



**REPORT AND OUTCOMES FROM INAUGURAL
WON VISIONARY ACTIVISTS GATHERING
AT WON DHARMA CENTER
3RD TO 5TH MAY 2013**

**CHANGING HUMANITY
ONE BREATH AT A TIME**

Sponsored by:

Won Buddhism 100th Anniversary Committee



WON BUDDHISM
UN & INTERFAITH OFFICE

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WON VISIONARY ACTIVISTS

New Age Thinkers' Group set up to facilitate the emergence of a Whole-World View.

A new group was recently established following a three day meeting at the inspiring Dharma Meditation Center in Claverack, Upstate New York.

The Group, named the Won **Visionary Activists**, held its inaugural meeting from 3-5 May 2013 in the Buddhist Temple located about a hundred and twenty miles north of New York City. The Center serves as a prayer, meditation and conference site situated in the green and serene Columbia County.

Twenty-six representatives took part in the gathering. They included political officials, scientists, educators, business people, media consultants, journalists, artists, religious leaders, and spiritual healers.

The main objectives of the gathering were: to take the first steps in a long term journey in the service of the people of the world and the planet; to facilitate the emergence of a whole-world approach; and to stress the evolutionary shift in consciousness.

The participants were able to come to an agreement on specific steps to be taken to that effect. These are based on a multidisciplinary, intergenerational, intercultural, interfaith, and inter-civilization approach requiring both dialogue and action.

“Changing Humanity one breath at a time”, declared Ven. Chung Ohun Lee, Executive Director of UN and Interreligious Affairs, Won Buddhism International, addressing the gathering. Dr. Lee cited peace activist Mahatma Gandhi, who counseled that we should be the change we wish to see in the world.

Lee, a well known and respected figure in the diplomatic community and among the international civil society, has herself directly experienced what one single individual can do to change things around us. She revealed to the attentive audience that with patience and commitment, she was instrumental in changing the views and attitudes on the world of her own family members in the Republic of Korea.

“Every one,” she advised, “should take responsibility into their own hands.”

The **Visionary Activists** noted at their inaugural meeting that a new world consciousness was slowly emerging. The Group decided that it would deepen its examination of this important development at its future gatherings in 2014 and 2015. The Group hopes that these preparatory steps will culminate in the convocation of an international congress in the United Nations in 2016.

The **Visionary Activists** call on the representatives of governments, the media, business and religious leaders and the civil society to participate in their activities and to contribute to the understanding of the values of the emerging global community.





WON VISIONARY ACTIVISTS

Mission Statement

Inclusively, joyfully, truthfully and lovingly to reflect on, envisage and co-create inspiring and practical perspectives and actions to facilitate the emergence of a whole-worldview, global consciousness and a new civilization encompassing and nurturing people and planet.

Guiding Principles

To be the change we wish to co-create by:

- Recognizing the interdependency and interconnectedness of all
- Embracing diversity whilst recognizing underlying unity
- Exemplifying integrity, transparency and loving truth
- Embodying mindfulness and heart-fullness in our thoughts, words and actions
- Living the golden rule of treating all others as we would wish to be treated
- Respecting the sacredness of all life



WON VISIONARY ACTIVISTS

Program (May 3-5, 2013)

Friday (Reflecting)

- 2-5pm Registration ([Registration Desk](#))
- 6:30pm Moderators Meeting ([Conference Room](#))
- 5-7pm Dinner - Vegetarian ([Dining Hall](#))
- 7-9:30pm **Welcome**

Music:
Piece of Green
Edge of Time
 • Abby Lappen



Opening Remarks & Objectives of Visionary Activists Gathering ([Ilwon Hall](#))

- Ven. Chung Ohun Lee
Our place in the bigger picture: context for our Gathering

Address

- Robin Andrews

Sunset Meditation ([Ilwon Hall - West Deck](#))

Introduction to the Program

- Ven. Chung Ohun Lee - Reflecting: *Who am I?*
- Dr. Jude Currivan - Envisaging
- Dr. Azza Karam - Co-Creating

Appreciative Inquiry

Who am I?
 Why I do what I do?
 What are my expectations? Why am I here?

