POLITICAL INFLUENCE ON HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENT POLICIES
18th International Conference on Health and Environment: Global Partners for Global Solutions

UNITED NATIONS HEADQUARTERS, April 15-16, 2009

H.E. Mr. Ban Ki-moon
The Secretary-General of the United Nations

Written Message to 18th International Conference on Health and Environment

It is a pleasure to greet all the participants in this international conference.

You gather to mark 23 years since the Chernobyl disaster. In the immediate aftermath of the tragedy, our minds were on the lives lost and damaged, and on the environmental impact. But the incident also imposed a terrible long-term health burden. In the three countries surrounding epicenter of the incident, more than 5,000 additional thyroid cancers in children can be attributed to radiation from Chernobyl.

Such fallout caused support for nuclear power to plummet, at both the popular and political levels. Yet now, with the threat of climate change and the search for low- or no-carbon energy sources, nuclear power is again in the headlines. It is clear that viable alternatives to fossil fuels are needed - and soon. We must weigh carefully all considerations, from science to public health and safety, taking into account the full range of benefits and risks involved. This conference and its subject matter are, therefore, very timely indeed.

Chernobyl led to revised safety standards in all operating nuclear power plants. The international community also learned that nuclear emergencies require the highest level of coordination among a wide range of agencies and actors. We saw that we do indeed need global partners for global solutions.

We are also beginning to learn more about alternative sources of energy. Biofuels, for example, which seemed so attractive at first, may have important negative consequences, such as diminished food security, since land given over to biofuels is land taken out of food production.

In developing policy for health and the environment, we should be driven not only by the goal of avoiding harm to human health, vital as that objective is. We should go further and adopt environmental policies that promote health benefits. We have done this successfully in the architecture of new cities. We should do the same as we tackle the inter-related challenges of climate change, public health, food security and growing energy demands.

I thank the Government of Ukraine and all others involved in making this conference possible. Please accept my best wishes for the success of your deliberations.
Your Excellencies, Distinguished Delegates, Colleagues, Students, Ladies and Gentlemen:

World Information Transfer (WIT) is very proud to be convening its 18th International Conference on Health and Environment: Global Partners for Global Solutions. Our Conferences highlight our work with our global partners in identifying global problems of human health caused by degrading natural resources. Working together, we seek global solutions which will ultimately benefit future generations. Over the years our partners have included member states of the United Nations, in particular the Government of Ukraine. The Government of Poland has recognized the importance of our Conference, and the Government of Japan demonstrated its support for four Conferences on the topics of nuclear power and climate change. We recognize the UN intergovernmental agencies, notably WHO, and the departments and divisions of the United Nations, in particular the Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA) Division for Sustainable Development (DSD), UNAIDS, and UN-NGLS, the UN Non-Governmental Liaison Service. Our past partners in the United Nations system include the UN Environment Program, UN Development Program, UNICEF, UN Department of Public Information, and the DESA NGO Section.

Today we give thanks to the following UN Permanent Missions of Belarus and Mexico for lending their name in support of our 18th Conference.

WIT’s overall purpose in convening 18 Annual Conferences on Health and Environment has been to increase global health security by communicating accurate, relevant information. We chose the United Nations for the Conference venue because we recognized that health issues crossed national boundaries and thus required international attention. Beginning with the Rio Summit in 1992, we created a forum to convey these issues at the major UN Summits in the 1990’s, the UN ECOSOC Commissions, notably the Commission on Sustainable Development, and our annual conference starting in 1991. As we have said since Rio, we see securing human health as the bottom line of Sustainable Development.

By focusing on scientifically grounded information WIT works to influence government and non-governmental stakeholders. Greater knowledge about the interrelationships between health and a deteriorating environment has led to signed treaties among nations. This process needs to continue unimpeded.

The greatest impediment to global public health is lack of recognition of public health threats by governments. The greatest obstacle is fear: fear of exposure, fear of consequences, fear of loss of control. The prevalence of corruption and lack of transparency by governments, industry and some civil society actors, foster this fear and prevent the establishment of a global health security network beneficial to all humanity now and in the future.

The Chornobyl nuclear disaster and its ongoing affects to human health exemplify the long lasting consequences of fear based decisions. For us, Chornobyl represents the full range of human health issues related to environmental degradation caused by man. Chornobyl also symbolizes the need for accurate information and reliable communication in safeguarding human health when a disaster occurs.

We continue to see how easy it is to forget about the worst nuclear disaster the world has ever known. We have been told that our Conferences contribute to keeping the “Chornobyl issue” on the international agenda. We would like to think that our work also adds to fair minded dialogue on whether nuclear energy is a safe alternative to fossil fuels.

We rely on the findings of science and differentiate this knowledge from the sensational. Stories of grotesque birth defects caused by Chornobyl fallout command a lot of attention but have nothing to do with the facts of radiation exposure. Data on the exclusion zone suggest the area is either highly toxic or safe for tourism. Unfortunately, the real facts about the actual importance of the leaking sarcophagus covering reactor #4, take a back seat to the continuing Science Fiction surrounding Chornobyl. Containing the leaking reactor remains the most significant human health issue to be resolved in the long aftermath of Chornobyl. Ongoing distractions suggest the politics of fear at work.

It takes courageous individuals to stand against the politics of fear. When knowing the truth might cause harm, especially to loved ones, it is easy to understand why so many people prefer to remain ignorant. Sometimes it takes a critical mass to oust the purveyors of fear. Behind
the groundwork are the courageous individuals whose efforts inspire others and produce beneficial change.

Within the framework of sustainable development, Kenyan Nobel Peace Prize winner Wangari Maathai and her Green Belt movement come to mind. Her tree-planting initiatives in Africa, empowered women farmers to conserve agricultural lands and emphasized the truth about the impact of deforestation. All over the world, similar struggles occur with local heroes, who go unrecognized. A key reason to bring out such stories is to embolden the next generation to secure a safer and healthier planet. These stories educate for sustainable development.

Equally important are the lessons learned from silence and inaction. We regularly point out how afraid most people are to change their conditions. People learn fear. It is the great enabler of harmful traditions which destroy the earth and its inhabitants. Telling stories about the destructive power of fear can also embolden others, especially young people, to find out the truth and act on it.

This point is well illustrated by the little known events that burdened the rich farm lands of Ukraine. This event, known as Holodomor, was the result of the collectivization of farm land under the Soviet regime. Recently released historical records bring to light new information about collectivization in Ukraine, where an estimated 15 million land owners and agricultural workers were eliminated by starvation in less than three years. Between 1931-33, under Stalin’s harsh rule, 33% of the population of Ukraine died.

Holodomor is the Ukrainian word for forced famine. Documents from the former Soviet archives suggest that Stalin willfully forced farm owners and workers to fulfill grain quotas to the state before farmers themselves could reap their own harvests. The Soviet government’s demand for grain practically guaranteed that the state took entire harvests, leaving nothing to eat for farmers and their families. Western European nations suffering from poor harvests bought the grain grown in Ukraine.

Whether Stalin intentionally caused the Ukrainian famine remains controversial. Some hold the view that Stalin sought punishment for a politically unruly Ukraine, others hold to the view that the slow murder by starvation fulfilled a long standing desire for a “final solution” to the political and cultural “problem” of Ukrainian nationalism.

The results of the Holodomor were Soviet and Russian domination of highly fertile agricultural lands in Ukraine. The stories of the heroes who survived Holodomor are just coming to light. Today, we have with us the daughter of a survivor of Holodomor, Prof. Hanna Kapustyan. Next month, during the UN Commission on Sustainable Development, she will participate in our panel addressing the politics of food security. The stories of survivors provide the rest of us with an opportunity to witness the power of silence over these past 75 years.

President Barack Obama said, “Good policies make good politics.” We would all benefit if our leaders put these words into practice. However, reality shows us that gaining and then holding onto power tends to redefine that high minded idea.

We have invited experts from many areas of sustainable development to share their knowledge with you. We hope that our Conference will embolden you to challenge your current world from the perspective of science and truth. We hope that you will have the courage, honesty and integrity to build a better world.

Thank you.

H. E. Mr. Volodymyr Holosha
Deputy Minister of Emergency of the Government of Ukraine

Twenty-three years ago, the fire of the Chornobyl catastrophe left its burns in the Ukraine, Belarus, Russia and other European countries. Chornobyl entered the human history as a new, unprecedented phenomenon, as the biggest man-made disaster of the XX century, which caused a national tragedy and sufferings of millions of people, changed the natural environment on a vast territory and impacted the psychology of the population.

Through all the years of its independence, the Ukraine has been financing the considerable expenses of its activities aimed at the liquidation of the consequences of the Chornobyl disaster, and these expenses have not become less costly. The Ukraine has been compelled to devote large volumes of its material, human and financial resources to ensure protection of the affected population, liquidation of the consequences of the disaster in the Chornobyl exclusion zone and rehabilitation of the environment.

The problems caused by the Chornobyl catastrophe do not disappear as the time goes by, but rather change their shapes. Some of them, first of all the health, social and economic become more acute and call for integrat-
ed solutions a systematic approach to their integrated solutions by the administrative authorities. Consideration of the array of issues connected with the Chornobyl catastrophe already became a tradition and an instrument of the international policies geared towards the development of a multi-year strategy of the international assistance related to the implementation of the actions needed to overcome the consequences of the Chornobyl catastrophe.

Thank you for your attention and your open-hearted desire to assist in addressing the heavy burden of the Chornobyl problems!

**H.E. Mr. Yuriy A. Sergeyev**

Permanent Representative of Ukraine to the United Nations

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is my great pleasure and honor to address this forum. I would like to thank World Information Transfer and its President Dr. Christine Durbak for organizing this conference and especially for the unremitting attention which this NGO attaches to environmental and health problems, caused by Chornobyl disaster.

The 26th of April has forever been inscribed in the history of mankind as the date of the worst radiation disaster — the accident at the Chernobyl nuclear power plant. That event shook the world and forever changed the lives of millions of people. During the 23 years that have elapsed since then, the governments of the three countries that suffered most — Ukraine, Belarus and Russia — along with the international community have spent tens of billions of dollars in an effort to overcome the devastating consequences of the accident. Although considerable efforts are still being undertaken today, the consequences of Chornobyl still influence environment, health and human lives. The Chornobyl catastrophe itself was a combination of technology and human factors, which led to the tragedy.

Therefore Chornobyl must strongly remind those who negligently approach issue of obtaining nuclear technology without paying due attention to all aspects of own responsibility before humankind. This reminder should be especially alarming for those who try to do or are already doing this in a way hidden from the international society, generating mistrust and worry, causing deep concern, how to prevent nuclear military confrontation or nuclear disaster with far more reaching consequences than Chornobyl.

Issue of Chornobyl puts today a special emphasis to the problem of the security of nuclear technologies on nuclear facilities, safety and control on nuclear power plants. We must convert the nuclear power plant in an ecologically safe place. It is very important to understand that further delays can cost too much. It is the right time to start applying modern [nuclear] technologies, which are safer, more stable and ecologically proved. Role of new partners in this process is very crucial for us.

We appreciate the address of the UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon, which has been forwarded to the participants of the conference. We do share his opinion, I quote: “Chornobyl led to revised safety standards in all operating nuclear power plants. The international community also learned that nuclear emergencies require the highest level of coordination among a wide range of agencies and actors. We saw that we do indeed need global partners for global solutions.” End of quote.

It is true - the global world today needs global programs and action. But without everyday work and combined efforts of everyone these words will not become deeds. That is why such conferences like this one are very important and contribute essentially to tackle global challenges which we are facing. Therefore I wish all the success to the second part of the conference. I thank you.

**H.E. Mr. Valeriy Kuchinsky**

Former Permanent Representative of Ukraine to the United Nations

Your Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen. It’s a great honor to participate in this conference and in opening the second day of deliberations of the Eighteenth International Conference, Health and Environment: Global Partners for Global Solutions. Let me first of all express my sincere gratitude to the World Information Transfer, an NGO with a consultative status with the United Nations and of course its founder and continuous president, Dr. Christine Durbak for keeping first of all the awareness of Chornobyl disaster alive for over twenty years now. And for the priceless research in the field of health and environment, particularly the degradation of human health and environment. And, of course holding of international conferences like the conference we are having today; the setting up of international scholarship programs for young people publishing scientific quar-
terly World Ecology Report, creating CD-ROM, libraries and information centers around the globe. This is by far an incomplete list of numerous activities of World Information Transfer and its staff.

Once again, thank you very much for your great efforts, perseverance and courage. Incidentally, the most noticeable achievement of this organization is a regular holdings of international conferences like we are having today, Health and Environment: Global Partners For Global Solutions. And, I was privileged to participate in quite a few previous conferences with many capacities. And, today the conference is taking place in one of the most important conference rooms of the United Nations of the Secretariat. You can see that there are no empty seats. It is only in the peak of the United Nations seasons when the main committees are sitting that you can have the same atmosphere as we have today. So, it says for itself. Let me first of all give the floor to our first speaker, his Excellency Yuriy Sergeyev.

He is a career diplomat from Ukraine. Before being appointed as permanent representative of Ukraine to the United Nations, he served as Ukraine’s ambassador to France as well as the permanent representative of Ukraine to UNESCO in Paris. He has a long and distinguished career in Ukrainian diplomatic service. He served as Secretary of State in the Ministry Foreign Affairs of Ukraine. He was a spokesman for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, a very responsible task. He was also the Chief Staff of the Minister. But one of the highlights of his career was the work as foreign policy advisor to Ukrainian President, and that is extremely – as you understand – he is the number one man in foreign policy. Ambassador Sergeyev also served as Ukraine’s Ambassador to Greece and Albania and as Minister Plenipotentiary of Ukraine in the United Kingdom and Northern Ireland. Ambassador Sergeyev has many orders, has many prizes and he received the state order of Ukraine for merit in April 2003. So it is an honor to give the floor to Ambassador Sergeyev.

