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OP-ED

Amid Global Crises,

Government Cooperation Is Key to Create a Better Future

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History is truly at a turning point. In the years ahead, the world has to overcome a myriad of challenges.

Already, we faced the damage done to our economies and our societies by COVID19- and climate change. And now, we also have to confront the repercussions of a dangerous clash between major global powers and between very different global value systems.

Where will this lead us?



I believe the answer will depend in large part on governments. Their policies can either lead to a more resilient, more inclusive, and more sustainable future, if they opt for cooperation, tech governance, and a long-term vision.

Or they can take us down to a new dark age of global conflict and climate crises, if they limit their action radius to short-sighted and self-interested policies.

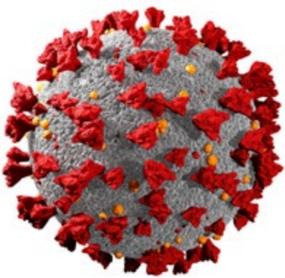
Indeed, in times of crisis such as these, the role of governments is more important and more relevant than ever. Of course, business, civil society, and other actors are drivers of prosperity. Their entrepreneurship, innovations, and activism create the possibility of progress for all. But when crises engulf entire societies, it is the role of government to provide direction, and ensure stability.



In these past years, this crucial function has come under tremendous stress.



First, the slow burn of climate change and rising inequalities eroded the basis for many societies to properly function.



Then, COVID knocked even the best-run communities off balance.



And recently, geopolitical conflict and the war in Ukraine have questioned the stability of global governance in its entirety.

We do not yet know the full extent of the systemic and structural changes which will happen in the years ahead due to this perfect storm of crises. However, we do know that global energy systems, food systems and supply chains will be deeply affected. In response, many societies will feel the urge to retreat on their own, in a quest to become self-sufficient and keep out global turbulence.



Yet, we need to go beyond crisis management and to look to constructive ways we can build our common future. We need to define a longer-term narrative to make the world better for all. And to deliver on this task, we need global platforms for governments shaping the future.

It is what both the World Government Summit and the World Economic Forum aim for.



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**So how do we get out of
the current Catch-22?**



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1.

First, governments should work on tech governance. With all the current issues on our agenda, we tend to forget that we are in the midst of a Fourth Industrial Revolution which accelerates global change in much more comprehensive and faster ways than the previous three revolutions. Like any system's change before, it can either lead us to better outcomes, or exacerbate the crises we are in.

Indeed, technology in itself isn't "good" or "bad". If we want new technologies to work for good, we must quickly recognize its potential. We must develop the necessary ethical and political frameworks around these new technologies to ensure that they are human-centred and society-oriented. Forward-looking, openminded governments are best placed to ensure this outcome.

At our Centres for the Fourth Industrial Revolution, we create the space for governments, business, and other actors to work on such positive outcomes. And their global reach and cooperation shows us that technology governance is of interest to governments around the world.

United Arab Emirates 
CENTRE FOR THE FOURTH INDUSTRIAL REVOLUTION

The UAE hosts a Centre, and so do Saudi Arabia, Israel and Turkey in the region, and the US, Japan, India and Brazil.



2.

Second, we need to come together more often again, and search for common solutions to global problems. COVID has enclosed many of us, physically and mentally, into a much smaller social circle. It has made us believe that the answer to global challenges, is to close ourselves off. But while isolation is good to contain a virus, it also makes us more insular.

Fighting profound global challenges such as climate change and COVID in insular ways, is bound to make each of us fail. What we need is global cooperation, and global, physical meetings such as these.

In fact, it was at Davos in January 2020, that scientists, entrepreneurs, government agencies and international organizations laid the groundwork for developing and distributing COVID vaccines.



3.

And third, governments need to focus again on the long-term, and not just on the short term. Understandably, the world has been in crisis mode for the past two years.

The emergency actions governments and others took in these times, helped prevent even worse disasters. They supported the economy, scaled up health solutions, and recently provided emergency relief.

But to prosper in future generations, and peacefully co-exist among nations, a longer-term orientation is now needed. Governments need to provide direction on the energy transition, on long-term food and security provisions, on preventing and alleviating future natural disasters and diseases. And for all this, again, we can use all collective knowledge and cooperation we have.

This then is our task for the times ahead. Despite all the challenges, we have to uphold our responsibility which we have towards the next generation and which we can fulfil only through collaboration.

We all have our role to play. But it will be enlightened, cooperative and future-oriented governments that will make us all succeed or fail – **from Dubai to Davos.**



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