy more to scale, tailor-make it better, change the composition?

I have a background in both medicine and psychology. As a medical student, similar questions we continuously asked: Was the cancer patient not getting better because she received too much medication? Or too little? Or was it the composition of drugs that had to be amended? Were the patient's symptoms side effects which proved that the treatment worked, or did they signal that the treatment failed? Was the answer *less* treatment, or *more*, or *better adapted*?

My position is that our current obscene state of the world is indeed a *side effect* and that we have to have *more* globalisation and not less, however, that we have to change the *composition* of globalisation. We have to not just promote any kind of globalisation but need to harness *globalisation* with what I call *egalisation*. Let me explain more further down in this paper. I will begin with a look at human history that embraces a larger picture than usually included.

A look at human history

In my work, I treat concepts such as *democracy, communism, capitalism, modernism, postmodernism*, and *modern information age* as *epiphenomena, or side effects* of deeper *logics*, which are inscribed in a time frame that reaches back more than 10,000 years.

William Ury (1999), anthropologist, and director of the *Harvard University Project on Preventing War*, drew up a *simplified depiction of history*. He pulls together elements from *anthropology, game theory* and *conflict studies* to describe three major types of society: a) *simple hunter-gatherers*, b) *complex agriculturists*, and c) the currently emerging *knowledge society*.

In Ury's system, simple hunter-gatherers, (a), live in a world of coexistence and open networks, within which conflicts are negotiated, rather than addressed by coercion. The abundance of wild food represents an expandable pie of resources that does not force opponents into win-lose paradigms. Complex agriculturalists, (b), on the other hand, live in a world of coercion. They lead their lives within closed hierarchical pyramids of power on land that represents a fixed pie and pushes antagonists into win-lose situations governed by strict rules. Knowledge society, (c), resembles the hunter-gatherer model because the pie of resources – knowledge – appears to be infinitely expandable, lending itself to win-win solutions. This type of society rejects the tightly knit hierarchical structure in favour of the open network espoused by our earliest ancestors. Negotiation and contract replace command lines, and coexistence is the primary strategy.

Samuel L. Gaertner and John F. Dovidio (1999) show in their research that an environment that rests on win-win conditions is more benign than environments framed by win-lose conditions. Gaertner and Dovidio (1999) explain that a win-win situation lends itself to cooperation, while zero sum circumstances increase the likelihood of divisions among people. If we take Ury's historic picture, we find that a rather benign period of hunting-gathering was followed by a relatively malign period of complex agriculture, leading up to the benign promise of a win-win framing through knowledge in a global knowledge society.

Unlike land, knowledge – ideas, new thoughts, and novel inventions – has no limits. Agriculturalists depend on land, while information bearers find themselves in win-win situations; there is always another innovation out there waiting to be invented (I am not speaking of crude economic growth here, on the contrary). The innovative ideas that power modern technologies that in turn power globalisation therefore also render a *benign* win-win push towards cooperation. These are good news, as invisible as this benign push might appear to be at the current point in history.

But not only is the inherent win-win nature of knowledge good news. Globalisation in itself entails many more positive elements. Among these positive elements is the waning of in-group/out-groups divisions. Humankind is being freed from destructive biases in tact with the emergence of the idea and reality of *one single family of humankind* who is jointly responsible for their tiny home planet Earth. A host of destructive *biases* arises when we engage in polarising “us,” or our in-group,” from “them,” or our out-groups. As long as we polarise in-groups from out-groups, we suffer from biases such as *attributions errors* and *false polarisation effect*, to name just a few, all of which are not conducive to fruitful cooperation. Globalisation, or the coming together of humankind, or what anthropologists call the *ingathering* of the human tribe, by creating *one single in-group*,

does away with destructive psychological biases. These are very good news. At the same time, the coming-into-being of one single in-group fosters a benign promise to all human beings, namely that they all are invited to use their full capacities instead of being pressed into social prisons of domination/submission designed to fight out-groups.

However, we ask, if all this is correct, how come that we live in such an obscene world where a few indulge in conspicuous over-consumption and the majority lives in squalor?

In order to disentangle malign and benign influences at the current point in human history, I have coined the term *egalisation*.

Globalisation & egalisation

I coined the word *egalisation* in order to disentangle negative and positive elements in the current predominant trends (primarily globalisation and the human rights movement), that brought so-called “globalisation critics” to the fore. Egalisation is meant to match the word *globalisation* and at the same time differentiate it from words such as equality, equity, or egalitarianism. The main point is *equal dignity* as stipulated in the Human Rights Convention. The first sentence in Article 1 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights reads, “All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights.” Human rights ideals oppose hierarchical rankings of human worthiness that were once regarded as “normal” (and are still “normal” in many parts of the world).

The term egalisation is meant to avoid claiming that everybody should become equal or the same and that there should be no differences between people. *Egality* can coexist with functional hierarchy that regards all participants as possessing equal dignity; equality can not coexist, though, with hierarchy that defines some people as lesser beings and others as more valuable. (Even though egalisation is not the same as equality, there is a connection between equality and equal dignity that is “hidden” in the human rights stipulation that equal chances and enabling environments for all are necessary to protect human dignity.)

