



SÉRIES GOVERNANCE AND CITIZENSHIP

# Principles of governance in the 21st century

PROPOSAL PAPERS FOR THE XXI<sup>ST</sup> CENTURY - CHARLES LEOPOLD MAYER EDITIONS

## Proposal papers for the 21th century

*The proposal papers are a collection of short books on each decisive area of our future, which assemble those proposals that appear the most capable of bringing about the changes and transformations needed for the construction of a more just and sustainable 20<sup>th</sup> century. They aim to inspire debate over these issues at both local and global levels.*

The term 'globalisation' corresponds to major transformations that represent both opportunities for progress and risks of aggravating social disparities and ecological imbalances. It is important that those with political and economic power do not alone have control over these transformations as, trapped within their own short-term logic, they can only lead us to a permanent global crisis, all too apparent since the September 11<sup>th</sup> attacks on the United States.

This is why the Alliance for a Responsible, Plural and United World (see appendix) initiated, in 2000-2001, a process of assembling and pinpointing proposals from different movements and organisations, different actors in society and regions around the world. This process began with electronic forums, followed by a series of international workshops and meetings, and resulted in some sixty proposal texts, presented at the World Citizen Assembly held in Lille (France) in December 2001.

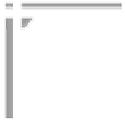
These texts, some of which have been completed and updated, are now in the process of being published by a network of associative and institutional publishers in 6 languages (English, Spanish, Portuguese, French, Arabic and Chinese) in 7 countries (Peru, Brazil, Zimbabwe, France, Lebanon, India, China). These publishers work together in order to adapt the texts to their different cultural and geopolitical contexts. The aim is that the proposal papers stimulate the largest possible debate in each of these regions of the world and that they reach their target publics whether they be decision-makers, journalists, young people or social movements.

# Presentation of the proposals paper « Principles of governance in the 21st century »

## **Common principles of governance applicable to both local management and world governance, resulting from the works of the Alliance for a responsible, plural and united world**

Governance, from local to global, is at the heart of the changes occurring at present. Private enterprise, the market, national governments and representative democracy are no longer adequate for meeting the needs of the 21st century. Governance must be capable of managing the relations between different sectors of activity, between social actors, and between human activities and ecosystems. The Alliance's different workshops - those devoted to the governance of territories, States and the world, as well as those devoted to sectorial problems, such as security, water, energy, finance, science, etc., have - identified common principles for the governance of the 21st century:

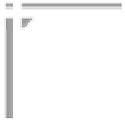
- 1) Governance is based on a territorial approach and on the principle of active subsidiarity.
- 2) Through governance, plural communities can be set up on scales ranging from the local to global.
- 3) Governance resituates the economy in its place and defines that which belongs to the market and that which does not.
- 4) Governance is based on the universal ethic of responsibility.
- 5) Governance defines the cycle of formulation, implementation and control of public policies.
- 6) Governance organises co-operation and synergy between actors.
- 7) Governance is the art of conceiving systems that correspond with the objectives pursued.
- 8) Governance controls the flows exchanged between societies and between them and the biosphere.
- 9) Governance permits both management and projection through time.
- 10) Governance creates the conditions for the legal and legitimate exercise of power, ensures short-term stability and prepares long term evolution.



# Principles of Governance for the Twenty-first Century

*Common principles of governance, applicable  
to global governance as well as local management,  
emerging from the work of the Alliance  
for a Responsible, Plural and United World*

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# Summary

<b>PREAMBLE: AN ARCHITECTURE FOR GOVERNANCE THAT IS ADAPTED TO THE NEEDS OF A NEW ERA .....</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>FIRST PRINCIPLE: GOVERNANCE IS BASED ON A TERRITORIAL APPROACH AND THE ACTIVE SUBSIDIARITY PRINCIPLE .....</b>	<b>13</b>
1.1 GOVERNANCE IS BASED ON A TERRITORIAL APPROACH .....	13
1.2 THE ACTIVE SUBSIDIARITY PRINCIPLE DETERMINES THE MECHANISMS FOR COOPERATION BETWEEN LEVELS OF GOVERNANCE.....	14
<b>SECOND PRINCIPLE : THROUGH GOVERNANCE, PLURAL COMMUNITIES TAKE FORM, FROM THE NEIGHBOURHOOD LEVEL TO THE PLANETARY LEVEL .....</b>	<b>16</b>
2.1. CITIZENSHIP IS NECESSARILY PLURAL.....	16
2.2 A COMMUNITY REQUIRES FOUNDING ACTS .....	17
<b>THIRD PRINCIPLE : GOVERNANCE MUST PUT THE MARKET ECONOMY BACK WHERE IT BELONGS .....</b>	<b>18</b>
3.1 THE MARKET IS A MEANS, NOT AN END IN ITSELF .....	18
3.2 THE ROLE OF GOVERNANCE IS TO DETERMINE WHAT CATEGORIES OF GOODS CAN BE EXCHANGED IN THE MARKET-PLACE .....	19
<b>FOURTH PRINCIPLE: GOVERNANCE MUST BE ROOTED IN A UNIVERSAL ETHICS OF RESPONSIBILITY .....</b>	<b>21</b>
4.1 HUMANKIND HAS A COMMON RESPONSIBILITY: BUILDING A RESPONSIBLE, PLURAL AND UNITED WORLD .....	21
4.2. A HUMAN RESPONSIBILITIES CHARTER AS A THIRD PILLAR FOR THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY ....	21
4.3. THE CHARTER DEFINES THE NATURE OF RESPONSIBILITY .....	22
4.4 THE RESPONSIBILITY PRINCIPLE IS APPLICABLE IN EVERY FIELD OF GOVERNANCE.....	23
<b>FIFTH PRINCIPLE: GOVERNANCE DEFINES THE CYCLE OF PUBLIC POLICY ELABORATION, DECISION-MAKING AND MONITORING .....</b>	<b>24</b>
5.1. AS SOCIETY EVOLVES THE CONDITIONS THAT SHAPE POLITICAL ACTIVITY CHANGE.....	24
5.2 THE POLITICAL SPHERE ORGANISES THE PROCESSES OF COLLECTIVE ELABORATION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF PUBLIC DECISIONS .....	25
<b>SIXTH PRINCIPLE : GOVERNANCE ORGANISES CO-OPERATION AND SYNERGIES BETWEEN ACTORS .....</b>	<b>27</b>
6.1. PUBLIC AUTHORITIES NEED TO REALISE THE IMPORTANCE OF DIALOGUE AND PARTNERSHIPS WITH OTHER PLAYERS .....	27
6.2. THE CREATION OF PARTNERSHIPS BETWEEN PUBLIC AUTHORITIES IS BASED ON THE PRINCIPLES OF RESPONSIBILITY AND ACTIVE SUBSIDIARITY .....	28
<b>SEVENTH PRINCIPLE: GOVERNANCE IS THE ART OF DEVISING MEASURES THAT ARE ADAPTED TO PURSUED OBJECTIVES.....</b>	<b>29</b>
7.1 PUBLIC MANAGEMENT AND ITS REFORM ARE AT THE HEART OF GOVERNANCE.....	29
7.2 CONCEPTS, STRUCTURES, CULTURES, PROCEDURES, HUMAN RESOURCES AND METHODS OF EVALUATION CONSTITUTE THE MAIN DIMENSIONS OF PUBLIC INSTITUTIONAL ENGINEERING .....	31

<b>EIGHTH PRINCIPLE : GOVERNANCE MAKES IT POSSIBLE TO CONTROL THE FLOW OF EXCHANGES BETWEEN SOCIETIES AND BETWEEN SOCIETIES AND THE BIOSPHERE.....</b>	<b>33</b>
8.1 INFORMATION SYSTEMS ARE ONE OF GOVERNANCE’S KEY INGREDIENTS .....	33
8.2. THE MANAGEMENT OF PUBLIC INFORMATION SHOULD CONTRIBUTE TO RENDERING THE WORLD AND GOVERNANCE MORE INTELLIGIBLE .....	34
8.3. THE ORGANISATION OF INDEPENDENT INFORMATION SYSTEMS REQUIRES THE CREATION OF NETWORKS .....	34
8.4. CHOOSING INDICATORS, AND DECIDING ON A COMBINATION OF INDICATORS, IS DECISIVE .....	35
<b>NINTH PRINCIPLE : GOVERNANCE MAKES IT POSSIBLE TO MANAGE LONG TIME PERIODS AND PLAN AHEAD.....</b>	<b>36</b>
9.1. THE ART OF MASTERING AND HARMONISING THE RATES OF EVOLUTION WITHIN SOCIETIES .....	36
9.2. THE ART OF CONDUCTING LONG-TERM STRATEGIES.....	37
9.3. THE ART OF ASSOCIATING THE TEMPORAL CONTEXTS OF VARIOUS AGENTS .....	37
9.4. THE ART OF SETTING THE PACE OF GOVERNANCE.....	38
<b>TENTH PRINCIPLE: GOVERNANCE, FROM LEGALITY TO LEGITIMACY .....</b>	<b>39</b>
10.1. THERE IS AN EVER-GROWING GAP BETWEEN LEGALITY AND LEGITIMACY IN GOVERNANCE .....	39
10.2 LEGITIMATE GOVERNANCE FULFILS A NEED THAT IS WIDELY FELT WITHIN A COMMUNITY .....	41
10.3 GOVERNANCE’S LEGITIMACY RESTS ON WIDELY RECOGNISED AND SHARED VALUES AND PRINCIPLES .	42
10.4 LEGITIMATE GOVERNANCE IS CARRIED OUT EFFICIENTLY BY GOVERNING AUTHORITIES THAT ARE WORTHY OF TRUST. ....	44
<b>THE ALLIANCE FOR A RESPONSIBLE, PLURAL AND UNITED WORLD .....</b>	<b>45</b>
WORKING TOGETHER TOWARDS THE CHALLENGES OF THE 21 <sup>TH</sup> CENTURY.....	45
<b>THE PROPOSAL PAPERS ON THE INTERNET .....</b>	<b>47</b>
<b>PARTNER PUBLISHERS .....</b>	<b>49</b>

# Preamble: an architecture for governance that is adapted to the needs of a new era

We haven't just, according to the Christian calendar, begun a new century and millennium. **Humankind is entering a new era.** The extent and magnitude of interdependencies linking human beings, societies, and humankind and the biosphere have changed radically over the last two centuries. What goes on in one part of the planet has repercussions that stretch to every corner of the Earth. Information, goods and people circulate and intermingle. The evolution of science and technology, the new dynamics of markets and capital, the generalisation of certain lifestyles and models of development in economically developed countries: these various transformations have modified our relationship with the biosphere and threatened to disrupt vital equilibriums at a time when we are just beginning to understand their complexity and possible fragility. The technical system upon which societies are based has changed: from biochemistry to microprocessors, know-how and information is taking precedence over the direct manipulation of matter.

