CLUB DE MADRID

A Call to Action for Leadership to Build Shared Societies

The Shared Societies Project

Democratic Leadership for Dialogue, Diversity & Social Cohesion

Building a World Safe for Difference

Club de Madrid President Kok with Women Members of the National Assembly, Nigeria

Capacity Building Workshop in Sierra Leone

Global Forum on Leadership for Shared Societies, Rotterdam

Project co-chair Uteem discusses elections in Yemen with women leaders

President Evo Morales meets with former President de Klerk, South Africa

Nelson Mandela receives Club de Madrid Leadership Award

Project co-chair Birkavs with local leader in Timor-Leste

Pres. Clinton keynotes the Global Forum on Leadership for Shared Societies, Rotterdam

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Real cohesion is more than social. People need to be included in society in every way

Wim Kok
Former Prime Minister of Netherlands
President, Club de Madrid

FOREWORD

The Shared Societies Project of the Club de Madrid has been in existence now for nearly 3 years. The Members of the Club believe that the issue of social division is one of the most critical issues of our day, accelerating the need for a dialogue on how to effectively build a shared society.

A lot has happened in those three years. The need for that conversation has been confirmed as new tensions arise between cultures and identity groups and the global economic downturn increases pressures on communities and leads to competition for resources.

In the Shared Societies Project we have been busy. We have produced a set of key documents to stimulate the conversation and contribute ideas and practical insights. We published them as a pamphlet in 2009 and distributed them to current leaders, the media, non-governmental organisations, the academic community and anywhere else where we thought they would be useful.

We visited countries and cities and explored how they are working to achieve a shared society, as well as collected examples of policies and practices which we can share with leaders elsewhere. These examples are important because they not only show that it is feasible to work on building a shared society, but that countries are actually doing it. Increasingly, these missions are looking at the problems our hosts face and discussing what more they can do. In the last year we have extended the project to new countries and cities, including Peru, the region of Madrid, South Africa and others. These ongoing missions will be an important part of the project in the future.

In addition to these engagements, we have been working to promote the principles included in the key documents. We have taken part in many international fora and received positive responses. We have been particularly focused on the UN Commission on Social Development for the last two years, as social integration was its priority theme. I myself was invited to speak at a high level panel in 2009, and we were represented again in 2010. We were grateful that many of the concepts and language that we promote were adopted by the Commission.

In fact we are heartened that our language is resonating with the widespread desire to find new ways to talk about and understand these issues. We deliberately chose the term "shared societies" because it was not widely used, while other common terms seemed to have lost their freshness and often imply assimilating people from one community into another. We wanted to stress the importance of people being able to feel at home and be themselves, even when they are different from other populations within society. As our mission states, we want to work for a world and a society safe for difference. Now the term shared society is increasingly adopted.

In our engagements and discussions with leaders and experts, we have realized the importance of directing our attention to the link between economic well-

being and shared societies. On one front we have established a working group to articulate the economic rationale for promoting shared societies backed up by hard data, while on another we have begun to explore what elements constitute a shared societies approach to economic policy.

Our website provides information on our activities and can be used as a resource for ideas and examples of policies and practices for inclusion we have gathered from around the world. The website contains information on reports and press articles as well as films, all of which are aimed at equipping interested parties in shared societies.

I am delighted that this new enlarged edition of the key documents is being published. We find these documents and the principles they address to be more relevant than ever and in great demand. One important new feature is a CD with examples of policies and practices. They are presented in an innovative way that allows the user to quickly identify policies and practices which are particularly relevant to their areas of concern or interest and to pinpoint the features of the example which are particularly relevant.

The key documents will be updated constantly, as well as new examples of policies and practices. I am confident that there will be a third edition which will include the economic rationale for building a shared society and more examples. In the meantime, a constantly updated version can also be found on our Web site.

As the current President of the Club de Madrid I know I speak for all the members in saying that we are committed to continuing to work on issues of social division and building shared societies, and we eagerly anticipate the development and enrichment of the Project in the years to come.

Wim Kok
President, Club de Madrid
Former Prime Minister
of the Netherlands

CALL TO ACTION FOR LEADERSHIP ON SHARED SOCIETIES

CALL TO ACTION
FOR LEADERSHIP ON SHARED SOCIETIES

The Club de Madrid –whose members are 75 current and former heads of state and government from 54 countries– meeting in Rotterdam 12-14 November 2008, reaffirmed its commitment to promoting leadership for social cohesion and shared societies as a key priority for the world today.

LEADERSHIP REQUIRED

We call to action all peoples, leaders and organisations in all sectors of society and walks of life to redouble efforts towards building understanding and tolerance. Beyond that, we call on leaders to show by example that when societies' dominant groups recognise and fully include others, who bring richness through difference, it will be for the betterment of all. We call on leaders to ensure that no-one is excluded from opportunity or left behind in the journey to participation, progress and prosperity.

We call on them to use their spheres of influence –at the community, local, provincial, national, regional and global levels– to work together to promote and ensure social inclusion and cohesion. We call on them to recognise that achieving social cohesion and creating a world safe for difference is essential for the well-being of individuals, states and the world as a whole.

NO 'PLAN B'

We declare that there is no other option –no plan B– if we are to avoid a world continually wracked by identity-based tensions, inter-community divisions, inequality, and injustice. Without action, tension will continue to beget conflict, and conflict will breed violence.

