

Creating a Role for International Geneva

in the

Upcoming Sequence of UN Summits – 2023 to 2025

DW Speech Notes (10-mins)

1. Thank you Georgios: as you say, the People's Pact project delivered a cornucopia of great ideas – ideas that really, really should be implemented tomorrow. But – as you and I have experienced over the last 30-40 years, they almost certainly will not. In the game of UN Reform, great ideas from Civil Society are almost always on the losing side. WHY?
2. Well – it is perhaps significant that we are meeting on the day, 8th June, on which, in 1949, George Orwell's dystopian fantasy, 1984, was first published. Even back then – the great majority of “We the Peoples...” had an irrational fear of Global Governance and Orwell played on it brilliantly – elaborating on the Stalinist world of “Thought Police,” totalitarianism and mass surveillance. If he'd been writing today, he would have talked about Fake News – and the threats of AI. These threats are very real – and they make people scared of the UN. Very scared: I was in the USA last year – and I was surprised to see: “US out of UN” signs on the freeway. In California!! This is NOT fertile ground in which the ideas outlined in the People's Pact can take root and flourish.
3. And yet – today – we have to move rapidly to implement such proposals: global governance is no longer an option: it is an imperative! WHY?
4. Because, for me, it is unconscionable that we do not yet have a global body that can save young people from the scourge of illegal wars – like the Ukraine War in which tens of thousands of young Russians and Ukrainians are being killed – their lives as cheap as logs for the fire. That's UNFORGIVABLE!
5. Also, in 1945, when Prime Minister Clement Attlee opened the 1st General Assembly of the UN, he spoke of the imperative of banning nuclear weapons – a goal which, 78 years on, the UN has not achieved – rendering life on the planet at severe, and increasing, risk of instant immolation. That is also UNFORGIVABLE!!
6. But perhaps the most important reason is that – as we say in the opening of our Environmental Governance Track – we are merrily breaching planetary boundaries: Seriously! Scientists have identified 9 boundaries – and we have breached 6 of them already – each breach posing a catastrophic, existential risk to Life on Earth.
7. WE HAVE TO CHANGE! – and we know what we have to do!
8. We have to PHASE OUT fossil fuels – and implement a Fossil Fuel Non-proliferation policy to prohibit all further prospecting. The 1.5 degree threshold will not, as we thought, be breached in 2040 or 2050 – so far in the future, we don't have to worry about it today: last month, the WMO across the street from here told us that it will be breached in at least ONE of the next five years. So - we have to ACT on all this NOW!!
9. We have to tax the heck out of unsustainable consumption behaviours – and subsidise sustainable behaviours;
10. We have to move quickly to ban and dismantle all nuclear arsenals – everywhere.
11. AND – crucially – we have to devise global systems of Governance - of Monitoring and Enforcement so that cheats and dissemblers who are placing the future of life on this planet, are punished. As Al Gore has said, what Lee Raymond and Exxon did by burying the science about fossil fuels causing climate change is the “*biggest crime against humanity since the Second World War.*” People like him should be behind bars. They are a danger to us all.
12. HOW DO WE DO THIS? – This is where I think International Geneva can really help: so let me offer a few ideas to start the conversation:
 - Follow **Examples that have WORKED!** Look how Malala Yousafsai transformed the Global Conversation about girl child education by her example and leadership; look how Greta Thunberg raised the issue of Climate Change from near the bottom of international global concerns to the very top concern. Young people can shame whole populations into caring for their future. So we must use and empower them to lead! I am

delighted that the UN has – finally – woken up to this reality of youth power, creating in the last few years a Special Envoy for Youth, a Youth Office at the UN and a Youth Climate Advisory Board. These are things that my organisation – Peace Child Intl. – has been banging on about for 43 years!

- **Create Coalitions of the Willing** – so that we’re not all SLAVES to the Lowest Common Denominator; that is the Opportunity that the Club of Rome has opened with its letter to the Secretary General. It is an opportunity that International Geneva can grasp, convene and make happen.
- But let it be **SMART Coalitions of the Willing**: be careful to include key players and voices from every sector in each of those coalitions. I was brought up short recently when – during my facilitation of the Environmental Governance track – I praised the European Green Deal – with its innovative Border Adjustment Mechanisms. I was roundly condemned by my Indian co-facilitator who pointed out that such mechanisms were hugely unfair to developing country manufacturers who could not dream of achieving the same standards of production possible in Europe. So – Smart – inclusive Coalitions. International Geneva would be very clever at that;
- But – my major recommendation to you here in Geneva is that you take on the task of creating that fertile seed bed in people’s minds so that they are ready and hungry to receive, embed and grow the great ideas proposed in the People’s Pact. We need to create an EDUCATIONAL INDUSTRIAL COMPLEX – which combines schools, academia, think tanks, the media – TV, publishing, social media – in a huge effort that we call **Transformative Education**: education that can transform that irrational fear of global governance into an irrepressible, rational appetite for it as the only possible route to planetary survival.

This is where my organisation is placing its focus – and we are seeking support from International Geneva – as well as UNESCO and other Media Partners. International Geneva should lead on initiatives like this in the build-up to the Sequence of UN Summits. Together with NGOs like ourselves and major media companies – you can be the driving force for acceptance and implementation of the ideas emerging from these Summits. Every UN Member state should launch a myriad of educational / edutainment initiatives to create that appetite.



I don’t want to spend a lot of time introducing my organisation: if you are interested, check out our [History HERE](#) or watch our [40th Anniversary video HERE](#). Also watch our Pilot [UN Day State of the Planet programme HERE](#), and our 1-minute [“Grab the Wheel”](#) sketch which sums up Peace Child’s approach to “Empowering Young People.” These ideas form the background to the new initiatives which we are launching later this year to deliver Transformative Education for the UN Summit sequence. They include the following:

1. **Model Citizens Assemblies** – short-form Citizens Assemblies which bring together whole communities in a demographically balanced jury to review and assess the planetary crises and draw conclusions for how

to address them. They can happen online or live – with a live audience. A great way for communities to come together around these issues;

2. **Youth Sustainability Action Fora** - we challenge young people to learn what it means to be sustainable by devising a local action project that advances the sustainability of their home, school or community;
3. **Peace Child Forum Theatre show** – this is what we’re planning to premiere here in Geneva – to tell a fictional story of how the young people of today implement these ideas of global governance in their lifetimes, transforming the UN into a genuinely effective Multilateral organisation. Working with my friend, the Soviet Era rock star, Stas Namin – now an Armenian citizen, we’re going to assemble a cast of P-5 member state youth to figure out a way of collaborating together over their lifetimes to deliver a safe, sustainable world for future generations. Ambitious? YES! – High Risk? Very! But that is the hallmark of Peace Child – and young people. And I hope you will support them in their ambition and capacity to take risks to secure the survival of the planet. What’s the Forum Theatre part? Well – imagine a political play with a “discussion Afterwards” – but here, the discussion happens *during* the play – and informs the way the cast end each performance.
4. The other thing that Peace Child International promotes are **Intergenerational Conversation Cafés** – of which we have done a few over the years: each Peace Child play script is built on intergenerational dialogues between the young cast – and representatives of key professional sectors – business, lawyers, advertisers, politicians, diplomats, bankers, military leaders, faith leaders, teachers etc. We have also used them to get young people leading dialogues on community issues. But Manuela and Greycells have been running professional Intergenerational Dialogues than we have. So – I’ll end here and hand over to her. Thank you!

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