Invent the Future

“No challenge is beyond the reach of human creativity”

J. F. Kennedy, June, 1963

There are moments, very few of them, in which change suddenly becomes possible.

For centuries human beings have lived in fear and obedience toward the absolute power of a few men. For centuries it has been the fittest law and “If you want peace, prepare for war”. A history of bloodshed in which peace has only been a pause between wars and the light of human creativity has barely flickered.

Centuries and centuries of silence, of submission. Centuries and centuries after which social inequality and extreme poverty dominate in world that, with the influence of human activity is also deteriorating.

And more recent centuries with the predominance of global empires.

But also more recent decades in which, at last, people are being heard and it is accepted that from them all power emanates... although this power is still mainly male-dominated and continues to be based on force; a power that counts the citizens in election time, but doesn’t take them into account on a daily basis, which is the true definition of democracy.
If we look at the world as a whole, with notable exceptions we will see that we continue to be subjects and that the mechanisms to ensure real participation don’t work or are ignored... In the ethical debacle of the West, the last throes of capitalism are not only creating serious social inequalities that will be difficult to reverse, but are also delocalizing production to areas in which people continue in subjugation, working in unbearable conditions.

In the West, and especially in Europe, we live obsessed with stock market values (moral values no longer exist) and risk premiums, while those who control the oil wells and the communications media ensure that our fanaticism for sports and team spirit replace any other possible emotions or reactions, while the really great challenges such as those affecting the environment, health, etc. fade from our minds.

We contemplate with indifference how the “markets” have had the incredible audacity to appoint governments in the very cradle of democracy, Greece, and in Italy. But that’s all right. We have seen how the European Central Bank serves the interests of only one out of twenty-seven countries... but that’s all right.

We allow power to be wielded by the hands of a very few, and it is ultimately they who decide... And people, the peoples, immersed in implausible media campaigns, continue to be distracted, indifferent, detached from political events and their protagonists –to whom they award failing grades in all of the opinion polls!– being interested solely in
who scored the most goals or in the “details” of the most spectacular news items...

And as if this weren’t enough, the ecclesiastical hierarchy –which given that “we’re up against the Church, Sancho”, no one dares put in its place– is meddling in the areas of education, ethics and science, in which their incompetence has already been resoundingly demonstrated.

But we have now reached a turning point in history toward achieving the dignity of all human beings, without exception, which could not be culminated in 1944 with Roosevelt and the United Nations, nor in 1962 with Kennedy, nor in 1990 with Gorbachev and Nelson Mandela at the end of the Cold War, since the United States’ ambitions for dominance prevailed, accompanied, as is customary, by the United Kingdom... And we have allowed groups of plutocrats from seven, eight or twenty countries to alienate the United Nations, seeking to govern one hundred and ninety-six!

It is now time for radical changes because for the first time in history three favorable aspects have coincided at the global level:

i) A global conscience, that enables us to better appreciate what we have and recognize the needs of others, increasing solidarity;

ii) An increased number of women with decision-making powers;

iii) The possibility of distance participation, thanks to modern communications and information technologies.
But in the European Union where the great military, financial, energy and media domain still prevails and in the United States with an ultraconservative Republican Party so lacking in solidarity, it is very difficult to imagine large-scale mobilization. Nevertheless, if we take into account the world as a whole and not only the West, it’s be quite possible —and it’s about time!— that the innumerable peaceful dissidents have been creating their own “spring” and —representing 99% of humanity!— are merely awaiting an opportunity to take action.

Hollande can represent the beginning of a “new era” in the European Union and Obama’s second term may mean the same in the United States ...and even far beyond.

This “new beginning”, which would represent a conceptual and practical triumph over capitalism and communism, would soon require new economic, financial and structural guidelines as well as new directives concerning the environment and the conditions for a life of dignity for all human beings.

The future has yet to be invented. The first “invention” should be led by the United States, but with the support of all of the countries in the world and with the United Nations that, by guaranteeing adequate geo-strategic conditions through alliances and with national contributions to common security provided by “Blue Helmets”, could facilitate an immediate and profound cut in military spending.
As I have already had the opportunity to suggest, in addition to the “Territorial” Security Council, there would likewise be an Environmental Security Council and a Socio-economic Security Council.

The re-founding of the United Nations system would include a General Assembly with 50% of its delegates from Member States and the other 50% —“We, the Peoples”— from representatives of civil society. The present vetoes would be eliminated and replaced by a system of “weighted” voting.

This re-founding of the UN must inevitably include a large-scale efficient restructuring of international justice to enable rapid and well-coordinated action against all areas of criminal activity. On other occasions I have mentioned the local, national and regional matters that could provide essential solutions for this significant turning point: sustainable development; diligent and efficient action, with the appropriate regional cooperation when faced with natural or man-made disasters; attention to priorities to achieve the “equal dignity of all human beings”, to facilitate the requisites for a life of dignity (food, water, health, education), without exception...

Today I would also like to underscore the sinister influence that drug consumption and trafficking has on the lives of people at both the national and international levels. This would also be one of the “inventions” that could change the world in record time. As in the case of alcohol and tobacco consumption, consumers should be held responsible, with the appropriate media and educational campaigns at all levels, and as patients
should be provided with the corresponding healthcare. The drastic decrease in the price of drugs would eliminate the narco-terrorism that today, through tax havens, is one of the most perverse challenges facing political leaders worldwide.

Political, economic and social innovation. A clear distinction being made between the nature of employment and work when simultaneously seeking alternative sources of financing, such as taxes on financial transactions.

In this “new beginning” it will also be necessary to rapidly and efficiently share the benefits obtained from exploiting natural (mining, oil...) resources among those who possess the technology and the “owners” of that natural wealth.

This will be a multi-polar world, with considerable regional influences, and with a notable and progressive federation of countries.

Invent the future with citizens of the world capable of meeting and getting to know each other through virtual social networks with an increasingly-significant capacity for mobilization, citizens who will urgently propose and “vote” on solutions for the problems identified, thus becoming a relevant part of democratic process at the local and global levels.

Demographics and longer life expectancy will prompt millions of opinions and proposals. Our immense geographic diversity will be compensated by
the “closeness” of those who will share their points of view from very distant places.

This is a new world view, with new lifestyles. The great personal and collective challenge is to change our life model. This will be the most difficult to achieve, since many of our present “habits” will subsist in noticeable proportions.

The world is entering a new era. We have many things to preserve for the future and many others to decidedly change. At last, the “Peoples”. At last, the voice of the people. At last, citizen power. At last, words and not force. A culture of peace and never more a culture of war.

In summary, it is essential to invent a “new” democracy. More democracy, better democracy at all levels: personal, local and global.

Faced with a world that is off course, it is both essential and possible to invent the future. Just as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights provided points of ethical reference for humanity in 1948, a Universal Declaration of Democracy could now unite local and global “inventions” to enable us to leave our future generations a world that is both “free from fear” and from the “scourge of war”, in the words of the Declaration of Human Rights and the United Nations Charter, respectively.

Invent the future, a new beginning.