

***Economics, Globalisation and the Common Good: A Lecture at
London School of Economics***

"The Value of Values to Build a World for the Common Good"

By

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Thank you for inviting me to speak to you today, and for giving me the opportunity to share with you my journey for the common good, a journey which I began many years ago, when as a young man I left Iran for England in 1972 in my search for life's bigger picture.

Friends, I very much like to set the scene by reading a short statement, giving you a brief background to my presentation, my abstract, if you will:

First:

This presentation is dedicated to the youth of the world, our children and grand- children, who are the unfolding story of the decades ahead. May they rise to the challenge of leading our troubled world, with hope and wisdom in the interest of the common good to a better future

Second:

Our country, the United Kingdom, like all nations of the world, despite many good works, deeds and actions by so many individuals, organisations, civil societies and more, is facing a number of major socio-economic, political, ecological, moral, ethical and spiritual crises.

However, I wish to argue that:

Our crises can only be addressed, reversed and resolved, and our goals can only be achieved, if we change direction, adopt new values and become concerned with life's bigger questions. We must reconnect ourselves with nature and with our true human and spiritual values. Moreover, as members of the household of humanity, we must provide security, sanctuary and constructive engagement for all of our human family. Sustained by the bounty of all, called by the Sacred, and animated into action by the Spirit of peace, Justice, and Reverence for All Life, we must be guided by values and take action in the interest of the common good, empowering each other to build a better world, for all of us.

And Now I want us to come together and imagine a better world, a world for the common good:

Imagine a political system that puts the public first. Imagine the economy and markets serving people rather than the other way round. Imagine us placing values of respect, fairness, interdependence, and mutuality at the heart of our economy. Imagine an economy that gives everyone their fair share, at least an appropriate living wage, and no zero-hour contracts. Imagine where jobs are accessible and fulfilling, producing useful things rather than games of speculation and casino capitalism. Imagine where wages support lives rather than an ever expanding chasm between the top 1% and the rest. Imagine a society capable of supporting everyone's needs, and which says no to greed. Imagine unrestricted access to an excellent education, healthcare, housing and social services. Imagine hunger being eliminated, no more food banks and soup kitchens. Imagine each person having a place he/she can call home. Imagine all senior citizens living a dignified and secure life. Imagine all the youth leading their lives with ever-present hope for a better world. Imagine a planet protected from the threat of climate change now and for the generations to come. Imagine no more wars, but dialogue, conversation and non-violent resolution of conflicts.

This is the country and the world I wish to see and I believe we have the means to build it, if we take action in the interest of the common good.

Now let me, before saying anything else, continue my statement by reading you a few inspiring quotes to focus our minds, enabling us to proceed more fruitfully; more rewarding:

"He that seeks the good of the many seeks in consequence his own good." **St. Thomas Aquinas**

"What is the essence of life? To serve others and to do good." **Aristotle**

'UBUNTU': "I am because we are."

"A generous heart, kind speech, and a life of service and compassion are the things which renew humanity." **Buddha**

‘We have to build a better man before we can build a better society.’-**Paul Tillich**

“Try not to become a man of success, but a man of value” **Albert Einstein**

“Do all the good you can, by all the means you can, in all the ways you can, in all the places you can, at all the times you can, to all the people you can, as long as ever you can.”-**John Wesley**

‘The World is my country, all mankind are my brethren, and to do good is my religion’-**Thomas Paine**

The Common Good: What do I mean by the Common Good?

Now let me say a few words about what I mean by the common good. By the "common good" I'm referring to a broad evolution beyond values and actions that serve narrow self-interest, and towards those guided by inclusiveness -- supporting well-being, happiness, dignity, economic prosperity and success, security, human rights and stewardship of resources for the benefit of all, rather than just for some, as it currently is.

The principle of the common good reminds us that we are all responsible for each other – we are our brothers' and sisters' keepers – and must work for social conditions which ensure that every person and every group in society is able to meet their needs and realise their potential. It follows that every group in society must take into account the rights and aspirations of other groups, and the well-being of the whole human family.