This combination of quantitative transformations is resulting in a **qualitative change** comparable to the passage from the middle ages to the modern world with all that this entails in terms of resistances, divergences, trial and error, and learning processes.

**Governance, from the local to the global levels, is at the heart of this change.** Either humankind will achieve, before it's too late, a qualitative leap to a new level of awareness and development, or ever increasing feuding, greed, identity-based conflicts, predatory behaviour, lack of foresight and carelessness will have calamitous effects. The role of **governance is critical for it determines human societies' ability to equip themselves with systems of representation, institutions, rules, procedures, measuring tools, processes and social agents that are capable of managing interdependencies in a peaceful manner.**

Every era, every society has given rise to a dominant system of governance that is deeply rooted in a particular culture and that is the product, matrix and means of transmission of this culture.

Governance is the regulatory system for that complex life form we call human society. **It manages a society's internal functions as well as its relationship with the outside world and thus guarantees its stability and adaptability.**

Over the last two centuries four components of governance have become dominant: the company, the market, the national state and representative democracy. Each of these components plays a specific role. **The company** provides a means of organising human resources, knowledge, know-how, information and capital in order to produce goods and services. **The market** provides a means of linking supply and demand in the fields of labour, know-how, capital, and goods and services. The **national state** provides the space *par*

*excellence* within which identity can be defined, common goods can be managed, tasks can be allocated to either the public or private sectors, cohesion and solidarity can be built, public services can be produced. Finally, **representative democracy** provides rules for elaborating and executing the common will and mechanisms that determine how political power is to be both carried out and controlled.

At the end of the twentieth century these four components appeared to be universal and even hegemonic: companies were establishing themselves at global levels and had become dominant social agents; the market had become global and was considered pre-eminent in all forms of exchange; national states remained the cornerstone of all international life; following the implosion of the communist world, representative democracy had become the official universal ideology.

Nevertheless, it seems quite likely that, at the end of the twenty-first century, these components will have ceased to play a major role in governance. For they may be capable of organising the production and distribution of goods and services, both public and private, but they aren't up to the task of **organising new relations between individuals, between societies and between humankind and the biosphere.**

Thus, **a mental and organisational model** that we can refer to in simplified terms as "Western society" **has produced enormous global transformations that are now beyond its control.**

We haven't reached the end of history, but rather the end of a period in history and we now need to put our heads together to write the next page, that of **the building of an international community** that is capable of **combining unity and diversity** at all levels, from the local to the global, that is capable of **mastering and orienting the powerful forces of science and the market**, that is capable of **equipping itself with the rules, institutions, representations and methods** that will ensure long-term development and harmony.

**This is history in every sense of the term.** A history that we must write, that constitutes a long-term learning process, whose inspiration lies in a project and a resolution. A history that will probably be punctuated by both triumphs and failures, by steps forward and steps backward. If we were to present this history, not as a singular human adventure but as the effect of universal laws, we wouldn't look towards the laws of physics or pseudo laws of economics that claim to be rooted in natural laws. We would refer to the laws of evolution and **the living world's ability to organise itself in an increasingly complex manner.** And this is why, as we write the next page of history together, we shall assign a central role to governance.

Governance has a decisive influence on the unfolding of the destinies of human societies. Because it was incapable of developing a political system that was adapted to the development of productive forces, Europe committed quasi suicide with two world wars before finally rising from its ashes with the construction of the European Union. Also, over the last 50 years, national states' varying ability

to organise energies, resources and talents around a common goal explains to a great extent the differing speeds of development from country to country. South Korea, for example, had a per capita GNP comparable to that of African countries!

It's not by submitting isolated individuals, looked upon as producers and consumers, to the market's universal laws, or by submitting states, each with their own predefined "comparative advantage", to global market forces that we're going to build tomorrow's world. Rather, it is through **the will of plural communities to build a common destiny and common history.**

Over the course of the second half of the twentieth century, the gap has progressively widened between **the interdependencies** that link individuals and societies and **the legal mechanisms** that organise international relations and are supposed to regulate interdependencies. These mechanisms have, however, become more elaborate and diversified over the last fifty years. With the creation of the Bretton Woods institutions, the San Francisco agreement on the United Nations Charter, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the development of the GATT and the WTO, the creation of specialised agencies within the United Nations system, and with a growing number of international conferences and conventions, elements of **global governance** have emerged. But though these elements have resulted in new interdependencies they have remained rooted in a representation of the world dominated by relations between sovereign states and by market forces. The fact that this representation is outdated means that most of the current forms of global governance are obsolete. This is why a new architecture must be conceived.

But a **new architecture for global governance cannot emerge without a new philosophy of governance that can also be applied at other levels.** This architecture can't be conceived without redefining the nature and role of national states, and these entities can't be overhauled without redefining their relations with the territories they encompass.

How do we go about developing a new architecture for governance?

**Governance isn't an abstract speculative theory.** It is, as with any architecture, a **set of practices** that have developed in reaction to concrete challenges that societies' must deal with and that, very gradually, have become an accepted system that makes it possible to formulate general principles. We can thus speak of **the progressive emergence of a theory** based on the observation of recurrent problems, practices and innovations. In turn, the formulation of general principles makes it possible to build an "**ideology of governance**", capable of providing a lasting and stable image, a **common reference framework**, that allows each individual to find their place and act within or outside of the sphere of public service.

This building process can benefit from the rich field of experimentation of the Alliance for a Responsible, Plural and United World. International workgroups have been established, some devoted to a reflection on **governance at different levels** – local territories, national states, regional integration, global governance –

and others devoted to sector-based challenges such as security, water, energy, finance, science, etc., where, in each instance, issues linked to governance appear.

The proposals that follow are the fruit of the reflection carried out by these workgroups. Their work has allowed us to confirm:

- **The importance of governance issues**, whatever the subject we're dealing with may be. It's **neither technological nor scientific means, nor even human or financial resources that are lacking in today's world. What is missing is the capacity to combine and orient these means and resources so as to ensure genuine individual and collective well-being ;**
- **The frequency of "governance crises"**, crises that, first of all, highlight the fact that current regulations are inadequate and, secondly, very often bring discredit to public management and politics: a particularly dangerous situation at a time when these areas require extensive reforms;
- **The existence of common far-reaching principles**, around which a comprehensive ideology can be built.

A central idea forms the axis around which common principles of governance are organised. We must steer away from the current dominant systems, both public and private, that **favour a "vertical" approach** to the production and distribution of goods and commercial services. That **separate** the public and the private, the economic and the social, material development and human development, humanity and the biosphere. That **compartmentalise** the responsibilities at different levels of governance, the prerogatives of different public services, the activities of different sorts of agents. We must instead **design modes of governance that are capable of dealing with relations between different fields of activity, between social agents, between human activity and ecosystems.**

This requires adopting a **radically new perspective** in which, for instance, a "local territory" isn't defined by a portion of physical space, but rather by a **system of open relations**. In which the state's first role consists in **organising synergies** between public and private agents. Or in which global governance, instead of being restricted to a **diplomatic space** for relations between states, becomes a **domestic space** in which relations, preferably contractual relations, are organised between different categories of agents.

The following principles reflect this new perspective.

# First principle: Governance is based on a territorial approach and the active subsidiarity principle

## 1.1 Governance is based on a territorial approach

It's quite possible that the 21<sup>st</sup> century will be an era of cities and territories in the same way that the 20<sup>th</sup> century was an era of companies and states.

The local territory, as paradoxical as it may seem at a time when we are focused on the globalisation of activities and the new internet economy, is the **foundation of future governance** and will perhaps replace the company as the 21<sup>st</sup> century's major social agent.

There are already tangible signs of this development. Take, for instance, the fact that in more and more cities, states and regions, the impetus for economic development is coming from localised territorial initiatives. From Singapore and the US's Silicon Valley, from England's South East and Mauritius, from Shanghai in China and the Emilia-Romagna in Italy. The more the economy is based on links between very diverse agents, the more it is essential that territories develop initiatives such as those concerned with human resources management, partnerships, networks, employment programs, counter-donation programs, and the creation of long-term relationships.