Mr. Werner Obermeyer
Deputy to the Executive Director, WHO
Political Influence on Health Policies

Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen.
Over the past several years the world has faced a series of crises. Global food shortages merged with a fuel crisis, resulting in sharp increases in the price of fossil fuels in 2007 and 2008. Together with concerted efforts to address the complex challenges posed by climate change, the fuel crisis caused a renewed focus on cleaner, or renewable, energy sources, such as hydro, solar, wind, geothermal and nuclear.

Economic growth relies on energy supply, and in particular access to energy sources. Yet the availability of energy has not always led to increased efficiency or distribution thereof. Rapid urbanization and industrialization in especially middle income countries, have strained energy supply, and over the past decades resulted in tremendous growth in coal fired electricity, with obvious negative health and environmental effects.

It is interesting that electricity use in developing countries has been outpacing GDP growth, and these consumption patterns have caused increases in air pollution. Poor air quality is not limited to industrial areas, but traffic congestion and unsafe waste disposal in rapidly urbanizing towns and cities have caused higher rates
of acute infections of the lower respiratory tract, lung cancer and obstructive pulmonary disease.

The WHO does not set guideline values for particulates because there is no evident threshold below which there are no adverse health effects - in other words the particulate matter sourced from power plants, household cooking and heating fuels, as well as construction, are all detrimental to human health.

We have witnessed less investment not only in clean energy, but in energy supply overall – especially towards rural areas in developing countries. This trend has resulted in the unfortunate situation where more than 3 billion poor still rely on wood, dung, coal and other traditional fuel for indoor cooking and heating. Indoor air pollution therefore continues to contribute to more than 1.5 million deaths annually, mostly of women and young children.

The current global financial and economic crises will result in less foreign investment, and as developing countries use their financial reserves, domestic investments in health and energy sectors will also decline. Similarly, health ministries will be under growing pressure to cut expenditure, making it more difficult to retain the right balance of essential curative services and preventive programmes.

Exacerbating this problematic situation is the fact that growing unemployment and worsening economic conditions will place more stress on public health facilities, as private healthcare would simply become unaffordable. Furthermore, health insurance and social protection schemes are not typically designed for the informal sector, and these vulnerable and poor could largely be left without support.

This prognosis is troubling as it would increase the number of individuals and households suffering from ill health, thus pushing them further towards poverty, and through continued ill health and non ability to obtain medicine and care hindering attempts to move out of such poverty.

How then do we address these challenges before they spiral out of control? Obviously financing is key, as one of the main determinants of health is money. Quite simply money buys bed nets to combat malaria, drugs for all kinds of immunization campaigns, and anti-retrovirals for HIV/Aids treatment.

But even with funding available, political will and commitment is equally important. Only with political support will health and environmental policies be developed and implemented to ensure improvements in clean water supply, provision of adequate sanitation and renewable energy. Although access to safe water and sanitation improved over the past decade, unacceptable numbers of people still suffer from diseases related to diarrhea – which is the second highest cause on the global burden of disease scale and kills more than 2 million children every year.

A serious and sustained move towards a global green economic model will require political investment and fortitude, but the benefits are clear – not only in economic returns, but also in the area of health. Health remains one of the pillars of a country’s development process and a key driver for economic growth, wealth and poverty reduction. The impact of health on a country’s gross domestic product (GDP) is significant – an extra year of life expectancy is estimated, under optimal conditions, to raise a country’s GDP by about 4%, as sickness and disability adversely impact on not only individuals, but households and wider communities. In Africa the economic losses associated with malaria have been estimated to be up to $12 billion per year, costs that can be severely curtailed by investing in health systems and improved care giving networks.

In closing, allow me to re-emphasize that we are now at a point where solid political commitment is required to address not only the short term implications of the perfect storm of crises that the world is facing, but also the long term. This means investments in education, sustainable energy and health. These areas are mutually supportive, but unfortunately in times of crises are too often neglected.

It is through events such as this, where we are all present today, that opinions are influenced and decision makers are stimulated with new ideas. I commend Dr Christine Durbak and Dr Claudia Strauss, as well as their colleagues at the World Information Transfer, for their tireless efforts and thank them and their sponsors, in particular the governments of Ukraine and Poland, for inviting the World Health Organization to this occasion.

Ms. Irena Zubcevic
Senior Sustainable Development Officer, Global Policy Branch, Division for Sustainable Development, DESA

Health and Sustainable Development

The link between the work of the Division for Sustainable Development, Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA) of the United Nations and this Conference is sustainable development. There is not one definition of sustainable development, but the one most
widely accepted comes from one of the landmark documents on sustainable development Report of the World Commission on Environment and Development: Our Common Future headed by a former Norwegian Prime Minister and former Director-General of the WHO, Gro Brundtland and therefore known as the Brundtland report. The report states that “humanity has the ability to make development sustainable to ensure that it meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs”. 

In order to achieve this, concentrating only on economic growth was not enough. Social and environmental pillars of sustainable development need to be incorporated and this brings us to the theme of this conference - health and environment. Health is a social issue and all subsequent landmark documents on sustainable development such as Agenda 21, Programme for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21 and the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation (JPOI) clearly show health and environment are interlinked.

Thus, according to Agenda 21 (chapter 6) and JPOI (chapter 6), health and sustainable development are interconnected. Both insufficient development leading to poverty and inappropriate development resulting in over-consumption, coupled with an expanding world population, can result in severe health problems in both developing and developed nations. The linkage of health, environmental and socio-economic improvements requires intersectoral efforts and involvement of civil society as well as private sector, as is very well seen in a new challenge of the climate change impact, which is expected to be greatest among the most vulnerable communities living in the poorest countries. Climate variability and change cause death and disease through natural disasters, such as heat waves, floods and droughts. In addition, many important diseases are highly sensitive to changing temperatures and precipitation. Climate change already contributes to the global burden of disease, and this contribution is expected to grow in the future. Concerted action to strengthen key features of health systems, and to promote healthy development choices, can enhance public health now as well as reduce vulnerability to future climate change.

Therefore, establishing a more conducive international environment for a more central role of health in the sustainable development is essential in order to enable better coordination and coherence at national and regional levels in order to integrate health concerns, including those of the most vulnerable populations, into strategies, policies and programmes for poverty eradication and sustainable development. Mechanisms to improve intersectoral action, including institutional strengthening for health impact assessment by its integration into mainstream policy-making should be addressed as well as new partnerships and alliances put in place for health and sustainable development.

Enhancing international capacity-building initiatives that assess health and environment linkages including climate change and use the knowledge gained to create more effective national and regional policy responses to environmental threats to human health should be identified. Means to reduce occupational deaths, injuries and illnesses, and link occupational health with public health promotion as a way of promoting public health and education should be found.

Health has been discussed during nearly every session of the Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD), including the nineteenth Special Session of the General Assembly (Rio+5) and the 2002 World Summit on Sustainable Development. Within the framework of the Commission’s current multi-year programme of work, health and sustainable development are considered each year as a cross-cutting issue within the context of the main sectoral issues taken up during each two-year cycle.

The latest decisions form the 17th session of the CSD in May 2009 encourage support “in strengthening health systems including though increased public funding, in particular on reducing infant and maternal mortality and addressing HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria and highlight the need to provide access to adequate nutrition to affected communities and households”. They also call for “improving the knowledge base for national and regional policy responses to environmental threats to health by strengthening international capacity building initiatives that assess health and environmental linkages”.

This rich source of expertise can help better outline interlinkages between health and three pillars of sustainable development, including new challenges due to current crises exacerbated by climate change and its impact on economic, social and environmental development. But it should also be a two-way street and the CSD can, as a result, profit from the international dialogue to come with more concrete measures how to help countries in need to formulate such policies that can be efficiently implemented and their results monitored.

Therefore, conferences like this one that bring together scientists, practitioners and policy-makers help move the agenda forward and raise awareness of the need for more holistic approach to health within sustainable development in order to achieve Millennium Development Goals and make a better living for all.

Our support goes to all of you who are organizing this valuable conference year after year, the speakers as well as participants.

Thank you for your attention.
Global warming is the biggest and most urgent threat we face. It is on a fast track to destroy life as we know it on this planet. The politics of global warming, in my view, has four basic components: the industrial status quo, the neo-conservative political movement, the extreme religious right, and the environmental protection movement. Population growth is an additional factor in climate policy.

THE INDUSTRIAL STATUS QUO: This component is mainly comprised of the fossil fuel constituency. The five top oil companies spent $5 billion on renewable energy over the last 15 years. Shell Oil alone spent $87 billion on oil exploration. Oil and gas industries together spent $35 million on political campaigns in 2008. In the 2008 political campaign, a pro-coal group called the Americans for Balanced Energy Choices spent $1.3 million on advertisements in the key primary states of Nevada, South Carolina and Iowa promoting “clean coal” and showing a power cord being plugged into a rock of coal. In total, coal companies spent $40 million on the “clean coal” advertising campaign.

Coal-fired power plants emit 1600 to 2100 pounds of CO₂ for each kilowatt-hour of electricity they produce. In Kentucky and West Virginia, coal companies are lopping off entire mountain tops and dumping the debris in the valleys below destroying rivers, hollers, and vital ecosystems. They are destroying the characteristic landscapes of the region, and when the coal is gone, they leave and don’t restore the mountains.

THE NEO-CONSERVATIVE POLITICAL MOVEMENT: This movement’s basic premises weave economics and religion together. Pro business/anti-environmental regulations, driven by the Milton Freedman economic policies of “trickledown economics,” mean that business reaps maximum profit regardless of the environmental or health consequences. Businesses operating from this tenet don’t acknowledge the societal costs of environmental degradation in their computations of gross national product which gives a disingenuous picture of the true profit margin.

Many neo-conservatives point to Genesis 2: 26 which reads, “And God said, let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth” to justify pillaging the planet at the expense of creation. What neo-cons fail to acknowledge, when they quote the Bible, are the passages promoting environmental protection.

THE EXTREME RELIGIOUS RIGHT: The basic idea is that since End Times are near, environment doesn’t matter. A very large number of extreme right-wing religious conservatives believe in the Rapture or End Times, as they call it, when Jesus returns and takes all righteous people to Heaven leaving the rest to live in eternal hell on earth.

The irony is that ignoring global warming either for financial gains or for religious ideology is immoral because it endangers billions of people in the future. This brings me to the heart of the political part of my presentation. The Bush Administration and the Republican Party were totally co-opted by the religious right and the neoconservatives. President Bush stated more than once how he was guided by God.

The Bush/Cheney White House along with many conservative Republican Congressmen did everything in their power to misinform the public about global warming and confuse the issue. Their first step was to deny the legitimacy of science itself. They insisted that scientists disagreed that global warming was real when in fact out of 928 scientific peer review articles over the past 10 years not one peer review article came out doubting global warming or man’s role in causing global warming.

A cadre of special interests, including Exxon Mobile and oil, coal, and power companies schemed to dispel the reality of global warming in a media campaign. One of their internal memos leaked to the press stated that their goal was to “reposition global warming as theory, rather than fact.” The tobacco industry had used the same tactic 40 years ago when they tried to create a controversy around the science which proved that smoking tobacco caused lung disease.

The Bush Administration put Phillip Cooney, who came from the American Petroleum Institute, in charge of environmental policy at the White House. Cooney tried to change information in a report submitted by NASA scientist James Hansen in which Hansen’s science presented accurate data that highlighted the seriousness of global warming. Cooney, with no scientific background, censored Hansen’s report, taking out any mention of the dangers of global warming to the public. Cooney’s memo leaked to the New York Times a few days later. The Administration tried to fire James Hansen but the leaked memo caused so much embarrassment to the Bush Administration that Cooney resigned and the very next day went to work for Exxon Mobile.

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION UNDER PRESIDENT BUSH: During the 8 years of the Bush Administration, over 300 attempts were made to gut environmental
protection laws for clean water, clean air, endangered species, wild lands protection, and greenhouse gas reduction.

With the Clean Water Act the Bush Administration withdrew proposed stricter limits on arsenic in drinking water, weakened wetlands protections, allowed mining companies to dump waste in waterways, exempted the oil and gas industries from storm-water rules, and refused to regulate dioxins in sewage sludge.

With the Endangered Species Act, Pres. Bush gave the Navy approval for sonar tests that kill whales, took the polar bear and wolf off the Endangered Species list, allowed the slaughter of 231 Yellowstone bison, cut $10 million from the endangered species budget, and allowed the poisoning of prairie dogs in 4 states.

With the Clean Air Act, Bush failed to reduce carbon dioxide emissions, allowed 10 more years for power plants to cut mercury and sulfur dioxide emissions, refused to acknowledge CO\textsubscript{2} as a pollutant, tried to ease and delay smog-control rules, excluded 17,000 facilities from installing pollution control equipment, tried to reclassify mercury as nontoxic, and scaled back smokestack pollution monitoring.

With Wildland protection, Bush approved of limestone mining in 5,400 acres of Florida’s Everglades, allowed coal companies to dump mountaintop waste in valleys and streams, approved oil and gas drilling in several National Parks, and increased logging, grazing and mining on 192 million acres of public land.

**POPULATION AND CLIMATE POLICY:** One other area that I want to briefly touch on is the effects conservative religious organizations have on human population issues. Conservative religious organizations are against condom use and birth control. Population growth has a huge bearing on our quality of future lives. The world population now is around 6.5 billion. In just the next 40 years it is projected to jump to 9.1 billion people.