Globalisation is powered by technology and our use of it, while *egalisation* depends on our day-to-day moral sentiments and moral decisions. Egalisation is about our relations with others and ourselves, whether we deem it right to look *up* or *down* on others in a system of domination/submission or whether we believe we should treat all with equal respect and ought to refrain from humiliating people. Egalisation is about whether we use fear as the “glue” for coercive hierarchies or prefer to live in creative networks held together by mutual respect and the avoidance of humiliation.

If we imagine the world as a container with a height and a width, globalisation has to do with the horizontal dimension, the shrinking width. Egalisation concerns the vertical dimension. “Globalisation critics” oppose a lack of egalisation entailed in the current design of globalisation. Globalisation critics do not necessarily wish for less globalisation, but for a different kind of globalisation. They want this world not only to shrink in “width,” but also to become “flatter.” (Globalisation indeed entails a push toward egalisation, albeit with a painful time lag and in a hurtfully uncoordinated way. In his last book, Thomas L. Friedman (2005) describes how the current round of globalisation – he calls it *Globalisation 3.0* – contributes to making the world *flatter*.)

Human rights advocates wish to do more than bring down tyrants (and let them be replaced by new tyrants); human rights promoters aim at dismantling the very system that keeps supposedly “higher” beings above “lower” beings. Egalisation means dismantling oppressive hierarchies and building institutions, both locally and globally, that respect that every citizen is equal in dignity, while healing, preventing and avoiding humiliation. This vision is in line with Margalit’s (1996) call that we need to build a *decent* society, or, in the case of the whole world, a *decent global village* – a world based on human rights, extending the opportunity for dignified lives to all.

The traps on the way

I believe that it is a worthy goal to work for a future world where the positive aspects that globalisation can provide (win-win framings, the formation of one in-group with all its benign consequences) are wedded to egalisation (equal dignity and enabling environments for all citizens).

However, it is important to be aware that in the cross-fire between the old paradigm (of higher and lesser beings), and the new paradigm (of equal dignity for all), particularly hot feelings of humiliation emerge. When people accept the human rights message, they feel that their humanity is being humiliated when their dignity is violated.

And human dignity is indeed being violated widely at the current point in time. The transition from old ranking norms to a world defined by human rights is progressing too slowly and too incoherently, with an obscenely long detour through empty human rights rhetoric. If a Martian consultant came to planet Earth, the verdict would be that humankind manages the transition from ranked societies to societies of equal dignity abysmally amateurish.

One of the problems is that globalisation can very well occur without egalisation. This is precisely what appears to be happening at present when we consider that the gap between the rich at the top and the poor at the bottom is growing, both locally and globally. And this is a deeply humiliating state of affairs for every person who has adopted human rights as his or her normative frame. Globalisation without egalisation is a story of the container getting narrower and higher instead of flatter. It is a world of a few elites exploiting the rest, keeping a strict authoritarian hierarchy of submission/domination in place.

What makes the current transition towards egalisation particularly vulnerable to potentially dangerous outcomes is that both universes, the “high container” of globalisation alone, and the “flat container” of globalisation wedded to egalisation, have diametrically opposed normative sets of values and “attitudes of everyday life” that are irreconcilable but expressed in identical language.

The term *harmonious*, for example, can be understood in two ways. Harmony, in a human rights context, describes the successful calibration of whatever conflicting interests might exist between players who all respect each other’s equal dignity and nurture mutual recognition and connection. In contrast, in old times, harmony was linked to oppression. For long stretches of history – and still today in many segments of global society – it was normal that the pain felt by cowed underlings was defined as being “good” for them, not only for them, but “good” also for the whole order of society,

similar to a medical treatment that is “good” only when it hurts. Harmony was defined as a state of affairs where underlings meekly accepted their lowly lot. When they protested, this was called “disharmony.” Harmony, in the old order, was expressed when a beaten woman was quiet. In that context, a quiet woman was a good and harmonious woman.

Semashko’s vision of a harmonious era may therefore be misunderstood as an Orwellian vision of people being manipulated, cowed, and terrorised into quietly accepting exploitation and oppression, while he defines it as a vision of dignified players respecting each others’ equal dignity and engaging in negotiating diversity, dissent, and conflicting interests in an atmosphere of mutual recognition and connection.

Likewise, terms such as *peace* and *stability*, or *freedom* and *empowerment*, have two potential meanings, one within the context of a *global village* of a few dominating the rest, and another, completely different meaning within the concept of the human rights vision. The same terms that human rights advocates use in hope for a more egalised world, can be used by tyrants to secure their privileges and their grip on underlings. Tyrants may call for “freedom” for their interest groups to “secure” a “pseudodemocratic” system to provide “stability,” “peace,” and “empowerment” to their constituency. The thief says: “It is my freedom to steal from the poor!” and “It is my freedom to define ‘might is right’ as right.” However, should we agree with the thieves of this world?

