

Turning Point for All Nations Study Outline

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(Note: bolding and underlining have been used to quickly capture the topic and/or the most important information. This marking may be especially useful when scanning the outline, for the first time, or upon review, in that it enables one to quickly review the main points and see the structure underlying the text (without needing to reread the whole text again). It may thus enable one to memorize the main points as a preparation for the speech and/or, while giving a speech, to quickly access a main point if one has forgotten it. Some abbreviations such as “int’l” for “international” may have been kept in order to limit the expanse of the visual field and thus ease the burden on one’s short-term memory. Summaries have been included to likewise aid in speeches, etc. Though the outline is detailed, it attempts to serve its purpose by positioning the text in a more readily viewed and memorizable fashion.)

Summary of Statement

As upheavals have led to the recognition of our interdependence, our being of one homeland, and our requiring one world political system, it is necessary to progressively restructure the U.N. institutions to fit this reality. Doing so requires seeing the institutions’ development evolutionarily (in light of its great successes and necessity, its being but a part of the greater int’l

order, and its success being dependent on the contributions of its constituents. This will enable development of short-term and internally consistent strategies directed toward an ultimate vision while anticipating setbacks.

This optimistic view of its past and future nevertheless recognizes its failures and confronts existing challenges, seeking to progressively ensure the changes above through a global Summit. The participation of grass roots groups, reflected the public more accurately as a whole, should be included, decentralization sought for except where centralization is necessary, and diverse governance forms investigated for adoption.

The vision in mind must provide for a more representative General Assembly promoting trust of the world's peoples enabling enforcement of resolutions. The short-term prestige will be enhanced by membership being conditional on respect for human rights including democracy, appointing a commission to study borders for warning and assessment, financial assessments being made with representation but graduated and eventually enforceable (while allowing voluntary contributions), establishing a common language and script internally and making steps to establish one for the world, and making graduated and credible steps to a single int'l currency.

The Executive should ultimately ensure a collective security pact unhampered by the limitations of the Security Council, taking steps as curbing the veto power to its original intention, developing ad hoc arrangements into an international Force with core regional forces for deployment to promote conditions for disarmament, applying collective security to issues as int'l drug trafficking and food security , and retaining independent Executive function for already successful organizations in the UN family.

The World Court should be strengthened to promote the essential component of justice with eventually binding authority and immediately being expanded to allow other organs of the UN to bring cases to the Court and act as an umbrella for existing (Int'l Criminal Court) and new thematic courts (Int'l Criminal Court, Chamber for Environmental Matters, int'l terrorism, and drug trafficking)

It is also necessary for the focus of the internal and external changes to focus on the oneness of humanity as the basis and purpose for all human rights and in that spirit to engage all mankind in its promotion. Int'l institutions must nurture a humanity removed from and distrusting of the int'l arena, seeking to win their support and fully and openly consult with interested parties to foster the individual's latent potential.

Promoting economic development is critical to this, but must be done accounting for spiritual factors and motivations as promoting the scientific and moral skills and desire to serve humanity and create wealth, not unsustainable consumerism, just getting by, or dependency. To fully satisfy Agenda 21's

goals, expedition of nat'l efforts comparable to the Marshall plan promoted by the Bretton Woods institutions reexamined at a conference designed to make sufficient resources available and possibly redefine and recreate new institutions and/or coordinate the Social Summit's implementation.

Human rights must be enforced adequately through adequate funding of the Centre for Human Rights, ratification of human rights conventions, and selectivity in assignment of positions to the Commission on Human Rights. They must also be emphasized as a prerequisite to peace and concern of all and promoted through correlating its corresponding responsibilities.

Institutions must act for women's inclusion with the firm belief that their full participation is required for society's progress. Their complementarity with men should be valued as their role as mothers is respected while noting that their leadership, scientific, or creative capacities are not thereby diminished but perhaps enhanced, especially in a new age where necessary qualities have shifted more from force to more feminine qualities. Violence and the condescending attitudes which view women as inferior or a burden and make them easy targets of anger and frustration must be eradicated through a new social conscience. Increased appointment of women to ambassadorial, etc. positions, ratification of int'l conventions protecting and enhancing women's status, and monitoring of Beijing Platform of Action will support women's progress.

The most powerful agent of human attitude and behavior change, religion in its reality free from dogmas and imitation, is an influence which should be harnessed through a campaign of conferences, material publication, and other activities to assist local moral education initiatives to invest in the future. Unity, responsible behavior and service, and virtues for human interaction are all beneficially harnessed by religion and should not be blocked in the name of separation of church and state.

As Bahá'u'lláh called for, leaders must seek the best interests of the world and do so out of altruistic responsibility, truth-seeking, and principle-guided behavior in order to gain the public's trust and act in their best interests.

0. Quote and Summary of Quote of Shoghi Effendi, 1936

Quote:

“Unification of the whole of mankind is the hall-mark of the stage which human society is now approaching. Unity of family, of tribe, of city-state, and nation have been successively attempted and fully established. World unity is the goal towards which a harassed humanity is striving. Nation-building has come to an end. The anarchy inherent in state sovereignty is moving towards a climax. A world, growing to maturity, must abandon this fetish, recognize the oneness and wholeness of human relationships, and establish once for all the machinery that can best incarnate this fundamental principle of its life.”

Summary:

“Unification of the whole of mankind is the hall-mark of the stage which human society is now approaching.”

“Unity of family, of tribe, of city-state, and nation have been successively attempted and fully established.”

“Nation-building has come to an end.”

“The anarchy inherent in state sovereignty is moving towards a climax.”

“World unity is the goal towards which a harassed humanity is striving.”

“A world, growing to maturity, must abandon this fetish, recognize the oneness and wholeness of human relationships, and establish once for all the machinery that can best incarnate this fundamental principle of its life.”

Restated Summary:

Unity of mankind is the hall-mark of current stage of society. (Has Happened)

Family, tribe, city-state, nation unity has been consummated. (Is Happening)

World unity is the goal toward which humanity is striving (Needs to Happen)

We must abandon state sovereignty (Can (& will) Happen through specific means)
need to establish the machinery to incarnate this principle

Collective Summary of I-III. Background, Proposals, and Institutions

A-D Summary: The processes of upheaval (integration and disintegration) have been leading to our recognition of our interdependence, and as a result, to seeing ourselves as of one homeland and in need of a world political system.

E-G, III.A-N Summary: Although previous attempts at int'l order (actuated by desires to accommodate our increasing interdependence and in recognition of bad consequences for not doing so) have failed, and problems still exist (I.G), they have led to greater accomplishments, commanding recognition of the good aspects of the UN, its inseparability from the contributions constituent states, and the requirement of seeing (and acting to reform) the UN in an evolutionary manner.(III.A-N)

I.G-I.I Summary: The challenges that still remain (I.G), and the inadequacy of current int'l machinery (operationally, its subsidiaries, and systemically-I.I) as well as approaches (to embracing our oneness as the basis and purpose for most human rights and to engaging more of the populace at large—see below) are leading to a spirit of reform around the UN's 50th anniversary (I.H), and the BIC would like to contribute to this on-going discussion and progression.

J, II.A-Q Summary: A global Summit to address these questions is necessary (in light of past history and reason), and this should be addressed in light of certain principles and past experience, including that the UN should be seen in light of the whole int'l order, the oneness of humanity (each is a trust of the whole (but must be allowed to operate autonomously in many regards) is the foundation of most human rights being defined (and can be seen as the purpose

of these rights), and that promotion of int'l order must involve and excite the generality of mankind. (II.A-Q)

Restated Principles

Don't be discouraged by UN failures (put in int'l perspective)

Involve all mankind in unity/justice/consultation (each a trust of whole)

Involve other organizations/decentralize in int'l gov't (engage people)

Executive: See UN in big picture of int'l order: build world security pact, etc.

World Court: Unity foundation of human rights, need strong court for it.

General Assembly: involve all people in ability to vote

apparatus means: int'l order as a whole (admin. structure)

ends / mode of operation of gov'ts: see each is a trust of whole (admin. focus)

reinforcing means - engage and excite all mankind (indiv./community focus)

I. Overview: An Opportunity for Reflection (The end of the 20th century) sec. I

Radical upheavals & departures from the past have occurred this century.

Some have been destructive.

The old has collapsed.

the colonial system

the great 19th century empires

The new broad (man-made) experiments have failed.

totalitarianism, fascism, and communism

Deep negative consequences have resulted.

deaths of millions (individuals)

eradication of old lifestyles and traditions (culture/community)

collapse of time-honored institutions (institutions)

Others have been more obviously positive (other destructive ones might be seen as positive in the sense that they make way for the new)

Scientific discoveries and social insights spurred progressive changes (social, economic and cultural).

new definition of human rights & affirmation of personal dignity

expanded opportunities for individual & collective achievement

bold new avenues for advances in knowledge & consciousness

These processes are evidence of a single trend toward increasing interdependence & integration.

positive examples

fusion of world financial markets - (main purpose of interaction now)

reliance on diverse & interdependent resources (interaction content)

energy, food, raw materials, technology and knowledge

construction of int'l communication & transportation systems (means)
scientific understanding of earth's interconnected biosphere (env't)
nations of world looking to forge a world political system (manage)**expanded
on later in section I.E.

negative examples

Destructively seen in modern weapon systems

A few men can now bring an end to human civilization itself.**expanded further
in section I.G.

