NOW IN ITS SEVENTH EDITION, THE WORLD GOVERNMENT SUMMIT BRINGS THOUSANDS OF INTERNATIONAL GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS, RESEARCHERS, INNOVATORS, AND ACADEMIC EXPERTS TOGETHER IN DUBAI TO INSPIRE AND ENABLE THE NEXT GENERATION OF GOVERNMENTS. IT SETS THE AGENDA FOR LEADERS AND POLICY-MAKERS TO DEBATE HOW THE NEXT GENERATION CAN HARNESS INNOVATION TO SOLVE HUMANITY’S MOST PRESSING CHALLENGES.
His Highness Sheikh Khalifa bin Zayed Al Nahyan
President of the United Arab Emirates
His Highness Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum

Vice President & Prime Minister of the United Arab Emirates, Ruler of Dubai
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World Government Summit 2019

The seventh edition of the World Government Summit was held in Dubai, United Arab Emirates (UAE), in February 2019, under the patronage of His Highness Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Vice President and Prime Minister of the UAE, Ruler of Dubai.

The 2019 edition attracted more than 4,000 participants, including global political leaders, international policy-makers, researchers, innovators, and academic experts from 140 different countries. An internationally renowned platform dedicated to shaping the future of governments worldwide, the Summit aims to inspire and enable the next generation of governments to shape the future of humanity worldwide.

The World Government Summit 2019 hosted over 600 thought leaders and experts who participated in more than 200 sessions to share their knowledge and experiences, and present research findings and best practices. In addition to the main program, the sidelines of the World Government Summit form a stage for international cooperation, a meeting place for nations and organizations to come together, for governments to sign agreements, and for visionaries to launch novel initiatives and showcase embryonic technologies.

The World Government Summit has established the UAE as a center for international cooperation, thanks to the vision and guidance of the nation’s leadership, and plays a significant role in formulating global trends. It sets the agenda for leaders and policy-makers to debate how the next generation of governments can harness innovation and technology to solve the challenges facing humanity today and in the future.

The Summit In Numbers 2013–2019

900+ Speakers
950+ Interactive sessions & activities
140+ Participating countries
39,000+ Media exposures
100+ Reports
80+ Bilateral agreements signed
25,000+ Contributors
13+ Media partners
40+ International, regional, & intergovernmental organizations

140+ Participating countries

39,000+ Media exposures

100+ Reports

80+ Bilateral agreements signed

25,000+ Contributors

13+ Media partners

40+ International, regional, & intergovernmental organizations
Main Agenda

High-level officials and distinguished international speakers highlighted pivotal issues facing the world and solutions to global challenges that contribute to building a better future for humankind.
The 7 Shifts Shaping Future Cities

In an address to the Summit that he delivered as a hologram, His Highness Sheikh Hamdan bin Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Crown Prince of Dubai, Chairman of the Dubai Executive Council, and Chairman of the Board of Trustees of Dubai Future Foundation, focused on the future of cities and the shifts they are predicted to experience.

Cities are the foundation of global economic progress, and throughout history they have been the engine driving human development. The future of humanity, he asserted, is therefore directly linked to the future of cities.

Sheikh Hamdan highlighted seven areas shaping the future of cities that governments must be prepared for.

City Design
Firstly, cities will be faced with radical changes in design. Today’s cities are largely products of the early 20th century. Sheikh Hamdan pointed out that during this time period, cities were designed around three primary factors:
1. The number of cars streets could accommodate
2. The density of the population
3. The division between industrial areas and commercial areas

This design approach is outdated and does not serve the needs of city residents today. One primary challenge is the impact that current city design has on the social cohesion of communities. Cities of the future, Sheikh Hamdan noted, will be centered around the human experience in order to strengthen community ties and enhance residents’ quality of life.

Mobility & Transportation
The second shift Sheikh Hamdan spoke about relates to mobility and transportation. The extent to which a person can move easily from one point to another in a city has a significant impact on their happiness and well-being, and traffic congestion and long commutes negatively impact quality of life.

The solution to these mobility challenges will be to create new transportation concepts, such as the Hyperloop, Dubai’s Roads and Transport Authority’s Autonomous Air Taxis, and self-driving vehicles. Governments and city planners must focus on developing the infrastructure necessary to support these modes of transportation and create a network that moves people around a city quickly and safely.

AI & The Internet Of Things
Next, Sheikh Hamdan asserted that artificial intelligence will be the backbone of city development in the 21st century, much as electricity was in the 20th century.

Emerging technologies such as AI, virtual reality, autonomous transport, and the internet of things (IoT) will make cities more connected, secure, intelligent, and productive.

Resource Consumption
The fourth transformation cities will face deals with the way resources are consumed and produced. Sheikh Hamdan explained that the decreasing cost of clean energy, the increase in our ability to efficiently store energy, and the availability of a smart grid for energy distribution will create a radical shift in how cities are powered. Cities will move away from a centralized system to a decentralized but interconnected approach, where utility companies become platforms for energy exchange.

He noted that food production will become an important part of urban life, and vertical farms within the city will become an important part of urban life, and vertical farms within the city will provide most of the residents’ food.

City Competitiveness
Cities will also experience a shift in how they compete globally. Future cities will be open platforms for communication, connecting minds, and driving innovation. To do that they will need to attract bright minds and promising talent, which will require a focus on fostering a culture of tolerance. “The power of future city communities is based on coexistence and tolerance,” he emphasized.

Economic Systems
The sixth transformation that governments must be prepared for is related to economic systems. Sheikh Hamdan explained that advancing technologies and the challenges of today are encouraging the rise of different economic systems. Cities are looking beyond oil and other tangible commodities and trending more toward a data economy. Technology is also encouraging the growth of participatory economies, where assets are shared to reduce operating costs and make it less important to own tangible goods.

Challenges such as climate change have helped circular economies to flourish as well, which aim to eliminate waste and continually reuse resources.

Governance & Flexible Leadership
The seventh and final transformation cities will face is a shift in legislation and governance. “The role of city leadership will change from providing housing solutions and services to enabling the design of these solutions in partnership with the private sector and civil society,” Sheikh Hamdan noted. In light of the data revolution and the increasing role of IoT within cities, traditional approaches to policy-making will no longer be relevant. Leadership in future cities will be based on flexible legislation and the willingness to leverage technology and innovation to design unconventional solutions and services.

People Are The Future
Sheikh Hamdan reminded the audience that governments alone are not responsible for the future; everyone must be involved. “Every seed we plant today will be a tree in the future, in the future of our cities,” he concluded. “We are all partners in this future.”
Papal Message To Governments Of The World

Attendees of the World Government Summit were honored to receive a message of peace and tolerance from His Holiness Pope Francis, the Head of the Catholic Church and Sovereign of the Vatican City State. While he was unable to attend the Summit in person, he opened his remarks by recounting his recent visit to the UAE and the warm reception he received.

**A Blooming Desert**
His Holiness recalled his visit to the UAE and said that he found it to be a “modern country looking to the future without forgetting its roots.” In his message, he explained that he has seen hope in the development that the UAE has achieved, returning to his home with a vision that many deserts in the world could spring up, bloom, and grow in the same way.

“I believe it is possible, but only if we grow together alongside one another, with openness and respect, willing to take on everyone’s problems, which are the problems of each person in this global village,” he noted, as he reflected on the challenges facing the world today.

**Facing The Issues**
Pope Francis expressed his support as the world faces fundamental issues, including political challenges, economic development, protection of the environment, or the use of technology. He urged attendees to put people first, rather than capital and economic interests.

“It is my sincere hope that the question underlying your reflections will not only be ‘what are the best opportunities to take advantage of?’ but ‘what kind of world do we want to build together?’”

**A Common Good**
His Holiness asked listeners to consider the meaning of good, positing that if it is not the common good, it is not actually good. Simply put, he emphasized that individuals and organizations need to work together for the good of society. Our collective future relies on increased cooperation and open dialogue.

Pope Francis brought his brief message to a close by asking the Lord to bless the commitment for a more just and prosperous world.

**KEY POINTS**
- We need to work together as a global community to tackle the issues of the world today
- We must act in the interest of the common good
- We must communicate and have honest dialogue with each other

"Thinking and acting require a true dialogue with others, because without others there is no future."
Main Address Of The Guest Country: Estonia

Embracing a digital future and learning from each other’s solutions will accelerate improvements and efficiency in economies and governments, said His Excellency Jüri Ratas, Prime Minister of Estonia. In his main address to the Summit, Ratas detailed the growth Estonia has achieved by embracing digitization since restoring its independence in 1991.

**e-Estonia**

In the past 20 years, Estonia has made use of digital tools to spur economic growth, improve governance, and connect society. Digitization has been so widely embraced that the country is often referred to as e-Estonia. A small country with 1.3 million inhabitants and limited natural resources, Estonia’s forward-thinking leaders recognized the opportunity that digitization has to offer. To illustrate his point, Ratas mentioned that since the early 2000s, government meetings have gone fully paperless and have become hyper-efficient, with cabinet sessions lasting only 27 minutes on average, during which time approximately 16 government decisions are made.

**Must-haves In A Digital Society**

Ratas outlined three key elements in building a functioning digital society. First, every person must have a unique ID number. Second, it is important to provide a strong digital identity. This ensures safe and secure transactions and authentication of sensitive information. “In Estonia, digital IDs are used for taxes, internet voting, e-prescription, e-banking, and most importantly, for signing any document digitally,” he explained.

The third key element of a digital society is a unified way of sharing data. Estonian engineers have developed X-Road, a data exchange layer that enables the secure transfer of data between 651 public and private sector organizations. Ratas mentioned, however, that the technical requirements alone are not sufficient for a truly digital society. A mindset of openness, transparency, and privacy creates trust in digital solutions.

**The Digital Future & e-Residency**

Ratas asked the audience to look to what the future holds for coming digital solutions. Estonia has begun redesigning its digital services to create value and privacy for its citizens. “For example,” offered Ratas, “whenever a child is born in Estonia, his or her ID number is generated automatically. Monthly child benefits are paid to the parents, and a place in kindergarten is assigned without having to fill any applications.”

On the commercial side, small- or medium-sized companies in Estonia can allow the government to access some of their financial data, and taxes can be filed automatically. The country also sees great potential in artificial intelligence and machine-learning solutions for the public sector. It has opened its digital services to the rest of the world in the form of e-residency, with the aim of attracting global users to services offered by local companies and the Estonian government. The country has already gathered over 50,000 e-residents from 168 countries – including the UAE. Those e-residents have established more than 6,500 new companies.

To conclude, Ratas extended an invitation to other countries around the globe to collaborate with Estonia: “Estonia looks forward to working together in building digital bridges between our countries and our regions to create economic growth and jobs by transferring knowledge and sharing solutions.”

**KEY POINTS**

- Sharing solutions, rather than competing against one another, will accelerate economic growth, security, and efficiency in digitized societies
- Having a unique ID for every citizen, a strong digital identity, and a unified system for sharing data are three key elements for building a digital society
- A mindset of openness, transparency, and privacy creates trust in digital solutions
- Governments and businesses can offer their services most efficiently and safely when a strong digital infrastructure and proper security measures are in place
Best Practices From Estonia: Europe’s Digital Leader

The success of Estonia’s pioneering digital transformation was highlighted during three sessions focusing on the small European nation. Estonia was one of the Summit’s three guest countries.

A Digital Transformation

His Excellency Rene Tammist, Minister of Entrepreneurship and Information Technology of Estonia, gave an overview of the country’s digital development since 1991, when it regained independence and sought to reboot its economy.

The vision to adopt ICT led to technical infrastructure such as X-Road, the digital backbone that connects the nation’s various public and private sector e-service information systems.

Tammist highlighted that residents can access all government services online, with the exception of marriage, divorce, and buying real estate. The nation was the first to implement e-voting, 97% of patients use e-health services, and 99% get their prescriptions online. Citizens can even e-sign documents through their mobile phone. The result is not only convenience for businesses and citizens, but it also saves the government 2% of its GDP annually.

He highlighted that trust is one of the core pillars of the government’s approach. The nation has invested in defense against cybercrime, and now they are being recognized for it around the world. “We’ve been becoming more and more known for it because there’s some important EU and NATO centers in Estonia dealing with cyber defense and also protecting people’s privacy and data privacy.”

In keeping with its pioneering spirit, the country is also looking into artificial intelligence applications. Tammist noted several cases where the government is already using AI, including to monitor potential cyber threats to its X-Road system and predicting where police should send patrol cars to monitor traffic. While further developing AI is a high priority for Estonia, Tammist noted they are also very mindful of its challenges and are working to mitigate any ethical or social issues it may present.

Expanding Estonia’s Reach

Siim Sikkut, Chief Information Officer of the Government of Estonia, took to the floor to explain how Estonia was the first country to launch e-Residency, a government-issued digital identity. Estonia’s e-Residency is available to anyone around the world. The system allows people to make use of the country’s public services to establish companies and run them remotely, without the need for intermediaries.

Originally, the aim was to increase the number of service users. Since Estonia is a small nation of 1.3 million people, they opened up to the world to expand their reach.

Sikkut noted that the current mission is to empower entrepreneurs from all over the globe by lowering the barriers to entry for them to participate in Estonia’s economy. This also has the positive side-effect of increasing their wellbeing and that of their families.

In its first four years, the program has signed 52,000 new e-residents and 6,500 companies. Sikkut reported, clarifying that the scheme is not about tax avoidance, in fact it is built on transparency and publishes all tax information. Its popularity stems from the quality of the services it offers. It gives freelancers and digital nomads a sense of legitimacy and helps business access the European market.

A Growing e-Population

Growing its population through e-residency is having an impact on the economy, said Sikkut. This is because entrepreneurs are immediately active economically, whereas babies only become economically active about 20 years down the line.

“Every week, we get more e-residents than there are babies born in the country. We literally grow as an economy, as a country, faster in the digital space than in the actual, physical world.”

In his presentation, Marek Helm, General Manager of Nortal, who is also the former Director General of the Estonian Tax and Customs Board, outlined nine criteria that led to Estonia’s digital transformation success:

1. Data quality
2. Political will
3. Infrastructure
4. Awareness
5. Trust
6. Internet access
7. Laws
8. Change management
9. Government integration

The quality of Estonia’s e-services has opened them up to the world, expanding Estonia’s reach.
Main Address Of The Guest Country: Costa Rica

One of the three World Government Summit 2019 guest countries, Costa Rica has built a successful model for sustainable development and social inclusion that works to offer opportunities to all and is deeply respectful of the environment. In her address to the Summit, Her Excellency Epsy Campbell Barr, First Vice President of Costa Rica, highlighted the inspiring story behind her nation’s pioneering work to integrate happiness and quality of life into the heart of its public policies, while maintaining environmental sustainability.

Decarbonizing The Economy
Costa Rica’s current administration, under the leadership of President Carlos Alvarado Quesada, has set a very lofty goal – to make Costa Rica the first country in the world to completely decarbonize its economy. To help realize this goal, Barr explained, the protection of natural resources underpins all policy-making, an approach that is reaping big environmental rewards.

While the country suffered from mass deforestation that began in the 1970s, its efforts to restore the natural environment over the last 20 years have been very successful. In 2009, the New Economics Foundation named Costa Rica the greenest country in the world. Today, more than half of the island country is once again covered in lush forests.

In addition to the ongoing reforestation efforts, Barr announced that 98% of Costa Rica’s electricity now comes from renewable sources, including wind, geothermal energy, solar power, and hydroelectric energy.

Policies To Improve Quality Of Life
On top of its staggering achievements in sustainability, Barr also highlighted Costa Rica’s triumphs in other sectors, which are contributing to citizens’ overall wellbeing and quality of life. She mentioned that 8% of the country’s GDP is invested in the education system, making Costa Rica the first Latin American country to achieve full enrollment in its primary schools. “It is the commitment of the Costa Rican state that every child must have an educational center close by,” she stressed. “The younger generation is at the center of decisions, and it is the generation of light.”

Barr also showcased the Costa Rican Social Security Fund, which provides universal healthcare to all the country’s citizens and permanent residents. “The Costa Rican Social Security Fund continues to be an example of equity and has had an important impact on the health and productivity of society.”

Finally, she explained that Costa Rica “decided to swap weapons for books” some 70 years ago. Instead of spending money on a military force, the country instead invests in education, healthcare, and the environment. Abolishing the army, she said, has significantly increased Costa Rica’s GDP growth rate.

The Path To Progress
To bring her session to a close, Barr commended the World Government Summit’s mission of promoting public-private partnerships to create a positive impact for people all around the world. Countries must work together to strengthen multilateral systems such as the United Nations, as this is the only path for progress.

KEY POINTS
• Costa Rica has put environmental sustainability at the heart of its policy-making
• 98% of Costa Rica’s electricity comes from hydroelectric power, wind, geothermal energy, and solar power
• Costa Rica is the first country in Latin America to have full enrollment in primary schools
• Abolishing the country’s military has increased its GDP growth rate
• Strengthening multilateralism is the only path for progress

“In call upon you to dream of a stable, harmonious world – one that presents equal chances without war, one that presents biodiversity, and one that presents better chances and opportunities for everyone to be happy”
Best Practices From Costa Rica: Leading The Way To Sustainability

Costa Rica, one of the Summit’s three guest countries of 2019, was in the spotlight during four sessions that focused on leadership and efforts to protect the environment, ensure sustainable development, and provide citizens with social security and gender equality.

A Vision of Sustainable Development
Her Excellency María del Pilar Garrido Gonzalo, Minister of National Planning and Economic Policy of Costa Rica, told the Summit that since the 1940s, Costa Rica has had a vision of how it wanted its nation to be. This vision is centered around sustainable development.

She said their aspirations for growth and the distribution of wealth were accompanied by discussions on protecting their resources, which led to the inclusion of sound governance and strong institutions in their vision.

The Peace Dividend
The country abolished its army, and instead directed its investment toward education and health. As a result, Costa Rica ranks one of the highest in literacy, at about 97% of the population, and the education system teaches five different languages.

“People are the most important asset we have and the most important investment,” she said. “This is what makes us one of the happiest nations in the world.” However, this is not enough for Costa Rica. They must constantly review and strengthen their institutions.

Gonzalo asserted that Costa Rica is working toward the UN’s Sustainable Development Goals alongside their own national goals, especially in fighting poverty, combating inequality, and establishing sustainable patterns of consumption and production.

Building Strong Institutions
Expanding further on Costa Rica’s strong institutions, Román Macaya Hayes, Executive President and Chairman of the Board of the Costa Rican Social Security Fund, shared the story of Costa Rica’s healthcare system.

Founded in 1941, the nation put in place a guarantee of public healthcare for workers. In 1947, it added pensions as one of its guarantees. By 1961, it declared its goal would be to provide healthcare to all and, over the course of 18 administrations, the system expanded to provide universal healthcare coverage. Today, healthcare services cover 99% of the territory, from mountain to jungle, and the nation spends about 10% of its GDP on healthcare.

“The outcome of this has been one of our biggest achievements. We have a life expectancy at birth of 80 years... Our model has allowed us to have the health indices of a rich nation without yet being a rich nation,” he said.


He said that things need to be done differently to keep up with changing demographics and financial pressures, and one of the ways Costa Rica is achieving that is through data. A national medical database helps identify patients based on their demographics, to try and serve them before they come into a hospital, which is the most expensive place to treat them. This involves screenings and prevention programs. The nation is also looking into establishing a genomic center to enable research into the frequency of certain genetic mutations.

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Main Address Of The Guest Country: Rwanda

In the last 25 years, Rwanda has worked to build a new nation based on the values of unity and opportunity for all citizens. His Excellency Paul Kagame, President of Rwanda, asserted that his country has made significant progress in growing its economy and maximizing benefits for its people. He explained that if there is one lesson the world can take away from Rwanda’s experience, it is optimism. If Rwanda can achieve its goals, other countries can too, as long as people work together toward a common vision. According to Kagame, Rwanda’s government has focused on three key areas in order to drive their recent development:

1. Involving all citizens in shaping the country’s future
2. Investing in human capital, infrastructure, and technology projects
3. Encouraging regional and continental integration

An Inclusive Approach
Kagame explained to the Summit that the first thing Rwanda had to do to foster development was establish the right foundation. The administration had to understand that leaders and institutions exist to respond to the needs and expectations of citizens. This understanding was coupled with a focus on enhancing civic participation and trust in the government. The aim was to ensure that all Rwandans were given a voice in shaping the country’s future and everyone’s rights were upheld, especially historically marginalized groups, such as women.

“The commitment to good politics has generated immense goodwill and energy,” Kagame noted, “which helped Rwandans resolve the complex issues related to our country’s history.”

Investing In The Future
Rwanda’s second focus area was heavy investment in human capital and ambitious infrastructure and technology projects to secure the country’s future prosperity. While the scale of Rwanda’s vision in this regard has sometimes outpaced the available means, Kagame pointed out that the country has made the best of the resources it does have and devised creative approaches to bridge any gaps.

The government has worked to shift the basis of Rwanda’s economy from subsistence to knowledge in an effort to unleash citizens’ creativity, entrepreneurship, and innovation. “In other words,” Kagame added, “our strategy has been to get government out of the business of business, and focus instead on creating a conducive, enabling environment and a level playing field for private enterprise.”

Collaboration Is Key
Finally, Kagame asserted that regional and continental integration is a key priority for Rwanda. For the country’s economy to continue to grow and thrive, it must participate in bigger markets, he said, adding that by 2050, Africa’s population will reach 2.5 billion, making it larger than any other continent.

The only way the continent can achieve its full potential is by joining together and boosting the continent’s trading position on the global market. Governments across the continent have a responsibility to ensure their young people are equipped with the skills to compete and succeed internationally.

Empowering African Youth
Kagame noted the importance of Africa’s youth to the future of the continent. Governments across the continent have a responsibility to ensure their young people are equipped with the skills and knowledge necessary to compete and succeed internationally.

“While there is still much work to be done, many great steps have been made in this direction. Kagame highlighted the African Continental Free Trade Area, which will create a free trade area among 54 of the 55 African Union nations, as well as the Single African Airport Transport Market, which aims to establish a single, unified air transport market in Africa, as two such examples.

“This means that African countries are now faced with unprecedented prospects for economic transformation and growth,” Kagame said. “The faster we can work, the better.”

KEY POINTS
• Governments must understand that the purpose of leaders and institutions is to respond to the needs and expectations of citizens
• Rwanda has shifted the basis of its economy from subsistence to knowledge in order to unleash creativity, entrepreneurship, and innovation
• Africa can only achieve its full potential by joining together and boosting the continent’s trading position on the global market
• African governments have a responsibility to ensure their young people are equipped with the skills to compete and succeed internationally

If there is one lesson from Rwanda’s experience, it is optimism. If Rwanda can make it to this point, it means there are no insurmountable challenges”
Best Practices From Rwanda: Leading Tourism & Agriculture

The World Government Summit brought together representatives from Rwanda, one of the three guest countries for 2019, to discuss the small African nation’s flourishing tourism and agriculture industries. The session hosted Her Excellency Dr Gerardine Mukeshimana, Rwanda’s Minister of Agriculture and Animal Resources, Emmanuel Hategeka, Deputy CEO and Chief Operating Officer of the Rwanda Development Board, Emmanuel Ndayizigiye, President of the Horticulture in Reality Cooperative Rwanda, Rebecca McLaughlin-Duane, Manager of Akagera National Park, and Jes Gruner, who manages Akagera National Park.

Efficiency In Agriculture

Dr Mukeshimana explained that Rwanda is a small country, where the average farmer’s landholding is around 0.5 hectares. The government is doing everything it can to serve their people in the present, while also considering the sustainability of land resources for future generations. Maximizing output and profitability in a country like Rwanda comes down to efficiency. “We have ambitious plans to keep growing the productivity of our lands to make sure that we can feed ourselves.”

Agriculture is Rwanda’s top employment sector, with 60 to 70% of the population working in the industry. However, it is set to face challenges in the future. In addition to weathering the impacts of climate change, Rwanda’s farming population is aging and youth are becoming less interested in the trade. The nation has undertaken various measures to safeguard the sector, Dr Mukeshimana explained, such as implementing smart agriculture technologies, transitioning to solar energy, and investigating the creation of farming cooperatives to support smaller producers.

The Importance Of Youth

In Rwanda, 70% of the population is under the age of 30. To involve more of these young people in the agriculture sector, Dr Mukeshimana asserted that Rwanda must focus on developing industries to turn the country’s raw commodities into value-added products, as well as agro-processing. This will extend the shelf-life of the country’s agriculture industry and create more jobs for future generations.

Sustainable Tourism

Hategeka pointed out that agriculture and tourism are two parts of the same ecosystem. It takes deliberate policy-making and investment to ensure the sustainability of both industries, and that’s exactly what Rwanda is doing. Sustainable agriculture and conservation efforts are attracting and supporting Rwanda’s push to increase tourism. Hategeka put the issue of a productive agricultural sector succinctly: “You cannot build a thriving tourism industry if you do not have the food to feed the tourists.”

Hategeka explained that Rwanda is investing heavily in building hotels, a convention center, a new airport, and a national airline. The country is focused on building a diversified product offering, he added, with MICE and major events, conservation, and community development. He also highlighted Rwanda’s revenue-sharing policy: “We have a policy of sharing all the revenue that comes from tourism. We actually earmark a percentage that goes back to the community.” This approach has not only supported communities and social projects like hospitals, schools, and housing for vulnerable groups, but it has encouraged some former poachers to become conservationists.

KEY POINTS

- Agriculture and tourism are linked, with one depending on the other
- Rwanda needs to increase productivity while sustaining the land for future generations
- Rwanda is looking to technology to meet its agricultural goals and attract future generations to farming
- Supporting and sustaining agriculture and tourism are key for Rwanda’s economy
A Prosperous Future For All

The clock is ticking, and governments must transform in order to deliver on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by 2030, announced Her Excellency Amina J Mohammed, the Deputy Secretary General of the United Nations. Taking to the stage to deliver a report on the global goals, Mohammed warned that while many nations have made progress, it has not been rapid enough to meet the targets by the 2030 deadline.

The Biggest Challenge
Mohammed noted that the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development is in its fourth year, and the world now faces an imperative: work toward these goals must be accelerated. Progress has certainly been made over these past few years, she said. Citizen wellbeing and quality of life has improved in many countries, there have been advances in promoting rule of law and access to justice, and member states have improved their public service delivery.

These achievements, however, are not happening fast enough, she noted. Inequality and intolerance are on the rise, and the world continues to face war, hunger, humanitarian crises, and environmental degradation. In addition, she explained that multilateralism is encountering growing skepticism at a time when it is absolutely crucial for countries to cooperate on common goals. “It is up to us to bring back the trust and demonstrate that global institutions can meet global challenges and meet people’s expectations,” she urged.

Governments must ensure they do not leave behind people who have been adversely affected by globalisation. Mohammed stressed that “leaving people, especially our youth, with a sense of unmet aspirations, no hope, and life without dignity is a recipe for chaos.”

Mohammed called on governments and institutions to rise to meet what the UN’s Secretary General has called their biggest challenge: to mobilize solutions to serve society. In today’s era of unprecedented change, Mohammed urged governments at all levels to reconsider the way they operate. She advocated collaboration and integration, advising leaders to consider the effect their policies have on multiple sectors and capitalize on synergies to make an impact in people’s lives.

“We all must keep pushing the boundaries of transformation,” Mohammed emphasized. The 2030 Agenda functions as a roadmap for mobilizing public, private, domestic, and international resources, as well as all segments of society. It is up to governments at all levels to create a nurturing environment for these players and the opportunities they present.

Mohammed also recommended bolstering democratic practices, encouraging private sector investment, and allowing stakeholders to participate in creating solutions to serve society. “Overall, we need to foster whole-of-society approaches to address today’s most pressing challenges.”

An Era Of Change
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Leveraging Technology Responsibly
Investing in innovation is also crucial to realizing the SDGs by the 2030 deadline. Emerging technologies have huge potential for addressing development challenges and measuring results, Mohammed said. For example, mobile phone data is being used to measure child poverty, and social media surveys are helping humanitarian agencies better understand the situation for refugees in conflict-affected areas.

Implementing new technologies must, however, be coupled with strong political leadership, resources, and commitment to use these tools responsibly so that inequalities are not exacerbated further. Access varies widely between countries. Governments must make sure that new technologies are reaching and benefiting the people who are furthest behind, and that they are providing education and support for those who have been sidelined by innovation.

In closing, Mohammed reminded global leaders and policymakers in the audience that the world’s citizens are depending on them to address the challenges of sustainable development. “A more sustainable, secure, and prosperous future for all can be ours.”

KEY POINTS

• Governments and institutions must accelerate their efforts to achieve the SDGs by 2030.
• Governments at all levels need to focus on collaboration and integration in order to make a positive impact on people’s lives.
• Investing in innovation is crucial to achieving the SDGs.
• Governments must be mindful that they are using new technologies in a way that is helpful, and not creating fresh challenges.
• As long as governments and countries work together, the SDGs can be achieved by the deadline.
A Journey Of Wisdom

In a moving keynote address at the Summit, Lieutenant General His Highness Sheikh Saif bin Zayed Al Nahyan, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior of the UAE, emphasized how the guiding principles of wisdom and tolerance have steered Emirati society to achieve stability and prosperity.

According to Sheikh Saif, true success, creativity, tolerance, and progress can only be achieved through wisdom. Wisdom plays an instrumental role in the political, economic, and social aspects of a country. It is a universal power that can enable the continuity of success.

Practicing Wisdom In Politics

In politics, wisdom must be exercised along with justice and rational thinking.

Sheikh Saif gave the example of Prophet Mohammad’s (PBUH) conquest of Mecca. Although he had a great army, he took over the city with minimum violence as he combined tolerance with wise decisions.

The UAE leaders’ wisdom has led to achieving a balance between building a defense force and developing the country on the values of tolerance and peaceful coexistence. However, it is not enough to practice wisdom, but it is also necessary to teach and pass it on to the next generations.

Elevating Economies & Societies

Economic wisdom lies in successfully navigating difficult times. Sheikh Saif explained that an economically wise person is someone who has effectively managed to steer out of a fiscal crisis. He spoke of the late Sheikh Rashid bin Saeed Al Maktoum, who built a thriving port in Dubai despite many naysayers. In the years since, His Highness Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Vice President and Prime Minister of the UAE, Ruler of Dubai, has gone on to develop the port and establish DP World. Today, the company operates a portfolio of 80 ports across six continents.

He also added that the most essential asset for economic success is investing in people. Sheikh Saif stressed the importance of investing in education and how enabling students allows the economy to grow. He urged leaders in education to be persistent in overcoming obstacles and creating the best possible prospects for youth. Additionally, empowering small and medium businesses can further fuel the economic growth of a country.

Sheikh Saif further highlighted that the absence of wisdom has a significant negative impact on society.

The Continuous Pursuit

Sheikh Saif underlined the importance of preserving the balance between power and tolerance. While the UAE was formed on the foundation of tolerance and sharing, one of the key priorities was power. It is wise to keep a balance between defensive power, ensuring security, and building the country on the principles of tolerance and peaceful coexistence, he added.

Sheikh Saif concluded his speech by reinforcing the value of wisdom when it comes to solving challenges and planning for the future. He described how by leading with wisdom, vision, and intelligence, the past and current UAE rulers have been able to make the country a global model for wise leadership.

With the many tenets of wisdom in mind, the UAE Government’s relentless goal will continue to be to enhance the wellbeing and quality of life of Emirati and global communities.

KEY POINTS

- The virtues of wisdom and tolerance have helped Emirati society to prosper
- It is not enough to practice wisdom; it is also necessary to teach it to younger generations
- Economic wisdom lies in successfully navigating difficult times
- The most important asset for economic success is investing in people
- The absence of wisdom will have a significant negative impact on society

“We have a responsibility to pursue the journey of wisdom to secure a bright and successful future for our upcoming generations”
Pope Francis In The Emirates: A New Dawn For The Middle East

The landmark visit of His Holiness Pope Francis, Head of the Catholic Church and Sovereign of the Vatican City, to the UAE was a significant milestone for interfaith dialogue and coexistence, said His Highness Sheikh Abdullah bin Zayed Al Nahyan, Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation of the UAE.

The Human Fraternity Meeting
In his address, Sheikh Abdullah emphasized the importance of the papal visit and the historic meeting that took place between Pope Francis and His Eminence Dr Ahmed Al Tayeb, Grand Imam of Al Azhar Mosque, which became known as the ‘Human Fraternity Meeting’.

According to Sheikh Abdullah, the meeting, which was the culmination of a journey of peace that had begun years ago between Pope Francis and Dr Al Tayeb, sent a universal message of peace, tolerance and dialogue to the world. “People may wonder why these two religious figures insist on championing human fraternity, shunning all critics who stood firmly against this idea;” he said. “The answer is quite simple: peace. History has proven that there are two kinds of people that make wars: politicians and clerics. We have chosen to uphold peace. We all need to have the courage to put an end to conflicts.”

Human Fraternity Document
In addition to promoting the values of brotherhood, solidarity, and peace, the meeting resulted in the signing of the Human Fraternity Document. The historic declaration sets out principles of interfaith coexistence and dialogue and calls on people across the globe to unite in their efforts to spread a message of peace.

The signing of the declaration will help to further shine a positive light on religion, which has been distorted throughout history and marred by extremism and terrorism. “The Human Fraternity Document is a historic reconciliation document filled with courage and honesty, to give humanity hope that peace and coexistence are possible.”

“The declaration clearly states that ‘freedom is a right of every person; each individual enjoys the freedom of belief, thought, expression and action. The pluralism and the diversity of religions, color, sex, race, and language are willed by God in His wisdom, through which He created human beings’.”

Sheikh Abdullah highlighted another passage that states: “This Declaration constitutes an invitation to reconciliation and fraternity among all believers, indeed among believers and non-believers, and among all people of good will.” This excerpt shows that “peace is not limited to believers; it encompasses humanity as a whole.”

Zayed International Fund For Coexistence
Sheikh Abdullah also praised the establishment of a new fund announced by His Highness Sheikh Mohamad bin Zayed Al Nahyan, Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi and Deputy Supreme Commander of the UAE Armed Forces. The Zayed International Fund for Coexistence will complement the document and support its principles through a wide variety of soon-to-launch international projects and programs.

Sheikh Abdullah reiterated the UAE’s unwavering and full commitment to instilling the message of peace, tolerance and harmony among students and teachers in the nation’s schools and universities. “This document will be included in school and university curricula,” he announced. “An international work group will be formed as of next year in order to disseminate the document across the world by inviting clerics, politicians and community influencers to sign it and adopt its cultural principles.”

Human Fraternity Award – Dar Zayed
Sheikh Abdullah also shared the details of a new award created by His Highness Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Vice President and Prime Minister of the UAE, Ruler of Dubai, known as the Human Fraternity Award – Dar Zayed. The accolade was jointly awarded to the two religious leaders, Pope Francis and Dr Al Tayeb, as they launched the Human Fraternity Document in recognition of their efforts to bring people closer together.

The Abrahamic Family House
In conclusion, Sheikh Abdullah described the groundbreaking open-air mass held by Pope Francis at Zayed Sports City Stadium in Abu Dhabi, which had more than 150,000 people in attendance. On the same day, the UAE announced the construction of the Abrahamic Family House on Saadiyat Island in Abu Dhabi. The museum will commemorate the historic visit of Pope Francis and the Grand Imam, and be dedicated to interfaith harmony.

KEY POINTS
- The Human Fraternity Meeting was a significant milestone for interfaith dialogue and coexistence
- The Human Fraternity Document outlines principles of interfaith coexistence and dialogue and calls on people across the globe to work together to spread a message of peace
- The UAE has launched the Zayed International Fund for Coexistence, the Human Fraternity Award – Dar Zayed, and the Abrahamic Family House to support the principles of peace, tolerance, and coexistence
Pakistan’s Road To Reform

In his first address in the UAE, His Excellency Imran Khan, Prime Minister of Pakistan, shared details about his country’s development and his vision for its future.

The former cricket player turned politician began by recalling the development of Pakistan and his pride at the country’s historic ties with the UAE.

“Pakistan in the 60s was considered the fastest-growing country in Asia,” he noted. “It was a model of development for the developing world. I met Sheikh Mohammed today and he reminded me that Emirates airline was helped by Pakistan Airlines in the 70s. So Pakistan was a country with optimism and hope. We grew rapidly, we had an excellent governance system and our bureaucracy was one of the best in Asia. That’s the Pakistan I grew up in.”

Building Trust & Taking Risks

Khan spoke about his efforts to modernize Pakistan’s economy and healthcare system, and his keenness to resolve the lack of trust the Pakistani people feel toward the government today.

Building the nation’s first cancer hospital, which led him to question people’s generosity when funding hospitals, yet have issues when paying taxes. The reason, he surmised, is that people do not trust the government. In addition to concerns over corruption, taxpayers feel their money is being wasted, funding the lavish lifestyles of the ruling elite.

He referred to the experience of playing sports career taught him lessons in leadership, accountability, and determination. “I saw a lot of players with a lot of talent, but they never made it big because they were scared of losing – they would not take risks,” he said. “Players with less talent but that ability to take risks, they also faced hardship, but eventually the ones who took chances were the ones who made it big.” One of the most important lessons he learned from playing sports is that “you only lose when you give up.” That same principle is true in government as well.

The Need For Reform

Khan acknowledged his government’s efforts to enhance the country’s position on the global economic and trade map through investment and reform. “The foundation of a state is its rule of law,” he said. “It’s a commitment to humanity and knowledge.”

He remarked that “the worst thing that can happen to a society is that you keep postponing reforms because of the fear that you will have opposition”. In order to progress, everyone must be considered equal before the law, and governments should be accountable. Khan stressed that the more accountable and trustworthy a government is, the more successful it will be. Getting the right people in government office is key, he added, noting that meritocracy is the best approach. “The better the system of getting the best talent to the top, the better the country.”

Driving Business To Eradicate Poverty

In conclusion, Prime Minister Khan told the audience that Pakistan’s economy is ready for international investment and pridled to foster an environment for business. “Now is the time to invest in Pakistan,” he asserted. “Don’t miss the boat.” He referred to a recent conversation he had with His Highness Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Vice President and Prime Minister of the UAE, Ruler of Dubai. “He told me something very interesting,” Khan explained. “He said that you must allow businesses to make money. Investors must make profits, and the reason is simple: people don’t come into business for charity, they come into business to make money. So if they can make money, more people will come and invest.”