If individuals and peoples are not able to express themselves in their language, enjoy their culture and traditions, and pursue their aspirations, they will not live freely nor fulfil their dreams. As such, they are a loss to the potential of their society and the world as a whole.

If we are not able to accept difference and to learn to understand the unfamiliar in others, and are not helped to engage with others, barriers are created between people and communities which fester and lead to social disintegration with devastating consequences.

ACTION PARTNERS

The Club de Madrid believes in building shared societies, based on co-operation and welcoming the contributions of all. We reject attempts

to build homogeneous societies, in which difference is discouraged or even forbidden.

At a time when global financial, food, and energy crises will exacerbate the tendency to seek scapegoats among those different from us, this work is more important than ever. We make this Call to Action too at a time of hope, when barriers are being brought down and change may come from new directions, leading us together from difference to shared societies.

BASIC PRINCIPLES

We have identified basic principles on which true social cohesion and shared societies can be created. We call on all leaders to uphold and apply those principles and measure progress towards social cohesion against them.

The basic principle we cherish is respect for the dignity of every individual.

We equally value the principle of respect for human rights and the rule of law.

No section of society, either the majority or the minority, can expect to have license to act in any way it likes, ignoring others and their rights. Central to the vision of a shared society is a social equilibrium in which all members of society, while expressing their own identity and aspirations, are expected also to do so in ways that accept the dignity and rights of others with different identities. Critical also is the principle of rule-of-law, adhered to by leaders and all members of society.

Equality and fairness are essential principles in building shared societies and they cannot exist where there is discrimination, marginalisation and lack of opportunity for all.

The Club de Madrid was founded on the principle of democracy and we believe that democracy enhances the possibility of building a shared society if all sections of society are able to express their aspirations and needs. However, we recognise that many democracies fail to promote social cohesion, and that the importance of building social cohesion also applies to authoritarian states.

We are clear about what has to be done and we in the Club de Madrid have prepared a Portfolio of Policies and Practices that document the ways in which it has been done by others.

CALL TO ACTION

We have identified 10 areas of policy commitments that complement one another towards achieving a shared society and to which we call all leaders to commit themselves to action. We call on all other sectors of society to support leaders to make and implement these commitments.

At our Global Forum for Leadership on Shared Societies in Rotterdam, we have invited principal sectors of the global community to contribute key ideas for taking forward this Call to Action –see annex.

URGENCY TO ACT

We believe there is no excuse for avoiding the imperative to build social cohesion. Excuses such as resource scarcity or the presence of conflict are in fact reasons to make increased efforts to value all people in society and respect their diversity.

The issue cannot wait. Action is needed now. The process of building social cohesion starts at the top and we call on all leaders to endorse and act on this Call to Action.
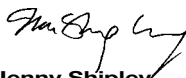
Signed:

Ricardo Lagos
President, Club de Madrid
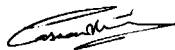Former President, Chile

Mary Robinson
Vice President, Club de Madrid
Former President, Ireland

Jenny Shipley
Co-Chair, Shared Societies Project
Former Prime Minister, New Zealand

Cassam Uteem
Co-Chair, Shared Societies Project
Former President, Mauritius

SECTORAL SUPPPORT
FOR THE CALL TO ACTION

The Call to Action was agreed at the General Assembly of the Club de Madrid in Rotterdam, 11 November 2008, and invites all sectors of society to support it. The Call to Action was launched at the Global Forum on Leadership for Shared Societies the following day, after sectoral meetings prepared the following statements of specific support and action.

GENDER EQUALITY

The working group on gender equality calls on leaders to implement international agreements already reached such as CEDAW, the Millennium Development Goals and U.N. Security Council Resolutions 1325 and 1820.

The group advocates a transformation of gender relationship as the basis of inclusive democracy because transformed gender relations are essential to teach future generations the basic values of democracy in the public and private fields.

The working group calls on leaders to ensure that at least 40% of corporate, social and political decision makers are women, using all available means including education, a responsible media, quotas and inclusive democratic processes.

MIGRANT GROUPS

The working group on migrants stresses that organizations which support migrants play an important role in building shared societies by assisting migrants to feel secure in their identity and recognize their own capacity and potential so that they have the confidence to connect and collaborate across the whole society.

The group calls on leaders to strengthen minorities' social and economic structures emphasizing that this strengthens society and as such is in the leaders' own interest.

The group asserts that the advancement of immigrants is not a threat to society but a necessity.

EDUCATION

The working group on education identifies education together with nutrition and health as the most powerful instruments to reduce the levels of poverty, inequality and social exclusion.

The group draws attention to the need for education to operate within a framework of respect for culture diversity and to facilitate the retention of the cultures and languages of the learners.

RELIGION

The working group on religion recognizes that religion can play a positive role in building shared societies through interreligious education, where there is fair representation of different religions and lifestyles.

The group calls on religious communities to demonstrate, in schools and the popular media, the positive contributions and the values which each religion has to offer.

This group calls upon both religious and political leaders to foster a climate of religious tolerance, and respect including through religious dialogues and by establishing interreligious councils at national and local levels.

YOUTH

The working group on youth calls on leaders to actively listen to the issues and strategic recommendations of young people before they respond.

The group calls on leaders to provide space for young people to be included in planning processes, activities and decision making.

