

## SHARING AN ENVIRONMENT

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After having lived with church dogmas, the idea of Reason came into being 500 years ago. This idea resulted in humanistic themes, great inventions and the emergence of influential cultural, artistic, literary trends and movements. Yet, religion, rich culture, and humanism were not strong enough; in the 1st half of the 20th century there were 2 world wars. At least 82 million people lost their lives and large parts of Europe were in ruins.



This order rejected the principles that led to the 2 world wars – ethnic nationalism, spheres of influence and imperialism – and replaced it with a system based on universal values, human rights, the rule of law and national sovereignty and did not happen by accident; it was the result of tireless efforts to lay the foundation, to promote and guarantee the values.

In the late 1980s, "capitalism won from communism", but this economic system has slowly but certainly changed from ambition into an ideology for an increasingly small group of people, focussing on priority to efficiency, growth and bureaucracy, while man fell out of sight. The system controls man, developed into the direction of a plutocracy and crony capitalism, can as such not be of service to us to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals and is under attention with the intention to reform:



Moreover, multiple other issues simultaneously influenced our social life profoundly, sometimes creating violent hostility: the liberal order is in danger, there is disinterest in cohesion and sense of community, there are several serious internal and external threats and citizens are looking for a compass.

Humanity put itself in an inconvenient situation: ongoing wars and violence, the prevalent culture of individualism and fragmentary thinking; populism, obscurantism, political revisionism, return to ethnic nationalism became fashion, as well as the use of abusive language via social media.

In contemporary times, countries and people are interconnected. Own sailing is increasingly dependent on the extent to which globalization is progressing.

There remains as such an urgent need for inter- and supranational organizations such as the EU, UN, IMF, WTO, WHO, international law, institutes and ngo's, each with their goals for the common good.

It is excellence at being human, a skill which helps a person survive, thrive, form meaningful relationships and find happiness. Europe started a civilization ideal that has created in the world the largest area with common prosperity and long-term peace. That should remain the challenge and be broadly widespread, not the use of the language of hate and fear, oppression, intimidation, aggression, threats and violence. We ourselves can shape our life, we ourselves have to take care the values. This freedom of choice, together with the associated responsibilities, constitute the dignity of man.

The era of thriving years have made us forget a lot. Always of importance is to receive insights, truthfulness, and inspiration. It gives us wisdom about directions to follow in life. Through education we may strengthen the liberal order, provide more ethics in our lives and systems, try to develop cohesion and sense of community and embed a broad category of ethical philosophies that affirm the dignity and worth of all people, based on the ability to determine right and wrong by appeal to unilateral human qualities. Such can only succeed when man recognizes obligations and wants to commit himself towards a greater purpose and greater goodness.