Global warming will dry up many water supplies as glaciers around the world melt. For instance, over 2 billion people rely on melt-waters from the Himalayan glaciers for their water supply. These 2 billion people will be forced to relocate to find water. Along with them will be hundreds of millions who are forced to relocate due to a rise in sea level, droughts, and extreme flooding as climate change worsens.

As global warming diminishes cropland, water supply, and living space, we will be adding up to 4 billion more people to the earth all having to compete for food, water, and living space. On top of that each additional billion people will require an added 10,000 megawatts of electricity at any given moment. If we are still relying on coal, it will require 500 more coal-burning power plants to provide energy for them. If we reach the projected 9.2 billion by 2050 it will require 1,500 more coal-fired power plants producing up to 31,500,000 pounds of CO\textsubscript{2} per kilowatt hour.

In 2000, the world’s total average rate of energy usage was roughly 13 trillion watts. Even with aggressive conservation, the world’s total average rate will be 26 trillion watts by 2050. This means that we will have to cut CO\textsubscript{2} emissions by 80% by 2050. This is why population control is a vital issue that should not be allowed to be co-opted by the conservative religious community.

**CONCLUSION:** Every 24 hours, humans pump 70 million tones of CO\textsubscript{2} into the atmosphere. Today CO\textsubscript{2} is at 385 parts per million and is currently rising at a rate of 2 parts per million. This rate is accelerating due to China and India’s increase in fossil energy production. Above 450 parts per million, many life forms will perish. At our current rate of CO\textsubscript{2} emissions, we will reach 600 parts per million in 45 years which may render earth uninhabitable.

To have any meaningful impact, world governments have to put into place effective climate related policies as soon as possible. We all have a responsibility to demand that our governments put into place policies that will get CO\textsubscript{2} below 350 parts per million by 2080 or we won’t stand a chance. My motto is: “government won’t work if the people don’t work it,” So get involved, speak out, take action now.
Thank you for inviting me once again. Global climate change promises to be one of the greatest challenges of the 21st century and it threatens the health and welfare of both the global population as well as the environment. Reliance on the burning of fossil fuels for transportation, electricity generation and heating is a primary cause of increasing concentrations of atmospheric CO$_2$ implicated in climate change trends.

The purpose of this presentation is to provide an overview of the technical basis for the safe management of spent nuclear fuel and other high-level radioactive waste.

The need for low carbon emitting sources of energy has renewed interest in nuclear power mainly for controlling global CO$_2$ emissions. Aside from relatively small amounts of CO$_2$ produced during front end and back end activities, nuclear plants produce round-the-clock electricity on a large scale without CO$_2$ emissions. The commercial nuclear industry has greatly increased its emphasis on safety and now boasts an excellent performance record. However, the perceptions of the industry and technology remained colored by Chernobyl and the Three Mile Island.

Opposition to nuclear often centers on the concern that the nuclear waste problem cannot be solved. Waste produced during power generation in a nuclear reactor remains contained in the fuel itself which represents a very small volume of material compared to emissions...
and waste by-products from fossil fuel combustion. The used or spent fuel is highly radioactive and remains so therefore it needs to be isolated from the biosphere to mitigate risks. Another unique aspect of spent nuclear fuel is that a once-through pass of standard nuclear fuel typically extracts less than one percent. Accordingly, spent fuel also represents a potentially significant energy resource, if the decision is made to pursue a recycling approach to the nuclear fuel cycle.

**How Nuclear Fuel Gets “Used”**

* Nuclear fuel irradiated by neutrons in a reactor to sustain a controlled fission chain reaction for heat generation

* Reactor vessel
  - 40 ft (12 m) tall
  - 14 ft (4 m) diameter
  - ~8 in (20 cm) thick carbon steel with stainless steel lining

* Nuclear fuel for a typical reactor
  - ~200 bundles
  - ~40,000 fuel rods
  - ~110 tons (100 mt) of UO₂

* 1000 MWe plant will supply electricity to a city of 1 million or 750,000 homes

* Based on a four-loop Westinghouse 1,150 MWe PWR design

**Used Nuclear Fuel – Concentrated and Contained**

* Nuclear energy is extremely concentrated:
  - 1000 MWe plant requires 25 metric tons fresh fuel/yr
  - 3 million metric tons of coal/yr (36,500 rail cars)
  - 1 metric ton of coal = 14 g uranium fuel (0.5 oz)

* Waste remains contained in original fuel

* Used fuel from 50 years of U.S. reactor operations would fit in an area the size of a football field ~ 7 yards deep (NEI, 2009)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fuel type</th>
<th>Quantity of fuel (tonnes)</th>
<th>CO₂ released (tonnes)</th>
<th>Ash produced (tonnes)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hard coal</td>
<td>3500000</td>
<td>7200000</td>
<td>280000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>O₂</td>
<td>1700000</td>
<td>5000000</td>
<td>35000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Natural gas</td>
<td>1600000</td>
<td>4000000</td>
<td>very small</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uranium in PWR</td>
<td>~500000</td>
<td>~0</td>
<td>~5000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enriched U</td>
<td>~200000</td>
<td>~0</td>
<td>~3000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table from: DECCNIA, 2007, Management of Recyclable Fissile and Fertile Materials, NNE No. 6107

**Conclusions**

* Nuclear energy is highly concentrated – a lot of energy from a very small amount of fuel
* Nuclear waste is hazardous and presents technical challenges, but waste is contained in a small volume
* Used fuel from a nuclear reactor can be considered a waste or a resource
  - either is technically valid, determined by other factors
  - permanent disposal is needed for all nuclear power options
  - final decision on waste vs. resource can be deferred or changed until irreversible disposal occurs
* Used fuel is currently managed in dry storage at 51 sites across the U.S. – low maintenance
* Used fuel can be safely contained and monitored for decades to centuries
Thank you very much for inviting me. I am really indebted to WIT’s activity and Dr. Durbak. This is an opportunity for me to give you a big picture about energy. It was referred to in several of the previous talks, and I will try to go very quickly through many facts just to give you a broad perspective of what faces us, especially the many young people in this audience, in their life time. I will start with the energy challenge, the next topic is what the world thinks about it, and then a little bit of science very quickly and a look into the future.

You can see that the world population has been increasing. As it increases, of course, there is an increasing demand for energy.

In these graphs you see the world demand for energy increases, not only proportionally to the population increase, but there is additional increase that is super linear. That has to do with the increased expectation of people for a better life, and what we anticipate is that by mid-century, the demands will double. By the end of the century, the demands will triple. Already we are being strapped with the present demands and impact on world climate. These are the challenges: how we are going to provide all the energy; and how we are going to make the planet habitable. Those are the two issues we will be talking more about. The environmental challenge is real, and it is large.

The mean temperature rise, of course, varies from one place to another. In some places, in fact, the temperature decreases fall with the changing climate. Since we have taken records on the effect of man and energy consumption, temperature rose just 1 degree. But we expect in this century, that temperature will rise maybe 2 to 3 degrees, and that becomes somewhat more serious.

In the lifetime of the people in this audience, we will be doubling energy demand. We will go from the present fossil fuel economy, which is about 85% of the world, to another phase where more than half has to be renewable because we don’t have any other choices. Nuclear might be one of those components, but even nuclear is not totally renewable because the amount of fissionable material available on our planet is finite. This is a sort of plug for chemistry, physics and the science of technology and engineering that will make all this happen. We hear a lot in the news about nano, but we are thinking miniaturization on the scale of just few molecules. At these levels of clusters, materials behave very differently than they do in bulk. We can make catalysts that have exponential effects on reactivity. We can control parameters that physics tells us, and in 3D technology, with size as an additional parameter, we could make things happen that we could not ordinarily. These are some of the factors that science and engineering have on top of their menu to help society overcome some of the challenges.

This conference also produced regional agreements by countries that need technological support to be provided by countries with

**General Observations of WIREC 2008**
*(Washington International Renewable Energy Conference 2008)*

- Over 9000 participants from 113 countries including 103 ministers – The largest conference in renewable energy held to date.
- There was a strong sense of optimism internationally about the future of renewable energy.
- Delegates showed an appreciation of the scale of the energy problem, of global climate issues and of the increasing energy needs of a growing world population.
technological expertise. Developing countries are also included through training of personnel and exchange of personnel from one country to another. Solar, wind, hydroelectric, ocean tides, biomass, geothermal are all part of renewable energy. What we anticipate by the increase that is demanded by the mid century are 2 aspects that the audience should have as a take home message.

A doubling amount of energy is a very big quantity because we are already using a large quantity. To meet these growing energy demands we need many renewable sources, including nuclear plants. The solutions will be many. But one thing we know is that the sun is the only source of energy that is enough to keep everybody going and for very long time.

We can make some predictions. The total amount of unrecoverable oil or gas amounts to 1.5 days of sun light, so it is a very small amount. We have three things the sun can provide. The first is electricity. The sun can also make fuels for us. Photosynthesis is something we understand now. We try to mimic what the sun does, and then we try to create artificial fuels. Those things are moving ahead and also not only capturing the photons and the light, but also capturing the heat. This is an advantageous way to look at it because you can capture more of the solar spectrum in that way. Right now, the amount of renewable energy we are utilizing for either solar to electric conversion fuels or thermal is a minuscule part of the total that we are using. We have to make a very large conversion.

This is a technological challenge, and it is an opportunity for young people to meet this. When I was young, we started into the electronics revolution. We had the semi-conductors that produced the information age, and we did it. We now have another challenge, and people think that somehow we are going to do it. It will take effort and collaboration between different countries.

This is a little bit of the technical view graph, and it shows that by having multiple junctions you can capture different parts of the solar spectrum. The efficiency of capture increases, another thing is that you can make multiple electron hole pairs by using nano-structures.

Hydrogen is a source of energy, and it does not occur on our planet. We have to produce it. We have to store it. But the driver of this particular technology is when you burn hydrogen and all you have is water, which is benign.
The other part of this is that the fuel cells that people can make nowadays are twice as efficient as the engine in our automobiles. The storage is a big challenge.

Hydrogen can be produced, and this was discovered over 30 or 40 years ago. The technology is basically known. However, it has to be greatly improved and we have to find a catalyst other than the expensive ones like platinum which is used today. Some progresses have been made. With hydrogen you wouldn’t have the problem with intermittency which is the problem of the sun not shining at night.

Another issue is the use of waste heat, and thermoelectrics - an area that I work in. The waste power and the waste heat into electricity, and this process has been known for about a hundred and fifty years. Very recently, we have found that nanostructures allow us to control these materials’ properties much better and the field has all of a sudden blossomed from almost no activity to very extensive activity. So, we have some hope that we will be able to make this conversion. Right now we use thermoelectrics to fuel the satellites going beyond Jupiter because we don’t have sunlight and sufficient quantity to launch satellites to go further than Mars. However, now, with the increasing capabilities of these kinds of materials, we are hoping to utilize waste heat to do many things, including the renewable work, and here is a picture of some kind of concepts, of taking sunlight and using thermoelectrics to make electricity for us.

What is the outlook for the future; what are the energy business needs? The energy industry needs an exponential improvement in capability of materials. What has happened is that the size of your computers, your electronics, semi-conductor components has decreased exponentially. This is called Moore’s Law. The same time that the size decreases exponentially, the power that is the capabilities of the units that we use increases. This has happened in solid state lighting. This has a large impact because there are about 25% of sold electric uses for this application.

I am involved in the science technology side of things, and we have to work with the industry. We can develop all these technologies in the laboratory but there is a big gap between laboratory development and having products that people can sell that are reliable and safe. Energy has to be cheap enough that it can compete with what we are using today, and hopefully cheaper than that. People have to like it. That is what sociology is. Politics means that the governments have to make it advantageous to do the right thing, so that we can develop these technologies for the population in a seamless way, efficiently, and cheaply.

We have a huge challenge ahead, but young people always like challenges because it gives them something to do. The demands, the time scales are daunting. One of the challenges is to get young people involved and have some appreciations about the needs for science and technology. We have to have people from all the constituencies talk one language and talk to each other so that we can work together to make this a better place. That is my message. Thank you.
I want to first start by acknowledging the hospitality of Dr. Durbak and Dr. Strauss and their WIT team. Even more than their hospitality, I want to acknowledge their commitment to the discussions and dialogues which I personally have found extraordinarily informative this morning and this afternoon. I am going to talk for a few minutes about a facet of children’s health that typically does not get the kind of prime time that I believe it deserves: namely food and food security.

I will discuss this topic from the perspective of how the US government is involved in partnership with a number of non-government US Major Groups in the current cycle of the UN’s Commission on Sustainable Development. I will cover three areas in my discussion: (1) history of CSD (Commission on Sustainable Development), its origin and some of its extraordinary features. (2) US engagement in the current CSD two year cycle (2008-09); (3) the links between cities and their food needs with rural sustainable farms and food production facilities.

Let’s first start with a little bit of the history of the UN Commission on Sustainable Development. The 1992 Earth Summit in Rio De Janeiro produced a program of action called Agenda 21, which provides the sustainable development blueprint for the global community. The CSD emerged from Rio and through Agenda 21 as a collective global body that takes a look at the commitments that have been made, how we are doing, what more needs to be done and how these commitments may need to be adjusted as we move forward. Over the last few years, the decision was made - and we in the US like to think that we have a little bit of influence in this - that instead of taking on all aspects of sustainability each year, we would instead, as a global community, focus in two years cycles on particular aspects of sustainability. In 2004-05, the focus was on water; 2006-07, the focus was on energy. The current cycle, 2008-09, commonly called CSD 16 and 17, focuses in on five key issues: agriculture, rural development, land, drought, desertification and Africa.