Also the term *free market* that has been alluded to in the beginning of this text, is among those terms and concepts that have fallen prey to the confusion between reality and rhetoric. Many critics of the abysmal abject poverty to be seen around the world reason that we need to do away with free market. However, the problem on the ground is precisely that the world market, at present, is not free, due to some powerful “thieves” calling exploitation “free market.” The current Doha Round illustrates this to everybody’s inspection. It is obscene to see that the rich close their borders and ask the poor to open theirs. It is obscene to see the amount of subsidy a cow in Europe and America receives per day – about US \$ 2.5 per head – is more than twice the average daily income of a small farmer in the rest of the world, or more than the average earnings of half of the population of the world. This is not a world with a free global market.

Words are treacherous. Therefore, merely throwing out words does not suffice. Only deeds show the actual scope that such words describe.

The solutions

Michio Kaku (2005), renowned physicist and leading expert in string theory, concludes his book on *Parallel Worlds* with the following paragraph:

The generation now alive is perhaps the most important generation of humans ever to walk the Earth. Unlike previous generations, we hold in our hands the future destiny of our species, whether we soar into fulfilling our promise as a type I civilization [meaning a civilization that succeeds in building a socially and ecologically sustainable world] or fall into the abyss of chaos, pollution, and war. Decisions made by us will reverberate throughout this century. How we resolve global wars, proliferating nuclear weapons, and sectarian and ethnic strife will either lay or destroy

the foundations of a type I civilization. Perhaps the purpose and meaning of the current generation are to make sure that the transition to a type I civilization is a smooth one. The choice is ours. This is the legacy of the generation now alive. This is our destiny (Kaku, 2005, p. 361).

What are the solutions? What do we have to do to “save the world”? I believe that four steps are crucial. We have to 1) discard some old assumption that are wrong, 2) we have to develop world views that are both more adapted to the new reality of a globalising interdependent world and more apt to promote constructive strategies for further development, 3) we have to learn the skills to implement new insights, and 4) build institutions that give structure to new strategies.

Discard old assumptions

One among the many assumptions that stop people from joining in and putting their efforts into building a “better world” is the postulation that “man is aggressive by nature.” Many believe that humans are ravaging predators at their heart, and that therefore those of us who think that the dire state of the world can be improved at all are blue-eyed fools.

This is a mistaken view. For millions of years, hominids evolving towards *Homo sapiens* roamed the globe as hunters and gatherers. They lived in small bands of approximately 200 individuals who enjoyed rather egalitarian societal institutions and remarkably high qualities of life. There is no proof of organised fighting among hunters and gatherers, explains Ury (1999). Jonathan Haas (1998) explains, “The Hobbesian view of humans in a constant state of ‘Warre’ is simply not supported by the archaeological record” (Haas, 1998, p. 8). The absence of evidence for homicide does not prove that it did not occur, but it would be safe to posit that organised killing did not occur until much later, namely during the past 10,000 years that were characterised by a malign win-lose framing, suggesting that “man” is perhaps not aggressive by “nature,” but rather by circumstance. Entering into the win-win frame of a knowledge society entails therefore the promise that “man” is being freed from the malign circumstances of the past 10,000 years that drove humankind into belligerent behaviour.

A host of research from other fields of inquiry underpins that “man” is no predator. On the contrary, the situation of early humans was much humbler. They were prey. Humans evolved to be peaceful and cooperative to avoid being eaten, to avoid becoming “dinner” for predator animals. Scientists outlined these insights most recently at the 2006 American Association for the Advancement of Science (<http://www.aaas.org/>) annual meeting in St Louis, US.

However, the opposite fallacy would be as destructive, namely believing that humans are but love and harmony. The situation is much more complicated. Indeed, love may even lead to violence and war. Some peace advocates indulge in unrealistic expectations and are continuously astonished that the world is “bad.” They seem to believe that the world ought to be “good,” full of love and peace, and wallow in indignation at its lack, spending their time and energy on ranting. They resist recognising that it needs everybody’s efforts to make the world “good.”

There is, furthermore, a host of cognitive limitations and fallacies, well summarised by the proverbial saying that it is bad to “throw out the baby with the water,” that would benefit from being abandoned. The word “nice weather” may illustrate this point. Usually “nice weather” is meant to signify sunny weather. However, if humankind were able to engineer weather – and would create sunny weather without rain, every day, all over the globe – this experiment surely would end up as an ecological disaster. In other words, the word “nice weather” entails dangerous scripts for behaviour. However, since humankind cannot engineer weather, the danger is limited to some people overexposing their bodies to the sun and giving skin cancer fertile ground to grow.

However, in other fields of life, the danger is much greater. Is it a constructive way out of abject poverty and hunger to enter the ranks of obese people? What is good quality of life? Is it attained by accumulating large quantities of money and possessions? Is it attained through striving for “status” by ways of blindly imitating elite behaviour, functional or dysfunctional behaviours alike? It has been widely understood by now that it is a fallacy to believe that oppression is healed and prevented by pressing everybody into sameness. “Communism” does not heal and prevent exploitative hierarchies, particularly not when forced upon people by tyrants; at best, it forces everybody into shared poverty. Or, and these are related fallacies, can justice and equal dignity be attained by methods that entail their violation? Can we bomb people into loving us and peace? Can the world be humanised by methods that involve dehumanisation?