(We're becoming universally conscious of this interdependence for better or
worse)

(This leads to the fact that) we now see ourselves as of one common homeland.

Seen in the familiar photograph of the earth as a swirling sphere of blue &
white against the infinite blackness of space.

This image crystallizes the realization that we are a single people, rich in
diversity, living in a common homeland.

Previous attempts failed in reaching their ultimate goal.

A new int'l order has been tried twice before in this century.

Each attempt sought to address the recognition of global interdependence.

However, the system upheld state sovereignty above all else. However, they
have led successively to great achievements.

The League of Nations was a breakthrough in the concept of collective security.

It marked a first decisive step toward world order.

The United Nations has for 50 years been an int'l forum of last resort & a
noble symbol for humanity's collective interests.

The U.N. has demonstrated humanity's capacity for united int'l action.
in health, agriculture, education, environmental protection & children's
welfare.

The U.N. has affirmed our collective moral will to build a better future.

This is seen in the widespread adoption of int'l human rights Covenants (and
global programs to promote these rights).

New levels of consensus have been reached on global programs to promote health
and sustainable development.

It has revealed the human race's deep-seated compassion.

Financial and human resources have been devoted to aiding people in distress.

The U.N. has blazed a bold path toward a future without war, playing a role in
preventing a third world war.

This can be seen in the all-important realms of peace-building, peace-making
and peace-keeping.

Nevertheless, many deep problems have persisted or increased.

The U.N.'s establishment did not usher in the era of peace & prosperity hoped
for by founders 50 years ago.

Their wish is evidenced by the wishes expressed in the inspired preamble to the
Charter of the U.N. which includes a mandate toward removing political barriers
to stability and happiness (equal rights and promotion of peace) as well as
social and economic barriers (improve social progress and standards of life)

using moral/spiritual and political means to ensure this universal well-being can occur).

Unresolved political/military problems

Numerous local, national and regional conflicts based on long-smouldering ethnic and sectarian passions have cost millions of lives.

These burst out even after ideological motivation for conflicts were removed.

The instruments and technologies—and to some extent the underlying passions—to bring about planet-wide destruction still exist.

This is in spite of the Cold War's end reducing the threat of a global, terminal war.

Unresolved social issues

The situation on the ground in many areas has deteriorated.

alarming spread of militant racialism and religious fanaticism

epidemic rise of crime and organized criminality

widespread increase in mindless violence

cancerous growth of materialism

immoral excesses of unbridled capitalism and growth of political corruption

ever-deepening disparity between rich and poor

At least a billion live in abject poverty (World Bank, 1994).

More than 1/3 of the world is illiterate (World Bank, 1994).

continuing inequities faced by women

intergenerational damage caused by the pervasive breakdown of family life Given

the continuing/increasing problems, the need for their resolution is being

increasingly recognized (through positive and negative experience), and the

timing of the 50th anniversary of the United Nations, it is an opportune moment

to reflect on how we may face the future.

A wide range of useful proposals have already emerged for strengthening the

U.N. and its capacity to coordinate the responses of nations to these

challenges

These proposals fall roughly into 3 categories dealing with:

primarily bureaucratic, administrative & financial problems within U.N.

reconfiguring bodies like the Economic and Social Council, the Trusteeship

Council and the Bretton Woods economic institutions.

changes in the U.N. political structure as:

widespread changes as

expanding Security Council and/or changing UN Charter

(The first major and serious reassessments of the U.N. occurred in the 1950's

in anticipation of the Charter's 10th anniversary.)

structural changes which ensure individual freedom without impinging on

others' basic human rights.

proposals relating to U.N. reforms within a particular issue as:

appointing a U.N. Board for Sustainable Development

structural reform relating to finance, trade and energy, as they affect

North-South balances

Most works are constructive; some are provocative.

Our Global Neighborhood by the Commission on Global Governance provides one of the most balanced and thoughtful.

It argues for widespread adoption of new values as well as structural reform in the U.N. (cf. Prosperity of Humankind) as it examines underlying assumptions of Social and Economic development as well as World Citizenship as it enjoins the promotion of these values (and teaching of them in schools)).

The BIC wishes to contribute to this ongoing discussion & consultation on this issue of utmost importance based on 3 initial propositions.

Discussions about the U.N.'s future need to take place in the broad context of the int'l order's evolution and direction.

The int'l institutions which have co-evolved in the late 20th century will, as a whole, define and be shaped by the int'l order's evolution.

The mission, role, operating principles and activities of the U.N. should (thus) be examined in how they fit with the int'l order's broader goals.

Each member of humanity is (and must be seen as) a trust of the whole.

This proposition is at the heart of most of the human rights the U.N. instruments are attempting to define.

It serves to define an overriding purpose for the int'l order in establishing and preserving the individual's rights.

Discussions about int'l order's future must involve & excite generality of man.

This discussion cannot be confined to leaders in government, business, academia, religion, or civil organizations.

This conversation must engage women & men at the grassroots.

Broad participation will be self-reinforcing by raising awareness of world citizenship & increase support for expanded int'l order.

II. Recognizing the Historical Context: A Call to World Leaders sec. II

A-C Summary: Action must be taken now to prevent further catastrophes along inevitable path to integration.

D-E Summary: As this power rests with leaders, it is incumbent for them to convene an int'l Summit to redefine & restructure the int'l order to meet humanity's needs.

F-H Summary: This Summit must be based upon past Conferences' successes, esp. regarding their inclusion of civil organizations as they reflect & build support among society as a whole

I-L Summary: For this reason, it should be sensitive to need for decentralizing (brings int'l gov't back to people esp. to avoid despotism or oligarchy affecting operation of constituents) except where global direction & coordination (and enforcement) are necessary (states cannot act themselves, or rights of peoples or member-states are compromised, as reduction of armaments) possibly borrowing from federalism.

M Summary: The eventual world gov't must be elected by the people (and confirmed), have strong Executive to back up, and World Court to ensure check for and elaboration on just laws and enforcement in order to achieve its purpose.

N-Q Summary: However, this vision, though not immediately enforceable, can

inspire and must be taken in progressive steps.

Not only is our global political integration possible, but it is inevitable.

The past has been leading up to this point.

This world confusion and calamitous condition in human affairs is a natural phase in an organic process leading ultimately and irresistibly to the unification of the human race in a single social order whose boundaries are those of the planet.

The human race, as a distinct, organic unit, has passed through evolutionary stages analogous to the stages of infancy and childhood in the lives of its individual members, and is now in the culminating period of its turbulent adolescence approaching its long-awaited coming of age.

The basis of this process (that we are one) is acknowledged by many thinkers (as paleontologist Richard Leaky, see p. 24).

It is already beginning to happen.

The process of global integration, already a reality in the realms of business, finance, and communications, is beginning to materialize in the political arena. However, this process has been marked by catastrophes in the past. (WW I&II) Failure to take action now based on consultative will is unconscionably irresponsible.

The task of determining the exact architecture of the emerging int'l order currently rests with heads of state and governments. We therefore urge leaders at all levels to take a deliberate role in supporting a convocation of world leaders before the turn of this century.

Its purpose would be to consider how to redefine this int'l order & restructure it to meet the world's challenges.

It might be called the World Summit on Global Governance (Commission on Global Governance recommended one in 1998 and ratified by 2000)

Such a Summit might be built upon the successful U.N. conferences' experiences in the early 1990's.

These include:

World Summit for Children in 1990.

The Earth Summit in 1992.

The World Conference on Human Rights in 1993.

The International Conference on Population & Development in 1994.

The World Summit for Social Development in 1995.

The Fourth World Conference on Women in 1995.

They have established a new methodology for global deliberations on critical issues. A key to these deliberations' success has been the substantive participation of civil organizations.

Painstaking negotiations among gov't delegations about political, social and economic structural changes have been informed and shaped by the vigorous involvement of these organizations and tends to reflect grass roots needs and concerns. World leaders would be wise therefore to reach out to as wide a circle as possible to secure the goodwill and support of the world's peoples for this Summit.

The scope and degree of centralization is one which must be weighed carefully.

Some fear that int'l political institutions inevitably evolve toward excessive centralization and constitute an unwarranted layer of bureaucracy. It must be explicitly and forcefully stated that any new structures for global governance must ensure that the responsibility for decision-making remains at appropriate levels.

This is a matter of both principle & practicality.

The need for balance of centralization & decentralization is evident in specific fields.

“Small is beautiful” used for economics in the early '70's

E.F. Schumacher describes the omnipresent need for freedom of many autonomous unities and also orderly large-scale unity and coordination

“Think globally, act locally,” an environmental & community development activist slogan captures this perspective.

Striking the right balance may not always be easy.

Genuine progress can only be achieved by people themselves acting in response to the specific concerns & needs of their time and place.

This is true whether they are acting individually or collectively.

It can be argued that decentralization is the sine qua non of development.

Legitimate loyalties and national autonomy are not abolished.

The diversity of ethnical origins, climate, history, language and tradition, thought and habit are not ignored or suppressed.

A system of world gov't disclaims centralization and uniformity.

Nevertheless, the int'l order clearly requires some global direction & coordination.

It seeks to broaden the basis of society's existing foundations & remold its institutions in a manner consonant with an ever-changing world's needs.

