

**MANIFESTO OF THE O.P.C.R.
ORGANIZATION FOR THE PROTECTION OF CHILDREN'S RIGHTS**

FOR THE RESPECT OF HUMAN AND ENVIRONMENTAL CONDITIONS OF CHILDREN

INSPIRED AND DIRECTED BY RICAARDOE DJ DONE

GAIA 2031
NEW EARTH
NEW ERA

HUMAN AND ENVIRONMENTAL STRATEGIES
TO PRESERVE THE EVOLUTION OF FUTURE GENERATIONS



...INTO THE LIGHT

THE FACTS ARE OVERWHELMING. IT IS NOW TIME TO CONSCIOUSLY CONSIDER OUR ACTIONS, TO RETHINK OUR IDEOLOGY AND THE MANAGEMENT OF RESOURCES BEFORE WE COME TO THE POINT WHERE HUMANITY IS ONLY CONCERNED WITH BASE SURVIVAL.

We must make the necessary changes for the sake of our children!

See section SCIENCE...

IT IS NECESSARY TO DEVELOP A COLLECTIVE AWARENESS IN ORDER TO ADOPT STRATEGIES THAT ENSURE THE EQUILIBRIUM OF THE PLANET AND SUSTAINABILITY FOR FUTURE GENERATIONS.

We owe it to our children!

See section CLEVER STRATEGIST

WE HAVE MADE OUR CHILDREN AND OUR PLANET MORE VULNERABLE. WE MUST NOW ADOPT SURVEILLANCE MECHANISMS TO ENSURE THE PROTECTION OF HUMAN AND ENVIRONMENTAL CONDITIONS.

We must have the courage to adopt these mechanisms for the sake of our future generations!

See section SENTINEL

HOW CAN 9 BILLION PEOPLE SURVIVE ON THE SAME PLANET IF ALL NATIONS CONTINUE THEIR DISRESPECT OF THE ENVIRONMENT?

We must change the very nature of our consumption for the survival of our children!

See section THERE WERE “MANY” PEOPLE

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Note that regardless of Gaia's 2031 manifesto's anticipation in time, the statistics in the document reflect today's current reality.

Peter Allik-Petersenn, L.L.B.

Lawyer and Family Mediator (ret.) – British Columbia (Canada)

Garfield Brown, M.A. (Psychology)

Professor and Principal Clinical Psychologist, Department of Clinical and Applied Psychology (Medical University of Limpopo) – South Africa

Pasquale Carrozza

President, Trattoria Caffè Italia – Ontario (Canada)

Frank Di Cesare

Commissioner (English-Montreal School Board) – Québec (Canada)

Timi Ecimovic, Ph.D. (Environmental Sciences)

*Professor of Environmental Sciences
Chair of The School for Environmental Sciences (Ansted University) – Slovenia*

Albert Jacquard

Genetician and Humanist

Bawa Jain

Secretary General, World Council of Religious Leaders

Tony Lacroce, M.Sc. (Physics)

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Charles Mbugua

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John Mould, M.S.W., R.S.W.

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Professor and Director of the School of Social Work (University of south Florida) – Florida (USA)

Roshni Udyavar, M.Sc. (Geo Informatics)

Head, Rachana Sansad's Institute of Environmental Architecture (Academy of Architecture, Mumbai) – India

Hélène Van den Steen

Teacher and Mediator at the European Centre of Mediation – Belgium

Gaia 2031 is dedicated to all children on the planet...

and to Jacques Giroux, a friend and collaborator who has always been firmly convinced that we can "make a difference" in this world.



www.opcr.org

TheoDone
PUBLISHER

www.theodone.com

gaia2031@theodone.com

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5167 Jean-Talon Street East, Suite 370, Montreal, Québec H1S 1K8
Tel.: (514) 593-9027

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...INTO THE LIGHT

Open your soul to humanity. A renewed morality needs social values based on support and cooperation. Believe in all small actions. Let's make a difference all around us. Let's do something that counts and that allows us to live within the limits of the planet. We must create a new worldwide cooperation, a sort of realistic and concrete governance that respects the continuity of the world. There is an urgent need to work out a new code of conduct and management of societies.

The models that have been adopted up until now become unrealizable and utopian. There must be a responsibility to respect between generations which favors quality of life, while at the same time allowing the planet to regenerate itself. Furthermore, it is necessary to set up a model for the consumption of natural resources and for the prevention of all forms of pollution. A sustainable ecological concept must also be developed for the children that are yet to be born, so they can live in a healthy environment, on both a physical and a psychological level.

At the end of the 2nd millennium, the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development was adopted by a number of countries. The Rio Declaration is a set of 27 principles covering environmental protection and responsible development. Human beings are at the heart of these concerns, and are directly linked to sustainable development. It is now more than ever the right time to redirect this "wobbly boat" not that of Rimbaud's, but one that looks more like a shipwreck, a new Titanic.

We must think about future generations and not just as the mortgaged heirs of our environmental and human ineptness.

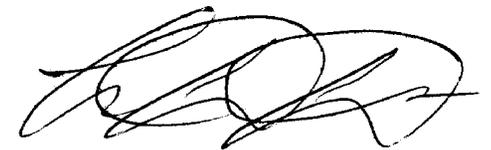
We also wish to recognize the positive accomplishments that have been achieved up until now and put a strong emphasis on others such as

sustainable development as well as the development and respect of children's rights.

Gaia, our planet, is in a way a self-regulated living organism which continuously adapts itself to its own needs. It will know how to develop protective mechanisms to keep its stability. However, other efforts must be made by humans, if mankind is to survive. We will have to maintain the basis that permanently encourages the creation of behaviors which will allow us to adapt to all environmental mutations to come and ensure life on our planet for us as well as for the societies which will live on it.

It is necessary, more than ever, to foresee things that cannot be undone, to think of models of exchanges between humans of all groups and all points of view that allow life to continue while respecting future generations which have the freedom to be and think in terms of justice and equity. Let us promote this worldwide cooperation which encourages the development of strategies that will allow children to take advantage of the same privileges and the same environmental legacy as their predecessors.