But the importance of territories stretches far beyond the realm of economics. The more it becomes necessary for us to **reflect on reality in all its complexity**, the more it becomes important that we take into account relationships, that we find **integrated responses**, that we think about the interrelations between human societies and their environment, that we focus on **territorial responses**. For it is at this level that we can successfully measure the flow of material and informational exchanges between societies and between societies and their environment. It's at this level as well that subjects that, elsewhere, may appear theoretical and abstract - "an ecological fingerprint", "partnership", "responsibility", "citizenship" - will become concrete, tangible and palpable. It is at this level, finally, that we can fix and translate a general philosophy of governance into terms familiar to each tradition.

## 1.2 The active subsidiarity principle determines the mechanisms for cooperation between levels of governance

The territorial approach is closely linked to the **active subsidiarity principle** according to which each territory and each level of governance have a duty to **provide specific answers to questions shared in common**.

The active subsidiarity principle is rooted in the need to **go beyond the classic opposition** between a **centralised approach**, where, in the name of unity, all of political power's legitimacy comes from "above" (a nation one and indivisible, embodied by the state) before being decentralised or delegated to local authorities of varying autonomy; and the **federalist approach**, where, in the name of autonomy, all legitimacy and political power come initially from "below" (the community and its local representatives) before being devolved, in principle in a revocable manner, to a federal level for matters that individual communities can't deal with on their own. In practice, these two opposed political philosophies have, to a great extent, merged and, today, centralised states are decentralising and federal states are delegating more and more responsibilities to federal authorities. But, most importantly, these two classic philosophies are grounded in a widely shared conviction: that a clear partitioning of responsibilities between levels of governance is the only way to ensure a real evaluation of the actions of those who govern, i.e., the only way to ensure democracy.

However, this conviction has itself become very tenuous as **it is contradicted by facts** that consistently demonstrate that in today's world, no serious problem, whether it be education, water, energy, social cohesion or research and development, can be adequately dealt with at just one level. Any serious policy must therefore utilise **relations between levels of governance**. **The mechanisms of co-operation between levels** of governance become a central part of an architecture for governance.

Prioritising the territorial approach doesn't imply entertaining the illusion of being able to provide a territory total autonomy or self-sufficiency. On the contrary, each territory is a segment of Mother Earth, and each is "entrusted" to a society on condition that it be well managed. This is quite the opposite of a property owner's vision in which everyone – private owner, community, state government – can do as they like in the name of the sacred character of property, autonomy and sovereignty.

The active subsidiarity principle combines three fundamental ideas:

- **Different levels of governance share a common responsibility.** It is no longer a question of understanding how problems of a particular jurisdiction are managed in a state of isolation. Instead, what is important is understanding **how different levels of governance co-operate**, each with specific means, in the management of common challenges, from the local to the global levels.

- **Each territory must develop the most pertinent specific responses to common guiding principles decided on together.** This is at the root of the idea, confirmed by numerous examples, that societies have common challenges (reflecting unity) but that the most suitable solutions are, in each case, of a specific nature (reflecting diversity).
- **No community at any level can thus have absolute sovereignty over a given territory.** It can only have a managerial role and is therefore considered accountable before the entire international community.

## Second principle : Through governance, plural communities take form, from the neighbourhood level to the planetary level

### 2.1. Citizenship is necessarily plural

A community, no matter its size or denomination, develops a specific identity, a level of solidarity, a medium connecting the individual to the world. Through their participation in a community, individuals become citizens, and this citizenship is based on a **balance between the rights and responsibilities** of each individual with respect to their community.

**In the 21<sup>st</sup> century, citizenship is fundamentally plural**, for each individual will inevitably be a citizen, not only of their immediate community and of their state, but also of a world Region and of the entire planet. It can't be either one **or** the other, nor one **against** the other, but, rather, one **with** the other. Through these citizenships, individuals cease to be powerless and anonymous and begin to redefine themselves through identification and differentiation.

*The links between unity and diversity start at the local level*

A few centuries ago, the world's diversity was an abstract philosophical concept for the majority of people who lived inside more or less homogeneous communities, communities that forged themselves a strong identity that stood in contrast with a world they assumed to be strange or hostile. With the intermingling of populations and the circulation of information and people, diversity has progressively become a general rule, even at the level of cities and neighbourhoods. Alarming, as cultural and ethnic diversity has spread, more and more communities have been turning in on themselves with ensuing bloody consequences. This has occurred even in societies where pacifism was for a long time very highly regarded: in India, in Africa, in the Middle East, in the Balkans. The idea of recreating homogenous entities with their own laws and institutions, is rooted in the "right to self-determination", but it is contrary to the world's evolution and can only lead to fragmentation, violence and other such impasses. This demand for homogeneous territories can only be thwarted **by recognising the right to diversity at all levels of governance.**

*There are always several dimensions to diversity*

In the construction of governance and the world community it is fanciful and dangerous to consider that diversity has only one dimension. The stratification of today's society is based much more on social classes and socioprofessional groups than on ethnic or religious backgrounds. There is often a much greater gap between people of different milieus living within the same territory than between people of a same milieu separated by thousands of kilometres. We must therefore **avoid a one-dimensional vision of diversity** and the illusion, for instance,

that it is just “international interests” at play on the international scene. **Governance must be based not only on dialogue between different territorial communities, but also on dialogue between different milieus and thus requires the organisation of this dialogue.**

## 2.2 A community requires founding acts

*A community isn't decreed, it establishes itself.* Naturally, it can't reinvent itself on a regular basis, but neither can it be based solely on a common history and founding myths and events of the past. The need for founding acts, that establish and re-establish the community, is particularly vital with regard to the founding of future communities, such as world regions or the international community.

A community establishes itself, in particular, by **inventing its own rules**, its own constitutional charter: **the social contract that founds it and binds it to others.** Creating constitutive practices and acts at every level is one of governance's dimensions and, at this historical juncture in time, is an absolute necessity. The pitiful proceedings of the September 2000 UN General Assembly, dubbed the “Millennium Assembly”, exposed a system that had run out of steam.

# Third principle : Governance must put the market economy back where it belongs

## 3.1 The market is a means, not an end in itself

In one way or another, governance is always **an act of resistance** by which a community asserts its ability to orient its own destiny. This is the very essence of democracy and is particularly relevant with regard to the economy and market forces. A country or a region of the world can, at a given time, consider that the free reign of market forces is beneficial to its interests and can, consequently, become its unconditional advocate at a world level. But, for a lucid democratic community, this sort of attitude will always be considered tactical and limited both in time and space.

Thus, in the 1950s, the European Union chose to build an economic union **after** an attempt to constitute a European Defence Community failed. Rather than being a goal in itself, economic union was seen as a means of building a lasting peace between members.

Thus, if Asian countries over the last fifty years became developed it wasn't because they submitted to free market laws. It was because they chose to **pilot the market's mechanisms** to their best advantage. Much like shrewd rice growers, they protected their young economic buds until they were strong enough to face the great winds of the global market. Other countries didn't practice such astute governance and their protectionist measures simply served to provide long-term income for national monopolies.

Thus, Great Britain and the United States knew, in the course of their histories, when it was in their interest to be protectionist and when it was more beneficial to be free market advocates. Over the last ten years, the pressure that the US has brought on Russia to speed up its passage to a market economy seems to be motivated more by a longing to weaken its old enemy than by a real desire to help it develop. Once again, the time-worn economic rhetoric serves a political cause.

Markets, companies and capital have become more and more internationalised and it's no longer possible, in this day and age, to speak of "national economies" or of "local economies" as if they were located in a polar region. This shouldn't prevent, however, local territories, states and continental groupings from defining development strategies by drawing on synergies between players, relations between training systems and companies, research and development, public commissions, the traceability of products, etc. On the contrary, seeing as **sustainable development imperatives** will require that human societies produce more well-being with less consumption of matter and energy, defining development strategies has grown urgent. It will be necessary to modify the cost of various factors, by taxing international transport or the consumption of matter rather than human labour for instance, and to replace certain goods with services.

These changes will lead to a reterritorialisation of the economy and to local-level development strategies.

### 3.2 The role of governance is to determine what categories of goods can be exchanged in the marketplace

In its task of putting the economy back where it belongs, governance's main role will be that of determining **what categories of goods can be exchanged in the marketplace**. Traditionally, a distinction was made between, on the one hand, public goods and services, and, on the other, commercial goods and services. But the boundaries separating these two groupings fluctuate enormously as they vary according to a society's political and cultural options. The most obvious example is the category of health and education.

In the case of health and educational services the public/private distinction is based less on the **inherent characteristics** of a product (technically speaking, a visit to the hairdresser is hardly different from an appointment with the doctor) than on its **purpose**. To define a service as public implies that **the service is a universal right**.

In the 21<sup>st</sup> century, the notion of sustainable development, that is to say a form of development that is guided by both **social justice** and **an equilibrium between humankind and the biosphere**, introduces a new fundamental distinction between categories of goods.

The market is perfectly adapted to **the first category** of goods and services: those that owe their existence to human ingenuity and that **divide** when shared, i.e., primarily industrial goods. However, the market isn't well adapted to three other categories of goods that are vital to both life and development.

- those that are **destroyed** when shared. These make up the vast category to which **common goods** belong. They require **collective management**.
- those that **divide** when shared. These make up the category of **natural resources** whose distribution is guided by **social justice** rather than by market forces.
- Finally, those that are most interesting for the future, those that **multiply** when shared: knowledge, beauty, love, experience, etc. Rather than being submitted to the market, they should be guided by the notion of **mutual benefit**: I receive because I give.

Were we to give absolute value to the market and consider it to be the most reliable instrument for the rational distribution of goods, we would have to group these four categories into one lone category, that of merchandise. Were we to do this, we would **destroy** the first category of goods, the common good and ecosystems, we would **commit an injustice** by setting aside natural resources for a

wealthy minority, we would **deprive** those without means of knowledge and experience and create an artificial shortage of these goods. Most importantly, we would end up with an economy that doesn't take into account the value of relationships and that underestimates or discounts that which has no commercial value.