SECURITY SERVICES

The working group on the security services stresses that every unit of the security services should be a place safe for differences and, in order to be so, they should aim to reflect the diversity of the community in terms of gender, ethnicity, religion and social groups. They should also maintain professional ethical standards.

The group expects Governments and political leaders to provide a sound political framework to enable the security services to function in a way which protects diversity and guarantees the correct use of force.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

The working group on local government believes that local authorities play a key role in building shared societies by promoting diversity and equality in its policies, and reflecting the composition of its population in its decision making structures.

The group calls on leaders to personally engage with members of the local community and to strive for legislative and institutional frameworks that promote participation, inclusion and social cohesion.

INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY

In order to fulfill the potential role of intergovernmental agencies in promoting social cohesion, the group proposes a review of the structures and mandates of institutions to allow the fulfillment of their role in supporting individual states to build a shared society.

The working group on international organizations calls on all states to recognize the importance of social protection as a framing concept in developing strategies to build shared societies.

MEDIA

The media working group recognizes that the media should play a role in building shared societies by taking up diversity as a creative opportunity and taking full responsibility to implement diversity in all its activities.

The group expects political leaders to take full responsibility to address society in its diversity in a positive way and work out a clear vision and overall strategy for achieving shared societies which the media can then share with the public at large.

The group calls on leaders to establish a legal framework that guarantees the diversity of media.

CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANIZATIONS

The working group on civil society invites NGOs and other civil society organizations to acquaint themselves with the Call to Action agenda and use it as a vehicle for lobbying, education, and other concrete actions in all relevant fora, within their own societies and in relation to

their own governments in order to further the achievement of a shared society.

The group calls on government agencies to develop and implement concrete benchmarks for promoting inclusion.

The group also advocates consultation between government and NGOs and other civil society organizations to ensure co-operation in building shared societies.

We all help create the political and cultural climate in our societies. We must therefore be willing to overcome and correct stereotypes and prejudice and defend the victims of discrimination and humiliation.

Mary Robinson
Former President, Ireland
Member of the Club de Madrid

PROJECT SUMMARY

WHAT IS A SHARED SOCIETY?

A 'shared society' is a socially cohesive society. It is stable, safe. It is where all those living there feel at home. It respects everyone's dignity and human rights while providing every individual with equal opportunity. It is tolerant. It respects diversity. A shared society is constructed and nurtured through strong political leadership.

WHY SHARED SOCIETIES?

Burqas banned in France… Brutal racial attacks on Indians in Australia… Gay Iraqis murdered by militia forces…Italian city passes "public security" ordinance to expel foreigners… Ethnic clashes erupt in Kenya… Bloodshed between Han Chinese and Muslim Uighurs… Headlines everyday tell us of identity-based conflict north and south, east and west.

A paradox of globalization is that the more we come together, the more we seem to fall apart. But fear of difference is not new. And, in times of crisis, apprehension grows as people cling to the familiar for fear of losing out to those who are different. Many leaders are comfortable catering to the majority – some even exploit tension between people of different identities to solidify political capital among their base. Research and practice show, however, that societies are most likely to be peaceful and prosperous when leaders and citizens recognize and celebrate the value of diversity and actively build an inclusive, shared society safe for difference..

WHY A SHARED SOCIETIES PROJECT?

As communities become ever more inter-twined and intercultural – ninety percent of the world's countries have at least a ten percent minority – leaders face the challenge of building and maintaining social cohesion challenges in their communities and countries. How they respond to social cohesion differs from leader to leader, but one element remains true for all: They need options and tools to address this challenge.

The Shared Societies Project was designed in response to an urgent call from leaders worldwide for arguments and action plans to help them effectively and constructively manage ethnic, cultural, religious and other identity differences – promoting human rights and respecting human dignity – to facilitate coexistence, inclusion, opportunity and participation.

PROJECT GOALS

The Shared Societies Project has identified four key conditions if individuals and groups are to feel that they have an equal place in the society in which they live: Democratic Participation; Respect for Diversity and the Dignity of the Individual; Equal Opportunity; and Protection from Discrimination.

Here's how the Project set out to achieve this vision:

1. Outreach and Dissemination of Shared Societies Project Principles and Tools. Through dissemination of project materials and follow-up on received expressions of interest, continue to promote project principles and tools and outreach to leaders.

2. Norms, Practice and Policy, International Advocacy. Through participation in selected international fora and building on established partnerships and relationships with multilateral agencies, other IOs and civil society organizations, continue sharing the principles of and need for greater leadership action to build shared societies while advocating for the adoption of new language and recognized instruments for social inclusion.

3. Engagement with Leaders. Club de Madrid, led by its Members and with the support from third parties, will respond to requests for leader-to-leader support in implementing the project tools to face current challenges of exclusion and identity-based conflict.

Two strategies are cross-cutting to all of the above lines of work.

● Network of Political Leaders United for Shared Societies (NetPLUSS). Committed to promoting shared societies in their own work and working with others to promote that ideal in the wider world. The project will benefit from their experience and expertise and their capacity to enthuse and inspire other leaders.

● Building the Economic Rationale for Shared Societies. Make the case that shared societies result in economic benefits and create tools and arguments that can be internalised and acted upon by leaders.