Give the next civilization the opportunity to create a new genesis of the principles of life which will find an echo in our present society and especially in the ones of the next centuries.



Ricardoe Di Done
O.P.C.R.'s President
and cosignatories

SCIENCE, PHILOSOPHY AND HUMAN POLITICS

**THE FACTS ARE OVERWHELMING. IT IS NOW TIME TO CONSCIOUSLY CONSIDER OUR ACTIONS,
TO RETHINK OUR IDEOLOGY AND THE MANAGEMENT OF RESOURCES
BEFORE WE COME TO THE POINT WHERE HUMANITY IS ONLY CONCERNED WITH BASE SURVIVAL.**

We must make the necessary changes for the sake of our children!

Seeing that we are dealing with humanity, it is about us and our fellow human beings that we must talk about. Looking the other way does nothing but increase the inevitable fate. It is necessary to face reality like it is. The facts are overwhelming. I am already here, 25 years later, and you are also with me already in 2031. It all seemed so far away to us, not so long ago and the pain has, in a subtle way, spread itself. I who am speaking to you, am only

the result of our careless consumption, our unlimited exploitation of natural resources and the failure to respect human rights, but there is no more time for pity. This time is now past. We need to take action and to rethink our ideology, and “civilize”, to quote Albert **JACQUARD**, the management of natural resources.

JACQUARD
Albert:
French scientist
and essayist
1925-...

We always knew that they existed – the alarming amount of statistics and documents dealing with the deterioration of the environment and the condition of humans; especially on children of the world and the dismal omen that never ceases to hang over them or over their perilous future. The numbers speak for themselves. There is no need to repeat them. Let us talk about the overwhelming facts. Let us look at the unnamed heresies that we have forgotten because of selfishness. But what have we become? The profusion of information that deadens everyone’s mind, the increased financial power and the abdication by adults of situations that they wish to totally ignore belittle, in an insidious way, the level of consciousness and confine humans to the simple level of survival.

The common denominator of these symptoms is fear – your fear of life and of not having enough. Do not forget this little word that prevents us from moving forward.

Before the silence, the ignorance and the complacent acceptance, it became inescapable and necessary to make statements, to change the principles in this broken-down world of values. It is necessary to react to this undeniable control that is held in a subtle, invisible and artificial manner, or any other system based on economic considerations to the detriment of a moral and social code and human and environmental considerations, with a single and global thought.

Becoming aware and understanding the stakes are now a necessity. This is the only real way to finding a new definition to humanizing science, a universal philosophy of rights and liberties and human and environmental policies. This is necessary in order to bring about a collective awakening of the planet’s future, the social continuity of the world and the establishment of a new code of conduct and management for future societies.

We can no longer act in an isolated way. Problems will now necessarily have an impact on a planetary scale. How could we come to that? Do you want to remember it a little? See for yourself. For about 50 years now, following René **DUMONT**’s shout of alarm and that of many other environmentalists, and as a result of more than 150 years of intense human and industrial activities, you have created a period of apathy and inertia in the 20th century. This huge period of industrialization, of corporatist politic, of the illicit trade of values based on pride and the human ego had, as its driving force, financial ambitions and the dilapidation of natural resources.

DUMONT
René:
French engineer in agronomy
and sociologist
1904-2001

And then there appeared an impoverishment and complete disregard for the planet's human and natural resources. Alongside this sad reality, there was a negligence or ignorance of the situation of children in the world: the horrible child labor, child soldiers, poverty, street gangs, prostitution, drugs, exploitation and corruption. It was the beginning of environmental warnings, human emergencies for children and a disaster in slow motion on a global scale.

Somewhere around the year 1980, there was the announced breach, it was POINT ZERO: *The collective demand exceeded then the ability of the planet to regenerate its resources.*

And today, a few decades too late, here we are belatedly in a period of movement and awakening – a foot in the old millennium and the other in the new one so as to forget nothing – neither memories, nor the future that we savor with more greed, all the more since we seem to sense the end of it.

We have now come to a collective awakening and an understanding of the urgency as well as the beginning of preventive measures. As cataclysms and uncommon catastrophic hurricanes raise fears everywhere, there are fleeting movements of solidarity, of denunciations, of impromptu organizations that are established. While the goals of the latter are laudable, they attempt to maintain a standard of life that cannot be sustained by our environment.

The aim of the O.P.C.R.'s Manifesto is thus to immediately start the recovery movement that is supported by the cosignatories of this Manifesto through the adoption of recommendations that it proposes and the measures that it urgently wishes to up into place.

It is necessary and it is a priority from now on to see science, philosophy and politics as necessary tools of humanization that will serve the environment and respect future generations.



3 million more children survived in 2000 as compared to 1990. This represents an 11% decrease of the mortality rate among children who are five years old and under in this decade alone.

(UNICEF)

CLEVER STRATEGIST

**IT IS NECESSARY TO DEVELOP A COLLECTIVE AWARENESS IN ORDER
TO ADOPT STRATEGIES THAT ENSURE THE EQUILIBRIUM OF THE PLANET
AND SUSTAINABILITY FOR FUTURE GENERATIONS.**

We owe it to our children!

An ideology should represent the views of a group of individuals and not only those of an elite or an existing power. Furthermore, it is necessary to change preconceived ideas and mental principles that should exist no longer so that a new way of thinking can be adopted. Didn't the poet Khalil **GIBRAN**, himself believe that the world would end, till the day he saw a caterpillar turning into a butterfly?

GIBRAN
Khalil:
Lebanese poet and writer
1883-1931

Our position suggests nothing less than a collective awakening. The entire scientific community, ideological movements, different forms of governance, entities, organizations and social movements working for the well-being of children must unite in order to re-create this severed intergenerational bond. In the same vein, environmental organizations can be responsible for the protection of natural resources and be the subject of a true solidarity. Human and environmental measures must be taken and adjusted for entire nations so that individual nations can adapt the measures to their specific reality.