Friends, ladies and gentlemen, the future is full of risk and perils for our planet and all peoples. If we are to survive we must surely build cultures of peace, justice, kindness, sympathy, empathy, and trust, and we must walk together to face the future. The journey, for sure, will be much more secure and fruitful if we begin to walk the walk together for the common good.

Central to this task is the urgent need to reflect on two pertinent and timely questions:

- 1- Why are we here? (That is, the world of crisis after crisis)
- 2- How can we get there? (That is, the better world we all wish to see)

In order to look at these two questions and possibly be able to offer some answers, we need to ask two further questions first:

- 1- What are the values that have taken us to here?
- 2- What might be the values that could take us to there?

This, in a nut shell, is the gist and the essence of my talk tonight

Sharing the Wisdom of Others: I am only the Messaganger

I wish you to note that this presentation, harvesting the fruits of contemplation, is offered as a contribution to the public conversation about values and the shaping of the social ethos in which we live: Our moral compass, if you will. My perspective comes from two broad sources: (1) from over sixty years of living in a globalised, diversified communities, in different countries and continents, in the midst of a diverse group of people, from various cultural, ethnic and religious backgrounds; and (2) from thinkers-past and present- who were/are open, fresh and responsive to the human spirit, reflecting deeply on the individual and society. It is fair to say that, their impact on me has been profound. Their wisdom has nourished and nurtured my personal and professional development. For that I am for ever grateful to them.

My Presentation, I hope, is Easy to follow- I am a story teller:

Moreover, I will present my thoughts in an easy-to-follow manner and I see myself as a story-teller in a heart-to-heart dialogue and conversation with you; nothing less, nothing more.

Today, our global family is facing a multitude of enduring and potentially catastrophic crises. For me, the answers lie in simplicity. There is no need to complicate matters further. **After all, in the wise words of Leonardo da Vinci, “Simplicity is the ultimate sophistication.”**

What are my educational/teaching ethos& values?

Before saying more, let me share with you the philosophy, the vision and values which underpin my thinking and have guided me in offering this suggested path for the common good. Here I am most humbly inspired by Lao Tzu, a mystic philosopher of ancient China, considered the founder of Taoism. He said:

*Some say that my teaching is nonsense.
Others call it lofty but impractical.
But to those who have looked inside themselves,
this nonsense makes perfect sense.
And to those who put it into practice,
this loftiness has roots that go deep.
I have just three things to teach:
simplicity, patience, compassion.
These three are your greatest treasures.
Simple in actions and in thoughts,
you return to the source of being.
Patient with both friends and enemies,
you accord with the way things are.
Compassionate toward yourself,
You reconcile all beings in the world.*

Where does my economic thinking come from? Who inspires me to say what I say? My economic guru is the real Adam Smith, not the false one taught at universities the world over. Let me explain:

As many observers, including some honest economists themselves have noted, the economics profession was arguably the first casualty of the 2008-2009 global financial crises. After all, its practitioners failed to anticipate the calamity, and many appeared unable to say anything useful when the time came to formulate a response.

Mainstream economic models were discredited by the crises because they simply did not admit of its possibility. Moreover, training that prioritised technique over intuition and theoretical elegance over real-world relevance did not prepare economists to provide the kind of practical policy advice needed in exceptional circumstances.

Some argue that the solution is to return to the simpler economic models of the past, which yielded policy prescriptions that evidently sufficed to prevent comparable crises. Others insist that, on the contrary, effective policies today require increasingly complex models that can more fully capture the chaotic dynamics of the twenty-first-century economy.

This debate misses the key point. Why: Because, it was not, and it is not, about the models to begin with. It is all about what economics was and what it has become. It is all about the missing values in the so-called modern economics.

As a “Recovered” economist, who has seen the “Light” and hopefully is now wiser than before, I believe I can shed some light on this matter.