OUTREACH: INFLUENCING POLICY	INTERNATIONAL NORMS ADVOCACY	ENGAGEMENT WITH LEADERS
• National Leaders • International Leaders • Business Community • Civil Society	• International Fora • Regional Fora • Economic Fora • Business Fora	• Social Leaders • National Leaders • International Leaders • Business Leaders
Network of Political Leaders United for Shared Societies (NetPLUSS)		
Economic Argument for Shared Societies		

THE PROJECT IN ACTION

- Club of Madrid members developed and endorsed a **Vision, Rationale, Call to Action and Ten Commitments for Shared Societies,** illustrated by feasible approaches and examples for implementation; which, sent to 2000 policymakers, are provoking strong interest and support.

- The UN, World Bank, Inter-American Development Bank, African Union, OAS, and others are taking up the language and concepts in their work. Civil society leaders are beginning to use Shared Societies concepts to encourage political leaders and hold them accountable for work on social inclusion.

- Leaders in cities, regions and countries around the world are inviting collaboration with the Project. Club of Madrid Members have held elected office, understand what leaders face, and can support their peers with experience, trust and discretion.

- **First Global Forum on Leadership for Shared Societies** (Rotterdam, November 2008), which brought together political leaders, Intergovernmental Organizations, NGOs, activists and experts who validated the initiative and produced a **Call To Action for Leadership on Shared Societies** inviting current leaders and organizations around the world to adhere to it.

- Club of Madrid Members and international experts have gathered good policy and practice worldwide through case-study missions and research, including the economic arguments. The result: a **Toolkit for Leadership on Building Shared Societies.** Designed as a compilation of best leadership policies and practices that promote social cohesion, this tool provides leaders with ample examples and arguments to lead towards social cohesion. It shows that shared societies are not only needed but also possible. Users will find inspiration and ideas from others who "have been there."

Shared societies do not just happen. They need to be constructed —purposefully— and nurtured through strong political leadership.

Cassam Uteem
Former President of Mauritius
Member of the Club de Madrid and
Co-Chair of the Shared Societies Project

DECLARATION FOR SHARED SOCIETIES

STATEMENT OF COMMITMENT FOR SHARED SOCIETIES

We, the members of the Club de Madrid, make a commitment to work for the building of shared societies throughout the world.

We have considered the lessons and insights that can be learnt from experience in our own and other countries, and from the work of leading thinkers and policy makers, and are convinced that these lessons and insights indicate possible and effective strategies for promoting and maintaining respect for diversity and enhanced social inclusion and cohesion.

We have created a set of materials based on the experiences, lessons and insights we have collected, that can facilitate the process of building societies for all, and in which everyone can play a full and active part.

The main components of this Portfolio of Policies and Practices for a Shared Society are:

- A Rationale for giving priority to building shared societies.

- A statement of the Vision of a shared society.

- A set of Principles on which a shared society is based.

- Ten Commitments leaders can make, covering ten areas of policy and social life central to creating a shared society.

- Examples of Approaches and methods of meeting those Commitments which have been implemented in different countries and contexts around the world.

We offer these proposals aware that they need to be adapted to local contexts and their unique circumstances. We do not believe that we can be prescriptive about the approaches to be used in specific situations, but we are clear that these are issues that cannot be avoided and challenges which must be met if a prosperous, stable, shared society is to be a reality.

We also know that maintaining a shared society is a continuous, ongoing process because even the most inclusive, cohesive society will have to adapt to growing diversity, social change and new challenges. In these circumstances one of the greatest threats is to assume complacently that previous tried and tested approaches will work again in these new circumstances.

We call on all leaders around the world to commit to this Statement –which will inform other initiatives and developments– so that there will be a common identification with these principles and strategies in the international community.

IT IS URGENT

- We make this commitment and this call because we believe that the failure to achieve shared societies is one of the greatest challenges to the world community today.

- The world is increasingly diverse and its peoples increasingly intertwined, as a result of globalisation and population movements. Ninety percent (90%) of the countries of the world have at least a ten percent (10%) minority population.

- We acknowledge the pernicious effect of discrimination and prejudice that lead to social exclusion.

- We recognise the threats to the world that are created by the existence in many countries of socially acceptable, habitualised or institutionalised social, economic and political exclusion on the basis of race, ethnicity, religion, culture, language or other signs of difference.

- Tensions are growing and new forms of hostilities are emerging in many parts of the world, often related to new challenges such as climate change and energy, food and economic crises.

AN ACHIEVABLE GOAL – AND AS URGENT NOW AS EVER

- Social cohesion is an attainable goal and has been achieved in many societies past and present.

- Policies directed at embracing diversity and cultural identities have a particularly crucial part to play in societies threatened by these crises or by social disintegration –or the interaction between them, as they often feed on one another. While some might argue that such threats are a reason to postpone efforts to build social cohesion we are confident that the opposite is the case and that these threats are a reason to redouble efforts to create integrated and socially cohesive societies.

- The Club de Madrid and the leaders who are its members are committed to collecting and sharing information and counsel with regard to how leaders and societies achieve social cohesion and shared societies.

IT IS A MORAL IMPERATIVE

- We know that governments that fail to create opportunities for all sections of society to maximise their capacities and fulfil their full potential are neglecting their responsibilities to the people.

- Members of society should not be penalised because their ways and their values are different from those of the more powerful sections of society.