“We are now telling businesses that we will help them in making money,” he added, “because the more money they make, the more investment will come… and wealth will be used to lift people out of poverty. We want an equitable growth. We don’t want the rich to get richer and the poor to get poorer.”

HE Imran Khan
Prime Minister of Pakistan

KEY POINTS

- Pakistan is continuing to undergo reforms, which are essential for progress
- The government is working toward regaining trust with accountability based on meritocracy
- Governments must take risks to enable change
- Pakistan is open for investment and focused on generating business wealth to eradicate poverty
The Future of Multilateralism & The Role Of The United Nations

In her main address to the Summit, the President of the 73rd Session of the United Nations (UN) General Assembly Her Excellency María Fernanda Espinosa Garcés, asserted that countries cannot confront today’s challenges on their own. While there is a disconnect between expectations and institutional and political responses to global challenges, which has fueled distrust in multilateralism, international cooperation is imperative for building peaceful, equitable, and sustainable societies and securing a prosperous future for all.

Governments cannot deliver unless they are working in partnership with other stakeholders. “Our challenge,” she explained, “is to strengthen multilateralism and ensure it is flexible and innovative.”

A World Of Paradoxes

Today’s world is one of paradoxes, Garcés stated. On one hand, increased globalization and emerging technologies have fueled unprecedented human progress, including alleviating poverty and enhancing wellbeing. On the other hand, the existing development models have exacerbated inequalities within and between countries. She stressed that feelings of exclusion and disempowerment are spreading and many people are insecure about their present and future. “In other words, the gap between our knowledge and our ability to act, to address, to solve, often falls too short.”

While this disconnect fuels distrust in national and international systems and encourages nationalism and isolationism, Garcés pointed out that no country can tackle the challenges of today on its own. Multilateralism and collective action are essential to tackling the challenges the world is facing today.

Has Multilateralism Failed?

In light of these obstacles, Garcés addressed the question of whether the UN has failed to uphold its mandate. In her view, it has not. “I am convinced that international cooperation and a rules-based order is the right and only way to address global challenges and shape our common future,” she asserted.

She highlighted several of the UN’s past achievements as evidence of its success. It has laid the groundwork for international cooperation, established international agreements covering all aspects of political, economic, and social life, and has been at the forefront of landmark conventions to ensure development, peace, and human dignity. These accomplishments are undeniable, Garcés maintained, but there is still much work to be done.

Adapting To New Realities

While the UN has a long list of landmark achievements, Garcés recommended three crucial areas where the organization must enhance its performance in order to adapt to new realities and remain relevant:

1. Improve communication methods

In order to build on its achievements of the past seven decades and face future challenges, Garcés stated that the UN must be closer to the people and improve the way it communicates in order to strengthen public support for its work. She recommended the use of both mass and social media as effective channels to help garner more public buy-in for multilateralism.

2. Privilege the underprivileged

The UN has to uphold the 2030 Agenda and upscale its efforts to ensure no one is left behind, Garcés asserted. Currently nearly 783 million people worldwide live below the poverty line, 262 million children do not have access to education, and women are still paid approximately 20% less than men. She called on the UN member states to recommit to the SDGs and the promises that were made when the Agenda was launched to ensure these inequitable trends are reversed.

3. Increase efficiency and effectiveness

Finally, Garcés charged the UN to be more efficient, effective, action-oriented, and results-driven. While time and resources are not unlimited, she said, everyone recognizes that multilateral institutions could and should work better, and they should enact reforms to do so. She advocated new, innovative alliances in order to drive tangible outcomes, but cautioned that these partnerships “cannot and should not replace the rules-based international system and the critical role of governments themselves.”

Governing Technology

In closing, Garcés touched on technological change and the extent to which it is impacting everyone’s life. She advised governments and institutions to adopt national and international governance models that address these rapid changes in an inclusive and equitable way so that everyone can share in the benefits.

KEY POINTS

- International cooperation is essential to building a stable, prosperous, and sustainable future for all
- The UN has been successful in the past, but it must enact reforms in order to remain relevant and effective
- Multilateral institutions such as the UN need to improve communication to increase public support, privilege the underprivileged, and increase their efficiency and effectiveness
- Inclusive, equitable governance models for advancing technologies must be put in place to ensure the Fourth Industrial Revolution benefits everyone
In a candid discussion with CNN’s Richard Quest, Her Excellency Christine Lagarde, Managing Director of the International Monetary Fund, offered proactive solutions governments can take to address future economic complications. She identified four potential clouds over the world economy and suggested steps governments can take to ensure the clouds do not create an unwanted financial storm.

4 Factors Hindering Economic Growth

Lagarde assured Summit attendees that the economy is growing, but warned that the growth is happening more slowly than anticipated. She highlighted four realities in the global economy that are contributing to the sluggish growth rate:

1. Trade tensions and tariff escalation
2. Tightening of financial policy
3. Uncertainty surrounding Brexit and its outcomes
4. Economic slowdown in China

A self-described optimist, Lagarde went on to point out ways governments can deal with these potential issues and avoid severe consequences. She identified political determination, the eradication of corruption, and forward-looking policy as crucial to mitigating the risks these four challenges pose.

Mitigating The Risk

Addressing trade tensions and tariff escalation, Lagarde insisted that these issues are not purely political. “The real issues are the substantive ones having to do with IP [intellectual property] protection, subsidies, state-owned enterprises, and with transfer of technology,” she noted. However, while trade tensions and tariff escalations are not exclusively political challenges, addressing them will require political determination. Nations from all corners of the globe must commit to resolving trade issues and clarifying terms of trade. Another potential issue could arise from central banks tightening financial policy. Lagarde explained that this can be viewed as a good thing because it signals the return of economic growth; however, the timing may not be ideal. Tightening policy poses a threat during times of considerable debt, including sovereign debt and debt on corporations and households, and measures must be taken to mitigate these risks, she advised.

A great deal of uncertainty also surrounds the impact of Brexit, and that uncertainty is contributing to the global economy’s slower growth rate. Lagarde urged governments, the private sector, and anyone involved in business to brace themselves for Brexit. While we may not know the specifics about how the United Kingdom will withdraw from the European Union, it is still important that we prepare for it.

Building Trust

Lagarde identified trust as crucial to keeping the global economy strong. As the internet has facilitated and democratized information, the average citizen now has access to data and reports on how a nation is using its funds. If people feel that governments are not using their resources wisely and their trust is weakened, the financial system cannot remain strong. She advised governments to be transparent and communicate clearly to bolster trust, as “trust is at the heart of economic relationships.”

Lagarde also explained that corruption is inversely proportional to economic growth – when there is more corruption, there is less growth. Governments must act swiftly to eradicate corruption.

She highlighted Georgia as an example of the impact this can have on a nation. Its economy blossomed after the administration addressed corruption head-on. Revenue collected by fiscal authorities doubled over the course of five years, creating financial stability for Georgia’s people.

Adjusting To Artificial Intelligence

To bring her session to a close, Lagarde advised governments to be proactive in preparing for artificial intelligence. New technologies create opportunities, but they also pose risks, and governments must be ready for both.

She pointed to the medical sector as an example. Thanks to AI, we can provide better healthcare, and better healthcare means people are living longer. However, this also means that governments must consider how pensions will cover the costs of longer life expectancies.

KEY POINTS

- Trade tensions, tightening financial policy, uncertainty surrounding Brexit, and China’s economic slowdown have caused the global economy to grow at a slower rate than expected
- Good governance can reduce risks to the world economy
- Eradicating corruption is essential for economic growth
- Governments must make policies now to address problems of the future
Globalization 4.0

Globalization has transformed and governments must adapt or face the risk of global instability. This was the message delivered by Professor Klaus Schwab, Founder and Executive Chairman of the World Economic Forum, at the opening address of the Summit, which focused on the rapidly shifting landscape brought about by the Fourth Industrial Revolution.

His Excellency Mohammad Abdulla Al Gergawi, Minister of Cabinet Affairs and the Future of the UAE and Chairman of the World Government Summit Organization, also addressed the audience. He urged governments to find solutions to both manage and lead change.

A Global System Under Stress
Prof Schwab acknowledged that global growth has lifted hundreds of millions out of poverty, but not everyone has benefited. “Globalism can’t keep delivering winners and losers,” he said. “Those left out want to be let back in; they won’t tolerate anything else.”

He added that the world is experiencing unprecedented pressure from the Fourth Industrial Revolution and a growing dissatisfaction due to corruption, a lack of leadership, and environmental concerns. “Global growth is slowing while risks are growing,” he mentioned. “We haven’t solved key issues which are of utmost concern to people, like data ownership. Meanwhile, Mother Nature is losing patience with us.”

Prof Schwab called on world leaders to reestablish trust and put forward Globalization 4.0 as a more sustainable, inclusive system that will empower women, youth, NGOs, businesses, and governments and enable progress. “It has to be more inclusive to give a new vision to people who have lost the hope for a better future.”

Governments Gaining & Regaining Control
Prof Schwab emphasized the need for governments “to move away from crisis management to more constructive management, because too much time is lost by managing crises.” “Governments have to gain and regain control,” he said. “Governments have to show leadership in partnership with business and the other stakeholders in society.”

Governments must take more responsibility for civil infrastructure. Governments often lag behind, particularly when it came to technology, but Prof Schwab highlighted the UAE as an example of how governments can create a successful vision for the future.

Future Transformations
In the second half of the session, Al Gergawi advised governments to prepare for three major transformations:

1. The declining role of government
Al Gergawi remarked that the Fourth Industrial Revolution had brought about significant changes and that “many governments worldwide have failed to keep pace with these changes”. He urged governments to be vigilant and constantly improve to avoid competing with private sector companies such as Amazon, Apple, and Google, which are driving development.

2. The growing need for ideas
Governments must also place importance on imagination and ideas as key commodities of the future, Al Gergawi added. “Data will become the commodity of the future, along with imagination and ideas – not oil and gas. Anyone who owns ideas will own the future. We are moving from the information age to the imagination age.”

3. Communication is key
The third transformation is communication, which Al Gergawi believes cannot be understated, as it is a fundamental part of human civilization. We have transitioned from bilateral to multi-way communication, and even more change is on the horizon. In the future, billions of smart devices in our cars and homes will closely link the entire globe, which will create huge investment opportunities for governments, he explained.

Entrepreneur-friendly Cities
Before bringing the session to a close, Al Gergawi asked Prof Schwab about the potential impact of the Fourth Industrial Revolution on cities around the world. Prof Schwab replied, “I think cities have to create an entrepreneur-friendly system. As you mentioned, imagination tomorrow will be the key factor. Innovation will be the key factor of global competitiveness.”

KEY POINTS
• The global system is under stress
• Governments must adapt to gain and regain control
• The three major transformations that government must prepare for are the declining role of governments; the growing need for imagination and ideas; and the evolution of communication.
• Cities must create an entrepreneur-friendly system
Building Bridges Of Hope

While significant progress has been made to eradicate global hunger and extreme poverty, there is still much work to be done, asserted David Beasley, Executive Director of the World Food Programme (WFP).

In his address to the Summit, Beasley spoke about passion and the role it plays in the pursuit of eliminating world hunger. “My goal at the World Food Programme,” he declared, “is to put the World Food Programme out of business.”

The History Of Hunger

Beasley emphasized that we should never overlook people in poverty, but it is also important to acknowledge the growth we have made in recent history. “We have made a lot of progress,” he noted. There were 1 billion people on Earth 200 years ago, and 95% of those people lived in poverty. Fortunately, widespread poverty and hunger are no longer the norm. There are now 7.5 billion people on the planet, and in the last 25 to 30 years we have reduced the number of hungry people to below 800 million.

While improvements certainly have been made, Beasley warned that we continue to face challenges when it comes to hunger. “Though wealth has been shared around the world in a way that is unprecedented, we are now seeing, for the first time, the hunger rates go back up.” The number of hungry people around the globe has increased from 777 million to 821 million.

Even though there is $300 trillion of fluid wealth in the world today, Beasley revealed that a child still dies from starvation every five to ten seconds. He emphasized that the effects of hunger have been reduced through intentional planning, and we must continue to implement effective solutions to avoid setbacks in that progress.

When hunger is reduced, Beasley explained, so do a host of other societal problems, such as migration due to necessity, marriage rates for pre-teen girls, teenage pregnancy, and recruitment by extremist groups.

A New Mindset

Beasley explained that the WFP has changed the way it views the private sector and its role in relation to his program. While the old approach shunned the private sector, now the WFP is looking to it as “absolutely critical to ending poverty and hunger around the world.” The organization is exploring how it can better utilize the private sector’s strengths and experience to help realize its goals.

In addition to embracing the private sector, the program is also redesigning the way it improves impoverished countries, Beasley noted. The focus is now on empowering and inspiring rather than only providing food.

He shared a success story of a woman in Nigeria. In the past, the WFP simply gave food to people like her. Under its new approach, however, the program provided a method to harness rainwater so the woman could grow her own crops despite the difficult landscape. The WFP still offers meals, but by empowering and educating people, it also offers hope. The Nigerian woman now makes enough profit from her harvest that she can buy more land and share the surplus with her neighbors.

The Role Of Passion

Beasley concluded by making an appeal to passion in the fight against hunger. “It’s the heart that will change the world. Money will only go so far,” he stressed. Money is important and engagement is critical, but passion and drive will be the building blocks that inspire each of us to learn from one another and work together to end hunger.

In conclusion, Beasley praised the UAE and said the United Nations is grateful for the country’s financial support, for the heart shown by the country’s leadership. “They’ve asked me questions I don’t get from many others, like what can we do better? What do you need from us? What mistakes have we made?” He urged other nations to follow this example and begin asking the same questions.

KEY POINTS

- Despite the growth in global wealth, hunger is still an issue
- Reducing hunger also reduces other societal challenges, such as extremist group recruitment, migration due to necessity, and teen pregnancy
- Money is important, but passion and heart are the building blocks of change
Choosing The Future We Came From

The lessons of the past hold the keys to succeeding in the future. Her Highness Sheikha Mariam bint Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, Chair of the Salama bint Hamdan Al Nahyan Foundation, told the Summit in her session called ‘Choosing The Future We Came From’.

A Blueprint For A Prosperous Future

In her address, Sheikha Mariam asserted that the ways of life and the principles held dear by the UAE’s forefathers, and upon which the UAE was founded, will be central to progress.

“The values and traditions of our ancestors are not only as applicable today as they were in the past, they are imperative to the future,” she said.

“The collaborative principles of the majlis, the wisdom and lessons imparted through storytelling, the innovation, creativity, and the Bedouin spirit of survival, all provide a blueprint for a prosperous future.”

Sheikha Mariam emphasized the importance of passing on the country’s traditions to today’s youth so they may carry them forward, and discussed the importance of events and initiatives designed to celebrate the culture and national identity of the UAE.

“The vision of Sheikh Zayed has given us a national identity that we are proud of,” she stated. “I encourage our youth to participate in these important cultural and traditional events, especially our national celebrations, and to share in these celebrations with their families and neighbors.”

Lessons In Life & Leadership

Sheikha Mariam shared a number of personal stories to demonstrate the principles for life and leadership that she learned from her mother, Her Highness Sheikh Salama bint Hamdan Al Nahyan, her father, His Highness Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, Crow Prince of Abu Dhabi and Deputy Supreme Commander of the UAE Armed Forces, her grandfather, the late Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan, known as the Founding Father of the UAE, and her grandmother, Sheikha Fatima bint Mubarak Al Kebti, also known as the Mother of the Nation, who is Chairwoman of the General Women’s Union, President of the Supreme Council for Motherhood and Childhood, and Supreme Chairwoman of the Family Development Foundation, among others.

She noted that the customs of the Bedouin culture, passed on to her by her family and from previous generations, provide a sound framework for developing an impactful and empowering leadership style.

“Leaders lead best when they empower their people, when they raise everyone up. It’s not about taking charge of others. It’s about taking responsibility for one another. That’s how Bedouins survived, that’s how communities grow. That’s what we teach our children today.”

Investing In People

Sheikha Mariam highlighted that traditional values fuel the success of the Salama bint Hamdan Al Nahyan Foundation, which she established with her siblings in 2010 to honor their mother’s commitment to service. The Abu Dhabi-based foundation develops and supports a wide range of initiatives spanning art, culture, heritage, early childhood development, and health, guided by its mission “to invest in the future of the United Arab Emirates, by investing in its people”.

“Sheikha Mariam expressed her thanks and appreciation to His Highness Sheikh Khalifa bin Zayed Al Nahyan, President of the UAE, for his tireless efforts and commitment to investing in the UAE’s people, the country’s most important asset, and in humanity as a whole. She also praised the success of the World Government Summit, launched by His Highness Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Vice President and Prime Minister of the UAE, Ruler of Dubai, to realize his vision of strengthening the role of government and advancing UAE society, and recognized the efforts and perseverance of the staff of the Salama bint Hamdan Al Nahyan Foundation.

KEY POINTS

- Traditional wisdom is imperative to a prosperous future
- Today’s youth should be proud of their past and keep the spirit of their forefathers alive
- The Bedouin culture holds many valuable lessons in collaboration, leadership, storytelling, innovation, survival, and creativity, as well as integrity, humility, and honesty
A Conversation With Saad Al Hariri

Veteran Egyptian journalist Emad El Din Adeeb hosted His Excellency Saad Al Hariri, Prime Minister of Lebanon, in a special session that examined Lebanon’s future, youth, women empowerment, and how Al Hariri aims to bring hope to the country.

Al Hariri began the session by extending his heartfelt thanks to His Highness Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Vice President and Prime Minister of the UAE, Ruler of Dubai, for his generous invitation to the Summit, which is of great interest to Arab youth in particular.

Lebanon’s Promising New Era
Al Hariri shared details of his government’s strategy and the implementation of reforms to revitalize the nation’s economic development. “Following the formation of the government, we have developed a clear program of reforms aimed at encouraging Arab and foreign investors wishing to invest in Lebanon,” he said. “At the CEDRE Conference in Paris, we received support from France, the World Bank, and the International Monetary Fund. This has helped us to elaborate an economic reform program and identify the key elements to boost Lebanon’s economic development and undertake legislative reform. We also worked with the World Bank on transparency and anti-corruption legislation.”

According to Al Hariri, the reforms have received widespread support among all political factions due to “a radical shift in mindset”. “There is a consensus that this is the only way to support the ailing economy and save Lebanon,” he asserted. Lebanon does not have time for politics. The economy could collapse, he warned, unless the government acts fast.

Speaking about the measures undertaken by the government to attract investors, Al Hariri said that Lebanon has entered a “promising era” geared toward investment. “Today’s investors can take part in implementing infrastructure projects, especially after the Parliament’s approval of the Law of partnership between public and private sectors and the optimized access to information,” he explained. “In short, all the things that matter to investors have been put in place.”

Overcoming Local & Regional Issues
Speaking on the progress of the region, Al Hariri raised the issue of youth unemployment and the status of women within Lebanese society. He said, “Women in Lebanon represent 56% of the population. Failure to involve women in society, business, and politics is not only a missed opportunity but also a loss in our GDP.”

He expressed regret at Lebanese youth leaving the Arab region to emigrate elsewhere to Canada, the United States, or Australia, and voiced his concerns over sectarianism, which he described as “the disease that ails the youth and region and is used by some for political purposes”. However, the Prime Minister was optimistic about the future of Lebanon and the region, and referred to the city of Dubai as his inspiration. “I will say this: His Highness Sheikh Mohammed recently revealed in his latest book that he wanted to make Dubai like Beirut in the future, ever since he visited Lebanon in his childhood. Today I say I want to make Lebanon like Dubai.”

In conclusion, Al Hariri emphasized the need for Arab cooperation and recommended that Arab nations compete in sectors such as tourism, yet work together to achieve economic complementarity, similar to Europe.

KEY POINTS
- Lebanon is undergoing economic reform aimed at encouraging Arab and foreign investment
- The Lebanese government has worked closely with the World Bank to develop transparency and anti-corruption legislation
- Lebanon recently passed a partnership law between the public and private sector
- Failing to include women in society, business, and politics can be considered a loss to the country’s GDP
- Arab nations must work together to achieve economic complementarity
The Evolution Of Leaders

Drawing on his insights gained from over 40 years of professional experience in the field, Tony Robbins, the best-selling author, entrepreneur, and business strategist, shared his thoughts on the changing nature of leaders and leadership in his opening address to the Summit.

Influence & Vision
According to Robbins, effective leadership is the ability to inspire others and drive lasting, positive change. Great leaders must be able to understand what motivates others and look inward to understand themselves. Leaders must have a clear, defined vision to inspire progress. “What great leaders do is that they see something better than everyone else, and then they raise the standard.”

He remarked that many leadership strategies in other countries are failing because they are “trying to manage people, not help create a better quality of life or even have a sense of happiness.”

This is not the case in the UAE, he pointed out, where strong vision and leadership has led to remarkable growth and success. Robbins referred to his interview with His Excellency Mohammad Abdulla Al Gergawi, Minister of Cabinet Affairs and the Future of the UAE and Chairman of the World Government Summit Organization, who spoke about the old days of Dubai when there was no running water, and the tallest building was just six stories high.

The UAE has evolved into one of the most prosperous nations on earth – a transformation that came about because of vision. “Someone decided, someone had this vision of what could be true,” he said.

Developing Belief
Leaders must be able to shape vision, direction, and focus so that people move forward. Robbins explained that “leadership is really about developing beliefs that empower you and the individuals around you because beliefs create or beliefs destroy.”

He referred to the efforts made by the UAE to promote equality between men and women, noting that in 1994, women were given the right to equal pay – a right that is yet to take effect in countries such as the United States.

Robbins also explained the difference between management and leadership. Management is when you can get people to do things while you are present. Leadership, on the other hand, is changing people’s values and standards so they perform at a higher level even in your absence. “If you want to lead someone, if you want to influence somebody, you can try to influence their results, their behavior,” he said. “You have to change their state.”

Physiology & Focus
A true leader’s job is to put other people in a powerful ‘state’, where they feel confident and empowered. However, before we can do that for others, Robbins advised, we must first manage our own state.

He identified two ways in which we can influence our state: focus and physiology. Our focus determines our feelings. To illustrate this, Robbins asked the audience to think about how they would feel if a friend had promised to meet them for dinner at 7pm, but at 8pm they still hadn’t arrived. Some people would feel angry and assume their friend is being disrespectful. Other people would feel worried that something bad had happened. This difference arises because of a difference in focus. “The difference in our life is not our experience of events. It’s the internal experience based on what we focus on.”

The way we hold ourselves and position our bodies also has a profound impact on our state. Even small changes in our physiology, such as making eye contact, breathing deeply, or standing up, can instantly change the way we feel.

Finding the right combination of focus and physiology, Robbins concluded, is the key to becoming an impactful leader and influencing others.

Tony Robbins
Best-selling Author,
Entrepreneur, &
Business Strategist

“Leadership is about developing beliefs that empower you and the individuals around you”

KEY POINTS
• Too many leaders are trying to manage people instead of creating a better quality of life or sense of happiness
• Leadership is about developing beliefs that empower you and the individuals around you
• Successful leaders and governments must create positive momentum to inspire action among people
• Focus and physiology have a profound impact on how we feel
The Evolution Of Leadership & Meaning

Tony Robbins
Best-selling Author, Entrepreneur, & Business Strategist

Best-selling author, entrepreneur and business strategist Tony Robbins delivered an engaging workshop at the Summit. He guided the audience through a series of exercises to enhance their leadership skills, which he has devised from 40 years of experience running 54 companies over four continents and working with influential leaders and athletes such as Bill Clinton, Oprah Winfrey, and Serena Williams.

A Visionary Leader
Robbins began by expressing his admiration for the UAE and the late Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan. The nation’s remarkable evolution and success has been entirely due to visionary leadership. “This is a country that was running out of the resource of oil, but someone had the greatest resource: vision, imagination, caring, the ability and the determination to push through their fears and their limits.”

Robbins drew comparisons between the UAE’s transformation to his own childhood experience of growing up poor. “I had to figure out how to change my life,” he said. “What it really came down to was making a decision like all leaders do, to say, ‘This is how life’s going to be’. If you really are a leader, you state the vision. You decide what’s going to be.”

Success Leaves Clues
The motivational coach then led the audience through a series of exercises to help them discover ways to improve their own leadership skills and increase their chances at success.

Robbins told the audience to remember that “success leaves clues”, and if an individual consistently enjoys success for months, years, or decades, it is not because of luck. “They’re just doing something different with their mind and body,” he explained. “And what I’ve learned to do is figure out what that is.”

We should learn from their techniques, Robbins added, and keep personal aims and fulfillment in mind.

The Power To Execute Knowledge
Knowledge is only potential power. Many people may gain knowledge, most fail to execute. He shared the experiences he had working with some of the world’s most extraordinary athletes, some of whom practiced 3,500 to 2,000 shots a day in order to execute the right shot at the moment they need to. “I’m a big believer that peak performance and peak results come from being in a peak state.”

He encouraged the audience to use their bodies, clapping and high fiving one another, to ‘activate’ the learning process. He likened the method to the act of taking notes. “If you take some notes, even if you never read the notes again, the act of writing it down drives the groove deeper in your nervous system, which makes it more likely you’ll follow through,” he said. “What we want to do is train our nervous system to have the energy and to follow through.”

The Importance Of Resourcefulness
Robbins highlighted how the ability to achieve a desired outcome depends on an individual’s mental state and their personal blueprint, which he described as “your beliefs, your values, your expectations”.

It is possible to alter one’s mental state through the body, he asserted, using the ‘fire walk method’, where his participants are encouraged to face their fears and walk barefoot across burning hot coals. “We change their emotional state by changing the body,” he explained.

To bring the workshop to a close, Robbins led the audience through another series of mental and physical exercises to discover ‘micro triggers’ to help change their state.

KEY POINTS
- Use the body to ‘activate’ the learning process – even the simple act of taking notes can help retain knowledge and enable the execution of knowledge
- Pay attention to your physical reactions, which may define micro triggers that can alter your mental state
- The ability to achieve a desired outcome depends on an individual’s mental state and their personal blueprint
- Define a goal and keep focusing on it – focus trains the brain’s reticular activating system, which is a powerful tool for achievement
- The most successful people are personally fulfilled by what they do

“Resourcefulness is more important than resources”
The Future Of The Economy In The Age Of 4IR

His Excellency Angel Gurría, Secretary General of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), tempered his optimism about the future with a stark warning of economic slowdown. Gurría touched on the opportunities presented by the Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR), which describes how digital technology is transforming the way we live and work. Citing innovations in healthcare, education, and development, he said, “It’s exciting. It’s challenging. It’s full of promise. And at the same time, it has its downsides.”

A Displaced Workforce
One of these downsides is that 10% to 14% of today’s workforce is in danger of being displaced by technology, while another third will be not displaced but disrupted by technology. “The question is how do you provide the skills they need so that they can face the music and also profit from, rather than being threatened by, the progress.” Gurría, who also serves as Commissioner for the Broadband Commission for Digital Development, which leverages broadband technologies as a key enabler for social and economic development, acknowledged the benefits of automating certain roles, but asked, “Then what do you do with that very large part of the workforce and the hundreds of millions of youths that have not yet been incorporated [in those figures]?"

He warned that the impact of 4IR would exacerbate inequality. “It’s already happening. It’s not in one year or 18 months, it’s happening every day as we speak. And also, it’s happening at different speeds. Not every country is adopting the digital revolution. Not every country is in the fourth stage; some are still catching up with the third, and in many countries, you still have rural economies that are relatively underdeveloped.”

The gap is not only between different countries. He pointed out that within some countries there are cities just a few miles apart where there is a six, eight, or ten years’ difference in life expectancy. “How do you level the playing field and make digital technology a great equalizer? How do you not create a situation where the state becomes a great provider of assistance to people who are unemployed and have been left out by the digital revolution?”

Trade Tensions Hit Growth
Furthermore, Gurría called attention to the fact that the OECD has downgraded its global economic forecast from 4% to 3.5%. This 0.5%, he explained, represented trillions of dollars, and he expressed his concern that things could get worse, citing ‘ominous events’ such as trade tensions between the United States and China. When it starts to affect the technology sector, he warned, it would affect progress, resulting in two individual sets of innovations on either side of the conflict, which may eventually mean users will have to choose and may not be able to connect between the two.

“The process of the advancement of knowledge normally is that somebody makes progress and then somebody else picks up where they left off and goes a step further. Then the first party picks that up again and makes more progress. Now, because of this trade tension, we are seeing progress that otherwise was going very fast is actually now slowing down.”

It is the falling investor confidence, rather than the value of the tariffs themselves, that is causing the slump. “Investment is the seed of tomorrow’s growth. Uncertainty is the killer of the growth of tomorrow.”

He recalled that growth had just returned to cruising speed at 4%, having taken 10 years to recover following the previous economic crisis. And a single quarter of slowed growth will have a lasting impact. “The exports of today were ordered last year,” he said. “The exports of tomorrow were ordered during this quarter of uncertainty, so it will last. It’ll last a few quarters.”

Instability & Uncertainty Prevails
Looking at the global political landscape, however, instability and uncertainty seems to prevail. Referring to the fragmentation in Europe, including Brexit and the political scene in the Czech Republic, Netherlands, Germany, and Spain, among other countries, Gurría noted that hundreds of millions of people are dissatisfied with what their governments have provided and do not feel that prosperity is being shared equally. “We need to participate more in the solutions and share more in the benefits,” he told the audience of government leaders. According to Gurría, this dissatisfaction has impacted the engagement of populations in politics, especially among the youth, 60% of whom did not vote during Brexit, despite the impact it would have on their future.

These changing voting behaviors have then led to fragile coalitions that limit governments’ power to lead. “When you get these fragile coalitions – even if the leaders are very competent and courageous – they cannot make proper decisions because somebody from the coalition will fall off the bandwagon. And therefore, what you have is basically no decisions at a time when we really need visionary and far-reaching decisions.”

KEY POINTS
• The future in a world of the Fourth Industrial Revolution is exciting and full of promise, offering innovation in fields such as healthcare, education, and development
• The challenge for governments is to reskill and support the people who will be left behind by the fast pace of change
• The economy has already been hit by trade wars causing uncertainty, which affects investor confidence
• The OECD and IMF have confirmed a slowdown of 0.5% in the global economy, which will take time to recover
• Governments are facing a backlash from dissatisfied peoples, which is making them less able to govern effectively
HE Francis Gurry  
Director General of the World Intellectual Property Organization

**The Future Of Intellectual Property In The Age Of AI**

As artificial intelligence proliferates, the systems that currently govern intellectual property rights need to be reassessed to ensure they are fit for the new era.

If they are not, a number of risks lie ahead, asserted His Excellency Francis Gurry, Director General of the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO). For example, the free flow of data around the world may be threatened, and global imbalances in technology capabilities could widen.

**Rising Levels Of Applications**

With technology taking an increasingly central role in the global economy in recent years, the corresponding demand for intellectual property rights has risen significantly, Gurry told the Summit.

To demonstrate the strain that existing systems are now under, he cited the immense volume of applications filed around the world during 2017:

- 3.2 million patent applications
- 9.1 million trademark applications
- Nearly 2 million design applications

These applications reflect the important role that intellectual property plays when innovation is so prevalent. Gurry defined intellectual property rights as “a set of policies designed to encourage innovation and creativity through the establishment of property rights in certain classes of information and technology.”

“What a property right gives you is the right to exclude access,” he explained. As such, the issue of ownership is closely connected with issues around privacy and the protection of personal data.

**AI At The Heart**

Gurry shared some key insights from a recent report published by the WIPO, which studied trends in intellectual property in light of AI’s growth. This study yielded two important observations:

1. People are using the existing intellectual property system extensively for AI
2. Most patent applications related to AI are coming from private companies, rather than from research institutions

While people are clearly still using the existing system, it does have its challenges. Gurry asserted that there are three major issues with the current system that must be addressed.

The first challenge that must be met head on is the question of how we should ascribe authorship in this new era. As AI itself becomes a creator of material that needs protecting, definitions need to be revisited.

Secondly, we have to find a middle ground between policies that encourage the free flow of data, and those that restrict its use in order to protect intellectual property. Gurry noted this as an interesting intersection. “On the one hand, we have some policies that encourage the free flow of data, which of course feeds the algorithms that supply artificial intelligence,” he explained. “On the other hand, there are also restrictions on the use of that data – effectively what intellectual property rights actually do.”

The third primary challenge is that governments must ensure that policies addressing the intellectual property protection of AI do not exacerbate the huge disparities in technological capacity that already exist across the globe.

**Asia Leads The Boom**

Using in-depth data from the report, Gurry explored this third issue further. He highlighted that two-thirds of all intellectual property applications originate in Asian countries. In the field of artificial intelligence specifically, there is a significant gap between the three leading countries – China, the US, and Japan – and the rest of the world.

In terms of the functional applications of artificial intelligence, Gurry observed that the fastest-moving fields are robotics and manufacturing methods. “The growth rate there is around about 55%,” he said. “This gives us an insight into the future, and where technology applications are going.”

**Sectoral Split**

Looking at sectors, AI-led intellectual property applications appear to be relatively widespread and equal. “There is actually a deep horizontal penetration of artificial intelligence across all main commercial sectors,” Gurry revealed. “Sectors at the forefront include transportation, which accounts for 15% of all artificial intelligence patents. Then the life sciences and medical sciences fields account for 12%. And then next – as we might expect – personal devices and computer human interaction, which accounts for about 11%.”

**KEY POINTS**

- AI is creating a boom in innovation and driving an upsurge in intellectual property applications as a result
- Aspects of the current system for protecting intellectual property need rethinking to meet this growth in demand and meet the unique challenges posed by artificial intelligence
- We must find a middle ground between policies that encourage the free flow of data, and those that restrict its use in order to protect intellectual property
- If the system is not adjusted, existing global disparities in technological capacity will be exacerbated, and data flows excessively restricted

“One needs to find the balance between the often-competing interests of producers of intellectual property and consumers of intellectual property; this is something that applies not just within a society, but across the world”
An Urgent Call To Action On Climate Change

The time for action against climate change is now. This was the message delivered by His Excellency Dr Thani Ahmed Al Zeyoudi, Minister of Climate Change and Environment of the UAE, and actor and philanthropist Harrison Ford as they took the stage at the World Government Summit. Best known for his roles in action and adventure films, Ford has recently leveraged his fame to shine a light on what he termed the “greatest moral crisis of our time” – climate change – and the increased threat to our ocean habitats.

Humanity’s Greatest Challenge

While climate change has recently become headline news, the effects of polluted air and water have already taken their toll. Carbon dioxide emissions and greenhouse gases are some of the main causes of deaths around the world, explained Al Zeyoudi, and air pollution is already linked to an estimated 7 million deaths annually. “Climate change and its dramatic impacts are upon us and we must take action,” he warned. Without action, the problem will only get worse. “It is estimated that climate change will result in an additional 250,000 deaths around the world between 2030 and 2050,” he said. This is the greatest challenge facing humanity, HE Al Zeyoudi cautioned, and ignoring the issue will have serious repercussions on health, the environment and our planet’s biodiversity.

Hope For The Future

Though the situation is undoubtedly dire, Al Zeyoudi assured the Summit there is still hope. Increased awareness of the issue of climate change and its effects on the world’s oceans has mobilized efforts around the world to mitigate the growing threat. Al Zeyoudi explained that the UAE is leading the global charge for renewed conservation efforts. “Thanks to the far-sighted wisdom and vision of the UAE’s founding father, the late Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan, the UAE has endeavored to sustainably preserve its natural resources, especially the marine resources, in order to achieve a balance between economic growth and environmental protection. It has also sought to ensure the sustainability of resources and biodiversity for future generations,” he continued.

Conservation Efforts From Land To Sea

“Enlightened modern conservation started on land, but it is not enough when it comes to oceans,” asserted Ford as he took the stage to address the Summit on its final day. “Humans have unique attributes; but as well, we are the only member of the animal kingdom whose behavior, whose hubs, can destroy the planet.”

Ford highlighted the impact that pollution and global warming are having on our oceans, and outlined how these negative changes are not only affecting the ocean habitat, but the lives of human beings. “More than 3 billion people survive on fish,” he explained. “And 75% of our biggest cities are on the ocean’s coastline – New York, Hong Kong, Los Angeles, Dubai, Abu Dhabi.”

Rising ocean temperatures may cause more water vapor to be released, fueling violent and destructive weather across the globe. “As our oceans warm, glacial ice melt and expansion drive sea levels higher endangering these cities, threatening their populations and their economies.”

Global Solutions For Global Problems

Ford’s hope for combating climate change lies in global cooperation. With global problems such as climate change, solutions must also be global. “We need to better understand the complexities of our ocean, to invest more in science, to adopt behaviors that will allow our oceans to better serve us.”

The results of polluting our oceans will impact every human on earth, warned Ford. “All of us, whether rich or poor, powerful or powerless, will suffer the effects of climate change and ecosystem destruction. We are faced with what I believe is the greatest moral crisis of our time, and those least responsible for nature’s destruction will suffer the greatest consequences.”

Ford’s conclusion was clear – we must act now to address ocean pollution and habitat destruction. “What we do today,” he implored, “determines our ability to provide a future for our countries, our communities, our families, and our children.”

KEY POINTS

- Climate change is the greatest challenge facing humanity today
- Oceans are under great pressure because of habitat destruction, overfishing, pollution, and climate change
- Those least responsible for nature’s destruction will suffer the greatest consequences
- Nations and people must work together to address climate change
Work For A Brighter Future

As we enter the era of Globalization 4.0 – a new wave of globalization centered on the digital economy – the face of employment is quickly changing. The future of work will be the outcome of human interventions, asserted His Excellency Guy Ryder, Director General of the International Labour Organization (ILO), in his address to the World Government Summit, and we must establish a clear, actionable plan so that we do not fail to address the challenges that lay ahead.

Recalibrating Work
Stressing the importance of work, Ryder said, “Work is at the heart of the human life experience of each one of us. If we think of the material and spiritual wellbeing which comes from access to decent work, then surely this recalibration of political settings for Globalization 4.0 is compelling.”

In the spirit of recalibrating the way we look at work, the International Labor Organization has established a human-centered agenda for development that puts people and their work at the heart of policy-making.

The ILO’s agenda focuses on three primary areas of investment. The first is the investment in people and their capabilities, with an emphasis on lifelong learning and delivery systems to make skilling, upskilling, and reskilling a consistent part of working life for everyone.

The institutions of work are the second area of investment, Ryder mentioned. Labor is not a commodity and there are rules and policies currently in place to protect that position, but as technology changes the nature of labor, new institutions will be necessary to ensure people’s fundamental rights are protected at work.