It calls for a wider loyalty toward the aims of a unified world.

Therefore, int'l institutions should be given the authority to act only on int'l issues where:

the states cannot act on their own.

it's necessary to intervene to preserve the rights of peoples.

it's necessary to intervene to preserve the rights of member states.

All other matters should be relegated to national and local institutions.

Such a world parliament should be enabled to enact laws for the regulation of life & to satisfy the needs and adjust the relationships of all people.

This view was expressed by Shoghi Effendi in the 1930's and is shared by such scholars as Jan Tinbergen, winner of the 1969 Nobel prize for Economics.***

continued on II.L and esp. II.M

In doing so, a broad range of approaches to governance should be surveyed to potentially incorporate the wholesome aspects of each of them.

One of these time-tested models of governance is the federal system.

This might accommodate the world's diversity within a unified framework.

Federalism has proved effective in decentralizing authority and decision-making in large, complex, and heterogeneous states.

It has achieved this while maintaining a degree of overall unity and stability.

Another model worth examining is the commonwealth.

At the global level, it would place the interest of the whole ahead of any

individual nation.***these topics are delineated in II.L below

Extraordinary care must be taken in designing the architecture of the int'l order that it does not degenerate.

It should not fall into any form of despotism, oligarchy, or demagoguery corrupting the life and machinery of the constituent political institutions.

(As outlined by Shoghi Effendi, reiterated by the Bahá'í International Community in a 1955 statement to the U.N. based on Bahá'u'lláh's ideas articulated nearly a century before) eventually, a world Super- State must be evolved in whose favor all nations of the world will have ceded:

every claim to make war

certain rights to impose taxation

all rights to maintain armaments, except for maintaining internal order

This world Super-State will have to include a(n):

International Executive adequate to enforce supreme and unchallengeable authority on every recalcitrant member of the Commonwealth.

World Parliament whose members are elected by the peoples in their respective countries.

Their election would be confirmed by their respective governments.

Supreme Tribunal whose judgment has a binding effect.

This would be true even in cases where the parties concerned have not voluntarily agreed to submit their case to its consideration.

This vision of world government is the ultimate safeguard and the inevitable destiny of humankind.

However, it represents a long-term picture of a global society.

Given the pressing nature of the current state of affairs, the world requires bold, practical and actionable strategies that go beyond inspiring visions of the future.

Nevertheless, by focusing on a compelling concept, a clear and consistent direction for evolutionary change emerges from the mire of contradictory views & doctrines.

III. Defining a Role for the UN Within the Emerging International Order sec. III

A-D Summary: The UN's early use as a forum for working between antagonistic nations (esp. victors of WWII) has expanded greatly since its beginning to include more issues of int'l concern and more members (increased number of independent states) without much change in its structure

E-I Summary: The resulting disproportional criticism is unfair in light of the limited resources and authority being allocated to the UN by the members, (its nascent development), and the need to look at the UN in the larger picture (with other int'l institutions and a process building over time).

J-N Summary: The following suggestions (as all should be) are placed in the framework of being implementable in the short-term, internally consistent with

the current system, and take into account that although even radical changes may occur, the long-term potential of the system is for progressive evolution.

The U.N. has been the centerpiece of the int'l system created by the World War II victors.

During the long decades of ideological conflict between the East and the West, it served its original purpose as a forum for int'l dialogue.

Its mandate has since been expanded to include not only:
int'l standard-setting & promotion of social & economic development
but also peacekeeping operations on several continents.

The political reality of our world has also since experienced dramatic change.

At the time of UN's inception, there were some 50 independent states.

That number has grown to exceed 185.

(Humanity as a whole has become more represented in this system.)

At WW II's close, governments were the main actors on the global scene.

Today, the growing influence of organizations of civil society & multi-national corporations has created a more intricate political landscape.

Despite the growing complexity in its mission, the UN system has retained more or less the same structure designed for 50 years ago.

Unfortunately, in this dialogue, criticism has far outweighed praise.

Most criticisms of the operations of the UN are based on comparisons with the operations of leading organizations in the private sector or on inflated initial expectations.

Although some specific comparisons may be useful in improving the UN's efficiency, more general exercises of this kind are essentially unfair.

The UN lacks not only clear authority, but needed resources to act effectively in most cases.

Accusations of UN's failure are in fact indictments of the member states.

Judged in isolation from the reality in which it operates, the UN will always seem inefficient & ineffective.

However, if it is viewed as one element of a larger process of development in systems of int'l order, the bright light of analysis would shift from the UN's shortcomings and failures to shine on its victories and accomplishments.

To those with an evolutionary mindset, the early experience of the UN offers us a rich source of learning about its future role within the int'l regime.

An evolutionary mindset implies the ability to envision an institution over a long time frame:

perceiving its inherent potential for development

identifying the fundamental principles governing its growth

formulating high-impact strategies for short-term implementation

even anticipating radical discontinuities along its path

Studying the UN from this perspective unveils significant opportunities to strengthen the current system without the wholesale restructuring of its

principal institutions or the intensive re-engineering of its core processes. In fact, we submit that no proposal for UN reform can produce high impact unless its recommendations are internally consistent and direct the UN along a projected evolutionary path toward a distinctive & relevant role within the future int'l order.

We believe the combination of recommendations described herein meets these conditions and that their adoption would represent a measured but significant step toward building a more just world order (This term "new world order" was used by Bahá'u'lláh as in the Kitáb-i-Aqdas in 1860's).

Resuscitating the General Assembly sec. III.A

A-C Summary: The legislature's prestige, as the promulgator of the basis of gov't, must win the trust of its trust, esp. as distrusted as int'l gov't is.

D-G Summary: The impact of General Assembly is limited due to its inaccurate representation of people (not elected by peoples just nation-states) and its laws' dependency on each state's ratification is a hindrance to effectiveness in certain areas.

H, 1.A-D Summary: Some short-term practical measures in this direction include denying membership or adding consequences to states which violate basic rights as elections and freedom of expression.

2.A-C Summary: Continuing claims against formerly occupied territories cause war & conflict and should be addressed by a special commission (better not relegated to the World Court though even the Legislature might determine these borders) charged to study and recommend fixed borders taking into account all claims & the arbitrary nature of original allocations.

2.D-F Summary: The Commission's results could serve as an early warning for growing tensions, could help assess potential threats in preventive diplomacy, and could help the eventual establishment of permanently fixed borders, so necessary (and possible) for a genuine community of nations.

3.A-D Summary: Due to shortfalls from unpaid dues (and without interest), bureaucratic inefficiencies, annual budget shortfall, the UN is under stress and requires strong revenue generation (through a Task Force) including assessments (without representation) that are graduated (fairness) & allows individual/community contributions

4.A-C Summary: Reducing the 6 official UN languages to 1 through a specially appointed Commission would be more efficient, save money & promote a spirit of unity. Teaching an auxiliary language in every school would benefit governments, businesses & peoples.

5.A- Summary: Adopting a single currency would stabilize markets, incomes & prices among other benefits. A special Commission should be charged to establish clearly and weigh the economic benefits & political costs and hypothesize on a credible implementation plan.

The foundation for any system of governance is the rule of law.

The primary institution for promulgating law is the legislature. While the authority of local and national legislatures is generally respected, regional & int'l legislative bodies have been the subject of fear and suspicion.

Two shortcomings that hamper the General Assembly's ability to have impact. First, the current arrangement gives undue weight to state sovereignty.

This results in a curious mix of anarchy and conservatism.

In a reformed UN, the legislative branch & voting structure will need to more accurately represent the world's people as well as nation-states ('Abdu'l-Bahá, Secret of Divine Civilization)

Second, the General Assembly lacks the force of law needed in limited areas.

General Assembly resolutions are not binding unless they are separately ratified as a treaty by each member state.

This current system places state sovereignty above all other concerns.

This must give way to a system that can address interests of a single & interdependent people.

Therefore, the resolutions of the General Assembly must gradually come to possess the force of law with provisions for both enforcement and sanctions.

This must be within a limited domain of issues. (see II.I.4)

These 2 shortcomings are linked.

The majority of the world's people are suspicious of world government.

Therefore, they are unlikely to submit to an int'l institution unless it is truly more representative.

Nevertheless, in the short term, 5 practical measures are possible to strengthen the General Assembly, enhance its reputation and align it with a longer term direction.

Raising Minimum Requirements for Membership sec. III.A.1

The minimum standards for a gov't's conduct toward its people has been established by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and subsequent int'l covenants (Int'l Bill of Human Rights).

Active & intelligent participation of the vast majority of its population in its own affairs cannot occur without certain guaranteed freedoms. An unshakable commitment to:

regular & periodic elections with universal participation by secret ballot
freedom of expression and to other such human rights

Member states which violate these basic needs should be dealt consequences.

Nations seeking recognition should be denied membership until they openly espouse these standards or make recognizable efforts to move in that direction.

Appointing a Commission to Study Borders and Frontiers sec. III.A.2

Outstanding claims toward formerly occupied territories continue to cause war/conflict and highlight need for general agreements on nat'l boundaries.

Such treaties can only be arrived at after consideration of the arbitrary manner in which many nation-states were originally defined and of all

outstanding claims of nations and ethnic groups.

Instead of relegating claims to the World Court, the BIC believes it best to establish a special Int'l Commission to research all claims affecting int'l boundaries and then, after careful consideration, make recommendations for action.

