Rebecca Walkiw

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We too are interested in finding effective solutions to the critical problems we face as a global humanity such as global warming, dwindling resources, overpopulation, human inequality, poverty and war. There are also many other people and organizations working towards this end (see the Earth Charter Initiative at www.earthcharter.org). Green Cross International, for example, which was founded in 1992 by Mikhail Gorbachev, is also dedicated to finding effective solutions to environmental problems and is actively involved in the development of sustainable energy worldwide. In fact, its U.S, affiliate, Global Green USA, is currently building affordable, energy-efficient and eco-friendly homes for the victims of Hurricane Katrina (see greencrossinternational.net and globalgreen.org). Attached to this mail is a copy of “The Earth Charter” and an interesting interview with Brad Pitt on the above-mentioned project in New Orleans along with a short report on the benefits of sustainable development there for both the residents and the environment. I must say that your film and this project were a genuine inspiration to me and the other members of the study group. We realize it’s only a beginning, but these exemplary efforts prove that it’s possible to win the battle against global warming and to build a just, sustainable and peaceful global society, if we all join forces and start working together as a global family.  Last but not least, we fully agree with a very important point you made in your film with regard to our rapidly growing global population and the effect it has on global warming. It is only common sense that a growing population consumes more energy, which in turn increases the CO2 emission and intensifies the green-house effect. Needless to say, a growing “overpopulation” accelerates this process. So in order to win the struggle against global warming, we must stop our global population growth through an effective program of global birth control and bring our planetary population count back into balance with nature, which for a planet the size of Earth is about 0.5 billion or more precisely 529 million (see “Stirbt unser blauer Planet?” by Heinz Haber and “Social Issues” at us.figu.org). Such a measure, by the way, would also reduce all other problems we currently face – whether social, economic or environmental – to a size that we could deal with far more effectively. To accomplish this, however, it is necessary to raise public awareness – via lectures and other forms of public communication – with respect to the cause of this problem, the effects it has on our planet and humanity and how we can resolve it. Education and insight, combined with the appropriate measures and legislation, are undoubtedly the best means of resolving this and other problems we face as a global humanity. For this reason, it would be desirable, if courses dealing with environmental and other human-related problems were made a standard part of every school curriculum. Moreover, schools in general should be opened to the public for life-long learning, so that people of all ages and from all walks of life can learn to effectively deal with the problems they face in life. Putting their knowledge into practice however, especially on a global basis, would require an appropriate system of government to carry out the will of the people, such as a worldwide system of direct democracy, through which all people from all nations of the world could vote directly on issues that affect them and the rest of humanity in global referendums.  An effective system of global democracy in turn would require yet another form of human progress, namely lasting world peace, which contrary to common belief could indeed be achieved, if universal values that unite humanity and promote world peace were taught in our schools and demonstrated in our social behavior, and also with the help of a multinational peace-fighting corps composed of several million peace-fighters from all nations of the world, whose task it would be to secure and safeguard world peace. The members of such a peace-fighting corps must be highly trained specialists in defence, peace-making, peace-keeping and the protection of human life and must be deployed over the entire planet in order to nip all wars and violent uprisings as well as all criminal and terrorist activities in the bud within 72 hours. Such a corps, however, must be strictly and exclusively controlled by the world population under the guidance of wise, experienced and capable leaders (see *“Multinational Peace-Fighting Troops and World Peace”* by Barbara Harnisch and Billy in the attachment to this mail). The development of such a global defence force would therefore require a well informed and socially responsible global population and a genuine govern-ment of the people in all countries of the world, which in turn must be accompanied by the development of easily accessible and absolutely safe systems of electronic voting worldwide to enable all citizens of Earth to actively participate in government decisions at local, state, national and global levels by voting directly on all issues affecting them and the rest of humanity. As you can see, dear Mr. Gore, we all have a lot of work ahead of us, but then again the time is ripe for change. I and all other members of the study group are therefore confident that we can achieve these goals together, as a united humanity, with the help of wise and far-sighted leaders from all nations of the world who are dedicated to finding effective solutions to all human problems and who will put them into practice, once they have been approved by the people of Earth in global referendums.  Since all change starts in the hearts and minds of the people and can only lead to improvement, if it is guided by the truth, all we need to save our planet and humanity are effective solutions to our global problems based on the effective truth and supported by the world population. In other words, all we need is a worldwide grassroots movement in support of truly effective measures against overpopulation, the destruction of nature, human inequality, poverty, war and all other forms of destructive human behavior and in favor of universal education; the cultivation of positive human values that unite all people regardless of their differences; the acknowledgement of equal human rights and duties for all people; the worldwide development of sustainable energy; the protection of nature and all planetary life through the controlled, sustainable development of humanity and all of its needs; a global system of direct democracy to promote the development of a worldwide government of the people; the cultivation of peace among all peoples of Earth; the development of a multinational peace-fighting corps to secure and safeguard world