The third is investing in work opportunities for the future. “We live at a time when fear of chronic job security is very much present in our societies. We need to identify and we need to invest in those productive sectors which offer the promise of major employment opportunities in the future,” he urged.

Right To Work
Job insecurity is an issue felt across the world, not only in terms of whether or not work is available, but also whether that job is remunerated appropriately, and if employees are provided appropriate working conditions. “For these reasons our global commission proposes a universal labor guarantee,” explained Ryder, “applicable to all regardless of their employment or contractual status.”

This guarantee, he went on, would protect people’s fundamental rights at work. It would prescribe an adequate living wage for all, set maximum working hours, and make safety and health at work a human right.

Making It Work
While the ILO’s agenda may seem ambitious, Ryder believes it is achievable with some effort on the part of all stakeholders. In terms of policy development, governments need to strengthen their capacity to interact with employers in the private sector to find consensual solutions to work challenges.

Secondly, the global commission recommends that there needs to be stronger international policy coherence with the aim of deepening international cooperation in the domains of work, trade, and finance. Finally, Ryder explained, to achieve the commission’s agenda, there needs to be resources and investments from the private sector, and a greater alignment between business incentives and behavior. “Fiscal policies, nationally and internationally, will also need to be re-examined in the light of the investment needs identified.”

The international community needs to work together to achieve the ILO’s goals, Ryder asserted. “In designing this future of work that we want, which after all means the future of our societies as well, we have everything to gain from working together in our international family,” he concluded.
The Rise Of The Dragon: China’s Success In Leading The World Of Technology

China’s digital economy is continuing to achieve remarkable growth, said His Excellency Wang Zhigang, Minister of Science and Technology of China, in his remarks to the World Government Summit. He opened his comments by observing that, “The world today is undergoing a major change. Globalization, economic restructuring, climate change, and other series’ of contradictions and issues are prominent.” Wang then shared his thoughts on worldwide economic changes and China’s role in this new wave of globalization.

Opening Up To The World
China has undoubtedly seen massive economic changes in the past few decades. The country has opened up significantly in terms of international trade. “China’s 40 years of reform and opening up is shifting from a period of rapid economic growth to a stage of high-quality development,” Wang stated. “The Chinese government attaches great importance to seeking new growth from technological innovation and creating new momentum for development.”

Sharing insights into the country’s tech prowess, Wang noted that the cost of research and development (R&D) expenditures in Chinese society has maintained steady growth for many years, reaching 20% of global R&D. He also highlighted the 2016 National Innovation-driven Development Strategy Outline, which made science and technology the cornerstone of the country’s development approach. “China’s digital technology and digital economy growth rate and scale are among the highest in the world. Using digital innovation to empower industry, digital infrastructure improvement, and building a good digital innovation ecosystem are three important points for China to promote the development of the digital economy,” he observed.

Artificial Intelligence
China’s New Generation Artificial Intelligence Development Plan aims to apply artificial intelligence technology results to all sectors in China, including industrial manufacturing, medical care, smart cities, finance, and education. Wang noted that he sees a great deal of potential for AI in manufacturing especially. “Traditional manufacturing is undergoing a digital and intelligent transformation where new technologies and new equipment are being rapidly implemented.” While AI’s potential is great, it still needs to undergo more development. The nation, explained Wang, is looking to collaborate to fill in the gaps of AI development. “China also recognises the gap between the basic research of artificial intelligence and the underlying technology. China adheres to an open attitude of cooperation to solve various new problems in the field of artificial intelligence.”

International Collaboration
While technological advancements have strengthened China’s economy, Wang explained that they have also brought challenges. “The digital technology revolution will have a profound impact on production methods, social livelihood, ethics, and national security,” he said, outlining areas in which potential issues may arise.

He urged countries around the world “to join hands to build a responsible innovation and governance-based framework,” adding that “we need to improve policies to stimulate resource allocation and evaluation, serve the main body of scientific research and innovation, and create a good atmosphere for international scientific and technological cooperation.”

Wang concluded his speech by extending an invitation from China to the rest of the world: “China is willing to cooperate with all countries in the world, including the Arab world, to seek common innovation and shape development, and to contribute to China’s wisdom and strength in the global tide of technological innovation.”
In this highly competitive world, it can be difficult to keep in mind that some games simply have no end. In his address to the Summit, leadership expert and author Simon Sinek explained that the goal of leadership is not to win; the goal is to perform better than you did the last time.

Finite & Infinite Games
Reflecting on the Vietnam War, Sinek pointed out that although the United States had fewer casualties and won more battles, they still lost the war. "How do you win all the battles, decimate your enemy, and lose the war?" he asked. "It raises new questions about how we understand the concept of winning and losing.

Referencing James Carsey’s book, Finite and Infinite Games, Sinek explained how this is possible. It depends on whether it is a finite or infinite game that’s being played. In finite games, there are known players, fixed rules, and an agreed-upon objective. Infinite games, on the other hand, have known and unknown players, the rules are fluid, and the objective is to perpetuate the game.

Finite players play to win, while infinite players play to keep playing. According to Sinek, global politics and business are infinite games. There is no such thing as winning governance or winning business, "but when we listen to the language of too many leaders, they don’t know the game we are in," he asserted. They talk about beating the competition and coming out on top. They are playing an infinite game with a finite mindset.

To illustrate the difference between infinite and finite mindsets, Sinek related his experience speaking at separate education summits held by two global tech giants. At the first, the majority of the presentations were focused on beating their rival. At the second, every single presentation was about how the company’s devices and technologies could be used to help teachers teach and students learn. "One was obsessed with where they were going and their vision. The other one was obsessed with beating their competition.”

Finite players understand that winning isn’t the point. The goal is to outdo ourselves and to be better than we were before. A Recipe For Leadership
Today, far too many leaders are leading with a finite mindset. Sinek emphasized that we must change the way we lead to suit the game we’re actually playing. He identified five necessary elements for succeeding in an infinite game:

1. A just cause
People want to believe in the work they’re doing. If they do, they’re willing to make sacrifices to further the cause.

2. Trusting teams
Leadership is about creating the right environment for people to flourish. When employees feel trusted, valued, and empowered, they do their best work.

3. A worthy rival
It is important to have a rival because they show us where our weaknesses lie and how we can improve.

4. A capacity for existential flexibility
Sinek defined existential flexibility as "the ability to make a profoundly different strategic shift because we find a better way to advance our cause.” We must be willing to take big risks, even if we’ve already invested time and money elsewhere.

5. Courage to lead
Finally, it takes a tremendous amount of courage to take a different leadership approach and challenge conventional mindsets.

Leaders Are Made
To bring his session to a close, Sinek reflected on the nature of leadership. He explained that it is a skill that can be cultivated and learned just like any other.

Sinek reminded Summit attendees that everyone can be a leader, regardless of their position. "Leadership has nothing to do with rank," he said. "What rank and authority give us is the ability to lead at greater scale. But the rank itself is not what makes you a leader, it just gives you a leadership position.”

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The Future Of Mobility In The Age Of 4IR

In his address to the Summit, His Excellency Mattar Al Tayer, Director General and Chairman of the Board of Executive Directors of the Roads and Transport Authority – Dubai (RTA) shared his insights into the future of mobility and outlined the key issues for the transport sector, including technological development, the Fourth Industrial Revolution, and the future role of governments.

The Fourth Industrial Revolution

“The Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR) is set to significantly change modes of future transportation,” said Al Tayer. He recognized challenges the future holds, while noting occasions when Dubai has met challenges in the past, highlighting innovations like the world’s longest driverless metro, which the city implemented in 2009. Dubai will continue to meet new challenges head on, he noted.

When it comes to 4IR in other countries, it is the private sector that drives change. Al Tayer mentioned the private sectors in countries like the United States and Japan, which spend large sums of money on research and development. He contrasted that with the UAE where the government is directing change. “The UAE has set a different example with the government kickstarting change with a clear vision.”

One way the government is driving change is through the establishment of the Centre for the Fourth Industrial Revolution. An affiliate of the World Economic Forum’s (WEF) Centre for the Fourth Industrial Revolution, the centre works to implement the latest thinking from the WEF’s 4IR experts into projects in the UAE and work together to improve frameworks and protocols for supporting 4IR technologies.

“In 2017, the UAE Government rolled out the UAE’s Fourth Industrial Revolution Strategy, anchored in nanotechnology, artificial intelligence, smart devices, and digital transactions in all fields,” Al Tayer added.

The Role Of Legislation

As transportation changes, legislation must also evolve alongside it. Al Tayer stated that the objectives for transportation legislation are safety, security, and privacy. Additionally, legislation should help regulate relationships with the private sector.

He mentioned rideshare companies, noting that some countries have experienced chaos in this sector due to lack of legislation. Dubai, on the other hand, organized relationships with these companies as far back as 2016 and continues to partner with companies like Careem and Uber.

Automobile vehicles are another area where legislation must continue to evolve alongside new technology and new challenges. Al Tayer drew attention to the Dubai Code of Practice for Self-Driving Vehicles, the world’s first set of guidelines for the trial of driverless cars. Developed in 2018, the guide aims to attract manufacturers to invest in research and trials to help transform Dubai into a regional hub for self-driving vehicles.

Al Tayer acknowledged the difficulty of regulating autonomous vehicles in Dubai, which brings together more than 200 nationalities, each of which has a unique driving culture. “This imposes complexity and challenges,” he said, “but everything is possible.”

“Smarter Transportation

Al Tayer noted that the UAE ranks among the highest in the world when it comes to car ownership for personal vehicles. Every person in the family has a car, he noted, yet we only use these cars 10% of the time. Most of the time the car sits in a garage.

To reduce the need for car ownership, RTA launched a car sharing initiative, partnering with Udrive and ekar to put 400 shared vehicles on the road. “We plan to increase them to at least 1,400 by 2030,” declared Al Tayer.

Car sharing will, however, require regulation and legislation. It takes fees from taxi services, and it is important that car sharing companies do not end up using the infrastructure for free.

In closing, Al Tayer said he is optimistic about the future of the transport sector around the world. While the future challenges facing transport are great, RTA is prepared to confront them by implementing innovative initiatives.
The Future Of Global Water Security & Sustainability

With more than two billion people lacking access to safe drinking water, water-related crises are one of the world’s top five global threats, announced His Excellency Saeed Mohammed Al Tayer, CEO and Managing Director of Dubai Electricity and Water Authority (DEWA).

Water scarcity will affect over 40% of the world’s population by 2030. The solution lies in implementing strategies and policies that increase the efficiency of water use, as well as integrated water resource management to ensure its sustainability.

Challenges Become Opportunities
Water is the cornerstone of economic and social development. However, it is becoming more scarce as the world’s population increases. “Water scarcity affects over 40% of the world’s population, with more than 2 billion people lacking access to safe drinking water.” The world is expected to face a 40% gap between demand for water and availability of water by 2030.

The UAE produces 14% of the world’s desalinated water, and the average per capita water consumption within the country is 360 liters per day. That is a world high, warned Al Tayer. The UAE is also in one of the driest regions in the world, and that presents challenges. Nevertheless, the country has learned from its wise leadership to turn challenges into opportunities. DEWA is addressing water security in the region and developing and implementing strategies that will increase water efficiency and sustainability.

Al Tayer noted that addressing water scarcity and ensuring sustainability will require three key approaches:
1. Enhancing water resources and water storage
2. Rationalizing consumption
3. Utilizing technology and innovative solutions

Enhancing Water Resources & Water Storage
One of the UAE’s challenges is that it must increase production of desalinated water and reduce emissions from the desalination process simultaneously, explained Al Tayer. In order to achieve this goal, Dubai is producing water by an efficient process known as reverse osmosis (RO). By the year 2030, 100% of Dubai’s desalinated water will come from a combination of clean energies. Using efficient processes like RO and relying on clean energies will allow Dubai to increase production and reduce emissions.

Al Tayer then shifted his focus to water storage. The UAE Water Security Strategy 2056 aims to secure sustainable and continuous access to water under normal and emergency conditions. The use of storage for desalinated water in basins is already underway, and a ground reservoir is currently under construction to store and retrieve 6 billion gallons when needed.

Rationalizing Consumption
Water sustainability requires an increase in resources and storage, but it also requires a reduction in consumption.

According to Al Tayer, the sophisticated smart water meter infrastructure implemented by DEWA has helped decrease consumption by successfully identifying 37,000 water leaks. In the event that a smart meter detects an unusual rise in consumption, it initiates an inspection of internal connections. This allows authorities to identify misuse of water, repair leaks, and ultimately reduce water consumption.

In addition, the smart meter also creates significant financial savings. Al Tayer said the authority is working to convert all water meters to smart meters by the end of 2019. DEWA’s efforts to rationalize consumption have succeeded in reducing water use among customers in both the residential sector and the commercial sector by 27% and 29% respectively.

Utilizing Technology & Innovative Solutions
To date, DEWA has invested 500 million dirhams (approximately $136.2 million) toward research and development in new technology. The authority aims to make Dubai a global model for clean energy and the green economy by adopting Fourth Industrial Revolution technologies such as artificial intelligence, unmanned aerial vehicles, energy storage, and blockchain, among others.

In conclusion, Al Tayer emphasized the importance of leadership support when it comes to addressing water resource management, as well as of leveraging technological developments and partnerships with the private sector to develop innovative solutions that improve the efficiency and quality of water services.

KEY POINTS
- Water security is a global challenge and one of the world’s top five threats
- Water scarcity affects over 40% of the world’s population
- Addressing water scarcity and ensuring sustainability will require the enhancement of water resources and storage, rationalization of consumption, and utilization of technology
- By 2030, 100% of Dubai’s desalinated water will be produced from a combination of clean energies
- Leveraging technological developments and partnerships with the private sector are key to improving the efficiency and quality of water services
How To Respond To The New Challenges Of Global Governance

His Excellency Bruno Le Maire, Minister of Economy and Finance of France, used his keynote at the World Government Summit this year, Le Maire reported that a great deal had been achieved in the first 18 months of President Macron’s leadership, including essential reforms aimed at improving the competitiveness and simplicity of the French economy.

Capitalism For A New Era
Capitalism has been the model for western economies for decades, and thus far it has proven successful. However, in his address to the World Government Summit, Le Maire posited that capitalism is no longer delivering on its promises. “Many people feel left behind, feel left out of globalization and the benefits of globalization. We believe it’s time to create a new model of capitalism to provide concrete responses to those people,” he stated.

Addressing Inequalities
Though traditional models of capitalism have served societies for decades, the world is seeing that these models are favoring the wealthy and disenfranchising poor individuals. Wealth is becoming more concentrated, explained Le Maire, inequalities are increasing, and standards of living in developed nations are stagnating. Inequalities are not in the interest of global unity, and can lead to extremist factions and in-fighting between nations, individuals, and corporations that receive tax benefits. While the instinct may be for a nation to turn in on itself and isolate itself from the global economy, this leaves nations with no global presence or solidarity, he asserted.

Instead, the best approach is to fight against inequalities to provide a better world. In short, he noted that the time has come to redefine capitalism to the benefit of all nations.

The Way Forward
To redefine capitalism in a way that better addresses inequality, France has defined three key priorities for the G7:
1. Introduce a fairer, more efficient, and more transparent global taxation system so that individuals and businesses alike can feel that they are being taxed fairly
2. Level the playing field for responsible investments, ensuring that countries accepting loans are in a position to pay off those loans without damaging their economies
3. Flag indicators that can highlight inequalities within nations – for example, large companies will need to report on the median wage within their companies to increase the transparency of wage inequalities

A Stronger Union
Finally, Le Maire expressed France’s hope to support the European Union in becoming a more integrated, unified and ultimately stronger economy on the world stage. He noted that the world economy is more brutal and less fair, and that it is key for European companies to have all the tools to compete on a global stage. To that end, France will push to convince all European nations to gather their efforts, investment, and funding for the sake of reinforcing the European continent.

“We are calling for a stronger Europe, with all the European nationals working together, investing together, and trying to build a better world.”

KEY POINTS
- Traditional models of capitalism need to be revisited
- Individuals and small businesses are beginning to feel left behind under current models
- France has defined three key priorities for the G7: implementing a fairer global taxation system, leveling the playing field for responsible investments, and highlighting and addressing inequalities within nations

“He Bruno Le Maire
Minister of Economy & Finance of France

“Let us try all together to seize the opportunity of the current challenges we face, to shape a fairer capitalism, and a more efficient economy for the 21st century”
Rethinking Cities Of Tomorrow: A Human-centric Approach

The state of urban living has changed over the years, and with cities growing both in size and in population, the current model of city life may not be serving residents as well as it could be, asserted His Excellency Engineer Dawood Al Hajri, Director General of Dubai Municipality.

A History Of Urban Development

Humans began developing cities for protection from the elements and enemies, Al Hajri explained, giving a brief history of urban development. Over time, the concept of living in cities has evolved, transforming into centers of trade and attracting people from surrounding rural areas. During the Industrial Revolution, the role of cities changed again, this time into centers of production. Urban planners began to incorporate infrastructure projects, housing, health, and social care into the fabric of their designs.

Finally, the advent of the automobile saw populations move out of cities, developing suburbs outside each urban area. This resulted in the need to rethink urban design once more, incorporating highways, bridges, and trams to transport people from their suburban homes to their urban jobs. Modern cities, Al Hajri pasted, may have invisible challenges—issues that are not as apparent as the need for traditional infrastructure. To identify and address these challenges, governments and urban planners must take a more holistic view.

Modern Urban Lifestyles

“Do we dwell in cities, or do cities dwell in us?” asked Al Hajri, quoting a favorite saying. The design of urban areas can have a profound effect on an individual’s health, mood, and mental state. Governments and urban planners are now beginning to take into account the impact of public spaces on individuals when designing new districts.

More and more, researchers are finding connections between an individual’s physical and mental health and their environment. With most urban residents spending most of their time at home, at work, or in the car, Al Hajri said, there may be a connection between common ailments, like stress or obesity, and the way cities are designed. For example, cities that are better suited for walking and cycling may have lower obesity rates.

There may be a connection between urban planning and stress as well, Al Hajri noted. “For example, some scientific studies show that 20% of the population in crowded cities suffer from stress and 58% suffer from mood disorders.”

Changing The Landscape

Though mental and physical health issues may be an epidemic in urban areas, the future holds a great deal of hope as governments and urban planners take a new look at the needs of city dwellers. “Cities can be a source of happiness when they cater to our needs, allow us to interact with our natural environment, and especially when they are well designed to optimize our health,” Al Hajri stated. He urged governments and city planners to take a fresh, human-centric approach.

Well-designed cities can actually foster social cohesion and the importance for city planners to design accessible, liveable, and friendly spaces that promote social bonding. Seoul’s officials, he explained, have focused on creating green spaces around buildings to encourage connectivity among residents, and Barcelona is redesigning neighborhood streets for pedestrians rather than cars.

Dubai Urban Plan 2040

Al Hajri stressed the importance of encouraging all segments of society to be actively involved in their city’s progress, and shared details of Dubai Urban Plan 2040. The plan aims to provide a green, safe, and healthy environment and a high standard of living through modern technologies and artificial intelligence.

“The Dubai Urban Plan 2040 is the sixth holistically designed development plan that directly affects all aspects of economic, social, environmental, and urban life.” Al Hajri also explained Dubai’s new Jumeira Project, launched by His Highness Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Vice President and Prime Minister of the UAE, Ruler of Dubai, in November 2018. The project aims to turn the Jumeirah area into an integrated cultural destination with an innovative feel and new design.

As for the Dubai of the future, Al Hajri said was clear on the emirate’s vision: “We seek to build the city of the future with the active participation of all segments of society—innovators, intellectuals, and artists—to identify the actual and practical needs of human beings and ensure that our cities become more effective and achieve prosperity.”

KEY POINTS

- Modern city planners need to take a holistic approach to city design
- There is a close-knit relationship between city design and health and happiness
- Cities can be a source of happiness when they cater to our needs
- People should be governments’ and urban planners’ top priority
Rethinking Culture & Its Future

According to Her Excellency Noura Al Kaabi, Minister of Culture and Knowledge Development of the UAE, and Ernesto Ottone Ramírez, Assistant Director General for Culture of the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), protecting heritage is similar to protecting human lives.

In a discussion moderated by The National’s Mina Al-Oraibi, the two panelists highlighted the recent partnership between the UAE and UNESCO to rebuild historic sites in the city of Mosul, Iraq, and unpacked what culture actually is, and why it is so important in building – and rebuilding – societies.

Bridging The Past & The Future

Al Kaabi opened the session by highlighting the importance of cultural heritage. "Heritage is your bridge to the past and your gateway to the future," she stated. Taking the sentiment further, she posited that protecting heritage is akin to protecting a human life, as heritage is part of an individual’s overall identity.

The protection and reconstruction of historic sites, according to Al Kaabi, is not the responsibility of one, but a shared responsibility of humanity. It was this collective responsibility, as well as the ethos of the late Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan, that led to the partnership of UNESCO and the UAE to revive the city of Mosul, specifically to rebuild the Al-Nuri mosque.

Rebuilding Heritage

With over 70 years of history rebuilding and protecting cultural heritage sites, Ramírez mentioned that the project in Mosul is different for UNESCO than what they have accomplished in other nations. Not only do they have the opportunity to rebuild something specific – the Al-Nuri mosque – but they are also rebuilding two churches in Mosul, Al-Tahira and al-Saa. In this way, said Ramírez, they are trying to rebuild the very spirit of the city.

After more than 85% of the city of Mosul was destroyed, the UNESCO project is attempting to engage with the young people of the city to breathe life back into its cultural heritage.

"We want to ensure that the young people that are coming back to Mosul will not only have the opportunity to participate in the rebuilding and reshaping of what they had, but also the opportunity to understand the city that was destroyed," Ramírez explained.

By engaging with the youth, the project will help to define the future of what culture should mean for young people and what type of society they want to build for the future.

Heritage & Technology

The panelists then discussed the use of technology in protecting heritage and culture. When thinking about heritage, one often does not think about the use of technology. However, organizations such as UNESCO and the UAE’s Ministry of Culture and Knowledge Development are leveraging emerging technologies to gain insights into how best to protect and nurture culture.

Al Kaabi used the example of the Al Burda Festival – a festival that celebrates and promotes Islamic art. “At the festival we released a questionnaire regarding future trends of Islamic art and culture. The questionnaire used swarm artificial intelligence,” she noted. With AI’s findings, the ministry decided to start an endowment that will support up and coming artists.

Ramírez pointed out another role of technology. “When we talk about what will be the future, we are talking about artificial intelligence, we are talking about the opportunity that we have by creative economy to build societies that can bring jobs of quality for young people, exchange of technology, but also of technical abilities to work in the future.”

Cultural diplomacy, Al Kaabi and Ramírez agreed, is key to our collective future. Cultivating a shared identity will help create a more humanized world. Culture should be accessible to everyone, and learning about a new culture not only enriches one’s knowledge, Al Kaabi noted, but it also builds bridges between people with different backgrounds.
Building Great Cities Through Tolerance

HE Sheikh Nahyan bin Mubarak Al Nahyan
Minister of Tolerance of the United Arab Emirates

What is the role of tolerance in building happy and healthy communities? This was the question posed by His Excellency Sheikh Nahyan bin Mubarak Al Nahyan, Minister of Tolerance of the UAE, during his address to the World Government Summit.

As governments across the world look to improving the lives and wellbeing of their citizens, tolerance may be the key to modern, successful urban areas that support health, happiness, and community values.

Tolerance In Diversity
Cities around the world are growing quickly and becoming more diverse, leading to creative, cultural, and economic growth – but governance must ensure prosperity and protect individual freedom, public order, and stability, asserted Sheikh Nahyan.

“The governance of our cities becomes increasingly complex and more challenging every day. We know that our cities will not prosper if government is not established in a way that protects individual freedom, guaranteed under the rule of law to ensure public order and stability.”

Sheikh Nahyan defined tolerance as the sympathetic consciousness of other people’s distress and the desire to alleviate it. In practice, tolerance enables open, honest, and confident dialogue among people with diverse backgrounds and leads to mutual understanding and respect. Governments must impose and enforce laws which punish intolerance, he advised.

He also noted that many religious traditions do, in fact, support tolerance. Quoting the Quran, he said, “It is not necessary to convert everyone to a single belief, rather to ‘vie with one another in virtue.’”

Cities Of Strangers
“Cities develop from villages, towns, and suburbs in basic ways with one of the most important differences: being that cities are, by definition, full of strangers,” said Sheikh Nahyan, quoting the late Jane Jacobs, the Canadian American who popularized urban studies.

He highlighted the UAE as an example of this concept. Nearly 200 nations are represented by the population of the UAE, each with their own cultural values, belief systems, and customs. Though their traditions may be different, Sheikh Nahyan mentioned, each individual is unique and deserves dignity and respect. In a country with such cultural and religious diversity, respect for each other is paramount. The leadership of the UAE accepts the obligation to respect and understand the many different religious beliefs of the people living and working in the country.

“Good human beings respect one another and seek to understand each other’s motives – whatever their cultural differences and personal beliefs may be,” Sheikh Nahyan asserted.

Building Moral Societies
Commenting on the historic meeting between His Holiness Pope Francis, Head of the Catholic Church, and His Eminence Dr Ahmed Al Tayeb, Grand Imam of Al Azhar Mosque, in Abu Dhabi the week prior, Sheikh Nahyan said that the visit highlighted the UAE’s positive advocacy for multiculturalism and religious tolerance. The two religious leaders came together in recognition of the role of religion in promoting human dignity, peace, and prosperity.

“Our attitude toward the world’s various religious faiths constitutes a key element in the vision of the United Arab Emirates. Our vision is a global vision because our country is a global country and society. We want our global community to prosper, and to have peace and harmony.”

This commitment to tolerance, Sheikh Nahyan noted, was established by the vision of the nation’s founding father, the late Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan, and permeates the policies of the UAE even today.

To promote a diverse and inclusive landscape, Sheikh Nahyan advised diverse nations such as the UAE to support common activities that allow disparate cultures to come together and connect. This may include community festivals, shared public spaces, and supporting residents of different backgrounds in working together on community projects.

In this Year of Tolerance, Sheikh Nahyan concluded, the UAE will work with everyone who is willing to help cities become engines of tolerance and change.

KEY POINTS
• Today’s cities and societies are becoming more diverse and complex
• Tolerance is key to building communities that thrive
• Good people respect others and seek to understand individuals who are different from them
• City leadership should promote activities that promote tolerance
Religious Tolerance in Cities & Societies

Religious tolerance is fundamental to creating peaceful societies. This was the message delivered by His Excellency Alhaji Muhammadu Sa’ad Abubakar III, Sultan of Sokoto, Nigeria, and President General of the Nigerian Supreme Council for Islamic Affairs.

Dr Josef Boehle, Director of the Peace Charter for Globalization, Religion, and Politics at the University of Birmingham, in a heartening panel discussion about the role of tolerance in building successful, peaceful communities.

Accepting Diversity

Without peace there cannot be progress in any human endeavor, asserted Abubakar. He underlined three primary areas crucial to obtaining world peace:
1. Accepting religious diversity
2. Improving communication
3. Finding common ground

He urged people to accept others who are different from themselves, not just tolerate them. Being tolerant to religious differences is not the same as accepting diversities. “Tolerance suggests a kind of inconvenience, which one is constrained to put up with. Accepting is more about having mutual respect.”

According to Abubakar, education through dialogue can help foster religious and cultural acceptances. “Discussions about the inner logics of culture and religion can enlighten religious coalitions and cultural behaviors.”

He further pointed out that for the survival and success of humans, it is critical that we cooperate and find common ground. For example, people can only contribute and succeed in areas such as trade and commerce, research and learning, protecting the environment, and so on, if they collaborate across different cultures.

Global Conversations

Dr Boehle noted that there must be effective global discourse on designing structures that can facilitate tolerance. “Religious tolerance is an indispensable foundation for peaceful societies and communities,” he asserted. However, despite knowing this, we are far from achieving sustainable peace and severe crises continue to affect many communities across the globe. “This is why it is our obligation to find out how we can better respond to the sincere calls for tolerance, understanding, dialogue, collaboration and peace,” explained Dr Boehle.

He emphasized that it is each person’s responsibility to help identify visionary and constructive solutions for current issues. It is also important to engage diverse religious communities and ethically motivated individuals to work for more tolerance.

“It is my hope that a new global discourse on public policy, governance, and international relations, enriched by authentic national conversations and universal values, will emerge. This can create a better, just, and more peaceful future for all.”

The Value Of Diversity

Agüero commended the UAE leadership’s efforts on embracing tolerance. With 2019 declared the Year of Tolerance by the UAE Government, she said the country is highlighting the importance of tolerance and mutual respect for diversity. “These are ways of increasing the strength and the resilience that is needed to achieve truly cohesive societies.”

She explained that political leaders of a similar caliber are members of the Club de Madrid, a non-profit organization created to promote democracy and change in the international community. “These leaders are aware of the fact that diversity is at the very heart of our societies.” The organization has been focusing on two important elements – inclusivity and sustainability – over the past years.

Agüero also highlighted the Shared Society Project in Spain, which is based on the belief that societies are most likely to be peaceful when leaders and citizens recognize the value of diversity. “The crucial management of diversity and the crafting of constructive dialogue among and within cultures and religions to reduce tensions is essential,” she mentioned.

Governments, both national and local, have an important role to play in the right management and support of ethnic, religious, and cultural diversity.

KEY POINTS

- Accepting religious diversity, improving communication, and finding common ground are essential to building peaceful, successful societies
- Effective global discourse on different policies and international relations can facilitate a peaceful future
- It is each person’s responsibility to help find visionary and constructive solutions for current issues impacting global peace
- Government at all levels has an important role to play in supporting ethnic, religious, and cultural diversity
How Governments Can Harness The Science Of Synchronized Randomness

In his address to the Summit, Steven Strogatz, Professor of Applied Mathematics at Cornell University, highlighted several experiments that may explain how individual humans work together in groups, and what that means for governments and leaders.

Better Together
Strogatz explained that the study of complex systems stemmed from chaos theory, which was hotly debated in academic circles in the 1980s. In brief, the theory is that a complex system is made up of many parts that interact, usually in relatively simple ways. When small parts of a complex system interact, there can be synergies among the parts such as cooperation, unity, or harmony.

“When this idea is applied to humans, there are very interesting implications for society and governments,” said Strogatz. The understanding of the behavior of a group given the behavior of the individuals that comprise the group is one of the great unsolved mysteries in science.

As an example, Strogatz highlighted a session he attended at the Summit:

“Counterintuitive, unexpected phenomena occur at the level of the group that you would not see at the level of a single individual.”

“Synchronized Social Media
With a substantial fraction of the world’s population active on social media, Strogatz pointed out that platforms such as Facebook can be seen as massive and complex groups. The “friendship paradox”, he explained, states that on average an individual’s friends are connected to more people than the individual. This fact applies to 93% of people on Facebook, leaving only 7% of users so well connected that they could defeat the paradox.

While this may seem like a trick of mathematics, he stressed that the friendship paradox has very serious implications in the real world when put into the context of the spread of things like extremist ideology or even disease. “Back in 2009 there was a pandemic of the H1N1 flu. Researchers at Harvard did a study in which they asked whether they could use the friendship paradox to provide a kind of early warning system for outbreaks of contagious disease,” said Strogatz. The experiment held true, and researchers were able to determine which individuals were at risk for contracting the disease.

Conversely, the same paradox could be leveraged to immunize against disease. By targeting highly connected individuals for immunization, diseases could be more easily prevented from spreading.

Understanding group behavior from a mathematical perspective can be extremely beneficial for organizations and even governments, Strogatz concluded. The behavior of one individual may be drastically different from a collective, and understanding how to leverage that behavior for the good of society may mean a happier and healthier world.

KEY POINTS

- A complex system is made up of many parts that interact
- Parts of a complex system may cause the collective to behave differently when the various parts interact
- Group think can be combated with diversity
- Ideas and experiments in the study of complex systems have serious implications for society and governments

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Mitigating The Risk Of The Next Global Epidemic

In this main session, which was also part of the Global Dialogue for Happiness and Wellbeing’s “Well Minds” theme, Dr Mehmet Oz, physician and host of The Dr. Oz Show, Professor David Clark, Professor and Chair of Experimental Psychology at the University of Oxford, and Arianna Huffington, Founder and CEO of Thrive Global, discussed a global epidemic that is currently impacting millions of people around the world. Often overlooked, and in some places even considered a taboo subject, the panel unpacked the global decline of mental health and its burden on society.

Burning Out
Huffington, known her for her advocacy and support of mental health issues, opened the discussion by recounting her experience with exhaustion, sleep deprivation, and burnout. “Two years into building the Huffington Post and the mother of two teenage daughters, I collapsed from exhaustion, sleep deprivation, and burnout, hit my head on my desk, and broke my cheekbone.”

When she began trying to understand what had happened, she discovered that millions of people are suffering from burnout today, leading to a crisis of both mental health and chronic disease. Living on only a few hours of sleep and being “always on” has become the norm, said Huffington, a habit that can lead not only to exhaustion, but may contribute to chronic conditions like diabetes and heart disease. To further the issue, many suffering from exhaustion are unlikely to speak to a professional about their issues, as there is often a stigma attached to any discussion about mental health.

Dr Oz noted that the mental health epidemic is not only detrimental to individuals, but to society as a whole. “The Lancet just published a commission report on global mental health – $16 trillion cost estimated by 2030,” he revealed. Male life expectancy has dropped, he added, because of the assumption that the world is somehow worse today than it was in the past. People make the false idea that the world is worse off, Dr Oz noted, because of the proliferation of information in today’s society.

Social Stress
There are many potential contributing factors to declining mental health, the panelists agreed, though it is difficult to pinpoint to what extent each one furthers the overall epidemic. Social media seems to have a role, Prof Clark said, noting that the largest increases in mental health issues come from the 16 to 25 year-old age group. Huffington agreed, saying that social media pushes young people to make constant comparisons before their own sense of identity is fully formed.

Dr Oz cited financial stress as a major contributor to overall stress. “We know that the top 10 stressors have a financial element to them from the Real Age study,” he said, referring to an ongoing survey that aims to determine the negative impact of stress and disease on an individual.

Another factor is the false idea that the world is somehow worse off today than it was in the past. People make the assumption that the world is worse off, Dr Oz noted, because of the proliferation of information in today’s society.

Winding Down
While the panel acknowledged that anxiety and depression are often times the result of chemical imbalances and need to be medicated, some individuals suffering from those mental issues, as well as stress and exhaustion, can take behavioral steps to alleviate their symptoms.

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Huffington outlined a few of the “micro steps” that individuals can take to help alleviate stress and anxiety. The first is to unplug at the end of the day. Set a time each day that you stop working, turn off your phone, and leave it to charge away from your bed. In the morning, take one minute to set your intention for the day.

Prof Clark and Dr Oz suggested that though declining mental health is a global epidemic, there is hope, agreed the panelists. They ended the session on an optimistic note, stating that the solutions to this epidemic already exist – they just need to be implemented. Destressing will not only benefit individuals, but may benefit society as a whole.

KEY POINTS

- The declining state of mental health is a global epidemic.
- Millions of people are suffering from exhaustion and burnout.
- Exhaustion and stress can lead to both mental health issues and chronic disease.
- Taking small steps to alleviate stress can be very effective.
- The solutions to this epidemic already exist, they just need to be implemented.

Dr Mehmet Oz (Center Left)
Host of The Dr. Oz Show
Prof David Clark (Right)
Professor & Chair of Experimental Psychology at the University of Oxford
Arianna Huffington (Center Right)
Founder & CEO of Thrive Global
Becky Anderson (Left)
Managing Editor & Anchor for CNN Abu Dhabi, Moderator
Bridging The World Through Trade

According to Her Excellency Soraya Hakuziyaremye, Minister of Trade and Industry of Rwanda, and His Excellency Sultan Ahmed bin Sulayem, Group Chairman and CEO of DP World, the recipe for success in trade is good governance, transparency, fair systems, and tolerance. Changes in sociopolitical climates and world markets are creating new challenges for trade, and to prepare societies for the future and create prosperity in world markets, strategic links between the UAE and Africa will be vital.

Challenges Facing Global Trade

The panelists highlighted the tensions between the United States (US) and China as a key challenge currently facing global trade.

Bin Sulayem believes the tensions between two countries will ultimately be resolved. He advised people to focus on actions rather than words. Threats are part of the negotiations. Actual results are often much different and much more positive, he noted, citing free trade agreements reached between the US and its neighbors in Canada and Mexico. It is the indecisiveness that creates a problem. Indecisiveness, fear, and concern among financial institutions are the real challenges. He explained that it can be a problem, for example, if banks want to lend money to one country, but a potential policy retaliation between that country and another affects that deal.

A Bridge For Trade

Globalization should be viewed as a bridge for trade. Populist movements in the United States, United Kingdom, France, and Germany have been about competition, not just immigration. However, according to bin Sulayem, the outcome of negotiations like Brexit should not matter to businessmen. Once an agreement is reached, the indecisive environment disappears and businesses can resume as usual. “I am not fearful about Brexit,” he said, “The UK did not vote to stop trade, it voted to stop immigration.”

He explained that it is often the fear of changes in job markets that leads to restrictions in trade. He urged governments and companies alike to prepare for an uncertain future, which will demand jobs that don’t even exist today.

Globalization & Free Trade In Africa

Hakuziyaremye asserted that the US and China are both important trade partners for Africa, but right now the continent’s priority is to create its own single market.

She highlighted the African Union’s efforts to establish a continental free trade bloc, which aims to unite 55 countries and 1.2 billion consumers. The agreement will combine the countries into a singular voice on the global stage and enhance trade within the continent. Intra-African trade is low at 12%, but Hakuziyaremye is optimistic that this number will double by 2022.

Rwanda & The UAE

In Rwanda, the government is working to create a conducive business environment. In the last two decades, the country has boosted its world ranking from nearly 150th to 29th on the Ease of Doing Business index. Hakuziyaremye attributed this leap in part to good governance. Accountability, visionary leadership, and consistent policies have attracted investors and made it easier for Rwanda-based businesses to export. Rwanda’s efforts to transform its business environment encouraged DP World to establish a logistics park there. “We see Rwanda as a very important country,” said bin Sulayem.

