

## CREATING A SHARED FUTURE IN A FRACTURED WORLD<sup>3</sup>

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Today with new changes and new forces in the world, the balance of economic capability and political power is changing. This is being reflected in far-reaching transformations in the shape of the world. There are new and serious challenges related to peace, stability and security of the world.

Technology driven transformation is deeply affecting our way of living, working, behaving, talking and even international groups' politics and economy. Examples of joining, moulding and breaking of technology is visible in the use of social media today. Data has become the biggest property today. Bigger opportunities as well as bigger challenges are being created from the global flow of data. Mountains after mountains of data are being created. There is a race to control data. Because, it is believed that, in future those who control data will attain supremacy.

Similarly, rapidly changing technology and spread of destructive forces in areas of cyber-security and nuclear safety are making the already existing challenges more serious. Science, technology and economic progress, on one hand, has the capacity to show new ways of "Prosperity" to humans, on the other hand, these changes have created many fissures which may result in painful blows. Many changes are creating such walls that have made the path to development and peace not only difficult but also unattainable for humans. These fractures, divides and barriers are coming up because of lack of development, poverty, unemployment, lack of opportunities and control over natural and technical resources. In these circumstances, there are many important questions which require proper answers for our future generations and for the future of the human race.

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<sup>3</sup> "Creating a shared Future in a Fractured World" (based on the speech of H.E. Mr. Narendra Modi, Prime Minister of India, at Davos on 23 January 2018)

Is our global system encouraging these fractures and gaps? Which are the forces which gave preference to division over harmony, conflict over cooperation? And what are the tools with us, what are the ways for us to fill up these fractures and gaps and realise the dream of a beautiful and shared future.

Being a representative of India, Indianness and Indian heritage, for me this topic is as much contemporary as it is outdated. Outdated because since ancient times in India, we have been believing in connecting all human beings, not in dividing them, not in separating them apart. Thousands of years ago, Indian thought said in our scriptures, "*Vasudhaiv Kutumbkam*" which means the whole world is one, one family. Essentially, we all are bound like a family with each other. Our destinies bind us with one shared formula. This concept of "*Vasudhaiv Kutumbkam*" is certainly even more relevant today in removing the fissures and gaps of our world. But a more serious problem is that we lack the consensus needed to face the challenges of our present age.

In every family, while there is cordiality and help, there may also be a few disagreements and quarrel. But the soul and inspiration of a family lies in the feeling that whenever the family faces a challenge, every member faces it together as one and shares the achievements and pleasures together. However, it is a matter of concern that our divisions and fissures have made the challenges faced by the human race more and more tough because we are not ready to face the challenges as a family.

These challenges are not only numerous, but are also expansive. We take only three challenges here which are the biggest threat to human civilisation.

The first danger is that of climate change. Glaciers are shrinking. The arctic ice is melting. Many islands are sinking or are on the brink of sinking. Extreme hot or extreme cold, extra rain or dry spell - effects of extreme weather is increasing day-by-day. What should have happened in such a situation is that we join hands together leaving our narrow confinements. But did it happen? If not, why? What can we do to improve this situation. Everyone says that the carbon emission should be reduced but how many countries or

persons are there who want to help in providing the required resources and technology to developing countries and societies for reducing carbon emission.

You would have heard many a time about deep harmony with nature in the Indian culture and traditions. Thousand of years ago, our scriptures told us “भूमि माता, पुत्रो अहम् पृथ्व्याः”(Bhumi mata, Putro aham Prithivyah) - we humans are children of mother earth. If we are children of earth, why is there a war between humans and the earth?

At the beginning of one of the prominent Upanishad “Ishopnishad written in India thousand of years ago the Guru says to his pupil ‘तेन त्यक्तेन भुञ्जीथा, मागृधःकस्यस्विद्धनम्। (Ten tyakten bhunjitha, magridhah kasyaswiddhanan) which means that live in this world by using the resources with renunciation and do not lust for other person's wealth. 2500 years ago, Lord Buddha gave a prominent place to the concept of “अपरिग्रह” (Aparigraha) or “need-based use”, in his principles. In India, our father of the nation, Mahatma Gandhi’s principle of trusteeship was also in favour of need-based use of resources. He opposed greed-based exploitation of resources famously by saying, “The earth has enough for everyone’s needs but not for everyone’s greed”. We need to think how have we reached to this stage of exploiting nature for our greed today. Is this our development or decline?