Even the World Legislature itself might determine fair and just borders.

The results would serve as:

an early warning system for growing tension among civil or ethnic groups
assessment of threats in situations benefiting from early preventive diplomacy.

This research would serve the end of establishing a genuine community of nations in the long run by settling finally all disputes over disputes????.

'Abdu'l-Bahá assures that true civilization will appear and true peace & security can occur when certain sovereigns arise for peace and such a binding treaty which all should view as sacred.

Searching for New Financial Arrangements sec. III.A.3

Poor financial arrangements exist and bring the UN into a crisis management mentality. These include:

general assessments not being submitted on time.

This is compounded by the lack of authority to collect interest accrued due to the delay.

bureaucratic inefficiencies in its operations

the annual budget shortfall

Voluntary payments from member states will never be a reliable approach to financing an int'l institution.

Vigorous approaches to generating revenue must be devised to allow the UN's smooth functioning.

An expert Task Force could be appointed to begin a rigorous search for solutions.

It should keep in mind by those seeking to generate more/steady revenue:

not to assess without representation

assessments should be graduated (for fairness and justice)

mechanisms for encouraging voluntary contributions by individuals & communities should not be overlooked (e.g., philanthropy having risen 3.6% in the U.S.).

Making a Commitment to a Universal Auxiliary Language and a Common Script sec. III.A.4

The UN would derive benefit (as advocated by the Esperantists and BIC) from creating a new or choosing an existing language for use as an auxiliary language in its activities.

The UN currently uses 6 official languages

This would save money, simplify bureaucratic procedures, and promote a spirit of unity.

This would not, at this point of history, imply the imposition of a language at the expense of national and local linguistic and cultural diversity.

This doesn't envision any living language or culture declining.

A high-level Commission should be appointed to carefully study issue of int'l auxiliary language and common script.

This Commission should be composed of members from various regions and relevant fields, linguistics, economics, social sciences, education, and media.

Eventually, this will need to be taught in schools worldwide to supplement the language(s) taught.

This would facilitate the transition to a global society, bringing:

better communication among nations

reduction of administrative costs for businesses, governments and others involved in global enterprise

generally foster more cordial relations between all humanity

As a result of its adoption, Bahá'u'lláh stated, to whatever city he journeys, a man will feel as though he is entering his own home.

Investigating the Possibility of a Single International Currency sec.

III.A.5

The need to promote a global currency as a vital elements in the global economy's integration is self-evident.

Economists believe a single currency will bring benefits, including:

curbing unproductive speculation and unpredictable market swings

James Tobin (1981 Economics Nobel Prize winner states in the 1994 Human

Development Report "special contribution" that a permanent single currency:

would eliminate much if not all of the turbulence associated with huge currency speculation.

might, due to its unlikely immediate adoption, be implemented in the interim by an "int'l uniform tax" on spot transactions in foreign exchange.

promoting a leveling of incomes and prices worldwide

This (these?) would thereby result in significant savings.

However, the possibility of savings will not lead to action without:

an overwhelming body of evidence addressing the relevant concerns and doubts of skeptics

a credible implementation plan.

Therefore, a Commission should be appointed:

whose task should be to:

begin immediate exploration of the economic benefits & the political costs of a single currency (B.1 above)

hypothesize on an effective implementation approach (B.2 above) consisting of the most accomplished government leaders, academics and professionals

Developing a Meaningful Executive Function sec. III.B

A-D Summary: A collective security pact is the most important executive function; this implies the nations will, even out of self-interest, commit to the collective common good. The Security Council's inability to take effective action and the Secretariat's pressures of the member state's complex demands hampers them from fulfilling their roles.

The single most important executive function is the enforcement of a collective security pact.

Bahá'u'lláh's stated this in His letters to the kings and rulers of the world over a century ago.

They should "be united" and "rise...against "anyone among" them "that take up arms against another" as this would be "naught but manifest justice."

Collective security implies a binding covenant among nations to act in concert against threats to the collective.

The covenant's effectiveness depends on the degree to which members commit to the collective good.

This is so even if the motivation is a sense of enlightened self-interest.

Within the UN, the enforcement role is largely carried out by the Security Council, with other functions of the executive shared with the Secretariat.

Both are hampered, however, in fulfilling their mandated roles.

The Security Council suffers from an inability to take decisive action.

The Secretariat is pressured by the complex demands of the member states.

4 practical short-term measures can strengthen the UN's executive function:

Limiting the Exercise of the Veto Power sec. III.B.1

Summary A-D: The abuse of the veto power beyond its original intention of ensuring security between the Permanent Members (or unauthorized use of its forces) should at least be curbed as a transition to elimination of this power and the concept of Permanent Member in order to build confidence in the Security Council.

The UN Charter's original intention of conferring veto power among 5 Permanent Members was to prevent them from:

using force against another

requiring the use of its forces against its will

However, it has been used since the Cold War repeatedly for reasons other than regional or nat'l security.

In 1955 as today, the BIC argued in its submission on UN reform to gradually eliminate the concepts of "permanent membership" and "veto power."

This was to build confidence in the Security Council.

A transitional step might be to curb the exercise of the veto power to reflect the Charter's original intention.

Institutionalizing Ad Hoc Military Arrangements sec. III.B.2

Summary A-E : An independent & loyal Int'l Force should be created to support UN peacekeeping and Security Council resolutions under the command of the Secretary-General under the Security Council's authority, with a budget determined by the General Assembly, and with competent personnel from around the world. An immediate step could be to institutionalize the current ad hoc

military arrangements to allow rapid deployment during a crisis.

Summary F-G : A Force might encourage disarmament including those of mass destruction though a ban of these weapons should not await this.

Summary H-I : Treaty on Nuclear Weapon Nonproliferation, comprehensive test ban, further nuclear/ chemical/biological bans, conventional weapon restrictions (as indiscriminate killers as land-mines) would be commendable steps along the way to near-total disarmament (excepting for means of internal order)

An Int'l Force should be created to:

support the UN's peacekeeping operations

add credibility to the Security Council's resolutions

It should be assured to be:

loyal to the UN

independent from national considerations

Such a fully armed Force would:

be under the command and control of the Secretary-General

be under the authority of the Security Council.

have its finances determined by the General Assembly

The Secretary-General would seek to draw competent personnel from all regions of the world for such a force.

As an immediate step toward the establishment of this Force, the present system of ad hoc arrangements could be institutionalized.

Core regional forces would thereby be established for rapid deployment during a crisis.

If properly implemented, this Force would also provide a sense of security that might encourage steps toward global disarmament, thereby making possible an outright ban on all weapons of mass destruction.

Such a ban should not await the full development & deployment of such a Force, however.

Positive steps along disarmament would include:

renewing the Treaty on the Nonproliferation of Nuclear Weapons

firmly establishing a comprehensive test ban

further efforts to eliminate nuclear, chemical and/or biological weapons

stronger efforts to restrict and control conventional weapons such as land mines, which kill indiscriminately.

Furthermore, it would become gradually understood that states need only maintain armaments sufficient for their own defense and the maintenance of internal order.

This is in line with the principle of collective security.

Applying the Notion of Collective Security to Other Problems of the Global Commons sec. III.B.3

Summary A-D : The expansion of collective security to include all threats which have global dimensions (as drug trafficking, food security) should be on the

Global Summit's agenda though detailed formulations on security would not preclude the basic cause of military aggression.

The principle of collective security may now be applied to include all threats, though apparently local in nature, result from the complex breakdown of the present-day global order.

These include (but are not limited to):

int'l drug trafficking

food security

the emergence of new global pandemics (see Mahbub ul Haq, 1994, Senior Advisor to UNDP Administrator on insights to development theory & practice which include new concept on human security)

These would have to be included on the proposed Global Summit's agenda.

However, it is unlikely expansive formulations of collective security would preclude the fundamental cause of military aggression (see World Citizenship and III.B.A.)

Retaining Successful UN Institutions with Independent Executive Function sec. III.B.4

Summary A-C: Some of the successful independent organizations of the UN should maintain their independent executive function and be reinforced as part of the int'l executive.

Some of the more independent organizations within the UN family have enjoyed conspicuous success with focused but important areas of int'l concern.

These include:

UN Int'l Children's Emergency Fund

Int'l Civil Aviation Organization

Universal Postal Union

Int'l Telegraph and Communications Union

Int'l Labor Organization

World Health Organization

Generally these already have their own executive function.

Their independence should be retained & reinforced as part of the int'l executive.

A Strengthened World Court sec. III.C

Summary A-F: The judicial function is necessary to moderate other branches' powers and to articulate, promulgate, and deliver justice, the most fundamental basis of world civilization. It can alone translate our newly forming consciousness of oneness into a will to create the necessary global community structures. As the individual uses justice to discern truth, the group sees it in the interest of the group with the individual, and enables the unity in decision-making and consultative atmosphere which avoids manipulation & partisanship.

Summary G-H : What will bring this about is the recognition that society's

and the individual's interests are interconnected (we can't isolate any soul from the aggregate, ethically, socially, economically, etc.) and in this context, justice must be extended to levels from the family, neighborhood, and world.

Summary I: A future world court would have representatives of each nation (proportional to population) elected by the people and confirmed by their respective gov'ts and assigned absolute final authority.

