

## THE POST-TZUNAMI WORLD-SOLIDARITY DECLARATION: “LEARNING FROM THE CATASTROPHE”

6th of January 2005

### ***THE CLUB OF BUDAPEST CALLS FOR WORLDWIDE DIALOGUE ON STEPS TO BUILD A SUSTAINABLE CIVILIZATION***

The tsunami catastrophe in Southern Asia touched the entire human community at a level and in a way never before experienced. The community's first response was the provision of emergency relief that was likewise of historically unprecedented magnitude, promptness, and spread. This is a sign of great hope for our common future. In the long term, however, something more is required: a worldwide dialogue must begin on concrete steps that could lead beyond the present unsustainable condition of the world toward a more stable, peaceful, and sustainable civilization. *The tsunami catastrophe, with its enormous human cost, must wake us up and impel us to learn.* This opportunity is historic and not to be missed. The question we face is this:

Will we continue to accept that the world is so unequally and unjustly divided that in some countries, regions, and continents there are no early warning systems to avert major catastrophes whether they are of natural or of human origin; that there are no adequate infrastructures for assuring an existence of human dignity for all the people; and that only the actual occurrence of a catastrophe that involves millions of people reaches the mind and touches the heart of the rest of the human community?

Or will we seize the opportunity to learn from the experience of a major tragedy to develop the vision and the solidarity to see all of humanity as one family and reorder our priorities and restructure our relations accordingly?

We need to launch a process of worldwide discussion and dialogue on practicable ways to pull ourselves up to the level where our technologies of production and communication have already precipitated us: to the level of the biosphere as a whole, where all people now live in interaction and interdependence, and must also learn to live with mutual respect and solidarity. **We invite all thinking people and humanistically oriented organizations to join the call for a global dialogue on ways and means to create an inclusive and peaceful Sustainable Civilization.**

*Adopted by the Executive Board of the Club of Budapest International  
on the 6<sup>th</sup> of January 2005*

Through its website [www.clubofbudapest.org](http://www.clubofbudapest.org) the Club of Budapest pledges to provide a platform for a worldwide dialogue, receiving feasible and creative ideas and proposals and transmitting them to the pertinent groups and organizations. The attached Statement contains the Club's own vision and its action proposals.

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## ANNEX

### to the Post-Tsunami World-Solidarity Declaration

*6th of January 2005*

# „Building a Sustainable Civilization“

## Two Projects for Launching the Dialogue, Proposed by the Club of Budapest

### **The Problems We Face**

Due to rapid and remarkable technological and economic development we find ourselves in a world of great challenges and vast possibilities; a world where perhaps ten times more wealth could be available for each person than a hundred years ago. Yet, never in all the history of humankind have the chances of people for development and well-being been less equal and less fair, and never have the ecological foundations of our world been more endangered. The globalization of the world economy has created a vacuum of values and great inequality in power and wealth.

We have failed to recognize fundamental human values, the common resource of all ethically motivated people, and failed to apply them to the problems of our rapidly globalizing world. An impartial observer could only call the level of development of our moral values and associated practices barbaric. They fail to address the problems we now face, such as worldwide poverty, the progressive destruction of the environment, chronic patterns of violence, and countless others. How is it possible that in a world of fabulous affluence there are still voices that seek to justify the hunger and poverty of billions of people, the presence of chronic diseases and epidemics, and the persistence of hopelessness and despair? Indifference and cynicism of this kind is contemptuous of the value of human life.

### **What we need**

Humankind urgently needs a global dialogue that is both comprehensive and intensive, focused on civilizing our global co-existence – a deep dialogue on a new civilization that takes humanity as diverse yet indivisible. For some time now we have possessed sufficient resources and adequate technical means to ensure that no one needs to starve, that all people on earth are provided with basic medical care, that all people can learn to read and write and have the benefit of lifelong education, and that every human being is enabled to contribute actively to the development of society. In order to realize our real potentials we would need merely a fraction of what the world's governments spend on security alone– on a kind of security that leaves most nations and people in growing insecurity.

Only a world that ensures personal and national security and creative development for all its people can be a world that is safe for all its people. If wages in today's poor regions are not increased, the wages in today's rich regions will inevitably decrease. If the cutting down of the rainforests is not stopped, the climate will turn unfavorable for all. Peace, security, employment, wealth, freedom,

sustainability – no matter which values we refer to, in an interdependent world these values can only be protected and developed when they concern, and are taken seriously by, all the people. The sooner and more consistently we see ourselves as part of an integral world community, the better are our prospects for our a peaceful and sustainable future.

## **Two projects**

To begin a worldwide dialogue on concrete steps leading toward a Sustainable Civilization, the Club of Budapest puts forward two basic projects.

1. ***A Global Marshall Plan for Achieving the Millennium Development Goals.*** At the United Nations Millennium Summit in the year 2000, Millennium Development Goals were unanimously adopted by more than 150 heads of state. The goals include cutting in half the number of people in the world who have to subsist on less than one dollar a day, and enabling all children to receive full elementary education. Various independent organizations calculated that an annual expenditure of about \$100 billion could finance such a program. This is a relatively modest amount, and a number of practicable suggestions exist for raising it. We ask that the world community consider adopting the actions proposed in the Global Marshall Plan Initiative in view of raising the necessary funds and applying them toward the timely realization of the Millennium Development Goals.
2. ***The Creation of a Civil Parliament within the United Nations.*** If democratic principles are taken seriously, they are not restricted to individual nation-states. Decisions that affect the life and destiny of all people cannot be left to political trade-offs by national governments and the self-centered aims of power groups. Processes of global decision-making must be transparent, subject to democratic parliamentary control. To this end, the creation of a civil parliament within the United Nations is a first step. It can serve as the beginning of a process of progressive democratization of other forms and forums of global-scope decision making.

For the coming years and decades, the most important challenge for the world community is to recognize, update, and apply the core values that had inspired sustainable and humanistic civilizations in history so as to ensure the well-being of all people in a world that has grown to be global. We advance the above projects in the hope that they may catalyze action leading in this direction, helping to close the persistent gap between words and actions. “We are the people...” begins the Preamble of the Charter of the United Nations. We the people together can create more equitable and forward-looking forms of globalization. Those of us who have not been the victims of the tsunami catastrophe owe it to our children to learn from this tragedy and take concrete steps toward building a Sustainable Civilization.

Further information on the two mentioned projects:  
[www.globalmarshallplan.org](http://www.globalmarshallplan.org)  
[www.uno-komitee.de](http://www.uno-komitee.de)