Music: *No More War*
 • Abby Lappen





WON VISIONARY ACTIVISTS

Saturday (Envisaging)

- 6 - 7am** Sunrise Meditation
(sunrise trail and top of the hill)
• Qikong / Yoga
• Walking meditation
- 7:30-9am** Breakfast - Vegetarian
(Dining Hall)
- 9-10am** Bird Watching and Walking Meditation
- 9-9:30am** Moderators, Facilitators, and Reporters Meeting
(Conference Room)
- 10-11:30am** Public Session (Ilwon Hall)
Introduction and Guided Meditation
Ven. Chung Ohun Lee
- Vision for a New Civilization*
• Dr. Abdelkader Abbadi
- Envisaging a Whole-World*
• Dr. Jude Currivan
- Q & A*
- 12-1:30pm:** Lunch - Vegetarian
(Dining Hall)
- 1:30-3pm** Attunement & Introduction to Envisaging
Dr. Jude Currivan (Ilwon Hall)
- Envisaging Small Group Discussion: Session 1
- How does an emergent global consciousness look and feel?
 - What are its values and ethics?
 - What is holding us back from manifesting it?
- 3-3:30pm** Break
- 3:30-5pm:** Envisaging Small Group Discussion: Session 2
- What needs to be reconciled, released and resolved within our individual and collective human psyche to achieve it?





WON VISIONARY ACTIVISTS

Saturday (Envisaging)

5-7pm: Dinner - Vegetarian
(Dining Hall)

6pm: Reporters Meeting (Session 1 + Session 2)
(Conference Room)

7-9pm Envisaging Small Group Discussion: Session 3

- How and in what forms can humanity collectively come together to realize our vision?
- Gathering to integrate communal outcomes into envisaging an optimal future as a basis for further exploration and process of co-creation
- Writing our prayer for humanity and Earth



9pm • Star Gazing





WON VISIONARY ACTIVISTS

Sunday (Co-Creating)

- 5:30 - 7am** Sunrise Meditation
(sunrise trail and top of the hill)
 - Qikong / Yoga
 - Walking meditation

- 7:30-9am** Breakfast - Vegetarian (Dining Hall)

- 8:30-9am** Moderators, Facilitators, and Reporters Meeting (Conference Room)

- 9-10:30am** Co-creating
Dr. Azza Karam (Ilwon Hall)
 - Identify key tasks
 - Define the most commonly shared vision we have articulated
 - How can we support each other to get to it

- 10:30am** Planting a Tree
Peace Pole Blessing

- 11-12pm** Prepare 2016 Visionary Activists Congress at the UN
 - 2015 event
 - 2014 event
 - (Ilwon Hall)

- 12-2pm:** Lunch - Vegetarian (Dining Hall)

- 2-2:30pm** Departure

- 2:30-3:30pm** Moderators reflections





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WON Visionary Activists Gathering

Report and Outcomes from Inaugural Gathering 3rd to 5th May 2013

The following report describes the background, aim, program and outcomes of the Inaugural WON Visionary Activists Gathering of 3rd to 5th May 2013 which took place under the auspices of WON Buddhism International at the WON Dharma Center in upper state New York.

It also announces the adoption of a WON Visionary Activists Mission Statement and Guiding Principles for future development and activities.

BACKGROUND

Humanity is now ready to move beyond the historically fragmented perspectives that have brought us dangerously close to the edge of a global breakdown. We face enormous challenges. Our economic and social systems are deeply inequitable, and there is a growing awareness that they are also unsustainable. A hopeful emergence is gathering pace which heralds an evolutionary leap in our collective consciousness. It embraces the ancient and spiritual perception of universal kinship and equality.

AIM

The inaugural WON Visionary Activists Gathering invited a diverse group of participants, including politicians, scientists, educators, businesspeople, media consultants, journalists, policymakers, artists, musicians, social media experts, religious leaders and spiritual healers. Their aim was to take the first steps in an inspiring and empowering journey together in service to people and planet; to facilitate the emergence of a whole-worldview and an evolutionary Shift of consciousness. A list of the inaugural WON Visionary Activists is detailed on page 25.