On the whole, we consider that all modifications and changes which do not respect humanity and the environment must be kept under surveillance and controlled and even eliminated. How?

First, it will be necessary to develop new fuels that are less polluting, in order to considerably reduce greenhouse gases (GHG), such as the carbon dioxide emissions (CO₂), methane (CH₄) and nitrous oxide (N₂O) and allow the establishment of the perfect conditions for the restoration of the ozone layer.

Without restricting travel, whether it is for leisure or utilitarian purposes, it is essential to encourage the possible limitation of the free movement of people and to plan some type of USER/PAYER system, in order to subsidize the research on new fuels that are less polluting and preserve the quality of our environmental legacy.

In order to encourage the respect of natural resources, we consider that immediate measures should be taken, in order to favor the reduction of GHGs by creating new fuels that are better adapted for air and road travel and by creating a special tax TFE (Tax For Environment) for all air travel which will be deposited in an International Fund for the Environment.

Furthermore, it would be necessary to contain the medium and long-term effects of genetically modified organisms (GMO) whose genetic inheritance has been changed, either to enhance or attenuate some of the characteristics or to provide it with other completely new features. Human beings should be informed whenever a product has been genetically modified. No matter what the motivation is for this modification, it is important that such changes do not affect the environment or humans. The respect for life and the ecosystem has to have precedence over technological development.

We believe that in spite of the studies that point to the virtues put forth to justify genetic modifications, in the respect of humanity and biodiversity, these genetic transformations do not necessarily benefit the environment since they alter the soil, food and the bodies of those who ingest them.

It is also necessary to agree on the respect of the community of beliefs, religions and the various groups of loyal subjects that nations have given themselves. There are five renowned religions in the world. Although the doctrines of these religions are as a rule positive and peaceful, and do not make any value judgments, statements and actions that they uphold are sometimes debatable and cause disagreements: we need to make sure that no person, group or association may use these doctrines to promote fights, wars or even interpretations that are detrimental to the development of a fair and impartial vision of the world, for humans and the environment.

We consider that the human spirit, while respecting diversity, should live in a universal belief system that is free from fundamental doctrines and nonsectarian, where this homogenous spirituality exists beyond churches with one single faith, without borders. Thus this new monolithic, unified, humanity, with one huge conviction, could freely believe, in accordance with one's personal convictions, rather than believe in dogmatic interpretations that often bring nations into conflict with each other.

Politics and the actions of democracies are increasingly moving towards a policy of power that is in opposition to humans. Democracies do not represent humans anymore; they represent the corporations that support them. Economic and financial power is becoming the real motivation. It will be necessary to redefine parameters and theoretical frameworks and harmonize the approaches to governance, in order to obtain the best balance between opposing forces and a fair distribution of wealth.

We consider that politics should be mainly centered on principles and actions based on humanism and which take into account the needs of future generations. Furthermore, there should be environmental organizations whose actions and choices are accountable to a national or universal authority.

We are far from being fundamentalists or extremists. But there must be changes. The hidden will of the status quo or playing the ostrich, will no longer be a viable option to the painful choices that we will probably soon have to make. It is time to gradually bring about some change to a situation wherein everyone is responsible.

Gaia works as a huge living organism, with its own potential for remaining balanced, so it continuously adapts itself to new realities. This is not where the real problem is – it is really mankind that is in danger.

In spite of our deep convictions, we do not want to indoctrinate or to impose our choices, but rather strongly encourage and require human and environmental solutions in order to restore our confidence in life and in the future.



Native culture: genuine treasure for humanity. 119 basic plants that are used in 74% of our medications have been discovered by native people. The World Health Organization has noted that 21,000 medicinal plant species are used by these communities.

SAVOIR AUTOCHTONE : UN TRÉSOR (LesOgres.org)

SENTINEL

**WE HAVE MADE OUR CHILDREN AND OUR PLANET MORE VULNERABLE.
WE MUST NOW ADOPT SURVEILLANCE MECHANISMS TO ENSURE
THE PROTECTION OF HUMAN AND ENVIRONMENTAL CONDITIONS.**

We must have the courage to adopt these mechanisms for the sake of our future generations!

This new form of human conception, thought and governance must periodically ensure that the new system that will be put into place continues to be relevant. The new system must from time to time be re-evaluated if necessary, in order to avoid the same pitfalls as before. We have always known that children, these important beings, are “fragile” (it seems that since Françoise **DOLTO**, we are even more aware of this fact).

DOLTO
Françoise:
French doctor
and psychoanalyst
1908-1988

The same can be said about the natural resources of the world. It is up to us to maintain from now on, the precarious permanency and eventually reinforce the foundations and the level of harmonization of each human with nature.

We should develop surveillance mechanisms in advance and not after the fact, so that we have effective measures in place that will allow us to determine whether we are deviating from this new permanent code of human behavior.

In order to facilitate an effective follow-up, we consider that the establishment of an international organization for the environment (such as an International Fund on the Environment) would be desirable as long as it has a decision making body present on all continents, that every country is represented and devotes the necessary time and energy to ensure that environmental rules and regulations are followed. In this respect, an environmental protection program will provide the parameters of surveillance.

This program could also include useful information on the quality of water which would considerably reduce illness and child mortality and avoid abuses and the non respect of children's rights, as detailed in the *UN Convention on the Rights of the Child*.

From now on, and beyond all mechanisms of prevention, it will be necessary to continuously be attentive to this new planet that our children will inherit.

***MAY THE CONCRETE AND HUMANITARIAN OBJECTIVE THAT
THE O.P.C.R.'S MANIFESTO PROPOSES BE WITNESS TO THIS, AND SURVIVE US.***



Drinking water:

1981-1990: one billion people had access to drinking water for the first time in their life.

1990-2002: There were 1.1 billion more people who had access to drinking water.

2005-2015: Goal: Reduce by half the proportion of people without access to drinking water.

THERE WERE “MANY” PEOPLE (but did they live happily ever after?)