Humiliation is a core culprit in this context. Many people profess their love for peace, while being unaware that their fear of humiliation and their wish to resist humiliation may foreclose peace, at least as long as this resistance is not well thought through. On 26th April 2006, on BBC News, the Sri Lankan Prime Minister told the Tamil Tigers that he does not want war but will not be cowed by attacks. In other words, the desire to resist humiliation may lead to war, unintentionally. Or, challenged as to the Iranian nuclear program, Iran’s president Mahmoud Ahmadinejad posited that Iran will not be bullied into submission. A Somali proverb makes this point even clearer, “A man deserves to be killed and not to be humiliated.”

Hitler imagined future world domination and humiliation from the World Jewry and the Holocaust was his atrocious attempt to “prevent” future humiliation. Eberhard Jäckel (1991) documents that Hitler’s last words during his last conversation on April 2, 1945, were the following: “the world will be eternally grateful to National Socialism that I have extinguished the Jews in Germany and Central Europe” (Jäckel, p. 64). Also in Rwanda, it was imagined humiliation in the future that was “prevented” by genocide.

In short, as long as people have not understood that resisting humiliation can foreclose peace when the Hitler-path is followed, and as long as people have not learned the Mandela-path out of humiliation, there is no hope (I treat Nelson Mandela in an *ideal type* fashion and focus on his constructive strategies, which, I feel, are not minimised by various criticisms that people may be directing at him as a person).

Develop new world views

Robert Axelrod (1990) explored computer models of the iterated *Prisoner’s Dilemma* game (which gives two players the chance to cooperate or betray one another) and

formalised the *evolutionary tit-for-tat* strategy. Axelrod's key finding is that the *evolutionary tit-for-tat* strategy – also known as reciprocal altruism – is remarkably successful and defeats all other strategies, increasing the benefits of cooperation over time and protecting participants from predators. In *Deutsch's Crude Law of Social Relations*, Morton Deutsch (1973) stipulates that “cooperation breeds cooperation, while competition breeds competition” (Deutsch, 1973, p. 367).

The important point for prosocial results is that the *Prisoner's Dilemma* game is repeated many times, because people are more tempted to cheat when they know they will never see one another again and are more likely to cooperate when cheating is costly. Peter Singer (1999), who describes himself as a “Darwinian Left,” suggests that, in order to create a more peaceful world, we need to set up situations in which people experience long-term relationships in which they do better by cooperating than by exploiting one another. Indeed, globalisation does just this. Globalisation encourages formerly *separate* entities to join *one single unit of interdependent relationships*. It is no longer strategically intelligent to hide behind thick emotional walls, isolated out of fear of being cheated. Entering altruistic and cooperative relationships is the better strategy, even though you may occasionally encounter predators.

I suggest there are six logics at the core of the human condition (this model is expanded from the initial four logics that I developed in 2000):

- (1) The question of whether and to what extent resources are expandable (*game theory*, as developed within *philosophy*),
- (2) The question of whether *out-group biases* are stronger or weaker (*social psychology*),
- (3) The question of whether the *security dilemma* is stronger or weaker (*international relations theory*, as developed within *political science*),
- (4) The question as to which extent human beings can use their full potential or not (*social psychology*),
- (5) The question as to what extent long-term or short-term horizons dominate (as described in many academic disciplines, among others *cross-cultural psychology*),
- (6) The question of how the human capacity to tighten or loosen fault lines of identification is calibrated (*social identity theory*, developed by *social psychology*).

All points are linked to globalisation in some ways or the other. Point (1) is linked to globalisation indirectly, through the knowledge that drives it and the inherent nature of knowledge being what game theory calls an expandable pie. Point (2) depends on whether the playing field is defined by several units or by one unit. The coming into being of a so-called *global village* indeed promises the emergence of *one single* unit with *inner* problems. This is a rather benign constellation, as opposed to *many* “villages” trying to solve problems with out-groups, a setting that makes everybody fall prey to destructive out-group bias. Also the state of the security dilemma (3) is linked to globalisation. The security dilemma wanes in tact with the emergence of the reality and imagery of one single in-group.

Point (4), as well, is facilitated by the emergence of a *one-in-group* reality and imagery where all are jointly responsible for their habitat. The traditional division of labour between elites and underlings has handicapped both. In a traditional marriage, for

example, the man decides, but does not change the diapers of his babies, while the woman maintains the harmony of the family, but does not define the larger frame. Neither of them uses their full potential. The man utilises only his right sword arm so-to-speak, and the woman only the left arm of nurturing. In contrast, in an interdependent world that needs peace and creativity, both are needed to use both arms – women can learn to lead and strategise and men to nurture.

Points (5) and (6), equally, receive a push from globalisation. Becoming aware of the fragility of humankind's tiny home fosters a long time horizon, (5), and with it constructive *evolutionary tit-for-tat* approaches. And success in a global market, where innovation and creativity count and not submissive obedience, is not achieved without (6), namely new respect for equal dignity for all world citizens.