He lauded the nation’s current leader as a visionary who devised incentives for investment and governance. Despite some progress being made, trade within Africa is still very limited. In addition to high customs duties, bin Sulayem identified poor infrastructure as a primary problem. Building better infrastructure will require capital, which the private sector can provide. In return, the private sector will demand sound governance and transparency.

Bin Sulayem urged African nations to learn from the UAE’s example. “To encourage FDI [foreign direct investment] is like planting a seed somewhere where the soil is good. The soil for progress is governance, transparency, good leadership, fair systems, and tolerance.”

KEY POINTS

- Globalization acts as a bridge for trade and should never work against it
- Indecisiveness and fear cause unease in business dealings between nations
- Accountability, leadership, and consistent policies have improved trade outcomes in Rwanda
- Improving infrastructure in Africa is key to boosting intracontinental trade
- Governance, transparency, good leadership, fair systems, and tolerance are essential to progress
The Upcoming Revolution In The Telecom Sector

Telecoms has become fundamental to almost every aspect of society, and the sector is at the dawn of another phase of revolution and disruption.

In this session, a panel of industry experts examined three key drivers of that future:

1. 5G
2. Data
3. Adaptability

Greater Connectivity Is The Foundation

This new era will be driven by 5G. In the view of His Excellency Houlin Zhao, Secretary General of the International Telecommunication Union, “5G will be the technology for the next decade.”

Other technology developments, including the Internet of Things, AI, and cloud computing will not be fully realised until 5G is commonplace, he explained. It provides the required level of connectivity that is their necessary foundation. “Nothing can be implemented if we do not have 5G.”

Therefore, in many ways the main threat to progress may come from whether the industry is able to provide the infrastructure to connect those people who are not yet connected, he asserted.

Data Is The Next Oil

Alongside 5G, the panel believed that data will be at the heart of tomorrow’s telecoms.

His Excellency Hamad Obaid Al Mansoori, Director General of the Telecommunications Regulatory Authority of the UAE, proposed that data and the processing of data will be as important to the future as oil is to today. This represents an opportunity for the telecoms industry to reinvent itself around.

Competition Is Critical

Al Mansoori emphasized that having a level playing field within the industry is vital to successful change. As a regulatory body, his role is to make sure that there is fair competition. Any kind of change is possible in the sector, therefore “we are always revising or testing our current regulations.”

Zhao supported this idea, pointing out that telecoms companies can and should compete with other tech disruptors to bring about this new era. “The telecom infrastructure is irreplaceable; Google and telecoms will continue to go together, side by side,” he claimed.

According to Osman Sultan, CEO of du, one of the UAE’s two largest telecoms companies, the opportunities that his peers described are actually imperatives. “The biggest threat to telecoms companies is not being able to adapt. Disruption is happening in multiple dimensions, and the ecosystems of today are far more complex than those of yesterday,” he explained. “They are much more multi-stakeholder, much more multi-player.”

Sultan stated this is a cautionary tale for telcos to think of their future, and to consider how their industry is changing. “The ecosystem is changing, and you have to change with it. Otherwise we will not be around. The biggest threat to telecoms companies is not being able to adapt.”

Customer-centricity Is A Priority

To compete in this new world, companies should consider how they offer and price services, and strive to be even more customer-centric. “If we do not, we will be our own worst enemy,” Sultan said. Telecoms is doing a good job of making connectivity a basic human right, but the industry cannot rest on this.

Telecoms companies must maintain best-in-class IT infrastructure in order to provide the type and quality of services that their customers demand, as this is what is most important in the new, rapidly evolving ecosystem.

KEY POINTS

• 5G will be the foundation of change, providing the basis to enable other disruptive technologies
• Data is the commodity of the future and the opportunity the sector should reshape itself around
• Telecoms companies need to become content creators, rather than just vessels or conduits of content
• Fair competition, adaptability, and customer-centricity are the keys to a successful tomorrow
How Do We Fight Radicalism By Creating Hope?

The Arab Hope Makers initiative, launched by the Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum Global Initiatives in 2017, recognizes heroes whose humanitarian work alleviates suffering and improves the lives of the disadvantaged. Four Arab Hope Makers came together at the World Government Summit to describe how their efforts have spread positivity in their communities and across the Arab region.

Creating Happiness Through Service

Hisham Al Dahabi, Founder of The Iraqi Safe House for Creativity, explained that while the terrorist presence in Iraq is obviously detrimental, it has resulted in more volunteer groups coming to the area and working to provide services that bring happiness to others. It also helped inspire volunteers to continue their mission with compassion. “The work of volunteer groups and young people who have engaged in humanitarian and development work in Iraq has had a positive impact on the community,” Al Dahabi elaborated on his experience in dealing with the Iraqi government as well as other state institutions. He mentioned that ever since the first edition of the Arab Hope Makers initiative in 2017, there has been significant and qualitative change for the Iraqi Safe House for Creativity. “This is because we now have better and more open relationships with the state institutions,” he explained.

Women Leading Positive Change

Ma’ali Al Asousi, Founder of the Tamkeen Development Organization, highlighted the importance of women in humanitarian work. Educating women, who will in turn teach their children, will prevent young people from falling prey to extremist rhetoric, she noted.

As women represent a large segment of society, they play an instrumental and substantial role in humanitarian initiatives. They can be powerful agents of change. “Women have an advantage over their male counterparts as they have access to homes’ and societies’ secrets,” she explained. “Girls and women are the backbone of a society. Women have the opportunity to serve and do work that will impact the society positively.”

Food For The Soul

In Sudan, Hope Maker Fares Ali said that his organization, Food for Education, is working with partner institutions to provide meals to children in remote border areas, where extremist groups are luring them in with promises of food.

His initiative began with 20 sandwiches, he said, and grew to distribute 40 million sandwiches in just eight years. Ali announced that this year alone Food for Education was able to distribute 49 million sandwiches across 123 schools. According to him, the Hope Makers Award was a step forward that helped transform philanthropy into development work.

“Seeking to achieve sustainable development, we have turned to global partnerships. We now have partnerships with the European Union and the Italian EMERGENCY organization, designed to educate 25,000 students,” he announced.

During his talk, Ali also highlighted the recently signed partnership with the Khalifa Bin Zayed Al Nahyan Foundation under the patronage of Sheikh Mansour bin Zayed Al Nahyan, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Presidential Affairs of the UAE, to build 10 villages in Darfur in Western Sudan to further improve the humanitarian conditions in the region.

A Shared Responsibility

Finally, Mahmoud Wahid, Founder of Together To Save a Human, elaborated on his initiative, which helps homeless people in his home country. The Egyptian Hope Maker said that he would like to see this initiative become a national project.

“The goal is to ensure that no homeless person sleeps on the streets,” he stated. In his experience, Wahid noted that homeless people are resentful of society and lack a sense of belonging, which increases the risk of them becoming victims of extremism. He emphasized that advancing society is a shared responsibility and everyone must contribute in any way they can.
In a series of sessions under the theme “21st Century Urban Life”, Gérard Collomb, Mayor of Lyon, France, Robert Muggah, Research Director of the Igarapé Institute, Elora Hardy, Founder and Creative Director of IBUKU, Prem Ramaswami, Head of Product for Sidewalk Labs, and Saskia Sassen, Professor of Sociology and Member of the Committee on Global Thought at Columbia University, examined global cities and the influence they will have on the future of modern living.

Cities Power Countries

During his presentation, Muggah explained that cities are what power countries and their success will determine the survival of humanity. He highlighted the need to view everything through the lens of cities, rather than nations.

By studying current trends today, we are able to design new cities centered around the future. Several countries around the world have already launched initiatives to create smart cities. However, according to Muggah, despite these initiatives, the reality is that the vast majority of cities are not going to be planned with the future in mind. “In fact,” he said, “many of them are urbanizing before they industrialize, as they have in previous generations.”

Accounting for more than 80% of the global GDP, cities are driving the growth of countries Nevertheless, they still face huge challenges, such as increasing slum populations, war, terrorism, a growing number of refugees and political asylum seekers, global warming, and climate change. For cities to overcome these issues, Muggah advised governments to set plans, build and operate sustainably, diversify energy grids, invest in integrated solutions, and work together to strategize for the future.

Global Cities Cannot Operate Alone

There is a notion in today’s world that if you digitize, you can take your business anywhere. During her session, Sassen reexamined this idea and discussed the dynamics that explain the existence of global cities.

“It is very important to understand that technology alone cannot bring multiple specialized knowledges together,” she explained. “Humans will have to play a part too, to help produce something that is an outcome of multiple different forms of knowledge.”

According to Sassen, the global city is not the whole city, it is a particular element that installs itself within a city. She said that the global city’s function is to bring together multiple types of highly specialized information that connect different places around the world. A global city is a strategic site with many global, highly specialized, partial elements.

To conclude, she pointed out that there is no perfect global city. In fact, some of the most global cities in the world, such as New York and Tokyo, are only about 60-70% of the way there.

Retrofitting Cities For Sustainability

Collomb highlighted his experience in restructuring a city to be more sustainable and happier for its inhabitants. The strategy, he said, combined historic elements with contemporary architecture.

He explained how the city of Lyon collaborated with Japanese companies in energy-related renovation fields to revamp old buildings dating back to the 1930s. According to Collomb, the biggest problem is the rehabilitation of historic buildings as they consume the most energy. The city provided its residents with monitoring tablets, which use a program called Conso Tab, developed by Toshiba, to help them track their energy consumption. The tablets provided real-time data about how much energy residents were using and helped them to understand the importance of urban renovation.

Another issue that the city dealt with was mobility. Collomb described how they developed an important public transport system in Lyon, which runs on carbon-free energy, as well as a fleet of electric vehicles available for public use and an autonomous shuttle service.

Collomb also highlighted the importance of bringing nature back into cities and preserving the biodiversity of the surrounding areas.

Using Resources Responsibly

In a discussion focused on sustainability, Ramaswami and Hardy agreed that humanity must focus on extracting resources at a slower rate to allow them time to replenish themselves.

The two panelists also explained to the Summit how their respective companies are contributing to social sustainability. According to Hardy, “Humans, as an extension of nature, have created so much that ends up feeling so distant from nature and from ourselves.” Her architecture and design firm IBUKU is seeking to rectify, by merging forward-thinking urban design with technology to recreate cities around the people who live there and radically improve quality of life.

KEY POINTS

- The continuity of the human race will be determined by the success of cities as they drive the growth of countries
- It is crucial for cities to set plans, build and operate sustainably, and work together to strategize for the future
- Technology alone cannot bring together multiple specialized knowledges that connect different places around the world; people are also an important aspect
- It is critical to only use resources at a rate that allows them sufficient time to replenish themselves
In a series of sessions under the theme “Design to Transform Government,” global subject specialists looked at using and visualizing data, involving communities in the decision-making process, and enhancing service design.

**Data Visualization For Better Policies**

In his session “Visualizing Data For Better Policies”, renowned visual data journalist David McCandless discussed the role of big data - specifically its ability to explain and communicate issues when converted into powerful visualizations. Comparing data to “a new kind of matter that we can gather, dig through, and question,” he suggested that the most valuable insights often lie in the gaps and comparisons. McCandless shared his own illustrative examples of what can be achieved by gathering data about the world, citizenship, and populations, then graphically illustrating it using - for example - ‘billions’ and ‘government spending’ as datasets. “When you do, you start to see patterns, connections, and links between numbers that would otherwise lie separated and scattered across multiple sources,” he explained. Issues and policies then become more understandable, and more compelling. By visualizing data in these ways, policy-makers can build bridges: from “seas of data” on one side, into everyday life on the other. Doing so will enhance civic engagement, he proposed, because people are able to relate better to information and policy.

**Policy Is About People**

Such community empowerment and involvement was also endorsed by Don Norman, Director of The Design Lab at the University of California, San Diego. In the second session, he postulated that the biggest problems facing the world today are actually best solved by the communities affected by them. As an example, he noted the challenges that past models for aid-giving have experienced. The “traditional” model, which relies on outside experts, can be insensitive to the unique issues and dynamics of the local communities where it is implemented. On the other hand, approaches that depend solely upon local expertise can often have difficulty broadening their impact. Even simply merging these methods presents challenges, as the two sides often struggle to communicate effectively with one another.

Instead, Norman recommended a more fluid approach that unites aid providers and recipients as people, not just as models. “We need to focus on the people, instructing and teaching them how to look at the whole system,” he concluded. “Then, we should design things to be flexible so that when they are not working, we can step back and try something different.”

**Humanizing Government Services**

In the final session, Tim Kobe, Founder and CEO of Eight Inc, explored how design can change how people think, feel, and act. He looked at how the thoughts and processes that people bring to commercial endeavors can also often be applied to government services, and thus play a role in creating better human outcomes. “Ultimately, design can define human progress,” he asserted.

Since government is, at heart, the expression of a core set of values that people then experience, the focus becomes how to design that experience, Kobe explained. “When you design a service based around how people will experience it, then you will drive loyalty, preference, and successful outcomes.” He outlined eight ways to unlock this potential:

1. Recognize that human experiences are holistic
2. Leverage ‘uncommon’ insights to understand your audience and establish a dialogue
3. Forget best practice – what counts is what differentiates you not what makes you similar
4. Be empathetic, not just in service design, but in every human interaction
5. Generate ‘word of mouth’, rather than just looking to benefit from it; 80% of word-of-mouth recommendations stem from direct experience
6. Take risks – not trying something is just as risky as trying something and failing
7. Aim for loyalty that might even be irrational. Doing so will move your audience from participation and engagement, to happiness and wellbeing
8. Understand that a return on experience will deliver a return on investment

“If this approach is followed successfully, you can say you have created value,” he concluded. “Great leaders are those who create great experiences.”

**KEY POINTS**

- Bringing data to life brings policy to life, making it more relatable for citizens and easier to understand
- Communities are best placed to solve the challenges they face, but only when solutions are designed in human-centric ways
- Well-designed services do more than just deliver government policy – they can change how people think, feel, and act
- Great leadership is about creating great experiences
Post-conflict Governance

Transitioning to peace may seem insurmountable for countries plagued by civil war, but in two inspiring sessions, audiences heard stories of success from the Honorable Juan Manuel Santos, President of Colombia from 2010 to 2018 and a recipient of the 2016 Nobel Peace Prize, and 2011 Nobel Peace Prize Laureate and Liberian Peace Activist, Leymah Gbowee. In the ‘Leading Nations...From Conflict to Resolution’ session, Santos shared his approach toward establishing peace and ending the country’s five-decade conflict with the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) rebels.

In the ‘The Role of Women in Rebuilding Nations’ session, Gbowee gave an unflinchingly honest insight into the First Liberian Civil War in 1989, which caused the death of more than 250,000 people and displaced a million more. Against all odds, the war led to a powerful female uprising that resulted in the signing of a peace agreement.

The Path To Securing Peace
Santos described the time when, as Minister of Trade, he attended a conference that was intended to attract investment to Colombia. A large explosion shook the capital city of Bogotá, and the conference was cancelled. Santos recalled that one of the investors told him Colombia would never attract investment or be fully developed until the war came to an end. Several months later, the late Nelson Mandela told him the exact same thing. That is when Santos decided that his objective in life would be to bring peace to Colombia. For him to be successful, he would have to adopt a fresh approach. He began by thoroughly studying the peace processes in other conflict-affected countries and identifying the conditions that made peace possible. In Colombia, these conditions included the effectiveness of the military and regional support, but the most important factor was convincing the warring parties that negotiating peace was a better option than continuing the conflict.

In Liberia, women were instrumental in ending the civil war. Gbowee explained how the country’s women decided they were going to hold a protest for peace. Dressed all in white, they took to the streets to challenge the dictatorship. Growing frustrated with the lack of action, Gbowee and a group of women forced their way into a hall where delegates were holding peace talks, taking them hostage and refusing to release them unless they signed a peace agreement. About three weeks later, the agreement was signed.

The Power Of Women
Women are vital in securing post-conflict peace, Gbowee asserted, and they must be involved in a country’s constitutional and legislative processes. Building a prosperous nation requires the inclusion of both men and women. To demonstrate the importance of ensuring that women’s voices are heard, she instructed the audience to cover one eye and asked whether they could see the entire room clearly. “When we leave out the skills, the expertise, and the unique qualities that women bring to nation-building processes, it’s like you’re seeing with one eye covered,” she emphasized.

Understanding The Opposition
Both speakers shared insights into the people behind the conflict. Santos explained that a turning point for him was when he acknowledged that the people behind the conflict in his country were still Colombians. He began viewing the FARC as competitors, rather than as enemies, and this made them more willing to come to the table to negotiate with him and his administration.

Gbowee noted that the suffering of women during the war in Liberia was indisputably linked to existing gender inequality. The way people are socialized during peacetime impacts the way they behave during war. As an example, she told the Summit about a conversation she had with a former child soldier. She asked him if he had forced any woman to have sex with him during the war. His response was, “Yes, but isn’t that what women were made for?”

Constructing Future Peace
Santos and Gbowee also discussed the methods they used to drive change in their respective post-conflict countries.

In Colombia, Santos described working with the FARC rebels to convince peasants to shift from growing illegal crops to legal ones, which is proving successful. “I think if we maintain this policy, we will – for the first time – not be the number-one exporter of cocaine into world markets,” he announced.

Gbowee also believes in the transformative power of education. The most sustainable change is achieved by providing women with education and a political voice. She highlighted her foundation in Liberia that provides education for young girls. It is empowering an entire generation of women to pursue university degrees, become active in government, and shape the future of their country. “Going back to the kitchen, going back to just taking care of children is not an option anymore. Transforming our society and our world is the option,” Gbowee concluded.
Redesigning Medicine

During a series of sessions under the theme “Redesigning Medicine,” experts explored how advanced technologies and precision medicine will change the current healthcare system.

Personalized Diets To Cure Disease
Momchilo (Momo) Vuyisich, Founder and Chief Science Officer of Viome, explained that a person’s health is determined by their gut microbiome, environment, and eating habits. There can be no “one diet fits all” because the microbes in the gut are vastly different in each person. Science-based personalized diets will enable individuals to take control of their health, rather than waiting until they become sick to be treated.

According to Vuyisich, today’s healthcare model is only about managing symptoms rather than treating a specific disease. As an example, Vuyisich told the Summit of his personal experience of being diagnosed with early onset arthritis in his 20s. “By the time I was 35, it was debilitating,” he said. “Modern medicine couldn’t identify the origins of the disease to be able to treat it. It only offered medicines to cover up the symptoms and suppress the immune system.”

He read every possible piece of scientific literature that was available to him as a scientist. He shared how, at the age of 40, he identified a science-based personalized diet that cured him completely. This led him to establish Viome, which offers gut-biome testing and personalized action plans for individuals.

Vuyisich asserted that the next phase in healthcare will be true preventative medicine. “With the advancements in technology today, it is possible to prevent a disease decades before the symptoms show up.”

Drug Repurposing Is The Future
Dr Harald Schmidt, Professor of Pharmacology and Chair of the Department of Pharmacology and Personalised Medicine at Maastricht University, advocated a more holistic approach, understanding microbiomes and different aspects such as the gut-brain or the brain-heart axes.

He also explained that drug repurposing identifies new ways to use existing drugs, which will revolutionize the way pharmaceuticals are developed, as it can drastically reduce the time and money it takes to create a completely new drug.

“This could mean the end of pharma and detoxing,” he posited. “There will come a point in a couple of years’ time where we will not require any more new drugs.”

Drug repurposing could be the answer to treating multiple illnesses, and tailoring treatments down to the cellular level will be the future.

7 Pillars Of Holistic Health
Finally, best-selling author and physician Dr Sara Gottfried asserted that genes only contribute about 10% to a person’s risk probability of acquiring a particular disease. The remaining 90% is due to their environment, much of which they can control, such as the kind of food they eat or how much sleep they get.

Food is generally considered as calories or fuel for a body’s cells, but it is more than that, stated Dr Gottfried. “Food is information for the DNA – not just of human cells but also of the microbes in a person’s gut.”

Contrary to popular belief, only 3% of the population has the short sleep gene. “This means 97% of the rest of us need our seven to 8.5 hours of sleep with a minimum of 90 minutes of deep sleep,” she explained.

Dr Gottfried advised the audience to uphold the seven pillars of holistic health – eat, move, sleep, think, soothe, connect, and detox – to achieve a state of overall wellbeing.

KEY POINTS
• An individual’s health is determined by their gut microbiome, environment, and eating habits
• Science-based personalized diets can help prevent diseases and maintain one’s health
• The next phase in healthcare will be all about preventative medicine
• Drug repurposing will transform how drugs are developed
• The seven pillars of holistic health include eating, moving, sleeping, thinking, soothing, connecting, and detoxing
Technology, War, & Peace

The more digital technology develops and changes our world, the more its accompanying threats and risks increase too. Over this pair of sessions, two speakers analyzed this precarious dynamic, stepping back to look at the fundamental questions it raises.

The Impact Of Cyber Warfare
Cybersecurity is more than just computer hacking, warned information security researcher and consultant Rodrigo Bijou in the opening session. It is an issue that drives economies apart.

Citing how hackers can take over smart meters and infrastructure, manipulate opinion, and spread disinformation, he identified two vital questions that society needs to resolve in order to fight back:

- Who is responsible for providing protection?
- What constitutes a proportional reaction?

To demonstrate the full implications of these questions, Bijou elaborated on them further. “Is it a company’s job to defend itself?” he asked. “Is it a government’s job to have a forcefulness response against another country?”

As a tangible example, he outlined the story of the NotPetya ransomware attack. This began in Ukraine around 2016 as an attack by Russian hackers, but soon spread across cyberspace.

“The ransomware went on to affect numerous major companies all round the world. It cost them hundreds of millions of dollars in damages, but when those companies went to their insurers, the insurance companies decided NotPetya originated as ‘an act of war’. Therefore there was no payout, as insurance policies do not cover acts of war.”

Hacking Has History
By relating a number of illuminating examples, Bijou showed the Summit that the threat of ‘hacking’ is as old as communication technology itself. He described how the first recorded hack in history came in 1903, when inventor Guglielmo Marconi hired a theater to display the supposedly infallible security of his pioneering long-distance radio technology. In fact, his performance ended in embarrassment when his live transmission was intercepted and altered by a British ‘proto-hacker’, John Nevil Maskelyne.

“Like Marconi, we are always going to build new and innovative technologies,” Bijou concluded. “But we have to also understand that it is inevitable: with these technologies will come security flaws. And once a technology becomes critical to a state, or becomes mainstream in society, then the hacking or breaking of that technology becomes inherently political.”

Bijou advised governments to employ tactics such as hiring hackers to find flaws in technologies that underpin the global economy and work collaboratively to change the dynamics of cyber warfare, using hacking as a force for global good.

Protecting Social Media
Dr Erin Marie Saltman, Policy Manager for Europe, the Middle East, and North Africa on Counterterrorism & Countering Violent Extremism at Facebook, explained how Facebook contributes to global policy development and works to challenge terrorism, which represents this issue’s most violent side. Her role is one of preventative measures.

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The Art & Science Of Decision-making

In a hard-hitting discussion with The National’s Mina Al-Oraibi, Daniel Kahneman, Nobel Laureate in Economic Sciences and Professor Emeritus of Psychology and Public Affairs at Princeton University, examined the decision-making process. He explored to what degree factors like personality are responsible for decision-making and whether human intuition can be trusted.

Science In Decision-making

“Personality has a great deal to do with successful decision-making,” explained Kahneman. However, he advised that its role should actually be reduced in the judgment aspect of decision-making.

Instead, we should look to science, which Kahneman defined as bringing “an objective attitude to data and facts, as opposed to fancy or wishes.” This has to start with a prior commitment to the facts and objectivity. You can train people to collect and evaluate data objectively, but the desire to do things in a systematic, fact-based way must come first.

Thinking Slow

In today’s fast-paced world where we are being bombarded with information, people feel increasingly pressured to think quickly.

“We cannot think slow all the time,” Kahneman admitted. Nevertheless, when we suspect that we are likely to make a mistake, the best course of action is to slow down and question ourselves.

The subjective self-confidence that comes with intuition should not be trusted. It is possible to be extremely self-confident and wrong. “In general, the correlation between confidence and accuracy is not very high,” Kahneman noted. The key is to practice disciplined thinking, which is to delay intuition until we have all the facts and take the time to think about the situation objectively.

Bias & Noise

When making decisions, we are confronted with bias and noise. Kahneman highlighted that there is a fundamental difference between the two. Bias is a “systematic error” – in measurement and in decision-making. Noise, on the other hand, is random.

To explain the concept of noise, he used the example of an insurance company with many underwriters. When assessing a certain risk, you would not want the company’s decision to be affected by the individual underwriter who made it. It turns out, however, that there is massive variability even in well-run companies.

Kahneman advised replacing human judgment with rules, algorithms, or artificial intelligence to mitigate the issues noise can create. Evidence shows that when human judgment competes with simple rules, the rules are as good – or better – more than half the time.

“The one reason they are better is that they are not affected by random variability, or noise,” noted Kahneman. The key is to practice disciplined thinking, which is to delay intuition until we have all the facts and take the time to think about the situation objectively.

AI & Decision-making

When AI becomes ubiquitous, what will make human decision-making stand apart from machines? Kahneman noted that this is a much-debated topic, “because no one wants to accept that machines are going to be better than people at everything.”

Machines will have the advantage, though, because a central robot can receive feedback and data from thousands of other robots. “No individual can acquire the kind of experience that robots will very quickly acquire once you set them loose.”

He expects that there may not be any specific skill that, given enough data, machines won’t be able to learn. They will learn whatever they are told to learn, and they will learn it correctly.

The impact of AI will likely affect society soon, so Al-Oraibi asked what advice the professor would give to those looking at governance. Kahneman warned against programming bias into machines. “It would be quite easy to teach a machine to predict what you are going to like, and then the machine will have all your biases and they’ll be even worse than your biases.”

Machines may not always be right – they may not have some important information that the human monitoring the machine does, Kahneman concluded. It will be important to program machines to recognize when they are not fully equipped to solve a problem and when they don’t know the answer.

KEY POINTS

- Think slow – wait until you have as much data as possible before making a decision
- Pay attention to facts and objective data, not personality or intuition
- To make better decisions, we should suspend our intuition until we have looked objectively at all the facts
- Machines are better equipped to make some decisions because they are not affected by random variability, or noise
- Artificial intelligence must be programmed to recognize when it does not know an answer
The Future Of Global Trade

In these twin sessions, Paul Krugman, Nobel Laureate in Economic Sciences and Professor Emeritus of Economics and International Affairs at Princeton University, and blockchain researcher and entrepreneur Bettina Warburg explored what global trade might look like in the future.

The Opportunity Of Globalization

In a discussion with CNN’s Richard Quest entitled “Global Trade: Future Foresight and Analysis for Governments,” Krugman identified the key challenges and opportunities facing trade today. According to him, globalization is a huge area of opportunity because, as a concept, it naturally benefits trade. Krugman told the Summit that he is encouraged by the resilience that globalization has shown recently, despite some adverse developments. “Remember how the world looked in 2015 – pre-Trump, pre-Brexit,” he explained. “At that point, we thought we had strong globalization. Then, two years later, we thought it was all falling apart. However, it now seems that the backlash against globalization has much shallower roots than we thought.” This means globalization may be more durable than some previously believed.

Challenges For Trade

Krugman also highlighted two crucial challenges facing global trade. The first is tax avoidance, which he noted is probably a multi-trillion dollar issue. When huge corporations shift their profits to tax havens, it distorts the numbers on the global economy, particularly regarding concentrations of wealth. This is a big deal because this is one of the underlying causes of populism.

The second challenge is the lack of preparation for a major economic event, such as another recession. Krugman explained that if there is another crisis like that of 2008, he is concerned that the world currently doesn’t have the proper safety net, reserves, or policy tools in place to manage it. He urged delegates to focus on these areas to safeguard global trade because “we don’t know what’s going to happen.”

From The Past To The Future

In a session titled “Tech, Blockchain, and the Future of Trade,” Bettina Warburg examined the role that blockchain might play in transforming trade. While blockchain’s potential to transform global trade is undeniable, for many people it remains largely conceptual. Seeking to cross that bridge, she put technology into context for the Summit.

“We hear how AI makes everything smarter; how everything connects to the internet of things; how blockchain is fundamentally reshaping our economy,” she explained. “But this does not really cover what is changing underneath, to our economic story, our infrastructure. To understand this, we need to understand the history of trade.”

The earliest form of trade was more of a one-to-one, direct transfer of value. The distance and complexity of trade steadily grew from there. Institutions such as banks and mercantile associations were established to deal with the uncertainty that this evolution brought. These institutions are now online, in the form of companies like Amazon, eBay, and Alibaba. “What the future now promises is an extension of this same story, but instead of institutions as the middleman, we have a technology.”

The Power To Reduce Uncertainty

According to Warburg, blockchain’s key strength is that it extends trade by reducing uncertainty. Even though the technology may not bring a major ‘step change’ for another five to ten years, it is already creating greater confidentiality and privacy in transactions. This will allow blockchain to significantly transform trade.

She also emphasized that this doesn’t just apply to humans. “When we think about blockchain as lowering our uncertainty and expanding our ability to trade and transact, it’s not just for humans. We really need to understand that these are decentralized computing architectures that enable machines to transact with machines autonomously.” Humans will have to establish the rules that will govern these machine-to-machine transactions. In this way, the future of trade relies on humans and machines collaborating.

To conclude, Warburg reminded the audience that we are going to experience many layers of growth. This new decentralized era of trade will transform the global economy much in the same way that the internet did.

KEY POINTS

• Global trade is less threatened by globalization than many had feared
• Governments need to be prepared for another major economic crisis because we don’t know what might happen
• Technologies like blockchain will extend trade by reducing uncertainty, allowing everyone to participate in a single global economy
• The future of trade relies on humans and machines working together
The Future Of Learning

In a pair of sessions examining the future of learning, clinical psychologist and best-selling author Dr Shefali Tsabary and Ryan Roslansky, Senior Vice President of Products and User Experience at LinkedIn, discussed what lies ahead for the next generation. They considered strategies people can use to prepare for a future that will be vastly different from the present.

Conscious Parenting
Dr Tsabary opened her session by discussing parenting and offering ideas for parents who want to raise their children more consciously. “To be conscious,” she explained, “is to be aware that in every moment you are bringing an emotional legacy, an emotional feeling, an emotional touch, an emotional taste.” She urged parents to go beyond their family, but the missing piece is consciousness. Being conscious demands that you see other people for who they really are.

Conscious Education
These ideas should also be applied in school classrooms, Dr Tsabary advised. Education should not be uniform, or one size fits all, as this approach fails to honor the individual. Helping children reclaim their unique essence is crucial to building a better future, where young people are thinking differently and changing the game.

To bring her session to a close, Dr Tsabary also recommended a stronger focus on building relationships between teachers and students. Besides consciousness, the key ingredient to successful education is connection – and true connection is only achieved when we accept the other person for who they really are.

The Economic Graph
Roslansky offered clarity about the future of work based on data that LinkedIn has collected from its 600 million users worldwide. The platform features 30 million companies and 20 million job postings at any given time. All this data is compiled to create “The Economic Graph,” which is a digital representation of the global economy that highlights trends such as talent migration, hiring rates, and in-demand skills.

Roslansky offered clarity about the four-year college model will become outdated. “Right now in the United States, over 50% of graduates from college are either unemployed or underemployed... The system is obviously broken and needs to change.” Roslansky emphasized continuous, lifelong learning as the key to preparing young people for a future that varies significantly from the present.

To help children reclaim their individuality is crucial to building a better future. “The way we train the workforce is going to need to be much quicker and much more practical,” he stated. He anticipated that the four-year college model will become outdated. “Right now in the United States, over 50% of graduates from college are either unemployed or underemployed... The system is obviously broken and needs to change.”

He also suggested that LinkedIn’s data can offer insight into the skills companies require, and therefore the skills people should learn so they can be confident they will find a job. The data creates a model that helps us understand what people need to learn to be successful.

Rethinking Education
Roslansky pointed out that 65% of children today will hold a job that does not currently exist. This means the current model of education will require adjustments to remain relevant.
The Impact Of Tribalism
Amy Chua, John M Duff Jr Professor of Law at Yale Law School and author of Political Tribes, explored pressures in society frequently become factors that affect the global geopolitical balance. Three speakers across a series of sessions explored how to address this dynamic.

The Enduring Challenge Of Economic Inequality
James Robinson, Director of The Pearson Institute for the Study & Resolution of Global Conflicts at the University of Chicago, co-author of Why Nations Fail explained that, contrary to popular belief, globalization and access to technology are not necessarily to blame for rising inequality. Instead, it has more to do with an individual country’s institutions and labor markets, as well as the government’s commitment to addressing socioeconomic inequality. It depends on the type of capitalism that is in place.

In Europe, there’s a commitment to a welfare state and governments work to redistribute wealth and promote inclusion. This has created much less inequality compared to countries such as the United States and Great Britain.

“There are lots of different ways that capitalism can be organized, with very different consequences for inequality,” Robinson asserted. He advised governments to consider the systems they have put in place in their countries and the effect they are having on inequality.

The Issue Of Identity
For Mark Lilla, Professor of Humanities at Columbia University, identity conflict is a key social issue that has emerged and impacted politics in recent years. This is actually surprising in many ways, given the positive that followed the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989. “Then, as barriers between East and West came down, there was a sense that things were going to be different; that more countries would be able to determine their own destiny; that freeing up trade would make people more prosperous, and therefore there would be less conflict in the world.”

Instead, there has been a rise in conflict, largely due to issues surrounding identity. Identity challenges have taken many forms, Lilla explained, including religious fundamentalism and the growth of nationalist and racist political groups. “Many countries are now in turmoil due to questions of identity, not of class or other traditional issues.”

He suggested that the root cause is the fact that globalization produces monoculturalism, not multiculturalism. It creates the experience of sameness, rather than difference. The more we feel the same, the weaker our sense of who we are becomes. This leads to new kinds of identity conflict; conflicts that “do not come from distrust or hatred of ‘the other,’ but from our instinctual anxiety in the face of a monoculture that no longer roots us in a place.” It makes people feel “homeless when already at home.”

The world needs new structures to tackle this issue, Lilla asserted. “How can we develop and strengthen a healthy ‘we’? Not a reactionary or racist ‘we’, but a ‘we’ that contributes to thinking about the common good, and about the future.”

Lilla urged governments to work toward cultivating a sense of national identity for their citizens so that they feel grounded and do not fall into conflict.

KEY POINTS
- Tribalism is part of human nature, but it is politically harmful
- Immigration, demographic changes, and even democracy can promote tribalism
- Economic inequality is largely a result of the systems and institutions a country has put in place
- There is less inequality in countries where governments have committed to a welfare state and work to redistribute wealth and promote inclusion
- Identity-related conflicts are increasingly superseding other forms of conflict
- Nurturing a sense of identity around citizenship can help citizens feel grounded
In a series of sessions under the theme ‘The Interplay of Tech and Government’, speakers examined how governments can monitor and steer the conversation surrounding technology, ways of partnering with the private sector to deliver change, and the need for another technological step change to address challenges.

**Scope & Speed**

According to His Excellency Casper Klynge, Tech Ambassador of Denmark, technology will not only profoundly impact individuals, but also global affairs, foreign policy, and international relations. Moreover, the rapid pace at which technology is developing will set it apart from previous revolutions.

He identified two players critical to retaining control and oversight in this new era: technology diplomats and big technology companies.

**The Role Of Tech Diplomats**

Klynge pointed out that several countries are now considering appointing tech ambassadors like himself. The aim – and the benefit – is to influence diplomatic directions and platforms by having an ‘on-the-ground’ presence, especially in the global epicenters of technology-driven transformation.

“My role is not commercial; I am not out there to attract investments to Denmark or promote Danish companies abroad,” he explained. “It is a political position, a foreign policy position. In part, it helps us understand the positive consequences of new developments, but it also helps us mitigate some of the risks associated with them.”

For example, tech ambassadors could play a crucial role in preventing technology platforms from interfering with elections. He urged the Summit’s delegates to see this as a way of protecting the role of governments in a digital age where governance is threatened, and in some cases even undermined by new technologies and platforms.

**The Role Of The Tech Giants**

Vern Brownell identified three factors that strengthen the case for a future driven by quantum computing:

1. Growing complexity in society
2. The approaching capacity ‘ceiling’ in current computing
3. Its high levels of power consumption

Quantum computing will help address these shortfalls and usher in a new era of technological possibility.

**Bridging Digital Divides**

Finally, Greg Wyler, Founder and Executive Chairman of global communications company OneWeb, highlighted two of his company’s initiatives where they are cooperating with governments to bridge digital divides.

The first initiative is the O3b Network. The name stands for “the other three billion” – the proportion of the world’s population that is currently not connected. OneWeb’s second initiative is Project Connect, a not-for-profit collaboration with the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF) to map every school in the world and measure their connectivity. Using live maps, it shows which schools have internet access and which do not. To date, the team has mapped 600,000 schools around the world, providing metrics for $20,000.

**KEY POINTS**

- Tech diplomats give governments a critical presence in the new digital world
- Large technology companies must be held accountable so that they do not abuse their influence
- The private communications company OneWeb is partnering with governments around the world to bridge digital divides
- Quantum computing will enable us to tackle challenges that current systems cannot
The World’s Next Resources

In a series of three sessions under the theme ‘The World’s Next Resources’, renowned entrepreneurs discussed new-age tools to address global challenges.

**Big Data Versus Thick Data**

Tricia Wang, Technology Ethnographer, Co-founder, and Principal of Sudden Compass, said collecting more data does not necessarily lead to better decision-making. Despite the fact that the big data industry is a multi-billion dollar industry today, the returns are surprisingly low. “The majority of big data projects are not profitable, and that number sits at 73%,” Wang noted. “This is because while investing in big data is easy, harnessing its true value can be challenging.”

Through her company Sudden Compass, Wang helps enterprises and organizations implement big data in a human-centric way. Relying solely on big data increases the chances of missing out on important aspects, while giving an illusion of complete knowledge. There must also be a focus on gathering ‘thick data’, which is the information gleaned from humans in the form of interactions, stories, and emotions that cannot be quantified into spreadsheets or databases. Informed decision-making requires both big and thick data. “Big data provides insights at scale and takes advantage of machine intelligence, whereas thick data comes to us in the form of deep, small sample size and by using human intelligence,” Wang explained.

Experts will only be able to derive meaningful insights and discover genuine value from data when both types are integrated together.

