

JEAN-PIERRE ELKABBACH NARENDRA TANEJA

Introduction

Narendra Taneja, Energy CEO and Convener, World Oil & Gas Assembly (WOGA)

Good morning. Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen, we are starting this first plenary session. As you all know and as is very clear in the programme, we are going to talk about population, climate, health and what global governance there is. As we all know, there is a direct link between health and population and similarly, there is a direct link between population and climate.

Again, you can see that there is a direct link between education and population, climate and health. In fact, the way I look at it, education is central to the issue of population, climate and health. Population grows faster; this is the experience we have, at least in the part of the world I come from. Population grows faster in societies that are weak in terms of the reach of education and healthcare. Societies that are deprived of good health and education infrastructure, that turn inwards, look inwards and eventually actually even work inwards, create an alarming gap. This is not even a vacuum. This gap is between the societies and their supposed rulers.

Such experiences, which occur in the part of the world that I come from, lead to frustration, anger and very often violence in society. Such developments weaken societies and slowly but surely weaken their country, their region and eventually the whole world. In the present-day world, global governance exists largely in the context of globalisation. Of course, there are other interpretations, there are other definitions; there are other concepts. However, the way I look at it is that global governance is largely in the context of globalisation.

Population, climate and health are more serious global challenges than ever before in the history of mankind. If countries such as India or Bangladesh, for instance, are not able to bring education to their deprived children and adults fast enough, the growing population could prove to be a curse. That is if I may use the word. This is for the whole world and not only for South Asia, for other regions in the world. We have seen that poor healthcare in parts of Asia, Africa and Latin America is a ticking bomb, as more and more people look upon education and healthcare as their fundamental right. You invite violence when you deny people their fundamental rights for too long. We have seen that in many parts of the world, including South Asia, the region where I come from.

It is a shame that millions can still neither read nor write in the world; it is a shame that millions still die uncared-for and unattended. Millions do not have access to any kind of medical care. We live in the age of globalisation, which also means that nowhere is insulated from disease, unless every other inhabitant on the planet is equally protected. Poor medical care in any part of the world can eventually prove to be a curse for the whole world. The recent outbreak of swine flu was only a very, very small example of that.

Population, climate and health, which we are discussing this morning, will occupy centre stage in global governance in the coming years and decades. Education, population and health will increasingly become as crucial in world public opinion as the issue of climate change happens to be today. Therefore, it is important that all the new international dialogues, platforms and orders are based on genuine respect for every society and nation on the planet. No society, no nation, organisation or corporation, should attempt to dominate or monopolise ideas, thoughts and orders that are crucial to the future of our small planet.

Wisdom is not a monopoly of any part of the world. An ordinary fisherman in a remote village in India, Bangladesh or Indonesia may know as much about climate change as a parliamentarian, or a professor in Scandinavia or any part of the world. Even an illiterate in a remote corner of Asia or Latin America may hold the key to solving some of the greatest problems of the world. Therefore, we must find ways, ideas and thoughts from every society in the world, irrespective of its economic and educational profile or status.

Therefore, we must engage everyone in this planet in our efforts to build a better world. There is a tendency in some societies, nations and organisations to dominate and monopolise all debates, all such initiatives and efforts. Global governance must be checked. It must become more inclusive and more participatory. Therefore, we need more independent initiatives like the World Policy Conference to help build a new world order. This is based on genuine respect for each other's ideas, thoughts, faiths, beliefs, lifestyles and civilisations. I am here with my colleagues. Jean-Pierre and I are going to chair this morning's session and try to make it as interesting, as useful and as interactive for you as possible.

Jean-Pierre Elkabbach, President, Lagardère News

It's my turn to quickly tell you what an honour and a pleasure it is to chair this first session with Narendra Teneja during the WPC's third edition. We have four experts with us today – experts well-known in their speciality – who will share their reaction. In any case, they will present their views and have a panel discussion. You may have heard Mr. Ban Ki-Moon, Christophe de Margerie and Thierry Montbrial yesterday. I think they set the tone. Down with hypocrisy! In any case, the priority today is to speak frankly in every area. The four experts who are here with us have agreed to take questions from those of us who want as much as we do to ask them about the relationships between populations movements, climate change and public health challenges. Even though these issues are highly connected, they are rarely addressed together.

We're going to try to do so through questions and especially the answers which we're going to hear. We're talking here about the realities of today and the 21st century. Two examples from 2008: natural disasters displaced 20 million people from their homes. Each year will see a rise in the number of climate refugees, a term used by the United Nations for the first time in 1985. As Ban Ki-Moon was just saying, official forecasts are already predicting 250 million displaced persons in 2050 and, most often, these forced population movements take place within a country's borders, and sometimes in the neighbouring country. If the wealthy States believe they are spared, or in any case relieved of responsibility, they are wrong. Up to now, they haven't created any large-scale programmes to manage this predictable problem, which could destabilise countries and regions and threaten national security.

This growing phenomenon of climate displacement and refugees could also lead to the emergence of new, often unidentified diseases, and have consequences for public health. Global governance does not only involve theoretical objectives and missions. In this case, we're talking about the deaths of millions of human beings and their fate as well as new rights to grant or win. To our four experts, by combining your experience, strengths and research, you can advance knowledge, cooperation and solidarity, which are essential for organised, positive and equitable globalisation, as His Majesty Mohammed VI said in his message. This presentation has perhaps lasted too long, but we wanted to outline a framework. And now let me introduce the personalities who are with us today: to my left, Fernando Alvarez del Rio, the spokesperson for the Mexican Ministry of Health who was scheduled to be here but was detained in his country. I hope he's not worried about the appearance of a new virus in Mexico or Latin America. Jean de Kervasdoué directs the Pasteur Institute's school of public health and teaches at the prestigious CNAM institute of higher learning. Professor de Kervasdoué's books are authoritative and often controversial as well because they tend to be iconoclastic. We might experience that here as well. [Now to you,] Taneja.

Narendra Taneja, Energy CEO and Convener, World Oil & Gas Assembly (WOGA)

We have William Reilly, who is Chairman of the Climate Works Foundation. As we all know, he is the former administrator of the United States Protection Agency. We also have Chris Viehbacher with us. He is the Chairman and



CEO of an organisation which we all know and needs no introduction, Sanofi Aventis. Ladies and gentlemen, please welcome our guests here this morning and we will get the ball rolling.