In 2000, I wrote, in Lindner (2000):

The most benign scenario is a combination of weak Security Dilemma, expandable pie, long time horizon, and an atmosphere of respect. Conversely, the worst scenario brings together a short time horizon, positioned in an environment that represents a fixed pie of resources, combined with a strong Security Dilemma, within which individuals or groups are exposed to humiliating assaults. As already mentioned, feelings of humiliation and their consequences may be so strong that they override and undermine otherwise "benign" scenarios, in a downward spiral. This model of the human condition may be instrumental to analyzing social change over long time stretches and in different world regions, as well as aid future strategy planning for governments and international organizations. It indicates that the destructive nature of the dynamics of humiliation becomes the more visible the more the other parameters veer to the benign side (p. 439).

To summarise, it seems a worthy goal to work for a world where people use a long-term horizon for strategising and planning, a setting that fosters the application of the beneficial *evolutionary tit-for-tat* strategy. This is helped by humankind becoming aware that it inhabits a tiny planet for which it is jointly responsible. It is furthermore useful to promote a world that regards knowledge as its resource, because this renders a win-win framing. Moreover, out-group biases benefit from being done away with. The world is also better off without the security dilemma. Luckily, the coming together of humankind promotes the weakening of this destructive dilemma and, in the same sweep, frees human beings from preparing for war and having to accept divisions of labour that hinder both underlings and elites to use their full potential. The ingathering of the human tribes promotes all these beneficial effects. And, finally, it is beneficial to work for a world with a strong sense of respect for everybody's equal dignity.

In short, promoting globalisation helps, because it entails the potential to facilitate a host of benign effects and framings, however, only as long as it is harnessed by egalisation.

In practice, egalisation is a task that needs to be carried out at all levels, from macro to micro levels, and in all fields of life. The current Doha Round concerns the macro level in the field of international relations, namely the building of a decent *global village* with decent global rules. Initiatives such as fostering micro credit schemes or participating in

competitions such as The World Challenge (www.theworldchallenge.co.uk), concern the meso level. Empowering the downtrodden can be achieved at many levels, including micro levels. The task of egalisation even reaches into intrapersonal arenas, inside the mind of every individual. A woman is traditionally socialised to care and nurture; she can be invited into learning how to lead. A man is traditionally taught to be fearless and ready for fight; he has now an opportunity to learn how to maintain harmony. Globalisation wedded to egalisation gives men and women, elites and underlings, unprecedented new opportunities to unfold the entirety of their humanness and celebrate shared humanity. No longer do male leaders strategise and female underlings nurture, all are invited to use all their faculties and become full human beings. All this also concerns the topics of “learning new skill” and “building new institutions” which I discuss in the following.

Learn new skills

What do we need to learn for building a better world? Which new skills do we have to acquire? Which sources of satisfaction are productive and which are counterproductive? Are their segments in our social behaviour repertoire where we behave like drug addicts who yearn for the next fix and do not care about health and survival?

What we can be sure about is that merely wishing for harmony is not sufficient. There is no hope for harmony to emerge as long as we are stuck in the old definition of harmony with underlings being expected to quietly accept oppression. Harmony has no chance until we learn the skills necessary to give life to the new definition of harmony as something to be attained by players of equal dignity.

From my time as a clinical psychologist, I remember the lament of one of my clients. She told me how every year, at Christmas, she would tell her family that this was a feast of love and harmony and that everybody ought to refrain from quarrelling. The result was, invariably, that the first day of the family gathering was characterised by doors being slammed angrily, and on the second day everybody could be found locking themselves up in their rooms, crying and ranting.

Once, I tried to mediate in a quarrel in an international peace NGO. One of the members had criticised the director. The director, together with his board, was pitted against the dissenter. I failed in my efforts to show them that for their goal of building a better world, a world without genocide, war and violence, they ought to walk the talk and communicate with other human beings in ways that did not entail hatred and aggressive campaigns, not even for the sake of defense. I was amazed at the amount of venom the board of directors was able to produce against the dissenter. Here we met highly trained academics with idealistic goals, and they were almost indistinguishable from a gathering of immature drunkards who find satisfaction in hurling vulgar insults against whoever passes by. They took the opportunity given to them by the need for defense as license to go for cheap self-oriented satisfactions.

When we analyse how genocide is organised, as in Nazi Germany during World War II, or in Rwanda in 1994, the instigators began with identifying an out-group and then marking them as such (both, in Germany and Rwanda, physical features did not safely decide differentiation). In Nazi-Germany, Jews, for example, were forced to wear yellow stars on their clothes; in Rwanda, identity cards served the same end. Then, in a next step,

the out-group was being ridiculed and demeaned. Whatever they did, was interpreted negatively – nothing was positive. Those marked as Jews in Europe, or those identified as Chinese in Indonesia (the “Jews” of Asia), instead of reaping recognition for their diligence, were disparaged as “ants,” or it was insinuated that their goals were evil (Jews, for example, were accused of aiming at the domination of the world). Then, in a subsequent step in this “salami-tactic” approach, slowly, the contempt for the out-group was augmented and increasingly more venom was produced, preparing for the atrocities that followed.

Without being aware of it, the NGO of peace-makers and anti-genocide activists that I tried to counsel, within their own group, went down precisely the path they wished to free the world from – at least the first steps. This is why I highlight the need to *walk the talk* in the network that I founded, Human Dignity and Humiliation Studies (www.humiliationstudies.org). See also Lindner (2006).