**Applying Satellite Earth-observation Data**

In the second session, Will Marshall, Co-founder and CEO of Planet Labs, explained how his company has more than 300 satellites in orbit, which generate over one million images of Earth each day. According to Marshall, this enables a wide scale surveillance system that helps to understand the changing planet without affecting an individual’s privacy. “We now have a massive dataset of all this imagery of what is going on in the planet, and we are adding AI to catalogue the items appearing in the images to index what is on Earth over time,” he said.

There are many applications for this technology, including monitoring environmental and border issues. Planet Labs currently works with emergency response agencies, providing images of areas affected by natural disasters to help them assess the extent of the damage and expedite aid delivery. Satellite Earth-observation data can save the planet, he asserted, “however, what really matters is whether or not we will take action based on this data.” He highlighted the potential that Planet Labs’ technology has for helping realize at least 12 of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals, as it can assist in tracking and measuring aspects such as the development of refugee camps, crop health and yields, and water levels, among others.

**Taking Action**

In the final session of the forum, health and technology entrepreneur Naveen Jain pointed out that preventable chronic diseases such as depression, diabetes, obesity, and cancer are driving up healthcare costs. The current healthcare model focuses on treating a person’s symptoms after they have already become ill. This needs a radical shift toward prevention, rather than treatment. According to Jain, the food a person eats and how their unique gut biome responds to them has a huge impact on their health. The future of health, he asserted, is a personalized approach that allows individuals to understand their own bodies and how foods interact with their microbiome so they can take control of their own health. Viome, a company which Jain co-founded, is already working toward this goal by offering gut biome testing and tailored action plans based on the results. “If one million of us could do the test today, we would have all the information we need to find out how to stop every single disease,” he announced to the Summit.

He called on governments to work together and help collect this data. However, it is not enough to just gather the data; government leaders must also take effective steps toward implementing solutions based on the insights they garner from this wealth of information.

**KEY POINTS**

- Thick data is the information gleaned from humans in the form of interactions, stories and emotions.
- Both big and thick data are essential to making informed decisions and forming complete ideas.
- If insights from satellite earth observation data are applied effectively, it has the potential to save the planet from environmental and humanitarian issues.
- Preventable chronic diseases such as depression, diabetes, obesity, and cancer are increasing healthcare costs.
- The future of healthcare is a personalized approach tailored toward a person’s unique gut biome.
What Is New In News?

In a series of sessions discussing the future of the news business, journalists and researchers examined the question of who we can trust to deliver truthful news.

**Automation Is Necessary**

According to Nathaniel Barling, Co-founder, CEO, and Editor in Chief of Knowhere News, automating the news business is both inevitable and necessary for it to be trustworthy and independent in today’s world. Humans cannot be a completely trustworthy source of information, especially given our “inability to keep up with modern information flows.”

Paywalls often make it expensive for people to access high-quality information, while bad information is freely available everywhere you look. Barling suggested that in the right hands, AI as a source for news offers several benefits over its human counterparts:

- Increased transparency
- More trustworthy
- Less partisan
- Cheaper to produce

AI will completely reshape the media landscape, and is in fact already beginning to do so. However, we must not overlook the fact that it cannot entirely remove bias from the news.

**Increasing Efficiency With AI**

Mina Al-Oraibi, Editor in Chief of The National, welcomed AI as a development that saves journalists time and boosts efficiency. She explained that her newsroom already uses elements of AI to help them sift through incredible amounts of data and information. “I would never get a journalist to spend hours on something we can now do with artificial intelligence,” Al-Oraibi said.

She agreed with Barling that AI alone cannot fully address the issue of bias. “There is some unconscious bias, but a lot of bias in news is conscious – often related to ownership, who your publisher is, what your ethos is. Whether or not we use AI does not even scrape the surface of that issue.”

**Algorithms Are Not Neutral**

Gerard Baker, Editor at Large for The Wall Street Journal, warned that if news outlets rely too heavily on AI, audiences would be expected to believe that machines could not be wrong. The truth, however, is that they can be just as wrong as humans.

“What really, really worries me is that we would invest in the idea of objective truth as ascertained by artificial intelligence and that we would rely on algorithms to tell us how to settle the big issues,” Baker cautioned. This is a dangerous perception, as the results that an algorithm produces are entirely reliant on what information has been put into the algorithm in the first place. To illustrate, he used the example of performing a search on Google News. The results that Google generates will be determined by that specific person’s search and internet-usage history. In short, the results are biased.

Baker concluded that AI and algorithms could actually accentuate and intensify the lack of trust that people already have in news and media outlets.

**Synergy Is A Way Forward**

Matthew Winkler, Editor in Chief Emeritus of Bloomberg News, emphasized that the real opportunity lies in AI and humans working together to create a more comprehensive and accurate reporting narrative.

He gave the example of a journalist needing to convey a complex economic story, one with incredible amounts of complicated data. They can rely on technology to synthesize all the data points, and then the journalist can make the necessary relative-value judgments, he explained.

**Democratizing Data**

Ben Willington, research analyst and Visiting Assistant Professor at the Pratt Institute, promoted the value of open data. He emphasized that people don’t have to be computer programmers to use it effectively.

Because it is universally available, open data creates dialogues with governments where everyone can participate – from journalists and policy-makers to private citizens.

Willington drew the distinction between passive data and data that can actually be used. This difference is critical to empowering and democratizing information. He explained how the New York Police Department used to comply with transparency regulations by releasing huge amounts of data on topics such as car accidents. “They would list every collision in New York, the street it was on, how many people were injured, and so on – but all in PDF,” he said. “A PDF is where data goes to die. A PDF is a fortress against public data use.”

To rectify this problem, a private citizen created an application that crawled the police department’s website every day, downloaded the PDFs, and converted them into a format that machines could read. This made the data open to all, and many government agencies soon followed suit.

Willington challenged all journalists, academics, policy-makers, and anyone else with access to data to make it accessible online so that it is available to everyone.

**KEY POINTS**

- AI is already making news production more efficient, but it does not solve issues related to bias
- Machines can be just as wrong as humans. The results produced by algorithms are only as good as the information that went into the algorithm in the first place
- AI and algorithms could exacerbate the lack of trust that people already have in news and media outlets if not used correctly
- Open data creates dialogues with governments that allow everyone to participate
- Open data must be in a format that is readily accessible and usable
The sixth installation of the Museum of the Future was an interactive experience with visual, high-tech displays that depicted a future world where humans could benefit from the latest scientific and technological advancements. Under the theme ‘HUMANS 2.0,’ the showcase was inspired by the latest scientific breakthroughs and leading futurist projections. It took visitors on a journey through time, detailing potential advancements across future eras that could improve our quality of life, physical bodies, and brain functionality.
Experts from around the world shared their insights, recommendations, and the best approaches for making social happiness and wellbeing central to policy-making in a series of sessions under four themes: Well Governments, Well Minds, Well Life, and Well Cities.
Well Governments

Who is responsible for our happiness? The concept that this is part of the remit of governments and other civic bodies has gained significant traction in recent years.

While this principle is now widely endorsed, practical measures remain hard to identify. This series of three sessions aimed to address that gap by showcasing a trio of global organisations that have implemented tangible measures to improve happiness and wellbeing.

Measuring A Positive State

The first session was delivered by Jacques Attali, President of the General Management Committee and Supervisory Board of the Positive Planet Foundation. While governments are used to measuring national GDP, they are less familiar with measuring happiness.

As one method for correcting this imbalance, Attali outlined the Positive Planet Foundation’s index for measuring national positivity. This index embraces 45 dimensions, from those that are relatively mainstream and ‘knowable’ – such as demographics, public debt, and education – to those that are more granular and harder to assess – such as the role of women, freedom of the press, and global good governance.

Combining data on these issues into an overall score generates a national happiness measure.

Acknowledging the difficulty of obtaining all the relevant data, Attali explained how the index initially focuses on the countries that are members of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), where information is more readily available.

The index has now been operating for six years. Consistently at the top are northern European countries, including Iceland, Sweden, and the Scandinavian nations. The UAE currently ranks eighth, equal with New Zealand, Germany, and Canada.

Attali concluded by advising nations to adopt five key ways of working:

1. Thinking and planning for the long term
2. Taking preventative action
3. Integrating decision-making
4. Collaborating, rather than working independently
5. Involving the people affected by decisions in the decision-making process

Assessing Policy For Future Generations

Sophie Howe, Future Generations Commissioner for Wales, shared insights into the principality’s groundbreaking Wellbeing of Future Generations Act.

This act places a statutory duty on Welsh public bodies to demonstrate that they have considered how their decisions will impact future generations. It helps ensure development goals are sustainable, in the sense that they meet the needs of the present without endangering the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

Howe explained that implementing this act has required the government to enhance its wellbeing measure.

She finished by suggesting that this act was a great way to measure a nation’s success, echoing Robert Kennedy’s remark that GDP, by comparison, measures everything in life except that which makes it worthwhile.

A Budget For Better

The final session, entitled ‘New Public Finance: Wellbeing Based Budgeting’, focused on one of the countries included in the Positive Planet Foundation index – New Zealand.

Deputy Chief Economic Advisor to the New Zealand Treasury Tony Burton outlined the inspiration behind his country’s wellbeing budget, introduced in May 2019. A global first, this budget was deliberately designed to inform and enhance a wellbeing and happiness agenda.

Burton explained that this budget’s critical difference is that it assesses whether financial and legislative rules actually hinder people working ‘at the frontline’.

“We saw the Treasury’s role as making sure financial systems are in place that enable people to do their jobs and use their expertise, without constraint,” he said. This mindset is not just about a budget; it is also about change across government.

Burton concluded with two advisory tips for delegates to keep in mind when developing their own approaches to enhancing happiness:

1. Look to go “from inspiration to perspiration”, turning ambition into policy, no matter how difficult the path
2. Wellbeing is a slow and evolutionary process, not a question of instant results

KEY POINTS

- Measuring happiness is as important as measuring GDP
- Governments must focus on changing inspiration and ambition into tangible policy
- The path to happiness is not immediate, so a long-term outlook is vital
Wellness: The $4.2 Trillion Opportunity

The wellness industry is growing, with more and more people taking the time to address both their physical health and their mental wellbeing. Susie Ellis, Chairman and CEO of the Global Wellness Institute, addressed the World Government Summit to discuss the history and meaning of wellness, as well as the economics behind this booming industry.

The Economics Of Wellness

Ellis began her session by telling the Summit a bit about her company and some of its projects. The Global Wellness Institute is a non-profit that is considered the leading global research and educational resource for the wellness industry. It aims to positively impact global health and wellness by advocating for public institutions, business, and individuals that are working to help prevent disease, reduce stress, and enhance overall quality of life.

Born from the Global Wellness Summit, the Institute was founded 12 years ago, the Global Wellness Summit is an organization that invites industry stakeholders to discuss the rapidly growing wellness industry in an attempt to support a global discourse. Since its inception, the Global Wellness Summit has been held in the United States, Switzerland, Turkey, Bali, Morocco, India, Italy, and Mexico. Its mission, explained Ellis, is to join together to shape the future and to empower wellness worldwide.

The Global Wellness Institute began its research 11 years ago with the help of the Stanford Research Institute, to give policymakers a clearer understanding of global wellness. Since then, the Institute has made its reports and findings available online for free for anyone who needs to use them. “I’m happy to say that we made a decision over a decade ago that rather than selling the research to what would most likely have been a limited number of companies with resources and the vision to see its values, we decided to give it away for free,” stated Ellis.

The results of the studies conducted by the Global Wellness Institute have revealed a great deal about the wellness industry. The 2017 study showed that the sum total of annual revenue in the wellness industry added up to an astounding $4.2 trillion, Ellis announced. This includes revenue from 10 sectors including wellness tourism, fitness, wellness lifestyle real estate and more. And based on the findings of the 2018 report, the development of the industry is not showing any signs of slowing. “Over the past two years, the wellness economy grew 6.4% annually, which is nearly twice as fast as the global economic growth of 3.6%,” she noted.

While the growth of the global wellness industry is undoubtedly staggering, Ellis stated that the worldwide cost for not addressing preventable disease is much higher. Nearly 75% of all healthcare dollars in the United States are being spent on ailments that are preventable through lifestyle changes, with the global costs set to reach $4.7 trillion by 2030 according to the World Economic Forum.

“The economic cost of smoking is nearly 2% of the world’s GDP,” she said. “Mental health issues account for 4% of the GDP across the European Union.” This is quite shocking, especially when we realize that the things that wellness practitioners promote, such as exercise, eating right, and reducing stress, are the answer to many of these preventable health problems.

Wellness Defined

Ellis also focused on the importance of understanding what “wellness” actually means. The definition, she said, is not entirely clear. While the term “wellness” has been used throughout history, it was not widely popularized until the 1970s. She pointed out that the terms wellbeing, well-being, wellness, health, and happiness are often used interchangeably, causing some confusion in the industry. This is particularly important, stressed Ellis, in a world where those interested in improving their health often turn to the internet. For example, searching online for the term “well-being” returns different results than a search for “wellbeing.”

There is no consensus on the spelling or definition of these terms, even in the industry itself, which Ellis sees as an opportunity. “That is actually good news in my view, because it gives us the chance to be thoughtful, possibly even collaborating and taking some more time to set the best course for the future.”

In conclusion, Ellis asserted that the key to improving health outcomes lies in inspiring people to reach higher levels of vitality and wellbeing, and she invited government and private sector leaders to collaborate with the Global Wellness Institute to further the ideal of wellness for all.

KEY POINTS

- The wellness industry was valued at $4.2 trillion in 2017 and is continuing to grow at an astounding rate
- 75% of healthcare dollars in the United States are spent on ailments that can be alleviated through lifestyle changes, such as practices and activities advocated by wellness practitioners
- Collaboration between stakeholders is crucial to growing the wellness economy
- The key to improving health outcomes lies in inspiring people to reach higher levels of vitality and wellbeing
Wellness For A Longer Life

Data-driven models are changing the game for the health and wellness industry, asserted Dr Mehmet Oz, host of The Dr. Oz Show, Mindy Grossman, President and CEO of WW International, and Esther Lee, Executive Vice President and Global Chief Marketing Officer of MetLife, who gathered for a panel discussion at the World Government Summit. Moderated by CNBC’s Hadley Gamble, the experts discussed how the widespread availability of information is changing the way we see health.

The Data Of Wellness

Dr Oz opened the discussion on wellness data by addressing a wellness sector that has traditionally lacked research - alternative therapies. While alternative medicine has been around for generations, its methods and approaches have often gone unvalued because there is no financial motivation to study them. Alternative therapies may include something as simple as sleep, Dr Oz noted. Giving an example of combining alternative and modern medicine, he pointed to cancer treatments. Sometimes the alternative is simply what time chemotherapy is administered. If modern medicine can take into account circadian rhythms and sleep, these become important issues with how one manages their therapy.

Grossman has also seen the power of wellness data collection. She explained that WW International, formerly known as Weight Watchers, has undergone a complete transformation based on a massive qualitative and quantitative study. They have used millions of data points to build an ecosystem of wellness, helping people live healthier lives and keeping them motivated along the way. “We want to inspire healthy habits for life for people, families, communities and really democratize wellness.”

According to Lee, MetLife, the largest global insurance provider, is also tapping into new data to better understand their customer’s needs. She said they found that what people really want from a company like MetLife isn’t a product at all. They want a company that is going to understand them, be flexible as their needs change, and share expertise - people want a partnership.

Empowering The People

“At its very core, we need to treat people like adults. They need to have the autonomy to make decisions,” asserted Dr Oz. To do this, individuals need access to their own healthcare data. As an example, Dr Oz cited the Real Age test which provides the user an “age” based on their health and lifestyle habits. Smoking, for example, adds years to an individual’s “real age”, while eating meat increases the age by only a few months. Being aware of these risks allows people to make informed decisions on their lifestyle choices, he explained.

Taking the idea further, Dr Oz looked to the community. “You begin to seek society change because the number one thing that changes a community is how you do we shift with them instead of always having to wait for them to ask. And the third is expertise.”

With this tsunami of data now being collected, Dr Oz advised that the next step is to make the information accessible. “You should have all your health information in one spot. Not just your medical information but your basic lifestyle information.”

Once individuals have access to and take ownership of their health information, they can be empowered to make informed decisions that may positively affect their lives.

KEY POINTS

- There is a wealth of healthcare data being collected
- Massive amounts of data can give greater insight into healthcare needs and trends
- Having the support of a like-minded group or community can make one more successful in their journey toward health
- People should have access to their own healthcare and lifestyle data to make informed decisions
**Ikigai: Purpose & Happiness**

Kenichiro “Ken” Mogi, one of Japan’s leading neuroscientists and an expert on mindfulness and intelligence, took the stage at the World Government Summit to discuss a wholly Japanese concept, ikigai, that may provide deeper insight into individual intelligence, motivation and future of humanity in a post artificial intelligence world.

**The Concept Of ikigai**

Simply put, ikigai is the Japanese concept of intrinsic motivation – the reason that a person wakes up in the morning. Mogi explained that the motivation can be small, such as walking a dog or having a cup of tea, but it can also be part of an overarching life goal.

Ikigai is made up of five pillars:

1. **Starting small**
2. **Releasing yourself**
3. **Harmony and sustainability**
4. **The joy of little things**
5. **Being present in the here and now**

During his address to the Summit, Mogi elaborated on three of the five pillars. He began with the concept of starting small, using the origin story of world-renowned, Michelin three-star chef Jiro Ono. While Jiro Ono’s sushi restaurant is now one of the most famous in the world, the chef began as a child who simply needed to complete his restaurant chores so that he could get a good night’s sleep. Jiro Ono did not set out to become one of the most sought after chefs in the world, but by starting small, his ambition eventually grew. “You might have a great aspiration like to end war or hunger, but you can start small,” explained Mogi. “That is the beauty of ikigai.”

Next, Mogi highlighted the example of Hattorizakura, a small sumo wrestler with a terrible record of two wins and 130 losses. While he loses nearly every match, Hattorizakura still loves the sport and continues to compete. The concept of ikigai explains why Hattorizakura returns to the sport year after year in spite of his almost-certain demise, Mogi said. “In sumo, you have many little things to support you.” The joy that Hattorizakura has for participating in simple aspects of sumo culture, such as cooking the traditional chankonabe meal, is what motivates him to return. Mogi pointed out that this coincides with the fourth pillar of ikigai – the joy of small things.

Mogi’s final example was of a very important Shinto shrine in Japan. For the past 1,300 years, the shrine has been rebuilt every 20 years. The need for planning, dedication, and patience in this process, he asserted, illustrates the ikigai concept of harmony and sustainability.

**Mindfulness in The Modern World**

As a neuroscientist, Mogi thinks of mindfulness in terms of brain activities. According to him, ikigai is very closely related to mindfulness and the activities of the brain’s default mode network – a network of interacting brain regions that is active when a person is not focused on a particular task.

When it comes to the advent of artificial intelligence, Mogi explained, the technology is very good at applying rules-based algorithms to solve problems, but the human brain is much better at applying ambiguous, common-sense judgments. While AI may eventually outpace human intelligence, it will not be able to replace human mindfulness and social sensitivity.

According to Mogi, this will alter the way that humans think of intelligence. Instead of the solving of simple problems, social intelligence will be valued and the traditional concept of intelligence will be less relevant. To be considered intelligent in the future, individuals will need to learn to work together to solve problems that require more than algorithms and machine learning. “Rather than the intelligence of individuals, we really need to feel and empathize with each other. That’s the key for success in the future,” he said.

Mogi used examples from successful Japanese corporations like Toyota and Hoshinoya Resorts to illustrate these concepts in the field. Employees of these companies are empowered to take ownership over their tasks, regardless of their rank or background. The result is a successful company and satisfied employees.

“You can be a nobody, but you can start small, like Jiro Ono when he was a small child. Nobody knew that he would be a three Michelin-star chef in the future. But that’s not the point; you can start small and you can do it together. This is the most important aspect of a post-AI society,” Mogi concluded.

**KEY POINTS**

- Ikigai is the Japanese concept of intrinsic motivation – the reason that a person wakes up in the morning
- Ikigai is made up of five pillars: starting small, releasing yourself, harmony and sustainability, the joy of little things, and being present in the here and now
- To be considered intelligent in the future, individuals will need to learn to work together to solve problems that require more than algorithms and machine learning
Mappiness: How Space & Time Impact Our Wellbeing

When it comes to personal happiness, there has been a great deal of research on overall life satisfaction. However, Dr George MacKerron, Chief Technical Officer of Psychological Technologies, has asked a slightly different question with his Mappiness study: where are we most happy and what causes momentary happiness?

The Mappiness Study
To better understand what makes individuals happy at any given moment, Dr MacKerron developed a smartphone application called Mappiness. Mappiness pings its users throughout the day and asks them to rate their happiness. What makes this app unique is that it also tracks the user’s GPS location, allowing researchers to see not only when people are happy, but where they are happy.

Using this data, Dr MacKerron explained, he is able to see the events in a person’s life that create peaks and valleys in their happiness. This approach is different from typical happiness studies because his team is looking at momentary happiness rather than overall life satisfaction.

A History Of Happiness
Happiness studies are not new, Dr MacKerron mentioned. In 1881, economist Francis Ysidro Edgeworth imagined an instrument that would continually register the amount of pleasure an individual is experiencing from moment to moment to give researchers a better understanding of happiness.

While building such a machine was not possible at that time, in the 1970s researchers began to implement this idea using the technology available – namely paper forms. With the advent of the smartphone, researchers have been able to take their studies to the next level.

“In around the last 10 years, smartphones have enabled us to reach hundreds of thousands of people and millions of points in time. That gives us something qualitatively new,” Dr MacKerron noted.

The Geography Of Happiness
Data from the Mappiness app has given researchers interesting insight into what makes people momentarily happy. It has shown that people are least happy when they are at work, and that they are happier when spending time in nature as opposed to cities.

These insights may have interesting implications for employers and governments. “We spend an awful lot of time at work. If we could make people even a tiny amount happier in their working lives, that would make a very big difference to a very large number of people.” Crime also has significant impacts on people’s happiness, reported Dr MacKerron. He found that people’s happiness drops by up to 13 percentage points if they are within five kilometers of where a crime occurred, and that unhappiness tends to set in between 24 and 72 hours after the event. This data reveals an additional social cost to crime that occurs at the level of the individual, which is not visible when looking at national, or even city-wide, data.

When we understand what causes happiness and what environmental factors contribute to happiness, societies and governments can make purposeful changes to help support a community’s collective happiness. Dr MacKerron’s Mappiness study continues to provide a deeper insight into why, when, and where individuals are most happy.

**KEY POINTS**
- The Mappiness smartphone application tracks where and when individuals are momentarily happy
- Insights from this study give a deeper understanding of what can be done to support happiness
- People are least happy at work, and happier in nature compared to cities

“We don’t have life satisfaction data. What we’ve got is something different – it’s momentary happiness”
Smart Cities: What Comes Next?

John Rossant founded the NewCities Foundation with the belief that all stakeholders must work together to improve the quality of life and work in 21st century global cities. NewCities’ mission is to shape a better urban future for all by generating and scaling ideas and solutions through events, research and urban innovation projects. Rossant addressed attendees at the World Government Summit to discuss the next steps in the development of smart cities.

What Is A Smart City?

Though the NewCities Foundation is inarguably an organization closely tied with smart cities, Rossant said he has banned the term in his office. “I hate the term,” he said, “for the simple reason that the formula itself reduces the conversation around cities and the way they develop in the future to technology, to efficiency, to things, but not often to people.”

Though the term was first used in the 1970s, it was popularized in the 1990s by enterprise technology firms like IBM and Cisco who aimed to digitize the basic functions of a city, such as transportation, security, and waste collection, with the goal of making more efficient communities.

Rossant explained that as technology was poured into urban spaces, something became apparent to him – automating services and bringing them online cannot and must not be an end in itself. There are many urban geographies where technology is prevalent, and yet they remain unhappy places to live and work, and citizens feel disconnected from each other. Instead, Rossant and his organization are pushing for urban wellbeing to be considered when designing a so-called smart city.

According to Rossant, the key to achieving urban wellbeing is connection. “This shift implies enabling city citizens to connect with each other. That’s what it’s all about. It’s all about connection. To connect with each other, to connect with city administrations, improving access to quality education, which can prepare citizens for the needs of the 21st century economy, improving the quality of air and water and housing.”

The Mobility Revolution

Another key component to urban wellbeing is quality transportation, Rossant added. Mobility allows citizens to take full advantage of the opportunities that a city presents. “Not only do we need functional and up-to-date mobility options, but we need systems which connect and work with one another.”

Changing trends in mobility may go so far as to revolutionize how urban areas are planned, posited Rossant, and may even change the very way that we live. “It will change the way that we think about work and play and living in cities, where we do those functions. This is a revolution that in fact stands to alter our very notions of space and time and movement, and those are pretty fundamental things,” he explained.

Still, with the mobility revolution on the horizon, it is imperative that we keep people and communities at the forefront of development. Without putting people first, new transportation technologies could just result in more isolated individuals and more congested communities.

Growing Communities Together

Rossant also shared his thoughts on public green spaces in urban areas, another key component to happy healthy cities, using New York City’s Central Park as a prime example. While Central Park is a beautiful space, its benefits are not only physical. “Beyond the obvious environmental benefits of green space, there is a direct positive correlation between access to public green space and urbanites’ mental wellbeing, social networks, and sense of community.”

To optimize wellbeing in cities, Rossant believes that communities need to be involved in the process. Paris, for example, puts out an annual call for ideas from its citizens, and thousands of participants submit proposals that are openly discussed on a digital platform. “One of the benefits of this approach has been the breakdown of political divisions and fights and arguing and skepticism. Participatory budgeting enables people to come together around specific projects in their neighborhoods, in their communities,” Rossant explained.

John Rossant
Founder & Chairman of the NewCities Foundation

“The development of a smart city doesn’t end with the application of technology. To make an urban area truly smart, healthy, and happy, city planners must involve citizens and put the needs of their communities first, Rossant concluded.

Key Points

- Simply introducing technology to an urban space does not make a smart city
- Governments and city planners need to put people first
- Connected mobility and green spaces are key in urban wellbeing
- Citizens must be involved in the development of their communities
Your City: The Incubator Of Your Wellbeing

As populations grow and become more urbanized, the needs of city-dwelling residence have changed. At the World Government Summit, Gleam Davis, Mayor of Santa Monica, California, and Charles Montgomery, author and Founding Principal of Happy City, examined how some of the mistakes that were made when building cities in the 20th century are being revisited by today’s city governments and urban planners in a discussion moderated by John Defterios, Emerging Markets Editor of CNN.

Mistakes Of Our Past
Many of the cities built over the last 100 years were bad for human health, asserted Montgomery. “We built a lot of bad cities,” he said, “and by that, I mean cities that were bad for our health, bad for our psychological wellbeing, bad for social connections – places that weren’t resilient.” This is particularly true for some of the sprawling cities in America, he noted, that now suffer from issues such as traffic congestion and a lack of affordable housing.

Though studies are beginning to show that cities need to rethink their models to improve health and happiness, it can be difficult to convince citizens to buy-in. According to Davis, this is the case in the small city of Santa Monica, California. “People are afraid of more traffic, they’re afraid of more people taxing the infrastructure, so that’s always an ongoing tension.”

The key, Montgomery and Davis agreed, is in communication. “I think what we’ve discovered in our community is that if we educate people about why we’re doing something, we can eventually win them over. If we don’t say we want to build more housing, but instead we talk about having a healthier community; if we talk about actually solving traffic by creating the greater ability to walk or bike to work then they begin to get on board,” explained Davis.

Looking To The Future
Determining what will make a healthier, happier city requires data collection. In Santa Monica, resident wellbeing is being measured through a survey conducted every two years. The administration then uses the data gleaned from these surveys to see where the city can devote its resources to make the biggest impact.

“We measure everything from kindergarten readiness in our youth to the sense of isolation in our seniors and everything in between,” she said. Housing affordability and transportation are both important building bricks for a happy city, Davis and Montgomery agreed. Montgomery outlined examples from planned European cities, such as Vienna, Austria, and the Vauban quarter of Freiburg, Germany, that emphasize walkability to create a stronger sense of community.

To close the session, Montgomery shared what he believed are the top three innovations that will help make future cities incubators of wellbeing:

1. The understanding that the best mobility plan is a great land-use plan
2. Housing is a right
3. The belief that great cities are complex places that foster social connection

KEY POINTS
• City designs of the past did not support happy, healthy communities
• City governments and urban planners need to revisit city design to focus more on bolstering resident wellbeing
• Housing affordability, transportation, and community are key in developing happy cities

Gleam Davis (1)
Mayor of Santa Monica, California

Charles Montgomery (2)
Author & Founding Principal of Happy City

John Defterios (3, Left)
Emerging Markets Editor & Anchor for CNN, Moderator
Launching The Global Happiness & Wellbeing Policy Report

In recent years, governments have taken a keen interest in increasing the overall happiness of their citizens. Now that programs designed to support citizen wellbeing have been active for a few years, agencies and ministries across the world have been able to collect data on which initiatives work, which do not, and what elements are crucial to future success.

Her Excellency Maria Manuel Leitão Marques, Minister of the Presidency and of Administrative Modernization of Portugal, Her Excellency Ohood bint Khalfan Al Roumi, Minister of State for Happiness and Wellbeing of the UAE, Professor John Helliwell, Professor Emeritus of Economics at the University of British Columbia, and Co-director of the Canadian Institute for Advanced Research Programme on Social Interactions, Identity, and Well-Being, Professor Emeritus of Economics at the University of British Columbia, Lara Habib (3, right)

In the UAE, explained Al Roumi, the aim of supporting happiness and wellbeing is intertwined throughout all government entities. As the world’s first Minister of Happiness and Wellbeing, she is tasked with ensuring individual wellbeing is addressed in every government ministry.

“In the UAE, we try not to make it just sector-specific. We try also to hardwire it in all our systems and policies and also shift the mindset.” To that end, the UAE has appointed a Chief Happiness and Wellbeing Officer in every government entity, encouraging all to put wellbeing at the forefront of the national agenda.

In the second year, the Global Happiness and Wellbeing Policy Report is intended to be a publication complementary to the United Nations’ World Happiness Index. Through a collection of real-life case studies, the report systematically examined what is known about wellbeing and what is being done to support happiness in different parts of the economy, including business, the workplace, education, the health sector, and across government organizations.

The Global Happiness and Wellbeing Officer in the UAE’s push to elevate the overall happiness of its residents, citizens, and visitors. “The purpose of this council is to help us as a nation and other interested countries understand this and give us practical tools,” she said. “The report is a very practical tool for us as governments because we are interested in the question of how.”

Happiness Initiatives
Around the world governments are implementing policies and programs that they hope will increase happiness. In the UAE, explained Al Roumi, the aim of supporting happiness and wellbeing is intertwined throughout all government entities. As the world’s first Minister of Happiness and Wellbeing, she is tasked with ensuring individual wellbeing is addressed in every government ministry.

“In the UAE, we try not to make it just sector-specific. We try also to hardwire it in all our systems and policies and also shift the mindset.” To that end, the UAE has appointed a Chief Happiness and Wellbeing Officer in every government entity, encouraging all to put wellbeing at the forefront of the national agenda.

According to the report, Portugal takes one person to dismantle an entire structure.

While government initiatives are extremely important for improving wellbeing, the challenge lies in implementing these initiatives with the full commitment of stakeholders, explained Prof Helliwell. It is absolutely necessary to have top-to-bottom buy-in on all initiatives, or the program will not be a success. “In many cases, it only takes one person to dismantle an entire program,” he said, “so nurturing a pervasive cooperative spirit is crucial.”

Marques agreed, adding that public-private partnerships are also very important for improving happiness.

KEY POINTS
- Governments around the world, including Portugal and the UAE, are implementing programs to improve wellbeing
- Successful wellbeing programs need to have top-to-bottom buy-in from all stakeholders to be successful
- Public-private partnerships are important for enhancing happiness
Insights & Reflections From The Global Happiness & Wellbeing Policy Report

During this double-panel discussion, eight experts examined key insights from the Global Happiness and Wellbeing Policy Report 2019, produced by the Global Happiness Council.

Striking Balance
Professor Jeffrey Sachs, Special Advisor to the United Nations Secretary General on the Sustainable Development Goals and Director of the United Nations Sustainable Development Solutions Network, kicked off the two discussion sessions. He explained that there are four primary determinants of long-term wellbeing:
1. Friendships and social ties
2. Economic status
3. Mental health
4. Confidence and trust in one’s own society

“If there is a core message of the report,” Prof Sachs stated, “it is that there’s nothing wrong with societies getting richer; that tends to help.” However, when the focus is only on creating wealth and the other three elements of wellbeing are ignored, people suffer.

The Role Of Healthcare
Dr Tessa Peasgood, Research Associate in Health Economics and Decision Science at the University of Sheffield, tackled the report’s healthcare chapter. She outlined six recommendations to ensure that healthcare resources are used to improve citizens’ lives:
1. Countries need institutional decision-making processes that are evidence-based, transparent, and centered around economic evaluation
2. New interventions should only be funded if they are more beneficial than existing methods
3. Economic evaluation should prioritize happiness as a desirable outcome
4. Healthcare decisions need to consider families as a whole, not just the patients
5. Mental health deserves to be a much higher priority
6. End-of-life and palliative care requires as much focus as treating and curing disease

Positive Education
Dr Martin Seligman, Director of the Positive Psychology Center, and Zellerbach Family Professor of Psychology at the University of Pennsylvania, explained that over the last two generations, “we have seen more depression, suicide, anxiety, anger, and entitlement” among young people. This has led to the creation of Positive Education, which helps students engage more in life, forge better relationships, and find greater meaning and purpose.

Good Business Sense
Next, Dr Jan-Emmanuel De Neve, Associate Professor of Economics and Strategy at the Said Business School of the University of Oxford, noted that the report’s employment section looked at the relationship between employee satisfaction and productivity. Citing the largest-ever study on employee wellbeing and performance, he pointed out that employee satisfaction has strong positive correlations to customer loyalty, employee productivity, profitability, and lower staff turnover. Therefore, investing in employee happiness has immediate business returns.

Happiness Interventions
Dr Robert Biswas-Diener, Founder and Managing Director of Positive Acorn, which provides training in positive psychology, outlined four interventions to help citizens enhance their wellbeing:
1. Biological Interventions
2. Social interventions
3. Thinking interventions
4. Listing interventions

Happy Cities
Dr Ali al-Azzawi, City Experience Advisor for the Smart Dubai Office, explored the impact a city has on wellbeing. After visiting different cities around the globe, his team found that elements such as safety, social connections, green spaces, and mobility are what make cities happier places.

What’s Holding Us Back?
To bring the discussions to a close, Professor John Helliwell, Senior Fellow and Co-director of the Canadian Institute for Advanced Research Programme on Social Interactions, Identity, & Well-Being, recommended four steps to help policy-makers enhance happiness and wellbeing in their own countries:
1. Add freedom. Too many decision-making structures have become rigid, bureaucratic, and risk-averse
2. Be holistic. Working from top to bottom takes effort, but is worthwhile
3. Help people to be emotionally, morally, and intellectually committed to the process
4. Build coalitions with citizens, NGOs, and community groups. Initiatives that are solely government-driven often end when a government changes.
World leaders and advocates convened to highlight the urgency of finding solutions to the unprecedented challenges faced by humanity due to climate change.
Climate Action In A Multilateral-skept World

In 2018, climate-related disasters displaced two million people and cost $500 billion. According to Her Excellency María Fernanda Espinosa Garcés, President of the 73rd Session of the United Nations General Assembly, and His Excellency Laurent Fabius, President of the Constitutional Council and ninth Prime Minister of France, society must act quickly and collectively to address climate change. They agreed that the next three years will be decisive.

Multilateralism Is Key
Climate change not only affects everyone, it also connects everyone. Garcés asserted that millions of people around the world will not have a future unless climate action is effective, coordinated, and ambitious. Most importantly, society needs to see climate action and multilateralism as mutually dependent.

She outlined three principles that should underpin this cooperation:
1. Holding ourselves accountable to both present and future generations, and bringing youth to the table to ensure their voices are heard
2. Delivering climate justice. Most emissions come from bigger countries, but the most vulnerable countries suffer the biggest consequences. Opportunities are only sustainable when they are shared
3. Viewing current indices as a floor rather than a ceiling, and accelerating efforts by at least five times the current level

5 Building Blocks
Garcés acknowledged that these are ambitious goals, but being ambitious is the whole point. She identified five pre-requisites to achieving them. The first four involve providing financial resources, more capacity, better governance, and technology transfer.

“The final component is the idea of multilateralism,” she stated. “Climate change should enjoy the ownership and the commitment of the whole of society. This means scientific, judicial, financial, and technology communities, not just governments. We need this multilateralism to achieve the speed and scale necessary.”

Are We The New Dinosaurs?
Fabius agreed that current efforts to address climate change must be accelerated.

He highlighted a slogan he had seen recently to emphasize just how crucial this is: “I was watching TV recently, and they showed thousands of young people in a European country demonstrating against climate change, and one of the banners read ‘Dinosaurs thought they had time too’. I like this slogan because the question we have to ask ourselves today is: are we the new dinosaurs?”

The Importance Of Paris
Implementing the 2015 Paris Agreement remains vital, Fabius advised, despite the changing political landscape since.

“Paris was the first worldwide agreement,” he reminded the Summit. “An agreement that precisely defines the aims and means needed to master climate change, across 29 articles and 140 paragraphs of decisions.”

Paris, however, is not the end of the story. The real issue is how we now go about implementing it. Subsequent political changes, particularly in the United States (US), have given this story a challenging twist.

While President Donald Trump has one view on this, Fabius pointed out this does not mean the position of the US, as a people, should be considered a definite one. Governments come and go, so the focus should be on the responsibility of cities and regions, as well as businesses.

Fabius highlighted that 70% of decisions are taken by regional and city authorities. Garcés agreed, noting that around 400 US cities remain committed to delivering on the Paris Agreement. The business community also understand that they need to fight climate change – for both ethical and commercial reasons.

What Are The Barriers?
Fabius explained that recent skepticism surrounding climate change appears in three forms:
1. Selfishness
Several governments are only concerned about the next election, not the next generation.
2. Economic interests
Some governments are worried about the impact addressing climate change will have on the economy in their country.
3. Uncertainty
Individuals are unsure of what they personally can do to help.

On this final point, Fabius returned to his earlier analogy about dinosaurs.

“There are two differences between mankind and dinosaurs: dinosaurs lacked both morals and sophisticated brains. Our test is to prove and show that we are different.”