My job has been helping the US government to prepare for its engagement in CSD. One important element of CSD is the very active involvement of the nine Major Groups made up of non-government stakeholders who have an interest in the topics and who contribute to the dialogue and negotiation process.

Now, let’s consider the US Government’s involvement, in this particular CSD cycle, the US government has focused on three messages. One was our key strategic investment in science and education. Second was the work we have done to empower communities and individuals locally so that they can self-organize into groups, such as cooperatives, to get a job done effectively. Our third message has been to tap the powers of communication technology that we heard our young people describe in such compelling terms this morning. We also, as a government, believe that the CSD dialogue provides the valuable opportunity to listen, to learn, and to share experiences through what we call case studies, that is, examples of our programs. We also try to listen to the case studies that others present.

Let me drill in, a bit more deeply, to one element that I have found particularly fascinating about this agriculture focused CSD. We have out-reached to what is called the food system’s community in New York. That includes food banks, community gardens, farmers’ market, school-lunch programs, and we have asked them to provide showcases of some of their innovations, some of their lessons learned, to delegates as they come into the CSD meetings. At the CSD meeting last May, about 2000 delegates visited various places. We worked with the food system’s community groups here in New York City to get delegates on buses to visit, for example, gardens in Brooklyn, which are community centers, where all sorts of individuals including young people, the disfranchised, the elderly, are not only learning to grow food but also to process it, to share it and to use that collective experience as a way of building community in their neighborhoods. Some of these neighborhoods have very limited options for buying fresh produce.

This May, we hope to build on that showcase through an initiative that again is largely directed by food systems groups here in the city, and focus in on urban - rural partnerships for food security. This effort is trying to identify how urban centers can be influential in setting the food systems on track. It looks at promoting innovations to provide healthy food within the city from the surrounding areas. For example, New York City has the largest school lunch program in the US. I am told it’s second only to the public food program in the US Department of Defense. Altering the school lunch program in New York to provide “healthy” food to kids, could be quite influential across the country, and even globally.

As I mentioned, community gardens can enhance the nutritional options for young people, for the elderly, and for low resource communities at large. We are trying to demonstrate how that need inside the city can be linked to and can support sustainable production facilities beyond. It is my perspective that the UN Commission on Sustainable Development assumes a future. And it assumes our...
generation will live in a manner that will leave behind the environmental, the social, and the economic resources to enable future generations to live as well as we have. I think, that is a daunting assumption. Thank you again.

**Dr. Noel Brown**

President of the Friends of United Nations, former director of United Nations Environmental Program (UNEP) for the North America region, Director of Training International Ocean Institute of Halifax Nova Scotia.

**Political influence on Children’s Health and Environmental Policies**

When we speak of the environment, I am not sure that we fully appreciate the fact that we are talking about a life-support system, which is central to the maintenance of life on earth. As goes the environment, so goes the human future. Let me begin by offering a few perspectives from my experiences within the United Nations. Thirty years ago, governments requested UNEP to periodically take readings on Earth’s vital signs, and to present to them on a regular basis as the state of the environment. Then for three decades, UNEP compiled an impressive scientific database with one consistent theme, and that is – all is not well with planet Earth – a kind of self-evident scientific truth. Earth is showing progressive signs of stress, which some have termed as the “sick earth syndrome.”

*children are affected by trauma in different ways*

When the Earth is sick, we humans cannot be well, and our children cannot enjoy a high quality of life. That is why it is important to appreciate the fact that these pose direct and indirect effects to human health and well-being. Let me just use a few of the examples I think which should be of interests:

The first is air pollution and the increasing incidence of respiratory disorders. Years ago, when UNEP did a study on children’s health and the environment, we focused very intensely on the hazards of air pollution and what it did to bodies and natural systems in formation. At that time, we were able to look at what was happening on a variety of fronts, and what was causing these things to happen. Few of you will remember our concerns with radioactive rain. Because of atmospheric testing, there was radioactivity in the rainwater. The inclusion of strontium 90 caused very serious problems in mothers’ breast milk, a problem that would have direct implications for children. Then there were lead-based rains which also presented a new kind of hazard because lead is a neurotoxin. Children are most directly affected. And then there was the problem of acid rains, caused by coal-fired plants and the emission of sulfur and nitrogen oxide. This directly affected aquatic life in lakes and rivers.

Now there is the problem of ozone depletion, triggered by the chlorofluorocarbons. This was perhaps the most personal of the environmental stresses because there were reports of skin cancer and cataracts. Suddenly, the public became aware of the fact that the abstraction we call environmental degradation could affect us personally and cause adjustments in our lifestyle. Physicians warned against sunburn, and especially young women were asked to practice “safe sun”.

We’ve all heard the phrase, “wolf in sheep’s clothing.” In Australia they did one better. There, sheep wear polyethylene jackets to protect their wool. Those of you who have visited any Australian sheep farm will be impressed by the fact that these sheep are wearing little blue jackets because ultra-violet rays from the sun would destroy the lanolin in the wool and would lose a very important industrial feature.

The final atmospheric threat is global warming. For years, scientists have been warning us that if the present trends continue in the use of fossil fuels and other greenhouse gases, we are likely to change global temperature by one to four degrees sometime in the next century. Until recently, these predictions have been met by skepticism by large segment of our population, but there is support for the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) to remove any doubt as the state of the scientific consensus on the human factor in environmental degradation. This was supplemented in part by the very popular film ‘Inconvenient Truth’ by Senator Gore, which succeeded in giving the concept a new popular currency. There is a lesson to be learned here, that UN reports tend to cater to another specific audience. What the film did was to inject serious scientific conclusion in the popular culture. I have always advocated that many of the major UN documents and reports could be translated into popular versions, and even children’s versions.

**Political influence on Children’s Health and Environmental Policies**

When we came out of Rio in 1992, UNEP was the first UN entity to translate Agenda 21 into a children’s version. We invited young people to write their own editions. It was a best seller at the UN and perhaps the most widely read. One of the good things about the United Nations, it is not alarmist and when it speaks it speaks with authority and confidence.

We need to find ways of personalizing these issues, so that popular pressure might be generated to develop...
public policy. In 2012, when the Kyoto Protocol will be renewed, there may be a new push for sensible climate policy. I believe that our young people should be prepared, should be armed, to provide intensive care for planet Earth.

Let me cite just two examples which I think may be of relevance. The first one is the loss of biodiversity, what many people do not connect with human health. A colleague of mine, Mark Deromorter, at the University of South Florida, did a rather interesting and readable study which I commend your attention. It is called Six Deadly Plagues. He explained how we are causing them and showed that some diseases like West Nile virus, mad-cow disease, HIV-AIDS, Lyme disease, new strands of salmonella, and SARS can be directly linked to the loss of biodiversity. Mark Deromorter put it in this way: “In the chain of life, there is an intricate system of actions and interactions that nature works in pairs, every predator has a prey. When we interrupt this connection, we tend to leave a gap, which we humans tend to fill, in effect we are becoming hosts to a number of new diseases.” What this is trying to suggest, is that we need to pay more attention to the chain of life, to the well being of life and the preservation of biodiversity, because there is a very strong connection there.

The second one concerns the status of the oceans in what might be called the impending crisis of the seas. The seas and oceans are often termed as the source of all life. Yet, despite its importance, we know more about the far side of the moon than we know about the ocean. Fortunately a few weeks ago, the United Nations has decided to put the question of oceans into a sharper focus by declaring June 8th as the International Oceans Day. We need a new oceans literacy, because hazards to the oceans are really extensive and intensive.

We also need to look at the extent to which maritime litter is now affecting the oceans and the habits of the sea. We know for example that plastics in an area in the Pacific Ocean called the Pacific Jar (The Great Pacific Garbage Patch?), in total is about 30 million tons in an eternal swirl. Plastics do not biodegrade, and as a result of that many life-forms in the oceans are threatened. And if this part of the food-chain is threatened, humans would not be far behind. We urge you to pay attention. The UN has reported on this dead zone which does not support life, is this metaphor for our future and our planet? Again we ask you to pay attention.

Let me just conclude by saying that we are fortunate in having the United Nations because this provides a framework for keeping issues in focus. It also provides an opportunity for governments to negotiate sustainable solutions. I would like to present to you the ‘ozone model’, which we would like to characterize as a kind of preemptive diplomacy. We identify the crisis, and we are able to come to a conclusion before the crisis becomes a catastrophe. It is hoped that governments have the same kind of foresight, fortitude and commitment to address the climate problem in the same way. We have a model that works and one of the reasons why it works is because of the popular pressure. Let’s hope we can continue this trend in the future, and let’s hope our young people would educate themselves on what they need to do.

Ms. Jessica Williamson
Host of ZapRoot (Zaproot.com)
Communication with Youth

I grew up on a remote beach called Taylor’s Mistake, outside Christchurch, New Zealand. We lived in a small beachside house called a batch. Behind the batch, sheep covered the rolling hills. The front side of the batch stepped onto a black sand beach, where the ocean was surrounded by rocks made from lava that were covered in mussels. To the side was a track around the cliff leading to a penguin colony.

My childhood landscape has changed. The pristine atmosphere in New Zealand, known as land of the long white cloud, is threatened. The sheep at Taylor’s Mistake have now disappeared due to global demand for beef (Why?) and the increase in dairy farming. The mussels at Taylor’s Mistake have now disappeared due to global demand for beef (Why?) and the increase in dairy farming. The mussels are too toxic to eat because the water is polluted. Thankfully, due to conservation efforts, the penguin colony still exists.

Today, I am discussing how, by using media and technology, we can utilize youth to find solutions for sustaining the planet.

A Span of Generation

WHO WE ARE

Scientists (data collectors)
Policy makers
World Leaders
Emerging Leaders
Our Future

Analog

Digital

Bridging the gap
Section 1: Definition of the core audience and other demographics:

Today’s youth are fully integrated between their phones, their computers, their TV screens, their PDA’s, and their Ipods. They are the first generation that is always on in some way or another. It is rare for them to ever be off. And, this is the first generation to be directly linked to each other 24/7 on a mass scale through self-built digital communities which provide real time news, information, and commentary.

The Analog generation is reliant upon newspapers, television, and radio as the primary sources of information. How do we create bridges between the decision makers in the Analog generation and the extremely informed and proactive members of today’s youth audience? How do we change the mindset of “analog thinkers (governments, companies, and individuals)” to invest financially, through partnerships, and in their time - in digital infrastructure in order to enable the youth of today to have the tools necessary to keep this wonderful digital revolution evolving and sustainable.

Section 2: Defining core audience

The audience we are trying to reach is the youth or the digital generation. This Z generation communicates differently than the other generations do. I would like to break the youth today down even further into 2 key categories all related to their media connection to Health and Environmental issues: The Disengaged, The Engaged.

Gen Z (ages 1-17)

a) dis-engaged digital generation: these are kids who are very tech savvy, interact through these new platforms I’ll later discuss, but are not interested or engaged in environmental issues.

b) engaged digital generation: these are kids who get the environmental message, are taking actions and finding solutions to do something good in the world they live in. These are the future leaders who need your support and need to be granted access to better information, resources, and listened to as they are fast becoming the “first responders” of key information.

(As a side note, I could not give a speech in front of a UN audience without also pointing to the extremely important disconnected digital generation: these are people in emerging countries that if given the resources, could be connected, but are currently not. They usually fall into the engaged category because their villages rely on working with the environment. This group of teenagers is highly motivated and quite appreciative of being connected when they are granted that privilege.)

Section 3: Defining media and its changes over the past decade

It is not only the landscape of the planet that is changing. We are seeing a shift in the way media is created, accessed and disseminated. Traditional media is simply defined as: “the mass means of communication”.

Ten years ago, the main sources of information were film, radio, TV, magazines, and newspapers. The internet was a fledging place where we posted pictures and started to get “brochure ware sites” which were static pieces of information defined to introduce ideas. Cell phones weighed more than phone books and the term PDA stood for public displays of affection, not personal Digital applications - or blackberries. We did have the Palm; which offered the first digitized personal information, though unconnected.

Today’s analog audience still lives in a universe where they are primarily relying upon these sources as their key drivers.

b) Today’s Media - Amidst the Digital Revolution:

Ten years later, we have not only new technologies to learn and better use, but an entire new vocabulary to define these arenas. The Analog players must not only learn about the new forms of Media, but must learn about it in the same way a foreign language is studied and then implemented. While there are perhaps hundreds of new phrases and iconographic terminology, for the purpose of this presentation I have broken out the top 4 key defining trends: blogs, wikis, social networking, and mash-ups.
Other fundamental differences between traditional/analog media and today’s new media generation is user participation. Today’s new Media is no longer defined from a top down mentality, but from a bottom up approach. New media can best be described as “the mass means of conversation.”

Section 4: Blogs and Microblogs; Webisodes; Mash-Ups; Social Networking Sites.

a) Blogs consist of an entire sub universe of activity ranging from commentary blogs like Huffington Post, aggregator news feed blogs like Drudge Report, and green blogs like Treehugger.com. Blogs allow for “citizen journalism” to be recognized as a viable source of information due to the very nature of how news is generated; mass recognition and input leads to mass regulation and discernment. Just recently bloggers targeted Amazon for placing a book, about gay relationships, in the adult book section. Bloggers were outraged! All around the world people blogged about it, publicly shaming Amazon. Consequently, Amazon was held accountable, and the book was returned back to its appropriate section.

b) The blogs themselves have also evolved. Now there’s the new phenomena called ‘micro blogs’, defined by services such as Twitter; which ask the user one simple question: “What are you doing?” It is called a micro blog because the response must be under 140 characters called “tweets.”