Why does the deterioration of our mind, scary image of our selfishness not force us to deeper self-analysis?

With modern technology and tools, it is so easy to understand that our earth is not more than a dust particle in this whole universe, and if anything happens to this earth, there is no other place for us to go to.

If we think carefully, we find that there is one perfect recipe for solution to the dangerous ill-effects of ecological imbalance - harmony between humans and nature described by Indian philosophy. The holistic system of Indian traditions of Yoga and Ayurveda, born out of this Indian philosophy can not

only heal the fracture between the nature and us but can also provide balance in our physical, mental and spiritual health. These are just a few examples.

In the present day's context, the Indian government has set a huge target to safeguard the environment and fight climate change. By 2022, we will have 175 GW of renewable energy in India. In the last three years, we have already achieved 60 GW nearly 1/3rd of our target. India and France joined hands in 2016 to conceptualise a new international treaty based organisation for increasing the use of solar energy. This revolutionary step has become a successful experiment today. This initiative has taken the form of International Solar Alliance, and after the required treaty ratification, it has become a reality today. Leaders of member countries of this alliance are meeting in Delhi in March 2018 for its first summit.

The second big challenge is terrorism. You are all aware of the Indian concerns and the expanding and changing forms of the extreme dangers of terrorism faced by the whole human race. Two aspects of this danger are worth noticing. First, terrorism is as dangerous as the artificial division being created between "good" and "bad" terrorists. And the second is radicalisation and involvement of well-educated and prosperous youth in acts of terrorism. There is a need to think seriously about the causes of these trends and find solutions.

The third challenge is that many countries and societies are becoming more and more self-centred. It seems as if globalisation - contrary to its name - is shrinking. Ill-effects of these psychologies, tendencies and wrong priorities cannot be assessed to be less harmful than climate change or terrorism. Even though everyone talks of an interconnected world today, the sheen of globalisation is wearing off. The ideals of United Nations are still universally accepted. World trade organisation also has the same reach. However, do the structure, organisation and working system of world organisations created after the second world war reflect the realities, aspirations and dreams of humankind today?

There is a big gulf between the needs of so many developing countries and the old system of these international organisations. The forces of protectionism are rising against globalisation. They intend to not only safeguard themselves against globalisation but also change the natural flow of globalisation. One result of such thinking is new tariffs and new tariff barriers. Bilateral and multilateral trade negotiations and agreements have almost stopped. Cross-border financial investment in most of the countries has reduced. The solution to this worrisome situation against globalisation does not lie in division. The solution is in accepting and understanding the change, making the policies fit and flexible according to the changing times. Mahatma Gandhi had said that “I do not want that windows are closed on all walls of my house. I want that winds of various cultures should flow into my house unhindered. But I will not accept if my feet are uprooted in these winds.” The India of today accepts all life-giving waves with full confidence and fearlessness.

Democracy is the fundamental principle of India’s stability, assuredness and continuous progress. Democracy is not merely a political system for a country like India- a country of immense diversity in terms of religion, culture, language, dress and cuisine - but it is a philosophy of life, a way of life. We Indians know it very well what is the importance of democratic milieu and freedoms in converting unity in diversity into cordiality, cooperation and determination. Democracy in India does not only nurture our diversity, it also provides the necessary environs, roadmap and template for adequate development of the hopes, aspirations, wishes and dreams of more than 1.25 billion Indians.