PROGRAM

The program of the Gathering is detailed on page 5.

The program expedited a three-fold process of Reflecting, Envisaging and Co-creating to articulate a Vision of a whole-worldview and explore how to facilitate an emergent leap of collective consciousness. It culminated with an agreement of specific next steps to be progressed through multidisciplinary, intergenerational, intercultural, inter-faith, international and inter-civilizational dialogue and actions.

On the Friday evening, welcome, participant introductions and music by Abby Lappen began a period of personal and group Reflecting which sought to ask and respond to the questions of:

- Who am I?
- Why do I do what I do?
- What are my expectations of the Gathering?
- Why am I here?





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The Saturday continued with a consideration of the context within which the discussions of the Gathering were set through three introductory perspectives by Ven. Lee, Dr. Abbadi and Dr. Currivan, summarized as follows.

Introduction and guided meditation by Ven. Chung Ohun Lee

As Mahatma Gandhi said, “Be the change you want to see in the world.” Ven. Chung Ohun Lee introduced the ways in which humanity can take steps towards making a positive change in the world. Firstly, people have to stop waiting for someone else to save them, and have to take responsibility into their own hands. The reason Ven. Lee became a spiritual peace activist, feminist, and a humanitarian leader, was to change herself, her family, her village and ultimately, the world. Secondly, everyone needs to work together, encourage each other and support each other. Working together creates a peoples’ movement. Thirdly, people need to nurture themselves by emmercing themselves in nature and the universe. Ven. Lee explained the importance of watching the nature, as well as our own mind, our thoughts, emotions, feelings, impulses, and consciousness.

Vision for a new civilization by Dr. Abdelkader Abbadi *pg. 21

Throughout history, visionaries have attempted to formulate visions in a variety of fields. Some were bold, some accurate, others not so. But it is possible to peer into the future despite its uncertainties. We have now entered the era of an interdependent world, one in which the fate of the peoples and nations closely depends on each other. It is the times of deep, profound transformations which are likely to lead to the rise of a multidimensional, multicultural global civilization. During the transitional phases, our institutions and values would also undergo profound changes. Institutions would be reformed or new ones created, and global values such as inter state consultations, co-ordination, cooperation, common humanity and human solidarity would be increasingly emphasized. The human being would be at the center of man’s activities. There will be resistance to these unprecedented changes, but the realities will impose themselves in the end. There is hope for humanity. People all over the world are now just making their voices heard, and insisting on a better and improved life.

Envisaging a whole-world by Dr. Jude Currivan

Dr. Currivan spoke of an evolutionary collective Shift of human consciousness that is underway and gathering pace. She considered how the historic but misperceived separation between so-called evidence-based and faith-based perspectives has had damaging and now dangerous effects on our relationship with each other and with our planetary home. She described how a fundamental aspect of the emergent Shift is the reconciliation of these perspectives into an integral whole-worldview and how a developing consensus between science and spirituality of a conscious, evolving and fundamentally interconnected Cosmos where we are both creation and co-creators underpins and facilitates our collective evolution.

The remainder of the Saturday then continued through an Envisaging process facilitated overall by Dr. Currivan. Three sessions by three smaller group discussions, facilitated by Ven. Lee, Dr. Currivan and Dr. Karam progressively explored and answered in turn the following questions which were subsequently reported to the full Gathering.

- How does an emergent global consciousness look and feel?
- What are its values and ethics?



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- What is holding us back from manifesting it?
- What needs to be reconciled, released and resolved within our individual and collective human psyche to achieve it?
- How and in what forms can humanity collectively come together to realize our Vision?

These answers and perspectives together articulate the Vision of WON Visionary Activists. This then provided the inputs to Sunday's program when the Gathering sought to integrate the Vision into the first steps of Co-creating it. The Co-creating process, facilitated by Dr. Karam, sought to identify key tasks and determine how the Gathering participants could support each other and the overall Vision to achieve them.

