

Press Release

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What's happening that will change the world for better or worse? What do we need to know now to build a better future? The Millennium Project releases the 2012 *State of the Future* report – the annual “Report Card on the World.”

Washington, D.C., August 15, 2012 - The *2012 State of the Future Report* states that, “The world is improving better than most pessimists know, but future dangers are worse than most optimists indicate.” After 16 years of global futures research, we have “found more agreement about how to build a better future than is evident in the media”, according to Jerome C. Glenn, CEO of The Millennium Project and co-author of the *2012 State of the Future*. “When you consider the many wrong decisions and good decisions not taken—day after day and year after year around the world—it is amazing that we are still making as much progress as we are.”

This year's report verifies that the world is getting richer, healthier, better educated, more peaceful, and better connected, and that people are living longer; yet, half the world is potentially unstable. Protesters around the world show a growing unwillingness to tolerate unethical decisionmaking by power elites. An increasingly educated and Internet-connected generation is rising up against the abuse of power. Food prices are rising, water tables are falling, corruption and organized crime are increasing, environmental viability for our life support is diminishing, debt and economic insecurity are increasing, climate change continues, and the gap between the rich and poor continues to widen dangerously. However, the most recent data from the World Bank shows that the share of world population living in extreme poverty has fallen from 52% in 1981 to about 20% in 2010.

The world is in a race between implementing ever-increasing ways to improve the human condition and the seemingly ever-increasing complexity and scale of global problems. So, how are we doing in this race? What's the score so far?

The World's Report Card

Where are we winning?

- Access to water
- Literacy rate
- Life expectancy at birth
- School enrollment, secondary
- Poverty \$1.25 a day
- Infant mortality
- Wars
- HIV prevalence
- Internet users
- GDP/capita
- Women in parliaments
- Energy efficiency
- Population growth
- Undernourishment prevalence
- Nuclear proliferation

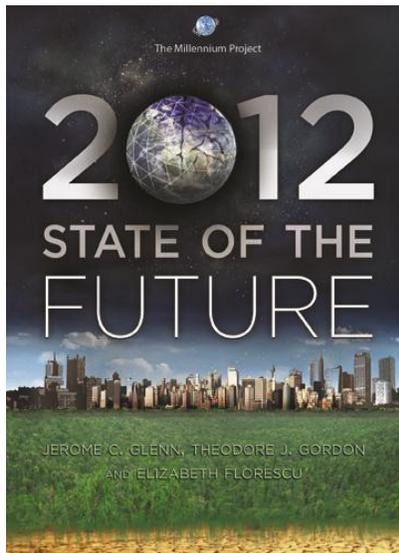
Where are we losing?

- Total debt
- Income inequality
- GHG emissions
- Voter turnout
- Unemployment
- Ecological footprint /biocapacity ratio
- Terrorist attacks

Where is there no significant change or change is not clear?

- Corruption
- Electricity from renewables
- R&D expenditures
- Freedom rights
- Forest lands
- Physicians per capita

There is no question that the world can be far better than it is, IF we make the right decisions. The *State of the Future* sets a context and framework for better decisions.



A must read for any decisionmaker.

Enrique Peña Nieto, President of Mexico

A must read for urban development decisions of today.

Zoran Janković, Mayor of Ljubljana, Slovenia

The best introduction – by far – to the major global issues and long-term remedies.

Michael Marien, *Global Foresight Books*

Invaluable insights.

Ban Ki-moon, Secretary-General, UN

The **2012 State of the Future** is an overview of our global situation, problems, solutions, and prospects for the future.

“15 Global Challenges” including energy, food, science and

technology, ethics, development, water, organized crime, health, decisionmaking, gender relations, demographics, and war and peace are analyzed, studied, and recommendations are made. The briefing is especially critical for senior executives, thought leaders, strategic planners, public policy experts, policy advisors, non-profit organization leaders, teachers/professors of world issues, and anyone interested in a global overview of our prospects for the future.

The 16th Annual Edition comes as an Executive Edition of 145 pages plus a 10,000 page electronic supplement with more than 1,500 additional pages of detailed current material, and searchable research from the past 16 years.