peace under the control of the world population, and many other forms of positive human development. These changes, however, can only be achieved on a global basis, once the people of Earth finally free themselves from all forms of tyranny and assume the power to govern themselves under the guidance of wise, experienced and capable leaders (see “Equality for All” by Rebecca Walkiw). Most of today’s powerful political, economic, religious and military leaders would undoubtedly oppose such a movement, because they are unwilling to share their power and resources with the rest of humanity. The common people of Earth, however, would embrace such a movement and would also support the efforts of wise and knowledgeable leaders who offer truly effective solutions to global problems and who are willing to work for the well-being of all humanity in harmony with nature. The people of Earth want leaders whose reason, judgement and actions are guided by the truth and who have the courage to defend the inconvenient truth in the face of powerful opposition. We are hopeful that ever more courageous leaders with genuine human qualities from all nations of the world will unite to form a global force of truly competent advisors who will help humanity achieve its goals!  My husband and I are both members of a FIGU study group here in Munich. …We [members of FIGU] are dedicated to seeking and upholding the truth in all things; the cultivation of positive human values such as knowledge, wisdom, truth, love, logic and justice; the development of human awareness and the support of human progress; living in harmony with nature; acknowledging human equality and the natural rights and duties of all human beings; heeding the laws of nature and creation; respecting and protecting all life forms; cultivating peace in the hearts and minds of all people, practicing self-responsibility and self-determination as an individual and also as a collective whole, among many other things. We meet once a month here in Munich, study FIGU literature together and discuss topics of common human interest. We also organize information booths about FIGU and its wide range of literature on numerous aspects of human development and we hold lectures on topics of general human interest. An issue of foremost importance to us is the fight against global overpopulation and its devastating consequences for all life on Earth. With a current global population of more than 7.5 billion people (unofficial count: see ueberbevoelkerung.at), our earth already has nearly 15 times as many people as a planet of its size can sustain for an optimal development of humanity and a harmonious coexistence with nature. Moreover, our global population continues to grow at an exponential rate, causing the already prevalent wastefulness, destructive exploitation of all resources and the on-going destruction of nature to assume ever more drastic forms, such as the growing frequency of devastating natural catastrophes throughout the world and the growing number of global conflicts over our diminishing resources. Overpopulation is by far the greatest problem we face as a global humanity. It is impossible to divide our dwindling global resources among a rapidly growing family of over 7.5 billion members, so that everyone has enough to live on. And due to the fact that 20 percent of the population in developed nations consume 86 percent of the world’s resources, nearly half of our global family now lives in poverty. If we add to this the hundreds of millions of people who will be displaced in the near and distant future as a result of the growing number of natural catastrophes caused by the on-going destruction of nature – including of course the numerous climate catastrophes resulting from global warming and the destruction of our atmosphere – the human misery will reach dimensions beyond description.  For this reason, our study group plans to hold lectures on overpopulation in the near future, so that ever more people will become aware of this problem and start to consider what they can do to help bring our global population count back into balance with nature. Of course the best way to achieve a balanced global population would be to work out an effective program of global birth control, which of course must first be approved by the people of Earth, before it is put into practice. One example of such a program is a global birth-rate check explained in an article by Christian Frehner at  www.us.figu.org/portal/SocialIssues/BirthRateCheck/tabid/104/Default.aspx.  Since your film, “An Inconvenient Truth”, provides valuable information that clearly shows the connections between global population growth, energy consumption, global warming and climate catastrophes, our study group would very much like to use material from your film in our lectures … to illustrate the relation between global overpopulation and climate catastrophes. … If you are interested, you can find more information about FIGU at the following websites: figu.org (German-language website) and us.figu.org (English-language website). Several articles about overpopulation in the English language can also be found on the English-language website under “Social Issues”.  On behalf of … our study group, I am sending you friendly greetings and best wishes for continued success in your efforts to raise human awareness on issues of major importance to humanity and all life on Earth.  Sincerely yours,  Rebecca Walkiw  Attachments: The Earth Charter; Interview with Brad Pitt [Global Green Activist]; Benefits of Sustain-able Energy; World Peace [Multinational Peace-Fighting Troops and World Peace]  See these attachments on the following pages.  [From Wikipedia: The Earth Charter is a declaration of fundamental values and principles for building a just, sustainable and peaceful global society in the 21 century. Its inclusive ethical vision proposes that environmental protection, human rights, equitable human development and peace are interdependent and indivisible. The charter itself was created through an open and participatory worldwide consultation process. The drafting of the text was overseen by the independent Earth Charter Commission, which was convened by Maurice Strong, founder of the Earth Council, and Mikhail Gorbachev, founder of Green Cross International, with the purpose of developing a global consensus on values and principles for a sustainable future. Many thousands of people and hundreds of organizations contributed to the drafting process.]  **The Earth Charter**  *(from earthcharter.org)*  **PREAMBLE**  We stand at a critical moment in Earth's history, a time when humanity must choose its future. As the world becomes increasingly interdependent and fragile, the future at once holds great peril and great promise. To move forward we must recognize that in the midst of a magnificent diversity of cultures and life forms we are one human family and one Earth community with a common destiny. We must join together to bring forth a sustainable global society founded on respect for nature, universal human rights, economic justice, and a culture of peace. Towards this end, it is imperative that we, the peoples of Earth, declare our responsibility to one another, to the greater community of life, and to future generations.  **Earth, Our Home**  Humanity is part of a vast evolving universe. Earth, our home, is alive with a unique community of life. The forces of nature make existence a demanding and uncertain adventure, but Earth has provided the conditions essential to life's evolution. The resilience of the community of life and the well-being of humanity depend upon preserving a healthy biosphere with all its ecological systems, a rich variety of plants and animals, fertile soils, pure waters, and clean air. The global environment with its finite resources is a common concern of all peoples. The protection of Earth's vitality, diversity, and beauty is a sacred trust.  **The Global Situation**  The dominant patterns of production and consumption are causing environmental devastation, the depletion of resources, and a massive extinction of species. Communities are being undermined. The benefits of development are not shared equitably and the gap between rich and poor is widening. Injustice, poverty, ignorance, and violent conflict are widespread and the cause of great suffering. An unprecedented rise in human population has overburdened ecological and social systems. The foundations of global security are threatened. These trends are perilous-but not inevitable.   **The Challenges Ahead**  The choice is ours: form a global partnership to care for Earth and one another or risk the destruction of ourselves and the diversity of life. Fundamental changes are needed in our values, institutions, and ways of living. We must realize that when basic needs have been met, human development is primarily about being more, not having more. We have the knowledge and technology to provide for all and to reduce our impacts on the environment. The emergence of a global civil society is creating new opportunities to build a democratic and humane world. Our environmental, economic, political, social, and spiritual challenges are interconnected, and together we can forge inclusive solutions.  **Universal Responsibility**  To realize these aspirations, we must decide to live with a sense of universal responsibility, identifying ourselves with the whole Earth community as well as our local communities. We are at once citizens of different nations and of one world in which the local and global are linked. Everyone shares responsibility for the present and future well-being of the human family and the larger living world. The spirit of human solidarity and kinship with all life is strengthened when we live with reverence for the mystery of being, gratitude for the gift of life, and humility regarding the human place in nature.  We urgently need a shared vision of basic values to provide an ethical foundation for the emerging world community. Therefore, together in hope we affirm the following interdependent principles for a sustainable way of life as a common standard by which the conduct of all individuals, organizations, businesses, governments, and transnational institutions is to be guided and assessed.  **PRINCIPLES**  **I. RESPECT AND CARE FOR THE COMMUNITY OF LIFE**  **1. Respect Earth and life in all its diversity.**  a. Recognize that all beings are interdependent and every form of life has value regardless of its worth to human beings.  b. Affirm faith in the inherent dignity of all human beings and in the intellectual, artistic, ethical, and spiritual potential of humanity.    **2. Care for the community of life with understanding, compassion, and love.**  a. Accept that with the right to own, manage, and use natural resources comes the duty to prevent environmental harm and to protect the rights of people.  b. Affirm that with increased freedom, knowledge, and power comes increased responsibility to promote the common good.    **3. Build democratic societies that are just, participatory, sustainable, and peaceful.**  a. Ensure that communities at all levels guarantee human rights and fundamental freedoms and provide everyone an opportunity to realize his or her full potential.  b. Promote social and economic justice, enabling all to achieve a secure and meaningful livelihood that is ecologically responsible.    **4. Secure Earth's bounty and beauty for present and future generations.**  a. Recognize that the freedom of action of each generation is qualified by the needs of future generations. b. Transmit to future generations values, traditions, and institutions that support the long-term flourishing of Earth's human and ecological communities.  In order to fulfill these four broad commitments, it is necessary to:  **II. ECOLOGICAL INTEGRITY**  **5. Protect and restore the integrity of Earth's ecological systems, with special concern for biological diversity and the natural processes that sustain life.**  a. Adopt at all levels sustainable development plans and regulations that make environmental conservation and rehabilitation integral to all development initiatives.  b. Establish and safeguard viable nature and biosphere reserves, including wild lands and marine areas, to protect Earth's life support systems, maintain biodiversity, and preserve our natural heritage. c. Promote the recovery of endangered species and ecosystems.  d. Control and eradicate non-native or genetically modified organisms harmful to native species and the environment, and prevent introduction of such harmful organisms.  e. Manage the use of renewable resources such as water, soil, forest products, and marine life in ways that do not exceed rates of regeneration and that protect the health of ecosystems.  f. Manage the extraction and use of non-renewable resources such as minerals and fossil fuels in ways that minimize depletion and cause no serious environmental damage.    **6. Prevent harm as the best method of environmental protection and, when knowledge is limited, apply a precautionary approach.**  a. Take action to avoid the possibility of serious or irreversible environmental harm even when scientific knowledge is incomplete or inconclusive.  b. Place the burden of proof on those who argue that a proposed activity will not cause significant harm, and make the responsible parties liable for environmental harm.  c. Ensure that decision making addresses the cumulative, long-term, indirect, long distance, and global consequences of human activities.  d. Prevent pollution of any part of the environment and allow no build-up of radioactive, toxic, or other hazardous substances.  e. Avoid military activities damaging to the environment.    **7. Adopt patterns of production, consumption, and reproduction that safeguard Earth's regenerative capacities, human rights, and community well-being.**  a. Reduce, reuse, and recycle the materials used in production and consumption systems, and ensure that residual waste can be assimilated by ecological systems.  b. Act with restraint and efficiency when using energy, and rely increasingly on renewable energy sources such as solar and wind.  c. Promote the development, adoption, and equitable transfer of environmentally sound technologies. d. Internalize the full environmental and social costs of goods and services in the selling price, and enable consumers to identify products that meet the highest social and environmental standards. e. Ensure universal access to health care that fosters reproductive health and responsible reproduction. f. Adopt lifestyles that emphasize the quality of life and material sufficiency in a finite world.    **8. Advance the study of ecological sustainability and promote the open exchange and wide application of the knowledge acquired.**  a. Support international scientific and technical cooperation on sustainability, with special attention to the needs of developing nations.  b. Recognize and preserve the traditional knowledge and spiritual wisdom in all cultures that contribute to environmental protection and human well-being.  c. Ensure that information of vital importance to human health and environmental protection, including genetic information, remains available in the public domain.    **III. SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC JUSTICE**  **9. Eradicate poverty as an ethical, social, and environmental imperative.**  a. Guarantee the right to potable water, clean air, food security, uncontaminated soil, shelter, and safe sanitation, allocating the national and international resources required.  b. Empower every human being with the education and resources to secure a sustainable livelihood, and provide social security and safety nets for those who are unable to support themselves.  c. Recognize the ignored, protect the vulnerable, serve those who suffer, and enable them to develop their capacities and to pursue their aspirations.    **10. Ensure that economic activities and institutions at all levels promote human development in an equitable and sustainable manner.**  a. Promote the equitable distribution of wealth within nations and among nations. b. Enhance the intellectual, financial, technical, and social resources of developing nations, and relieve them of onerous international debt.  c. Ensure that all trade supports sustainable resource use, environmental protection, and progressive labor standards.  d. Require multinational corporations and international financial organizations to act transparently in the public good, and hold them accountable for the consequences of their activities.    **11. Affirm gender equality and equity as prerequisites to sustainable development and ensure universal access to education, health care, and economic opportunity.**  a. Secure the human rights of women and girls and end all violence against them. b. Promote the active participation of women in all aspects of economic, political, civil, social, and cultural life as full and equal partners, decision makers, leaders, and beneficiaries.  c. Strengthen families and ensure the safety and loving nurture of all family members.    **12. Uphold the right of all, without discrimination, to a natural and social environment supportive of human dignity, bodily health, and spiritual well-being, with special attention to the rights of indigenous peoples and minorities.**  a. Eliminate discrimination in all its forms, such as that based on race, color, sex, sexual orientation, religion, language, and national, ethnic or social origin.  b. Affirm the right of indigenous peoples to their spirituality, knowledge, lands and resources and to their related practice of sustainable livelihoods.  c. Honor and support the young people of our communities, enabling them to fulfill their essential role in creating sustainable societies.  d. Protect and restore outstanding places of cultural and spiritual significance.  **IV. DEMOCRACY, NONVIOLENCE, AND PEACE**  **13. Strengthen democratic institutions at all levels, and provide transparency and accountability in governance, inclusive participation in decision making, and access to justice.**  a. Uphold the right of everyone to receive clear and timely information on environmental matters and all development plans and activities which are likely to affect them or in which they have an interest. b. Support local, regional and global civil society, and promote the meaningful participation of all interested individuals and organizations in decision making.  c. Protect the rights to freedom of opinion, expression, peaceful assembly, association, and dissent. d. Institute effective and efficient access to administrative and independent judicial procedures, including remedies and redress for environmental harm and the threat of such harm. e. Eliminate corruption in all public and private institutions.  f. Strengthen local communities, enabling them to care for their environments, and assign environmental responsibilities to the levels of government where they can be carried out most effectively.    **14. Integrate into formal education and life-long learning the knowledge, values, and skills needed for a sustainable way of life.**  a. Provide all, especially children and youth, with educational opportunities that empower them to contribute actively to sustainable development.  b. Promote the contribution of the arts and humanities as well as the sciences in sustainability education. c. Enhance the role of the mass media in raising awareness of ecological and social challenges. d. Recognize the importance of moral and spiritual education for sustainable living.    **15. Treat all living beings with respect and consideration.**  a. Prevent cruelty to animals kept in human societies and protect them from suffering. b. Protect wild animals from methods of hunting, trapping, and fishing that cause extreme, prolonged, or avoidable suffering.  c. Avoid or eliminate to the full extent possible the taking or destruction of non-targeted species.    **16. Promote a culture of tolerance, nonviolence, and peace.**  a. Encourage and support mutual understanding, solidarity, and cooperation among all peoples and within and among nations.  b. Implement comprehensive strategies to prevent violent conflict and use collaborative problem solving to manage and resolve environmental conflicts and other disputes.  c. Demilitarize national security systems to the level of a non-provocative defense posture, and convert military resources to peaceful purposes, including ecological restoration.  