These days I am inspired by the “Real” and “True” Adam Smith, known the world over as the Father of New Economics. We should recall the wisdom of Adam Smith, who was a great moral philosopher first and foremost. In 1759, sixteen years before his famous *Wealth of Nations*, he published *The Theory of Moral Sentiments*, which explored the self-interested nature of man and his ability nevertheless to make moral decisions based on factors other than selfishness. In *The Wealth of Nations*, Smith laid the early groundwork for economic analysis, but he embedded it in a broader discussion of social justice and the role of government. Today we mainly know only of his analogy of the ‘invisible hand’ and refer to him as defending free markets; whilst ignoring his insight that the pursuit of wealth should not take precedence over social and moral obligations.

We are taught that the free market as a ‘way of life’ appealed to Adam Smith but not that he thought the morality of the market could not be a substitute for the morality for society at large. He neither envisioned nor prescribed a capitalist society, but rather a ‘capitalist economy within society, a society held together by communities of non-capitalist and non-market morality’. As it has been noted, morality for Smith included neighbourly love, an obligation to practice justice, a norm of financial support for the government ‘in proportion

to [one's] revenue', and a tendency in human nature to derive pleasure from the good fortune and happiness of other people.

He observed that lasting happiness is found in tranquillity as opposed to consumption. In their quest for more consumption, people have forgotten about the three virtues Smith observed that best provide for a tranquil lifestyle and overall social well-being: justice, beneficence (the doing of good; active goodness or kindness; charity) and prudence (provident care in the management of resources; economy; frugality).

I am only very sorry that, no one taught me these when I was a student of economics, and then, I did not tell the truth about Adam Smith to my students when I became an economics lecturer; something that I very much regret and something that am trying hard to rectify, now that I am a "Recovering and Repenting" economist for the common good. At the end of the day, it is our honesty, humility and our struggle to seek the truth that will set us free and allow us to hold our head high.

Ladies and Gentlemen, Friends, why am I saying all these?

Because tonight I am delivering this lecture, at LSE, a prestigious, learned centre for the study of economics. I salute many great economists, past and present at LSE. I acknowledge their contribution to a better understanding of this subject, and for their contributions to build a better world. Equally, I salute many students, past and present, which have, and still wish, to change the world for the better.

Having said and acknowledged the above, there are two points that I wish to share with you, as they are important to the core of my presentation: **namely, if we wish to build a world for the common good, then, we need to direct the teaching of economics towards the common good too.**

1- Let me quote you the first paragraph of a letter I wrote to Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II on 27th November 2008, regarding her question at London School of Economics, when she asked: "Why did nobody notice?"

Your Majesty,

"I note, with much interest, Your Majesty's recent visit to the London School of Economics. Given the current financial calamity, Your Majesty asked a very pertinent and important question: "Why did nobody notice?"

I firmly believe that the director of research and his colleagues present there, should have provided Your Majesty with truthful and honest answers. However, given what I have read in the press, I do not believe this was the case. Their failure to do so, clearly goes a long way to prove the detachment of economists and the modern neo-liberal economics from the real world. They have turned our profession and subject into a comedy of errors, a dismal science of irrelevance.

This is very sad indeed Your Majesty. An entire profession now appears to have suffered a collapse. Trust and confidence in my profession has all but been demolished, the “dismal science” at its worst.

Many mistakes have been made. Many economists have compromised themselves and their profession by remaining silent, not criticising the extremism and the neo-liberal fundamentalism present in their profession. Lessons should be learnt, someone should be held accountable. Otherwise the same mistakes will be repeated and nobody will believe what an economist says again. In other words, Your Majesty deserves a proper and honest answer...”

And then yeas later the same concerns were highlighted in an editorial in the Financial Times

Given my observation above, it is very telling and humbling to me to note the Financial Times editorial of November 12, 2013 addressing the same issues as I had made many years before. Let me read to you a couple of key and relevant paragraphs:

“The failure of the dismal science to predict and explain the worst financial crash since the Depression has understandably prompted some reflection among the more thoughtful ranks of academics.