- At the same time all members of society, while expressing their own identity and aspirations, are expected also to do so in ways that accept the dignity and established human rights of others with different ideas and attitudes. No section of society, either the majority or the minority, can expect to have license to act in any way it likes, ignoring others and their basic rights.

SHARED SOCIETIES MAKE ECONOMIC SENSE

- We recognise the benefits of a socially cohesive society that maximises the contribution, creativity and talents of all its members and embraces diversity as strength.

- If some people are marginalised, their contribution, skills and talents are lost to society.

- We are aware of the tremendous costs, human and material, inflicted on a society that does exclude groups –sometimes to the point of fuelling violent conflict.

- We do not believe that a security led response is an effective and efficient response to social division and intercommunity tension. Increased expenditure on security services in these circumstances is costly in human and financial terms and perpetuates the divisions, compared to strategies that provide opportunities and encouragement for all sections of the community to participate as equals in benefits and responsibilities of the state, and its social, political and economic life.

- Evidence shows that a diverse society where there is social trust and participation is economically more prosperous than a divided society where some are marginalised. It is also more prosperous than a homogeneous society.

IT IS NECESSARY: THERE IS NO ALTERNATIVE

- We believe that a socially cohesive society is essential to allow individuals and identity groups to develop and contribute fully to their society.

- Some leaders despair that nothing can be done and they respond to divisions by ignoring or avoiding them, or they attempt to suppress dissent and opposition. They need to see that there is a better way.

- History and experience shows that the only effective, sustainable and morally acceptable way to manage social tensions between sections of society is to work to create a shared society in which all sections of that society feel at home and valued for who they are.

IT IS A GLOBAL ISSUE

- Not only do individual leaders need to take responsibility for divisions in their society but we call on world leaders to challenge their peers and colleagues, including their allies, to do the same.

- When political leaders act in ways that exploit fears and prejudices based on differences and insecurities among their constituents, deepen divisions and deny the basic principles on which shared societies are based, it is essential that their peers, and leaders of regional and international bodies, call on them to stop.

- When leaders manipulate division and others fail to demand change, the result is built up frustrations and resentments that may not be controllable.

IT IS TIMELY

- We welcome the signs that many agencies and leaders are recognising the importance of building shared societies.

- The UN Commission on Social Development has identified social integration as its priority for 2009-2010.

- The European Union designated 2008 as the Year of Intercultural Dialogue and 2010 as the Year of Combating Poverty and Social Exclusion.

- The Office of the UN Commissioner on Human Rights organised in 2009 a Review Conference on the Durban Declaration against Racism and Discrimination.

- Many other initiatives such as the Millennium Development Goals emphasise the importance of combating inequality and poverty and are inextricably linked to building shared societies.

- But we are also concerned that many declarations and programmes to encourage social cohesion have been limited in their application and have often met with implicit and explicit resistance from leaders and communities.

IT IS A RESPONSIBILITY OF LEADERSHIP

- We recognise that progress requires governments and leaders to identify social cohesion as a priority facing modern society and the global community.

- We believe that while governments and political leaders must provide leadership, there is also an important role for civil society, which is itself strengthened by the growth of social cohesion.

- We therefore call to action all peoples, leaders and organisations in all sectors of society and walks of life to redouble efforts towards building understanding, tolerance and shared societies.

VISION OF A SHARED SOCIETY

Socially cohesive or "Shared Societies" are stable, safe and just, and are based on the promotion and protection of all human rights, as well as on non-discrimination, tolerance, respect for diversity, equality of opportunity, solidarity, security and participation of all people including disadvantaged and vulnerable groups and persons.

A Shared Society is at ease with itself and the diversity of its members' cultural, religious and ethnic identities. It recognises and values these identities and their interdependence as strengths, working creatively with each other and with the wider global community to solve common problems and to promote respect for human dignity and release human potential.

We identify four key elements which are necessary ingredients if individuals or groups are to feel that they have a place in society:

- Democratic participation— the opportunity to take part in decision-making and the capacity and skills to do so effectively.

- Respect for diversity and the dignity of the individual— recognition of the value of difference and diversity in society. This means accepting (though not necessarily agreeing with) individuals' and groups' original and chosen identities, values and aspirations, and their chosen representatives. Respecting the dignity of others includes sensitivity to their feelings and avoidance of hate speech but we do not believe that this extends to restricting the expression of differences of opinion and critical comments even if on occasions this can cause offence.

- Equality of opportunity— equal access to economic and material resources and facilitation of social mobility, ensuring that individuals and communities have the capacity to take advantage of that access in order to satisfy their social, physical and economic needs and also play an active part in the social and economic development of the society.

- Protection from discrimination— mechanisms and forms of redress if the individual and his or her community are discriminated against or otherwise deprived of their rights and opportunities to play a full part in society.

RATIONALE
FOR A SHARED SOCIETY

Social exclusion and mismanagement of diversity within societies are among the major challenges facing the world today because they create enormous threats to the stability of our world and consume enormous resources in dealing with the consequences of inequality and exclusion, which include war, violence, community breakdown and alienation. Our failure to co-operate in managing the world's resources, locally and globally, leads to natural disasters and destruction of the environment.

How nations and communities, individually and collectively, approach the issues of social cohesion and cultural diversity will have implications for political and economic development, human security, social stability, and peace throughout the 21st century and beyond.

