

World Council for the Future

A voice for shared global values and future generations

An unprecedented initiative to set up a Council to speak for the future of the world has been launched in London. Supported by influential individuals, organisations and parliamentarians from around the globe, the World Future Council is designed to act as a voice for our shared global values and for future generations.

Founder and President, Jakob von Uexkull, who was a former Member of the European Parliament, says: "We need to tell a different human story, for the present one can have no happy end. We need to understand the processes we have unleashed and rediscover our place in the world.

"Today humanity has unprecedented powers to damage the planet and affect the well-being of present and future generations, yet we seem powerless to address both the global and long-term impacts of our actions.

"Despite the growing clamour for change, solutions that are being proposed are rarely implemented, leaving many people feeling helpless, angry and disempowered. The huge gap between our deeper values and current policies now threatens the legitimacy of our democratic system, which currently offers only superficial, short-term alternatives. Our world needs a clear and sustained voice speaking up for the values of global citizens."

The proposed Council "will challenge the short-term commercial thinking that currently has the power of veto over global decision-making." It will have a global membership of wise thinkers, practical pioneers and young leaders, who will identify the gap between current practices and those measures necessary to assure an equitable and sustainable world.

As an institution which represents humanity's common values, the Council will provide an ongoing forum for discussion and debate designed to lead to action. It will set up 24 international commissions on crucial issues such as democracy, sustainability, justice, health and education. These will work closely with MPs in national parliaments.

Herbert Girardet, co-author with Jakob von Uexkull of *Creating the World Future Council*, says: "The gap between what we need to do about the key issues of our time – environmental destruction, climate change, poverty, injustice, lack of action on sustainability – and what we are actually doing in reality, is growing rather than closing. The World Future Council intends to challenge civil society, governments and the UN to a new sense of urgency."

Professor Girardet envisaged the development of local and regional Future Councils. He said: "People working at the local level are increasingly keen to join forces across the globe." Steps are already underway to set up a London Future Council.

As Jakob von Uexkull says: "The most serious threat to us all today is not the impossible continuation of 'business as usual'. It is the collapse of our societies as our leaders lose their credibility and are replaced by preachers of intolerance and obscurantism.

"We may, of course, decide to trust the authors of our current human story, that their knowledge will grow fast enough to deal with the consequences of their actions. Alternatively, we can begin to write the new story of the world as a family, not a business opportunity."

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