d. Eliminate nuclear, biological, and toxic weapons and other weapons of mass destruction. e. Ensure that the use of orbital and outer space supports environmental protection and peace.  f. Recognize that peace is the wholeness created by right relationships with oneself, other persons, other cultures, other life, Earth, and the larger whole of which all are a part.  **THE WAY FORWARD**  As never before in history, common destiny beckons us to seek a new beginning. Such renewal is the promise of these Earth Charter principles. To fulfill this promise, we must commit ourselves to adopt and promote the values and objectives of the Charter.  This requires a change of mind and heart. It requires a new sense of global interdependence and universal responsibility. We must imaginatively develop and apply the vision of a sustainable way of life locally, nationally, regionally, and globally. Our cultural diversity is a precious heritage and different cultures will find their own distinctive ways to realize the vision. We must deepen and expand the global dialogue that generated the Earth Charter, for we have much to learn from the ongoing collaborative search for truth and wisdom.   Life often involves tensions between important values. This can mean difficult choices. However, we must find ways to harmonize diversity with unity, the exercise of freedom with the common good, short-term objectives with long-term goals. Every individual, family, organization, and community has a vital role to play. The arts, sciences, religions, educational institutions, media, businesses, nongovernmental organizations, and governments are all called to offer creative leadership. The partnership of government, civil society, and business is essential for effective governance.  In order to build a sustainable global community, the nations of the world must renew their commitment to the United Nations, fulfill their obligations under existing international agreements, and support the implementation of Earth Charter principles with an international legally binding instrument on environment and development.  Let ours be a time remembered for the awakening of a new reverence for life, the firm resolve to achieve sustainability, the quickening of the struggle for justice and peace, and the joyful celebration of life.  **The final version of the Earth Charter was published by the Earth Council on March 24, 2000**  **Earth Charter International Secretariat**  c/o Earth Council  P.O. Box 319-6100 San José, Costa Rica  Phone: (506) 205-1600 / Fax (506) 249-3500  E-mail: info@earthcharter.org  earthcharter  **Interview with a Global Green Activist on the**  **Sustainable Rebuilding of New Orleans**  *(from globalgreen.org)*  **Pitt: Energy bills will be unnecessary**  Hollywood star believes New Orleans project will serve as national model  By Mike Celizic  **TODAYShow.com contributor**  Updated: 11:21 a.m. ET Aug. 23, 2007  Brad Pitt wants to make energy bills go away, and he doesn’t think that’s an outlandish pipe dream. In the second part of an exclusive one-on-one interview with TODAY’s Ann Curry, he showed how the new houses he’s helping to build in New Orleans will make a giant stride toward that goal.  “The idea that we pay utility bills is absolutely unnecessary,” he said as he led a tour of what will be an affordable house in the city’s devastated Ninth Ward. “I mean, there's the sun. Feel the breeze that's been created here. And we got water right out there,” he said, gesturing out an opening in the wall that will be a window.  “Any one of these can be harnessed,” he continued. “And we can integrate ourselves into that ecosystem, and not only power our houses, but actually produce energy for other parts of the city.”  The actor and activist sponsored a design competition for affordable apartments and houses along with Global Green USA. With the second anniversary of Hurricane Katrina arriving next week, work on 18 apartments and five homes is nearing completion. Global Green is constructing the homes, which will be sold to residents, with preference being given to former residents of the neighborhood.  The housing will not be totally independent of the energy grid. “The family that will live here will save 75 percent on their energy bill,” he told Curry.  It starts with a roof positioned for maximum exposure to the sun to feed solar panels. All lighting will be energy-efficient compact fluorescent light bulbs. Appliances are Energy Star rated for efficiency. The water heater has no holding tank to keep hot, instead providing instant hot water as it is needed: “You are not heating massive amounts of water for 24 hours a day,” he said.  On Wednesday, Pitt, dressed in T-shirt, work pants and a tweed, snap-brim hat, had talked about how the devastation visited on the Big Easy was not nature’s doing.  “Katrina was a man-made disaster,” he said then. “The misconception is that it was nature. But this is man-made — decades and decades of erroneous engineering moves and really really bad, bad irresponsible moves that I believe government has a responsibility to make right.”  Pitt and his girlfriend, Angelina Jolie, have adopted New Orleans. In January, they bought an early-19th-century mansion in the French Quarter. Not long afterward, Pitt teamed with Global Green USA to sponsor a competition to design environmentally friendly and energy-efficient housing for the Ninth Ward.  “I care very much for the area,” he said.  **A small, first step**  The house he showed off is his way of starting to put things right. The homes he and Global Green are building are made with studwork and sheathing that are impregnated with an environmentally friendly blue compound that makes them resistant to termites and mold. Insulation is soy-based. Paints will be nontoxic.  “It is amazing,” he said. “Something we have to be more aware of is the chemicals that are in the products that we are surrounded by.”  There is a terrace on the second floor that will be planted with grass — an excellent insulator. Rainwater will be captured and filtered and delivered to a cistern to be used to flush toilets and to water the landscaping. That, he said, should cut the homeowner’s water bill in half.  It’s all part of his vision.  “The utility bill is useless,” he repeated. “It is unnecessary."  Global Green USA, which was created in 1993 by Diane Meyer Simon, is the U.S. affiliate of Green Cross International, an environmental organization founded in 1992 by Mikhail Gorbachev to protect our planet for future generations by promoting the development of human awareness for the Earth as a whole and thus recognizing the interdependence of humanity and nature and the need for sustainable develop-ment in our society to maintain a healthy balance of all things, be it environmental, economic or human development. Sustainable development is defined in Wikipedia as a socio-ecological process characterized by the fulfilment of human needs while maintaining the quality of the natural environment indefinitely. The mission of GCI and its affiliates is to help ensure a just, sustainable and secure future for all.  **Global Green USA and New Orleans – an Overview *(from globalgreen.org)***  After the devastation of Hurricane Katrina and the inadequate response of the US Government, Global Green USA made a dedicated commitment to sustainable building in New Orleans and the Gulf Coast. As part of that commitment, Global Green, in partnership with Brad Pitt, sponsored an international design competition during the summer of 2006, with more than 125 entries competing to design a zero energy affordable housing development in the Holy Cross Neighborhood of the Lower 9th Ward. Matthew Berman and Andrew Kotchen of Workshop/APD in New York created the winning design. With the Home Depot Foundation as lead sponsor, Global Green is now working with Workshop/APD and a dedicated and highly skilled team of sustainable design and building experts together with the Holy Cross Neighborhood Association to translate the winning development proposal into a reality.  **Sustainable Design Competition for New Orleans**  As part of our commitment to the sustainable rebuilding of New Orleans and demonstrating green building as a solution to global warming nationally, Global Green USA - in collaboration with Brad Pitt as jury chairman- sponsored an international design competition during the summer of 2006. More than 125 entries competed to design a net zero energy affordable housing and community center development in the Holy Cross neighborhood of the Lower 9th Ward.  It was estimated that If 50,000 of the homes destroyed by Hurricane Katrina were rebuilt according to the green standards set by the design competition, residents of New Orleans would save $38 million to $56 million in energy bills every year and eliminate over 1⁄2 million total tons of CO2 – the equivalent of taking 100,000 cars off the road.  The design jury selected six finalists, including three teams with New Orleans connections. The teams then worked with the technical jury and met several times with the Holy Cross residents to refine their designs. The finalists presented their refined concepts and designs to the design jury on August 29 and 30, 2006. The design jury selected the design by Workshop/apd, a young NYC firm.  **From Winning Design to "Holy Cross" Project**  In addition to workshop/apd, Global Green has assembled a highly skilled and dedicated project team of national experts paired with local professionals with the goal of transferring knowledge to ultimately make green expertise indigenous to New Orleans. Through the Holy Cross Project, Global Green is committed to:  Creating a green model or showcase for development and rebuilding for New Orleans, and green affordable housing in the US;  Ensuring the sustainability and long term affordability of the Project’s housing units for residents, and socioeconomic fabric of the neighborhood through the center;  Educating NOLA residents, the Gulf Coast and broader American public through the Project’s visitors center, NOLA resource center, and website about the benefits of green building.  Advancing smart solutions to global warming that both benefit communities (e.g., affordable housing, schools) and engage stakeholders in building will for action  The Holy Cross Project consists of 5 single-family homes, an 18-unit apartment building, and a community center/sustainable design and climate action center. The goal of the project is to achieve LEED Platinum standards (LEED for Home for the single family homes and LEED NC for the other buildings), net zero energy and carbon neutral building. By using solar panels, high performance building design, HVAC systems, energy and resource monitoring systems, and energy efficient appliances, the buildings in the Holy Cross Project will use at least 75% less energy than typical buildings. In addition, Global Green is also exploring the use of river turbines in the adjacent Mississipi River.  **Revitalizing the Holy Cross Neighborhood**  As a landmark sustainable development, the Global Green Holy Cross Project is of vital importance to Global Green, the Holy Cross Neighborhood and the people of New Orleans. The success of the project will act as a beacon for sustainable affordable housing development and will create a model that can be replicated by communities around the world. By utilizing multiple green and healthy building strategies, the Global Green Holy Cross Project will add real value by reducing long-term operating costs from energy and water bills, create a healthier living environment by eliminating toxic materials, protect the environment through the use of sustainable materials and empower the people of the Lower 9th Ward to work toward a healthy and sustainable future.  **About Global Green**  Global Green USA is a national environmental organization that merges innovative research, cutting-edge community based projects and targeted advocacy to create a sustainable future. Global Green USA has helped green nearly $20 billion in affordable housing, school, college and municipal building construction through technical assistance, partnerships, advocacy, and education. The organization has written, and implemented green building, energy efficiency, and solar power guidelines in addition to legislation and incentives at the local, state, and federal level. It has also pioneered partnerships with countless non-profits and government agencies.  **Securing World Peace with the Help of a Multinational Peace-Fighting Corps**  *Following are excerpts from an article by Barbara Harnisch and Billy taken from the FIGU action brochure, “Overpopulation”, published in February of 1995. This English version is an unofficial translation, which is subject to change. For further information on this topic, see the FIGU website at www.figu.org*  **World Peace and Multinational Peace-Fighting Troops**  …As the name implies, a peace-fighting troop is a multinational composition of trained military men and women. Every country trains for this purpose, proportional to its size and population, so-and-so many men and women as peace fighters, who are peace-loving in nature and who are willing to accept responsibility for the life of others. The result of this is a gigantic peace-fighting troop which is composed of several million people and is deployed over the entire earth. This troop champions peace and has world peace as its highest commandment. Its duty is to protect human life and if necessary to defend it in personal action, even with weapons if need be, and to also deprive the guilty parties, warmongers, dictators, terrorists, criminals, gangsters, etc., of power and make sure that no new unrest, etc., can break out in the country concerned. The large number of joint forces alone must guarantee that whenever they have to intervene in a belligerent country, they always outnumber the army members, criminals, gangsters, etc., many times over and thus constitute a large superpower in a peace-making form, so that no chance exists against them, should they be belligerently attacked.  