**HOW CAN 9 BILLION PEOPLE SURVIVE
ON THE SAME PLANET IF ALL NATIONS CONTINUE
THEIR DISRESPECT OF THE ENVIRONMENT?**

We must change the very nature of our consumption for the survival of our children!

We are now on Gaia in the year 2031. On Gaia, in nearly twenty years, that is in 2050, there should be 9 BILLION human beings. The Earth will be unable to meet such needs if we keep the current rate of consumption of resources. We have to live within the limits of the planet. There must be a change in the economy as well as new restrictive measures of energy resources and a new definition of human rights for future generations, if humankind wants to survive.

The most selfish nations show with impunity the lack of respect for their immediate surroundings. Policies that are national and divergent, particularly with regard to the economy and employment, prevent nations from developing a respect for natural resources and their protection for the benefit of future generations who will have the unbearable task of getting rid of the environmental burden that we leave them.

Man finds himself, now more than ever, in his own personal isolated world. He reacts to fear and to all forms of social violence. He has few bonds with others, except those which seem useful to him and which contribute to his need for safety. Unifying group values or social ethics have disappeared. It is a lonely extinction where everyone will need to die to his illusions if he wants to survive.

Earth's Pain

We borrow this title from Hubert **REEVES's** book, to demonstrate the unconscious misappropriation of resources. The drive to productivity is wasting the Earth's resources and totally ignoring the right to freedom of millions of children. Since World War II, one dominant thought prevails: making our



REEVES
Hubert:
Canadian astrophysicist
and popularizer of science
1932-...

economic development a priority instead of our social development. There must be a transformation in our beliefs and in the use of our resources.

In the Land of Giants

Emerging countries, such as China and India, can not consider development in the same way as we know it or use financial principles derived from capitalism. Otherwise, they will drag the planet to her fall. It is in a way the birth of new gigantic needs for energy. Between the two of them, China and India will use nearly 80% of the planet's energy. A new worldwide economy will have to be born.

Becoming Our Own Executioner

Will mankind create his own isolation, his human prison? More than ever the principles of humanity will have to be developed. A new respect for human rights will have to be put forth so that generations have access to all that they will need in order to live appropriately, on a physical, moral, social and psychological level.

*If we do not take the necessary essential measures right now,
this eclipse could last till the end of humanity.
We will have reached the limit. Gaia's limit.*

A new reality must now be set in motion.

In order to obtain stable climate conditions and a greater respect for the balance of biodiversity and the survival of our children, four general objectives guide our actions in our approach for new worldwide cooperation.

EDUCATIONAL OBJECTIVE

That is, favor a preventive approach that encourages actions which provide more incentives to recycle and regenerate as well as the adoption of school programs for children during the compulsory years of schooling.

MUTUAL HUMAN OBJECTIVE

That is, pass on values of solidarity and environmental interdependence which affect the entire world's populations, those who are present and those to come.

PARTICIPATION OBJECTIVE

That is, encourage the support of all social partners towards mechanisms of decisions and achievements. The new forms of governance will have to foresee policies and action plans that favor this purpose.

OBJECTIVE OF SUPPORT AND SURVEILLANCE

That is, a surveillance of the parameters that have been established and tools which will allow to evaluate and judge the validity of the actions that have been undertaken and their possible reorientation if necessary.

RESPECT OF THE ENVIRONMENT

WE RECOMMEND:

As a whole, the respect of a worldwide concept on the environment and in particular *Agenda 21*, action program established for the 21st century from the main principles adopted at the Earth's Summit;

An immediate and controlled worldwide decrease of at least 2% per year of greenhouse gases (GHG) emissions linked with transportation and all economic activities related to energy in the industrial, commercial and residential sectors;

The drawing up of a management strategy for transportation and the adoption of an approach to favor the number of environmentally friendly vehicles or the establishment of incentives that promote and favor the use of public transportation;

Enhance the image and the use of renewable sources of energy (solar, hydroelectric, etc.) and fossil fuels that are less polluting (ethanol/gas) and the incitement to develop environmentally friendly technologies;

The obligation for companies to conform themselves to stronger social and environmental laws when exploiting natural resources;

A better management of water, forests and natural resources while protecting species and ecosystems, in order to protect biodiversity;

Providing support to emergent countries in order that they adopt an appropriate "eco economic" policy and create development programs that are within the limits of the planet;

The immediate creation of a 5% emergency tax on any gas that does not contain ethanol or less polluting fuels and on the purchase or the renting of any new vehicle that has a higher mass, more than six cylinders, and four driving wheels. We also recommend that 25% of the multinational gas companies' annual profits be dedicated to the world community (the same principle should apply to the multinational pharmaceutical companies which should automatically remit a certain percentage of their annual profits to humanitarian causes which specifically deal with children in the world);

The immediate creation of specific and obligatory programs for students of the primary and high school levels so that they offer all the necessary tools for assuming the responsibility of their environment and the development of a social justice.

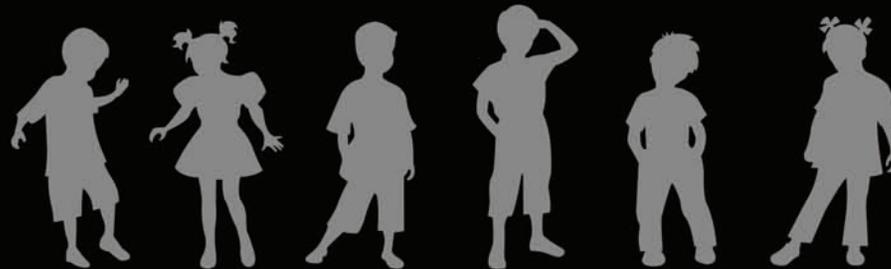
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**GAIA 2031
ECLIPSE**

THE FUTURE OF CHILDREN IN DANGER
ON A PLANET IN AGONY



The circle corresponds, on the scale of this page, to a real hole located in the ozone layer and represents approximately an area of 28 million irregular square kilometers on the whole planet or, if you prefer, that is nearly 6% of the overall Earth's ozone layer.