Thus, governance is mainly concerned with the last three categories of goods all of which require a collaboration between different levels of governance.

As a result, governance has two functions: **defining the zone covered by the market** and, in particular, limiting this zone to the first category of goods; **managing and promoting** the three other categories.

Thus, the management of the sea and coastal areas, goods belonging to the second category, require collective management. This is also the case for tropical forests or the vast ecosystems of the largely untouched steppes. This management takes place necessarily at a **local territorial level**. Rather than being "sanctuaries" in which all human intervention is forbidden, these regions can be areas where all human activity is respectful of the functioning of ecosystems and submits to their needs. In such a case, property and sovereignty are limited. Instead, a more extensive community is involved – at national, continental and world levels – **covering the expenses of this management**.

Water, soils and energy are typical examples of the goods belonging to the third category. Their cost-effective management, their regeneration (in the case of water and soils) or their production (in the case of energy) require **integrated and co-operative actions** between public and private entities from a local to a global level. They call for human activities that will often emanate from the private sphere. Nevertheless, these activities will generally be oriented towards **protecting, preserving, rebuilding and distributing a common good**. To this end, the different levels of governance, from the local to the global levels, must co-operate.

Finally, those goods that multiply when shared are goods that are essential for the future. They contain a prospect of unlimited human development that is compatible with finite resources. At the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the companies of the commercial economy, carried along by their energy and success, have wanted to convince us that the fourth category should be a part of the commercial economy, that it is **the very key to the development of knowledge** (intellectual property), **to the funding of innovation** (patents) or even **to the distribution of these goods** (the privatisation of cultural contents). But in doing this they have gone beyond their legitimate field of intervention and will, as a result, be faced with universal condemnation in the decades to come. One of the primary functions of governance **at all levels** will be to organise **the mutualisation** of these goods from a local to a global level.

## Fourth principle: Governance must be rooted in a universal ethics of responsibility

### 4.1 Humankind has a common responsibility: building a responsible, plural and united world

Inevitably, governance involves constraints, restrictions that limit liberty. These constraints, in order to be legitimate, must be justified by a need, a goal that is recognised by all. And from time immemorial, the primary goal has always been to ensure the defence and development of the community: the city, the nation.

The change we are witnessing at the dawn of this 21<sup>st</sup> century is quantitative, of course, but also qualitative. Even at the local level, governance is referring increasingly to principles that are commonly shared at a global level. And it is increasingly aware of a global responsibility: building a world that is both diverse and unified, both plural and united. The management of a territory, no matter its size, is a responsibility delegated to one part of the world.

### 4.2. A Human Responsibilities Charter as a third pillar for the international community

There can be no community, no governance, without an acknowledgement of common values. This is why most constitutions begin with a preamble that formulates the fundamental goals of “living together”. A community degenerates when it ceases to be aware of the original purpose of the relations established between its members and becomes a community of circumstantial interests, much like a family whose bond is merely that of a group of individuals who use the same refrigerator.

The new era that humankind is entering is witnessing interdependencies between people, between societies and between humankind and the biosphere on a far wider scale than ever before. **These interdependencies call for a new definition of responsibility and a redefinition of the social contract that binds each individual, each entity, to the rest of society.**

These responsibilities are a part of daily life but, as a result of interdependencies, must **take into account all of the international community.**

In the wake of World War II, the world’s nations drafted the United Nations Charter on Peace and Development and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights so as to better deal with the challenges of the time. To date, these two agreements have been the pillars upon which the relations at a global level, between people and between states, have been founded.

The new challenges for humankind in the 21<sup>st</sup> century have made it necessary to draft a new agreement, a **third pillar** that will stand alongside the first two. This agreement must underline the responsibilities of states as well as of everyone of society's agents, so as to ensure the dignity of all human life and to preserve and maintain life on this planet.

This "**Human Responsibilities Charter**" should, along with the Declaration of Human Rights, be the foundation for charters elaborated at different levels of governance, charters that have a dual constitutive vocation for communities: **through the responsibilities that members have with regard to one another; through their responsibilities with regard to the rest of the global human community.**

At the December 2000 Nice summit, the European Union's chiefs of state adopted a charter of fundamental rights. But a charter of social rights, for instance, leaves much unsaid if we don't know who these rights are opposable to, nor how European citizens define themselves in terms of responsibilities, nor what sort of responsibilities the European Union has with regard to the rest of the world.

### 4.3. The Charter defines the nature of responsibility

To talk about responsibility we must first define its main aspects.

Humankind's new situation results in an enlarged definition of responsibility with three components:

- I am ultimately responsible for the **impact**, whether voluntary or involuntary, expected or unexpected, of my acts. The precaution principle is based on the awareness of the degree of unpredictability of the effects of my acts.
- I am responsible for not having acted, in particular by associating with others, although I had the possibility to do so. In other words, my own powerlessness, my own ignorance, or my duty to obey don't justify my inaction.
- The degree of my responsibility is **proportionate to my power and my knowledge**. Power and knowledge constitute privileges, of sorts, to which are attached duties.

## 4.4 The responsibility principle is applicable in every field of governance

Responsibility has both **moral** and **judicial** dimensions. A moral dimension: I am a member of a community because I assert my responsibilities. A judicial dimension: **the duty to be open about and accountable for my actions** is the corollary of responsibility.

In governance, this approach to responsibility has three major consequences.

First of all, at the level of governments and administrations, **he who has power is responsible to, not only those who granted him this power, but also to whomever, within society or the biosphere, is affected by the exercise of this power.** The idea that governing authorities are only responsible to an electorate was logical at a time when it was possible to consider that countries were simply juxtapositions of territories, and the planet merely a juxtaposition of countries whose relations were of a diplomatic nature. This restrictive definition of accountability is no longer compatible with today's reality. The enlarged definition of responsibility is one indication of the planet's passage from the era of diplomacy to that of domestic management. The duty to account for one's actions is no longer limited to a mandate holder's duty towards his constituents, it is a duty with a larger scope.

Secondly, at the level of public services – the services of a local counsel, of the ministers of a state, of specialised agencies of the United Nations – the responsibility principle serves to establish both **a hierarchy of norms and rules and a hierarchy of loyalties.**

Each agent of the public sector tends to limit its responsibility to its institution's **field of competency** and, if **rules are respected and orders obeyed**, it rejects the notion of personal responsibility. The responsibility principle, however, renders each institution accountable for the **effects** of its action that concern other dimensions than those that fall directly under its authority. For example, if two essential objectives of the international community are sustainable development and the possibility for each individual to live in decent conditions, the WTO's mandate is **subordinated** to these two objectives and the WTO authorities are, **by definition**, accountable for whatever impact their action may have on these objectives, regardless of whether or not their mandate is limited to the development of free trade. This means that the Responsibilities Charter has to have constitutional value for **all public activities.**

The active subsidiarity principle, combined with the responsibility principle, transforms the duty of public servants. More important than the duty to respect rules is the public servant's **duty to act pertinently**, i.e., to always attempt to find the response that is most in conformity with general objectives.

Finally, the responsibility principle concerns more than just governing authorities or public administration. It is the basis for **an implicit or explicit social contract between various social agents and the rest of society.** This is true in particular for owners and managers of material and immaterial financial capital: shareholders, CEOs, holding companies, researchers, teachers, journalists.

# Fifth principle: Governance defines the cycle of public policy elaboration, decision-making and monitoring

## 5.1. As society evolves the conditions that shape political activity change

In the field of governance, common wisdom and the democratic political tradition have always underlined the **responsibility of elected authorities** in public decision-making and the need for a system of **monitoring and “checks and balances”** to counter the potential mishandling or abuse of power. Such a system is particularly relevant today but for it to be effectively put into practice, our way of thinking must evolve. This evolution is linked to several concurrent evolutions:

- the more complex a problem is and the **more the process of elaborating a suitable solution is important**, as the decision to adopt this solution is just the last, crowning step of the process.
- Political action usually requires more than isolated public policy making. It calls for **co-operation between various sorts of agents** and these agents should be working together from the initial phase of elaboration.
- With the emergence of complex technological, scientific or economic problems, the issue of **access to sources of information and specialised skills** is increasingly critical. But the guarantee that sources of information and specialists are independent with regard to big states or corporate interests is increasingly questionable.
- **representative democracy** is a system in which representatives who act “in the people’s name” are elected and are held accountable at each new election. It was suitable in a world where the general level of education was low and where information circulated slowly. This is no longer the case and, thus, citizens are often demanding a role other than that of passive elector. The emergence of NGOs, from the local to the global levels, is linked to this development. Though they can’t claim a “representativity” that could be considered equivalent to that which is obtained by universal suffrage, they embody a longing for more participative forms of elaboration, implementation and monitoring of public policy.
- **the emergence of big multinational companies** whose profits often surpass the gross national product of many states, represent, **in practice**, a power and an impact on a community’s life that can be of much greater significance than public policies. On this account, and in the name of the responsibility principle, **they should have to submit to the same conditions as public**

authorities, i.e., they should **demonstrate openness while carrying out their activities and should submit to monitoring and a system of checks and balances**. This should also be true for big NGOs.

- Finally, and again in conformity with the responsibility principle, the **monitoring and checks and balances process can't be partitioned off, only involving the agents of a given field**, e.g., electors and public officials, in the case of the public sphere, shareholders and CEOs in the case of companies, members and directors in the case of NGOs.