The Gathering was then completed and commemorated by planting an apple tree and through a Peace Pole blessing.

OUTCOMES

The Outcomes of the inaugural Gathering include the Vision of an emergent global consciousness, the first steps to co-create it and the intention to hold annual Gatherings in 2014 and 2015 and a Visionary Activists Congress at the United Nations in 2016.

The Envisaging Outcomes which describe the Vision of the Gathering are detailed on page 13.

The Co-creating Outcomes include the set up a number of WON Visionary Activists Circles covering the following key areas, whilst recognizing that the activities of the Circles will interpenetrate.

- Politics
- Youth
- The United Nations
- Media and Art
- Reconciliation of science and spirituality
- Spirituality
- Education
- Conflict resolution
- Gender equality
- Fundraising

Other Circles such as Business may be added in future as the numbers of WON Visionary Activists increase.

For each Circle, inaugural participants (including a convener) and initial key tasks were identified, as detailed on page 17.



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SUMMARY

The inaugural WON Visionary Activists Gathering showed how a group of diverse participants, many with little previous knowledge of each other, could come together inclusively, joyfully, truthfully and lovingly to reflect, envisage and co-create inspiring and practical perspectives and actions to facilitate the emergence of a whole-worldview and a global consciousness encompassing people and planet.

Whilst recognizing this as the first step of an ongoing and unfolding journey, the Gathering was able to embody and role model through its discussions and experiences the essence of its resulting Vision, Mission Statement and Guiding Principles.

With heart-felt gratitude to Ven. Lee, WON Buddhism International and all those who participated in this inaugural Gathering, let us now go forward together, changing humanity one breath at a time.

* Photos from the event can be viewed here: <http://www.flickr.com/photos/wbm431/sets/72157633766608540/>





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The Envisaging Outcomes

SESSION 1

- **How does an emergent global consciousness look and feel?**

Common Awareness of the Universal Consciousness

Interconnectedness becomes a commonly accepted universal principle

Actions based on love (not fear)

Sustainability and Self Sufficiency

Respect for Gaia and all her children

No physical or emotional boundaries that separate us

Recognizing the Oneness and celebrating the diversity

Inclusion rather than exclusion

Full Awareness of something common to all of us

Security and mutual support

Harmonious and balanced

In-to-creation of masculine, feminine, and child attributes

Ubuntu - philosophy focusing on people's allegiances and relations with each other

- **What are its values and ethics?**

Common Purpose: Peace, Freedom, Love, Health, Security

Mindfulness

Heartfulness

Compassion

Generosity

Gratitude

Love

Joy

Being True to oneself

Embracing and respecting the differences in others

Acceptance

Dignity and Respect – worth of each human being, animal, and our planet

Nonviolence, Forgiveness

Peace: Inner Peace and World Peace



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• What is holding us back from manifesting it?

Fear
 Inner past trauma
 Tribal / National identities
 Ignorance
 Prejudice
 Outdated systems: Educational, Political, Judicial, Societal, Economic and Financial
 Lack of awareness
 Delusions
 Perceived sense of limitations
 Apathy
 Dogma
 Consumerism / Greed
 Corporate culture
 Lack of political will
 Waiting for external support vs. taking the initiative yourself
 Institutional rules and regulations

SESSION 2

• What needs to be reconciled, released and resolved within our individual and collective human psyche to achieve it?

INDIVIDUAL:

Change starts within ourselves
 Clarify our own value system and identity
 Release fears and delusions
 Talking vs. Taking Action
 Encourage and foster discernment
 Improve relationship, conflict resolution and communication skills
 Improve overall knowledge of the world: history, culture, current affairs
 Good habit and spiritual practice development
 Team building and cooperation
 Live life of meaning and purpose
 Balance of masculine and feminine energy
 Quality over quantity
 Going beyond prejudice, assumptions, and stereotypes:
 Release judgment, replacing it with understanding and compassion





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Think ME \Rightarrow WE

Release intellectual control; Move into the wisdom of the heart

Reconcile the EGO Consciousness with our Universal Consciousness; Become Ego free

Learn to forgive: yourself and others

Silence is not Neutrality... Take ACTION!