Working together to deliver the objectives of the Paris Agreement is fundamental. This includes displaying the humanity and humility to “keep the door open,” even for those who have walked away.

“Paris is not only an agreement,” Fabius concluded. “It is a spirit: to act quicker, better, and together.”

KEY POINTS
• The next three years will be decisive for climate action
• Working multilaterally is key – cities, businesses, communities, and individuals need to take responsibility, not just governments
• A fairer and more equitable approach is needed to address climate change
• The Paris Agreement remains the best path forward, but countries must actively implement its objectives
Climate Change & The Health Of Our Oceans

In an enlightening panel discussion, sustainable development expert William McDonough, Founder of William McDonough + Partners, and M Sanjayan, CEO of Conservation International, focused on marine pollution. They explained that this is an area of the climate agenda that is particularly challenging. However, it is also an area where a number of remedial actions are clear and possible to implement.

The Key Issues
Oceans cover more than two-thirds of the Earth’s surface and produce over half of its oxygen. They provide sustenance and income for millions of people, and play a vital role in maintaining and regulating the global climate. But their health is increasingly threatened by climate change and pollution.

The panel began by pinpointing two key causes of environmental pollution in our oceans:
1. The durable solid plastics that society now produces in abundance are often entering the marine ecosystem
2. Polluting activities and emissions are putting more carbon into the atmosphere, causing ocean acidification

The ‘Use Cycle’
McDonough outlined the ‘use cycle’ approach that is being defined by bodies such as the European Commission and implemented by companies including Walmart and Unilever.

This model distinguishes between materials that are consumed or recycled biologically and those that are not. The latter group – items that become part of a ‘use cycle’ – can then be categorized into material that is ‘reusable, recyclable, compostable, or recoverable.’

Of these, the last is perhaps the biggest challenge, and one most specific to ocean pollution. A plastic item may be recyclable, but once it is in the ocean it also needs to be recoverable. Otherwise, the fact that something can be recycled is effectively a moot point, McDonough asserted. He then noted that 40% of plastics in the ocean arrive via rivers. This creates a potential focus for ocean clean-up efforts. He outlined initiatives and resources that are now being developed to collect plastic waste at the mouths of rivers. This method is significantly more cost-effective, efficient, and achievable than collecting debris once it is already in the ocean.

From Land To Sea
Sanjayan agreed that ocean conservation is vital. There is an imbalance between the conservation efforts that are being made on land and those that are being made for the oceans. “It is time for us to put the effort that we put into land conservation into sea conservation, then double it,” he advised.

To date, land-based initiatives have received more attention than their marine counterparts. “We are by nature a terrestrial species, and we have spent our time learning about conservation from the land. But unless we also take care of the oceans, the blue planet that we live on is fatally doomed,” he warned.

Sanjayan welcomed the target currently being advocated across the conservation community, where a minimum 30% of the ocean should be effectively managed and conserved. This target was first proposed in 2016 by the International Union for Conservation of Nature as a base level for protecting the ocean’s biodiversity. It is hoped that COP 15 – the 15th meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity, which will take place during 2020 – will continue to develop similar benchmarks and solutions.

Sanjayan concluded that this is important because protecting Earth’s oceans does not only benefit the marine animals that call it home. It is also crucial to human development and global economies.

KEY POINTS
• Ocean conservation should receive just as much attention and effort as land conservation has received
• Plastics and acidification from carbon emissions are two major environmental threats to our oceans
• Trapping waste at river mouths is a cost-effective, efficient, and achievable solution for reducing the amount of plastic in our oceans
• A minimum of 30% of the world’s oceans need to be effectively managed and conserved
• Marine conservation is crucial to human development and global economies
Global Health Forum

Policy-makers, practitioners, and industry experts from various fields of healthcare gathered to address major themes shaping the sector.
To open the Summit’s inaugural Global Health Forum, His Excellency Abdulrahman bin Mohammed Al Owais, Minister of Health and Prevention and Minister of State for Federal National Council Affairs of the UAE, reflected on the future of healthcare.

He examined the prospects in terms of technological advancements and readiness to fight global health threats and infections.

**New Frameworks Of Healthcare**

The new models of treatments, patient expectations, and disruptive technology such as genomics, robotics, and regenerative medicine, are defining the frameworks for the next era of healthcare.

While genetics examine specific or clusters of genes along the DNA strand, genomic medicine is known as the study of an individual’s complete genetic composition, Al Owais explained. This can help extensively to develop preventive strategies and preempt diseases.

According to Al Owais, together with advancing technology, new ways are emerging for organizing healthcare into concepts such as value-based healthcare and public-private partnerships. “We are moving toward focusing on people at the center of everything we do,” he said. “These new concepts are gaining strength across different health systems.”

**Patient-centered Healthcare**

A key transformation has been the move away from physician-driven care to a patient-centered one. This means an increasing number of healthcare providers are striving to ensure that they are open to each patient’s preferences, requests, and values. Caregivers need to make sure patients are completely aware of their health conditions and focus on their comfort and values before making any clinical decisions.

**Developing Preventive Strategies**

Optimizing population health outcomes through preventive care has become a top priority for governments. Al Owais gave the example of the UAE Government, which has recently changed the name of its Ministry of Health to the Ministry of Health and Prevention.

Past pandemics such as the Spanish flu and the Hong Kong flu resulted in the death of millions. “In 2018, we passed the 100 year anniversary from the 1918 Spanish flu,” he stated. “It is estimated that about 500 million people, or one third of the world’s population became infected with this virus. The number of deaths was estimated to be at least 50 million worldwide. More recently, the Hong Kong flu in 1968 was estimated to have caused 1 to 4 million deaths.”

Al Owais called on delegates to be a part of the collective vision in being prepared against future global health threats and implementing preventive strategies. “I would like to invite everyone in the industry to join us in this exciting journey towards our collective vision of modern healthcare and innovate the future of medicine.”

**KEY POINTS**

- The new models of treatments, patient expectations, and disruptive technology are defining the frameworks for the next era of healthcare
- A key transformation has been the move toward patient-centered healthcare
- Governments are now prioritizing preventive care and are preparing for future global health threats
The Future Lens Of Healthcare

Prof Shafi Ahmed
Surgeon at Barts Health NHS Trust, Founder of Barts X Medicine, Chairman of the Global Innovation & New Technologies Conference

Technology holds the key to more affordable, equitable, and accessible healthcare as it enables humans to think exponentially, rather than linearly, proposed Professor Shafi Ahmed, surgeon at Barts Health NHS Trust and Chairman of the Global Innovation and New Technologies Conference.

Over the past four years, he has visited 35 countries, meeting Ministers of Health, colleges, and universities, to share insights into how healthcare can be reimagnined.

A Dynamic Future
“We are probably living in the most exciting time to be alive,” Prof Ahmed declared as he opened his address to the Summit. “It is amazing to be alive,” he told delegates. “We are probably living in the most exciting time to be alive,” he declared. “It is amazing to be alive.”

Despite the exciting outlook, the path to this future is not straightforward. He identified three main challenges that must be addressed to ensure a successful future for healthcare:

1. Rising costs
2. A shortage of professionals
3. Slow and outdated training

Funding Remains Fundamental
Prof Ahmed explained to the Summit that in his travels around the world, he has noticed one commonality — a lack of money. Few people have the extra income required to pay for healthcare, so we must find a way to make it more affordable and accessible.

Technology provides one answer to the problem, as it can enable virtual and remote care. However, this requires a fundamental reshaping of the current emphasis on face-to-face contact. Meeting with medical professionals in person is very expensive, but if a portion of those consultations could be done via digital channels, we could drive prices back down.

He urged governments and the healthcare industry to do more to leverage telemedicine, especially now that AI offers even more capability in this realm. For example, smart home devices could be used to accelerate diagnoses using AI interfaces.

Demand Outstrips Supply
A digital approach would also help tackle the second challenge he posed: the growing deficit in healthcare professionals.

Ahmed cited a World Health Organization report that predicts a global shortfall in doctors and healthcare professionals in the tens of thousands by 2030. “There is the irony, the difficult part,” he told delegates. “We have an aging and rising population, but fewer healthcare officials to manage it.”

Telemedicine and avatar technology would help alleviate this challenge because a doctor could see patients in other cities, and even other countries. Communities lacking medical practitioners would still have access to healthcare.

Shaking Up Medical Training
The third aspect of his interlinked assessment was training. For this, he advocated fast, dynamic approaches, where students solve problems in mentored and funded teams. The focus is on creating innovative ways to transform healthcare, in an environment more akin to entrepreneurship and venture capitalism.

Prof Ahmed revealed that this method is currently being trialled at Barts Medical School.

“Medical school curriculums have not changed for centuries,” he noted. “Why do we still accept that it takes five or six years to train a doctor? Why not three? Because no one asks the question, and therefore it is five years because it has always been five years. But if we want more professionals, we need to redesign the way we create them.”

The need to be more nimble applies throughout the sector. “Currently, we innovate, we have early adopters, but then validation takes a long time. Clinical trials take ages. So by the time we implement change, technology has moved on. We need innovation and validation to occur together, at the same pace, so we both mitigate risk and implement rapidly to deliver the desired change,” he emphasized.

The pace at which technology is changing and shaping the world is remarkable, Prof Ahmed concluded, and the medical sector is no exception. Practitioners and policy-makers across the globe must work together to implement emerging technologies and reimagine healthcare for the betterment of humanity.

KEY POINTS

- Technology can transform healthcare because it inspires us to think exponentially, rather than linearly
- Replacing in-person doctor’s visits with remote care will boost access and affordability
- Medical training needs to be updated, incorporating a focus on innovation and entrepreneurship
- The validation of new methods needs to be accelerated to keep pace with technology
- Medical professionals and policymakers must work together to reimagine healthcare for the betterment of humanity
Infections Of The Future: Preparedness Or Peril?

Despite incredible advances in healthcare, the future of infectious diseases may be cause for alarm, asserted Professor Dr Peter Seeberger, Managing Director of the Max Planck Institute of Colloids and Interfaces in Germany. During his session at the World Government Summit, he warned of dire consequences if governments do not act now to provide effective vaccines to those who need it most.

Vaccine Accessibility

Prof Dr Seeberger told the Summit that he believes the current state of infectious disease is troubling, and the world should feel the same. “Today we lose about eight million people globally to cancer,” he stated, “and in 2050 we’re going to lose more than that to infectious disease that will be resistant to antimicrobial treatments.”

According to Prof Dr Seeberger, vaccination is the most cost-effective way to prevent the spread of infectious diseases and is much less costly than treating people after they are already ill. However, to bring life-saving treatments to those who need it most, the public sector needs to become involved. “It is a global concern and it will need global engagement at the level of governments,” he urged.

Access to cost-effective, life-saving treatments and preventative healthcare is often hampered by inadequate healthcare structures. In addition to policy issues that can drive the cost of vaccination prohibitively high, the logistics of providing vaccines in rural areas can also be a roadblock. “In the rural areas of some countries, it is difficult to maintain a cold chain that is required for many of those vaccines.” Temperature fluctuations in those vaccines can render the injection ineffective, he explained.

Vaccines Of The Future

Developing new vaccines for antibiotic-resistant diseases is also becoming even more of a challenge. Prof Dr Seeberger’s work has involved using carbohydrates to develop the vaccines of the future. The aim is to teach the human immune system to identify the carbohydrates in these vaccines as foreign and trigger an immune response. Then, when bacteria enter the body, the immune system would detect the carbohydrates in their capsules and attack.

New vaccines, however, are difficult and costly to make. It takes years and billions of dollars to bring them to market, so the process must begin now. To create these new vaccines and make them accessible, governments must become involved immediately.

Prof Dr Seeberger sees investing in vaccine programs as a positive business proposition as well as a way to improve global health. “This has immense business potential. If we invest in this today, the market for these types of vaccines is in the hundreds of billions of dollars per year. So you are creating good health and protecting people,” he noted.

As for the recent anti-vaccination movement in the United States, Prof Dr Seeberger mentioned that the World Health Organization considers this campaign as one of the biggest threats to human health on this planet. “If you do not vaccinate your children,” Prof Dr Seeberger warned, “and they get sick, the chance of something very bad happening to them is much higher than the risk of having an adverse effect to the vaccination.”

In closing, Prof Dr Seeberger emphasized the fact that governments must take action now and invest in vaccine programs in order to protect the health of future generations.

**KEY POINTS**

- Infectious diseases are becoming more difficult to treat
- Access to vaccinations can be improved by improving healthcare systems
- The anti-vaccination campaign is one of the world’s biggest threats to human health
- Governments should invest in vaccine programs now to protect citizens in the future

“Vaccination is the least expensive means to protect people from infectious disease at the level of an entire population.”
Cellular Therapeutics: New Options For Addressing Global Health Threats

According to Dr Robert Hariri, Founder and CEO of Celularity and Co-founder of Human Longevity Inc, lifespan is an equally important indicator of societal success as anything else. Emerging cellular therapies could lead the fight against infectious and chronic diseases, thereby prolonging lives around the globe.

Understanding Cellular Medicine
Dr Hariri began his session by explaining the importance of the placenta, an organ that develops in a woman’s womb during pregnancy. It is the most abundant source of stem cells, which are cells that have not yet differentiated or specialized to serve a specific function. The immunological relationship between the placenta and the woman who carries it is allogeneic, which means “every placental cell can be accepted by another individual without rejection.”

These unique properties make the placenta an invaluable tool for developing cellular therapies, which “deliver a tool that augments or replenishes the reservoir of stem and immune cells within the body in order to enhance biologic functions during disease and aging.”

To help the audience better understand how this process works, Dr Hariri compared cells to computer programs. The nucleus holds the ‘software,’ the cytoplasm is the ‘processor,’ and the cell membrane functions as the ‘input/output’ module. If a cell’s software becomes corrupted, stem cells can potentially repair or restore its normal function.

While antimicrobials and vaccines are very useful, in some cases this new approach may serve to augment or supplement the human immune system. Dr Hariri’s company Celularity is at the cutting-edge of this emerging field. He highlighted some of its cell therapy programs that focus on developing immune cells from stem cells to fight aggressive diseases such as cancer. They are also using stem cells to help restore the human body’s ability to renew damaged organs and tissues.

Augmenting Immunity
According to Dr Hariri, cellular therapy presents a multitude of opportunities.

One in every 1,000 pregnant women has some underlying malignancy during pregnancy, but the rate of transmission of that cancer to the fetus is almost zero. This is because the fetus develops in what is essentially a sterile bubble, Dr Hariri explained. Unique ‘killer cells’ that reside in the placenta have cancer-fighting properties, as well as the ability to protect the infant immediately after birth, before it has developed adaptive immunity.

He pointed out that these killer cells “may, in fact, be one of the greatest tools in enhancing an individual’s response to not just cancer, but also to infectious diseases”. They can be used to target age-related issues, as well as the inflammation that is at the heart of many degenerative diseases.

Addressing Age
Lifespan has increased dramatically over the last 100 to 150 years due to breakthroughs like sanitation, antimicrobial therapy, and improved abilities to detect cancer. With an increased lifespan, however, comes an increased risk of chronic diseases, cognitive decline, and fraility. There is also a rapid decline in the quantity and quality of an individual’s cells as they age. These factors severely limit an elderly person’s ability to be a productive member of society. “If we add years to these folks’ lives but don’t address this problem, they will continue to be a severe burden to society and they certainly will not be able to enjoy the benefits of those extra years,” Dr Hariri asserted.

Recharging The Regenerative Engine
As a person ages, every organ system in their body loses stem cells, which causes a functional decline in those systems. The fewer stem cells a person has, the less healthy and less disease-resistant they will be.

Dr Hariri highlighted a study his team conducted on rats, where stem cells were collected at birth. Those cells were then administered to the animals every month after they reached adulthood. Those that received the stem cell doses survived 30–60% longer than their control-group peers.

He noted that this presents “a unique opportunity to recharge the regenerative engine of every individual by administering back stem cells that are collected at birth.” Over time, replenishing a person’s stem cells will renovate and repair their tissues and organs to improve longevity and quality of life.

KEY POINTS
• Cellular therapy can be used to treat a wide variety of issues, including infectious diseases, cardiovascular diseases, degenerative diseases, and cognitive decline
• Increased lifespans mean increased disease, which can be addressed through stem cell therapies
• The age-related decline in quality and quantity of stem cells correlates to a decline in the function of tissues and organ systems
• Administering stem cells collected at birth over a person’s lifespan can “recharge the regenerative engine” and improve longevity and quality of life
High-level Dialogue: The Outlook Of Global Health

The Honorable Christopher Fearne, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Health of Malta, His Excellency Ghassan Hasbani, Deputy Prime Minister of Lebanon, His Excellency Dr. Ferozuddin Feroz, the Minister of Public Health of Afghanistan, and His Excellency Abdulrahman bin Mohammed Al Owais, Minister of Health and Prevention and Minister of State for Federal National Council Affairs of the UAE, came together at the Summit to focus on the outlook of global health.

A Quantum Shift

In his opening remarks, Al Owais said the healthcare sector would undergo an unprecedented transformation in the next three or four years due to technology. The challenge will be how governments approach these changes. According to Hasbani, the “exponential” changes happening across the sector are leading to the development of personalized medicine and tailored care. However, change is happening so rapidly that legislation is having difficulty keeping up. He called for a “dynamic, flexible approach” to replace the current “two-dimensional policy-making”.

Hasbani remarked that increased life expectancy means governments must take a whole-of-society view and consider other factors such as job creation and retirement. Feroz also called for a strong state commitment, intersectoral cooperation, and collaboration. “Disease doesn’t recognize borders,” so it is imperative that national plans are aligned with regional and global requirements.

Hasbani echoed this sentiment and shared some of his nation’s experiences fighting infectious diseases. Lebanon has been polio-free for 16 years, which he attributed to “collective activities” between the government, the private sector, and NGOs. “Multidisciplinary teams and the use of technology and data is very important to be able to locate and pre-empt potential disease spread,” he noted.

Adapting To The Future

Further discussions centered on the need for greater resilience, particularly in relation to the fight against infectious diseases and the looming threat of “Disease X” – an unknown pathogen that could cause the next global epidemic.

Fearne suggested that medical curriculums need to be updated. “We need to work with universities to make our medical students much more aware of prevention and preventative measures.” The perception of healthcare funding must also evolve, he said. Feroz also called for a strong state commitment, intersectoral cooperation, and collaboration. “Disease doesn’t recognize borders,” so it is imperative that national plans are aligned with regional and global requirements.

Hasbani echoed this sentiment and shared some of his nation’s experiences fighting infectious diseases. Lebanon has been polio-free for 16 years, which he attributed to “collective activities” between the government, the private sector, and NGOs. “Multidisciplinary teams and the use of technology and data is very important to be able to locate and pre-empt potential disease spread,” he noted.

KEY POINTS

- Governments must be flexible and encourage collaboration between the public and private sector to keep up with rapid changes in the healthcare sector
- Preventative care is critical to supporting a sustainable health sector
- Governments must be prepared for the next global epidemic, with a focus on robust response systems and technology that enables the early identification of outbreaks
- Medical curriculums should be revised, and physicians need to be trained to adapt to the rapid onset of technology and working on multidisciplinary teams
Women In Government Forum

Inspiring female leaders and experts came together to highlight the importance of empowering women and promoting female leadership in government and society.
Women Leading Nations To The Future

In an inspiring discussion, two trailblazing female role models shared their thoughts on women in leadership, urging women to encourage each other, to have more confidence in themselves, and to build strong support networks.

The Smart Thing To Do
Her Excellency Helen Clark, former Prime Minister of New Zealand, said it was right that women should hold top positions roughly half of the time. They have achieved this in New Zealand, but with fewer than 6% of the world’s prime ministers being women, this is not a global phenomenon.

“In principle, this should change, but it should also change because it is the smart thing to do because women bring a whole other range of perspectives to leadership,” she explained.

Clark said women in leadership positions should strive to create a platform that allows more women to follow them. “It’s important to have women in these top spots because it proves to young girls that that could be them someday.”

“You can’t be what you can’t see,” she stressed. “If I look at the road to leadership that I had to follow, it was hard because you couldn’t see yourself in those top positions. Now young girls and women in my country can. That excites me.”

A New Perspective On Work
Her Excellency Sarah bint Yousif Al Amiri, Minister of State for Advanced Sciences of the UAE, recognized the UAE Government’s actions in empowering women and providing opportunities for them across many fields traditionally dominated by men. Working for an experimental nation has given her a new perspective on what work looks like.

“I joined the space program about 10 years ago as the first female engineer within the team. That opportunity was something that I never dreamed I would have had,” she told the Summit. “The space sector was new in the UAE, and everyone working in it was being introduced to a new field. That gave me a new perception of what work looks like and it wasn’t something that you came into that you knew a lot about,” she said. “It was something that you came into with a goal to achieve and you needed to figure out how to get there.”

Over the years, Al Amiri said she loved every new and ambiguous opportunity, relishing the challenge of gaining a better understanding and working toward ambitious goals, such as the Emirates Mars Mission.

Al Amiri emphasized that the UAE has been built on the foundation that we cannot live by ignoring 50% of the population. This message came from the nation’s founding father when the country was established in 1971, she said, “and it has been ingrained in every development, every policy, and every effort – be it in education or in the workforce, and it has cascaded across all of it. Everyone here, every Emirati here, every woman that is living in the UAE has been a byproduct of that.”

The empowerment of women starts early with great education all the way through to graduate school, which is given to everyone regardless of gender, and opportunities available to all, with no discrimination.

Standing Up For Themselves
Clark and Al Amiri agreed that women should hold top positions, but it is not only right that women must be prepared to stand up for themselves, take risks, and seize opportunities to continue moving forward. Clark said women often claim not to be ready when presented with an opportunity. “How many men ever say they’re not ready?” she asked. “If someone is even suggesting to you that you should do something, consider yourself ready. It’s said that women will say they’re not ready when they’re 120% ready, and men will say they’re ready when they’re 60% ready. We have to get over this hurdle.”

Al Amiri concurred that saying no to opportunities is exactly why we don’t see a lot of women in leadership. She described herself as the product of “ignoring my self-doubt every step of the way”.

“What’s the worst that could happen? Not a lot. You’ll still be alive, you’ll still have your family, you’ll have gained a lot of experience going down that path, and you’ll have gained a lot of knowledge, and you’re still going to be better off than by not taking the opportunity,” she asserted. “This is something that I would love everybody to take to heart, because more than anything, we are our own worst enemies and we stop ourselves moving forward.”

Both women concluded that it is important to build alliances of support made up of both women and men. Citing when New Zealand became the first country in the world where women gained the right to vote, Clark said, “They fought hard for it, but an all-male parliament voted for it in 1893. You have to have male allies. Men are also coming on board to support women rising to the top because it’s the right thing to do and the smart thing to do.”

Al Amiri added, “Men advance because they’re great at creating networks, leveraging them and moving forward. That is the secret of success.”

KEY POINTS
- It is not only right that women should hold top positions, but it is also the smart thing to do
- The next generation needs female role models to follow
- Women should believe in themselves and take risks
- A strong support network is essential for success
Women On Public Administration

In this enlightening panel discussion, four leaders from across the globe came together to examine the importance of having women in public administration.

**Positive & Diverse Role Models**
Her Excellency Ohood bint Khalfan Al Roumi, Minister of State for Happiness and Wellbeing of the UAE, started by pointing out that the UAE has more women in government than men, with women accounting for 62% of all government employees, 70% of the employees in the Prime Minister’s Office, and 30% of Cabinet ministers. “The numbers are really good in the UAE, but we can always aspire to have more women in leading positions in government, here in the UAE and globally,” she noted. “I think the key for that is to have more role models. Creating diverse role models for women in government would really encourage and increase the number. It’s not about which gender is better in management, it is about creating a balanced government and fair representation of our society.”

Gleam Davis, Mayor of Santa Monica, California, agreed that positive role models are especially important in systems such as that of the United States, where other mechanisms are not in place for the promotion of female leaders. “We don’t have the ability either at local, state, or federal government to be able to do things like require that boards of directors have a certain quota of male versus female,” she said. “One of the key things we can do is create role models so that young girls can begin to see themselves in those roles and aspire to those roles.” She asserted that having more women in government positions may also have the knock-on effect of creating more openings for women in the private sector.

**The Right Conditions**
Her Excellency Maria Manuel Leitão Marques, Minister of the Presidency and of Administrative Modernization of Portugal, said that introducing quotas in Portugal had increased the representation of women in government and in industry. “Sometimes we need measures, discriminative laws to speed women’s progression in some professions, some political positions, and special leadership positions in private-sector listed companies,” she said, citing examples of certain male-dominated arenas which, for a long time, had been inaccessible to women. “Quotas are very important, but not enough,” she added, as it is also necessary to create the right conditions to attract women to public office. Two main factors, Marques outlined, are work-life balance and women’s perception of politics. She highlighted that the distribution of the load of caring for people – whether the elderly, children, or disabled people – still falls heavily on women. Secondly, she noted that women may perceive politics as related to war, power, and something that is not peaceful.

“We need to show them we can occupy political positions and leadership positions both in the private and public sectors and that these positions are very important in changing people’s lives,” she asserted. “We as women would like to play a bigger role in shaping the future of our countries and serving our people.”

Al Roumi concluded, “We have a collective duty as women leaders in government to work together to groom and support the next generation of women in government. I would love to see a group of women government leaders come together to advance this agenda and we’ll be happy to host this community at this Summit next year to enable this drive.”

**KEY POINTS**
- Positive, diverse role models will encourage women to join government
- Quotas need to be accompanied by conditions which enable women to take up roles
- Making a difference to people’s lives is a strong driver for women to join government
Women Shaping The Future Of Social Policy & Welfare

Ministers engaged in social policy and welfare from countries around the world gathered in this panel discussion to share their experiences in redesigning welfare systems to serve everyone equally.

Jobs For All
Her Excellency Mitcy Larue, Minister for Family Affairs of the Seychelles, told the Summit they are changing the education system, from the school curriculum to university-level education, to ensure it aligns with the demands of the job market now and in the future. They are also empowering women and young girls through training and reskilling programs.

“In the Seychelles, women and men are equal, because we can take any job,” Larue stated, although she admitted that the men may be a little reluctant to agree because they still see certain jobs as ‘men’s jobs’. Women are taking on the challenge, however, and Larue pointed out the opportunities are not only there for women. “In the Seychelles, we need more teachers, we need more doctors, nurses, and all these are not only for women. They are for men as well.”

She said the country needed more people to work in the ‘blue economy’, relating to the Seychelles’ marine environment, as well as in the fishing industry.

The country also recognizes the need to prepare for the future, she said. “As leaders, we will be needing more young ministers in the future because we are growing old. We need the younger ones to replace us. That is why we are relooking at the educational system we have in place so that we can really train our people in the domains that we need.”

Investing In People’s Futures
Her Excellency Bintou Chabi Adam Taro, Minister of Social Affairs and Microfinance of Benin, said Benin is taking a unique approach to tackling poverty, which disproportionately affects women.

“Sometimes it is unusual that people hear about social affairs and microfinance,” she noted. However, by pairing the two sectors, the nation has been able to give disadvantaged populations access to small-scale financial services to help them pull themselves out of poverty, instead of providing continual assistance like the social affairs departments of other countries.

Taro recalled that microfinance started in India and Bangladesh as a means for the poor to access banking credits. “Now it is a kind of innovation,” she noted. In Benin, which she described as a very secure, democratic, and progressive West African country, Taro said they wanted to help their poor to do what they want to do.

Not only to provide money for them to eat, but “when they’ve finished eating, they have the strength to work and that is what we wish to do – to help them do activities that they can benefit and profit from, to help them to autonomize, to set up and do their business to end poverty and progress slowly through microfinance.”

Tailor-made Solutions
Her Excellency Hessa bint Essa Buhumaid, Minister of Community Development of the UAE, discussed how the UAE was revamping its approach to social welfare.

“For us to achieve the UAE Vision 2021, and also the Vision of 2071 to be the among the best nations around the world, requires a lot of changes on the ground. Most important would be our social welfare system,” she explained. The revamp includes making changes to laws to make them more efficient and reviewing skills and education requirements.

Buhumaid described how the UAE differentiates between the various types of social welfare beneficiaries. Each group has its own specific needs, and looking at them individually allows the government to tailor more effective solutions to meet those needs.

They identify 21 categories of people on the nation’s ‘social safety net’, and the government is mandated by law to support these groups financially. “Of course, this is to ensure that no one in the United Arab Emirates is left behind,” Buhumaid said.

She also differentiated between three broad categories of social welfare beneficiaries, namely people who can join the workforce, people who will never be able to work for one reason or another, and entrepreneurs who will create work for themselves.

For people who can work, the emphasis is on reskilling them and working with other entities to ensure that they can join the workforce. The category which cannot work requires a different approach because people of determination require a social welfare focus that will differ from that needed for the elderly and other segments of society.

When it comes to the entrepreneurs, Buhumaid said the UAE has seen real success. “We have more than 2,400 families, productive families listed with us. Those families have started micro-businesses right from their own homes. They’ve got the support from the government in terms of skills and training all throughout the year, but most importantly they need a platform to ensure that whatever they produce is being sold and therefore financially they are better off,” she concluded.

KEY POINTS
- There are many innovative ways to approach social welfare
- Welfare systems should serve the people equally
- It is necessary to review and revise social welfare systems as the world changes
Public-Private Partnerships For A Common Future

Public-private partnerships (PPPs) are an important tool for supporting women in business. Four officials from the public and private sectors shared how their institutions are leveraging these partnerships to ensure female entrepreneurs have access to the resources they need to be successful.

Financing Female-led Entrepreneurship
Tamara Perko, President of the Management Board of the Croatian Bank for Reconstruction and Development, began by outlining several steps that the Croatian government is taking to encourage female entrepreneurs. At the heart of these policies is a mandate that banks offer loans with terms that are favorable to starting and growing SMEs, such as lower collateral requirements and less stringent credit history.

She explained that this policy stems directly from quantifiable research. “Our analysis revealed that women entrepreneurs are less prone to take a risk, when in fact the job sustainability is better than in SMEs run by men.” This insight inspired the decision to proactively incentivize female-owned businesses. “This is particularly vital because SMEs are the backbone of the Croatian economy,” Perko emphasized. Therefore, measures to stimulate and support SMEs run by women are essential.

Creating Strategic Alliances
Costa Rica is exploring similar policy and legislative instruments, asserted Her Excellency María del Pilar Garrido Gonzalo, Minister of National Planning and Economic Policy of Costa Rica, especially in training and education. “In Costa Rica, we have a Women’s Institute, and of course we also have the private sector,” Gonzalo pointed out. “We found that we need to reinforce both in a strategic alliance, and this is where PPP comes in.”

She stressed the importance of follow-through to ensure policy is put into action. Using econometric modeling, the Costa Rican government is identifying women’s specific needs and then visiting them in their homes to provide personalized support. This includes assessing whether women who want to work are being held back by requirements such as needing to look after elderly relatives. Gonzalo also urged nations to be bold and not hold back. “Policy cannot be neutral,” she stated. In order to close the gender gap, policies need to be redesigned specifically for women. Tools to measure how social factors, including investment and transportation, have different outcomes for men and women must also be put in place.

Nurturing Career Paths
Chiara Corazza, Managing Director of the Women’s Forum for the Economy and Society, outlined a number of other examples where partnerships have been leveraged to give women in business a leg up. For example, the Women’s Forum works with the French government, as well as companies such as Lenovo, Microsoft, and Google, to encourage young girls to enter the engineering field.

“The issue is that female students tend to prefer subjects that reflect a cause or purpose, and they feel that humanities-based subjects embody this. We need to demonstrate that scientific jobs are also purposeful,” Corazza explained.

Building Trust
Female entrepreneurs secure under 1% of public tenders globally. According to Her Excellency Arancha González, Executive Director of the International Trade Centre, this number is so minuscule because women struggle to get credit and they lack in-built networks and buyer trust. Institutions must realize that investing in women is no riskier than investing in men. In fact, if women were empowered to be part of the economy without discrimination, on exactly the same terms as men, there would be significant economic and social payoffs.

Perko concluded the discussion by explaining that women often bring a more flexible, well-rounded approach to work.
The Future Of Government Communication Forum

Global leaders and industry experts engaged in dialogue, highlighting the impact of technology, the changing nature of communication, and the need for rebuilding trust between the government and media.
The Future Of Government Communications

In the world of social media and ‘fake news’, the role of government communications is evolving rapidly. Her Excellency Jumana Ghunaimat, Minister of State for Media Affairs of Jordan, His Excellency Ali bin Mohammed Al Rumaihi, Minister of Information Affairs of Bahrain, and Hussein Zein, Head of the National Media Authority of Egypt, convened at the World Government Summit to discuss the changing face of the media in a session moderated by Al Arabiya’s Muntaha Alramahi.

The New Face of Information

The advance of rapid information sharing has made the traditional role of a Minister of Information nearly obsolete, stated Ghunaimat. There is no longer one entity that controls the flow of information and ministries should be formed according to the needs of individual nations, agreed Al Rumaihi, regardless of what that ministry is labeled.

According to Ghunaimat, the important discussion is not what the ministry is labeled, but what role it plays in regulating the media. “In light of the information revolution and the tsunami of information and social communication, a central administration with one minister is no longer a viable recipe,” she explained.

Al Rumaihi agreed that modern forms of communication have forced governments to move beyond a traditional model of information distribution. “Now we must foster a culture of communication with anyone. There must be communication, and transparency in communication.”

Identifying Fake News

Zein seconded the call for transparency in information, stressing that state media requires 100% accuracy, with no room for error. The problem goes far beyond accuracy in reporting, he warned, as today’s wars are “wars of thought.” The people creating fake news are not the biggest threat. It is the people who are sharing it without realizing how harmful misinformation can be that pose the greatest danger. Citizens must be taught how to spot accurate reporting and information, Zein advised.

In Jordan, efforts to increase awareness of fake news begins at school, said Ghunaimat. The country has launched a project called Media Education, which will incorporate media education curriculum into all schools and universities.

Al Rumaihi recommended that nations turn to legislation to protect citizens from fake news, as regulation is society’s first defense. Zein cautioned that while legislation plays an important role, governments should be wary of infringing upon personal freedoms. “Citizen awareness is the main line that will block all these things. We will not appoint a censor to every citizen for what he sees, what comes from him, what he writes, and what he does. We are not required to do so, but we are required to raise awareness,” he stressed.

KEY POINTS

- The role of the traditional Ministry of Information has changed drastically
- Governments need to stay in communication with their citizens
- Communication should be transparent and accurate
- Citizens need to be made aware of fake news and learn how to identify it

HE Jumana Ghunaimat (1) Minister of State for Media Affairs of Jordan

HE Ali bin Mohammed Al Rumaihi (2) Minister of Information Affairs of Bahrain

Hussein Zein (3) Head of the National Media Authority of Egypt

Muntaha Alramahi (4) Presenter for Al Arabiya, Moderator
The Future Of Technology In Communication

In the modern world of always-on communications, consumers are becoming increasingly concerned about the proliferation of ‘fake news.’ Media experts Cassandra Kelly, Member of the Global Tech Panel of the European External Action Service and Co-founder & Senior Advisor in Leadership & Technology of Pottinger, Jaroslaw Krolewski, Co-founder & CEO of Synerise, and Juan Carlos Riveiro, Co-founder of Vilynx, came together at the World Government Summit to discuss the current state of communications and the future of fake news.

**Fake News**

According to the panel of industry experts, so-called ‘fake news’ is on the rise. However, Kelly pointed out that the dissemination of false information is nothing new. “I think we’re getting overly wound up about the idea of fake news. Has there ever been a period of time when news has been purely transparently fact-based with no reliance on an agenda or ideology?” she asked. “We have always had some form of biased dissemination of information to us.” The antidote to fake news, Kelly continued, is primarily critical thinking on the part of the consumer.

Media consumers do not want fake news in their lives, said Riveiro. His company Vilynx aims to help news outlets provide more of what media consumers do want. According to him, the market is demanding more news and more accurate reporting. “We want to help media companies to be able to produce five times more content for the same amount of resources, and to understand the content really well in order to produce better content. This is what the people want to consume – better content. They don’t want to consume fake news,” he asserted.

**Embracing AI**

The same technology that may be contributing to the distribution of fake news could be used to quickly rebut inaccurate information. Turning their attention to artificial intelligence, the panelists agreed that it can help address individual concerns and should be embraced rather than feared. Krolewski pointed out that AI is about improving citizen experiences, and transparency surrounding how it enhances peoples’ lives will be a major factor in coming years. AI algorithms could be used to detect fake news and help consumers be more aware of media bias.

**Government Regulation**

With AI set to bolster access to credible news sources, the panelists were asked where the government responsibility lies in terms of regulation. Greed and lack of forethought, they agreed, could cause major issues.

Riveiro said that he believes developers, individuals, companies, and governments alike must take responsibility for regulation. “You have to put some level of regulation because consequences of something like that can be really great.” Kelly, who serves on the European Union’s Global Tech panel, explained that entities that bring together both regulatory bodies and private enterprise leadership may go far in deciding how and when to regulate the modern media landscape. “We brought together a roundtable to talk about these opportunities; to talk about the threats and to then go back out into the world to collaborate, to bring in more players. We’re determining how we’re going to monitor, regulate, protect, and guard something that is no longer just a physical threat,” she concluded.

**KEY POINTS**

- The proliferation of ‘fake news’ is a growing concern, but it is not a new concept
- Although AI has contributed to the distribution of fake news, the technology could also be used to help detect misinformation
- Entities should work together to discuss opportunities, threats, and possible regulation
The Future Of Crisis Communication

A panel of experienced negotiators and crisis communications experts discussed the pillars of crisis communications in the new media age, as part of the Government Communication Forum held during the Summit.

Noora Al Abbar, Director of Strategic Media Affairs of the Government of Dubai Media Office, moderated the discussion which reviewed what has changed and continues to evolve in the subject, as well as those elements that will never change.

Social media has added a new face to crisis communications, opening up global communications platforms to all and accelerating the speed at which news spreads. A major challenge, which must today be considered as central to crisis communications, is the disputing of ‘fake news’ and campaigns of misinformation.

At War Against Fake News

Nancy Jamal, Official Coalition Representative of the Global Coalition Against Daesh, began by explaining how the coalition uses new crisis communications techniques in its defense against Daesh, also known as ISIS. The coalition, which is made up of 79 international partners, 74 countries and five international agencies, has a communications working group with three co-chairs based out of the Sawab Center and Hedayah in the United Arab Emirates, Counter-Daesh Communications in the United Kingdom and the Global Engagement Center in the United States.

