

GLOBAL PEACE INITIATIVE OF WOMEN

Full Text of Concluding Statement of the G20 Forum of Religious and Spiritual Leaders *Seoul, South Korea, 12 November 2010*

We, a group of religious and spiritual leaders from around the world, representing the Buddhist, Christian, Hindu, Humanist, Jewish, Muslim, Sikh and Shinto faiths and philosophies, have gathered here in Seoul during the G20 Summit to help re-envision prosperity in response to the extreme dangers facing the world community in all its forms of life.

We recognise the competing national interests that make it difficult for the G20 leaders to come to agreement. Still, at an hour of great peril facing humanity and the Earth, these matters remain to be faced decisively:

- More inclusive economic policies benefitting all levels of society and all nations of the world;
- Concrete steps to respect and protect Nature while guiding economic development; and,
- Recognition in economic policies that “on a limited Earth there cannot be unlimited growth,” and work toward a more considered form of growth with greater concern for the long term, many-generational future.

We are committed to work together with leaders and communities to foster a new model of development, one that honors the beauty of our planet, protects its life-sustaining forces and understands its interdependence and its fragility. We are committed to a new vision of prosperity, one that embodies the spiritual qualities of sharing and mindful consumption, a prosperity that is shared and inclusive, and not resulting in exploitation of people and planet.

This new prosperity must be applied to all communities of life on the planet – plant, animal and human – and be measured by the fair sharing of the resources across these communities, by the health of our forests and mountains, the purity of our water, soil, and air and the wellbeing of our social fabric, including such aspects as the availability and quality of education, health, and gender equity. We believe that a culture of sharing, mutuality, and service will enable humanity and the Earth to recover and thrive. We believe that seeking a balance of material and spiritual growth, outer and inner development, is essential to the effective pursuit of happiness.

We sincerely believe that humanity has the spiritual strength and moral courage to take the bold decisions necessary to resolve this crisis in a positive and life affirming way and honouring the next generations. We ask that the world community respond with substance and in time to avert the looming prospect of great suffering and destruction, and we call upon all leaders and all people to take responsibility for this crisis and take urgent steps towards its resolution.

We believe that the new prosperity and a new economic and social framework underlying it should incorporate the following universal principles:

- Cooperation, Interdependence, Sharing, Mutuality, Oneness
- Service, Respect, Equality, Compassion
- Beauty, Harmony
- Wisdom, Foresight

In light of our deep concerns for the wellbeing of humanity, the Earth and all life on it, we respectfully ask the leaders of the G20 nations to take the following actions:

- To exert moral leadership, acting boldly, with courage, and in light of universal principles
- To balance national self-interest with the needs of the global community

- In this time of limited resources, to begin to redirect money from military use and weapons purchases to human services such as education and health, particularly preventative health care, and to restoration of the Earth's ecosystem.
- To balance a globalized economy with a new commitment to localisation of economic activity, the encouragement of local entrepreneurship and the development of local sustainable agriculture, including organic food
- To actively encourage the sharing and use of appropriate and non-polluting technologies which save energy and water
- To prohibit the practices of charging interest on interest, the issuing of irresponsible financial instruments, speculative investments and speculative currency practices
- To expand the measures used to assess the nation's wellbeing – to add to economic measures other measures of individual, social and environmental wellbeing
- To work to strengthen the bonds of family and community

In light of our deep concerns for the wellbeing of humanity, the Earth and all life on it, we respectfully ask all people, especially members of religious and spiritual communities, to take the following actions:

- To pursue contemplative practices such as meditation and prayer for the awakening of their highest potential and for the healing of the world crisis
- To seek to find their highest purpose in life
- To practice mindful consumption, using the following guidelines: to take only as you need, to give more than you take, to offer service, and to consider others' needs; to learn to recognize and resist impulsive desires
- To reduce consumption of meat and fish due to the negative effects on the environment
- To support local entrepreneurship, choose local products and select items with less packaging
- To speak up to governments and other bodies in order to encourage ethical, egalitarian and sustainable practices
- To choose intentional simplicity in lifestyle in order to help the Earth and all its communities, including the human community, to recover from this crisis
- To nurture and deepen family and community bonds

We understand that these changes will take time and effort. However, the Earth's systems and the economic and social systems do not have much time before more extensive destruction sets in. Therefore, we know that we must begin right away with decisive, collaborative, compassionate and responsible action.

We will support this work and the courageous leaders, individuals and communities who undertake it with our deepest inner and outer action. Let us open our hearts and minds to a new vision of prosperity for the good of all beings.

Re-Envisioning Prosperity: A Spiritual Forum during the G20 Summit
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