Communication around the globe today functions in a flash, and it has thus become possible for the commanding chiefs of such a peace-fighting troop to be constantly informed and kept abreast of things. Therefore, if unrest breaks out somewhere or if criminality and gangsters increase or a warmonger instigates his own army to rebellion, at least a tenfold superior force of peace fighters must instantly be mobilized and immediately dispatched to the place of unrest, via the shortest route possible, to nip the source of trouble in the bud, so no war, etc., can escalate. Alone the tremendous superior force of the fighting troop enables it to invade the troubled country from all sides, encircle the aggressors and apprehend them. At the same time, a defensive attack is started against the army and commanding chiefs, which is always proportionate to the aggressive threats of the belligerent country. (A popular uprising or rampant spread of criminality and crime calls for measures other than a nuclear bomb threat.) Once the source of trouble is eliminated, all weapons of the country concerned will immediately be destroyed. In the end, only the multinational peace-fighting troop has weapons for defence, and they must be stored and controlled in such a way that no power cravers, no retaliatory addicts or profit seekers and no criminals and gangsters have access to them. The peace-fighting troops are furthermore only able and permitted to obtain and use these weapons, if necessary defence should require it. The peace-fighting troops guarantee, that with time would-be dictators, warmongers, criminals, gangsters and enemies against life, limb, possessions and goods will be rooted out by humanly justifiable but rigorous measures, whereby peace and security for all life will be established worldwide and will be lasting.  A peace-fighting troop has absolutely nothing to do with a renewed state of war or with a new power group on Earth but merely performs the function of protection and of the logical use of force. As long as humanity continues to degenerate as it has for such a long time and as the daily news today confirms over and over again, such an organization will be needed to halt such hostile actions towards humanity and life. A warmonger, belligerent party, despot, dictator, criminal or gangster cannot be brought to reason with friendly words; alone the very idea of giving war commands or bullying, robbing and stealing from other people, sucking others dry with drugs and killing, etc., is evidence of the fact that people who do such things are sick, insane and degenerated in their thinking and behavior in a way that is hostile towards life and humanity. In their insanity and in their position of power, etc., they are so dangerous however, that they endanger the life of their own countrymen and the life of others, including people from foreign countries, whom they are willing to thoughtlessly, irresponsibly and senselessly sacrifice. In most cases, the heads of state, with their entourage, are the ones who are unable to cope with the enormous stress and responsibility of an entire state, have a mental breakdown and are power-hungry and therefore always want more and will never be satisfied.  Peace can only be brought about and maintained with the logical use of force which many people however are unwilling to understand. But a very good example of this is the human body itself which is subject to given natural laws and thus also functions accordingly: When a bacillus tries to settle down in the body, innumerable antibodies are produced which attack and destroy this disturbing factor with superior force. If this were not the case, the disease-bringing bacillus could multiply unhindered and finally attack and even destroy the entire body. The antibodies render security and protection to the living and healthy cells. It is just the same with warmongers and the multinational peace-fighting troop. If the criminal act of a head of state or a gangster, etc., is not immediately halted by a superior number of peace fighters, who establish order, then all the horrible and unimaginable things, which happen in abominable wars and crimes year after year in dozens of countries on Earth today, can go unhindered and unpunished.  In general, a fully false opinion prevails with regard to a multinational peace-fighting troop. The words ‘peace’ and ‘fighting’ united in one expression annoy a lot of people, and they think of it as an army, like the one we know today, which spreads misery, hardship, fear and terror. But that is not the case at all, since the troop members are very well trained specialists with regard to such things as defence, peace-making, peace-keeping and safeguarding survival on the one hand and with regard to abiding by the natural laws and being humane on the other. In addition, they come from so many different nations and nationalities that they could never form a power-hungry, state-related unit with viable traits of power. This way, they are multinationally obliged to perform their duties, side by side, whereby it can by no means be in their interest to allow quarrels to arise or cravings for power, etc. The peace-fighting troop fights for peace and tries to establish it to the best of its human knowledge and ability and also as humanely as possible, or in other words, in such a way, that there will be no dead, if possible, or only very few. Their task consists of protecting life and eliminating the source of unrest in order to maintain peace, stability and order as well as security for all life and possessions and goods and does not consist of playing ‘would-be warriors’. Every unnecessary death must be prevented under all circumstances. Whoever thinks however that a belligerent country could simply be invaded and levelled to the ground is no better than he who caused the war himself, for he is playing in his thoughts with underhanded murder, crimes against humanity and treacherous assassination of innocent people. That, however, is not the purpose of a multinational peace-fighting troop. Furthermore, the soldiers of the belligerent country are only carrying out their orders, forced to in many cases, and perhaps only out of fear of being killed by their rulers or their own people. It is usually not at all the way most people think, who are uninvolved, for if a ruler or a gangster degenerates somewhere, then neither he nor his entire entourage and by no means his entire people, who are usually not at all guilty, may be killed.  