

CALL

for a worldwide coalition for life and peace

Life and peace are inseparably linked. War destroys life. Indeed, today war interrupts the process of the development of civilization, and endangers the future of humanity. Our political systems are clearly unable to prevent wars or master the challenges of the future, such as halting environmental disasters, hunger, poverty, and water shortages, achieving global justice between the sexes, and implementing human rights, on their own. But we are firmly convinced that human beings in principle possess a substantial potential for survival, so that they are able to master the challenges of the future and find new ways forward for civilization—but only if we learn to find ways to make our own benefit be to the benefit of others as well. Therefore, the revival of the potentials and abilities of civil society, as a constructive counterweight to political parties, government institutions, and economic elites, is high on the political agenda at the beginning of this new century.

Since the French Revolution, mankind has made considerable progress as far as #social peace and democracy in particular are concerned, but we are still waiting for progress in peace #within and between many states. Even countries with a democratic constitution and culture have waged war in the past, and still do so today, in order to enforce their interests against other countries. Colonialism, two world wars, the gigantic arms race between the Eastern and Western blocs, and countless wars after the Second World War are expressions of immaturity and lack of ability to make the principle “if other people do well, I will do well, too” the guideline for all action, so as to lay the foundations for peace at home and abroad. At the same time, mankind is waging an insidious war against nature, and has been destroying essential natural resources at an accelerating rate since the beginning of industrialization.

The political systems are proving to be increasingly unable to find sustainable solutions for vital problems. We perceive more and more clearly a deep democratic gap. Major players in high politics regard themselves as enforcers of the interests of a small, financially powerful, and politically influential elite. The susceptibility of the present political systems to being instrumentalized for the benefit of an elite is one of the main causes of grave imbalances and tensions, which lead to environmental devastation, poverty and misery, masses of refugees, terrorism, and finally wars.

In order to cope with this challenge, we call for the formation of a worldwide coalition of social forces for life and peace. We call on all people to contribute their experience, skills and knowledge, independently of political parties, to their respective political system. We consider this historical responsibility a contribution to the further development of democracy and human civilization, and against the destruction of life. We want people to take fresh heart, instead of sinking into hopelessness, lethargy, and mistrust of the future. We want to link up globally, in order to overcome the obstacles on this path together. We are well aware that it will take considerable perseverance, patience, far-sightedness, and creativity to convince the parties and legislatures of the necessity of transferring some of their power and legitimacy to a counterweight legitimized by civil society. But at some point, we must begin to commit ourselves to this greatly demanding historical task. Today.

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