“The case for new thinking is strong. Economics teaching – even to first-year undergraduates – had before the crisis become too wedded to scientific pretension. Excessive faith was invested in abstract mathematical models, while insufficient effort was made to link these to real-life experience. The absence of topicality not only robbed the subject of interest and excitement, it risked not equipping the student with the skills to grapple with everyday problems.

“There are stirrings in the academic gloaming. The failure to predict the crash not only unsettled Queen Elizabeth II – who famously gathered some economists together to ask them how they had missed it. There has been some soul-searching among academics too.

“There is a recognition that disciplines such as psychology, history and finance need to be more firmly embedded in economics teaching. The route to publication in top journals should involve empirical research, not just the firing up of an Excel spreadsheet.

‘But, as the crisis showed, we should be humble about the limits of our knowledge. Substituting a little humility for pretension would be a welcome step.’

Well said Financial Times. But!

However, what a great pity that to the best of my knowledge, influential publications, such as the Financial Times, had not *written an editorial in*

similar vein before the crash of September 2008. I believe our world would have been a better place for it if they had.

For example, perhaps people like the Director of the London School of Economics and his colleagues at the department of economics would have behaved differently, and would have acted with wisdom, courage, and commitment to the common good.

This brings me to point number 2, I had mentioned above: Lord Kalms' letter to the Times (08/03/2011):

Ethics boys

Sir, Around 1991 I offered the London School of Economics a grant of £1 million to set up a Chair in Business Ethics. John Ashworth, at that time the Director of the LSE, encouraged the idea but had to write to me to say, regretfully, that the faculty had rejected the offer as it saw no correlation between ethics and economics. Quite. Lord Kalms, House of Lords

Thus, ladies and gentlemen, by now it must be clear that, given the state of our world today- a world of progress and poverty- the continuing and deepening global economic turmoil merely is a symptom of a much larger moral, spiritual and ethical crisis. In short, the world is facing a crisis of values; a crisis of trust.

Nobody trusts anybody or anything. Why? What has gone wrong?

Today, in many parts of the world, the so-called "free" market, the consumerist culture, and "Black Friday" sales, have become increasingly dominant, and are now seriously threatening our global future, both in terms of our care of the planet and in increasing societal rivalry and conflict.

In the process we have lost trust in everything: politics, economics, politicians, business, CEOs, governments, the media, and dare I say, even the religions. This is why I believe in the global society in which we all now live, it is vital for our common survival and wellbeing that we build cultures of trust, being prepared to take risk for the common good.

What is trust?

Trust surely comes from the experience of a *relationship - an in-depth experience* - which by its nature is rooted in values that are not necessarily economic or monetary.

At the basis of such trust is an understanding that, in spite of our differences, we have our humanity in common. Archbishop Desmond Tutu speaks of "that African thing, Ubuntu" – the notion that a person is only a person through other persons. A person with "Ubuntu" is open and available to others, all others, for we are incomplete without each other. Ubuntu echoes the insight

of John Donne that “No man is an island I am involved in mankind”, and that was in the seventeenth century.

Let us now pause for a moment and think about the following questions: Time to focus on life’s bigger picture

Today’s world, it seems, has become a world of continuing and deepening crises. Wisdom, must surely compel us to ask: Why?

Is it lack of money or resources? Or Lack of technology and IT? Or Lack of people holding PhDs and MBAs? Or lack of goals set by this organisation or that? No. What we lack is moral and spiritual imagination and compass. We lack wisdom and choose wrong, harmful, and worthless ways.

As I have said before, our crises can only be addressed, reversed and resolved, and our goals can only be achieved, if we change direction, adopt new values and become concerned with life’s bigger picture. If we want to realise anything good in life, including any goals we may set ourselves, we must begin, first and foremost, by focusing on some fundamental and enduring questions of human meaning and value. Questions such as:

1. What does it mean to be human?
2. What does it mean to live a life of meaning and purpose?
3. What does it mean to understand and appreciate the natural world?
4. What does it mean to forge a more just society for the common good?