## 5.2 The political sphere organises the processes of collective elaboration and implementation of public decisions

Thus, the evolution of a society leads to another vision of a public decision. While before we were almost exclusively focused on the **procedure involved in making a choice** between alternative solutions, today we must focus on designing **co-operative processes aimed at elaborating satisfying solutions, partnership-based processes for the application of solutions and public evaluation procedures**.

This development is visible both at a local level, as illustrated, for example, by participative procedures of elaboration and monitoring of budgets, and a global level. In this new conception of governance, four principles stand out:

- **Making a distinction between the power to make proposals and the power to make decisions**. This distinction was a key element in the building of the European Union where it emerged as a result of a seemingly impossible challenge: policies had to take into account the common interest of Europe, but the democratic bodies remained, and to a large extent remain today, member states, protective of their prerogatives and sovereignty. What allowed Europe to move forward was a system in which **the proposal-making monopoly**, i.e., the responsibility for **organising the elaboration of policies**, was given to the European Commission, while the decision-making prerogative was left to the European Council which contains chiefs of states or their representatives. It is a distinction that is particularly useful in the, increasingly frequent, cases where democratic institutions are elected at a level that isn't that of real problems. If applied to global governance, for instance, this distinction could make the Secretariat General a **veritable extranational institution** with an exclusive proposal-making power. If the international community were to be granted the responsibility for organising a public process of elaboration of proposals, the international community would gain a force and legitimacy that, at present, it doesn't get from either diplomatic negotiations or international conferences.

- **Organising public debate.** Citizens often are powerless in the face of our societies' complex challenges. Institutional mechanisms often seem incomprehensible. "Experts" monopolise attention, are very rarely independent and usually are good at discrediting any opinion that isn't in harmony with the majority point of view of their profession. Given these conditions, a public debate has three major virtues: it allows the **construction of the terms of the debate** and makes it progressively more understandable for a maximum amount of individuals; it is a means of avoiding a confrontation-negotiation involving a more or less secret negotiation between representatives of major interests; it leads to the emergence of **new types of relations and alliances**.
- **At the implementation stage, one shouldn't confuse the nature of a policy and the status of the agents of its implementation.** Governance at all levels is too often based on a simplistic distinction: public objectives are the domain of public agents and private objectives are the domain of private agents. This oversimplification results in much hypocrisy. States are often influenced by powerful lobbies - including internal lobbies connected to public administrations - and many public systems adhere to monopolistic and income-based rationales, that benefit those who possess some modicum of power within the systems. Finally, public and political institutions evolve slowly, which is a serious handicap in a rapidly evolving situation. However, the weaknesses of the public system don't justify its privatisation. The art of combining public objectives with agents of varying status will be decisive in the future.
- **An effective system of monitoring requires the existence of networks of independent expertise.** Too often, public authorities at all levels confuse information and public relations. Also, public networks of information must face three constraints: a territorial constraint (they must respect the geographical limits of the administered territory); a methodological constraint (the information, as it circulates upward, is conditioned by hierarchical relations); a information-source constraint (information that comes from abroad travels via official channels).
- In these conditions, it is essential for democracy's future that, at every level, we develop networks of independent expertise capable of confronting and more freely synthesising experiences and information that can help create direct channels between information circulating between upper levels (public authorities) and lower levels (citizens).

The media are sometimes referred to as a "fourth power", alongside the legislative, executive and judicial powers. They play an essential role in democratic societies but are also limited by constraints: competition between media that leads to an emphasis on entertainment rather than information; the influence of big corporate interests on which they often depend financially; the desire to avoid being cut off from official sources of information.

## Sixth principle : Governance organises co-operation and synergies between actors

### 6.1. Public authorities need to realise the importance of dialogue and partnerships with other players

Governance must help a community acquire a sense of collective purpose. Though other factors can play a role, public authorities are generally the ideal agents for promoting dialogue and partnerships and **catalysing collective action**.

The states that have been most successful at nurturing economic development are those that have managed to **organise all the community's players and involve them in a common project**. This is just as true at the local level, where no one disputes the legitimacy of a mayor's decision to assemble all of a given territories agents.

In the future, public authorities' capacity to partake in dialogue and partnerships with agents of all types will be an essential dimension of governance. But this calls for a **far-reaching cultural change** on the part of governing authorities and the public sector, as well as **procedural changes**.

Public authorities, particularly states, generally have a tradition of placing themselves above the society from which they emanate. The notion of a dialogue on equal-footing, without the administration imposing its language, its mental categories, its constraints, its procedures and pace, isn't widely shared, especially when it comes to dialogue with society's most deprived categories, those who are furthest from power and its codes.

In the future, this capacity to organise and mobilise agents of diverse natures will be an essential dimension of governance.

The stricter procedures are, the less civil servants are free to adapt them and the more the administration ends up imposing its methods of dialogue on its negotiating partners. This is obviously contrary to true dialogue which requires that parties listen to one another and remain open to influence. And the contradiction is perhaps even more striking when it comes to public authorities **entering a long term partnership** with other parties. For, if a true partnership is to emerge on a common project, both parties must be endowed with freedom of negotiation and initiative, or else public authorities stifle those they try to embrace. Many partnerships that are sincerely sought out by public authorities are, in practice, simply an invitation made to others to participate in a project that is unilaterally defined by the administration.

## 6.2. The creation of partnerships between public authorities is based on the principles of responsibility and active subsidiarity

The cultural change required if administrations of all levels are to partake in a “shared project” depends on the application of the active subsidiarity principle. In other words, the administration and its members need to shift from the paradigm of the “duty to obey” (the application of uniform rules) to that of the “duty to remain pertinent” (the search for the best solution for applying guiding principles).

The greater margin of liberty that results calls for the creation of a **widely shared sense of public service** as well as greater transparency and reinforced democratic monitoring mechanisms. Most of the rules that box agents into a conformist routine are based on two closely related fears: the fear that the enhanced margins of liberty offered to public service agents will reinforce administrative tyranny and corruption; the fear that the administration will displace political authorities in the decision-making process.

But experience shows that administrative tyranny and corruption are just as much the product of excessive rules as of an absence of rules.

As for relations between political authorities and administrations, they also call for a far-reaching cultural change. As long as these relations are based on the outdated idea that the political sphere has the “monopoly on meaning” and the administration is no more than an executing agent of decisions made within the political sphere, there appears to be no way out: bureaucracy – that is to say the tendency to be boxed in by rules – and technocracy – that is to say an administration whose real power is masked by an apparent docility with regard to political directives – are not likely to fade away any time soon.

## Seventh principle: Governance is the art of devising measures that are adapted to pursued objectives

Pursuing praiseworthy objectives and choosing “good” policies is one thing; achieving their materialisation is quite another. The art of governance is an art of creation, an art of action, an art of devising measures that are adapted to pursued objectives.

This art isn’t limited to voting laws or setting rules. It rests, above all, on how public services function and on how they can be made to evolve.

### 7.1 Public management and its reform are at the heart of governance

Large scale organisations are necessarily complex. They entail co-operation between many people of varying cultural backgrounds, ambitions and passions. They employ many different judicial and technical procedures, often acquired over the years by a process of stratification. They manage relations between many levels of power.

**Each organisation has its own internal logic** that governs its reactions, that limits how it perceives reality, that orients or even determines the nature of the solutions that it is capable of conceiving and enacting. This internal logic takes over without the organisation’s agents realising it; even when its goals are at odds with the organisation’s assigned goals. Thus, **the art of governance is the art of designing public institutions whose internal logic** is coherent with the missions it has been given.

In this light, and to take a few basic examples, how can we be surprised when a CEO, whose main revenue is derived from stock options, feels closer to the shareholders than to his employees? That a portfolio manager is judged on his short-term results is less interested in long-term performance? That an elected official is only interested in ensuring the conditions of his re-election? That a civil servant working in a subdivided service with a pyramidal hierarchy is more interested in satisfying his boss than in co-operating with other services? That in societies in which money is acquired through scheming, civil servants find bribery and clientilism more tempting than defending public interest?

How can a public service willingly finance a public debate or the development of long-term human networks when it is judged on short-term material achievements? How can it commit itself to long-term partnerships when budgetary procedures outlaw a public commitment that extends beyond the ongoing year? How can it be involved in co-operative processes when all its energy is spent dealing with Byzantine administrative procedures? How can a

banker who is judged on the amount of money invested in a given year be interested in devoting more time to small-loan negotiations? How can civil servants be interested in the long-term results of their action when that action is only evaluated in terms of its short-term effects? How can an international civil servant be prompted to pronounce a sincere assessment of a big country's policies when he is mainly judged on his diplomatic flexibility?

*The first duty: harmonising objectives and mechanisms*

Thus, **institutional engineering**, i.e., the art of designing institutions whose "internal logic" is in harmony with pursued objectives, should be a major dimension of political action. Needless to say, regardless of the level of governance, this engineering is given virtually no attention and has very few specialists. Billions are spent on analysing and improving the management of companies, while hardly any funding goes to the analysis of public services. There are a number of reasons for this: rather than taking an interest in how administrations function, public officials focus their attention on political debate; they look on administrations from "above" though they can only be understood when scrutinised from "below"; they are interested in organisational charts and in the nomination of officials rather than in the concrete workings of public services; the partitioning of all things "political", on the one hand, and all things "administrative", on the other, fogs up strategic reflection on organisations; carrying out an extensive reform of public institutions is long and arduous and, thus, isn't gratifying for the elected official. More worryingly, this lack of interest in public management jeopardises the reform of public services.