Release Apathy

Courage to take RESPONSIBILITY to DECIDE and BE TRUE to yourself

Transcend duality thinking

Nurturing ourselves and others

COLLECTIVE:

Integrating Global and Local thinking

Remove sense of separateness; Embrace interconnectedness

Consumerism / Materialism is to be released

Utilize social media and the power of the internet for information, communication and conversation

Advocacy – taking action to engage our collective will

Citizen empowerment

EDUCATION IS THE ENGINE:

Informational Education vs. Experiential Education

Education: for creativity, resolutions and relationships, rather than just the typical training for a job

Nurture and actively engage in the emerging consciousness

Spiritual and Interfaith education

Embracing the power of the new media – to empower the people; Become an agent of change

Inspire and support young people

Education for girls; Education for all

SESSION 3

- **How and in what forms can humanity collectively come together to realize our vision?**

HOW:

Lifestyle changes

Daily actions which contribute to sustainable consumption of resources

Cultivation of habits which encourage growth of love, peace, and mutual cooperation

Sharing the Vision

LOVE: “head to heart” approach

Fundraising





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Local Activism

Media: Digital and social media

Seminars & conferences

Select “Moments” which unite humanity: create commonality in physical and virtual spaces and times that are welcoming, fun, and meaningful (Ex: Solstice / Equinox)

Opportunities for cross-cultural and interfaith exchange; Spreading the message; Speaking engagements

Promotion of loving truth

Reconciliation of different views

Humanize the issues and debates

Bridge science and spirituality

Show understanding of perspectives

Educating skill-set: relating and communicating (group meetings and online resources)

Symbolic gatherings, events, or rituals which foster unity and mutual understanding (Ex: planting a Peace Pole)

Sustaining the momentum through continued engagement and commitment to the cause

FORA:

Political: Pursue greater involvement between political leaders and civil society; Get involved; Become a candidate; Vote!

The United Nations: Interfaith Harmony Week; General Assembly Opening; Lobby PR and DPR to UN

Art / Music / Media: Creativity to showcase a vision; Fun component; Conventional media

Internet: Using social media to educate and train, especially the youth

Spiritual: Meditation, body work, yoga, Qikong, etc.

Educational: Participative events at educational institutions; Seminars and workshops

“Be the Change you want to see in the World.”

- Gandhi



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The Co-Creating Outcomes Circles and Projects

1) POLITICS Circle

Action/Activity:

- Retreat opportunity for politicians
- Identify Representatives supportive of consciousness or voter rights education

Facilitator: Robin Andrews

Members: Raeph Sanderson, Sduduzo Ka-Mbili, P.L. de Silva, Jude Currivan

Audience:

- Political Leaders
- Constituents

Method/Plan of Action:

- Come to retreat or offer to have an event at their (audience) location
- Dem. Caucus / Questionnaire / Media

Risks/Potential Obstacles: No one comes to the retreat / event

Min. Ambition:

- identify at least 2 politicians or representatives
- short presentation within existing gathering

2) GENDER EQUALITY Circle

Action/Activity: Gender Equality Conference at Berkley University

Facilitator: Haesook Kim

Women Leaders Summit Conference Coordinator: Robin Andrews

Members: Chung Ohun Lee, Kristina Reddy, Laura Samuels, Jude Currivan, Raeph Sanderson, Roger Ross

Time Frame: June 2014

Audience:

- Women Politicians
- Gender Equality Activists
- UN Women
- Women in science, engineering, business, politics...

Method/Plan of Action: Conference



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3) FUNDRAISING Circle

Action/Activity:

- Clarify our identity
- Determine needs
- Pay honorarium to speakers
- Pay media expenses
- Pay for venues

Facilitator: Laura Samuels

Members: Kristina Reddy, Raeph Sanderson

Time Frame: 2016

Audience:

- General public
- Art Collectors
- People who believe in the vision

Method/Plan of Action:

- Write grants
- Art Show – funds received to be donated (May 2014)
- Seminars – charge entrance fee

Risks/Potential Obstacles: no \$ to give...