Jamal said, “For the first time in terrorism, Daesh started to use new forms of communications to deliver its message, attracting people online and offline using technology and the Internet. We had never seen this before. Other terrorist organizations throughout this period have been watching and learning. But we have also been watching and trying to stay ahead of the trend, working on techniques to counter this, and to provide a positive narrative that will work in the long run.”

Jamal described how important communications are to counter terrorist propaganda, and then to keep the positive narrative alive and keep people united and up to date with what is being achieved. This ongoing messaging arms vulnerable communities with resilience towards any propaganda that comes back.

One approach is the #LifeAfterDaesh campaign, which gives real-life examples of what life is like in liberated areas after stabilization. One story included an image of a child, who used to go to a Daesh school and play with guns, now playing football with his classmates and enjoying simple things that take him away from the violence of his past. “It builds a message of hope,” she said. Jamal called today the ‘age of disinformation’, with different groups trying to portray a negative message and terrorists trying to claim it was better at the time of the so-called caliphate.

The First Response

Silence is never the answer, the panel agreed, but as the speed of new media places increased time pressure on communications teams to respond immediately, unprepared commentators are at risk of making mistakes.

His Excellency Bernardino León, Director General of the Emirates Diplomatic Academy, recalled the aftermath of terrorist attacks against pedestrians in Barcelona, Spain in 2017. The government launched a dedicated web page to react to fake news. León also compared the response of the national police, the Mossos d’Esquadra of Catalonia, following the Barcelona attacks.

He praised the Mossos d’Esquadra, which told the public that they were still working to find the terrorists despite the pressure for a speedy response. On the contrary, the Interior Minister in Madrid announced that they had already arrested everyone. Then news broke that one of the terrorists had escaped. “This was devastating for him, actually his political career ended that very day,” León said.

“Managing time is absolutely crucial. If you have to tell them there is still one guy missing, it’s OK, just take your time. Don’t try to respond to this time pressure in the wrong way.”

Johan Verbeke, Director General of EGMONT – The Royal Institute for International Relations, reinforced this sentiment. “By definition, a crisis is incomplete knowledge or project a positive image of yourself. Always stand on solid ground. Never use a figure, such as the number of victims, that you do not really know is the case.”

At the end of the day, he said, facts and figures are not what people are really interested in, but if you make a mistake, even an innocent one, you could lose your credibility.

KEY POINTS

1. Clarify misinformation
   The deliberate dissemination of fake news may increase further with the involvement of artificial intelligence. It should form a central part of a crisis communications strategy.

2. Manage time pressure
   The speed of communications will accelerate as the digital world evolves and teams must be prepared to manage time the right way.

3. Reassure the people
   Show respect and compassion for victims and reassure the public, rather than rushing to share incomplete information or project a positive image of yourself.

4. Be prepared
   Teams should be prepared to communicate constantly, across all platforms and in multiple languages. Coordination across different teams working on the same issue is essential to deliver a unified message.
Under the theme ‘Powered by You,’ the fourth edition of the Edge of Government focused on how change is driven by action. The experience was a journey of discovery through numerous government innovation case studies that were transformed into interactive displays. Each presented the human ingenuity behind innovation, and showcased the ways in which experimentation and less-obvious solutions have made a positive impact on society.
The Future Of Education Talks

Under this special initiative, the World Government Summit opened its doors to educators and members of the public to hear how leading experts in the field of education are using innovative solutions to transform the learning process.
World-renowned clinical psychologist Dr Shefali Tsabary highlighted the importance of allowing children to be themselves and develop as individuals if we wish to nurture the creative minds of tomorrow.

In an impassioned speech, she challenged parents to explore their own identity in order to raise happy and creative children.

**Consciousness & Parenting**

World-renowned clinical psychologist Dr Shefali Tsabary highlighted the importance of allowing children to be themselves and develop as individuals if we wish to nurture the creative minds of tomorrow.

In an impassioned speech, she challenged parents to explore their own identity in order to raise happy and creative children.

**A Culture Of Conformity**

Dr Tsabary explained that much of the confusion and anxiety plaguing youth today is caused by pressure from parents who are raising children ‘unconsciously’, which she explained meant that many parents were unaware of the damage they were doing by encouraging their children to adhere to cultural, societal, or religious norms.

Parents may be trying to do what is best for their children by encouraging them to fit in and follow a traditional path, which is seen as the way to happiness. However, this is not the result for most people.

“The number one killer of creativity is conformity,” Dr Tsabary asserted. “The price you pay to fit in is the loss of your creative self.”

Parents often set forth a prescription for their children to follow, but then expect them to be creative. She called this “an inherent, ridiculous, hypocritical paradox.”

**Breaking The Mold**

To help illustrate this concept, Dr Tsabary told the Summit about her own experience growing up: “I grew up not only following rules, but following a whole list of ways that I needed to live my life. I was told how many degrees I needed to get, which subjects I should study as a girl, what age I should get married, and what kind of person I should marry.”

She believed that she had freedom of thought until she woke up one day and realized how little she was truly herself. “It was very uncomfortable to discover that I was only what my culture wanted me to be,” she said. This is when she began to rebel.

Naturally, going against the flow invites disapproval from others because it challenges their consciousness and freedom and makes them look at their own life. Despite this, Dr Tsabary urged people to be strong and stay the course. “There’s no creativity without disapproval of others. Creativity cannot function in an atmosphere of conformity,” she stressed. The prize outweighs the price because true happiness can only come from a deep connection to one’s inner being.

Children who are raised with a prescription for what it means to be happy, successful, and acceptable “lose their spark of creativity and innovation.” They do not stand out. They are just another face in the crowd.

To raise happy, vibrant children, Dr Tsabary told attendees that they first need to become conscious in their own lives. She urged them to take advantage of ‘choice points’, pivotal moments in which they have the opportunity either to conform or to be true to themselves.

“You cannot tell your child to be an innovator or a free thinker, a rebel or a free spirit when you’re scared to leave the crowd,” she concluded. “In order to raise the children of a free tomorrow, the first people we have to raise into freedom is ourselves.”

**The Children Of Tomorrow**

According to Dr Tsabary, parents owe it to their children not to put them in the same position. “This process of coming to realize your authentic self is really our sacred mission for our children.”

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**KEY POINTS**

- Conformity is the number one killer of creativity
- Happiness can only come from a deep connection to one’s inner self
- Conscious parents know who they truly are and allow their children to discover the same
- Parents must become conscious to raise the children of a free tomorrow

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"There is a price to pay to stop following, but the prize of not following is the potential to discover who it is you are"
Green Leaders For A Better Future

John Hardy, Co-founder of the Green School, delivered an inspiring speech that gave insights into the remarkable impact of his pioneering school in Bali. At the Green School, children are taught sustainability alongside a traditional curriculum, with the aim of inspiring the green leaders of tomorrow.

An Uncertain Future

In 1975, Hardy moved from a small town in Canada to the island of Bali and started a jewelry business with his wife, Cynthia. After leaving the business, the couple was planning a long retirement. That changed in 2008 when they saw the American documentary, An Inconvenient Truth. "My life changed forever,” Hardy explained. “It made me realize what we’d done to the planet, and that I need to spend the rest of my life mitigating the damage I’d done.” To prepare his four children for an uncertain future, Hardy and his wife decided to build a school – the Green School.

The Green School Model

The Green School is an unconventional building. Set among the Balinese rice fields, it was constructed from seven kilometers of bamboo. It is known as the “greenest” school on Earth because it gets its power from the sun and the nearby river. Students from kindergarten through 12th grade attend the school, and their classes meet in unorthodox classrooms without walls. Hardy explained that this setting provides an incredible environment for growth and happiness, and that “when you take children out of the educational box, they thrive.”

Hardy admitted that he thought it would be generations before they saw Green School leaders manifest, but he was very wrong. Within this unique environment, students immediately took initiative, starting their own businesses and international organizations to inspire change.

Green Leaders

Hardy highlighted several children who had attended the Green School and then gone on to make significant impacts in the areas of poverty, sustainability, and eco-conscious initiatives. Two students started a clothing company to help provide school uniforms for Indian students, whose government didn’t provide uniforms past eighth grade. The emboldened entrepreneurs took their moral fight even further when they declared that they would never make another shirt unless it was completely organic and made with natural dye.

Another student went on to found Hands for Hope, an organization that makes 3D-printed prosthetic bionic limbs for underserved populations. Other students refused to ride buses to school because of the carbon emissions produced by the vehicles. Now all five buses are powered by used cooking oil.

In conclusion, Hardy emphasized that the Green School serves as a beacon for people with educational dreams and allows children to thrive. It offers all the elements required to create environmental pioneers that drive change to benefit humanity. His mission is to share this model with the rest of the world in the hope of creating a happier, more sustainable tomorrow.

KEY POINTS

• The Green School teaches sustainability alongside the regular curriculum
• The unique environment and educational approach of the Green School inspires happiness and growth
• Children need to be empowered to pursue their own businesses and movements that benefit the environment and humanity as a whole
Collective Learning: A Win-win!

Nicolas Sadirac, Co-founder & General Manager of 42

A former hacker explained to leaders at the Summit why he has eschewed traditional teaching methods at his private, non-profit, and tuition-free computer programming school. He also highlighted the establishment’s remarkable success resulting from its unconventional methods.

Introducing Ecole 42
Nicolas Sadirac, Co-founder and General Manager of Ecole 42, shared the story behind his Paris-based school, which has no teachers or curriculum, no academic entry requirements, and grants no formal qualifications.

Sadirac, who has a background in cognitive science, explained that the school first came about when he set up a cybersecurity business. When hiring, he was not looking for people who could think outside the box. After 20 years, this training program has become Ecole 42, an inclusive and open school that helps students to develop what he calls "collective intelligence".

It graduates often end up working in top IT businesses, while more than 30% of Ecole 42 alumni go on to establish their own successful companies. Furthermore, 85% of those businesses survive beyond five years, which is about twice the average business survival rate in France. The school regularly wins global IT challenges and is ranked among the top 10 schools for IT in the world, Sadirac said.

Developing Collective Intelligence
Ecole 42’s method involves fostering creativity and encouraging a love of learning through making education fun instead of forcing it upon students. Traditional education, Sadirac asserted, is pushed upon people. They are told they must get an education and they do so out of fear of leading a life in poverty.

He said that this might look the same as finding enjoyment in learning, "But it works a different way in the brain. If you want to make someone creative, you can’t do it by force. It has to come from pleasure.”

One of the ways Ecole 42 makes learning fun is by gamifying the school experience. Students can level up and earn experience points, a framework that young people find very familiar from video games.

He explained that collective intelligence is not about making great individuals, but making people who are able to co-create with others. In the age of artificial intelligence, he said that memorizing and storing knowledge is the role of the computers. Humans add value if they can interact with AI and co-create with a group of humans.

"More than knowing a lot of things, we are focusing on how to interact with each other," he said. "Memorizing stuff is not useful, it is dangerous and makes you stupid. We don’t need any more knowledge transmission. Knowledge is freely available on the internet. We need people who are able to create new stuff out of this knowledge, and we need to create it in a group."

A School With No Teachers
Ecole 42 is not mandatory and nothing happens should a student decide not to show up. There is no disciplinary program and no teachers. Yet, most of the students attend 70 hours a week, and they take care of the place, keeping it clean and quiet. They manage it by themselves, said Sadirac, emphasizing the need to trust the students.

"Let them do what they want and trust that they will do it," he said. "If two or three kids don’t want to play the game, the group will manage it and will organize itself so they won’t bother the others. That is much more efficient than a teacher entering the fray."

Removing the teacher also helps to develop the students’ autonomy. Sadirac reasoned. In traditional education, the teacher will set the objective and teach one truth, creating a simple world for the student to navigate. But if you let the students find their own objectives and discover that there is more than one solution, the group learns to manage complexity, which is valued by employers.

Sadirac reported that the more diverse the group, the better they have found the results to be. Everyone sees a different way of approaching a solution, must argue their point, and find a way to get there together. It is this discussion where they develop themselves and their creativity, self-confidence, and leadership skills.

"At the end, we have students that are amazing in IT skills because they own the skills by themselves," he said, and he made a comparison between his students and those who have been taught by traditional methods in the event they were asked to do something new by an employer. The latter might reply that they could take on the new task if they were trained to do so, but those who have taught themselves autonomously will say “I learned this, so I can learn that”. In IT, this is particularly important, he noted, because every time you learn something it will soon be out of date.

While the platform that powers Ecole 42 was developed for IT students, it has also been effective at getting unemployed adults back into work, with a 70% success rate. He now aims to develop the methodology to apply to other industries, including design, biotechnology, business, anthropology, and more.

KEY POINTS
• Collective intelligence develops the skills of humans to work together to find solutions
• Transmitting and memorizing knowledge is no longer needed as computers can do this for us
• Students must find pleasure in learning because creativity cannot be forced

"If you remove the teacher, you put students in a very special situation. They make their own objective and own the situation. They learn to manage complexity"
Global stakeholders convened to reflect on the progress made toward achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and showcase successful strategies and advances in sustainability around the world.
In her opening address at the SDGs In Action @ WGS forum, Her Excellency Amina J Mohammed, Deputy Secretary General of the United Nations, defined five key areas for action to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals by 2030.

**Sharing Experiences**

The first step is reinforcing the commitment to sharing experiences, tools, and reports on progress. Mohammed emphasized the importance of sharing both successful and unsuccessful incidents. “We should consider failures as learning lessons and move ahead.”

Globally, the UN High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development is an important platform for sharing experiences, lessons, ideas, and knowledge. The forum provides the stage where people working on different parts of the SDGs can forge the connections necessary to keep efforts moving forward.

“We must continue to make the most of these platforms that provide robust data and evidence to identify gaps and mobilize actions to accelerate transformational change,” she noted.

Additionally, she pointed out that it is important to implement these actions in a timely manner. The current time lags make it difficult to attract the investment required for targeted action.

**Developing Effective Institutions & Services**

The second key aspect in achieving the SDGs is to do more to establish effective, inclusive, and accountable public institutions. This means institutions must be built on strong, transformational leadership at all levels, Mohammed explained. It is about developing public services that are built on trust, integrity, transparency, and accountability.

The vicious cycle that leads to poverty and inequality is often connected to a lack of access to public services, inadequate capacities, non-inclusive institutions, and poor governance. “This means that we must enhance our efforts to ensure that our citizens, especially girls, women, and the youth, are given a seat at the table and are included in shaping and implementing our development aspirations.”

**Encouraging Leaders To Be Drivers Of Change**

The third key point Mohammed highlighted includes strengthening the commitment of national and local-level leadership. Heads of state and government are essential in driving SDG implementation.

“In many countries, effective leadership is encouraging progress,” she said. “SDGs are being incorporated into national constitutions and development plans, and there is more systematic coordination across all levels of governments.”

She urged leaders, mayors, and public servants in cities and local governments to leverage their power to drive economic, social, and environmental transformation.

**Boosting Collaboration**

There is also a need to boost support for multi-stakeholder partnerships, harnessing the contributions from civil society organizations and the private sector.

“In addition to a whole-of-government approach,” Mohammed said, “we need whole-of-society engagement to build effective and sustainable partnerships and networks for action.” This can have a positive impact on the collective lives of people. Through investments conducive to achieving the SDGs, businesses and their leaderships can create jobs and empower citizens. This can also play a role in encouraging education to teach relevant skillsets.

“These collaborations can contribute to a pattern of growth that ensures the protection of our environment and preservation of our planet, and support the stable societies that, in the end, deter a lot of the violent extremism that we see in our world today.”

**Taking Advantage Of Innovation**

The fifth and final fundamental area, Mohammed noted, is to capitalize on the potential of innovation and the power of a restive youth. Leveraging new technologies and promoting innovation at all levels is essential to sustainably implementing the SDGs.

She urged all stakeholders to work together to ensure that the promises of the 2030 Agenda for sustainable development become a reality.

“The SDGs are a beacon of hope. Properly addressed they will be the transformation that is required for development to take hold and benefit all, ensuring progress for people, planet, prosperity, peace, and partnerships that leave no one behind.”

**KEY POINTS**

In order to achieve Sustainable Development Goals by 2030, it is imperative to:

- Strengthen the commitment to share experiences, tools, and reports on progress
- Do more to establish effective, inclusive, and accountable public institutions
- Reinforce the commitment of national and local-level leadership
- Boost support for multi-stakeholder partnerships
- Capitalize on the potential of innovation and the power of a restive youth

“Delivering on the SDGs will require inclusive leadership and transformation,” she concluded.

**Opening Speech: SDGs In Action @ WGS**
Wellbeing & The SDGs

Achieving the Sustainable Development Goals requires planning, international cooperation, and a spirit of charity and justice, said Professor Jeffrey Sachs, Special Advisor to the United Nations Secretary General on the Sustainable Development Goals.

Although the world has entered an era of astounding prosperity, still people go without basic necessities. Sustainable development may be the answer to bridging the gap between abundance and those who are struggling for survival.

Defining Sustainable Development
Prof Sachs defined sustainable development as the integration of economic wellbeing, social inclusion, and environmental sustainability. He asserted that sustainable development is absolutely essential because while the global economy is richer than ever, there are still a billion people living in extreme poverty.

The idea of sustainable development has been around since the 1970s, and in 1992 at the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, also known as the Rio de Janeiro Earth Summit, three major agreements were reached on climate change, protecting biodiversity, and stopping desertification. Unfortunately, by the Rio+20 conference 20 years later, no action had been taken on those agreements.

“And that’s when the government of Colombia stood up and said we need goals that are clear, sharp, and focused for the world to understand,” recounted Prof Sachs. “And that’s how the idea of the Sustainable Development Goals came about.”

On 25 September 2015, the 17 SDGs were ratified, and then on 12 December, the same 193 UN member states adopted the Paris Agreement to address greenhouse gas emissions mitigation, adaptation, and financing. Prof Sachs warned the audience that the lack of implementation of the SDGs may become a replay of the agreements reached during the 1992 Earth Summit – in short, plenty of talk and promises, but no action.

Prof Sachs, frustrated by the lack of movement on the SDGs, pointed out that action does not necessarily need to be drastic to make an impact. “For less than 1% of our output, we could reorient the world economy to a zero-carbon, wholly renewable-energy economy worldwide,” he said.

Achieving The SDGs
Encouraging governments to increase their efforts toward achieving the SDGs, Prof Sachs outlined three main components necessary for realizing these goals:

1. Planning
2. International cooperation
3. A spirit of charity and justice

The first step is planning. He advised governments to define where they want to be by 2030 and formulate strategies to help them get there. Planning to achieve the SDGs does not need to stem from a centralized power, Prof Sachs stressed, but there does need to be a plan to improve conditions. “Planning your energy sector transformation, planning your healthcare sector, planning your education sector – these don’t just happen by themselves,” he said.

The second component is international cooperation. Agenda 2030 is not a single-country agenda, he asserted. Countries and regions must work together to reach sustainable development.

Finally, we must cultivate a global spirit of charity and justice. Prof Sachs pointed out that if the world’s richest people donated all but $1 billion of their wealth, that would free up $8 trillion. This is more than enough to provide quality education, food, healthcare, and more to everyone in the world.

Achieving the SDGs is not complex, according to Prof Sachs, it just takes global participation. “This agenda is inherently a regional and global agenda, not a single-country agenda we need the regions to work together.”

KEY POINTS
• Sustainable development is the integration of economic wellbeing, social inclusion, and environmental sustainability
• Achieving sustainable development is absolutely essential because while the global economy is richer than ever, there are still a billion people living in extreme poverty
• Progress toward the SDGs has not been rapid enough and governments must increase their efforts
• Realizing the SDGs will take planning, global participation, and a spirit of charity and justice
Main Announcement Of The SDGs Initiatives

His Excellency Abdullah Nasser Lootah, Director General of the Federal Competitiveness and Statistics Authority of the UAE, called for governments to strive more than ever before to address the challenges of inequality facing the world’s population.

In a session introducing the SDGs in Action, a platform focused on the United Nations’ 17 Sustainable Development Goals, which include things like ending poverty, fighting hunger, decreasing inequality, addressing climate change, improving access to health and education, providing social protections, and building strong institutions, he called for long-term vision and collaboration between governments, leaders, and all sectors to develop solutions.

A World Of Inequality

“As we reflect on the world today, we see a world that is paradoxical, unequal, and with multiple realities. We live in the Fourth Industrial Revolution, a time of unprecedented technological advancement, a time of blockchain technology, gene editing, artificial intelligence, quantum computing, and space tourism. Yet, this revolution coincides with significant economical, political, social, and environmental challenges across the world,” Lootah asserted. “On many fronts, we face watershed moments, catastrophic climate change, shifts in geopolitics, conflicts, poverty, hunger, gender inequality, unemployment, pressures on accessing quality education and quality health, and reduced safety and security for far too many people.”

He called the global economy ‘highly uneven’, citing a UN report on the progress made toward the SDGs after 28 years, which states that one in ten people still lives below the poverty line of $2 per day, despite the advances that have been made in reducing poverty.

A New Threat

While great strides have also been made in healthcare, Lootah emphasized the need to address climate change, which is now endangering the lives of people across the globe.

Of particular concern is the threat climate change poses to food and water security, particularly for populations that may already be vulnerable. Conflicts and natural disasters linked to climate change are among the leading causes of global hunger, and more people are being displaced than ever before. Unsafe food and water also contribute significantly to the global mortality rate.

A Collaborative Approach

These challenges therefore pose significant hurdles for the achievement of the UN’s 2030 Agenda, and Lootah warned that leaders must strive for more and must continue to have hope.

“The framework for the SDGs provides us with a powerful common language to write another positive story to shape a better and a more equitable world,” he noted. The goals are complex and highly interconnected, and can only be achieved if all aspects of society – government, academia, the private sector, and individual communities – share a sense of responsibility and work together.

The UAE’s Approach

Lootah described the UAE’s approach, welcoming visitors to “the land of peace, prosperity, and positive coexistence”.

“In the UAE, sustainable development is at the heart of the country’s vision for the future,” he said. “We have adopted a collaborative, whole-of-government approach toward achieving the SDGs.”

To accomplish this, two years ago the UAE Government created the National Committee on SDGs to focus on effective implementation. The committee includes 17 federal government entities, and is chaired by Her Excellency Reem bint Ebrahim Al Hashimy, Minister of State for International Cooperation. Last year the committee established an advisory council made up of representatives from the private sector, as well as a youth advisory council to engage these key partners in creating solutions.

Another pillar of the UAE’s approach is the drive for data. “I cannot stress enough the need for partners to produce quality, accessible, open, timely, and disaggregated data to help us in our efforts for evidence-based decision making with regard to the SDGs,” Lootah said, and he referenced the third edition of the UAE 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development report, which highlights the UAE’s progress toward the 2030 Agenda indicators.

The UAE leads the region in the SDGs index, reflecting strong performance in several goals such as global partnerships, industry, innovation, infrastructure, peace, justice, and strong institutions.

“But we are not satisfied,” he continued. “We are committed to supporting others in achieving their SDGs.”

Lootah concluded with a message of hope: “Our gathering today gives me immense hope... At no other time in the history have we been so connected and so empowered to act. By taking leadership and working in alignment and in common purpose, together we can work to make a difference in humanity’s most pressing challenges. Together we can ensure that truly no one is left behind.”

KEY POINTS

- After 28 years of progress, the global economy remains highly unequal
- Government, civil society, academia, the private sector, and communities need to work collaboratively with a sense of shared responsibility
- The UAE leads the region in its work toward achieving the SDGs, and is helping others improve their efforts
Successful Practices On The SDGs In Partnership With The Organisation For Economic Co-operation & Development

As the World Government Summit 2019 took place, the ‘countdown’ on the United Nations’ 2030 Sustainable Development Goals passed the point where only 4,000 days remain until the deadline.

Representatives from Lebanon, Spain, and Argentina convened at the Summit, urging delegates not to regard the SDGs just as upcoming targets. Instead, the three panelists assessed ways they can be deployed now as growth drivers, even by nations that are facing economic challenges.

5 Steps To Success
In Spain, the SDGs are already proving highly beneficial, acting as internal mobilizing tools and policy actions across economic, political, and environmental spheres.

Cristina Gallach, High Commissioner for the 2030 Agenda of Spain, highlighted two key achievements in this context. First, the SDGs are creating a government agenda for change; and second, they are working to mobilize both the private sector and civil society.

She also recommended five tactics for government leaders and policymakers to implement in their own nations:

1. Have strong leadership to ensure a clear message ‘from the top’ that the SDGs are a driving force for a country
2. Collaborate across the various levels of government
3. Use budget cycles and frame financial decisions through the lens of the SDGs
4. Localize to make sure any existing gaps are identified
5. Be transparent and provide data that shows the impact of SDG-led decisions

Gallach also outlined how some specific challenges in Spain are being addressed through responses that are shaped by the SDGs. These include creating an ecological transition plan, as climate change will increasingly affect the country, which is already prone to drought, as well as social issues. "Internal inequalities grew in Spain after the last EU economic crisis," she explained. "So the possibility of embracing the SDGs and the 2030 Agenda as a process for bringing back equality and inclusiveness is, for us, critical."

Coordinating Activity Around The SDGs
His Excellency Ghassan Hasbani, Lebanon’s Deputy Prime Minister, explained how Lebanon’s high refugee population – almost 40% of the total – creates major infrastructural, societal, and financial challenges. This has motivated the country to view the SDGs as necessary, not additional, components to its planning and recovery processes.

Hasbani highlighted that the SDGs are very useful for coordinating government activities. They provide a framework that the government can use at all levels to work together and form a unified vision for the country. He also pinpointed the key difference that the SDGs bring: a focus on sustainability. A recent conference in Paris called for more than $11 billion to be invested in Lebanon. “If we were to deploy that money without applying the SDG framework,” Hasbani explained, “we would probably lose the ‘S’ of SDG. And that is a dangerous thing when you are reconstructing a country and rebuilding an economy.” He acknowledged that translating pledges into reality is always challenging, but identified transparency and efficiency as critical success factors. A project or policy may look good on paper, but if the implementation is not inclusive and transparent, the intended outcomes most likely won’t be fully achieved.

So far in Lebanon, sectors such as healthcare and education have seen positive impacts from SDG-enabled policies. Other areas – notably environmental issues – are proving slower than anticipated.

Support & Oversight Are Vital
Alberto Gowland, Comptroller General of Argentina, detailed similar steps in his country, and described how the SDGs are now embedded into annual planning processes within Argentina’s government ministries.

His particular department is mandated with then checking that this policy is working effectively. Gowland recommended this ‘oversight’ role as a worthwhile extra dimension for governments to adopt. “As the internal control, we go to the different ministries and we see how they are performing at incorporating the SDG objectives,” he explained.

“Then we can monitor and guide these authorities on what we want them to do with the SDGs. And actually put the heat on if there is any backsliding.”

Addressing The Digital Divide
To bring the discussion to a close, Hasbani acknowledged the difficulties of governing today, when the digital divide is growing ever wider. He explained that this gap isn’t so alarming when it comes to basic communication tools, as devices such as smartphones are more affordable and accessible than ever before. The real digital divide, he noted, is related to services. Governments must improve access to technology-driven services in order to improve the lives of their citizens.

KEY POINTS
• The UN’s SDGs should be viewed as tools for growth, not just targets to be achieved
• Governments should use the SDGs to build policy, determine budgets, and coordinate activity
• Promises must be translated into action through an inclusive and transparent process

Promises must be translated into action through an inclusive and transparent process
Enablers For Achieving Agenda 2030

Agenda 2030 is the most ambitious and complex international agenda ever enacted, agreed a panel of public and private sector representatives. This discussion brought together His Excellency Richard Raši, Deputy Prime Minister for Investments and Informatization of Slovakia, Her Excellency María del Pilar Garrido Gonzalo, Minister of National Planning and Economic Policy of Costa Rica, His Excellency Professor Enrico Giovannini, Professor of Economic Statistics at the University of Rome, and Jack Dangermond, Co-founder and President of Esri, to share enablers for achieving the 17 Sustainable Development Goals.

The Road To Implementation
According to Raši, Slovakia has focused on three key areas when implementing the SDGs:

1. **Policy Integration**
   It is crucial to ensure that sustainable development lies at the heart of national, foreign, regional, and local policies.

2. **Participation**
   It will not be possible to achieve the SDGs without the participation of all groups of people.

3. **Partnership**
   Stakeholders in every country and sector – national governments, the private sector, non-governmental organizations, and regional and municipal administrations – must work together.

Raši also noted that the long-term view of these goals makes their implementation difficult, but certainly not impossible. “You have to plan and invest for something which is beyond the political cycle,” he explained, adding that financing and budgeting are integral pieces of the puzzle.

Dangermond explained that Costa Rica’s approach stems from its constitution and revolves around four primary elements:

1. **Growth and distribution of wealth**
2. **Strong institutions and governance**
3. **Evidence-based, tailor-made policy**
4. **Respecting human rights and incorporating women into labor markets and politics**

For Costa Rica, achieving sustainable development involves incorporating people into formal economic and labor markets so they can start their own businesses and mobilizing resources for the people who need them.

Gonzalo also advised that a multi-dimensional measurement, rather than GDP alone, allows us to see which countries are in the greatest need.

Understanding Inspires Action
Dangermond, whose company Esri provides geographic information systems and spatial data analytics technology, explained that he is currently working with the United Nations to build a united information system for the SDGs to streamline collaboration and data sharing. “Countries build their national statistics and geographic information portal, and they produce maps on the SDGs,” he explained, “And then that portal shares content to the UN’s portal, a kind of system of systems.”

Dangermond noted. The maps that these systems create also aid in that understanding, which is crucial for inspiring action. “We observe things, we analyze things, we make pictures of things, and then we act on them,” he said. To create the understanding necessary for addressing the world’s biggest challenges, he recommended measuring and aggregating data spatially.

Dangermond admitted that there are challenges to collecting and aggregating such a large amount of data accurately, and there is “no magic cure” to address these problems. However, he urged governments and organizations to keep trying because “we must do better.”

Shifting Paradigms In Education
Local politics can sometimes be an obstacle to implementing the SDGs anywhere in the world. Prof Giovannini asserted that education is critical to overcoming that barrier.

He highlighted Italy’s initiative that has launched e-learning courses for teachers centered on the SDGs. “Our e-learning course on the SDGs was taken by 33,000 teachers last year, and 28,000 will take it this year,” he reported. We must also rethink how universities are managed and provide sustainable development courses for journalists and policy-makers.

The 2030 Agenda is very complex, but it has generated new ways of conceptual thinking about problems. For example, even governments have changed the names of organizations and ministries to foster a holistic approach to challenges like sustainability and carbon emissions. This paradigm shift keeps those organizations from operating in silos, Prof Giovannini concluded.

KEY POINTS

- Partnerships and participation across all business sectors, governments, and organizations will improve the likelihood of meeting the 2030 Agenda
- Evidence-based, tailor-made policies are critical to the success of the SDGs
- Aggregating global data and making it accessible will help to inspire action
- Education is key to overcoming political barriers in implementing the SDGs
Global Policy Platform

Government leaders, heads of international organizations, and industry experts convened to discuss practical ways to implement policies and frameworks to tackle today’s challenges and deliver a more hopeful future.
Wellbeing: GDP & Beyond

A panel of policy-makers concerned with creating the conditions for happiness and wellbeing discussed the various essential factors for happy societies. Given the consensus that GDP alone is not an indicator of happiness, the panelists sought to answer the question of how governments can measure the wellbeing of their people.

**GDP & Beyond**

Her Excellency Ohood bint Khalfan Al Roumi, Minister of State for Happiness and Wellbeing of the UAE, began the panel discussion by highlighting that although GDP has been on the rise over the past few decades, quality of life indicators such as mental health and employment have dropped. The future of government, she stressed, must be pivoted on wellbeing, and not just GDP.

“We know that the world today is wealthier than ever before. However, there is increasing global agreement that the rising levels of inequality have become the issue of our time,” she said. As the Fourth Industrial Revolution transforms the world into a digital economy, she warned that it will put more pressure on life indicators such as depression and mental disorders, because people will lose their jobs. She called this a ‘crisis of purpose’.

Al Roumi told the story of the UAE, the first government to create a ministry focused on happiness and wellbeing, to encourage governments to put it at the heart of their policies. The UAE enjoyed good growth in GDP, but the country’s high level of wellbeing comes from the role of the government, she said.

“My Prime Minister, His Highness Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, frames the higher purpose of the government on achieving wellbeing and happiness. We take this philosophy as not just an add-on to government; it’s a paradigm shift that needs to change how we think about policies, how we do our services, and how we structure our bureaucracies.”

She continued, “For me, wellbeing is not just another portfolio added to the government’s structure. It needs hardwiring. It needs to be shifting the mindset and the culture.”

**Quality Of Life**

His Excellency Angel Gurría, Secretary General of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), discussed the OECD’s Better Life Index, which focuses on 11 different dimensions to quality of life, as well as the Global Happiness and Wellbeing Policy Report 2019, by the Global Happiness Council. But he emphasized that there is no formula for happiness because there is no single question that can determine a person’s or country’s overall level of wellbeing. It is a multidimensional issue that must be approached from many different angles, of which GDP is only one.

His Excellency Achim Steiner, Administrator of the United Nations Development Programme, talked about the UN’s 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). He pointed out that the 17 SDGs do address risk factors for unhappiness, so if achieved, the SDGs translate into more equitable, sustainable, and thriving societies.

“You might say, ‘oh goals, targets, indicators, that’s hardly a recipe for happiness’. No, there is no recipe for happiness,” he said.

Steiner suggested that the economy has become a benchmark for happiness because it was very often a source of unhappiness, but he countered, “That is a very misleading indicator because some of the fastest growing countries are amongst the unhappiest countries.”

He predicted that over the next 50 to 100 years, the world will broaden the way it defines development, and that it will be much more connected to wellbeing.

“I think the two defining variables that will be at the center of the next paradigm that is emerging now are going to be equality and sustainability. They are the two defining variables with which we are rethinking the entire way in which we design our economies,” he concluded.

**KEY POINTS**

- There is a consensus that economic indicators do not equal happiness and wellbeing
- There is no single formula, but many factors affect happiness and wellbeing
- The 17 SDGs try to address risk factors for unhappiness
- The world is rethinking how it defines development, which will be based on equality and sustainability
High-level Panel On The Implementation Of The SDGs

Experts in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals, working at the highest levels of leadership, came together at the Summit to discuss the necessary steps to implementing the SDGs.

The Role Of Leadership
His Excellency Ban Ki-moon, President and Chair of the Global Green Growth Institute and former Secretary General of the United Nations, opened the discussion by touching on the essential roles of leadership in the SDG agenda. “When it comes to global issues like climate change and the Sustainable Development Goals, leadership by political leaders is absolutely crucial,” he emphasized. Formulating sound policies can only be accomplished at the highest level of government. However, these high-level leaders must have clear vision of what they are working toward and assume some ownership over the 2030 Agenda to ensure it is implemented.

His Excellency Mahmoud Mohieldin, Senior Vice President for the 2030 Development Agenda, United Nations Relations, and Partnerships of the World Bank Group, agreed. Leadership at all levels needs to be engaged in achieving the SDGs. “It’s not just about having a strong inspiring leadership at the top of the global system,” he said, “and it is not enough to have some powerful prime ministers and presidents. It is very much the case that we need to have strong leadership at the local level, at the city level, and in the villages.”

Ideas On Leadership
Her Excellency María Fernanda Espinosa Garces, President of the 73rd Session of the United Nations General Assembly, agreed that political leadership is important. However, she emphasized that implementing the SDGs is about social ownership and shared responsibility as well. She outlined three ideas on leadership that she sees as pivotal to the success of the 2030 Agenda: 1. The concept of ‘leadership’ extends beyond government and international organization officials. Delivering on the SDGs requires collective action from all levels – including civil society.

2. There are different scales of leadership. Social and political issues should be addressed at the most local level possible to ensure that the resolutions actually help those who are affected.

3. Local governments and municipalities are incredibly important to achieving the SDGs at the parochial level.

Engagement & Ownership
The Honorable Henry Puna, Prime Minister of the Cook Islands, highlighted that his island nation has come a long way in implementing the SDGs. For the Cook Islands, having total buy-in from leadership has proven essential. “Believing in the SDGs is actually very, very important,” he explained. “Strong leadership requires passion, commitment, understanding, respect, and a coherent implementation plan.” Additionally, he asserted that individuals, as well as leadership, need to be engaged and feel ownership over the goals. In his country, they have given the SDGs a “local flavor” so that citizens can understand the goals and the benefits they bring. This has resulted in increased public buy-in for the implementation and success of the SDGs.

His Excellency Achim Steiner, Administrator of the United Nations Development Programme, agreed that personal ownership is crucial in achieving SDGs. “Wherever you are, whether you’re in a family, in a school, in a business, in a government department, take the SDGs and make them a personal responsibility,” he urged. “You have to put yourself on the line and you have to also do things differently.” The SDGs need to be something that everyone embraces and takes some personal responsibility for – “whether you are a prime minister, you lead a UN organization, or you are a 13-year-old girl somewhere in school getting frustrated by what you hear.”

KEY POINTS
- Government leadership needs to be engaged at all levels to achieve the SDGs
- Localizing the SDGs helps garner public support and buy-in for the 2030 Agenda
- Individuals must feel ownership over and responsibility for the SDGs to make them successful
Generation Unlimited
In Partnership With
The United Nations
Children's Fund

A two-pronged approach must be taken to empower youth with the transferable skills that will allow them to be flexible, adaptable, and resilient in today’s rapidly evolving world. In an enlightening discussion, panelists introduced two campaigns targeted at critical stages in children’s education – the Dubai Declaration on Early Childhood, launched by Dubai Cares and the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF), in coordination with the UAE Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, and UNICEF’s Generation Unlimited.

The Innovation Economy
Kamran Elahian, Founder and Chairman of Global Innovation Catalyst, explained that education systems need to reflect the shift from the knowledge economy to the innovation economy. Most school systems are still focused on equipping students with the skills to succeed in the knowledge economy, but the emerging innovation economy, which is geared toward entrepreneurship, demands a completely different set of abilities. “In the innovation economy, ideas are a dime a dozen. Patents don’t mean anything. Intellectual property is a thing of the past. What matters is execution and implementation.”