Every big organisation is prone to inertia. It knows how to resist any scheme of reform of external origin. In the case of public organisations, this natural inertia is often compounded by **inadequate strategies of reform**: strategies that have no long term endurance, that change with the political seasons, that confuse strategy and declarations aimed at the media, that are too focused on formalities, that are based on simplistic analyses of the functioning of organisations, that are incapable of building on their own agents' deep-seated desire for reforms thus exacerbating the resistance to change, that have no global perspective, that consider that a change at the summit can produce a real evolution within well-established internal cultures, that are rooted in an outdated vision of governance, etc. Such strategies explain the frequent failure of attempts to reform public organisations. They are the result of an absence of real investment in public management.

The consequences of these repeated failures are immense. **By claiming that, because of their very nature, these public organisations perform poorly, are bureaucratic and impossible to reform, we prepare public opinion for their dismantling.**

## 7.2 Concepts, structures, cultures, procedures, human resources and methods of evaluation constitute the main dimensions of public institutional engineering

- a) *The concepts* are the **general ideology** of public services. How an organisation and its members represent themselves, their role, their place in society; how society sees governance, what its expectations are with regard to governance. The current situation requires a **change of vision** and new concepts, all of which presuppose an agreement on common principles of governance.
- b) Current *structures* generally remain sector-based and hierarchical. It is important that these structures now reflect new priorities: the territorial approach, networking, co-operation between agents, greater margins of liberty for individuals who are ready to clearly assert personal responsibilities.
- c) Administrative *structures*. Each organisation has its own style, habits and culture. This culture, shared by most of its members, takes form over the years, influenced to a great extent by the way in which its structures operate. In most structures it is common to observe a tendency to conform, to not involve one's self with what is going on elsewhere, to avoid taking risks, to manage one's little allotment of power. Four types of attitudes should be promoted in the future: a sense of public service, including the duty to listen and to engage in dialogue; a desire and ability to co-operate; a sense of personal responsibility; the ability to make judgements and take initiatives.
- d) *Procedures*. Currently they are most often designed to guarantee the equal status of citizens, to ensure the strict management of public funds, to allow governing authorities to decide on how to distribute these funds, to ensure equal access of all companies to public tender offers. These are all valid objectives. Unfortunately, the methods that we traditionally employ to achieve these objectives, by accumulating standard constraints that are poorly adapted to the great variety of situations, and by increasing the number of pre-established monitoring mechanisms, don't really allow us to achieve them. Instead, they have a very negative effect on the **pertinence** of public service action. Bureaucratic deviations are the product of **an archaic conception of power** which assigns more importance to demarcating and strengthening a field of competence, methodical arrangement, control, than to orienting, engaging in dialogue, co-operating. Only a **detailed analysis** of procedures can reveal the postulates on which they are based and can permit the evaluation of their effects on the daily behaviour of agents.
- e) *The management of human resources*. They are decisive and their importance grows in proportion to the complexity of the problems to be dealt with and the degree of personal responsibility that each member is entrusted with. Three factors determine their quality: **initial background; the moulding of mentalities and attitudes** by structures and procedures; the enriching of competence through the daily exercise of authority, which means that the institution has to be a sort of **permanent training ground**. Public systems often have deficient

human resources management: the initial training provides a poor preparation for managing relations; the methods of management result in mentalities that are too bureaucratic or too clientilistic; organisations are not considered in terms of “learning systems.”

- f) *Methods of evaluation.* More implicit than explicit, not codified into rules and procedures, evaluation systems and criteria mould mentalities, attitudes and reflexes. They reveal what is **in reality** expected of public sector agents. They reflect a real hierarchy of values that is often quite contrary to official declarations: initiative rather than docility, faithfulness to a public service rather than to a boss, giving priority to co-operation with others rather than seeking to reinforce an institution’s power, respecting the equal status of citizens rather than assisting the powerful, encouraging innovation rather than conformity, etc.

**Eighth principle : Governance makes it possible to control the flow of exchanges between societies and between societies and the biosphere.**

## **8.1 Information systems are one of governance's key ingredients**

Governance, a system that serves to regulate society, is necessarily concerned with acquiring and linking information that can provide a permanent diagnosis of the state of the system and that can measure internal and external exchanges and take the necessary corrective measures. The structure, the quality and the public availability of this information are thus decisive issues in governance.

This is why all the big states and all the international institutions have developed advanced statistical systems, while at the same time the internet has produced an exponential increase in the amount of available information. Nevertheless, societies' rarely have at their disposal the pertinent information they require for organising and piloting themselves. Current governance faces four serious limits.

a) **A bias favouring financial data and the monetary measurement of exchanges.** National wealth is still measured almost exclusively in terms of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) which only takes into account commercial exchanges. We are all aware of the perverse effects of this bias. This sort of measurement completely overlooks household work, social capital, the evolution of the quality of life and of the stocks of natural resources. As we only see exchanges through the filter of monetary valuation, we end up considering that that which has no price, has no value, and thus is of no interest. And thus is not measurable. This attitude isn't just true for companies. It can also be found at the level of territories. This helps understand why a Chinese village a thousand years ago was vastly more knowledgeable about relations in its midst and with the outside than a big modern city is today. The fact that the development of science, technology and information systems has led to a steady decrease in our awareness of our own concrete reality is a surprising but explainable paradox. As everything is converted into monetary value, as everything is exchanged in what has become a global market, monetary value is the measure of all things and the awareness of concrete relations is dulled. A city, for instance, has a very poor knowledge of its energy consumption, of the flow of internal and external exchanges of matter.

b) **Information production is controlled by institutions.** As a result, it is inevitably influenced by an institution's representations and particular ambitions. The information's credibility suffers as a consequence.

c) **Each public institution produces information adapted to its own needs.** Though public organisations' activities make them the essential producers of the

information that permits a society to know itself, each of these organisations produces information adapted to its own needs. The accumulation of such information doesn't necessarily provide a pertinent image of the world and of society.

d) The current extreme abundance of information and its easy accessibility leads to an overload, to incoherence, to noise. **The keystone of democracy is shifting: it used to be access to information; tomorrow it will be the structuring, the selection and the synthesis of information.**

Today we must design the mechanisms that will allow us to change perspectives.

## **8.2. The management of public information should contribute to rendering the world and governance more intelligible**

If a community is to fully play its mediating role between individuals and the world, governance must contribute to making the world and governance more intelligible for everyone. This role concerns, in particular, **a community's knowledge of itself** (public systems are, through their activities, producers of a considerable mass of information concerning a community but it is rare that this information is handed over to the community); **the understanding of the way in which public systems themselves function** (for much of the population the machinery of institutions often seems impenetrable, too complicated, thus suspicious); **the understanding of the outside world.**

## **8.3. The organisation of independent information systems requires the creation of networks**

This is a field in which organised civil society at the global level is particularly efficient. Public opinion often considers that, since civil society is more independent, its evaluations are more credible than public evaluations. And so we find ourselves in a situation where private agents play the role of defenders of public interest. Transparency International, that deals with issues related to corruption and whose index has become a benchmark, is, in this respect, an eloquent case in point. Similarly, in the case of relations between companies, norms of private origin, such as the French ISO norm, become benchmarks that public authorities refer to.

It is necessary, therefore, that public authorities accept to support this autonomous production of information and that they recognise its public interest role. Access to primary information, often a major challenge, requires the setting up of international networks of private, usually non-profit-based, private agents.

## 8.4. Choosing indicators, and deciding on a combination of indicators, is decisive

In a world where numbers seem to rule, the public and political and administrative authorities tend to become unaware of that which is neither measured nor quantified. The fact that indicators lead to policies that deal with symptoms rather than causes is another perverse effect of such a world. Also, to take two examples from the field of agriculture, farmers, because they are no longer using synthetic systems of measurement of soil quality, are less and less aware of soil degradation, and the absence of consumer information on the nutritional quality of a product leads to the product being judged by its price and its appearance rather than on its nutritional value. A society that, through public debate, could decide on measures that best characterise what it wants to be and wants to become, would signify a big advance for democracy.

These measures would make it possible to acquire concrete knowledge of each society's exchanges and social capital.

### *a) knowledge of material exchanges and the "ecological fingerprint" of companies*

Economically developed societies are going to need to produce more well-being with less matter. But before this can happen, each person, each territory, each state and the entire global community will have to become aware of the way in which consumed goods and services combine human work, information and limited natural resources. This awareness will form the starting point for future taxation and the re-organisation of production.

### *b) knowledge of societies' "social capital"*

Awareness is growing of the importance of societies' human wealth: how much it contributes to our quality of life today, how much it can potentially offer in terms of development and evolution tomorrow. The micro-credit experience, for instance, shows that its main quality isn't the fact that it creates jobs and income, but rather that it greatly improves the relational capacities of its beneficiaries. Evaluating and developing natural heritage and social capital will become much more important than evaluating and developing the capital of machines. This is why we must elaborate relevant systems of measurement.

## Ninth principle : Governance makes it possible to manage long time periods and plan ahead

Preserving one's identity and being capable of evolving; welcoming progress without being overwhelmed or destroyed by it; anticipating coming developments and preparing for them; bringing together enterprising forces and passions on a common project – the cement of a community's integrity: Governance, at all levels, is linked to time just as surely as it is linked to space. Its link to time is guided by two dimensions found in every system of regulation: **ensuring stability and cohesion; resisting an evolution that isn't chosen.**

This “art of time management” is at the heart of governance and features several dimensions.

### 9.1. The art of mastering and harmonising the rates of evolution within societies

Societies don't evolve in a uniform manner. Science and technology evolve very quickly, pulling along the economy in their wake. But thought systems, social and spatial organisation, infrastructures, institutions and cultural models evolve much more slowly. **Inconsistent rates of evolution**, that lead us to consider tomorrow's problems with outdated ideas and to manage them with even more outdated institutions, represent a real danger. Often handed down from the past, the institutions of governance are no longer adapted to the realities of today and tomorrow. Institutions and policies conceived in another context continue to live and act, sometimes erroneously, while other, badly needed regulations are absent. Thus, big metropolis' reputation for being ungovernable is a symptom of the fact that no metropolitan governance has managed to evolve at the same rate as that of urban expansion. Thus global interdependencies and economic globalisation have not yet led to the creation of legitimate and efficient governance.