By their very nature, these questions involve thought and discussion around spirituality, ethics, morals and values.

This means that our lives are connected not only to knowledge, power and money, but also to faith, love and wisdom. Unless the questions we ask encompass the full spectrum of these emotions and experiences, we’re unlikely to find the answers we are looking for, or to understand them in any depth, let alone solving problems and attaining goals.

The bitter harvest that neo-liberalism has brought us all is the result of its ignorance and inability to accept that our life journey is not all about economics, money and finance. We should acknowledge that our crises are not economic only, but spiritual.

This is why I firmly believe that we must begin by discussing values and to highlight why they matter.

How can we become agents of change for the common good? How can we spark a new public conversation framed around human dignity and the common good?

In seeking to answer these and other relevant pertinent questions, and to understand the world better, we need to discover the world not just as it is, but also how it ought to be. Indeed, the deepest and most difficult questions with which we wrestle are problems of value — right and wrong, beautiful and ugly, just and unjust, worthy or unworthy, dignified or abhorrent, love or hatred, cooperation or competition, selflessness or selfishness, progress and poverty, profit and loss.

Human beings have explored these many questions of value through religion, philosophy, the creation of art and literature, and more. Indeed, questions of value have inaugurated many disciplines within the humanities and continue to drive them today. Questions and conversations about values and valuing are fundamental to what it means to be human, but rarely become the subject of explicit public reflection.

The current economic model - employed by all political parties who have governed our country since the late 1970s - has brought us a very bitter harvest. This bitter harvest is the result of the quintessential ignorance and narrowness of these models and their utter inability to accept that our life journey is not merely about economics, money and finance; but, to an even greater degree, are deeply spiritual.

In all, my friends, ladies and gentlemen, in my view, the task for and being for the common good has never been more urgent and more needed. That task is of influencing and working for change in the moral fabric of society itself – for the common good we might say: And also accepting that each of us, have a life-long responsibility and mission to that end.

Values to Build a Better World

As it has been observed throughout history, in action and thought, people are affected by a wide range of influences. Past experience, cultural and social norms are some of the most important ones. Connected to all of these, to some extent, are our values, which represent a strong guiding force, shaping our attitudes and behaviour over the course of our lives. Our values have been shown to influence our political persuasions; our willingness to participate in political action; our career choices; our ecological footprints; how much money we spend, and on what; and our feelings of personal wellbeing, contentment and happiness; as well as our relationship with others, with nature and Mother Earth, to mention but a few.

We in the Globalisation for the Common Good Initiative (GCGI) have developed a model of what it would look like to put values such as love, generosity and caring for the common good into socio-political and economic practice, suggesting possibilities for healing and transforming our world.

To focus our minds, assisting us to see the big picture, I very much wish to offer for consideration and reflection the values of the GCGI, which we hold very dearly.

I firmly believe that if these or similar values are adopted by all the stakeholders, and then seriously adhered to afterwards, then the attainment of these goals becomes much more possible.

We value caring and kindness

We value passion and positive energy

We value service and volunteerism

We value simplicity and humility

We value trust, openness, and transparency

We value values-led education

We value harmony with nature

We value non-violent conflict resolution

We value interfaith, inter-civilisational and inter-generational dialogue

We value teamwork and collaboration

We value challenge and excellence

We value fun and play

We value curiosity and innovation

We value health and wellbeing

We value a sense of adventure

We value people, communities and cultures

We value friendship, cooperation and responsibility

Having noted some possible values needed to build a better world, I now wish to suggest a few possible practical steps to a better world.