If Mandela had used the approach of this NGO, he would have instigated genocide against the white elite in South Africa. In Rwanda, the Hutus, the underlings, when in power, embarked on killing the Tutsis, their former elite. Mandela refrained from going down this path. In order to follow Mandela, I am convinced that we have to learn to walk the talk.

And the danger is not over, both in South Africa, and in the world at large. Archbishop Tutu spoke to BBC’s Peter Biles and warned “that we are sitting on a powder keg.” “It is the obligation of all of us to be trying to do something about it.” The archbishop spoke of “demeaning” poverty in South Africa today and that “by and large, the white community does not seem to have shown an appreciation for the incredible magnanimity of those who were the major victims of a system from which they [the whites] benefited so much” (<http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/africa/4961418.stm>, 1st May 2006).

We indeed do need the Mandela approach if we want to address the global problems that this world encounters at the current point in time. Global cooperation is the only strategy that can possibly work for solving global problems. In order to build a more peaceful world, we have to learn to cooperate globally.

Could we be more ambitious?

In order to cooperate (in any arena, locally and globally) we have to develop first the *ambition* (and then the necessary *skills*) to build bridges from what we define our in-group to what we reckon to be our out-groups, with the aim to build increasingly larger in-groups with “inner” problems to solve. It is easy to only “preach to the converted,” because our in-groups are already convinced. Yet, cooperation is not achieved when in-groups stay isolated for themselves. In order to increase the amount of cooperation, locally and globally, we have to become more ambitious than resigning ourselves to preaching only to the converted. We have to go beyond huddling within pre-conceived in-groups. We have to reach passed boundaries, expand our horizons, and, ideally, invite all humankind *in*. And indeed, the definition of all humankind as one single in-group that emerges in tact with the ingathering of humankind, represents a structural push that induces the here described psychological adaptations.

Could we do without short-term fixes?

We have to learn to identify and then forego cheap secondary gains, which resemble the fix of the drug addict – a fix that ultimately leads into the abyss. Satisfaction from appearing tough and venting anger, for example, is destructive when cooperation is the aim and not domination.

Primates use dominant and submissive behaviour in situations of threat, in order to convey dominance and reproductive status. Primates use elaborate posturing and displays such as strutting, stereotypic, jerky movements, body swaying, genital display, and piloerection (a mammal erecting its fur or hair). Pekka Soini (1988) researched the pygmy marmoset in Brazil. In their genital display, of either sex, they turn their backs to the observer, arch their backs, raise their tails in a stiff arch, and the body and tail hair are ruffled.

Much of the vulgar “tough guy” language that we hear in certain segments of today’s societies, all around the world, seems to fall into this pattern. “Tough guy” language is used in many macho cultures and is also partly built into the American frontier ethos where it is applied by men and women. I collected ample experience with this kind of language when I learned how to fly (starting at fifteen with gliding) and spent time at sea (as a psychology student on a training ship from Europe to Africa). I have tasted the satisfaction that flows from tough talk that sends shivers down the spine and demonstrates both to myself and others that I am “not afraid.” To say it differently, I am not a faint-hearted idealist who cannot see linguistic “blood” (to be sure, I am also a physician who would have become a good surgeon). I have listened attentively to people who claim that anger is like a pressure cooker that needs to release aggression in order avoid “explosion.” I have furthermore discussed with peace activists who wish to give a voice “to the people” and condemn “refined” language as the “licking of the elites’ feet” and the “betrayal of the peoples’ authenticity.” Thus they defend filling their sentences with linguistic ammunition such as “fuck” and “damn,” or more intellectual variations such as “brain-fart” or “brain-screw.”

I respectfully disagree. First, “the people” around the world do not usually wave around with their sexual organs, linguistically. Believing that such practices would be “authentic” is a misrepresentation of the world’s “people” and of the concept of authenticity (and I have travelled the world more than most). I also find that “tough talk” too much resembles the narcissistic project of exhibitionists and the quick fix of drug addicts to be reconcilable with the goals of peace work. I furthermore believe it is a mistake to model anger according to the pressure cooker model. The desire to vent anger can and needs to be tackled in different ways than merely by venting anger. Showing off, singing loud in the dark, venting anger, feeling strong through shocking others and violating boundaries, misunderstanding authenticity, all this, to me, undermines peace work. I am saddened when I meet a person who, in the name of peace and humanisation, through her language, forces me into watching his or her bulging muscles, sexual organs, or production of faeces.

I therefore respectfully ask people who wish to humanise the world to refrain from “tough talk.”

Could we belong to our in-group without demeaning out-groups?

Particularly young people, who enthusiastically defend friends, may not see the fine line that differentiates defense from destruction. They might be tempted to make a cognitive link between friendship and readiness to “fight enemies.” Yet, I believe it is a mistake to assume that in order to defend my friends, I need to demean others. We can build friendship without creating common enemies. More even, the deep core of my friendship to you is dehumanised and thus destroyed if I try to form friendship by the help of creating and attacking common enemies.

I furthermore believe it is mistake to suppose that the expression of dissent is strengthened by the aggressive expression of anger toward the dissenters or by demeaning communication styles. I posit that the expression of dissent is only strengthened by respectful communication approaches. Dissent can be a powerful source for creativity and mutual enrichment. This chance is wasted and fruitful dialogue foreclosed when dissenters demean and hurt each other.