The speed of evolution isn't an end in itself that all of humankind should submit to; on the contrary, if humankind hopes to master its evolution it is urgent that certain transformations be stopped or slowed down, at least long enough to engage in reflection and debate.

Slowing down the transformations that are speeding beyond our control, accelerating those that are progressing too slowly, is a lucid and wise policy.

## 9.2. The art of conducting long-term strategies

It is when states prove themselves capable of proposing a long-term strategy that they become essential to societies. The fall of communism clearly demonstrated the difference between **planification and strategy**. Planification seeks to control the various facets of economic and social life. Strategy focuses on essentials. It is designed to combine continuity with the flexibility needed for, both, dealing with uncertain events and seizing opportunities. It **brings enterprising forces together** on a common project. It **anticipates and prepares transformations** by conducting necessary structural, cultural and institutional changes.

Strategy builds **relations between the local and the global levels**, not by introducing directives “from above”, but by organising spaces devoted to exchange and collective reflection. With governance that favours the territorial approach and recognises that complexity can only be dealt with at concrete and local levels, the **long term** ceases to be a state prerogative. It belongs to the citizens.

## 9.3. The art of associating the temporal contexts of various agents

One of the major obstacles to forming partnerships between agents of different backgrounds is that each has their own perspectives and their own pace. **But partnership involves common deadlines**. Public systems have their pace, set by their procedures: the time to build a case file, the annual budget, plans stretching over several years, political elections. This pace is not that of most of society which tends to organise life around both pressing matters and the long term. To enter a partnership, public systems need to be able to accept other paces and adapt their procedures accordingly.

**The art of associating several temporal contexts is an aspect of the management of strategies and transformations**. Various actions emanating from different temporal contexts must constantly be combined so as to devise the first operational steps of long-term actions. Policy in the field of energy is a good example of this. Everyone is aware of the importance of considerably reducing wealthy nations’ energy consumption and this can’t be accomplished without combining actions emanating from extremely diverse temporal contexts: changing consumers’ attitudes, modifying products and industrial processes, taxation, changing transportation systems and the very structure of cities.

## 9.4. The art of setting the pace of governance

A society requires a vast collective pace. It can't live only from day to day nor can it live in a climate of constant reassessment. Today, the majority of common social paces, excepted big religious rituals, are defined at the national state level. The moments of collective reflection are often linked to election times in democratic countries, which have the inconvenient effect of closely associating a society's inward reflection and political stakes.

The UN's attempts, through the big international conferences that began with the Earth Summit, to define deadlines for the evaluation of the application of these conferences' conclusions, is a step in the right direction. One of the major challenges for global governance will be setting the right pace for an emerging global community.

## Tenth principle: Governance, from legality to legitimacy

### 10.1. There is an ever-growing gap between legality and legitimacy in governance

Governance is **legal** when the act of governing is defined by a set of rules and principles derived from tradition or fixed in a Constitution, written laws and jurisprudence.

**The legitimacy** of governance is a much more subjective notion. It derives from whether or not a population feels that political power and administration is in the hands of the “right” people and is exercised in conformity with “good” practices and in the interest of the community. Thus, an entire society’s deep-seated approval of the way in which it is governed constitutes an essential dimension of governance. No matter how authoritarian a regime is, how important its means of repression, governance cannot maintain itself strictly through measures of constraint: it must meet with some sympathy, some approval, at the heart of society.

Democracies have always had a tendency to consider that legal governance is automatically legitimate, first, because the population’s approval for the particular system of governance was demonstrated by the majority electoral endorsement of constitutions and laws; secondly, because its approval for concrete practices of governance is periodically renewed through the electoral process. But reality is much more complex than theory. If in some countries the constitution is the founding act of a community, in many others it is a document designed for specialists that few know well and that has very little bearing on how the population perceives their government. Also, democratic structures can very easily favour a tyranny of the majority in which important minorities have no real place. In many countries – in Africa, Latin America and Asia, where the model for parliamentary democracy was introduced by former colonial powers – the new political system was built atop time-honoured regulations, sanctioned and legitimised by tradition. These ancient regulations had to don masks or hide themselves, but they often remained alive. This phenomenon is still easily observable in, for instance, the progressive superposition of property laws or of modes of settlement of conflicts.

Within the very societies that gave birth to parliamentary democracy we can observe a rising discredit of politics, a declining respect for the public sector, a widening gulf between government’s orientations and society’s expectations or the types of challenges that must be met. It underlines the ever-widening gulf between power’s legality and its legitimacy. This gulf, if it persists, will be a threat to democracy itself.

Governance's efficiency and its legitimacy mutually influence one another: they can reinforce one another just as they can pull one another down. If, for example, a national state wants to carry out an effective development policy, it has to be able to organise agents around a common goal, ensure that rules are respected, raise taxes and encourage investment. It won't be successful if it isn't respected. And it isn't respected if it appears to be inefficient or corrupt. How can one defend reinforced public action if already existent action is considered inefficient, or is in the interest of a minority that isn't particularly concerned about the common good, or if the state applies solutions to problems that it doesn't really understand? How can one call for public action if the administration is considered to be inhabited by bureaucrats who are, at best, narrow-minded, at worst, lazy, incompetent or corrupt?

This crisis of legitimacy is even more serious at the global governance level. On the one hand, current regulations don't measure up to the current interdependencies of global society. On the other, any measures taken to reinforce these regulations are unlikely to meet with general approval if the legitimacy of those that already exist is questionable. This happens to be the case: the UN is often considered to be a very costly masquerade. Its democratic legitimacy is limited, stuck between the vetoing power of a few big nations in the Security Council and the hypocrisy of the principle of "one state, one vote", that pretends to put Nepal or Burkina Faso at the same level as the USA. The same sort of crisis of legitimacy can be found at the World Bank or the IMF, both of which have become, in practice, tools that allow rich countries to impose policies on poor countries. There exist an abundance of international rules formulated by faceless authorities. The fact that they have no clear mandate, that there exists no clear-cut legal means of challenging them, saps them of their authority and efficiency and also discredits in advance efforts to formulate new rules, including in fields where major injustices and the notion of "survival of the fittest" are denounced. The problem is compounded by the fact that there is no way of ensuring the congruity of various UN agencies' campaigns and that the financial and regulatory means for promoting their ideas and imposing the application of the rules they create are generally lacking. The legitimacy of today's global governance, in which relations between **national states** are fundamental, is being undermined both by the crisis of legitimacy of states themselves and by the mechanisms which structure state relations.

Reinforcing the legitimacy of governance, both local and global, is thus a decisive challenge.

For it to be legitimate, governance must include three components:

- A community that is fully aware of itself and of the importance of internal and external interdependencies, and that clearly feels the need to establish regulations that ensure its integrity, its survival, its well-being. Governance thus answers a real need.
- Regulation systems that are rooted in an ethical foundation, with values and principles recognised by all. The equal treatment of members of the community is of particular importance.

- Concrete forms of government and an application of regulations that are satisfying. Governing authorities are competent and trustworthy. The methods they apply are pertinent and are constantly re-evaluated and perfected. The specific methods and modes of conduct are deeply rooted in the culture.

## 10.2 Legitimate governance fulfils a need that is widely felt within a community

### *a) The legitimacy of governance depends on a community's self-awareness*

What would China be without the history of the Chinese empire? What would France be without its State? What would the European Union be without its institutions, treaties and common rules? But, inversely, how many new, independent states are a patchwork of ethnic groups for whom the existence of a common state, of a flag, of an army, of even a parliament doesn't summon up a deeply felt awareness of a community tied together by interests and a common destiny. The coincidence of a level of governance and a real community is already exceptional and will grow even more so. This is why an awareness of **plural communities**, each one containing unity and diversity, is needed if we hope to deal with the challenges of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

**At the global level, community awareness still has to be built.** Governance can fulfil this role by creating founding events, by continually bringing to light interdependencies, by increasing the opportunities for co-operation.

### *b) For governance to be considered legitimate, its need must be apparent*

All governance implies a balance between the protection of individual autonomy and the constraints imposed **in the name of the common good**. As soon as the common good becomes less urgent or is less apparent, that the pursued objectives are foggy, that the means of attaining them aren't transparent, the constraints imposed in the name of the common good lose their legitimacy and no one cares to continue to be subjected to them. Nearly every society has experienced emergency laws that saw the day at a time when the society felt threatened and considered that the threat justified the temporary suspension of liberties, an exceptional tax or the sacrifice of human lives. The degree of constraint accepted is proportionate to its need. This rule is easily verifiable in the many societies in which tax evasion is a national sport, yet where small communities have trouble raising the necessary funds for a community project.

## 10.3 Governance's legitimacy rests on widely recognised and shared values and principles

*a) The legitimacy of governance depends on everyone adhering to the values upon which it is founded*

You can't separate collective values – applicable to institutions – on one hand, and individual values – applicable to persons – on the other. The dilemmas of societies – between liberty and the common good, between the defence of one's own interests and the acknowledgement of those of others, between peace and justice, between preserving identity and the will to evolve, etc. – also exist at the level of individuals. Being conscious of responsibility isn't just required of governing authorities; it is a duty that is shared by every individual and every social agent. You can't separate public morals, on one hand, and private morals, on the other. The most eloquent world charters will remain worthless scraps of paper as long as they don't meet a response in every heart. The use of "conduct codes" in companies, for instance, has shown that **it is the code's collective elaboration process, inclusive of all the people who are concerned by it, that ensures its value.** Thus, the principles of responsibility, like human rights themselves, have to be rediscovered, "re-invented", generation after generation.