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Professor and Principal Clinical Psychologist, Department of Clinical and Applied Psychology (Medical University of Limpopo) – South Africa

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Head, Rachana Sansad's Institute of Environmental Architecture (Academy of Architecture, Mumbai) – India

Hélène Van den Steen

Teacher and Mediator at the European Centre of Mediation – Belgium

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TheoDone
PUBLISHER

www.theodone.com

gaia2031@theodone.com

Gaia 2031 is dedicated to all children on the planet...

and to Jacques Giroux, a friend and collaborator who has always been firmly convinced that we can "make a difference" in this world.



www.opcr.org

DEEP IN THE SHADOWS...

A PLANETARY CRISIS IS IN MOTION. AIR AND WATER POLLUTION ARE APPROACHING LIMITS THAT HAVE NEVER BEEN REACHED BEFORE. MORE AND MORE WE ARE HEARING ABOUT THE POSSIBILITY THAT HUMAN BEINGS WILL DISAPPEAR FROM THE PLANET.

We have the responsibility to leave a viable planet for our children.

See section ODE TO SURVIVORS

1st MOVEMENT: A CAREFREE TIME

THE REGENERATION OF NATURAL RESOURCES HAS ITS LIMITS. WE HAVE PASSED THE BREAKING POINT: WE CONSUME MORE THAN WHAT EARTH ITSELF CAN GIVE US.

What will be left for our children?

2nd MOVEMENT: DROWSINESS

MORE AND MORE, WE CONTINUE TO CONSUME THOUGHTLESSLY IN SPITE OF THE INEVITABLE APPROACHING DEADLINE.

The consequences for our children are dire.

3rd MOVEMENT: INSATIABILITY

NEW EMERGING COUNTRIES WANT TO DEVELOP THEIR ECONOMY. THE WORLD'S POPULATION IS INCREASING AND TO SURVIVE WE MUST CHANGE OUR HABITS OF CONSUMPTION .

We are shamelessly mortgaging our children's future through our thoughtlessness.

GIVEN THE DETERIORATING ENVIRONMENTAL SITUATION, IT IS NOW ESSENTIAL TO CHANGE OUR BEHAVIOUR. A FEW SNAPSHOTS OF DESTRUCTION WILL BE ENOUGH FOR US TO PROVIDE INFORMATION ON THE EXTENT OF THE INEVITABLE CATASTROPHE.

Stop the horrific scenario now, for the sake of our children!

See section FREEZE FRAME

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DEEP IN THE SHADOWS...

It is useless to close your eyes. This will change nothing. The statistics speak loudly. As do the troubles. We must admit it: a new reality is in motion. Every day becomes another reprieve, a new chance for humans to change their almost unconscious behavior towards the environment and their unscrupulous manner of using or borrowing the earth's natural resources for their personal gain – resources that belong to our future generations. Our selfishness does not allow us to see any further.

It is sometimes useless to look beyond. It is here that are felt the aftershocks of storms that occur on the other side of Earth. No man is an island and the problem is inevitably worldwide. It is useless to listen to rumors, to speak and to lay blame on others. We are the ones affected by our acceptance of an ideology dominated by fear rather than the concern of evaluating the results of our human activities on the planet.

And then there are vulnerable children and their environment. These children depend on us because they need food, clothes, shelter, emotional and psychological support. They also need to live in a safe environment and above all, they must have the opportunity to become, like us, self-sufficient adults. We endanger their lives when we do not respond to their immediate needs or interests.

Yes, we endanger the lives of 16,000 children everyday. You have heard correctly: almost 6 million children die every year because of lack of food. 5,750 other children die every day, that is more than 2 million every year, because they do not have access to drinking water. We also endanger the lives

of other children when they are forced to become refugees and are often to be deported to other countries while being separated from their parents.

We do not have these problems here, in the developed countries. Of course not! Maybe, but there are other problems that are equally unacceptable in our surroundings. What do we do everyday to guarantee that children have a healthy environment? What do we do to prevent them from becoming emotionally unstable, or involved with drugs, crime, suicide and violence? What are we doing with the wealth that we should have shared and given to them?

What are we really doing?

Have we really seen all this? We lost ourselves as did the pathetic ghosts of **BRUEGHEL's** allegory. Look at that painting very carefully, where one blind man is leading another and another before falling. It is there that our blindness takes shape, our loss, our danger. Humanity is creating, if it does nothing to stop it, the perfect plan of extinction for the last 65 million years.

BRUEGHEL
Peter, the Elder:
Netherlandish
painter
1525-1569



A large, stylized handwritten signature in black ink.

Ricardoe Di Done
O.P.C.R.'s President
and cosignatories

ODE TO SURVIVORS

A PLANETARY CRISIS IS IN MOTION.

AIR AND WATER POLLUTION ARE APPROACHING LIMITS THAT HAVE NEVER BEEN REACHED BEFORE.

MORE AND MORE WE ARE HEARING ABOUT THE POSSIBILITY THAT HUMAN BEINGS WILL DISAPPEAR FROM THE PLANET.

We have the responsibility to leave a viable planet for our children.

It is Gaia, Mother Earth, your only Planet, and it will survive you!

Do not speak of the environment anymore, but rather of you in this world in jeopardy, because it is a human crisis! Do not listen to the rumors, the prophetic views of your thinkers, the promises of your elected officials, but listen closely to your conscience. Do not recall your most recent memories and the better days before you, but rather, think of the new visions for tomorrow, since you have already inherited them.

No matter who you are: do not say or believe anymore that it does not concern you. *Alas! It is no longer true.*

HAWKINS
Stephen W.
British theoretical
physicist
1942-...

And should you still today, 50 years later, after crossing the invisible boundaries of the non regeneration of the 1980's, ask yourself the same and relevant question that Stephen **HAWKINS** asked himself at the time: "Will the human race survive?"