Apart from the cognitive fallacy that expressing disagreement or proving loyalty in friendship necessitates aggressive hostility to others, there is also a psychological fallacy involved in “buying” in-group belonging with out-group hostility. Indeed in-group members’ joint ranting against out-group members renders a strong sense of belonging and excitement and thus provides a powerful incentive. Consequentially, some seek satisfaction in continuously scrutinising other people for potential out-group markers, ready to identify anybody who fails their scrutiny as out-group members, so as to then proceed to ridiculing them from within the in-group. This is a malign source of satisfaction that not only does not bring peace with out-groups, but easily turns inwards and poisons the very in-group members’ hearts and minds in the process. I suggest that we have to let go of it. Letting go of this satisfaction is among the most difficult lessons to learn, because the satisfactions that can be derived – belonging and a sense of expansion and control – are so powerful.

What we have to learn, instead of focusing on what possibly divides us, instead of investing our energies into drawing lines that separate us from out-groups, and instead of demeaning out-groups, is the ambition and skill to *highlight common ground* so as to facilitate cooperation across fault lines, including dissent as a source of enrichment. Ultimately we need to build one single global in-group that jointly solves their inner problems.

Do we need to provoke martyrdom?

Human history presents us with many stories of admirable heroic martyrs. Due to the amount of admiration that martyrdom can command, some people manipulate themselves into martyr roles. One way to achieve this is by provoking others – for example, by demeaning them – into attack. Another way is to hold on to remembering the humiliations of the past. In his book *The Ethics of Memory*, Margalit (2002) suggests that it is not only the experience of moral emotions like humiliation that motivates aggressive behavior, but also the memory of such emotions. Goldman and Coleman (2005) report, “Margalit proposes that, under certain conditions, individuals can become attached, or even addicted, to the emotion, thus serving as a constant source of retaliatory action” (Goldman and Coleman, p. 15). In other words, a self-styled martyr can use provocation

and the memory of humiliation to justify “heroic aggression.” I believe that we have to let go of such sources of satisfaction that promise a quick fix at the expense of the long-term common good.

To summarise, any desire to manipulate ourselves into martyr roles must be resisted. And creating enemies just for the sake of venting anger is a destructive strategy. Linguistic dominance behaviour is not constructive. There is no need to engage in “street fighting.” Peace promoters are no hooligans who derive pleasure from mere fighting.

On the contrary, we need to attempt to learn from whatever wisdom Mandela brought to the world. As peace and human rights advocates, we understand that some of our friends are young and enthusiastic and might not have thought through the consequences of their behaviour. It is a nice thing to want to stand up for your friends and defend them. However, we have to lovingly guide our friends to see that there is a fine line. By demeaning others in the process of defense, defense easily turns into destruction and thus becomes counterproductive. There is an inherent contradiction in defending humanity by methods that entail the demeaning of the others. We cannot humanise the world by methods that entail dehumanisation. All who wish for peace in the world need to honour their humanising message also in the ways they formulate it, particularly the communication of dissent.

All this requires far superior communication skills and personal maturity than were required from humans thus far. Outdated are such divisive habits as propping up *us* against *them* and polarising *friends* against *enemies*. Yet, it is indeed easier, for many, to preserve old in-group/out-group divisions and respond to humiliation with violent humiliation for humiliation in Hitler-like ways or by waging terror. It is not only easier; it also is an age-old tradition. Traditionally, societies were characterised by hierarchical structures, with strong-men [indeed, mostly men] often inflicting humiliating domination onto underlings and out-groups. All this has to be unlearned in today’s interdependent world that has heard the human rights message, not least, because it is counterproductive.

Engaging in moderation, humility, and respect for equal dignity for all humankind is the deeply challenging new task. It requires the maturity of a Mandela. To make the challenge extra difficult, moderate peacemakers risk being affronted or even killed by those who live in the past. Extremist Hutus killed moderate Hutus, not only Tutsis, and peacemakers such as Gandhi, Anwar Sadat or Yitzchak Rabin were assassinated by their own extremists.

All this means that there is nothing more courageous and “tough” than engaging in humility and refraining from “tough talk.”

Build new institutions

A friend from Texas wrote to me, in despair, when the Katrina hurricane disaster was unfolding: “Our government is so bad! We need less government!”

My reply was that if government is bad, we may need better government, not necessarily less. Many Americans would have wished for better government, or better prepared government, when hurricane Katrina hit New Orleans. I suggest, we need to

better adapt government to its tasks, better tailor-make it, bring it to scale, both locally and globally.

As the concept of government, also the concept of “free market” is not in itself negative. At the moment, the world experiences un-free markets. Oxfam advises the poor nations of the world to press for better solutions in the Doha negotiations. Most NGOs agree that free trade, if really free, would lift out the poor of the world much more efficiently than any humanitarian aid can ever achieve. Obscene statistics of self-serving rules make the “ugly American” and “ugly European” look like the perpetrators of humiliating double standards. Blindness for their own inconsistencies, on the American and European sides, exacerbates the problem.