*b) Governance's legitimacy depends on the clarity of the principles it applies*

Governance offers society a framework and guiding principles, models of conduct that can be looked upon as landmarks or a set of game rules. The rule of separation of the legislative, executive and judicial powers, the respect of fundamental rights, citizens' equality before the law, the creation of monitoring mechanisms and checks and balances are all reference points that have been sanctioned by history and that haven't lost value in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. We propose that the ten common principles of governance be adopted as a complimentary frame of reference.

*c) The legitimacy of governance rests on a sense of equity*

Does each individual, whether powerful or lowly, get equal consideration? Is each individual treated the same? Does he have the same rights? Is he subject to the same constraints, the same demands and the same penalties?

The principle of equity is just as true for societies as it is for individuals.

Whether they be states or individuals, when those that don't have the knowledge, the income, or the influential networks become aware that **in practice** they don't have the ability to fully exercise their rights, when abuse of power becomes commonplace and systems of recourse are inefficient or dissuasive because of cost or delays, the general feeling of equity fades away.

Often an individual or community is less interested in finding out whether a decision has followed legal channels than in verifying whether his point of view has been listened to and considered. This is why traditional democratic mechanisms, that allow a tyranny of the majority, are no longer a sufficient guarantee of the legitimacy of governance.

The issue of equity is at the heart of global governance's current difficulties. Naturally, we can't expect to see, in the very near future, a global democracy that is genuinely representative, but we can already begin doing much better than the inegalitarian system that exists today in which, seeing as there is no world tax system, the richest countries have the monopoly of power. It is a system in which the Big 8 behave as a sort of directorate, with the USA as headmaster or policeman, in which the power of shareholders – private, in the case of companies, public in the case of the Bretton Woods institutions – have much more power than simple citizens. It is a system in which the technostructures of rich countries and international institutions monopolise the processes by which the terms of negotiation are defined.

**New mechanisms of world governance won't be legitimate unless they are the product of authentic negotiations between all of the world's regions and are generally considered to be equitable. Most importantly, their priorities will have to take into account the real concerns of the biggest and poorest human groups.**

As long as it is only wealthy nations that decide on what is negotiable and what isn't (for instance, the circulation of goods: yes, the circulation of people: no; the methods of development of poor nations: yes, debating the wisdom of the lifestyles of wealthy nations: no; negotiable permits: yes, the ownership of natural resources: no; etc.) world governance, and the constraints it will produce, will only be very reluctantly accepted by the other nations. As long as wealthy nations continue to have the monopoly on **concepts** (for instance, by defining what are commercial goods and what are public goods) and on **strategies** (for example, by promoting heavy equipment and sophisticated technology at the expense of more solutions better adapted to societies), populations won't feel concerned, nor even bound by what their administrative and political elites might have negotiated in their name.

Finally, equity demands that sanctions for non-compliance with rules be dissuasive for powerful countries as well. This is not yet the case, as we can see, for example, with the WTO, where poor countries don't have the means of understanding or mastering the complexity of rules, of financing legal proceedings and, if they win their case, of imposing the application of dissuasive sanctions against economically powerful countries. For these sanctions to be real penalties, they must be automatically applied by all countries, and not just by the country that has been wronged.

*d) To be legitimate, governance needs to be rooted in a culture*

Each society has, in the course of its history, invented its own modes of regulation and its own conceptions of justice, conflict management, preservation of the common good, distribution of natural resources, and the organisation and the practice of power. **The art of harmonising unity and diversity** is applicable to governance itself since it involves harmonising universal principles and finding ways to adapt them to each culture. Each community should be able to decide on how it should **organise and manage itself** so as to reach goals that are of common interest: for water and soil management, for the organisation of partnerships

between agents, for making decisions, etc. Far from being detrimental to national or planetary unity, the local re-invention of rules by a community is a founding act that takes into account both its **identity** (through the inventing of rules in common) **and its place within a larger community** (through the acknowledgement of universal guiding principles).

## 10.4 Legitimate governance is carried out efficiently by governing authorities that are worthy of trust.

*a) Governance's legitimacy depends on the legitimacy of governing authorities*

At the end of the day, and no matter what forms of monitoring and balance of powers regulate their action and limit their misdeeds, it is the legitimacy of governing authorities – whether they be high-ranking or minor officials – that establishes their right to impose their authority in the name of the common good.

A governing authority's legitimacy, like that of anyone who holds power, hinges on several considerations: the exercise of power is respectful of established rules; power is devolved to individuals who possess merit (due to their background, their history, their competence and their experience); power is genuinely used to further the common good. This is why the justiciability of governing authorities, even symbolic, is essential if we are to guarantee that those who hold power in the name of the community **are worthy of the trust that they have been granted**.

*b) Governance's legitimacy depends on the pertinence of the methods that are used*

In the name of the common good, governance imposes constraints, solidarity and sacrifices on each individual. Everyone should be able to verify whether these impositions have been consented to in vain or whether they really are useful. There wouldn't be an **art of governance** if citizens only had to choose between more unity and more diversity, between more solidarity and more liberty. On the contrary, the art involves obtaining, **at the same time**, more unity and more diversity. It can be defined by **the principle of the lesser constraint**: reaching an objective for the common good while limiting, as much as possible, the constraints imposed on each individual. This can be achieved through the application of the active subsidiarity principle which consists in replacing a uniform rule with a set of objectives to be reached.

The more it shows itself capable of developing methods that are adapted to set objectives, the stronger governance's legitimacy will be.

# The Alliance for a Responsible, Plural and United World

## Working together towards the challenges of the 21<sup>th</sup> century

Ever since the late eighties of the 20th century, numerous initiatives have been put forward from different regions of the world and extremely diverse contexts. Different social actors were thus put in motion with the aim of organising a vast worldwide process seeking to explore values, proposals and regulations capable of overcoming the modern challenges humanity is faced with.

A large number of thematic, collegial and continental meetings were organised in the early nineties, a process which led, in 1993, to the drafting of the *Platform for a Responsible and United World*.

Regional groups were set up, international professional networks and thematic networks on the fundamental issues of our era were developed: the Alliance was created. It is financially and technically supported by the Charles Léopold Mayer Foundation for the progress of Humankind (FPH), among others.

The Alliance is focussed on inventing new forms of collective action on both a local and global scale, with the aim of shaping together the future of an increasingly complex and interdependent world.

The challenge of the Alliance is to actively support unity in diversity by asserting our societies' capability to understand and appreciate the complexity of situations, the interdependence of problems and the diversity and legitimacy of geo-cultural, social and professional perspectives.

**The Alliance, as a space of discussion, reflection and proposals, is built around three main orientations:**

Local groups aiming to bring people of a community, a region, a country or a continent together by looking at the realities and issues of their own societies. This is the **geo-cultural approach**. It reflects the diversity of places and cultures.

Groups of socio-professional actors wishing to provoke dialogue and mobilisation within a given social sector or profession (youth, peasants, scientists, local representatives, etc.). This is the **collegial approach**. It reflects the diversity of social and professional milieus, their concerns and responsibilities towards society and the challenges of today's world.

Thematic workshops seeking to create reflection groups centred around the major issues of our common future (sustainable water management, regional integration and globalisation, financial markets, art and society, etc.). This is the thematic approach. It reflects the diverse challenges humanity is faced with in the 21<sup>st</sup>

century. Thematic workshops are organised into four areas: Values and Culture, Economy and Society, Governance and Citizenship, Humanity and the Biosphere.

Seeking both to draw on the richness of materials and experiences gathered by these reflection groups whilst networking with other citizen dynamics with a similar focus, the Alliance fixed itself the objective of obtaining collectively developed, concrete proposals. The following meetings were thus organised:

- international meetings, for each thematic workshop and each college,
- synchronized continental assemblies (Africa, Americas, Asia, Europe) and a regional meeting in the Arab world (Lebanon) in June 2001 .
- a Citizen World Assembly, held in December 2001 in Lille, France, bringing 400 participants together from around the world.

These meetings together contributed to the drafting of some sixty *Proposal Papers for the 20<sup>th</sup> century* and a *Charter of Human Responsibilities*, published in several languages in different countries.

The Alliance has been involved in a process of disseminating and developing these outcomes since the beginning of 2002. Networks are expanding, branching out and their work themes are becoming increasingly transversal. They also strengthen links with other approaches aiming to create an alternative globalisation.

For further information, please visit the alliance website at [www.alliance21.org](http://www.alliance21.org), where the history of the Alliance, the challenges it is engaged in and the workshops and discussion forums being held can be viewed in three languages (French, English and Spanish).

E-mail: [info@alliance21.org](mailto:info@alliance21.org)

# The proposal papers on the internet

Whether in their provisional or definitive form, all the proposal papers and their corresponding translations can be accessed on the website of the Alliance for a Responsible, Plural and United World, at:

<http://www.alliance21.org/fr/proposals>

Themes available:

## **Values, education, cultures, art and the sciences**

Teachers and education – Education to an active and responsible citizenship – The alliance and the media – Art and cultural identity in building a united world – Women – Youth action and proposals for social change – An intercultural cultural diversity in the era of globalisation – Proposals of the inter-religious college – War, genocide, ...restoring humanity in human beings faced by extreme situations – Thinking through university reform – Social control of the scientific production system – Information society, knowledge society: benefiting from change – time and sustainable development

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