The report discusses a broad range of future-oriented policy initiatives such as: shifting from fresh water-based agriculture to saltwater-based agriculture; making environmental security the focus of US-China strategic trust; a global strategy to counter organized crime; and collective intelligence as one of the “next big things” in the world of ICT.

It also alerts readers to major changes that seem inevitable. For example, the coming biological revolution may change civilization more profoundly than did the industrial or information revolutions. The world has not come to grips with the implications of writing genetic code to create new lifeforms. Thirteen years ago, the concept of being dependent on Google searches was unknown to the world; today we consider it quite normal. Thirteen years from today, the concept of being dependent on synthetic life forms for medicine, food, water, and energy could also be quite normal.

This year’s Executive Edition of the *State of the Future* is a distillation of research with tables, graphs, and charts with *special chapters* on 15 Global Challenges, the State of the Future Index, changing stereotypes about women around the world over the past 50 years and projected next 50 years, future factors affecting cooperatives and businesses, hopes and fears of Kuwait, and futures of ontologists. The rest of the report is approximately 10,000 pages detailing the global situation with a range of strategies, analyses, and regional considerations for 15 Global Challenges facing humanity; eleven years of research and analysis for developing a State of the Future Index; several

global and regional scenarios; governance-related studies; concepts for building collective intelligence systems; environmental security studies; over 850 annotated scenarios; and various approaches for improving futures research, making it an extraordinary resource and data base for exploring the prospects for humanity.

Previous State of the Future reports have been used by:

- The Sherpa for the President of France in preparation for the G-8
- University courses around the world
- Deloitte & Touche LLP as input for their global strategic planning processes
- The Government of Denmark to change their science and technology priorities
- Futurists and thought leaders for speech materials and guidance for their consultancies
- Azerbaijan, China, Kuwait, and South Korea to create their State of the Future Indexes

***“Everyone, and I mean EVERYONE, should read this incredible document, period!”
---Technological Forecasting & Social Change***

Background

The **Millennium Project** was established in 1996 as the first globalized think tank. It conducts independent futures research via its 46 Nodes around the world that connect global and local perspectives. Nodes are groups of individuals and institutions that pick the brains of their region and feed back the global results. It is supported by UN organizations, multinational corporations, universities, foundations, and the governments of Azerbaijan, Kuwait, South Korea, and the United States. [This is not the “UN Millennium Project” headed by Prof. Sachs that produced scholarly papers to address the 8 Millennium Development Goals several years ago.]

The following authors are available for interviews:

Jerome Glenn, Executive Director, Washington, D.C., USA

Theodore J. Gordon, Senior Fellow, Old Lyme, CT, USA

Elizabeth Florescu, Director of Research, Calgary, Alberta, Canada

Interviews can also be arranged with Chairs of any of the Nodes of The Millennium Project:

Arts/Media, Global	Istanbul, Turkey	Rome/Pescara, Italy
Baku, Azerbaijan	London, UK	Kuwait City, Kuwait
Beijing, China	Ljubljana, Slovenia	San Sebastián /Madrid, Spain
Berlin/Essen, Germany	Mexico City, Mexico	Santa Cruz/La Paz, Bolivia
Bogotá, Colombia	Montreal/Kingston, Canada	Santiago, Chile
Bratislava, Slovakia	Moscow, Russia	Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic
Brussels Area, Belgium	Nairobi, Kenya	São Paulo, Brazil
Bucharest, Romania	New Delhi/Madurai, India	Seoul, Rep. of Korea
Buenos Aires, Argentina	Paris, France	Silicon Valley, USA
Cairo, Egypt	Penang, Malaysia	Tehran, Iran
Caracas, Venezuela	Perth, Australia	Tel Aviv, Israel
Cyber Node, Internet	Podgorica, Montenegro	Thessaloniki / Athens, Greece
Dubai, United Arab Emirates	Prague, Czech Republic	Tokyo, Japan
Helsinki, Finland	Pretoria/Johannesburg, South Africa	Warsaw, Poland

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It is available in six modes:

1. On-line download
2. Flash drive
3. Kindle – just the Executive Edition
4. Print-on-demand book of 145 pages with CD of 10,000 pages
5. CD-ROM (10,000 pages)
6. One-year subscription to access ongoing updated and improved version in the Global Futures Collective Intelligence System

To Order: <http://millennium-project.org/millennium/2012SOF.html>

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