Current trends of economic mobility, displacement and globalisation will increase the levels of diversity across the world. The failure to proactively and positively manage diversity has the potential to produce substantial negative consequences.

We believe that averting ethnic, religious and cultural conflict in and among communities and nations is an urgent priority for many cities and states. We believe that societies are most likely to be peaceful, democratic and prosperous when leaders and citizens recognise the value of diversity and actively develop means to work together to build a shared society based on a set of shared goals and common values.

We believe a socially cohesive society will be more stable and productive. Its members will be positive and confident of their role in society and their talents and contributions will be recognised, nurtured and applied in the further development of the society and the global community. The well-being of individuals and communities leads to the well-being of the nation, and among nations.

PRINCIPLES AND ASSUMPTIONS
UNDERLYING EFFECTIVE APPROACHES TO BUILDING SHARED SOCIETIES

Our approach to building Shared Societies is guided by a set of principles and underlying assumptions based on experience and observation of our own and other socio-political systems.

When states recognise the need to take steps to deal with social division and social exclusion, and to manage diversity, they normally attempt to create either a homogeneous society or a pluralist society.

Experience suggests that seeking homogeneity where it does not naturally exist creates disintegrative tendencies and reinforces resistance and negative reactions to difference, while recognising pluralism has integrative tendencies that promote social cohesion and build respect for difference.

Secondly, we recognise that the processes of implementing any policy or programme are complex. The problems of social conflict and the absence of social cohesion are the result of many factors, and as such they require multiple approaches balancing and complementing each other to build a critical mass of energy and influence, and policy and practice, that can enhance the achievement of a cohesive society. Moreover, initiatives may have both positive and negative impacts and consequences. We therefore do not set out a model on how to achieve social cohesion but principles that should be followed and we suggest specific steps which need to be adapted to local circumstances.

Thirdly, the most direct threats to a national framework for coexistence and social cohesion are not interpersonal but institutional: the exclusion of groups from the economic life of a country; the proscription of cultural expressions such as customs or language; inequalities and inequitable treatment related to identity; or the lack of representation or participation at all levels of governance and in the social networks. Addressing all these institutional issues is essential to the shared ownership of a national project for societal development.

"We really have no other alternative.

We either learn to get along and respect one another —and not define each other by negative reference— while celebrating our diversity, or we are finished."

Bill Clinton
Former President, United States of America
Honorary Co-Chair, Club de Madrid

Consequently and finally, we believe that political and government leaders play the key part in efforts to promote social cohesion.

On the basis of these four assumptions we are guided by the following principles:

- It is a central responsibility of government and policy makers to ensure that policies have a positive effect on social cohesion; it cannot be left to natural processes of cohesion or the expectation that civil society will solve problems, though they have an important contribution to make.

- Responsibility for social inclusion and cohesion must be clearly located within formal government structures.

- Respect is crucial in order for individuals and communities to feel included and accepted in society. They need to feel that their dignity, values, needs, interests and aspirations are respected even if they cannot always be realized.

- People need to have a sense that they are involved in a common project that is relevant to them and their interests.

- People have to feel that the groups that they belong too are recognized and that they and their community have the opportunity to be involved in their government's and society's decision-making, even if they do not take up the opportunities.

- Concerns and issues that cause division and hostility must be addressed directly.

- People have to feel that they can pursue their personal goals even if they are not necessarily satisfied.

By their own actions and policies, leaders can show their willingness to respect and interact with those with different backgrounds and their commitment to fair and equal treatment for all. They can also create conditions that encourage others to respect diversity and build shared societies.

The nature of the interaction between leaders and the community is crucial in managing issues of social diversity. Shared societies are achieved when all parts of a community value and feel committed to their shared achievements. The most effective way is through a partnership between the state and political leaders, civil society, religious institutions and the private sector.

We recognise that many leaders will be under pressure to support chauvinistic, sectional interests. Those leaders will need support in challenging divisive

tendencies. Otherwise they can easily become captured by and dependent on those interests. We also recognise that some leaders are self-serving and corrupt and that some states are authoritarian and oppressive. These leaders may wish to ignore concerns about building a shared society. In these situations, there is a responsibility on other leaders to challenge such attitudes and practices and show that ultimately an inclusive approach will lead to benefits for all. In this respect the Ten Commitments are a practical, non-judgemental way to help leaders to assess their current policies and their likely impact and to think about possible new policies and practices and their implementation.

COMMITMENTS & APPROACHES FOR SHARED SOCIETIES

HIGHLIGHTS

Building shared societies is a multifaceted task; no single policy or practice can overcome division or distrust.

The Commitments and Approaches for Shared Societies, are grouped in four categories: institutional arrangements, safeguards, service provision and inter-community development. These commitments have been identified as key policy areas which are essential features of a shared society and thus, leaders are asked to make a commitment to these if they have not already done so. They also can be used as a check list to review those areas in which a state has made progress and those areas in which more work needs to be done.

The Commitments and Approaches, as well as the Declaration for Shared Societies, were endorsed by the Club de Madrid Members on the Shared Societies Project Working Group on November 21, 2007 and revised in December 2007, July 2008, and June 2009. The current version is a working document.