I, who am speaking to you, may be the child you will have or the child that is growing up before your eyes, I am your forgotten hope born in the 3rd millennium. I am 25 years old today, a life later, we are already in 2031, and I am already old in my heart if you only knew, for I carry a heavy burden bequeathed by the last century of human activities.

Your non-respect of the environment, the huge consumption of fossil fuels, petroleum, water and air pollution, and excessive deforestation, that ignorance of the importance of our forests, have ruined life. Right before you there loomed

lost icebergs in the oceans floating South, which you photographed, along with those great white animals of the far North, for which you felt an indistinct brief regret before the glaciers melted. Before us also emanated the disastrous vapors thereby accelerating the concentration of greenhouse emissions.

And, for economic gain, for that constant fixation on profit, you have exploited the essence of childhood, for as long as you could, through forced under-paid labor, prostitution, drugs, violence and other inhuman sufferings.

You have mortgaged the future and you are afraid of what you perceive or what you do not dare see. Your pathetic gestures to protect are only aborted attempts of pretences, enactments of vain actions that have done nothing because you aimed for the wrong targets. You only chose to do what could ease your conscience. Your choices should have been more ambitious and your politics more giving while you still had the chance to do so.

I am speaking to you and cannot dare to think about those who will follow me, who will try to find this lost paradise, wasted by human pride and arrogance. I cannot dare to believe that tomorrow will be worse, more destructive and could become irreversible, the inevitable: Gaia's angry reply. I cannot dare to admit that human extinction is possible, that we are our own executioners. Finally, in the same way as William **FAULKNER**, before my mirror that is offered to me by humans, I cannot dare to avow these words to myself: "As I lay dying..."

FAULKNER
William:
American novelist
1897-1962

According to World Conservation Union (IUCN)'s red list: One amphibian out of three, one mammal out of four and one bird out of eight are endangered species.

1ST MOVEMENT: A CAREFREE TIME

THE REGENERATION OF NATURAL RESOURCES HAS ITS LIMITS.
WE HAVE PASSED THE BREAKING POINT: WE CONSUME MORE
THAN WHAT EARTH ITSELF CAN GIVE US.

What will be left for our children?

There is hardly any more humanity. There is only an exchange of services and mechanical gestures between humans that are inspired by fear and survival.

This global drift had already been announced many years ago. You knew it, unless you lived on another planet than Gaia. You knew, saw and then overstepped what we call the *zero point limit of regeneration* that had been announced. That moment occurred around 1980 – the definitive and crucial period, it was at that time that the planet had reached its limit – the point of no return for the sufficient renewal of natural resources.

And that is when you were just beginning to understand that things were not as simple as they seemed.

MONTESQUIEU:
French social
commentator and
political thinker
1689-1755

It was at that moment that you took the step that allowed you to unconsciously enter a forbidden area, to bring back the period and causes and introduce the beginning of a new form of decline, just as **MONTESQUIEU** had predicted for Rome at the time. It is at this moment that we made mistakes again that animals generally commit only once and at the same time we laughed at the future and at the urgency, so far invisible, of an end that was forthcoming.

This whole situation started gradually, by us, uneventfully, but with lots of consequences. It was the emergence of a new world increasingly turned towards self-worship and the pursuit of utopia. A parable of self-centered blind individuals who are leading each other, remember? Various governments have collaborated to this dormancy, to this carefree attitude, you have listened to them. You have your share of responsibility.

Knowledgeable scientists from all over the world spoke to us as prophets. But it was too late, we were already deaf. The breaking point had been reached, without any noise, without an echo, while life itself was turned upside down. From then on, it was practically impossible to turn back. We could only repair. The world, so transformed in this new prevailing ideological reality opened itself and we moved towards a global economy. We trampled on our principles and progressed towards an illusion, an instant financial world, without considering the future.

And we stopped believing in tomorrow and what it means for the environment and the future generations. What have we done to protect natural resources? The air that we breathe? Water, forests? What have we done to eliminate poverty, to give access to education, to protect the rights and interests of all children? What did we do when we could (still) be able to do it?

Nearly 100 million antipersonnel landmines still threaten the population of numerous countries, the most affected are: Afghanistan, Angola and Kampuchea.

(Ministry of Foreign Affairs, France)

Half of the conflicts that occurred between 1990 and 2003
took place in low income developing countries.

2ND MOVEMENT: DROWSINESS

MORE AND MORE,
WE CONTINUE TO CONSUME THOUGHTLESSLY
IN SPITE OF THE INEVITABLE APPROACHING DEADLINE.

The consequences for our children are dire.

Gaia kept on turning. No need for humans to worry about such an invisible, natural, nimble gesture with no immediate consequence.

BROWN
Lester R.:
Environmental
analyst
and writer
1934-...

But signs of environmental and human negligence are inevitably revealing. Lester **BROWN** and many others before him, spoke, announced and radically warned us. They seem to have preached to deaf ears: our deaf ears. In 1980, we crossed the invisible and irreversible border. We knew it and it was necessary to react at that moment. We were perhaps already in a runaway train without a conductor.

SUZUKI
David:
Canadian science
broadcaster and
environmental
activist
1936-...

The well-known environmentalist, David **SUZUKI** spoke, quite appropriately at the turn of the 3rd millennium, of a “disaster in slow motion”. The effects of such a disaster, he explained, would really be felt only in a few generations. And we are already there. What should have been done to sensitize humans? To warn them? To alert them before the inexorable? Does our behavior reveal an insidious and incorrigible procrastination or negligence?

What have we done? What will we do now? If we still had time.

It is thus at this time, close to twenty years before the 2nd millennium, that we crossed a latent period and thereafter entered a slow decline. Little by little we noticed subtle changes in the climate, the abundance of different species, the ecosystems, human values and children's rights. In a subtle way, something had changed.

We must remember. We would receive a profusion of information, which made us more and more deaf, blind and unconscious of the reality. Incredible statistics from the most atrocious human horrors already had nearly no effect on us or on our conscience – except perhaps for a few frightful seconds during which we implored divine forces or recited fleeting prayers. It was maybe too little too late.