Instead of less free market, we may need institutions that guarantee freedom that deserves its name, namely real global free market harnessed by fair global regulation. Philippe Legrain (2002), in his book *Open World: The Truth About Globalisation* delineates the responsibility that has to be shouldered by the *World Trade Organization* to create fairer global trade. Jeffrey Sachs (2005) explains, how world poverty can be ended. The task resembles that of installing traffic lights at cross-roads. At the current historic juncture, the rich nations drive big cars and force their way through at every cross-road. The poor people of the world have no cars or small cars and are coerced into submission and poverty.

So, let us make better institutions, similar to traffic lights. The understanding that free market is equal to “might is right,” is antithetical to the very concept of free market. “Might is right” is like not having traffic lights. The culprit is thus not the concept of a free market but the misreading of it. The concept is being misread by elites who have an advantage from doing so. As long as the “might is right” motto is accepted as a correct description of the free market concept by the rich and the poor, the so-called *just world belief* is free to wreak havoc: the rich feel “right” in being rich, and all think that it is the “fault” of the poor themselves to be poor.

Clearly, not only concepts such as government and free market need to be critically appraised and brought up to standards that make them deserve their names. How shall cultural diversity be managed? This is another core question. The objective of conferences such as the 2007 National Multicultural Conference and Summit is to explore precisely this, namely the intersections of social identities. “We believe that multiculturalism creates opportunities as well as challenges within the context of constantly negotiating multiple levels of privileges and oppressions” (www.multiculturalsummit.org).

Clearly, the list of local and global institutions that need to be built in order to achieve decency in the *global village* does not end here, but entails innumerable big, medium and small size tasks that can be shouldered by every single world citizen.

Concluding remarks

Globalisation offers the undoing of several malign trends of the past, among them, (a), the waning of the destructive in-group/out-group biases of the past, and (b) the weakening of past malign win-lose framings for resources. The ingathering of humankind fosters the emergence of one single in-group with shared “in-group problems,” a benign win-win framing for the management of knowledge. However, at the same time, huge new problems loom. Globalisation, particularly when coupled with the human rights message, also creates high expectations, which, if disappointed, foment feelings of humiliation, which in turn carry the potential to lead to violence. This danger can only be mitigated by rigorous egalisation, meaning, by rigorously putting into practice the human rights message of equal dignity for all.

Humankind might fail this task and go down in self-destruction. However, if we give up and invest our energies in hand-wringing, lamenting, and finger-pointing, we will fail by guarantee.

If we accept the global challenges that we face as ours – and do not deny them or shy away from them – we find a host of “sub-challenges.” We need to re-design life at all levels, in business, in government, in civil society, in our families – and even our individual lives are affected. Among others, we face the challenge of having to forge new definitions for what makes life meaningful and full and how we define “success in life.”

Let me link back to William Ury’s conceptualisation of history. We know that early hunter-gathers enjoyed a superior health as compared to early farmers and realised a high degree of quality of life. They did neither accumulate children nor possessions. This *quality* orientation changed when land became the resource most people depended on. Hierarchical societies were built, with men as guardians and leaders and women as nurturers. *Quantity* began to reign. A man was successful when he had many children, many underlings, many wives, and many possessions. All this was fostered by the win-lose framing of the past millennia that has furthermore taught people to guard their “territories” like watch-dogs. Many still are caught in this script and fill their lives with seeking advantages over others and hindering others to take advantage of them. In contrast, the new script for a future world is connectivity and mutuality. It is a challenge to leave behind old habits; however, it is worth it, because the reward is high.

To summarise, there are global challenges which we need to take on, and when we do that, we face more challenges, namely the task of learning new cognitive maps and new skills. We need new maps of the world, no longer countries as first priority, but *One World*, and we need to learn new skills, namely how to navigate in a global knowledge society and maintain its cohesion. In short, we are required to redefine most aspects of our lives. As difficult as this challenge is, the gain is worth it. Accepting global responsibility ultimately leads to more quality of life, both for the globe and for each individual who gets involved, me included.

As discussed earlier, a central question of our times is whether the deplorable current state of the *global village* is an expression of the *essence* of globalisation or a *side effect* that can be remedied? My position is that this obscene condition is a *side effect*.

A core problem is that *unifying tendencies* transgress *national borders* in ways that hamper *egalisation*. The building of global institutions to curb Hobbesian anarchy lags. A *benign future* lies ahead for the *global village* only if humankind manages to steer clear

of the *malignancies* threatening in the short term. Those threats are largely linked to the phenomenon of humiliation. If not curbed, the dynamics of humiliation could undermine all the benign tendencies. Reason for hope lies in the fact that many countries have learned to tame their internal tendencies toward Hobbesian anarchy, and in the process have created models that can be followed at the global level. These models operate from the benign belief that *one single interdependent in-group* can exist where differences are not divisive but diversity is embedded into mutual respect. We need to realise such models on the global level. And we need to imbue them with a worldwide commitment to overcoming the lack of egalisation that currently humiliates humanity. To capitalise on the benign tendencies of the *global village*, we must call for a *Moratorium on Humiliation*. If we succeed in doing all this, I believe, we indeed can hope that global society has a chance to enter into a harmonious information age.

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