INSTITUTIONAL ARRANGEMENTS

I.   Locating responsibility of social cohesion within government structures

II. Create opportunities for minorities to be consulted

SAFEGUARDS

III. Monitor structures and policies to ensure they are supportive of social cohesion

IV. Ensure the legal framework protects the rights of the individual

V.   Deal with economic disadvantages faced by those discriminated against

SERVICE PROVISIONS

VI. Ensure that physical environments create opportunities for social interaction

VII. An education system that demonstrates a commitment to a shared society

INTER-COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

VIII. Initiate a process to encourage the creation of a shared vision of society

IX. Promote respect, understanding and appreciation of diversity

X. Take steps to reduce tensions and hostility between communities

For more information:
www.clubmadrid.org/en/ssp/search_policies_and_practices

COMMITMENT I

Locating responsibility to ensure the promotion of social cohesion clearly within government structures

Suggested options for action:

- Create a government department with a minister within the government.

- Create a unit within a central government department such as the president's or prime minister's office reporting directly to the president or prime minister.

- Create a independent body such as a community relations council to act as a link between government and the people and to encourage civil society involvement in enhancing community relations.

COMMITMENT II

Create opportunities for minorities and marginalised groups and communities to be consulted about their needs and their perception of the responsiveness of state and community structures to meet those needs

Suggested options for action:

- Establish consultative councils on which all identity groups are represented and with the statutory right to be consulted on the impact of government policies.

- Encourage identity groups to create representative bodies with which government and other identity groups can dialogue to explore and understand issues and concerns that affect those groups.

- Create systems of community meetings that allow community members to express their views and air their grievances.

- Create the statutory duty of public bodies to include representatives of smaller identity groups in their boards and other decision-making bodies.

COMMITMENT III

Ensure that social cohesion is considered in devising governance structures, policy formation and policy implementation and establish procedures and mechanisms to ensure this is achieved and to reconcile divergent positions between sectional interests

Suggested options for action:

- Enact statutory provisions that require all public bodies to take account of the impact of their policies and decisions on social cohesion.

- Create rigorous monitoring and reporting systems to identify policies and activities that will hinder social cohesion and ensure that steps are taken to negate those effects.

- Establish protocols and procedures for carrying out a "social cohesion audit" of proposed policies and initiatives to test their potential for promoting or damaging social cohesion.

- Create a unit within government to ensure that proposed policies, where relevant, include measures designed to encourage greater social cohesion.

- Create neutral, independent bodies to reconcile divergent positions and overcome competing interests through a participatory, consultative process.

COMMITMENT IV

Ensure the legal framework protects the rights of the individual and prohibits discrimination based on ethnic, religious, gender or cultural difference

Suggested options for action:

- Enact as part of the constitution a statutory bill of rights that reflects international norms and instruments.

- Create a human rights commission independent of government to monitor situations of possible human rights abuses.

- Create an anti-discrimination unit to monitor possible sources of discrimination and with authority to redress cases of discrimination.

- Establish a fair employment body to establish standards and procedures to ensure fair treatment in the workplace, including in public services, the military and police which should be models for other employment sectors.

- Introduce programmes of affirmative action that include the equipping of members of groups disadvantaged and discriminated against, with the skills necessary to function confidently in work and other social and economic contexts.

- Use awareness campaigns and materials to inform citizens about their rights and obligations, including available resources and mechanisms to redress discrimination and human rights abuses.

- Facilitate identity groups to create institutions and structures which are necessary for the individual to be able to exercise those rights, such as language and religious practices, which can only be expressed fully in the context of interaction with others who share that identity.

COMMITMENT V

Take steps to deal with economic disadvantages faced by sections of society who are discriminated against, and ensure equal access to opportunities and resources

Suggested options for action:

- Establish fair and transparent land distribution boards to consider whether farmers that need access to land have opportunities to acquire adequate holdings at affordable prices.

- Introduce affirmative action schemes to ensure that individuals from groups disadvantaged as a result of discrimination develop the capacities and confidence, and are encouraged, to take advantage of opportunities to initiate business opportunities.

- Create a small business development unit to help individuals and groups to initiate small scale enterprises and support them in the initial stages.

- Provide small credit schemes to make credit available to those from disadvantaged and marginalised communities to initiate new or improve existing business enterprises.

- Establish co-operative bodies to enable small scale producers to work together to market their products more effectively and lessen their reliance on external, intermediary buyers.

- Carry out regional audits of local resources, capacities, opportunities and markets to identify potential economic projects.

COMMITMENT VI

Ensure that physical environments create opportunities for, rather than discourage, social interaction

Suggested options for action:

- Work with planners, architects and academics to identify how our physical environment impacts on social cohesion and raise awareness of this knowledge.

- Require local authorities and planning bodies to review the existing environment, identifying obstacles to social cohesion and take steps to remove those obstacles or minimise their negative impact.

- Establish a system to review all future planning decisions to ensure that they include features to encourage social cohesion and remove proposals whose execution would be harmful to social cohesion.

- Establish housing policies that encourage mixed communities, including equitable policies in respect to obtaining housing.

COMMITMENT VII

Ensure an education system that offers equal opportunity for developing the knowledge, skills, capacities and networks necessary for children to become productive, engaged members of society and that demonstrates a commitment to a shared society and educates children to understand and respect others

Suggested options for action:

- Evaluate educational establishments to assess to what extent they give a message of respect for difference and diversity and to what extent they encourage division and prejudice.