Min. Ambition:

- 1 Art Show
- Write 1 Grant

4) ART / MEDIA / SPIRITUALITY Circle

Action/Activity:

- “We Are One” - We will celebrate the Summer Solstice during a one-day event at the Won Dharma Center. Art, Music, and Spiritual activities will be organized to celebrate the emerging values and ethics of the new consciousness.

Facilitators: Kristina Reddy, Sduduzo Ka-Mbili, Ken Rubinstein

Members: Johannes Courtens, Abdelkader Abbadi, Steve Kingsley

Time Frame: June 21st, 2014 – 06:51 EST

Audience: general public, media

Risks/Potential Obstacles: limited funding

Min. Ambition: Small-scale event with fewer participants



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5) RECONCILING SCIENCE AND SPIRITUALITY Circle

Action/Activity: Inaugural meeting of scientists & spiritual leaders

Facilitator: Jude Currivan

Members: Raeph Sanderson, Haesook Kim

Time Frame: June 2014

Location: Princeton / WDC / Princeton Club NY

Funding: Templeton Foundation

Risks/Potential Obstacles:

- lack of funding
- participants

Min. Ambition: 12+ participants

6) THE UNITED NATIONS Circle

Action/Activity: 01

- International Day of Peace: “Education & Peace”
- Work with “Education peace team”; Connect to the Peace Education Center in Seoul

Facilitators: Deborah Moldow, Monica Willard

Members: Chung Ohun Lee, Azza Karam, Abdelkader Abbadi, Farida Ali, Roger Ross

Time Frame: September 21st, 2013

Audience: International Day of Peace NGO Committee

Method/Plan of Action:

- Write invitation with asks to diverse circles
- Submit curricula
- Organize event
- Promote locally

Min. Ambition: send to Deborah / Activation

Action/Activity: 02

- Opening of General Assembly
- Won Buddhism UN Office Roundtable

Project Coordinator: Azza Karam

Members: Deborah Moldow, Monica Willard, Abdelkader Abbadi, Farida Ali, Roger Ross, Azza Karam

Time Frame: September 2014



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7) INTERFAITH

Circle

Action/Activity:

- World Interfaith Harmony Week
- Interfaith Service & universal consciousness (Korea)

Project Coordinator: Chung Ohun Lee

Members: Chung Ohun Lee, Deborah Moldow, Monica Willard, Abdelkader Abbadi, Farida Ali, Roger Ross

Time Frame: February 2014

Min. Ambition: Breakfast at UNFPA

8) EDUCATION

Circle

Action/Activity: Mediation / Negotiation Skills

Mediation and Conflict Resolution retreat coordinator: P.L. de Silva

Logistics: Raeph Sanderson, Robin Andrews, Doyeon Park

Members: Farida Ali (Peace & Ethics), Jude Currivan

Audience:

- Change agents
- Prison guards

Method/Plan of Action: Won Dharma Center – based skills program

Risks/Potential Obstacles: Ability to locate / identify change agents who will allocate time and effort to participate

Min. Ambition: 20 participants *pay fees for program

9) YOUTH

Circle

Action/Activity: Youth for Meditation and Mindfulness Seminar Coordinators: Yael L. Shy and Doyeon Park

Members: Yael L. Shy, Doyeon Park, Michael Nouri, Eunju Nam, Kristina Reddy, MJ Lee



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Vision for a New Civilization*

by Dr. Abdelkader Abbadi

A statement made on the occasion of the meeting of the Visionary Activists at the Won Dharma Meditation Center, Claverack, Hudson, New York, from May 3-5, 2013.

Abdelkader Abbadi, PhD, Political Science. Former Director, Department of Security Council. Correspondent, United Nations.



Throughout history, visionaries have attempted to formulate visions in a variety of fields. Some were bold, some less so, some accurate, others not so.