The entrepreneur and venture capitalist, who works with international organizations on enterprise education, advised governments to split up enterprise support into micro-funds. Instead of setting up a $100 million fund for one or two big organizations to manage, he advocates giving $1 million micro-funds to 100 different organizations that invest small amounts in the ideas of young people aged 15 and up.

Elahian emphasized that the only way to effectively teach entrepreneurship is to let people experience it. He likened it to learning chemistry, where students aren’t just taught basic theory. They’re allowed into the chemistry lab to run experiments under the guidance of their teacher. This approach enables people to fail and learn from their experiences.

The Dubai Declaration
The speakers agreed that the first 1,000 days of children’s lives are crucial to empowering them as youths. The Dubai Declaration on Early Childhood responds to the growing scientific consensus that children’s early development directs their mental and emotional trajectories throughout their lives, with major implications for the economy and stability of their communities. It calls for a rapid increase in global investment in the early years of children’s lives and outlines the elements, such as good nutrition, healthcare, attention, playing, and being loved within a family, that are fundamental to ensuring children brains and bodies develop correctly.

Dr Tariq Al Gurg, CEO of Dubai Cares, explained that a child’s brain and body is growing in their first 1,000 days. Should the child not receive the nutrition he or she requires, the brain and body will stop growing and their ability to learn will reduce. A major challenge for governments today is trying to empower youth in developing countries, who did not benefit from this care in their first 1,000 days. From now, we must invest at this early age to equip the youth with the potential to become the future of their nations.

KEY POINTS
• The Dubai Declaration on Early Childhood calls for governments to invest in the crucial first 1,000 days of a child’s life
• Children’s brain development in these early years affects their ability to learn in later life
• Generation Unlimited aims to provide education and training and nurture entrepreneurship among adolescents
• Education systems must empower young people with the skills they need for the future
Governed Future Risk
In Partnership With
The Organisation For
Economic Co-operation & Development

Governments have a responsibility to protect their citizens. While dangers and risks cannot be avoided, proper planning and preparation can help reduce the consequences and cost of a crisis. In this discussion, a panel of experts shared their approaches to mitigating various types of risk.

A Riskier Landscape
His Excellency Angel Gurría, Secretary General of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, opened the session. He stated that over the past two decades, the range and complexity of the hazards that governments need to manage have increased dramatically. Today’s risks include cyber-attacks, pandemics, terrorism, natural disasters, and extreme weather events. Furthermore, social networking and fast-paced technological change have increased the speed at which risks become crises.

“Whoever saw the risk that 3.5 million Syrians would now be living in Turkey, or 1.5 million living in Lebanon or in Jordan, much smaller countries than Turkey? And then that two countries – Syria and Libya – would be falling apart at the same time?”, he asked.

He added that Europe was not prepared for the impact this would then have there. “Not only because they were not prepared to deal physically with the pressure of the migrants, but also because they had not discussed the policies.”

Immigration is driving countries apart, fracturing entire governments because the risk was not addressed. Gurría emphasized the need for governments to use evidence in risk management, enabling them to constantly review, revise, and reform policies. He said a whole-of-government approach is “absolutely paramount” when managing risk, and that governments need to define ambitious goals and time frames.

A Cross-sectional Approach
UAE Minister of State for Food Security Her Excellency Mariam bint Mohammed Al Meheiri explained that the UAE’s risk-management strategy involved adopting a cross-sectional approach, leveraging the private sector, and establishing a risk-monitoring assessment scheme.

They then focused on three main areas. First, they identify the risks happening on a global level, including issues such as climate change, because the UAE imports more than 90% of its food. Second, she said the population is growing while food production is slowing down. “We have a food gap increasing. Where are we going to get the food from when our natural resources are already exhausted in many parts of the world?” she asked.

The third element is people’s consumption patterns, with two extremes happening at the same time – hunger is increasing while obesity rates are also going up.

“Taking this all into play, we really have to ensure that we are developing, growing, and trying to reach the targets we want to reach. We want to become among the top 10 countries in the world that are food secure by 2021,” Al Meheiri told the Summit.

Transparency & Accountability

Governments must review what they did well and what could be improved at the same time?”, he asked.

“Whoever saw the risk that 3.5 million Syrians would now be living in Turkey, or 1.5 million living in Lebanon or in Jordan, much smaller countries than Turkey? And then that two countries – Syria and Libya – would be falling apart at the same time?” he asked.

He added that Europe was not prepared for the impact this would then have there. “Not only because they were not prepared to deal physically with the pressure of the migrants, but also because they had not discussed the policies.”

Immigration is driving countries apart, fracturing entire governments because the risk was not addressed. Gurría emphasized the need for governments to use evidence in risk management, enabling them to constantly review, revise, and reform policies. He said a whole-of-government approach is “absolutely paramount” when managing risk, and that governments need to define ambitious goals and time frames.

A Cross-sectional Approach
UAE Minister of State for Food Security Her Excellency Mariam bint Mohammed Al Meheiri explained that the UAE’s risk-management strategy involved adopting a cross-sectional approach, leveraging the private sector, and establishing a risk-monitoring assessment scheme.

They then focused on three main areas. First, they identify the risks happening on a global level, including issues such as climate change, because the UAE imports more than 90% of its food. Second, she said the population is growing while food production is slowing down. “We have a food gap increasing. Where are we going to get this food from when our natural resources are already exhausted in many parts of the world?” she asked.

The third element is people’s consumption patterns, with two extremes happening at the same time – hunger is increasing while obesity rates are also going up.

“Taking this all into play, we really have to ensure that we are developing, growing, and trying to reach the targets we want to reach. We want to become among the top 10 countries in the world that are food secure by 2021,” Al Meheiri told the Summit.
The Future Of Digital Cooperation In Partnership With The United Nations

Digital technologies readily cross national boundaries, but the corresponding issues they raise around privacy, competition, and regulation do not. A panel of five experts debated this imbalance and proposed a range of solutions that should be adopted within an environment enabled by the United Nations.

Cooperation Is Key
Amandeep Singh Gill, Executive Director of the Secretariat of the High-Level Panel on Digital Cooperation, reinforced this view: “Each nation is seeking its own path, rather than opting for cooperation.”

Gill gave three examples of where nations find themselves working in silos:
1. Cybersecurity
2. Election interference
3. The manipulation of public opinion to undermine trust

“When a country tries to reach out across borders on these issues, it encounters limitations and obstacles. Our job is to find out what those obstacles are, and suggest ways to enhance cooperation in addressing them. This is a global problem,” he emphasized. “Just like climate change, it has to be addressed globally.”

Exploring New Methods
His Excellency Francis Gurry, Director General of the World Intellectual Property Organization, confirmed that the problem is not the absence of rules, but their harmonization. “GDPR is great, but what if China, the United States, or India introduces a different form?” he asked. Each country is forging its own path, rather than opting for cooperation.

New approaches are required to encourage harmonization, and traditional methods, such as devising a treaty, take too long. “Treaties take at least five years. They really belong to the 19th century, because now, if you wait five years, the world has moved on.”

Gurry advocated involving the private sector in order to develop appropriate solutions, highlighting the recent shift of information resources in their direction.

More Regulation, Not Less
This suggestion was supported by Markus Reinisch, who, as Vice President of Public Policy in Europe, the Middle East, and Africa for Facebook, moved on.

Reinisch also dismissed the idea that more regulation is needed, but the United Nations should provide a framework for this. “Solutions will start bottom up; the UN should provide the framework for this.”

He too felt that a treaty-based framework was unrealistic. “Ultimately, we need a set of globally acceptable values,” he concluded.

KEY POINTS
- Countries are enacting policies to regulate digital technologies, but these efforts have not been coordinated.
- Bringing the global community together is key - it cannot be left to single nations or any one party.
- The United Nations should provide the framework within which digital cooperation across nations can be developed.
- More regulation is needed, but the traditional methods are not the right approach.
Transforming The Future: Creating Value Through Government Innovation In Partnership With The Organisation For Economic Co-operation & Development

His Excellency Angel Gurría, Secretary General of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) opened the discussion by launching the 2019 edition of Embracing Innovation in Government, a report published by the OECD in partnership with the Mohammed bin Rashid Centre for Government Innovation.

The report highlights 542 government innovations from 84 countries, providing case studies and best practices on how governments can innovate to work better, faster, and cheaper to benefit the most people.

What Tomorrow Looks Like

Gurría explained that the world is experiencing an unprecedented technological revolution and that innovation in government is fundamental to earning people’s trust.

According to Gurría, one of the most important consequences of the global financial crisis of the last decade, among slow growth, the loss of millions of jobs, and growing inequality, was the loss of trust in the government. “This is why this report is important,” he asserted. “We need to show innovators worldwide what tomorrow can look like.”

Her Excellency Huda Al Hashimi, Assistant Director General for Strategy and Innovation of the UAE’s Prime Minister’s Office, mentioned that the report, now in its third year, is brought to life at every Summit. It is showcased as the Edge of Government experience, which exhibits outstanding examples of government innovation.

Al Hashimi also launched the Global Innovation Council, which aims to create globally relevant innovation policies for the UAE and the wider world, as well as facilitating collaborative learning across governments and forming global benchmarks in public sector services.

Reaping The Rewards

Discussing the role of government in supporting private sector initiatives, Professor Mariana Mazzucato, Founding Director of the Institute for Innovation and Public Purpose at the University of College London, pointed out that government-funded innovation are not successful. She gave the example of pharmaceuticals in the United States (US) to illustrate how the fruits of government-funded innovation are not distributed to the people. The National Institutes of Health, which is part of the US Department of Health and Human Services, spends $30 billion dollars every year on health innovation, but these developments rarely reach the public actually benefits when they are implemented.

Prof Mazzucato also advised governments to do more to socialize the rewards of its investments so that the public actually benefits when they are successful. She gave the example of in the Fourth Industrial Revolution, governments often lag one or even two generations behind. One of the most important things governments can do to bridge this gap is focus on customer centricity.

Siim Sikkut, Estonia’s Chief Information Officer, echoed this sentiment. Estonia has been on the road to building its digital government for more than 20 years, he explained, and during that time it has learned some important lessons. Chief among these lessons is that a government must work directly with its residents when redesigning its services. This not only creates value for the country’s citizens and residents, but it also increases trust in the government.

Her Excellency Dr Rauda Al Saadi, Director General of Abu Dhabi Digital Authority, highlighted her organization’s efforts to create a customer-centric journey by focusing on engaging the public, in-house talent, the private sector, and academia. She said Abu Dhabi had more than 1,500 individual services offered through multiple websites and apps, and the authority aims to bring everything under one customer-centric model, called ‘TAMM’, which in Arabic means ‘done’.

As they do this, they are reaching out to various groups and working closely with the public through a range of tools. They include a 24/7 customer touchpoint, a public feedback application for the city, a design factory where they engage the public’s help in drafting blueprints for the most critical end-to-end journeys, and ‘cool creation’ areas in its service centers where the public can also become part of the design process.

“We also market our product as a beta version, and we make sure that the public is part of the evaluation process,” she said.

KEY POINTS

- The Embracing Innovation in Government report and the Edge of Government experience showcase outstanding examples of innovation in government from around the world
- Government innovation is an investment, and the rewards should be shared with the citizens
- Customer centricity is key when designing or redesigning public services
The Road To Digital Economy: The Role Of Blockchain In Partnership With The International Monetary Fund

An expert panel representing governments, regulators, international organizations, and the private sector discussed their experiences in implementing blockchain technologies, and some of the hurdles to seizing the opportunities they present.

Experimental Estonia
Siim Sikkut, Chief Information Officer of the Government of Estonia, kicked off the discussion by sharing the journey of the Estonian government, which has created a shared platform based on establishing an identity system where the user’s identity is verified centrally. This system underpins all digital initiatives, from national electronic health record to online voting. The government has also implemented pro-digital regulation, such as the acceptance of digital signatures for all contracts, enabling them to bring all services online. Another law prevents departments from requesting any data that the government, or some part of it, already has. This forces different parts of government to be more user centric.

Blockchain-powered services include publishing logs for the citizen about which government officials have accessed or updated their data, which helps build trust and flag any issues. Today, Estonia is looking at how to implement artificial intelligence, and Sikkut advocated a spirit of experimentation. “Instead of talking and trying to figure out the perfect solution, let’s try stuff out to see if it works. If it works, let’s improve, let’s scale, let’s start making use of it fully.”

Uses For Blockchain
The panelists highlighted various initiatives conducted by their organizations to implement blockchain technology.

Nelson Chow, Chief Fintech Officer of the Hong Kong Monetary Authority, said the authority has launched proof-of-concept projects covering digital identity, property valuation, and a central bank digital currency. In 2018, they worked with a consortium of banks to release a trade finance product to the market.

Thérèse Couture, Director of the Treasury Operations Department of the World Bank, cited a project in Kenya to bring micro pensions to 14 million informal workers and another with the government of Haiti to help increase revenues for mango and avocado farmers by bringing visibility to market data, such as pricing and provenance. The World Bank also issued the world’s first global legally binding bond, issued and managed throughout its lifecycle on a private and permissioned blockchain, in association with the Commonwealth Bank of Australia and with the help of Microsoft. Her Excellency Dr Aisha Bint Butti Bin Bishr, Director General of the Smart Dubai Office, described the Dubai Blockchain Strategy, which is now in its third year and receiving more than 700 applications from budding blockchain entrepreneurs. The results of the challenge are to be announced at the world-leading event for innovators in the subject, the Global Blockchain Summit, which attracts thousands of attendees to Dubai.

Regulatory Requirements
Promoth Manghat, Group CEO and Executive Director of Finablr, told the Summit that the movement of money requires collaboration and more talent and some of the hurdles to seizing the opportunities they present.

Siim Sikkut (1)
Chief Information Officer of the Government of Estonia

Nelson Chow (2)
Chief Fintech Officer of the Hong Kong Monetary Authority

Thérèse Couture (3)
Director of the Treasury Operations Department of the World Bank

HE Dr Aisha Bint Butti Bin Bishr (4)
Director General of the Smart Dubai Office

Promoth Manghat (5)
Group CEO & Executive Director of Finablr

Ross Leckow (6)
Deputy General Council of the International Monetary Fund, Moderator
The Future Of Energy

A panel of industry leaders discussed the opportunities presented by renewable energy in a session about the future of energy.

His Excellency Engineer Suhail Mohamed Faraj Al Mazrouei, Minister of Energy and Industry of the UAE, began by reflecting on the current volatility of the oil market, expressing optimism that it would stabilize by the first quarter of 2020. Based on preliminary production reports, he expected the oil market to see a correction during 2019 and he was optimistic that targets would remain on track and all countries were doing their part.

“My expectation is that we will see a balance during the first quarter, unless something happens. No one can predict what could happen... I think we’re doing our best to achieve that balance during the early part of the year,” he said.

Powering Better Cities

Steering the conversation to renewable energy, Al Mazrouei said that the aim of the World Government Summit is to set an example for governments. The public sector must collaborate with the private sector to regulate the energy sector. This partnership is needed to achieve two main goals: to make cities better for current and future generations to live in, and to reduce the cost of energy.

“We need them [cities] to be cleaner than how they are today. That’s why we are believing and betting on renewable energy for the future,” he explained.

“We are working together with the private sector to ensure that the energy of the future is not only going to be cleaner, but is going to be more affordable for the generations to come.”

Al Mazrouei stressed that these goals are impossible to achieve without making efficiencies and using less energy. He cited the UAE’s efforts in reducing the cost of energy and trying to make it cleaner, telling the audience of the nation’s target to cut CO2 emissions by 70% by 2050. The ambition of this target, he said, has not been matched by many governments, especially not oil-producing ones.

“We can only do that if we target efficiency improvements, and we believe we can do it.” He pledged to share their progress in future sessions of the World Government Summit.

Interim Solutions

Joe Kaeser, President and CEO of Siemens AG, emphasized that while he was a proponent for renewable energy, there remains much to be done to improve fossil fuels.

“First of all, I do believe that renewable is the future. On the other hand, you also need to go and see how we can make fossil fuels more effective and efficient and cleaner,” he stated.

He said he believes in having a carbon-free world by 2100, but pointed out that there are 81 years to go, so we need to find a way to be more efficient before then.

He championed hybrid technologies as a flexible alternative where certain methods of renewables may not be ideal. For example, he said electric-powered vehicles may not be the most viable option for transport in regions like the Middle East where the heat quickly degrades batteries. Wind and solar power could be used to create hydrogen, however, which could then power public transport.

Kaeser said that forward-thinking governments are essential for enabling the private sector to develop renewable solutions, and Siemens has chosen to start its hydrogen project in the UAE because of its visionary regime, with ‘close to perfect’ execution.

Making Efficiencies

His Excellency Saeed Mohammed Al Tayer, CEO and Managing Director of Dubai Electricity and Water Authority (DEWA), said the cost of renewable energy has fallen significantly, and he highlighted DEWA’s 15 year journey to improve energy transmission and distribution, reduce power loss by more than 50%, improve reliability for customers, and reduce fuel usage and CO2 output. He said the upgrades have reduced losses to some of the lowest in the world.

“This is really a big saving for us from an environmental and also from a CO2 reduction point of view. Besides that, we have a very ambitious target for renewables," Al Tayer told the Summit.

KEY POINTS

• The UAE aims to cut CO2 emissions by 70% by 2050
• DEWA’s target is for 75% of energy in UAE to be renewable by 2050
• Governments and the private sector must work in partnership to achieve these goals
• Renewable energy is the future, but fossil fuels must be made more efficient in the short term

That target is to generate 75% of its electricity from renewable energy sources by 2050, most of which will be achieved using photovoltaics, but the authority also has a concentrated solar power project, he said.
Outlook On Global Trade

His Excellency José Luis Rodríguez Zapatero, former Prime Minister of Spain, His Excellency Paulo Portas, Former Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs of Portugal, His Excellency Sultan bin Saed Al Mansoori, Minister of Economy of the United Arab Emirates, Her Excellency Arancha González, Executive Director of the International Trade Centre, and His Excellency Mukhisa Kituyi, Secretary General of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, convened at the Summit to examine the outlook for global trade.

A Multilateral Future

According to González, recent unilateralist actions and rhetoric from countries such as the United States has led to a revival in multilateralism. This may seem contradictory, she noted, but it has shed light on areas of trade created uncertainty among its outcome doesn’t negatively impact the rest of the world.

Challenges To Globalization

Kituyi asserted that the future of international trade must be a multilateral one. He pointed out that growing world trade in the last 30 years has created development and wealth, and has reduced poverty. He is confident that the G20 will provide a vision for economic cooperation that will keep pace with globalization.

US-China Tensions

Tensions between the United States (US) and China were a hot topic of discussion during the panel. Portas explained that the world has a new economic order, but a new, parallel political order hasn’t developed alongside it. Through increased globalization and digitization, China has challenged the global leadership of the United States, creating a new balance of power. This is an issue that any US administration will have to face. Al Mansoori advised other nations not to take sides in the US-China debate, as both countries are vital to global trade. The goal should be trade cooperation among all nations.

Reforming The WTO

The panelists all agreed that the WTO is a necessary entity, but that it needs to be reformed. González asserted that to improve the WTO, we must focus on the three main changes that the organization has faced over the past 10 years:

1. Stakeholders
   - The WTO’s stakeholders have changed drastically, and these newcomers need to step up and take responsibility for changing the system.

2. The shape of trade
   - The shape of international trade has shifted from “analog” to digital. The WTO must learn how to govern the huge amounts of data that come with this new form of trade.

3. Obstacles
   - Obstacles to trade have also transformed. Tariffs used to be the primary roadblock, but now the primary question is how to regulate the new digital economy.

Zapatero stated that the most important thing is for the WTO to develop a new world trade that is more demanding from a labor, social, and gender equality standpoint. This will make the organization a tool of the Sustainable Development Goals. He sees positive movement in this direction, citing that more companies are adopting gender equality standpoint. This will make the WTO a tool of the Sustainable Development Goals. He sees positive movement in this direction, citing that more companies are adopting sustainability practices that integrate into the digital economy.

Brexit Negotiations

Brexit was the panel’s last topic of discussion. Zapatero believes it is almost impossible and that there should be a second referendum. “If one analyzes the set of economic, legal, and political relations of the United Kingdom with the European Union (EU), they realize that it is a great labyrinth.”

Al Mansoori interpreted Brexit as a political vote that was done hastily without studying the full impact. Many people only focused on the trade deficit between Europe and the United Kingdom and did not consider the bigger picture. “It would have been wiser if they would have analyzed all the aspects of why they have failed in certain parts of this, and provide a solution and maybe a timeline to address it with certain sectors and then hopefully manage it.”

In conclusion, González stated that there hasn’t been any democratic debate between the British people and their elected officials about Brexit. She urged them to open this discussion as soon as possible so the referendum’s outcome doesn’t negatively impact the rest of the world.

KEY POINTS

- The future of international trade must be a multilateral one
- Other countries should not take sides in the US-China debate because both countries are important to global trade
- The underlying challenges of globalization that are clouding international trade need to be tackled head-on
- The WTO is necessary, but it needs to be reformed
- There needs to be a healthy democratic debate about Brexit within the United Kingdom so that its outcome doesn’t negatively impact the rest of the world
The Future Of Digital Policy In Partnership With Google

Karan Bhatia, Google’s Vice President of Global Public Policy and Government Relations, urged governments to work in close partnership with individual industries and each other to develop comprehensive and consistent legislation, as he opened a panel discussion on ‘The Future of Digital Policy’.

Although regulations are needed to protect the public, they could, however, obstruct economic productivity if they are fragmented or too prescriptive.

Regulations should be technology neutral, Bhatia asserted, giving the example of the energy sector setting laws on emissions. Not specifying the technologies by which utility companies must reach emission targets has led to the multiplication of new and innovative energy sources. The worst thing that can be done is limiting trade or trying to dictate market outcomes, he said, warning against protectionism. Instead, market outcomes, he said, warning limiting trade or trying to dictate new and innovative energy sources.

“Regulations should not limit trade or try to dictate market outcomes. Instead, they should leverage the private sector for creative solutions,” he said. “The best way to do this is through smart regulations that align where possible. While large companies may be able to navigate complex, inconsistent regulatory environments relatively easily, small companies will struggle. Establishing some common ‘rules of the road’ that are recognized by governments around the world would be extremely helpful in developing smart regulations.”

The panelists agreed that smart regulation helps countries seize the opportunities offered by digital technology. It must also guard against risks, including the potential misuse of new technologies, privacy concerns, consumer protection, competition, content, and, in the domain of AI, the overcategorization of people. The infrastructure challenge is significant, but in order to get to the opportunities that 5G delivers...you have to do that hard work first.”

Enabling Access
The countries that are going to succeed in this new digital economy of the future are those that have invested in the infrastructure needed to develop and access technology, noted Bhatia. He warned that almost half the world’s population is still not online, which is likely to exacerbate inequality.

Margaret Peterlin, Senior Vice President of Global External and Public Affairs at AT&T, emphasized the importance of education and training. “Our citizens in the digital world, trust, which is the trust ‘digital trust’ among our citizens. Governments should aim to foster ‘digital trust’ among their citizens.”

Investing in Human Capital
Bhatia explained that governments should leverage the private sector for education. He highlighted Google’s ‘Maharat Min Google’ initiative to help Arabic speakers, particularly women, and younger people, prepare for the future with free courses, tools, and in-person training around digital skills.

“That needs to be a strong push, a strong prioritization by governments to update youth education and integrate digital skills and resources into the schools,” he stressed. “We also need to make sure that governments don’t forget to invest in reskilling the workforce. This is a lifelong learning commitment that needs to be adopted to succeed in this space.”

KEY POINTS
• Policies should support digital infrastructure and education, while protecting against risks
• Setting consistent regulations – regionally where possible – can help innovative businesses, although individual countries and cultures have their own needs
• Regulations should not limit trade or try to dictate market outcomes
• Governments should aim to foster ‘digital trust’ among their citizens

Dr Talaat concluded that governments have an obligation to achieve ‘digital trust’, which he described as, “the trust of our citizens in the digital world, trust that the digital world will avail jobs, not deprive jobs, that the digital world will protect their privacy, help them trade better, find better jobs, get better training, and get free access to the global world.”
The Future Of Crypto & Digital Assets

Martin Bartlam, Partner, International Group Head of Finance, and Projects and FinTech Global Co-chair of DLA Piper, Ross Leckow, Deputy General Counsel of the International Monetary Fund, and Laurence White, Member of the Secretariat to the Financial Stability Board, came together to discuss the opportunities, risks, and potential regulation of crypto and digital assets.

Opportunities & Risks
Crypto assets and blockchain technology have attracted the attention of policy-makers, innovators, entrepreneurs, and investors around the world. While there is a great deal of opportunity in this space, in the past few years many potential risks have surfaced.

The panelists agreed that since the market has now matured, the next phase of crypto and digital assets requires further development of the regulatory landscape.

Bartlam explained that raising capital is crucial for economies all over the globe and that security regimes shouldn’t be economically prohibitive or prevent businesses from forming capital. However, there needs to be compliance. “If you’re fundamentally looking to raise capital, then you’re going to need to comply with the regulatory capital rules that apply in different countries around the world,” he said.

Leckow asserted that the International Monetary Fund (IMF) is one of the many entities working on regulatory frameworks for cryptocurrencies and fintech. “These types of issues fall very squarely within the IMF’s mandate to promote the stability and effective operation of the international monetary system and the global financial system underlying it,” he noted.

Monitoring The Crypto Space
While cryptocurrencies can open up opportunities for those looking to raise capital across borders, it also creates an easier path for bad actors such as money launderers and terrorists to conduct transactions.

To help mitigate those risks, Leckow explained that the IMF works with industry leaders who consult with the fund to help set standards and policies in the crypto market. He highlighted the IMF’s Bali Fintech Agenda, produced in partnership with the World Bank. The agenda is a “comprehensive statement of issues that countries need to think about in approaching fintech and technological innovation, including cryptocurrencies.”

While there may be some risks, White does not believe that crypto assets pose a risk to the global financial system. “So far we’ve monitored risks to the global financial system from crypto assets and we don’t see material risks to global financial stability at this time,” he asserted.

Instead, the Financial Stability Board found that the crypto-assets space is a parallel financial system to the traditional financial system. Thus, it has not greatly impacted the regulated financial sector. However, White does believe that vigilant monitoring of the crypto market is necessary due to the speed of technology development and a lack of transparency inherent to the crypto space.

With the crypto-assets space still in the nascent stage, Leckow advised entities to work together to determine how this market should be regulated. “We’re still at a very early stage, with the possible exception of money laundering legislation, in developing best practices or standards that would apply more commonly across the membership,” he said. “What that points to is the need for international cooperation and exchange of experiences on how to approach these issues.”

Entities such as the IMF and the World Bank are in a strong position to help in these areas, he concluded.

KEY POINTS

- Crypto markets present enormous opportunities in terms of raising capital, especially across borders
- Digital assets pose a number of risks due to the introduction of relatively new markets and its inherent lack of transparency
- The crypto-assets space is considered a parallel market to traditional financial systems
- International cooperation and knowledge exchange will be crucial to developing best practices and legislation to regulate cryptocurrencies
Investing In Digital Economy: The New Approach For Development Funds

Development funds and public-private partnerships are crucial to supporting sustainable development, agreed a panel of experts in an open discussion on financing projects that aim to grow the digital economy.

His Excellency Dr Fahad Al Mubarak, Minister of State and Secretary General of the G20 Saudi Secretariat, His Excellency Jin Liqun, President and Chairman of the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank, Ferid Belhaj, Vice President for the Middle East and North Africa of the World Bank Group, His Excellency Mohammed Saif Al Suwaidi, President & Chairman of the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank, and Dr Abdul-Hakim Elwaer, Director General of the Abu Dhabi Fund for Development, came together to discuss ongoing projects as well as the future of the digital economy.

Investing In Digital Infrastructure

Digital infrastructure is vital for economic and social development, but it must be balanced with a supporting physical infrastructure.

Banks and development funds from around the region are rethinking how new projects are funded. In Saudi Arabia, Dr Al Mubarak explained that the nation has restructured its development funds to adapt to new technology. Digital infrastructure requirements are now written into each loan, he said, which increases investment in digital infrastructure projects.

Physical infrastructure still plays an important role as a building block in sustainable development, added Al Suwaidi. “Unless we have the platform, unless we do have that infrastructure, no digital economy will be there,” he explained.

In addition to physical and digital infrastructure projects, Belhaj highlighted the importance of human capital, which he referred to as the ‘real wealth of our nations’. “This is why we engaged in the last couple of years in putting together a Human Capital Index,” he said in reference to the World Bank’s human capital analysis. “So that we can measure the performance of our countries, of our youth, when it comes to engaging on education, and on health, and on social protection.”

Dr Al Mubarak agreed that reskilling and upskilling human capital is paramount to the digital economy. “Building the infrastructure, the physical part, is important, but what is also more important is building the human skills and reskilling people to be more innovative, develop applications, artificial intelligence, and content,” he said.

3 Components Of The Digital Economy

Dr Elwaer explained to the Summit that the digital economy has three primary components.

1. Infrastructure
   The first component encompasses the digital infrastructure, and the supporting physical infrastructure.

2. e-Business
   The second component, e-business, encompasses the actual applications and legal framework required in each country to allow business to be conducted over the digital infrastructure.

3. e-Commerce
   Finally, e-commerce is the actual delivery and transfer of goods and services from producer to consumer.

Of these three components, Dr Elwaer asserted that development banks are most concerned with putting infrastructure in place. “To the [multilateral development banks], they are more engaged with putting in the infrastructure because when we analyze the infrastructure, the major infrastructure, we talk about fiber optic, backbone connectivity; it is still a state-owned service, and this is where the MDBs need to invest more.”

Public-Private Partnerships

For financing digital infrastructure projects, the panelists asserted that there needs to be more emphasis on public-private partnerships. 

Liqun advised development banks and financiers to leverage the private sector to devise more innovative investment solutions. “We should invest in it through the private sector,” he said. “We should make sure that we really look at every opportunity to bring the private sector into the conversation.”

In addition to being a valuable financing resource for digital infrastructure projects, the private sector brings with it the ability to innovate faster than government entities. “We need to open the door, de-constrain the private sector, de-regulate as much as we can, so that you know we have private investment coming into our countries and engaging in this new economy,” said Belhaj.

The panelists concluded with the message that public and private entities need to collaborate and coordinate across the region to further support digital infrastructure development.

KEY POINTS

- Digital infrastructure is vital for economic and social development.
- Physical infrastructure projects and human capital are also key for sustainable development.
- Public-private partnerships are crucial to developing the digital economy because the private sector is an important source for financing and it can innovate faster than the public sector can
Tolerance As An Effective Way Of Combatting Crimes Impacting The Safety Of Our Communities

Initiating interfaith dialogue to help foster change across communities should be a joint effort between governments and religious leaders. Rabbi Diana Gerson, Associate Executive Vice President of the New York Board of Rabbis, stressed the importance of interfaith engagement."The importance of faith to human progress cannot be overemphasized. It is the lifeblood of human existence. Without faith, there is no trust, no hope, and renders one utterly hopeless."

Beyond individual faith, he also emphasized that interfaith engagement is crucial to achieving progress. Interfaith dialogue leads to declarations, and declarations give directions for action. "The secular and spiritual must work together for the common good. Ahluwalia advised governments to incorporate sacred values such as love, compassion, forgiveness, transparency, and humility into policies. He also recommended the creation of budgets for interfaith collaboration to help support policies and related actions."

The Value Of Children
Gualberto highlighted the challenges he faced when bringing the faith community in the Philippines together to fight the online sexual exploitation of children. In many of these child abuse cases, family members were involved because they were trying to earn money to survive.

"Some parents did not view online exploitation as a crime, as there is no physical contact. This was alarming and a huge challenge for us. We had to figure out how to solve the problem because when we rescued a child, it also meant the survival of the family was bleak," Gualberto explained.

Re-educating adults on the value of children is vital to combating this type of crime. "Children are a gift from God. They have dignity. They are not commodities in order for families to survive. Children are partners in the society," he said.

KEY POINTS

- Interfaith engagement can only flourish when there is respect and understanding for each other’s faiths.
- The pursuit of peace begins by first reflecting within oneself.
- Interfaith engagement is crucial to human progress.
- It is important for faith leaders to work together with governments and NGOs to develop effective measures against crime.
- Adults must be re-educated on the value of children.

On his own personal journey to find peace within himself, Ahluwalia discovered the importance of faith. "Faith gives you a direction and is the path to progress. "The importance of faith to human progress cannot be overemphasized. It is the lifeblood of human existence. Without faith, there is no trust, no hope, and renders one utterly hopeless."

Beyond individual faith, he also emphasized that interfaith engagement is crucial to achieving progress. Interfaith dialogue leads to declarations, and declarations give directions for action. "The secular and spiritual must work together for the common good. Ahluwalia advised governments to incorporate sacred values such as love, compassion, forgiveness, transparency, and humility into policies. He also recommended the creation of budgets for interfaith collaboration to help support policies and related actions."

The First Line Of Defense
How do we address the really difficult issues confronting families today? To answer this question, Gerson discussed her experience training clergies and children to identify domestic abuse and ways to address it. "It’s not just about protecting kids in one congregation, it’s about connecting and protecting all the children in our community because we’re in this together," she asserted.

It is imperative that leaders and clergy from different faiths, as well as government officials, work together to confront and tackle these issues. "We need to be able to walk into each other’s houses of worship, sit down, and talk. We need to act together to be able to take action against crimes. We have to do this in partnership with our government leaders because it’s the same community that we’re all trying to help advance."

While faith leaders are aware of the physical and online crimes being perpetrated against children, they underestimate the size of the problem. To be able to create effective policies and implement initiatives, Al Falasi stressed it is crucial for faith leaders to work with governments and NGOs. Policy-makers must support faith leaders because they are the “first line of defense.” They are often the first people a victim turns to for help when something terrible has happened.

If faith communities are connected, they can share crucial information, wisdom, and values. This will also help protect children against crime, irrespective of their religion.

The panel stressed the need to teach the values of peace, forgiveness, and service to others in schools. Government and religious leaders must work in strong partnerships to make a sustainable change and advance communities together.

Rabbi Diana Gerson (1) Associate Executive Vice President of the New York Board of Rabbis
Pastor Stephen Gualberto (2) Field Strategy Coordinator & Pastor for the GMA Church of the Nazarene
Bhai Sahib Bhai Mohinder Singh Ahluwalia (3) Chairman of Guru Nanak Nishkam Sewak Jatha, Chairman of the British Sikh Consultative Forum
HE Reem Abdullah Al Falasi (4) Secretary General of the Supreme Council of Motherhood & Childhood of the United Arab Emirates
Ernie Allen (5, Right) Chair of the WePROTECT Global Alliance, Former President & CEO of the National Center for Missing & Exploited Children, Moderator
Fiscal Coordination

In a session moderated by CNN’s John Defteros, four panelists highlighted the importance of fiscal coordination and the lessons to be learned from recent global events.

No Universal Plan
In his opening remarks, Marcelo Guigale, Director of the Department of Financial Advisory and Banking Services of the World Bank Group, emphasized that fiscal coordination is a central issue that affects all citizens, yet it fails to attract media attention. He praised the UAE for taking the lead in bringing this to the agenda as a global government issue.

According to Guigale, there is no single blueprint for fiscal coordination. “The success of fiscal policies depends on each country’s constitutional history, economic endowments, and political preference – whether you were independent sovereign units that came together and are now trying to figure how to achieve public and collective good,” he explained.

The nature of economic endowments also plays a large part. Sometimes a commodity such as gold or oil governs the economic services of a country, while other nations do not have any such assets. This dictates the kind of services that are provided to citizens.

One aspect of political preference is about understanding if citizens can tolerate large regional disparities.

Coordination For Stability
His Excellency Dr José Antonio González Anaya, Former Secretary of Finance and Public Credit of Mexico, explained that there will always be pressures where people try to spend and not raise taxes. He also brought attention to the significance of having a single currency. “If you can regulate the states by controlling the banks in a single currency, then it works well,” he said. “It’s important to make sure when you have a single currency across one country to not allow the states to borrow in a foreign currency, because then inevitably your central bank will have to bail in.”

Guigale mentioned that a simple test to measure the fiscal coordination of a country is to see if it has a medium-term fiscal framework. This means that all the country’s government units work together to decide the best path for growing the economy. They have to agree on a variety of factors, he noted, such as the accounting framework and budget cycles, to reach economic equilibrium.

Niels Thygesen, Chairman of the European Fiscal Board, agreed, adding that it is vital for a nation or union to define a medium-term fiscal framework so it can function as a unit during a crisis. Prior to the 2008 financial crisis, Europe was spending money that had been earned in a temporary boom – an approach that is clearly not sustainable. After the crash, many countries in the union plunged into serious debt. This brought attention to the importance of having a stable framework in place to build up buffers during profitable times to ensure debt does not spiral out of control.

The Need For Fiscal Discipline
Thygesen continued to explain that while the means of monitoring the debt to GDP ratio have been good, the willingness of governments to live up to it has been weak. Discipline is necessary to keep the long-term debt ratio on a stable course.

His Excellency Juan Carlos Echeverry Garzón, Former Minister of Finance and Public Credit of Colombia, noted that implementing solutions demands discipline, the involvement of consistent leadership, and a fiscal institution. He referred to Colombia’s experience of fiscal decentralization that led to mayors and governors borrowing against future revenue and overspending. Colombia’s solution to the macroeconomic and a regional crisis was to create an IMF institution in the Ministry of Finance and a constitutional mandate. “Discipline and ‘teeth’ are crucial,” he emphasized. “You can have the best laws, but if you don’t have the leadership and the teeth, those laws are written in sand.”

Guigale remarked that borrowing is not necessarily a negative activity. “It’s a good way to transfer the benefits of a given investment across generations.” To illustrate this, he explained that if an investment is going to benefit three generations in the future, then the payment for it must be made by all generations, not just one. “We tend to do the opposite. We leave our kids with a lot of debt, and they pay for everything we enjoy. If you have a good fiscal framework, then you are aware of your revenue model and are able to develop an adequate borrowing capacity,” he concluded.

KEY POINTS

- There is no single blueprint for fiscal coordination as it depends on each country’s constitutional history, economic endowments, and political preference.
- It is important to have a single currency across one nation.
- A medium-term fiscal framework can help measure the health or fiscal coordination of a country.
- Leadership, discipline, and an independent fiscal council are key to managing overspending.
- Borrowing can be a good way to transfer the benefits of a given investment across generations.