- Where schools do not reflect the range of identities in the community, create programmes of exchange between schools to create opportunities for young people to meet and learn about each other.

- Introduce a curriculum on pluralism, diversity and mutual understanding to be implemented in all schools as a full subject, including assessment. This would include developing an understanding of the benefits of social cohesion as a national vision and how individual behaviour can promote or damage good community relations.

COMMITMENT VIII

Initiate a process to encourage the creation of a shared vision of society at local and national level

Suggested options for action:

- Introduce citizens to materials that encourage them to think about their society and their place in it and the place of other identity groups. Also invite them to consider how they would want to see society in the future and the place it offers for different identity groups.

- Instigate a project in schools and other institutions for young people to think about their society and their place in it and the place of other identity groups and also invite them to reflect on a question such as "What my country means to me". This could use mediums such as art, drama, music, poetry, film, photography and story-telling.

- Implement a national dialogue to exchange views on the nature of the society at present and how it could be changed to satisfy the interests of all sections and interests in society.

- Make government commitments to consider all ideas which emerge from exercises to envisage a future shared society and, where appropriate, incorporate them in legislation and policy. If the Government decided not to so incorporate them, it should also undertake to give a clear rationale and explanation of this decision within 3 months.

  See also Commitment # 9

COMMITMENT IX

Promote respect, understanding and appreciation of cultural, religious and ethnic diversity and support local communities in exploring their identity, sharing their experiences with other identity groups and working together with those groups on common concerns

Suggested options for action:

- Provide resources for the creation of local community organisations and for their activities to promote self awareness within communities and engagement with other communities.

- Create or ensure the creation of networks of local community organisations to engage with each other and encourage wider involvement in inter-community activities.

- Provide resources for the development of local cultural infrastructure and activities which reflect and respect the different cultural backgrounds of members of the community.

- Encourage cultural activities that explore issues of concern about relationships between different identity groups.

- Create opportunities for the expression of the diversity of communities in society including the recognition of special days and specific symbols that are meaningful to those communities.

- Initiate awareness programmes to encourage respect for difference. It should highlight the positive features of pluralism and diversity and the obligations of living in a shared society and building a shared future.

- Develop and promote the implementation of awareness programmes on the nature of racism and sectarianism and how they can be combated at an individual and group level throughout all levels of society.

- Establish and support training programmes to train skilled community facilitators to work with local communities in establishing local groups and organisations and in exploring issues of cultural identity and diversity.

- Where there is a legacy of bitter conflict within the community or state, consideration should be given to how best to address the feelings and concerns of different sections of society including

the contribution that a truth and reconciliation commission might make to building social cohesion.

- Create synergies between programmes in schools and colleges to promote awareness of the value of mutual awareness and respect and activities at community level, and involve leaders and representatives of local ethnic communities in school programmes.

COMMITMENT X

Take steps to reduce tensions and hostility between communities and ensure members of all communities are protected from abuse, intimidation and violence

Suggested options for action:

- Promote public awareness of the damage to individuals and the whole society as a result of intercommunity conflict and encourage the community to be vigilant in identifying and challenging situations that might lead to tension.

- Establish mechanisms at local community levels to improve communication among leaders from each community and equip them with the resources and skills to be able to neutralize and resolve critical situations before they escalate.

- Ensure the police service is equipped with the necessary powers to deal with those who promote, exacerbate or manipulate racial or ethnic tensions.

- Ensure officers of the police service are trained to police divided communities sensitively taking account of the customs and values of minority groups, and to recognise the value of working with local community leaders.

- Develop early warning systems to monitor inter-community relations and identify where preventive action is required.

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'You have to be like us!' is an unintelligent and unsustainable national identity approach. Valuing and respecting difference —as nations proactively develop a new national identity through concensus building around agreed shared values— can provide a hopeful and socially cohesive future.

Jennifer Mary Shipley
Former Prime Minister of New Zealand
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ABOUT US

The Club de Madrid is an independent organization dedicated to strengthening democracy around the world by drawing on the unique experience and resources of its Members – over 70 democratic former Presidents and Prime Ministers from more than 50 countries. In partnership with other organizations and governments that share its goals of "democracy that delivers", the Club de Madrid provides peer to peer counsel, strategic support and technical advice to leaders and institutions working towards democratic transition and consolidation.
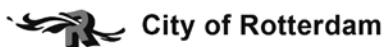
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Project co-chair Kumaratunga and Club de Madrid Vice President Shipley address East-West Dialogue participants, Barcelona

Project co-chair Uteem in Srebrenica, case study mission to Bosnia-Herzegovina

Project co-chairs Birkavs and Uteem with Prime Minister Shipley and Pres. Ramos support Pres. Ramos Horta's national dialogue, Timor-Leste

Project co-chair Birkavs shares locally drafted project findings with the Chair of the Bahrain Shura Council

Pres. Monteiro meets with women parliamentarians, Sierra Leone

President Lagos and Prime Minister Jospin lead case-study mission to South Africa

Religion in the Modern World, final conference with 10 Club de Madrid members participating, Teheran

President Museveni discusses project findings with President Robinson, Uganda

Training of Women Leaders in Yemen

Shared Societies Project: Democratic Leadership for Dialogue, Diversity & Social Cohesion

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