Summary J-L: Although the world court is admirably representative, it lacks authority (only binding if agreed to be by parties before) & jurisdiction (jointly submitted matters, certain specified legal matters or if stated to be binding in a treaty or convention). Although this may change in time, there are short-term measures which can strengthen the World Court.

In any system of governance, a strong judicial function is necessary to:
moderate the other branches' powers

enunciate, promulgate, protect and deliver justice

The drive to create just societies has been among the fundamental forces in history.

Without doubt no lasting world civilization can be founded unless it is firmly grounded in the principle of justice.

Justice is the one power that can translate the dawning consciousness of humanity's oneness into a collective will through which the necessary structures of global community life can be confidently erected.

An age that sees the people of the world increasingly gaining access to information of every kind and to a diversity of ideas will find justice asserting itself as the ruling principle of successful social organization.

At the individual level, justice is that faculty of the human soul that enables each person to distinguish truth from falsehood.

In the sight of God, Bahá'u'lláh avers, justice is "the best beloved of all things"

He states that thereby each individual to see with his own eyes rather than the eyes of others, to know through his own knowledge rather than the knowledge of his neighbor or group.

At the group level, a concern for justice is the indispensable compass in collective decision-making.

This is because it is the only means by which unity of thought and action can be achieved.

Justice is the practical expression of awareness that, in the achievement of human progress, the interests of the individual and those of society are inextricably linked.

This is far from encouraging the punitive spirit that has often masqueraded under its name in past ages.

To the extent that justice becomes a guiding concern of human interaction, a consultative climate is encouraged that permits options to be examined dispassionately and appropriate courses of action selected.

In such a climate the perennial tendencies toward manipulation and partisanship are far less likely to deflect the decision-making process.

The realization that in an interdependent world, the individual's & society's interests are intertwined will gradually reinforce this conception of justice.

Justice is a thread that must be woven into the consideration of every interaction, whether at the family, neighborhood, or global level.

'Abdu'l-Bahá outlined features of a future world court:

The number of representatives should be in proportion to the population of their country.

The national assemblies (parliaments) of each country and nation should elect 2 or 3 who are:

the choicest of that nation

well informed concerning int'l laws

well informed concerning the relations between governments

aware of the essential needs of the world of humanity today

The election of these souls who are chosen by the national assembly (parliament) must be confirmed by the upper house, congress, cabinet & president or monarch.

Thereby these may be the elected ones of all the nation & the government.

All mankind will thus have a share therein, for every one of these delegates is fully representative of his nation.

When the Supreme Tribunal gives a ruling on any int'l question, there will be no pretext for objection by the plaintiff or defendant.

Their decision is absolute whether made unanimously or by majority.

In case any of the gov'ts & nations are negligent or dilatory in the execution of the Supreme Tribunal's irrefutable decision, the rest of the nations should rise up against it (as they are supporters of the Tribunal).

This is a firm foundation.

This great purpose will not be realized as it should, however, by a limited and restricted League.

The current UN system has the foundation for a strengthened World Court.

The Int'l Court of Justice created in 1945 has many positive elements.

It seeks to create a judicial panel representative of a wide range of peoples, regions, and judicial systems.

However, it lacks the authority to issue legally binding decisions except: when the states have chosen in advance to be so bound.

Without jurisdiction, the Court is powerless to administer justice.

The Court's jurisdiction is currently limited to:

cases which the parties refer to jointly by special agreement.

matters concerning a treaty or convention in force which provides for reference to the Court.

specified classes of legal disputes between States for which they have recognized the Court's jurisdiction as compulsory.

In time, the World Court's decisions may become binding & enforceable upon all states.

However, in the short term, the World Court might be strengthened by 2 other measures.

Extending the Court's Jurisdiction sec. III.C.1

Summary A-B: In addition to nations which can bring limited cases to the World Court, other UN organs should also be given this right.

In addition to the limitation on jurisdiction to a few categories of cases, only nations have standing to bring an action.

We propose that other organs of the UN should also be given the right to bring cases before the Court

Coordinating the Thematic Courts sec. III.C.2

Summary A: The World Court should act as an umbrella for existing & new thematic courts for int'l cases of certain themes as commerce, transportation, crime, env't, terrorism, drug trafficking.

A. The World Court should act as an umbrella for existing & new thematic courts, that arbitrate and adjudicate int'l cases within specific thematic domains.

Early components of a unified system can already be found in the: specialized courts for arbitration of commerce & transportation, etc. proposals of bodies as an Int'l Criminal Court and a Chamber for Environmental Matters.

Other issue areas that might need to be addressed under such a system would include courts for int'l terrorism and drug trafficking.

IV. Releasing the Power of the Individual: A Critical Challenge of the Emerging International Order sec. IV

Summary A-K: Int'l institutions must respect the purpose of government (to advance civilization) as well as the attendant requirement of engaging the public through earning their trust (directly) by their administrative structure and interactions and through activities which can promote their development (and thereby build patterns in society & understanding in themselves which can in turn support int'l solidarity and order), including human rights, advancement of women & economic and moral development.

The primary objective of governing institutions at all levels is the advancement of human civilization.

This objective is difficult to satisfy without the inspired & intelligent participation of the generality of humankind in the life & affairs of the community

(inspired participation through well-earned trust of int'l institutions (directly or through advocacy directed at influencing the nat'l level to support the int'l?)

(intelligent participation through deriving benefits of activities done by these institutions which lead to their progress (human rights, advancement of women & economic and moral development) as well as willingness in turn to support activities which are of a broad-minded and just nature (as int'l

order).)

Int'l bodies have historically remained distant from the minds & hearts of the world's people (further discouraging their participation?).

The vast majority of people have not yet developed an affinity for institutions like the UN since:

they are separated by several layers of gov't from the int'l arena

they are confused by the media's coverage of int'l news

the institutions have focused on building institutions and creating a community of nations.

Only those individuals who have had some access to the int'l arena through channels like civil organizations seem able to identify with them.

Paradoxically, int'l institutions can't develop into an effective & mature level of gov't & fulfill their primary objective to advance human civilization, if they don't recognize and nurture their relationship of mutual dependency with the people of the world (if people don't trust them and encourage their gov'ts to support them or do not develop from activities aimed at overcoming obstacles to their intelligent progress)

Such recognition would set in motion a virtuous cycle of trust & support that would accelerate the transition to a new world order.

The tasks entailed in the development of global society (including building support for institutions that will guarantee its ultimate stability?) call for capacity levels far beyond anything so far mustered.

Reaching these levels will require an enormous expansion in access to knowledge on the part of all.

Int'l institutions will succeed in eliciting and directing the potentialities latent in the peoples of the world to the extent that their exercise of authority is moderated by their obligation to:

win the confidence, respect, and genuine support of those whose actions they seek to govern

consult openly and to the fullest extent possible with all those whose interests are affected.

Individuals who become confident and respectful of these institutions will, in turn, demand that their national governments increase their support, both political and economic, for the int'l order.

In turn, the int'l institutions, with increased influence and power, will be better able to take further actions to establish a legitimate & effective world order.

Along with the measures for strengthening its structure, the UN needs to adopt initiatives that release the latent power in all people to participate in this galvanizing process (of supporting the building of int'l order (& insist on nat'l acquiescence to int'l order).

To this end, certain themes that accelerate individual & societal advancement warrant special attention.

Among them are 4 priorities so closely tied to civilization's advancement that they must be emphasized as part of the UN agenda:

promoting economic development (must have basic needs met and education to

evaluate and act intelligently for oneself and others)
protecting human rights (abuse of rights disrupts peace, progress & likelihood of fixing borders & building trust among antagonistic peoples and gov'ts)
advancing women's status (they specifically need to be educated & develop capacity for contributing their high spiritual qualities to political & professional fields impacting development in all society, and avoiding inclination to solve problems through war)
emphasizing moral development (by building discipline to ensure order & progress, and love, justice, and int'l solidarity)
(These all build intelligence, esp. moral, and capacity to support int'l solidarity and order.)(see Prosperity of Humankind for further elaboration on the significance of these 4 areas)

Promoting Economic Development sec. IV.A

Summary A-G: Int'l economic strategies have failed to stem the accelerating gap of wealth & poverty and attendant social problems as crime and disease as their focus on large-scale projects and over-centralization, unjust trade terms, corruption, exclusion of women from decision-making, failure to deliver or allocate resources (e.g., through military diversions) to the poor does not take into account spiritual factors of development (as the need for meaningful work for others' as well as one's own benefit) and mistakes development as the creation of an unsustainable consumer culture or satisfaction with mere material or prestige/political wants.

Summary H-M: As education is the best investment in development and overcoming the masses' great ignorance of ordinary affairs let alone core problems, it must be harnessed, made obligatory, especially the type which emphasizes the process for knowledge acquisition, cultivates the powers of intellect and reasoning, and infuses the student with indispensable moral qualities to enable them to meet their basic physical and spiritual needs, generate wealth, and ensure just distribution of economic resources.

Summary N-S : Redistribution of wealth must not be absolute as it creates a spiritually-destructive dependency, but rather be equitable and efficient (avoiding the other extreme of unbridled capitalism, including income tax, and making provisions for voluntary individual and institutional contributions, and tying itself to wealth creation (with moral education mentioned above as the means toward this)

Summary T: (see section 1 on Agenda 21 below)

Economic development strategies employed by the UN, the World Bank & a number of gov't's in the last 50 years, however sincerely conceived & executed, have fallen far short of aspirations.

