



## **BRAHMA KUMARIS WORLD SPIRITUAL UNIVERSITY**

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We find ourselves today at a critical point in the history of humanity at which we are being called upon to make major changes. The list of problems in the world increases and while we have tried to find the reasons and solutions for them in terms of politics and economics, yet the cycle of cause and effect continues.

We have extensive material resources, sophisticated information and communication technology and diverse human resources. The world lacks nothing. Gandhi said: there's enough for everyone's need, but not enough for anyone's greed. However, the situation worsens and, in the darkness, we wonder what the future holds. Perhaps it's time to look in a different direction. It is increasingly evident that the "outer" state of the world is a reflection of the "inner" state of its citizens. Therefore, the solutions must also come from the non-material aspects of our existence; the cultural, moral, ethical and spiritual dimensions.

The sharing of material resources by those who possess them is vital for progress, and the compassion to uplift others from poverty will become the foundation of our global relationships. However, economic development is not the only measure of the quality of human life. True development must start by acknowledging our human resources, and using them for the benefit of all. Only when we invest in human resources can economic and material structures be effectively developed and sustained in the long term. The real poverty that needs to be eradicated is spiritual poverty, where the values that exist in every individual have become depleted, resulting in the peacelessness and suffering that we see in the world today. This is the challenge which now faces every country and every human being.

The ultimate aim of every country is surely to achieve peace and prosperity. To move towards this goal, spiritual values such as honesty, determination, commitment and responsibility need to be cultivated in each and every individual and implemented by leaders and governments. Such transformation results in stability, security and an environment of trust, and doorways are then opened for co-operation from other actors.

We cannot underestimate the importance of such human resources, and we find that in this respect the LDCs could indeed be considered to be wealthy. Creativity, resourcefulness, intricate social organisation, traditional knowledge and a rich cultural heritage that has evolved over hundreds of

years are resources to be valued. The world would be a poorer place without the richness of these cultures. However, we need to recognise that culture is dynamic: it is not meant to be static - it needs to respond and adapt positively to existing circumstances, whilst putting aside traditional practices that no longer serve the people. In this way we can move forward from the past and open the doors to the future.

The wealth and power of the human spirit has to be rediscovered. All actors have a common responsibility in this process of transformation: governments through their political will and their honesty, civil society (including NGOs) through their solidarity and commitment, developed countries through their generosity, and finally the people themselves through their sense of dignity and determination. Education programmes based on values and the empowerment of the individual are an investment for the future in shaping the common destiny of the LDCs and the developed world.

It was in the 60's when we first saw the photographs of the Earth taken from space by NASA, and it was strikingly apparent there is one world, one family. It is the spirit of co-operation, not competition or conflict, that is fundamental to a future of peace and prosperity on our planet.