Not let me share with you a few practical steps, guiding our path towards a world for the common good, that if adopted can lead us to construct the better world I had invited you to imagine at the beginning of my lecture:

1. the right to a meaningful job and a minimum income to all individuals, guaranteed by society and/or government, and a "Special Fair Deal" for youth employment& a vigorous job creation programme with increased public works spending

2. a tax on financial transactions
3. access by the poor to credit markets
4. limits on executive pay and compensation
5. taxing capital gains and dividends at the same rate as wages and salaries
6. elimination of too big to fail
7. massive use of usury free lending to provide basic human needs, and expand the quality of human life in ways that are environmentally friendly
8. a resurgence of financial regulations to reduce moral hazard, adverse selection, and to improve the flow of information to consumers
9. increased investment in green technology, with a serious global commitment to dramatically reduce carbon emissions, preserve habitat for endangered species, and to price goods and services with environmental costs in mind
10. an increase in funds for education at all levels, with education as a right
11. the grounding of Business and Economics education in social, moral, and ethical values and principles
12. a dramatic reduction in global military budgets
13. creation of an International Fund for Peace, recognizing that true peace must spring from the access of all to the means of life and the ability to be fully functioning members of the global community
14. the development of new international standards, institutions, and structures, where all countries and all peoples have an equal voice in holding, heads of state, executives of corporations, and policymakers accountable for their actions and policies according to the standards of insuring basic human needs to all, greater equality, and ecological balance; ensuring institutional integrity and full transparency; and the gradual elimination of the right of veto by major countries at the UN.

Conclusion: Co-creating “The Future We Want” in the Interest of the Common Good

The future is indeed fraught with environmental, socio-economic, political, and security risks that could derail the progress towards the building of “The Future We Want”. However, although these serious challenges are confronting us, we can, if we are serious and sincere enough, overcome them by taking risks in the interest of the common good.

One thing is clear: the main problem we face today is not the absence of technical or economic solutions, but rather the presence of moral and spiritual crises. This requires us to build broad global consensus on a vision that places values such as love, generosity and caring for the common good into socio-political and economic practice, suggesting possibilities for healing and transforming our world.

Finally, I wish to invite you all to rise to the global challenges and uncertainties. Many campaigners for a better world, wishing to serve and to promote the common good, often face an uphill battle every day.

But, we must remain positive, we must remain hopeful. We will build the World for the Common Good. Believe me, we will.

This evening, here in London, at London School of Economics, we formed a community of committed and passionate gardeners, sowing seeds of sustainability, peace, justice and global friendship for the common good. In the wonderful and wise words of Rumi:

***Tender words we spoke
to one another
are sealed
in the secret vaults of heaven.
One day like rain,
they will fall to earth
and grow green
all over the world.***

Thank you friends

Globalisation for the Common Good Initiative (GCGI): Where we connect our intellect with our humanity

To understand, appreciate, and face the challenges of the contemporary world requires us to focus on life's big picture. Whether it is war and peace, economics and the environment, justice and injustice, love and hatred, cooperation and competition, common good and selfishness, science and technology, progress and poverty, profit and loss, food and population, energy and water, disease and health, education and family, we need the big picture in order to understand and solve the many pressing problems, large and small, regional or global.

The "Big Picture" is also the context in which we can most productively explore the big perennial questions of life - purpose and meaning, virtues and values.

In order to focus on life's bigger picture and guided by the principles of hard work, commitment, volunteerism and service; with a great passion for dialogue of cultures, civilisations, religions, ideas and visions, at an international conference in Oxford in 2002 the Globalisation for the Common Good Initiative (GCGI) and the GCGI Annual International Conference Series were founded.

We recognise that our socio-economic problems are closely linked to our spiritual problems and vice versa. Moreover, socio-economic justice, peace and harmony will come about only when the essential connection between the spiritual and practical aspects of life is valued. Necessary for this journey is to discover, promote and live for the common good. The principle of the common good reminds us that we are all really responsible for each other – we are our brothers' and sisters' keepers – and must work for social conditions which ensure that every person and every group in society is able to meet their needs and realize their potential. It follows that every group in society must take into account the rights and aspirations of other groups, and the well-being of the whole human family.

One of the greatest challenges of our time is to apply the ideas of the global common good to practical problems and forge common solutions. Translating the contentions of philosophers, spiritual and religious scholars and leaders into agreement between policymakers and nations is the task of statesmen and citizens, a challenge to which Globalisation for the Common Good Initiative (GCGI) adheres. The purpose is not simply talking about the common good, or simply to have a dialogue, but the purpose is to take action, to make the common good and dialogue work for all of us, benefiting us all.