We have perhaps, to some extent, developed at its highest level, a new form of immunization to the human conscience.

The cost of War (in US dollars):

Gulf War: 80 billion

War in Iraq: 290 billion

War in Afghanistan: 142 billion

(Center for Defense Information [CDI], Washington D.C.)

World military spending in 2005:

1,118 billion dollars, that is \$173 per inhabitant

United States only: 48% of this amount

(LE MONDE.FR)

This amount increased to 1.200 billion dollars in 2006.

3RD MOVEMENT: INSATIABILITY

NEW EMERGING COUNTRIES WANT TO DEVELOP THEIR ECONOMY.

THE WORLD'S POPULATION IS INCREASING AND TO SURVIVE

WE MUST CHANGE OUR HABITS OF CONSUMPTION

We are shamelessly mortgaging our children's future through our thoughtlessness.

Utopia continued on, apathetic and grim.

Humans, who are more and more greedy, consume even more because of their overflowing insatiability and their will to ignore the anticipated future. Self-worship, a new subtle form of egoism, has reached critical thresholds. The Universe is living on borrowed time. This drowsiness has inevitably created a frantic resumption of life's rhythm due to fear and insecurity and also to the urgent need of living at the same rhythm as before the alert given by reputable ecologists.

We have developed the fear of not having enough. We are afraid of ourselves, of others, but most of all of life. We do not want to make any sacrifices. That inevitably means that to maintain such a rate of consumption, we must unavoidably borrow the resources of future generations.

We should have seen the surge of emergent countries: South Africa, then Brazil, China and finally India. Yes, India, has now become the most inhabited country in the world. And where are the Chinese? Would you like some statistics? It is 2031 and the gross domestic product (GDP) of China, has quadrupled in less than 20 years. Maybe we did not think that these new demographic forces could build their economies on such an economic model of growth. This is indeed absolutely inconceivable. We would require several planets to respond to those increasing needs.

We went back to work because of compensation, because fear and pride are two baleful ghosts, which rule the world. We continued to consume, to run as a result of Titanic's Syndrome, as in Nicolas **HULOT**'s work, to continue also to pollute, to avoid evil, to brazenly injure children and generations that will follow. But, what are we doing? We, citizens, companies or governments, we are still unconsciously modifying the atmosphere's chemical composition, the same air which keeps us alive. We pollute air, water and life... We have no faith, we are afraid. We have quietly made the world suffer!

We are living on borrowed time. We should rather talk about a countdown, a move to a new restrictive reality with deprivations that we could stay away from. We will perhaps have the chance to avoid all this and leave it to future generations. So we would finally escape from the worse. Nothing could be farther from the truth. We will have always a debt towards these descendants, because we have squandered what belonged to them too.

It is Gaia, our only planet, and it will forcibly take back its place!



HULOT
Nicolas:
Reporter,
ecologist and
French writer
1955-...

The eight main oil companies in the world, Exxon-Mobil, Shell, Chevron, Total, Petrobras, Lukoil and Statoil made close to 150 billion dollars in profits in 2006.

(AOL-Actualities)

FREEZE FRAME

GIVEN THE DETERIORATING ENVIRONMENTAL SITUATION, IT IS NOW ESSENTIAL TO CHANGE OUR BEHAVIOUR.

A FEW SNAPSHOTS OF DESTRUCTION WILL BE ENOUGH FOR US TO PROVIDE

INFORMATION ON THE EXTENT OF THE INEVITABLE CATASTROPHE.

Stop the horrific scenario now, for the sake of our children!

It now becomes impossible to make changes in values, behaviors or economies without launching chain reactions all over the world. No boundary, culture or religion is sheltered from such effects. The western model of growth for emergent countries that India or China wish to copy is now impossible to realize. Unless, that is, we have other planets in reserve. Many regions of the world are now linked, not by the impossible globalization, but rather by the unavoidable domino effect.

At the moment when mankind has made the Earth sick, alarming, frightening, and contradictory statistics inundate our different medias creating a lot of confusion and incomprehension. For example, while the part per million (PPM) of carbon dioxide rate becomes the highest since the last 200,000 years, while Malaysia, Brazil, India, Indonesia and other countries like them, continue full steam ahead towards an unrestrained industrialization and towards the destruction of their environment, all this in order to catch up to rich countries (in their excessiveness), a child dies of various illnesses every four seconds...

The time it takes to read this short sentence of horror.

Let's see now what you have done internationally with me, child of the world and those who are like me, before we got to the year 2031. You think you are dreaming? Stop the movie. Live the reality and dwell on some images of destruction for a few moments.



The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child was signed in 1989. Many countries pride themselves on having ratified it, but what has happened to it now?

CHINA

China is an emergent country from which will suddenly ironically appear the biggest developments and the most incredible changes. It has known a substantial decrease of its water reserves available for irrigation and has lost huge portions of land that were potentially suitable for cultivation notably in favor of the construction of roadways – more than 85,000 kilometers of roadways has been projected. With all this potential, China has become the most important power of the world in 2025. The unthinkable industrial development had however pernicious effects and made China one of the worst polluters on the planet.

As far as children are concerned, China has for a long time made itself unobtrusive and has defended itself against exploiting children. Nearly 9 million children, between the ages of 10 and 14, are working in the manufacturing of textiles, toys and sports items.

INDIA

Economic disparities are growing and a high poverty rate has been maintained. India wanted to develop. But development in which direction? The introduction of a multinational culture has brought about economic chaos. Gandhi always said: *There is enough in the world for the needs of everyone, but not enough for the lust of some.* India has difficulties satisfying its need for growth without penalizing the ecosystem. Some of the factors that contribute to this deterioration of the environment include population increase and technological and consumption choices. This deterioration is also the major cause of increasing poverty since a bad environment harms public health.

Too many children are living in abject poverty and the country cannot resolve the growing problem of prostitution. There are over 200,000 child prostitutes in India who come from Nepal.

