

## Toward Mutual Commitment

### Why a shared responsibility in facing the world's challenges is the key to resolving the global crises in an interdependent world

Despite decades of unimaginable efforts, resources, and planning on the part of the UN to eradicate inequality, exploitation, and lack of basic conditions for sustaining life, these problems still pose major challenges in many countries. Around the world, some 1.4 billion people are living on less than \$2 a day, while \$5.2 billion of worth of food are wasted every year in Australia alone. Jonathan Bloom, author of *American Wasteland: How America Throws Away Nearly Half of Its Food*, writes that “More than 40 percent of the food produced for consumption is wasted by Americans. The total cost of food wasted comes out to an annual amount of more than \$100 billion.” Worse yet, the gap between the haves and the have-nots is only widening over time, instead of shrinking.

For decades the efforts of the developing nations to seek aid in food, health, and development among the more affluent countries have been met with highly inadequate results. Until today there was no other choice because the name of the game was “Winner Takes All.”

The gaps are not only among nations, but also within the countries. The sensation of deprivation causes tension both nationally and internationally, and in light of the global crisis, the situation could get much worse.

But now the game has changed. The recent emergence of the Spring of Nations is teaching all of us a lesson we should heed carefully: The world is connected, and what goes around comes around. Globalization has made us all interdependent, and no nation can exploit other nations simply because it is stronger, or it will pay dearly. As we can see, countries that yesterday seemed unassailable, today are crumbling from within, maintaining solvency only by the mercy of nations that only a few years back were treated as inferior.

In today's globalized reality, either we *all* win, or we *all* lose, because we are interdependent. When enough people in the world open their eyes to the facts of globalization and shared responsibility, a major shift will unfold. No longer will countries and peoples exploit one another; no longer will mammoth consortiums exploit millions of underpaid workers around the world; no longer will children be allowed to die of hunger and illnesses that can be treated with common antibiotics, and no longer will women be abused simply because they are women. Indeed, in a world where people realize that their own well-being depends on the well-being of others, they will care for others, who will care for them in return.

When that shift unfolds, terms such as “first world” and “third world” will cease to exist. There will be only one world and the people living in it.

## Carrying Out the Shift

To actualize the above-said, two things are of utmost importance: first aid, and education.

First aid means that we begin with launching a worldwide campaign that explains why in a globalized reality, insufficient food supply and lack of clean drinking water are inexcusable and must be ousted at once. It is easy to show that the cost of such investments pays itself back with interest within a few short years. Countries such as India, Vietnam, and Indonesia serve as wonderful examples, for all their still existing challenges.

Education means informing people of the new era of globalization, mutual dependence, and shared responsibility of which we are all parts. The recent global financial crises and the series of uprisings around the world are sufficient evidence to the fact that we affect one another on all levels of life—economic, social, and even emotional (see Thomas Friedman’s reference to [“Globalization of anger”](#)).

At **stage one** of the education process, people will realize that it is unthinkable that over a billion people are starving while another billion is throwing away almost half the food that it buys and suffers from obesity. Once the bare necessities of life have been provided to the entire world population, stage two will begin.

**Stage two** will focus on enhancing unity and solidarity among individuals and nations, in congruence with the current reality.

In Nature, unity, reciprocity, and mutual responsibility are prerequisites to life. No organism can survive unless its cells operate in harmony. Likewise, no ecosystem thrives if one of its elements is removed.

Until recently, humanity was the only species that did not follow the law of mutual dependence and reciprocity. We believed that Nature’s law was “Survival of the fittest.” But now we are realizing that we, too, are subject to interdependence and must play by that rule if we are to survive.

### The Campaign

To inculcate the message of mutual responsibility and interdependence, we are suggesting to declare next year, which the U.N. titled the “Year of Cooperatives,” the starting point of shifting the global mindset toward the urgent need for mutual commitment in order to keep society and economy sustainable.

### The Steps of the Shift

1. We should assemble an international forum of scientists (from hard sciences as well as from social sciences and humanities), artists, thinkers, economists, successful businesspersons, and celebrities under the auspices of the U.N. to declare the start of the Year of Cooperatives. In that conference, the participants will commit to doing their utmost to eradicate hunger and deprivation. They will be chartered by their countries to devise a worldwide campaign to instill the awareness of globalization, shared responsibility, and interdependence.

2. At the end of the forum, teams from the U.N. will work with each country on devising media campaigns, school programs, street signs, and any other means of advertisement to promote the abovementioned concepts. The goal of the campaign will be to make the concept of exploiting abominable, and the idea of sharing and caring in accord with life's law natural, and even praiseworthy.
3. The U.N. teams will convene on a regular basis in the U.N. headquarters to report and synchronize their moves, thus creating uniform global progress toward unity and mutual responsibility. The teams' meetings will be broadcast live to demonstrate transparency and enhance credibility, but mostly to set an example of how productive work can become when working together.
4. Countries, consortiums, and even individuals who excel in demonstrating solidarity and shared responsibility will be praised and glorified much the same as movie stars and pop stars are admired today. This will be a powerful incentive to those who excel to continue excelling, and to those who are not, to join in.
5. From numerous experiments on the effects of prosocial behavior (such as David W. Johnson and Roger T. Johnson, "[An Educational Psychology Success Story: Social Interdependence Theory and Cooperative Learning](#)"), we know that typically Western afflictions such as depression and drug abuse will be all but gone when the campaign takes root. This, in turn, will free up a tremendous amount of financial and human resources to tend to humanity's other needs. International hostilities will also decrease tremendously, even if only for lack of moral and financial support of the adversaries. In an interdependent world, it is simply unwise to battle, and this will be very clear to all.

We at the ARI Institute have years of experience in international collaborations, networking, and circulation of ideas. We have an online system of free broadcasts with simultaneous interpretation into eight languages, and we can produce text and video materials almost on a moment's notice.

We are already collaborating with UNESCO on the topic of global education, and we offer all our services and facilities to the U.N. in the hope of expanding this fruitful partnership.

Today, Nature is demanding that we unite. Over time, that demand will intensify until we all consent. At the same time, that demand is the key to our success in building a sustainable reality for ourselves and for our children. In light of all that, we must unite, we must work together, and we *will* succeed.

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