What the GCGI seeks to offer - through its scholarly and research programme, as well as its outreach and dialogue projects - is a vision that positions the quest for economic and social justice, peace and ecological sustainability within the framework of a spiritual consciousness and a practice of open-heartedness, generosity and caring for others. All are thus encouraged by this vision and consciousness to serve the common good.

The GCGI has from the very beginning invited us to move beyond the struggle and confusion of a preoccupied economic and materialistic life to a meaningful and purposeful life of hope and joy, gratitude, compassion, and service for the good of all.

Perhaps our greatest accomplishment has been our ability to bring Globalisation for the Common Good into the common vocabulary and awareness of a greater population along with initiating the necessary discussion as to its meaning and potential in our personal and collective lives.

In short, at Globalisation for the Common Good Initiative we are grateful to be contributing to that vision of a better world, given the goals and objectives that we have been championing since 2002. For that we are most grateful to all our friends and supporters that have made this possible.

GCGI- Annual Conference Series

Plater College, Oxford (2002)- St. Petersburg, Russia (2003)- Dubai, UAE (2004)- Nairobi and Kericho, Kenya(2005)- Chaminade University, Honolulu, Hawaii, USA (2006)-Fatih University, Istanbul, Turkey (2007)- Trinity College, University of Melbourne, Australia (2008)- Loyola University, Chicago, USA (2009)- California Lutheran University, Thousand

Oaks, California, USA (2010)- Alexandria Bibliotheca, Alexandria, Egypt (2011—Postponed, due to the Revolution in Egypt)- School of Economic Science, Oxford Campus, Waterperry House, Oxford, UK (2012), Cité universitaire internationale, Paris, France (2013), and School of Economic Science, Oxford Campus, Waterperry House, Oxford, UK (2014)

The Globalisation for the Common Good Initiative Annual Conference Series have ranged far across the world through Oxford, Saint Petersburg- Russia- Dubai- UAE- Nairobi/Kericho- Kenya- Honolulu-USA- Istanbul- Turkey- Melbourne- Australia- Chicago- USA- Thousand Oaks, California-USA- Oxford- and Paris, France. The GCGI conferences have created and continue to create an ever-widening international community of speakers and participants, forging links and establishing dialogues across national, cultural, and religious/spiritual boundaries, and putting into practice the movement's core philosophy: that globalisation need not be defined merely in terms of impersonal market forces, but can be a power for good, building spiritual bonds that can unite humanity and bring different cultures, faiths and peoples closer together.

These multi/inter-disciplinary conferences- each locally organised and funded, most often by regional organisations working in tandem with a university/think-tank/civil society in cooperation with GCGI- have been lively and productive affairs, in which many national, regional and international participants have come together for intense discussions on a spiritual and value-centered vision of globalisation and the common good.

GCGI Annual Conference Series is now recognised as an initiative that has succeeded in establishing a large, vigorous, interdisciplinary, inter-faith, inter-civilisational, inter-cultural and spiritual team of researchers to focus on issues of globalisation, the common good and other related subjects. The expertise of those who have supported the GCGI includes economics, business studies, political science, media studies and journalism, international relations, history, philosophy, sociology, social anthropology, psychology, medicine, geography, environmental studies, mathematics, physics, chemistry, IT, education, development studies, peace and conflict resolution, law, ethics and theology, amongst others.

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scholarly journals, popular magazines and newspapers. His books include Development Planning in Iran: From Monarchy to Islamic Republic , The Economic Consequences of the Gulf war, Globalisation for the Common Good, Business Ethics, Corporate Social Responsibility and Globalisation for the Common Good , Promoting the Common Good (with Rev. Dr. Marcus Braybrooke, 2005), and A non-Violent Path to Conflict Resolution and Peace Building (Co-authored, 2008)