Rick Docksai said: “Futurology is about more than foreseeing the future; its goals are to advance the future’s knowability. We can learn much from both the mistakes and the successes of foresight.” 1

Ancient Greek historians like Herodotus (484-425 BC) envisaged the earth as flat, only to be corrected by Ferdinand Magellan (1519-1521) and others who affirmed that it was round. The Club of Rome in 1958 published a widely circulated report in which it claimed that earth resources would be depleted in a few decades. The Club ne ws has disappeared from the media scene in the last decades.

Nelson Mandela foresaw the end of Apartheid from his 18 year term prison on Robben Island. He was a visionary. Martin Luther King Jr. predicted that his people-the Afro-Americans-would make it up to the top of the mountain, perhaps without him, and they did. They achieved a large degree of desegregation. He was another visionary.

Vision implies looking at the future, even through the clouds, the uncertainties of the moment, the transitional stages, and being able to foresee transformative events. But a vision without realism remains an illusion.

With the active involvement of President Roosevelt, the leaders of the Soviet Union, the United Kingdom, and China finalized the Atlantic Declaration of the United Nations in January 1942. Together with 22 other countries, they committed to the principle of the establishment of the Organization after the war to work collectively for peace. The United Nations came into existence on October 24, 1945, five years after the greatest conflagration the world had ever known. They were visionary leaders.

So much for the past. What about the future?



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Hopefully, we will live to see similar visionaries help shed some light on the direction of our contemporary world. A group of thinkers such as the Visionary Activists can make a great contribution to that goal by trying to peer at the future. It is a challenge.

In the words of the Founding Fathers of this country, it is self evident that profound transformations are taking place in the world today, and that this period in history is unprecedented.

We speak about a wired world, and a globalized one. I prefer to describe it as an interdependent world. The concept of interdependence implies that in our times, no nation, no matter how big or powerful, can live by itself and on its own. The concept further means that more than ever before, consultations, coordination and co-operation among nations have become a reality and a necessity. It also signifies that the world needs restructuring of old institutions and/or creating new ones.

It can be argued that we already have global institutions. We have the United Nations, the Security Council, the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund, the International Labor Organization, the International Criminal Court, etc... True. But the problems have multiplied and become much more complex. And those international institutions were established for another time.

Take the example of the Security Council of the United Nations. Member states have been discussing the issue for its reforms for twenty years. Till now, they have not been able to come to an agreement on this issue. How long can Brazil, Japan, Germany, India and South Africa remain without a permanent seat with perhaps the right of the veto?

The same can be argued about the General Assembly and the IMF. The 21st Century demands that these institutions be profoundly restructured. That means that international institutions, like states, must undergo a process of democratization. People all over the world want to see the weighted vote of the IMF reviewed and equality prevail within this financial organization. They also want the members of the General Assembly to be elected, not appointed.

There is resistance to all these changes, but the new realities of the world will sooner or later impose themselves. Nobody foresaw the re-awakening of the regional Arab states-the so called "Arab Spring." Could we one day witness the rise of a Global Spring?

Beyond the renewal of the existing international institutions or the creation of new ones, the world seems to be showing signs of the coming new civilization. This is a matter for the far distant future, but the signs are unmistakable.

At the United Nations, a high level group of prominent personalities from different countries and faiths have been engaged in bringing understanding, tolerance and harmony among various cultural communities in the world. The ultimate goal is to reduce conflicts among them, and to establish the foundations of the "Alliance of





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Civilizations.” What form an alliance of civilizations can take may be a passionate subject for research.

There is a growing political and social consciousness that humanity seems to look like a giant ship on the high seas with aboard all human beings irrespective of their origins or nationality, and that they journey together. Their destiny is a common destiny. We are linked not just by communication technologies and social media, but above all, by our common humanity.

Our Common humanity also extends to our environment.

Speaking on April 22, at the United Nations, on the occasion of the Interactive Dialogue on Harmony with Nature to Commemorate International Mother Earth Day, the President of the General Assembly Mr. Vuk Jeremic declared:

“Living harmoniously with nature requires us to foster a balanced, ethical and non-exploitive relationship with our planet. We have a common duty to maintain the earth’s health and integrity, as our very existence is fully dependent on it.”