In much of the world, the gap between the "haves" and "have-nots" has widened and is accelerating with the persistent disparity in income levels.

Social problems have not subsided (They've worsened).

In fact, crime & disease are not just on the rise.

They are also becoming endemic (constantly present) & more difficult to fight.

These failures can be traced to a number of factors. They include:

a misplaced focus on large-scale projects & bureaucratic over-centralization
unjust terms of int'l trade
a pervasive corruption that has been allowed to flourish systemically
the exclusion of women from the decision-making processes at all levels
a general inability to ensure that resources reach the poor
the diversion of development resources into military hardware

A dispassionate examination of these factors betrays a common systematic and fundamental flaw in the current paradigm for economic development: material needs are often addressed without accounting for spiritual factors & motivation.

Development should not become confused with the creation of an unsustainable consumer society.

Although the spiritual side of our nature is obscured by the day-to-day struggle for material attainment, our need for the transcendent cannot long be disregarded.

Food, drink, shelter and a degree of material comfort are essential, but human beings cannot and never will find fulfillment in these necessities.

Nor can contentment be found in the somewhat more intangible material attainments such as social recognition or political power.

Ultimately, not even intellectual achievement satisfies our deepest needs.

True prosperity encompasses spiritual as well as material well-being.

It is in the hunger for something more, something beyond ourselves, that the reality of the human spirit can be properly understood.

Thus a sustainable development paradigm must address both the spiritual aspirations of human beings and their material needs and desires. (see Prosperity of Humankind for more on this theme)

Education is the best investment in economic development.

Bahá'u'lláh illustrates this:

“Man is the supreme Talisman.”

“Lack of a proper education hath, however, deprived him of that which he doth inherently possess.”

Bahá'u'lláh likewise states:

“Regard man as a mine rich in gems of inestimable value.”

“Education can, alone, cause it to reveal its treasures, and enable mankind to benefit therefrom.”

No nation can achieve success until this paramount & fundamental concern is carried forward.

The principal reason for the decline and fall of peoples is ignorance.

Today the mass of people are uninformed even as to ordinary affairs, how much less do they grasp the core of the important problems and complex needs of the time.

(Therefore, we are in danger of downfall without promoting education.)

Education (training & culture) rescues man from nature's imperfections (wild) into the educated (domesticated).

It should therefore be obligatory.

There are 3 kinds of education, however.

Physical training & development ensures the strength and growth of the body.
intellectual education (mental training) is why schools/colleges are founded.
the third kind is of the spirit in which the Holy Spirit (Sun of Reality's
effulgence and the divine quickening spirit) alone uplifts man into the world
of moralities and divine bestowals.

Education, implies more than a process of mastering a narrow body of knowledge
or learning a set of life skills.

In truth, education, which should be a fundamental imperative of development
must also teach:

the process for knowledge acquisition

cultivate the powers of intellect and reasoning

infuse the student with indispensable moral qualities

It is this comprehensive approach to education that allows people to contribute
to the creation of wealth and encourage its just distribution.

Ultimately, the most important regulation on any economic system is the moral
regulation that begins in the hearts & minds of people.

Wealth is created when work is undertaken not simply as a means of earning a
livelihood but also as a way to contribute to society.

We hold that meaningful work is a basic need of the human soul, as important to
the proper development of the individual as nutritious food, clean water &
fresh air are to the physical body.

Gov'ts and their partners must bear in mind that material equality is neither
achievable nor desirable.

Absolute equality is a chimera.

Because of the spiritually damaging nature of dependency, schemes which focus
solely on redistributing material wealth are doomed to failure in the long run.

At various points along the way, there will nevertheless be the necessity for
the redistribution of some of the world's wealth.

Unbridled capitalism clearly does not provide the answer either.

Distribution of wealth must be approached in an efficient & equitable manner.

A tax on income is, in principle, one of the fairest and most equitable means.

There must also be a role for the voluntary sharing of wealth at the level of
the:

individual

institution

Equal opportunities for economic advancement and progress, however, must be
woven into the very fabric of the new order.

In fact, it must be intimately integrated with the process of wealth creation
(as mentioned above in importance of moral education).

The BIC proposes the following to the UN system for promoting more effective
development:

Launching a Determined Campaign to Implement Agenda 21 sec. IV.A.1

Summary A-C: As little has been done by member states to implement the laudable goals of the UN Conference on Env't & Development/Agenda 21, an effort on the scale of the Marshall Plan should be called on, using the Bretton Woods institutions to expedite nat'l implementation efforts & inspired into action by a conference on par with the Bretton Woods meetings 50 years ago, dedicated to restructuring these institutions and making resources available for implementation of local initiatives and forming basis for global economic security, and potentially coordinating the implementation of the measures made at the recent Social Summit

The plan of action formulated at the UN Conference on Env't and Development incorporated a wide range of views from civil society and principles as these. Unfortunately, however, little has been done by member states to implement the measures described in the plan.

If the Agenda 21 objectives are to be addressed and satisfied, an expanded effort, different in nature but comparable in scale and commitment to the Marshall Plan for the redevelopment of post-war Europe, might be necessary. In this case, the Bretton Woods institutions would be called upon to mount a pronounced campaign to expedite nat'l implementation efforts.

A mandate of this nature can result only from a conference, similar to the first Bretton Woods meetings 50 years ago, dedicated to a wholesale re-examination of these institutions.

The purpose of this re-examination would be to make available to the people of the world sufficient resources so that they could implement local initiatives. Moreover, the conference could also expand its agenda to address deeper issues of global economic security through the redefinition of existing institutions or the creation of new structures.

The Establishment of the Global Env't Facility (GEF) is a commendable first step in the right direction.

It may be useful in the long run, as one of the tools that could be the basis for funding Agenda 21 if:

its operational scale is enlarged

its mandate is redefined.

If successful, this new machinery could also be extended to coordinate implementation of the measures identified at the recent Social Summit.

Protecting Fundamental Human Rights sec. IV.B

Summary A-C: The importance of human rights has been elaborated and agreed upon in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and related documents, but enforcement and follow-up is limited, and not enough focus has been made on the responsibilities accompanying rights (related to moral development—see below).

Summary D-G: It is necessary for nations to respond to human rights issues as they would to military ones under global collective security though it requires much global consensus to agree upon what constitutes a flagrant and willful violation. Progress has been made in defining these human rights, falling under those primarily related to the freedom to know and investigate for oneself and

the rights derived from seeing each as a trust of the whole, and applying to all people, regardless of race, creed, gender, etc. (Steps need to be made to ensure enforcement and follow-up can occur)

Summary H: The right to be recognized by the law implies responsibility to obey and promote the law and legal system, the right to marry implies the responsibility of contributing to one's family (respect one another & provide for children's education), the right to work implies the responsibility to work to one's best ability, universal rights implies a responsibility to the whole. (individuals must develop morally—see below)

Summary I-K: Though the promotion of human rights through upholding the corresponding responsibility begins in the family, the rights need protection by int'l institutions (the macro family) and 3 urgent actions follow toward this end

Over the 5 decades since the UN was founded, an understanding has emerged that human rights must be recognized & protected internationally if:

peace, social progress and economic prosperity are to be established.

The foundation for int'l agreement on the nature of human rights is the all-important Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

This was adopted in 1948.

It was elaborated on in 2 int'l covenants:

Int'l Covenant on Civil and Political Rights

the Int'l Covenant on Social, Economic and Cultural Rights.

In addition, some 75 other conventions and declarations identify & promote: the rights of women and children

the right to freedom of worship

the right to development

many others

The current UN human rights regime has 2 major shortcomings:

limited means for enforcement and follow-up

too little emphasis on the responsibilities that accompany all rights

Human rights enforcement at the int'l level needs to be handled in a manner similar to the treatment of military aggression under a collective security regime.

A violation in one state must be considered the concern of all.

Enforcement mechanisms must provide for a unified response on the part of the entire int'l community.

The question of when and how to intervene to protect human rights is more difficult to answer.

Vigorous enforcement will require a high degree of global consensus on what constitutes a flagrant and willful violation.

Important steps toward global consensus were taken during the process leading up to the 1993 World Conference on Human Rights. They:

affirmed unequivocally that human rights are universal, indivisible and interdependent

ended the long-standing debate about the relative importance of civil and

political rights as compared to social, economic and cultural rights.

Conference resolutions also confirmed that human rights

must be applied irrespective of differences of:

racial background

ethnic origin

religious belief

nat'l identity

encompass the equality of women and men

include for all individuals worldwide the same rights to: (see Prosperity of Humankind, par. 22-28 for further elaboration)

freedom of investigation, information and religious practice (based on the freedom to know)

basic necessities such as food, shelter, and health care (based on the

principle of each member of humanity being a trust of the whole) (would also

include protection of cultural identity (including from materialistic

influences), so vital to diversity so long as it is not manipulated for

partisan political ends

Beyond the need to build consensus and strengthen enforcement of human rights, it is important to establish the greater understanding that to each right is attached a corresponding responsibility.

The right to be recognized as a person before the law, implies the responsibility to obey the law, make the laws and the legal system more just

In the socio-economic realm, the right to marry carries with it the responsibility to support the family unit, to educate one's children and to treat all family members with respect.