Although the concept may seem mundane, these so-called “tweets” are becoming a powerful force in the way information is disseminated and accessed. It was Twitter that first broke the Hudson River plane crash and terrorist bombings in Mumbai. Twitter is surpassing conventional media by allowing for rapid, mass exchanges of information.

The site, characterized by a small chirping bird, is gaining some serious momentum. In February 2008, Twitter had an estimated 475,000 users. In one year alone, it jumped to roughly 7,000,000. To put that in perspective, Twitter saw a 1,374 percent jump in one year and in comparison Facebook only saw an increase of 228 percent over the same period.

With the emergence of “tweets” we are also discovering there is a lot more to the question, what are you doing, than meets the eye. Twitter is becoming a powerful research tool. Messages can be sent, from pacemakers placed in hearts, to doctors alerting them when a patient’s heart has skipped. Twitter can send notifications of where energy is being used and misused in your home. It can even track energy usage of an entire city. As a side note: Twitter is also a considered social network, with one fundamental difference Twitter users do not pick and create their own groups; theirs are self creating.

c) Webisodes: What we call web series of webisodes have begun popping up all over the internet. People are turning more to the internet for programing. This is why I was invited to speak to you today. I host webisodes called Zaproot which is a a weekly environmental news show with over 25 million viewers and growing. I am very proud to say we are #1. Webisodes allow for individuals, or shoes like Zaproot, to create their own content on a low budget and have it viewed by millions of people from around the world.

d) Mash-ups: Google earth just discovered what scientists have been trying to figure out for years; why animals migrate. They migrate to the magnetic poles! Through merely observing, satellite images that track the planet, we made this critical discovery. This innovative application not only tracks endangered species, but is also making enormous headway in efforts to stop deforestation, mountain top removal and over fishing.

e) Social networking is all about connecting. Its allows people to stay in touch with colleagues (linked in), lovers (match.com) friends (myspace). What is unique about social networking sites is it allows for complete strangers to connect through shared interests. Virtual communities are popping up all over the web and completely transforming the way humans communicate. These virtual communities are transcending the boundaries of space and time that we have up until this point, existed in. Social networking is the fastest growing sector in new media, These virtual communities are not only interactive, but proactive.

Media Metamorphosis

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Old Media</th>
<th>New Media</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Disconnected</td>
<td>Connected</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communication</td>
<td>Conversation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Limited</td>
<td>Exponential</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Top Down</td>
<td>Bottom up</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dictated to masses</td>
<td>Created by masses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opaque</td>
<td>Transparent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Speculation</td>
<td>Certainty</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Conclusion:
The transition to a sustainable culture is the biggest and most important we have faced as a civilization. This is where green social networking and media platforms, like Sustain Lane Media, can help. It can take the information from the data collectors and turn it into easily digestible, digital material that can reach the masses effectively. Imagine if we took the model from Face Book and mybarakobama.com, and applied it to environmentalism? The technologies exist right now. However, technology alone cannot save us. Small people, with small voices, must use these available resources to make themselves heard loud and clear. If we are to endeavor together towards a sustainable future, we must take the very first steps by ourselves.
Good afternoon, thank you for inviting me to participate in this conference. Just a few words about UNAIDS, UNAIDS is quite a unique entity within the United Nations system. UNAIDS is not an agency like UNICEF, UNDP, and the others. It is a joint program and I think it is important to remind ourselves because here we have talked about various global challenges and they require specific action from various identities, be it governmental or non-governmental, UN etc. AIDS, I think, is a very good example. As you know AIDS became one of the worst epidemics that human kind has ever experienced. It is also a very different type of issue because AIDS is much more than a health problem and this was recognized when it became apparent in the early 1980s.

This was a huge pandemic, global in its scope, effecting every sector of society and there are so many issues related to AIDS; be it the health related medical aspects, be it education, illness awareness, there are legal issues, and there are issues concerning AIDS in the work place. So this is an example why the ILO is a member of the UNAIDS family. So today we have 10 UN agencies including the World Health Organization, obviously UNICEF, UNDP, and the development program. I won’t name them all but there are ten key agencies working together to work on what the UN can do in terms of supporting countries in the fight against the epidemic. The secretariat of UNAIDS is in Geneva for the most part, with the small exception of the fact that we do have an office in New York because so much related to AIDS is also related to politics and policy and that’s why it is relevant to talk about AIDS and UNAIDS at this type of meeting.

The basis for everything related to children’s issues is the Convention on the Rights of the Child, which has been universally adopted as the human rights instrument for children. For example UNICEF is very much guided by the Convention and its provisions for practically every aspect of children’s lives. With regard to AIDS this is also critically important because when it comes to HIV infection, awareness, knowledge, and information are three key components.

We need to think about insuring that our children and young people know all there is to know about HIV, what it is, how it is transmitted, how you can protect yourself. This leads us also to somewhat difficult areas, and I would just like to make reference to a few things because the Convention on the Rights of the Child was born before the world faced this huge epidemic.

The first time that AIDS was discussed in this building was in 2001 when there was a groundbreaking special session of the General Assembly on HIV and AIDS in June 2001. For 3 days member states discussed and finally adopted the declaration of commitment on HIV/AIDS which sets out what needs to be done in terms of prevention, treatment, care and support for everyone in the world living with HIV.

This was not an easy process. Why? Because as you all know AIDS brings to the table personal issues, to do with human sexuality, because HIV is mainly transmitted through sexual contact, even though in some parts of the world, for example in Eastern Europe and in some parts of Asia, injected drug use has been the primary driver of the epidemic. When I worked in Russia and Eastern Europe that was the bulk of the problem among young people. You also see increasing numbers of cases related to sexual context in this region.

We need to face all of these issues in terms of information and education. This Convention guides us and I think that for all of us in this room it is important for us
to advocate for policies, programs and legislation which will insure that information and knowledge is made available. At the end of last year there were approximately 33 million people living with HIV or AIDS around the world and we need to remember that almost 22 million people have died of AIDS so far. These are incredible numbers that are unprecedented. Last year we focused on children.

There are between 2 and 2.5 million children living with HIV around the world and an estimated 70,000 children, younger than 15 years of age, died because of AIDS and more than 90% in Sub-Saharan Africa. There were 400,000 new infections of HIV last year among children and the number of children orphan by AIDS has now reached nearly 12 million in Sub-Saharan Africa. Also in several countries in Southeast Asia families and communities face these problems. I should also like to add here that half of all the infections occur amongst women.

HIV has a young face. This is also incredibly important in terms of policy legislation programs because AIDS hits people in their most productive ages. So usually, when we look at statistics, you look at the numbers for people between 15 and 47, and you have data related to children. We need to highlight that young people bare the brunt of the burden in many countries.

AIDS has fallen off of the news headlines recently. But even in the United States, there was quite a serious increase in infections last year, mainly among immigrant communities, African American communities, and also very young gay Americans who became infected. There is no reason why anyone actually should become infected today in the United States. There were also increases in France, Switzerland, the United Kingdom, even in Sweden where I come from, which is very worrisome. Here again, the two real global goals established through the Declaration of Commitment and the Political Declaration adopted in this building in 2006 calls for universal access to prevention, treatment, care and support related to HIV. And, of course, there is the Convention of the Rights of the Child. I should also mention that there are also linkages between HIV, tuberculosis and global health in general. This is another discussion. It is so important to see this in a broader context of global public health.

So just quickly, some of the key strategies here relate to insuring capacities for families to protect and care for orphans or vulnerable children. We have to mobilize community responses. When AIDS was first identified, actually, in the United States, where there was an immediate response from the gay community because the epidemic, was identified in men who have sex with men. There was a rapid civil society response when there was a lot of denial, and fear, stigma, and discrimination. This has repeated itself around the world. In Africa, the community response is also incredible, where you have village communities caring for orphan children or faith based organizations taking active roles in prevention, treatment, as well as caring support. The key message is that there has to be policy and legislation in place. This is why, in the UNAIDS family and the UN, we advocate for review of legislation in all countries. This is not only related to the country’s health policy, we need to look at the education policy, we need to look at labor policies, and we need to look at immigration policies. This may be a surprise to some of you, but actually, our Secretary General was very strong in his call at the Mexico AIDS conference last year for countries to abolish restrictions regarding entry and residence because their countries actually prohibit entry of visitors of people identified as living with HIV.

Chart number 5 shows how very critical it is to raise awareness at all levels in terms of advocacy, social mobilization, and support. I will just rapidly wrap up, and we can come back in the discussion. There are a few areas I will go through: strengthen capacities of family – how this is done, with various life skills programs, economics, social, and other support. Community based responses need to be supported, and this is specifically critical in developing countries. It is even more important that we are facing the financial crisis. We really need to insure that vulnerable populations do not suffer; that essential social services are in place particularly in education and health. Also, very important, are birth registration, planning for succession, inheritance and so forth.
4. Ensure that governments protect the most vulnerable children through improved policy and legislation and by channelling resources to communities.

- Adopt national policies, strategies and action plans
- Enhance government capacity
- Ensure that resources reach communities
- Develop and enforce a supportive legislative framework
- Establish mechanisms to ensure information exchange and collaboration of efforts

Governments need to protect the most vulnerable children through improved policy and legislation. Governments need to make resources available, so that there is capacity through a national AIDS commission, or other bodies that will have the knowledge, experience, expertise to tackle AIDS in the broader context. And finally, awareness raising. That is for all of us in this room, advocates and agents, because it is something we need to talk about. We need to talk about it openly; and above all, we need to overcome our fears and all elements of stigma and discrimination. We need to talk openly about sexual behavior among young people. We have to talk openly about injection drug use. We also need to talk openly about issues related to sexual orientation - which is critical. These are issues that young people are facing, whether they live in New York, Buenos Aires, Dakar, or Zurich. So with that, I will end, and thank you very much.

5. Raise awareness at all levels through advocacy and social mobilization to create a supportive environment for children and families affected by HIV/AIDS.

- Conduct a collaborative situation analysis
- Mobilize influential leaders to reduce stigma, silence and discrimination
- Strengthen and support social mobilization activities at the community level

The work of ISDE is based on the following strategies:

- “Action in partnership”
- Building alliances
- Regional replication
- Multi-sectorial participation

The main tools to implement the strategies to fulfill the goals are:

- Education
- Information
- Advocacy
- Promotion of research with intervention in the community

ISDE today wants to highlight the essential role that health plays in sustainable development, taking into account the special situation of health and high costs for the future that developing countries are paying because the lack of or inadequate chemicals management. An important area that is often overlooked or not recognized by either a government official, a health professional (a nurse or a physician), a teacher, or a parent is the possibility of harmful exposures to chemicals in the environment.

Yet every day we may be exposed to a variety of potentially hazardous chemicals in the air we breathe, in the food and water we consume, in homes and schools, in play areas and at work. Some of these potential harmful exposures are a result of deficient chemical management, trans-boundary movements of chemicals in the environment or in products or in hazardous wastes. The repetitive exposure to chemicals in the environment from conception throughout life may have serious effects on health and for future generations. Health should be an integral component of every country’s chemical safety agenda.

Vulnerable populations such as young men and women, pregnant women and particularly children have increased susceptibilities. Actions to prevent and minimize harmful exposures should always include special consideration of their circumstances.

Individuals, organizations, and agencies are all responsible for taking urgent action to protect health and to prevent harmful exposures. All sectors need to become more aware of the potential adverse impact on human health of inadequate chemicals management. The health sector capacity of every country needs to improve and promote the chemical safety process at all levels.

The achievement of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), especially those that aim at reducing child mortality (MDG 4) and ensuring environmental sustainability (MDG 7) requires the safe and sound management of chemicals. But chemical management and health effects is a crosscutting issue if the MDG wants to be achieved on time (2015).

The social and economic cost of the exposure to chemicals can be high and affect sustainable development by affecting the health of populations. In addition to the increment of the direct medical expenses, sick days keep children away from school and workers away from work. The lost of productivity, childhood illness, disability and death are an emotional and economic toll on families and communities all over the world.
The poor are the most vulnerable and may suffer the most harm, as they tend to be undernourished, live in more polluted environments, and lack adequate access to health care and education. Moreover, persistent poor health contributes to a cycle of poverty, negatively impacting the long-term productivity of communities and entire nations.

All sectors, particularly the health sector, governmental areas and international organizations, have to participate in chemical safety polices. Targeted efforts are needed to include all sectors in efforts and raise awareness on the negative impact on health of the chemicals inadequate management. Countries and international organizations need to invest in capacity building. The first step is to identify the emerging problems and learn from the successful experiences in other countries and regions. Based on this knowledge programs can be organized and scenarios prepared to allow all sectors to participate.

Concerning the potential health effects of toxic chemical exposure, it is important to inform immediately and educate to alert without alarming the populations. The health professionals particularly, have a responsibility and a “right to know” and be educated. They should be allowed to participate and contribute with other sectors because of the unique role and the contribution that they can make.

Investments have to be made to update the medical professional education in Medical Schools, and provide the means to take action to protect the health of the population. They prepare doctors to bring science and research into action. This scientific information must be effectively communicated to decision makers. Only if a level of understanding is reached will responsible individuals be able to facilitate the identification and diagnosis of the exposure situations, implement improvements, substitutions and interventions to enforcement the Conventions. In the end this will enable the application of the best control with the contribution of all sectors including industry.

For chemical safety we have to work together. But there are sectors, organizations, regions, countries that have clearly more and different responsibilities to make things happen. Agenda 21 talks of equity and solidarity and this applies also for the global chemicals management regime and particularly international waste management.