The concept of Common humanity can also provide an important subject for analysis. We are not alone in this world. We co-habit this world with other human beings and creatures. Compassionate people feel the suffering of their fellow human beings, and understand their problems and inadequacies, and are less judgmental towards them. These times demand that we pull off our shirt of indifference, and put on our gloves of commitment.

Albert Einstein said: “a human being is a part of the whole, called by us ‘universe’, a part limited in time and space. He experiences himself, his thoughts and feelings, as something separate from the rest—a kind of optical delusion of consciousness.” “The delusion,” added Einstein “is a kind of prison for us, restricting us to our personal desires and to affection for a few persons nearest to us.” “Our task”, he added, “must be to free ourselves from this prison by widening our circle of compassion to embrace all living creatures and the whole of nature in its beauty.”²

The geographic, racial, cultural and linguistic differences are still the realities today. But by boarding Ship Humanity together, and journeying together, we are in the midst of the transition that is preparing the grounds for a new stage in human history. That stage would enable the members of the international community to see each other as brothers and sisters, imbued with the values of the new age.

Those values would include love, compassion, corporate and shared responsibility, globalization that benefits all, human security, widely shared prosperity, commitment and human solidarity. They would place the human being at the center of any economic, political or social development. There is a general consensus towards a holistic approach to development. British Prime Minister David Cameron said that “improving our society’s sense of well-being is...the central political challenge of our times.”

In this regard, the education of the young generations in the area of global affairs and common humanity, includ-



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ing world history and civilizations, global citizenship, would be of a crucial importance.

Where would Ship Humanity land?

It would anchor on the shores of a vast island whose selfless inhabitants would be engaged in the search for the well-being of their brothers and sisters human beings, in their commitment to ending poverty, violence and war on man and nature, and in their pursuit of peace, a life of worth and dignity, and happiness.

Ship Hope actually sailed in the year 1958 and traveled the world to heal the human body.

Ship Humanity, a symbol, might sail in the year 2058 to lift the human spirit and stir man's soul.

In the midst of today's vast, profound and dizzily occurring transformations, Humanity is moving gradually, slowly, and eventually towards a Global Partnership with a rich and diverse civilization whose contours are still uncertain at the present stage. Global Partnership implies new institutions that invite universal and democratic participation by the major segments of the human society, including political leaders, business, labor, the civil society, women, and youth.

For the sake of the survival of Mankind and securing the future of the coming generations, we must have a vision, a dream: to humanize our relations with each other, and with our environment, and to free our world from the tyranny of nuclear weapons. This is not just a dream; it will be the most urgent priority to face the international community in the 21st Century.

Addressing the General Assembly of the United Nations on October 5, 1995, His Holiness Pope John Paul II formulated this poetic vision:

“We have within us the capacities for wisdom and virtue. With these gifts, and the help of God's grace, we can build in the next century, and the next millennium a civilization worthy of the human person, a true culture of freedom. We can and must do so! And in doing so, we shall see that the tears of this century have prepared the ground for a new springtime of the human spirit.”³

Temperatures are rising in the world's oceans, and their levels are also rising, posing a serious threat to Humanity. But at the same time, something else is rising: the voices of peoples, calling on their leaders to make changes and find solutions to the most urgent problems facing them. There is hope for Humanity's future.

* Title of a book I authored with Dr. Chung Lee and other Colleagues, Won Buddhism Publishing, 2000.

1. Associate Editor of the World Future Review.
2. Dear Professor Einstein, Albert Einstein to and from children, Alice Calaprice, Princeton University Press, 2002.
3. Address to the Fiftieth Commemorative Session of the General Assembly of the United Nations.





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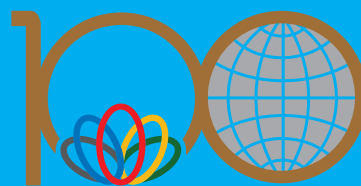
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