MIDDLE EAST

The climate is semi-arid and rainfall levels are low and inconsistent in many countries of the region. Humans face irreversible conditions of desertification. These countries have low rates of income and one inhabitant out of three depends on agriculture including fishing and farming. Countries of this region have difficulties guaranteeing food safety. Thus they have to import a lot of food. Poverty levels are high and any kind of development faces many obstacles because of limits in the availability of land and water as well as unpredictable rainfalls. The power of water becomes a geopolitical strength.

Children in this region live in an environment where many tragic situations occur. Children's rights are often violated in situations of war. Economic sanctions coupled with wars have harmful effects on the moral, social and psychological development of children. Moreover, children are also exposed to poverty and natural disasters (flooding, drought and earthquakes).

AFRICA

There is not as much hunting and fishing as before. This is something that cannot be denied. There are no fish and lakes and rivers are drying out. People are becoming "climate refugees" in Africa. Climatic changes do not only bring about rise in temperatures, but also starvation and shortage of water. And this is the situation for half of Black Africa. Scientists had actually foreseen aridness in Sub-Saharan Africa. But there is more. We cannot only blame it on the climate: we attack Congo's equatorial forest (it occupies more than half of the territory) and constitutes the second biggest tropical forest after the one in South America.

In these countries, there are 80 million working children, between the ages of 5 and 14 years. The important agricultural industry employs these children for South Africa's orchards, Madagascar's vanilla plantations and Egypt's jasmine fields. Africa also carries the AIDS virus, which affects 2 million children under the age of 15 in Sub-Saharan Africa alone.

EUROPE

There are more than 27 countries which have a common environmental policy. One major problem that remains in many of these countries is water pollution and the necessity to reduce greenhouse gases (GHG). But there is a bigger danger for some of these countries. Certain Ministers responsible for the environment consider that the collective behavior of the planet is leading towards an ecological disaster due to the overexploitation of resources, endangered animals and plants species, the destruction of tropical forests and the reduction of possibilities of development for future generations.

There are many children who live under the poverty line and do not receive a good education. Others are poorly-fed or victims of moral and physical violence. The trade of children still exists between European countries. Youth prostitution is also present: between 3,000 and 8,000 children as young as 6 years old prostitute themselves in Europe.

AMERICA

Cochabamba's city, in Bolivia, was the host of the Summit of South American Nations as well as the Social Summit for the integration of nations in 2004. The goal of the latter was to prepare an agreement for water in South America. Those taking part in the event had proposed to make access to water a human right. But beyond the official meetings, another concern was the Amazonian forest, which had an incomparable biodiversity. Once more figures will make your blood run cold. The destruction of the rainforest has had countless consequences on the world's climate, including an increase of carbon dioxide gases in the atmosphere and rising temperatures. Overexploitation has come from sawmills and coal producers. More than 10 million hectares are destroyed with time. And time has passed. Thus, it is not unrealistic to talk about the rapid disappearance of more than 50,000 square kilometers of forest every year.

In Latin America: there are 5.1 million children who work. Social problems such as poverty and violence are rampant.

WHEREAS the future of children is inextricably linked to the living conditions of their parents;

WHEREAS children living in particularly difficult conditions and those having particular needs must be fully part of programs whose aim is to prevent and eradicate financial, psychological, spiritual and political poverty;

WHEREAS a huge number of major social problems affecting society cannot be solved without first improving the critical situation of children;

WHEREAS the protection against violence, the access to healthy food, to health and to education should constitute essential preconditions for the fundamental rights of children;

WHEREAS children are able to develop a vision of the world and to freely express it according to their age and maturity;

WHEREAS obstacles to improving the living conditions of the world's children are often related to lack of political will and a bad distribution of the available resources

RESPECT OF CHILDREN'S RIGHTS AND FUTURE GENERATIONS

WE RECOMMEND:

FOR ALL THE CHILDREN OF THE WORLD

That they ensure the safety and the stability of children in an adequate family context, that is favorable to their development;

That they ensure that children's rights to education be respected;

That the essential physical needs of children are met, in particular providing healthy foods;

That children have psychological safety and learn how to develop their self-esteem;

That children have access to healthy foods, drinking water and the essential nutrients for their development;

That they can evolve in a healthy and safe environment without violence;

That they can adequately learn how to read, write and maintain hope in their future;

That they can learn how to respect the differences between humans and that they manage to solve conflicts with peers in a rational and peaceful manner;

That they understand the significance and the responsibility to communicate within all human and family relationships.

FOR ALL THE PARENTS OF THE WORLD

That there is more responsibility and the acquiring of tools which allow for a good education, the importance of good nutrition and the preservation of a good environment;

That they recognize the importance of the bond which links them to their children throughout their lives;

That they understand that children are lent to them and that they are responsible for them on a physical and psychological level;

That they understand with complete freedom and justice that spirituality brings universal values of love which must be both respected and promoted.

AND...

THAT STATES OF THE ENTIRE WORLD MUST RECOGNIZE THAT THE ESTABLISHMENT OF SOCIAL PROGRAMS CENTERED ON THE PROTECTION AND DEVELOPMENT OF CHILDREN CONSTITUTES A MAJOR RESPONSIBILITY;

THAT A SOCIETY SHOULD NOT TOLERATE CONDITIONS WHICH CREATE STREET CHILDREN; ALL SOCIETIES MUST ADOPT MECHANISMS ALLOWING THEM TO BE FULL MEMBERS OF A COMMUNITY;

THAT IT IS ESSENTIAL TO ESTABLISH A WORLD MINISTRY FOR CHILDREN WHO WILL HAVE AS FOUNDATION THE CONVENTION ON THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD AND WHO MUST IDEALLY HAVE A REPRESENTATIVE IN ALL NATIONS. EACH MEMBER WILL HAVE COMPLETE POWER TO BRING TO LIGHT ANY IMPORTANT PROBLEM WHICH IS A HINDRANCE TO THE RIGHTS OF CHILDREN IN THE WORLD.