UN Organizations and organizations working in Chemical Safety as the Intergovernmental Forum on Chemical Safety (IFCS), the Strategic Approach to the International Chemical Management (SAICM), and the International Conference on Chemicals Management (ICCM) and the different Secretariats responsible for overseeing the implementation and follow up of the different Conventions (Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm) have special responsibilities at the global level and in each region to include all sectors in efforts addressing chemical safety. The health sector once informed and knowledgeable has a responsibility to participate and contribute to solutions and preventive actions.

The World Health Organization (WHO) has a very special and mandated role to play. It should be leading the process in partnership with the other responsible health sectors. WHO should assume the responsibility that it has to reinforce and promote the processes of interaction especially in developing regions, and implement the mandate of the governments expressed in the Resolution 59 of the WHA in 2006 to take full account of the health aspects of chemical safety and to participate in the implementation of the SAICM. The actions will reinforce and prepare the health sector to participate globally but are especially important for developing regions.

Some of the immediate actions to be taken are: capacity building to understand correctly the financial cost and the cost of the effects on health of chemicals; development of local and regional indicators to be able to identify the main risks and mapping the situation to address actions; to identify the more vulnerable populations as women, children, elder, workers and ordinary people at risk and implement urgent action to protect them.

These actions are central if the Development Millennium Goals are to be achieved, the impact on human health and the threats of the lack of adequate chemicals management must be addressed. Without doing so the gap between countries will surely only widen. But as we are trying to identify the effects on health to better implement measures to control and prevent current problems and reduce the impacts, at the same time new and unknown threats for health are emerging. For example the possible negative consequences of e-waste management, the introduction into the market place of manufactured nano-materials or the international transport of heavy metals (lead, cadmium or mercury) via trade in products and waste. If no global measures are taken to prevent potential hazardous exposure the environmental burden of disease particularly developing countries will continue to increase.

By working with the health sector, which has the capacity to understand the mechanism of chemicals on human health, it will be possible to take not only preventive action when scientific certainty exists, but also to take “precautionary” action to avoid potential harmful and possibly irreversible health damage where a level of uncertainty exist but action is justified.

Finally, all sectors (decision makers, health care providers, educators, environmental and community organizations, industry groups, academia, and other) have critical insights and an important stake in the outcome of national policies implementation and action plans to protect health from unsound hazardous waste production and management. Each groups can contribute through dialogue, networking and incentive multi-sectorial actions thus inspiring mutual trust among all sectors and confidence in cooperation and promoting a healthy population.
Environmental policy that affects people’s health is often made without any health professionals at the table. This may be, in part, because health professionals are inexperienced with regard to environmental health issues. Little time is spent during medical school and residency training on environmental hazards and their relationship to illness. General medical and textbooks devote scant attention to illness as a result of environmental factors. Information pertinent to environmental health is widely scattered in scientific, epidemiological, and specialty journals not regularly read by clinicians.

To enhance the capacity of health professionals in selected less industrialized countries to handle environmental problems, the International Pediatric Association, with assistance from the World Health Organization, initiated the International Pediatric Environmental Health Leadership Institute in 2005. It was designed to teach pediatricians about the links between children’s health and the environment and to improve their capacities for leadership in the recognition, diagnosis, management and prevention of pediatric diseases from the environment and to facilitate exchange of ideas among pediatricians on prevention and treatment of childhood illnesses from the environment.

The Institute’s long-term goal was to stop the “vicious cycle” of persistent exposure to polluted water, food and air that prevents many children in low and middle income countries from thriving.

The International Pediatric Association collaborated with the World Health Organization to present tailored training courses on children’s environmental health in 3 countries: Kenya, India and Haiti. A 3 day workshop was organized for pediatricians in each country. Pediatricians who were eligible to participate include members of the national or regional pediatric societies or specialty pediatric societies. They were recruited through their national pediatric society newsletters and websites. Nurses who expressed interest were invited to attend with their pediatric colleagues.

Each workshop offered a standard children’s environmental health curriculum designed to present introductory materials to pediatricians with no formal training in environmental health. The curriculum used specific modules taken from the WHO Training Package for Health Care Providers, a series of peer-reviewed annotated PowerPoint presentations on key topics in children’s environmental health. The World Health Organization developed these modules with internationally harmonized information and peer-reviewed materials to enable health care providers to understand more about the links between children’s health and their environment, and also to become trainers of their peers and colleagues. The modules include extensive notes, references, and case studies. A selected team of experienced pediatric and environmental health professionals from 15 countries participated in their preparation. Each workshop provided 20 to 24 classroom hours of instruction; the length depended on local needs and circumstances in each country. In each workshop, there was an emphasis on the environmental health history and the use of the WHO pediatric environmental health history form (“green sheet”) and the clinicians were encouraged to begin using it in their daily practices. At the close of the workshop, all participants received a CD with the WHO original version of the training modules, the American Academy of Pediatrics book Pediatric Environmental Health (2nd edition), and the WHO Resource Manual on Children’s Health and the Environment: A Global Perspective. A Resource Manual for the Health Sector. Participants were encouraged to use the WHO training materials as the basis for their own presentations and organize training sessions in their own countries. It was emphasized that as each module contained a large number of slides, it was important to use only 20 to 25 slides per single presentation. Speakers were encouraged to select only those slides most relevant to the audience and the purpose of the event. One hundred eighty nine clinicians participated in the workshops.

The International Pediatric Environmental Health Leadership Institute demonstrated that pediatricians can be taught the basic elements of pediatric environmental health in a three-day workshop. The modules have now been made available on the WHO and IPA websites so that others who wish to learn online may do so. We expect that the modules will be updated continuously and remain an important component of the International Pediatric Environmental Health Leadership Institute. To access the modules, please go to the International Pediatric Association website:

http://www.ipa-world.org/Program_Areas/Pages/TrainingPackageHealthCareProviders.aspx or contact Dr. Ruth Etzel at retzel@gwu.edu.
At the 2009 World Economic Forum, world and business leaders converged in Davos to wrestle with the global economic crisis and discuss solutions for “Shaping the Post-Crisis World” in six areas, including economics, politics, innovation, science, technology, and new business models.

As a Global Health Diplomat with principal employment in the private sector, I was asked to participate in a session entitled “From GDP to Gross National Happiness.” As the sole health communicator and physician in the session, I joined noted psychologist and Nobel laureate Daniel Kahneman amongst others to explore this unique idea.

New Economics Foundation Executive Director Stewart Wallis shared the theoretical and evidence base they have developed. This includes the suggestion of National Accounts of Well-Being that could guide the direction of modern societies and the lives of people who live in them. The measures of health and wellness—not just the measures of disease and the economic indicators on which governments currently rely—could explain the relative success or failure of countries in supporting a good life for their citizens. National governments could use a variety of assessments at appropriate intervals to directly measure people’s subjective well-being: their experiences, feelings, and perceptions of how their lives are going.

The idea of holistic health is not new; it was circulated by the World Health Organization in 1947 where health was defined as “a state of complete physical, mental, and social well being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity.” President Truman formed the 1951 President’s Commission on the Health Needs of the Nation in the USA to provide recommendations about how to meet the nation’s immediate and long-term health care requirements. The commission published a landmark work touching on issues of health promotion (as opposed to disease treatment) entitled the Magnuson Report (for the commission’s chairman, Dr. Paul A. Magnuson). It was holistic in that it concluded that if a person’s social environment involved a lack of basic security such as food, shelter, or employment, the achievement of positive health (and wellness) was much more difficult than if these were not a source of stress. This suggested that social capital that included a network of supportive social and cultural institutions were necessary to support the individual in his quest to achieve high-level wellness. In 1961, Halbert Dunn introduced the idea of high-level wellness as “an integrated method of functioning which is oriented toward maximizing the potential of which the individual is capable. It requires that the individual maintain a continuum of balance and purposeful direction within the environment where he is functioning” (Dunn, 1961).

At a fundamental level, this nascent area of study and pedagogy presaged a communication and wellness perspective. Building on many of these ideas and other theoretical constructs as old as the ancient Greeks, in 1990, I suggested and published an acronym for holistic health—POISE “a balance—physical, occupational, intellectual, social/spiritual, and emotional approaches” as dimensions for health. While this was discussed as...
a framework for Leading Health Indicators for the United States at a subsequent Institute of Medicine Committee, it principally became a theoretical construct in health communication, joining other wellness-related contexts with health communication teacher-scholars ontology.

Today, as the world is developing a greater interest in health and wellness, not just the absence of disease, we have the theories and now need the practice with a happiness or wellness index. There are three key reasons to advance such an idea:

1. It would be a new way of assessing societal progress by explicitly capturing how people view and measure national progress, success, and what we value as a society.
2. Rather than an economic-based approach, it would be multidisciplinary and an ethical and evidence-informed approach to policy-making.
3. It could galvanize global institutions, national governments, and the public to address issues and antecedent factors about which the public is most concerned.

What would we need to do to make this happen?

In addition to the World Economic Forum, there has been discussion in Europe in this regard as French President Nicholas Sarkozy set up a special commission on the measurement of economic performance and social progress. The prominent U.K. economist Richard Layard’s book “Happiness” argued that the economic model of human nature used by policymakers is “far too limited” and that “[happiness] should become the goal of policy, and the progress of national happiness should be measured and analyzed as closely as the growth of GNP.” There is increased discussion at multiple venues of considerations to define a new approach so that we question the utility of economic indicators and explore what it might mean to capture true measures of well-being.

Recent communication from the U.S. Institute of Medicine as well as proposed draft legislation have suggested development of a set of indicators or index (Quality of Life—wellness—health literacy—happiness—health competence or some other composite) that could demonstrate that an increase in economic growth is not necessarily increasing well-being.

This shift from medical to health and wellness will require global health diplomacy that helps advance issues of importance amongst multiple stakeholders, in a variety of settings to advance health and happiness, while strengthening international relations and communication. As diplomacy is often thought of as the art and practice of conducting negotiations, “global health diplomacy” can help develop the innovative ideas amongst multiple stakeholders to advance collective action and partnerships in an interdependent world.

Our common interest with the broad range of disciplines and reach with this journal suggests that the fundamental base of health communication and negotiation advancing global health diplomacy is tantamount for the pursuit of health for all citizens worldwide.
I would like to thank our distinguished panelists for their insightful presentation and as you can see, we’ve enjoyed an afternoon of rich discussion and some very good questions posed, much food for thought. By way of closing, I would like to emphasize that today’s discussions could not come at a more critical juncture, when development, environment and health are high on the international political agenda. Children’s health and policies that promote them are integral to achieving sustainable development and poverty eradication goals are particularly important under the Millennium Development Goals.

In this respect, we’re all going to have to step up our efforts. This is not just merely an exercise in rhetoric, but we need to translate these words into action, especially in these current times of uncertainty and economic crisis. You, the students attending here today are the future. The future belongs to you. If we are wise enough to allow history to play its role as in the Latin proverb, “Historia est magistra vitae,” that is, “History is the teacher of life,” then let’s let history teach us and not merely repeat itself for the sake of today’s children and youth, and for future generations to come. Once again, I’d like to thank all our panelists and would you just put your hands together to show your appreciation once again for their presentations.
Nowadays it is one of the priority tasks of international community to tackle successfully with one of the toughest challenges in 21 century and achieve the First Millennium Development Goal for the reduction poverty and hunger. As a global society we cannot accept increasing levels of poverty and hunger.

Therefore, here in the United Nations, we have to promote growing international effort to raise the political profile of the global food security crisis.

Ukraine welcomes all join steps and measures to address the food insecurity and is ready to engage more actively in this process.

We co-sponsored and supported the resolution on “Agriculture Development and Food Security” adopted by the General Assembly during its sixty-third session. Ukraine is looking forward to effectively work during the next, sixty-fourth session of GA under the respective agenda item devoted to food security.

We co-sponsored and supported the resolution on “Agriculture Development and Food Security” adopted by the General Assembly during its sixty-third session. Ukraine is looking forward to effectively work during the next, sixty-fourth session of GA under the respective agenda item devoted to food security.


We rely very much on the work of the High-Level Task Force established by the Secretary-General in 2008 that had put together a “Comprehensive Framework for Action” based on a consensus between the United Nations agencies, the World Bank, World Trade Organization and the International Monetary Fund for a coordinated response. It is important to set out a framework for a global partnership for food security, bringing together Governments, regional bodies, civil society, private sector, businesses, international agencies, development banks and donors.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Ukraine understands very well the vital needs of people that suffer from hunger.

In the 20th century – only 75 years ago – Ukraine found itself in a very difficult situation. Perhaps the worst situation for the people of my country, when over 10 million people died from hunger.

Looking back to it, it is impossible to overestimate the pain of loss of the millions of innocent lives. Nowadays the issue of Ukrainian Holodomor – in other words, death by hunger – is well known around the Globe.

I would like once again to thank those who supported Ukraine’s initiative of recognizing of the Holodomor and commemoration of its victims. We appreciate every single signature from more than several dozens we have under the Declaration on the seventy-fifth anniversary of the Holodomor of 1932-1933, which remains
open for signing during sixty-third GA session. Those, who co-sponsored the Declaration from the very beginning, as well as those, who signed it just recently, have done invaluable contribution to the international recognition of the Holodomor, to opening of truth of the history.

Today this sad historical lesson teaches us: “Right to food is right to life”.

We strongly believe that food never ever can be used as the arm for punishment and become a part of the state policy management. Therefore international community should ensure the food stability and access to the food for all.

Ukraine is looking forward to participating actively in the international efforts to support countries in need.

My country is well-known in the world as one having a high potential for agricultural capacity. But the potential of the agriculture development in Ukraine is also great. The long-term solutions lay in attracting more investment in agricultural production, development and transfer of technologies, better use of soil resources, taking into the consideration the advantages from the land fertility.

We would welcome every initiative that elaborates well-organized international mechanism to achieve longer-term global food security.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Let me once again underline that the international community may not stay apart when millions of people around the globe are suffering from hunger and poverty.