The right to work cannot be divorced from the responsibility to perform one's duties to the best of one's ability.

In the broadest sense, the notion of "universal" human rights implies a responsibility to humanity as a whole.

The beginning of respect for human rights is in the family (see G.2 above)

A family is a nation in miniature, related to its other members.

Enlarging the circle of these micro-nations gives humanity as a whole.

Strife and dissension destroy a family and prevent its progress as do nations' destruction.

In fact, the former causes destruction of the latter.

Ultimately, while it is up to the individual to fulfill the responsibility in each area, it is up to int'l institutions to protect the related human right.

We propose 3 measures for immediate action.

Strengthening the Machinery of the UN for Monitoring, Implementation and Follow- Up sec. IV.B.1

Summary A-B: As the UN machinery for monitoring, implementing, and following-up gov't human rights compliance is inadequate, the resources of the Centre for Human Rights must be dramatically increased.

The UN machinery for monitoring, implementing and following-up gov't

compliance with int'l covenants is inadequate.

The Centre for Human Rights consists of a very small professional staff struggling to support efforts to monitor the compliance by countries of all treaties they have ratified.

The resources assigned to this Centre must be dramatically increased if it is to discharge its duties properly.

Encouraging Universal Ratification of International Conventions on Human Rights sec. IV.B.2

Summary A-C: The Secretary-General and UN bodies should encourage member states to act on ratifying int'l conventions on human rights, and the General Assembly might set a demanding timeline for universal ratification.

Ratifying the int'l conventions on human rights creates an obligation for member states, albeit not a practically enforceable one.

Therefore, the Secretary-General and all bodies of the UN might consider every opportunity to encourage member states to act on this issue.

In fact, a demanding timeline for universal ratification may be an inspiring goal to be set by the General Assembly.

Assuring Respect for the Monitoring Organs of the UN Involved in Human Rights sec. IV.B.3

Summary A-B: Given the serious nature of human rights monitoring, the UN should ensure that the structure, processes, and situations of these agencies are free of compromising situations such as membership of states which have not yet ratified int'l conventions on human rights (except those with supportive constitutions but internal political difficulties preventing immediate ratification) and those which are under scrutiny for gross violations in order to save the UN from embarrassment (and potentially unjust influence?) despite their continued ability to participate fully in the proceedings.

Since the mandate of the human rights monitoring agencies is of a very serious nature, the UN must be:

particularly mindful of perceptions created by:

the structure of these agencies

processes of these agencies

equally deliberate in acting to resolve compromising situations

It would be prudent to explore during the nomination process the qualifications of member states in visible positions in order to:

exclude from election to membership on the Commission on Human Rights and other monitoring agencies, any member states that have not yet ratified the int'l conventions

These member states would still be able to fully participate in deliberations.

However, it would protect the UN from a potentially embarrassing and compromising situation.

A single exception is warranted to the above rule.

Member states, not under the UN's scrutiny, have sufficient protection for

fundamental human rights within their constitutions, but which have not been able to complete the ratification process because of internal political reasons, should not be barred from election to visible positions.

exclude member states that have ratified the int'l conventions but are under scrutiny for gross human rights violations from election to the offices of conferences and other meetings of the Commission on Human Rights.

This will prevent a widespread perception of the proceedings as a mockery.

Advancing the Status of Women sec. IV.C

Summary A-F: The equality of women needs to be internalized and implemented by institutions, composed mainly of men, out of the awareness and appreciation that women's full inclusion will destroy the foundations of war and ensure a sustainable world civilization. They must seek out & weave women's participation into the fabric of society to create a more peaceful, balanced, just and prosperous civilization including the values of mental alertness, intuition, love and service in which women are strong.

Summary G-K: The biological differences between the sexes should not be seen as a basis for inequality or disunity but rather as complementarity that values & rewards the role of women as mothers while recognizing that this role does not contradict (may enhance) their aptitude for leadership or intellectual, scientific, or creative capacity.

Summary L-M: The following perspectives on critical areas are foundational to the recommendations that follow.

Summary N-P: Violence toward girls and women, a most blatant and widespread offense, must be eradicated through alteration of attitudes (some traditionally entrenched) which view women as inferior or burdens (making them targets of anger & frustration) into a new social conscience where mere condescension, let alone violence, will be shunned.

Summary Q-T: If the family is seen as the building block of society, and equality is established therein, equality will become a reality at all levels.

Summary U-V: Education must be achieved for all, especially for women, the first educators of future generations (and traditionally deprived and thereby excluded from other discourse?) as their progress is clearly associated with social development, the eradication of poverty, and the advancement of community.

Summary W-X: The differences in men and women should be seen as evidence of necessity to work together in their inherent complementarity for meeting their potentials to bring about the progress of civilization & perpetuation of the race.

Summary A'-C': The global dialogue on the role of men & women in society must include the historical reasons for oppression of women (force has been of use) and the new social, political and spiritual realities transforming our civilization. It should begin with a view which recognizes women's and men's inextricable co-development.

Summary D': The following 3 specific measures are also important. The creation of a peaceful and sustainable world civilization will be

impossible without the full participation of women in every arena of human activity.

As 'Abdu'l-Bahá states, the establishment of equality (as the abrogation of all differences and distinction) will destroy the foundations of war (discord & strife).

Women will never be willing to sanction war.

Mothers will not give their sons as sacrifice upon the battlefield after 20 years of anxiety and loving devotion rearing them from infancy.

This is true no matter what the cause.

While this proposition is increasingly supported, there is a marked difference between intellectual acceptance and its implementation.

It is time for the institutions of the world, composed mainly of men, to use their influence to promote the systematic inclusion of women.

This should be done, not out of condescension or presumed self-sacrifice, but as an act motivated by the belief that the contributions of women are required for society to progress.

As 'Abdu'l-Bahá states, humanity consists of two parts or members which require equal strength to establish humanity's oneness & joy.

Only as women's contributions are valued will they be sought out and woven into society's fabric.

The result will be a more peaceful, balanced, just and prosperous civilization.

The world in the past has been ruled by force.

Man has dominated by reason of his more forceful & aggressive qualities of body & mind.

Force is losing weight while mental alertness, intuition, and the spiritual qualities of love and service, in which woman is strong, are gaining ascendancy.

Hence the new age will be an age less masculine, and more balanced with the feminine ideals.

To speak more exactly, it will be an age in which the masculine and feminine elements of civilization will be more evenly balanced.

The obvious biological differences between the sexes need not be a cause for inequality or disunity.

Rather, they are an aspect of complementarity.

If the role of women as mothers is properly valued, their work in nurturing and educating children will be respected and properly rewarded.

It should also be acknowledged that the child-bearing role does:

not diminish one's aptitude for leadership

not undermine one's intellectual, scientific or creative capacity.

Indeed, it may be an enhancement.

Progress on a few critical fronts would have the greatest impact on the advancement of women.

The following perspectives are foundational to the recommendations which follow.

First and foremost, violence against women and girls, one of the most blatant &

widespread abuses of human rights, must be eradicated.

Violence has been a fact of life for many women throughout the world, regardless of race, class, or educational background.

In many societies, traditional beliefs that women are inferior or a burden make them easy targets of anger and frustration.

Even strong legal remedies and enforcement mechanisms will have little effect until they are supported by a transformation in the attitudes of men.

Women will not be safe until a new social conscience takes hold, which will make the mere expression of condescending attitudes towards women, let alone any form of physical violence, a cause for deep shame.

Second, the family remains the basic building block of society.

Thus behaviors observed & learned there will be projected onto interactions at all other societal levels.

Therefore, the members of the institution of the family must be transformed so that the principle of equality of women and men is internalized.

Further, if the bonds of love and unity cement family relationships, the impact will

reach beyond its borders

affect society as a whole

Third, while the overall goal of any society must be to educate all its members, at this stage in human history the greatest need is to educate women and girls.

This principle has been a long-standing one in the Bahá'í teachings.

In 1912, 'Abdu'l-Bahá said that men and women are equal in the sight of God.

He said the only difference (inferiority) now between them is due to education/training.

Her education should be given even greater priority than men as they are the mothers, rearers, and first teachers of the race.

They should also follow the same course of education and curriculum thereby promoting unity of the sexes.

For over 20 years, studies have consistently documented that, of all possible investments, educating women & girls pays the highest overall dividends in: social development

the eradication of poverty

the advancement of community.

Fourth, the global dialogue on the role of men and women must promote recognition of the intrinsic complementarity of the 2 sexes.

For the differences between them are a natural assertion of the necessity of women & men to work together to:

bring to fruition their potentialities for advancing civilization

perpetuate the human race

Such differences are inherent in the interactive character of their common humanity.

This dialogue needs to:

consider the historical forces which have led to the oppression of women
examine the new social, political & spiritual realities which are now
transforming civilization.

As a starting point for this dialogue we offer this analogy from the Bahá'í
Writings:

“The world of humanity has two wings—one is women and the other men. Not
until both wings are equally developed can the bird fly. Should one wing remain
weak, flight is impossible.”

In addition, we support the following 3 specific measures.

Increasing the Participation of Women in Member State Delegations sec.
IV.C.1

Summary A: Member states should be encouraged to appoint more women to
ambassadorial or similar diplomatic positions.