Democratic values and inclusive economic development and progress have the everlasting power to bridge all cracks and fissures. The current government has been working since 2014 with the motto – “Sabka Sath Sabka Vikas”, which means “Together with everyone, development for everyone”. The vision for progress is inclusive. The mission is inclusive. The

“inclusive” philosophy is at the foundation of each governmental policy. This is reflected in the financial inclusion of millions of Indians by having their first bank accounts or direct benefit transfer through digital technology to every person in need or gender justice through “Beti Bachao Beti Pado” that is “Save the daughter, educate the daughter”. We believe that only when everyone can move together, the development is real and the progress is progress in real term. Our economic and social policies are not undergoing minor improvements but major transformation. Our path is of reform, perform and transform. The Indian economy has no parallel today in terms of ease of investment. As a result, to invest in India, to travel in India, to work in India, to manufacturers in India or to export products and services from India to the whole world has become extremely easy. We are removing red tape and laying red carpet for investment. Almost all sections of economy have been opened up for foreign direct investment. Automatic approval is possible in more than 90% cases. Hundreds of reform policies have been implemented in the central government and the state government. More than 1400 old laws have been removed which created hindrances in business, administration and life of common people.

For the first time in 70 years of Independence, or unified tax system - Goods and Services tax (GST), has been implemented in India. Technology is being used to enhance transparency and responsibility. Business community of the whole world has welcomed our efforts and determination to transform India. Democracy, demography and dynamism are giving reality to development in India and forming her destiny. Today the people of India and the youth of India are capable of contributing in making India a five trillion dollar economy by 2025.

India has been extending its support to meet global challenges from ancient times. In the last century, during the two world wars, without any self-interest, without any economic or territorial ambition, India stood for safeguarding the high principles of humanity. More than 150,000 Indians soldiers laid their lives. These are the same principles because of which India

has contributed the maximum number of soldiers in the UN peacekeeping operations. These are the same principles which give us inspiration and power to help our neighbours and humans anywhere in terms of man-made dangers and natural disasters. Whether it is earthquake in Nepal or any hurricane or flood in a neighbouring country, India treats it as her duty to provide help as first responder. When Yemen was engulfed in the flames of violence, not only Indians but many other nationals were surrounded by it. We used our resources to rescue not only the Indian citizens but more than 2000 nationals of other countries too. Being a developing country herself, India provides assistance willingly in development cooperation and capacity building in other countries. Whether it is a country in Africa, South-East Asia, pacific islands or in the immediate neighbourhood, our cooperation and assistance gets tailored according to the priorities and needs of the recipient countries.

India does not have any political or geographical ambitions. We do not exploit the natural resources of another country but we develop that country by working with them. Thousands of years of living with unity in diversity in the Indian subcontinent has the direct impact that we believe in a multi-cultural world and a mutli-polar global system.

India is a living proof that through democracy, respect of diversity, cordiality and coordination, cooperation and dialogue of all disputes, disagreements and differences can be removed. This is a time-tested remedy for peace, stability and development. Also, a predictable, stable, transparent and progressive India will continue to be the good news in an otherwise state of uncertainty and an India where enormous diversity exists harmoniously will always be a unifying and a harmonizing force. Not only for us, not for our own country, Indian thinkers and philosophers have said so many thousands of years ago “ॐ सर्वे भवन्तु सुखिनः । सर्वे सन्तु निरामयाः । सर्वे भद्राणि पश्यन्तु । मा कश्चिद्दुःखभाग्भवेत् ।”

which means; may everyone be happy, everyone be healthy, may everyone be without fear and see good in others and no-one is unhappy. This is the dream that India has seen and has also shown the path to realise this dream.

Sanskrit verses - “ॐ सह नावतु । सह नौ भुनक्तु । सह वीर्यं करवावहै ।  
तेजस्विना वधीतमस्तु मा विद्विषावहै ।” *This means: May we all be protected.  
May we all be nourished. May we work together with great energy. May our  
intellect be sharpened.* The great Indian poet of the last century, a noble laureate  
Gurudev Rabindra Nath Tagore has seen a dream of such a heaven of freedom  
where the world has not been broken up into fragments of narrow domestic  
walls. Let us make such a heaven of freedom where there is cooperation and  
coordination, not division and fissures.

*Thus, India offers you everything that you seek from and for your life.*

*If you want wealth with wellness, work in India;  
If you want Peace with Prosperity, live in India;  
If you want Health with whole life, be in India.  
And our promise is that your agenda will be part of our destiny. We both will  
have a shared and successful future.*

*Thank You!*