Addressing that global threat we have to act as one. I thank you very much.

Dr. Claudia Strauss
Vice Chair and Director,
World Information Transfer

Introduction and Famine Chronology

Your Excellencies, Colleagues. I want to take a look at the phrase we chose for the title of this briefing. The phrase is Food Security. That is an expression hardly found in every day conversation in developed countries and is both broad and fluid in definition.

As an operational concept, Food Security entered international parlance in the mid 1970’s. The concept, which initially addressed issues of food production and supply, has been reshaped over the past 25 years to focus on food consumption, food quality (nutrition) and poverty reduction (reducing the number of people living on less than $2.00/day). By the mid-90’s, the concept of Food Security became a part of the overall framework for Human Security as conceived by the UN Development Program.

According to the UN Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO), “Food security exists when all people, at all times, have physical, social and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food which meets their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life.” The opposite of Food Security is Food Insecurity which FAO describes as the condition occurring when, “people do not have adequate physical, social or economic access to food.....”

When does food insecurity actually mean famine? The chronology of famine – a short version is in our World Ecology Report of Winter 2008 – shows that famine has occurred in all regions of the world and has usually been caused by a combination of natural and human factors. Documentation of famine goes back to 400 B.C., although comparisons are not always clear as the calculations for famine have changed over the millennia and from place to place.

Nature’s well-known role in causing famine is often exacerbated by human activity which includes political instability and war, corruption, poor land management policies and techniques, market and trade policies, and population growth. Climate change is expected to have a critical impact on grain harvests globally as world population surpasses 9 billion by 2050. Potato blight and crop destruction set off The Great Irish Famine between 1845 and 1849, but the crisis was aggravated as food was shipped from Ireland to England for higher prices.

Famine was both a cause and result of the Taiping Rebellion in China, between 1850 and 1873. The number of casualties ranges from 30 to approximately 60 million people over the two decades. Famine was used as a weapon of war or oppression in the First and Second World Wars and during the inter-war period as Soviet collectivization spread westward from Moscow; and in the Cambodian civil war during the reign of the Khmer Rouge. There is a long list of examples of famine used as a weapon throughout the world.

Getting the terminology right is important for developing and implementing policies on availability of and access to food, but it is also important for clearly describing reality. Famine does not necessarily mean that food itself is in short supply, but famine does imply that some people do not have life sustaining access to food. Differentiating famine from food insecurity is necessary not only for mitigating a food crisis but also for identifying its causes.
For the purpose of this presentation, and for that matter any discussion on food security, it is necessary to determine, what food security and food insecurity are. The former, for a household means access by all members at all times to enough food for an active, healthy life. Food security includes at a minimum: the ready availability of nutritionally adequate and safe foods, assured ability to acquire acceptable foods in socially acceptable ways (that is, without resorting to emergency food supplies, scavenging, stealing, or other coping strategies). Whereas, the latter is limited or uncertain availability of nutritionally adequate and safe foods or limited or uncertain ability to acquire acceptable foods in socially acceptable ways.

**Source:** (Definitions are from the Life Sciences Research Office, S.A. Andersen, ed., “Core Indicators of Nutritional State for Difficult to Sample Populations,” The Journal of Nutrition 120:1557S-1600S, 1990.)

Today’s presentation will cover the calorie budget for many households, a global look at the balance of food prices and exports, commentary on how conflict impacts food policy.

At the outset of the First World War, Russia’s officials judged its capacity to sustain the war effort in favorable terms, largely because of the country’s abundance of grain-growing regions. They could not have been more wrong in terms of their calculations. Within a year, shortages of articles of primary necessity – kerosene, footwear, textiles, and food – were registered in cities and towns throughout the empire. The foremost cause of these shortages was the diversion of resources, production and transport to war needs, which left inadequate supplies for the civilian economy. The creation of a Special Council for Food in 1915, the imposition of rationing, and other measures did little to alleviate the problem. Food riots, in which working-class women and soldiers’ wives figured prominently, were a frequent occurrence. The February Revolution was initiated in Petrograd by women workers’ protests over bread shortages. Food supply would continue to be a source of popular discontent throughout 1917 and beyond.

**Source:** The Russian Revolution 1917, Rex Wade

**Food Supply Problems Continue to Affect Many Developing Countries**

In Africa, civil strife and/or weather adversities are causing food supply difficulties in parts, increasing the number of people in need of food assistance. In eastern
Africa, severe drought conditions in Somalia have exacerbated the country’s already tight food supply situation due to a succession of poor harvests and the long-running civil conflict. An estimated 1 million people are facing food shortages. In Ethiopia, some 4.6 million vulnerable people, including those affected by the failure of the current belg season, as well as 385,000 internally displaced people due to the ongoing conflict with Eritrea, are in need of food assistance. In Eritrea, an estimated 450,000 people affected by the conflict with Ethiopia need food assistance. In Sudan, nearly 2.4 million war-affected people in the south are receiving emergency food assistance. In Uganda, about 400,000 displaced people plus 30,000 people in Rakai district affected by drought are receiving food assistance.

Source: FAO/GIEWS - Food Outlook

Resource Nationalism Portends Profits and Conflict

Almost as much in the news are the recent efforts of National Governments to protect Food Supplies. In the past few months, Egypt, Cambodia, Indonesia, and Tanzania have banned the export of certain foods. India and China also imposed severe food export restrictions. And, most recently, Kazakhstan, a large grain exporter, imposed a total ban on the export of wheat. These developments have long been predictable since world population has increased by over 1.1 billion people since 1975, but arable land devoted to food production has not increased since 1989. Moreover, food production likely cannot be expanded significantly beyond current levels because most of the land which could be brought into production today is marginal land, and not prime farmland.

Source: DeepCaster LLC, April 28, 2008

Rebels seize U.N. Food Supply in Philippine South

Philippine Muslim guerrillas halted a United Nations convoy and seized food supplies intended for tens of thousands of people displaced by weeks of fighting on a southern island, police said on Friday. “The rebels ordered the aid workers, at gunpoint, to transfer the shipment of food,” Goltiao said, adding the convoy initially thought the armed men on uniform were soldiers manning a checkpoint.

Since Aug. 11, the U.N. agencies had distributed more than 1,200 tonnes of rice to more than half a million people displaced by weeks of fighting in six southern provinces.

Source: Sept 5, 2008 (Reuters)

Over 3.5 Million at “high risk” of food insecurity: Ministry

“High food prices and drought have driven over one million vulnerable people across Afghanistan into ‘high-risk’ food-insecurity in the past five months, increasing the total number of ‘most vulnerable people’ to over 3.5 million, the Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation and Livestock (MAIL), told IRIN. A joint vulnerability assessment conducted by UN agencies and Afghan governmental bodies in December 2007 identified 2.55 million Afghans (out of a total population of some 26 million) as being in need of an emergency ‘safety net’ and severely affected by high food prices. Since January, food has become unaffordable for thousands of vulnerable households. Afghanistan was ranked the fifth least developed country in the world in 2007.”

Source: Integrated Regional Information Networks, 12 June 2008
Your Excellencies, Distinguished Delegates, Colleagues, Ladies and Gentlemen, I would like to thank the Mission of Ukraine and World Information Transfer for the opportunity to make this presentation.

While developed countries started industrial modernization at the beginning of the 19th century, in Ukraine, industrial modernization began in the second half of the 1920’s by the Soviet government under Joseph Stalin. The support for industrialization was grain export to Western Europe. The farmers produced 528.7 million poods of grain annually by the middle 1920’s (pood is a unit of measure equal to 16.4 kilograms). Accelerated industrialization goals by the USSR’s regime required confiscating grain from farmers by using repressive and murderous methods. The Communist Party was transforming from a political party into a system of repression and murder. Party organs, government executive organs, the courts, the Office of the Public Prosecutor, the police, and special services took an active part in organizing forced grain procurement in Ukrainian villages.

The Soviet government created financial and fiscal pressures on rural farms, resulting in famine and abject poverty. All the while, the USSR exported 298 million poods of grain in 1930, 316 million poods in 1931, but in 1932 the grain export totaled 108 million poods. The grain which was exported in 1932 could have rescued the millions of Ukrainian farmers who died in the artificially engineered famine known as the Holodomor 1932/1933.

Middle-class farmers, the grain producers, refused to give their grain to the state for a song and to enter collective farms. As its response, the Soviet government launched repressions against those it considered wealthy farmers. In a process known as “dispossession,” in 1930, 31, 595 rural Ukrainian farmers were deported to remote areas of the USSR. In 1931, this number increased to 32,127. In response, the rural population protested against the forced grain procurement, dispossession, forced collectivization, and church destruction. This protest was especially strong in Ukraine and Kuban Region in Russia, where ethnic Ukrainians lived. In fact, during first three months in 1930, the special service of the USSR registered 1630 farmer protests against forced collectivization, 923 of which took place in Ukraine. In 1930, 227,000 people rebelled in the Northern Caucasus (mainly in the Kuban, heavily populated by ethnic Ukrainians). Ukrainian rebels called for independence and restoration of the Ukrainian People’s Republic declared in 1918. There was a real threat of Ukrainians leaving the USSR.

Stalin and his comrades considered Ukraine and Kuban to be the regions of most severe opposition to the Communist system. In his August 1932 letter to Lazar Kaganovych, the Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party, Stalin remarked that Ukraine was of the main importance to the USSR’s survival. “If we don’t take measures to stabilize the situation in Ukraine, we can lose it,” he wrote.

The Soviet state thus organized a famine terror in Ukraine and Kuban Region. In November 1932, special decrees were issued especially for Ukraine and Kuban by the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Ukraine and the Northern Caucasus District Committee in order to punish the residents of these territories, who were ethnic Ukrainians. The measures were as follows: agriculture fines, farms searches and economic blockades. Ukrainian villages were blacklisted and quarantined from obtaining any food deliveries, and brigades of government-mobilized collective farmers, called “activists,” were organized to confiscate not only grain, but all other food and valuables so that farmers couldn’t sell them or exchange them for food.

In 1932, 1.72 million tons of grain were exported from Ukraine, and in 1933, this amount was 1.68 million tons. In order to confiscate food, there were special detachments organized known as towing brigades. Mykhaylo Hlushych, born in 1924 in the Zaporizhia region, recalled, “At first, dad gave the grain himself. Then they came and took everything that was left. Then they started to search. I remember that ten men burst into the house. The door was wide open. They destroyed our stove and our floor. There were two bucketful of beans left, and nothing else. They took away the beans.”

Yalosoveta Cherevan, born in 1915 in the Poltava region said: “There were confiscating brigades with metal pokers everywhere in the village. They pierced the floors, confiscating everything edible. They even found my granny’s slices of dried pumpkin and threw them into the mud in the yard.”

Yefrosyniya Skrul, born in 1901 in the Poltava region, recalled: “In the autumn, local mobilized activists started to go around the homesteads, taking away even the last seeds. They said they received orders from the government to confiscate all the grain from the people without leaving anything for sowing. When asked how they were supposed to feed their children, the answer was the
The order is to hand in all the grain and we have to do this by all means, otherwise we will be shot.”

Fedir Savchenko, born in 1920 in the Poltava region, testified: “In 1932, the activists found two small packets of grain that mother didn’t want to give. They seized the grain violently. Then activists wrote reports about Priska Savchenko hiding the grain and putting obstacles in the way of fulfilling the grain procurement plans of the Steputskaya Village Council. She was sentenced to two years’ labor at the White Sea and Baltic Channel construction projects.”

Millstones, mills and mortars were common devices used by peasants to make food during the famine. These devices were to be confiscated. Mykhailo Savchenko, born in 1903 in the Poltava region, testified: “The activists went around homesteads... They broke all the millstones, mills and mortars.”

Homestead rounds were conducted in the late fall and winter of 1932, and the beginning of spring 1933. Anastasiya Kornotsenko, born in 1920 in the Poltava region, recalled: “Government-mobilized thieves came to the village several times, taking away everything that could be used as food. Leather items were also taken away, since they could be boiled and eaten.”

As further evidence of the genocidal nature of the Soviet government’s deeds, the decree of the Central Committee of the All-Russian Communist Party of Bolshevik and People’s Deputies Council of the USSR «On preventing mass farmers departure» on January 22, 1933 established a border blockade of Soviet Ukraine from the surrounding republics of Russia and Belarus, preventing Ukrainian farmers from crossing the border to rescue themselves and thus sentencing them to death by starvation. Varvara Voloshyna, born in 1925 in Kremenchuk of the Poltava region, recalled: “Mother collected things and went to sell them in Belarus. But people weren’t allowed to board trains to cross the border. She had to leave the train, cross the border through fields and forests, sell her things there, and then walk back, because they didn’t allow anyone to enter Ukraine with foodstuffs. Otherwise, they searched and confiscate every single dried crust.”

Maria Ovsienko, born in 1925 in the Poltava region, testified: “My grandfather intended to go to Russia several times, but there were border inspectors on the trains and at the stations, and people were taken out of trains in Orel, Byelgorod, Kaluga and sent back home violently.” I must point out that there are essential distinctions in defining the reasons, mechanisms and effects of the 1932-33 famine in Russia (where food was lacking) and the implementation of terror famine in Ukrainian villages, where food was intentionally confiscated in order to eliminate conditions for survival. The famine mechanism in the Ukrainian village was based on periodic homestead searches, which were not employed in Russian villages. A native of the village of Kologriyuvka of the Lunensk district of the Penza Region of Russia, Rayusa Antchak recalled: “In 1932-33, food was not confiscated from our village and no searches were held in farmers homesteads. What did we have to take away? We were half-starving, but there was enough food to avoid starvation. During the 1932-33 famine, nobody in our family (there were six children and two parents) died.”