Member states should be encouraged to appoint an increased number of women to
ambassadorial or similar diplomatic positions.

Encouraging Universal Ratification of International Conventions that Protect
Women's Rights and Improve Their Status sec. IV.C.2

Summary A-B: As with conventions on human rights, the Secretary-General and UN
bodies should encourage member states to ratify conventions on women's rights
and advancement.

The Secretary-General and all UN bodies should consider every opportunity to
encourage member states to ratify conventions & protocols that:

protect women's rights

seek their advancement

This is as the case with the int'l conventions on human rights.

Planning Ahead for Implementation of the Beijing Platform of Action sec.
IV.C.3

Summary A-C: To avoid the ineffective implementation of the bold and
imaginative declaration at Nairobi, the Platform of Action from the Beijing
conference should be enforced by a monitoring system which gives status reports
on adopted measures' implementation and annually update the General Assembly
on the top and bottom 20 states complying to the Platform.

The Forward-Looking Strategies declaration adopted at the Nairobi conference
was highly bold & imaginative, yet its implementation was rather ineffective.

We believe that a lesson should be learned from this unfortunate experience.

Deliberate plans should be put into place to ensure that the Platform of Action
emerging from the Beijing conference does not meet a similar fate.

We propose that a monitoring system be established to:

prepare status reports on the implementation of adopted measures

make presentations to the General Assembly annually

They should highlight the top 20 and bottom 20 member states in terms of

compliance therein.

Emphasizing Moral Development sec. IV.D

Summary A-B: Religion, in the true sense of the word, has historically been largely responsible for the integration of people into larger groups and bringing true civilization.

Summary C-F: Although promotion of values may be controversial in this age of humanistic relativism, there are a common set of values across religions (and cultures), as evident in the “Towards a Global Ethic,” which constitute a framework for moral development and human interactions. These include unity and cooperation, guidelines for responsible behavior, and the Golden Rule to treat others as we would be treated.

The process of integrating human beings into larger and larger groups, although influenced by culture and geography, has been driven largely by religion. Religion is the most powerful agent for changing human attitudes & behavior. By religion, however, we mean the essential foundation or reality of religion. The dogmas and blind imitations which have gradually encrusted it and which are the cause of its decline and effacement are not intended.

In ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s words: “Material civilization is like a body.”

“No matter how infinitely graceful, elegant and beautiful it may be, it is dead.”

“Divine civilization is like the spirit, and the body gets its life from the spirit....”

“Without the spirit the world of mankind is lifeless.”

The concept of promoting specific morals or values may be controversial, especially in this age of humanistic relativism.

Nevertheless, we firmly believe there exists a common set of values that have been obscured from recognition by those who exaggerate minor differences in religious or cultural practice for political purposes.

This is evident by the interfaith declaration “Towards a Global Ethic”

This was produced by an assembly of religious and spiritual leaders from virtually every major world religion and spiritual movement at the 1993 Parliament of the World’s Religions in Chicago.

These foundation virtues, taught by all spiritual communities, constitute a basic framework for moral development.

Reflection on the commonalities inherent in the great religious and moral systems of the world reveals that each one:

espouses unity, cooperation and harmony among people

establishes guidelines for responsible behavior

supports the development of virtues which are the foundation for trust-based and principled interactions.

The Golden Rule, the teaching that we should treat others as we ourselves would wish to be treated is variously repeated in all the great religions:

These include Buddhism, Zoroastrianism, Judaism, Hinduism, Christianity, Islám, Taoism, Confucianism, and the Bahá’í Faith.

Promoting the Development of Curricula for Moral Education in Schools sec. IV.D.1

Summary A.1: A universal campaign should be instituted to promote moral development among local initiatives around the world through incorporation of a moral dimension in children's education.

Summary A.2: The holding of conferences, publishing of materials, etc. can be used to support this solid investment in the future.

Summary A.3: It can begin with a few simple precepts as values of honesty and altruism and service as the all-encompassing foundation of our progress.

Summary B-C: Religion and religious communities should not be barred in the name of the separation of church and state but should be drawn in as partners in this process of individual empowerment which will change interpersonal relations in society regardless of the person's background.

We advocate a universal campaign to promote moral development.

Simply put, this campaign should encourage and assist local initiatives all over the world to incorporate a moral dimension into the education of children.

It may necessitate the holding of conferences, the publication of relevant materials and many other supportive activities.

All of these represent a solid investment in a future generation.

This campaign for moral development may begin with a few simple precepts. For example:

Rectitude of conduct, trustworthiness, and honesty are the foundation for stability and progress.

Altruism should guide all human endeavor.

This should be such that sincerity and respect for the rights of others become an integral part of every individual's actions.

Service to humanity is the true source of happiness, honor & meaning in life.

The campaign will be successful only to the extent that the force of religion is relied upon in the effort.

The doctrine of the separation of church and state should not be used as a shield to block this salutary influence.

Specifically, religious communities will have to be drawn in as collaborative partners in this important initiative.

As it proceeds, this campaign will accelerate a process of individual empowerment that will transform the way in which people interact with their society.

This will be true regardless of their economic class, social standing, or ethnic, racial or religious background.

V. A Turning Point for All Nations: A Call to World Leaders sec. V

Summary A-B: We are at a turning point in the progress of nations leading to an int'l community with int'l institutions strong enough to better govern.

Summary C-F: Bahá'u'lláh's teachings of one God, religion, and race are appropriate to the reality He announced that humanity was coming of age and could increasingly recognize its destiny in building a greater material and

moral/spiritual global civilization as the new world order would cast aside the old to make way for the new.

Summary G-K: He therefore gave world leaders and humanity in general the task of taking on a world- embracing vision, motivated by a desire to serve all out of a sense of responsibility not out of asserting control. It requires the qualities of vision, ethics, courage, giving credible, sustained leadership that is caring, proactive, inspired, sees the long-term, and looks out for all humanity.

Summary L: This is particularly essential for int'l gov't leaders who can help build trust and therefore the int'l order by their integrity, honesty, humility, sincerity, actions guided by principles and a world-embracing view.

We have reached a turning point in the progress of nations.

(See section 0 for text, summary & restated summary of quote from Shoghi Effendi)

Over a century ago, Bahá'u'lláh taught that:

there is but one God

there is only one human race

all the world's religions represent stages in the revelation of God's will and purpose for humanity.

Bahá'u'lláh announced the arrival of the time, foretold in all of the world's scriptures, when humanity would at last witness the uniting of all peoples into a peaceful and integrated society.

He said that human destiny lies:

not merely in the creation of a materially prosperous society

but also in the construction of a global civilization where individuals are encouraged to act as moral beings who:

understand their true nature

are able to progress toward a greater fulfillment that no degree of material bounty alone can provide.

Bahá'u'lláh was also among the first to invoke the phrase "new world order" to describe the momentous changes in the political, social & religious life of the world.

"The signs of impending convulsions and chaos can now be discerned, inasmuch as the prevailing Order appeareth to be lamentably defective"

"Soon will the present-day order be rolled up and a new one spread out in its stead."

To this end, He laid a charge on the leaders and members of society alike.

"It is not for him to pride himself who loveth his own country, but rather for him who loveth the whole world."

"The earth is but one country and mankind its citizens."

Above all else, leaders for the next generation must:

be motivated by a sincere desire to serve the entire community

understand that leadership is a responsibility.

It is not a path to privilege.

For too long, leadership has been understood, by both leaders and followers, as

the assertion of control over others.

Indeed, this age demands a new definition of leadership and a new type of leader.

The Commission on Global Governance writes (emphasis added):

“As the world faces the need for enlightened responses to the challenges that arise on the eve of the new century, we are concerned at the lack of leadership over a wide spectrum of human affairs.

At nat’l regional, and int’l levels, within communities and in int’l organizations, in gov’ts and in non-governmental bodies, the world needs credible and sustained leadership.

“It needs leadership that is”:

“proactive, not simply reactive,”

“that is inspired, not simply functional,”

“that looks to the longer term and future generations for whom the present is held in trust.”

“It needs leaders”:

“made strong by vision,”

“sustained by ethics,”

“and revealed by political courage”

“that looks beyond the next election.”

“This cannot be leadership confined within domestic walls. It must”:

“reach beyond country, race, religion, culture, language, life-style.”

“embrace a wider human constituency,”

“be infused with a sense of”:

“caring for others,”

“responsibility to the global neighborhood.”

This is especially true in the int’l arena.

In order to establish a sense of trust, win the confidence, and inculcate a fond affinity in the hearts of the world’s people for institutions of the int’l order, these leaders will have to reflect on their own actions.

Through an unblemished record of personal integrity, they must help restore confidence and trust in government.

They must embody the characteristics of honesty, humility and sincerity of purpose in seeking the truth of a situation.

They must be committed to and guided by principles, thereby acting in the best long-term interests of humanity as a whole.

“Let your vision be world-embracing, rather than confined to your own selves,” Bahá’u’lláh wrote.

“Do not busy yourselves in your own concerns; let your thoughts be fixed upon”:

“that which will rehabilitate the fortunes of mankind and”

“sanctify the hearts and souls of men.” (Footnotes, where thought relevant, may be included within the outline above in the area corresponding to where the footnote was referenced; click here to see the Turning Point For All Nations endnotes)