The primary duty of the helping side consists, without exception, of protecting and preserving life. Death is only permissible for a single, solitary reason: Necessary defence. A human being is only justified in this one form to take the life of another human being. The peace-fighting troop always acts in accordance with the law of passive force (= alone the multiply superior force of the peace fighters nips the unrest in the bud). It naturally can not be ruled out that a peace fighter may have to shoot or otherwise kill a warlike assailant to save his own life or that of a third person or to fulfill his goal of bringing the unrest and the war or the crime, etc., under control, for it should be reckoned with that the belligerent country or the criminals, etc., are not willing to give up. But when killing must be done in this form, out of necessity, a peace fighter is acting in full defence of life and thus not for reasons of bloodthirstiness. This way, the number of unavoidable deaths can be limited to a countable few, whereas contrary to this today, thousands of people all over the world are abused, tortured, mutilated, robbed, exploited and innocently promoted from life to death, after they had hoped in vain for days, months or years for justified help. Here again, the human body serves as an example: If the antibodies do not succeed in neutralizing the seat of the disease, then a foot or a leg, etc., for example must be removed to protect the rest of the body, so the poison or the disease is unable to spread any further.  Peace-fighting is not the same as war, since war means murder, misery, hardship, hatred, annihilation and destruction; peace-fighting however, in the sense of fighting for peace, is an earnest, human endeavor towards a peaceful and healthy existence for all life forms and all existence, which is indeed connected with a period of unrest but has neutrality as its goal. This type of fighting is done in such a way that peace emerges as the goal, even if logical force is necessary to accomplish it. This is contrary to political and criminal wars, whose sole purpose is the acquisition of power, the preservation of power, and profit. The peace-fight struggles with the negative and the degenerated, so that the positively balanced can finally gain the upper hand. Peace-fighting creates peace and it preserves and builds, so it is not there to destroy and annihilate, which is characteristic of every politically, power and profit oriented war, etc. However, mindless fighting can not simply be started, because a peace-fight must also be strategically well planned down to the last detail and developed in such a way that success is guaranteed. This means with respect to an intervention in the machinations, etc., of belligerent states and criminal organizations that a tremendously superior number of peace fighters will invade the country concerned, so that every resistance is useless and so the unrest can no longer escalate and is destroyed at its source. A war however is not yet settled with this, for after the acts of war have been brought under control and those responsible have been rendered incapable of action and brought to account through a measure, for example, such as life-long banishment to an absolutely secure and inescapable place, it is necessary that the people concerned are offered humanitarian help. Therefore, the entire corps of the peace-fighting troop can not simply be withdrawn again. A certain vital part of this corps must remain in the country and make sure that no new unrest is able to break out. In addition, the new government to be appointed and also the people must be led back onto the right path through teachings, which can possibly take a long time, because every human being must gain insight into the necessity of peace and humanitarianism and also into a just and good lifestyle and therefore must undergo a change of mind.  *By Barbara Harnisch and Billy, Switzerland* *See entire article under* [*Friedenskampftruppen*](http://www.walkiw.homepage.t-online.de/Friedenskampftruppen_D_E_Web.pdf)  \* \* \* \* \* \* \*  In an article by Achim Wolf entitled *“Die Stimme der Vernunft” (see Sonder-Bulletin no. 26 at figu.org*), the creation of multinational peace-fighting troops, according to the model described above, would require that the decision-making body of the United Nations be occupied and headed by people who are absolutely independent, non-political and neutral, whose entire thinking is solely aligned with the creative principles of truth, knowledge and wisdom and who only allow themselves to be guided by reason and understanding. However, the way the U.N. handles things today, with its ridiculous and useless missions, nothing can be achieved with respect to pacifying the earth or its peoples, although the foremost duties of the U.N. are to secure world peace, heed international law, protect human rights and promote international cooperation. Our current multinational peace troops, as defined by the U.N., are nothing but a farce. In an official contact conversation between Ptaah and Billy on August 15, 2006, Ptaah stated that if the overall concept is to be effective and the desired goal of world peace achieved, then this can only be done with a multinational “peace-fighting troop” that acts in logical force and does everything necessary to disarm the armies. In principle and under all circumstances, only one multinational peace-fighting troop may exist on a planet under the strictest control of the world population, and alone this peace-fighting army may have combat weapons at its disposal to secure the safety of the entire planet and its population. The duty of such a multinational peace-fighting force would be to nip every seat of conflict in the bud within 72 hours, to disarm the elements responsible for the warmongering crimes and armed conflicts in a resolute manner and to take them in safe custody. The guilty must then be separated from society for life, by decision and order of the world community, so they can no longer do any damage. This procedure would correspond to the creative principle of logical force in defence, whereby the guiltless may in no wise be harmed, injured or killed, nor any avoidable damage caused to their property. For further details see *“Auszüge aus dem offiziellen .432 Kontaktgespräch” in Sonder-Bulletin no. 27 at figu.org*. With such a mighty global force dedicated to securing and preserving world peace, all the horrors of war could finally be brought to an end. The duty of every human being is to protect and foster life and not to destroy it. So let’s stop the senseless harming, robbing and killing of our fellow human beings and the equally senseless destruction of our planet. Together, we can take control of our destiny with the help of global referendums and not only stop all wars but create a truly humanitarian society on Earth guided by truth, knowledge, wisdom, reason and love.  *Rebecca Walkiw, Germany* |

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