As a rule, large families in Ukraine couldn’t survive the starvation. Eyewitnesses trying to define the motives of the Holodomor pointed out the national reason. Panteleymon Plypenko, born in 1921 said: “The main reason of the Holodomor was the absence of a stable national state.” Ivan Pasynych, born in 1911 in Myrhorod in the Poltava region, said: “In my mind, the main reason of the 1933 famine was anti-Ukrainian policy held by the Bolsheviks.” Thus in defining the motive, character, size and effects of the 1932-1933 Holodomor-genocide of Ukrainian people, we should consider the national reason – the threat of Ukrainians aspiring to restore an independent Ukrainian state, which had previously existed, and a strong desire of the Russian Empire and the Soviet Union to suppress an independent Ukrainian state.

The law on the 1932-1933 Holodomor passed by the Ukrainian parliament in November 2006 acknowledged the act of genocide against the Ukrainian people as the consequence of premeditated actions of the Soviet government that was aimed at the mass annihilation of Ukrainian peasants. The actions of the state in the fall of 1932 bore characteristics which can be classified as genocide, according to Article II of the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, adopted by UN General Assembly on December 9, 1948:

Farmstead searches in Ukraine and Kuban (REGION), which were populated with ethnic Ukrainians, to extract food.

The prohibition on Ukraine’s rural population from fleeing the genocidal conditions into neighboring Soviet republics to rescue themselves.

An information ban on the famine in Ukraine (in the USSR, this ban existed until 1987).

Such actions created conditions incompatible with life, so that is genocide. In 2008 according to the information of Institute of Demography and Social Research of the National Academy of Sciences, 3.4 million excessive deaths occurred in 1932-1933, while 1.1 million people were eliminated from an excessive decline in the birth rate. The demographic losses totaled 6 million people.

The Holodomor had other effects on Ukrainian society: moral, political, and economic. The international importance of recognizing the 1932-1933 Holodomor as genocide, not only in Ukraine but also in the global civilization, is highly relevant, particularly with regards to observing human rights, and strengthening society and government. Thank you for your attention.
done in the US and the UK showed that fewer than 15% of evangelicals saw global warming as a threat or health and environment issues as a priority for the church.

What happened over the last 20 years? These “dinosaur” leaders came up with something called environmentalism equals alarmism.” That is why when global warming came into the news, it came out as an “alarm bell.” For these leaders, alarmism equaled atheism, and atheism was like liberalism. Liberalism meant no values. So global warming equaled no values.

This interesting connection worked for a long time until a small group called the Cornwall Alliance formed. The Cornwall Alliance produced the Cornwall Declaration on environmental stewardship. The following quote was incorporated into their mission statement and signed by over 150 pastors. “We have the moral necessity of ecological stewardship.”

This coalition of clergy, theologians, religious leaders, scientists, academics and policy experts from the Christian evangelical community took a stand to be committed to bringing a balanced biblical view of stewardship to issues of the environment. They committed their organizations to combat issues of overpopulation, poverty, energy sustainability, water and endangered species. When this group first came out, they were attacked by the old guard.

The second crack in the lining came in 2004 when a group of young evangelical leaders got together at a Christian Coalition Forum. This new group of leaders introduced a powerful new idea and slogan. Their simple idea was this: Environment is part of God’s creation, of which humanity is also a part. Within two years of this Forum, some of the biggest changes in the religious movement occurred. Reaching over 100 million families worldwide, messaging started to change with these words.

For example, Richard Land, former President of the Southern Baptist Leadership Convention (SBLC) and one of the strongest Reagan supporters, agreed with the new group. He launched a new program for the environment called, “We Get It,” and said that the need to care about the environment has become a priority. Within a month, the National Association of Evangelicals produced a new slogan and campaign called, “Environmentalism equals Creation Care.”

This is where we are today, and we cannot ignore this positive shift with new slogans and actions worldwide funded with hundreds of millions of dollars. Here is a specific example: SBLC, launched the scientists Evangelical Project with Harvard University Center for Health and Environment with close to $20 million of SBLC funds to study how scientists and evangelicals can work together on solutions on solving environmental and health problems. Now 70% of evangelicals see global warming as a major threat.

This shift has also occurred in less dramatic fashion among the Islamic community especially in the UK and Indonesia. In the Jewish community, among Conservative, Reform and Reconstructionist groups, prayer texts have changed to include wording on health and environment. New initiatives have formed by synagogue networks with Hillel International, and others.

To conclude. We need to change our views of the faith community and recognize the massive changes that are happening right now. If we don’t, we become the obstacle. Thank you.
Mission Statement

World Information Transfer, Inc., WIT is a not-for-profit, non-governmental organization in General Consultative Status with the United Nations, promoting environmental health and literacy. In 1987, inspired by the Chornobyl nuclear tragedy, WIT was formed in recognition of the pressing need to provide accurate actionable information about our deteriorating global environment and its effect on human health. WIT exercises its mandate through:

• World Ecology Report (WER). Published since 1989, the World Ecology Report is a quarterly digest of critical issues in health and environment, produced in four languages and distributed to thousands of citizens throughout the developing and developed world.

• Health and Environment: Global Partners for Global Solutions Conference. Since 1992, WIT has convened what we believe to be one of the world’s premier forums for the presentation of scientific papers by international experts on the growing clinical evidence supporting the link between degrading environments and diminished human health. The conference has been convened as a parallel event to the annual meeting of the UN Commission on Sustainable Development. The scientific papers presented at the conference are available on WIT’s web site.

• Health and Development CD ROM Library. This project consists of a library of CD-ROMs each of which focuses on a subject within the overall topic of Development and Health information. Our Human Information CD ROM Library offers one bridge across the “digital divide” for both developed and developing countries. The project is continuous with future topics being developed.

• Health and Development CD ROM Library for Ukraine. In conjunction with UNDP, WIT has developed a country specific library disc for distribution in schools and centers in Ukraine.

• Humanitarian Aid. In conjunction with the K.Kovshevych Foundation, WIT provides humanitarian aid to schools, hospitals and orphanages in areas devastated by environmental degradation. Shipment includes computers, clothing, toys and medical equipment.

• Internship. World Information Transfer (WIT) offers internships in New York City, where our main office is located. Our goal is to encourage future leaders in health and environment. Our interns spend the majority of their time at the United Nations.

• Scholarship Program. With the support of the K. Kovshevych Foundation, WIT offers scholarships to intellectually gifted university students in need of financial assistance to continue their studies in areas related to health and environment. Our interns spend the majority of their time at the United Nations.

• Centers for Health & Environment. The aim of the Centers is to promote research, education and solutions. The first center was opened in Ukraine in 1992, and the second center opened in Beirut, Lebanon in 1997 at Bir Hasan, United Nations Street, Al-Salaam Building.

• Centers for Health & Environment. The aim of the Centers is to promote research, education and solutions. The first center was opened in Ukraine in 1992, and the second center opened in Beirut, Lebanon in 1997 at Bir Hasan, United Nations Street, Al-Salaam Building.

• Centers for Health & Environment. The aim of the Centers is to promote research, education and solutions. The first center was opened in Ukraine in 1992, and the second center opened in Beirut, Lebanon in 1997 at Bir Hasan, United Nations Street, Al-Salaam Building.

World Ecology Report
Summer-Fall 2009

World Information Transfer
World Ecology Report
World Information Transfer, Inc.
(ISSN #1080-3092)
475 Park Avenue South, 22nd Floor
New York, NY 10016
TELEPHONE: (212) 686-1996
FAX: (212) 686-2179
E-MAIL: wit@worldinfo.org
ELECTRONIC EDITION AVAILABLE ON:
http://www.worldinfo.org

FOUNDER & EDITOR-IN-CHIEF:
Dr. Christine K. Durbak
MANAGING EDITOR:
Dr. Claudia Strauss
CONTRIBUTING EDITORS:
Annie He, Wilson Wong Tsz Ming
CIRCULATION MANAGER:
Martha Duff
LANGUAGE EDITORS:
CHINESE - Au Yin Yu, Liao Jinghua
RUSSIAN - Natalia Harki
SPANISH - Patricia Munoz Tavira
UKRAINIAN - Oleh Harasevych

REGIONAL DIRECTORS
AFRICA:
Dr. Mohamed El-Banna
74 Sawa, St. Helopelis, 11341 Cairo, Egypt
Tel: (202) 368-2887; Fax: (202) 365-0492
E-MAIL: mbanna@starnet.com.eg

CANADA:
Mykola Zilhalov
2179 St. crescent
Mississauga L4Y 3V2 Ontario, Canada
Tel: (416) 891-9418
E-MAIL: webforge@gmail.com

CHINA:
Au Yin Yu (Josephine) Liao Jinghua (Greta)
5 Hop Yat Road 4th Floor, Kowloon, Hong Kong, China
E-MAIL: judykyvin@hotmail.com

EASTERN EUROPE:
Prof. Mykola Prytula
K. Levychko11a, #15, Lviv, Ukraine
Tel/Fax: (380) 322 76-40-39 & 76-68-18
E-MAIL: wit@post.com

EUROPEAN UNION:
Dr. Michel Loots
Oosterveldlaan 106
B-2610 Antwerp, Belgium
Tel: 32-3-448-65-54; Fax: 32-3-449-75-74
E-MAIL: mlouts@humaninfo.org

MIDDLE EAST:
Joseph Abou Rached
Al-Salaam Building–United Nations St.
Bir Hasan–Beirut, Lebanon
E-MAIL: wit@worldinfo.org

USA:
Carolyn T. Comitta
18 West Chestnut Street West Chester,
PA 19380
Tel: (610) 690-3806;
Fax: (610) 430-3804
E-MAIL: wit@dplus.net

World Information Transfer is a Non-Profit, Non-Governmental Organization in General Consultative Status with the United Nations, Promoting Health and Environmental Literacy.

Board of Directors
Dr. Christine K. Durbak, CHAIR & CEO
Roland DeSilva
EXECUTIVE VICE CHAIR
Dr. Claudia Strauss
VICE CHAIR
Carolyn T. Comitta
SECRETARY
Barnett Koven
TREASURER
Dr. Ruth Etzel
Dr. Bernard D.Goldstein
Amb. Valeri Kuchinsky
Dr. Philip J. Landrigan
Dr. Patricia Myscowski
Dr. Maria Pavlova
Dr. Scott Ratzan
Dr. William N. Rom
Jay Walker

“We have not inherited the world from our forefathers…we have borrowed it from our children.”
KASHMIRI PROVERB

Individuals and/or organizations can become WIT members and receive four issues of WIT’s World Ecology Report and other membership benefits for a tax deductible annual fee as follows:

- Student ............ $ 25.00
- Individual ........... $ 40.00
- Organization ....... $ 100.00
- Supporter .......... $ 500.00
- Life membership:
- Individual ............ $ 1000.00
- Organization ........ $ 5000.00
- Membership is “FREE” in developing countries.
- Renewal

WIT MEMBERSHIP

MEMBER INFORMATION

Date
Name ___________________________
Affiliation ______________________
Mailing Address __________________
Tel ______________ Fax __________ E-mail __________________

GIFT MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION

Date
Name ___________________________
Affiliation ______________________
Mailing Address __________________
Tel ______________ Fax __________ E-mail __________________

Please return this form along with a check made payable to:
World Information Transfer
475 Park Avenue South, 22nd Floor, New York, NY 10016
Good afternoon. My theme is simple. Never before has there been such an incredible opportunity for the scientific, organizational, NGO and governmental communities to forge genuine partnerships and alliances with the faith community in the interest of creating action plans in the area of health and environment.

We have to get rid of a behavioral process that has seeped into all of us, which is that Pat Robertson, Billy Graham, and Reagan’s inner circle are still running the evangelical movement. They are not. The behavioral change has begun. We need to recognize and foster it.

We here today have the responsibility to reach out to the people making those changes. The faith community I am referring to is the worldwide evangelical community that has the reputation, over the last 20 years, of being the obstacle to acceptance of a real growing danger to our environment.

Two nights ago, there was a private screening in Orlando, Florida, of the upcoming Disney release, Earth. After screenings in mega-churches, faith leaders discussed what they can do to support larger initiatives. Each faith leader at the screening committed to putting together a five week sermon series. These leaders reach over 40 million people worldwide.

Where were these pastors getting their facts from? They were turning to organizations that have popped up in the last two years, groups like the Evangelical Environmental Network, Christian Environmental Council, Interfaith Council for Environmental Stewardship, Evangelicals for Social Action, and most importantly, Green Cross. These organizations must be supported by us so they have access to the same information as we do. These groups have better access to prioritizing issues on a mass level than frankly, any of us.

This small gathering in Orlando, which I just mentioned, is so powerful that, today, in Washington, DC, the leadership of the White House is leading a discussion about how to reorganize faith-based initiatives into a re-allocation of funds specifically towards the five groups I just mentioned. That is, over 100 million dollars of funding would be available to new faith groups with environmental purposes. We need to become aware of this and de-link the pre-conceived notion of these “guys” as dinosaurs. This is a highly positive development if the funding and efforts are properly guided by us. We can overcome many things.

I want to talk a little bit about the history. Ronald Reagan brilliantly created an alliance within the Jewish and Christian communities in 1981 and 1982. He created government partnerships with government funding with major “old school” evangelical leaders such as Billy Graham, Pat Robertson, and many others. This was a formidable alliance for the Republican Party, and frankly, helped to keep George W. Bush in power for eight years.

These “old school” evangelical leaders built a massive international network in over 150 countries. They refused to acknowledge the core issues about health and environment issues. At the height of their power, surveys...