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## The Millennium Project 2050

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<b>Sponsors:</b>	The UNO, UNDP, and UNESCO The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Many other organisations including companies like Motorola Corporation, Shell International, Monsanto Company and Ford Motor Company. For a more exhaustive list go to <a href="http://www.acunu.org/millennium/affil.html">www.acunu.org/millennium/affil.html</a>	
<b>Type:</b>	Global continuous Foresight exercise	
<b>Organizer:</b>	It was initiated and coordinated by the American Council for the United Nations University in cooperation with the Smithsonian Institution, The Futures Group, and the United Nations University at Jerome Glenn. See <a href="http://www.acunu.org">www.acunu.org</a> .	
<b>Duration:</b>	continuously since 1996	<b>Budget:</b> 35,000 USD per year excluding special studies
		<b>Time Horizon:</b> 2050

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### Purpose

The Millennium Project organizes futures research to improve thinking about the future and make that thinking available through a variety of media for consideration by policy-makers and for use in advanced training and public education. The goal is to accumulate wisdom about possible futures. High profile results of the project include the elaboration of Millennium Development Goals.

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### Fostering Thinking about the Future

The Millennium Project provides an intellectually, geographically, and institutionally dispersed think-tank capability. It is designed to provide an independent, global capability for interdisciplinary, inter-institutional, and multi-cultural for early alert and analysis of long-range issues, opportunities, challenges, and strategies. The insights and information generated are made available through a variety of media for consideration in policy-making, advanced training, public education, and feedback is welcomed. To achieve this, the project has established an international network of experts in futures research to gain access to global knowledge on futures issues. Sponsorship is variable. Institutes and private companies are regular sponsors. Sponsorship is sometimes linked to the commissioning of special studies.

### The Mix of Methodologies Applied

The main tool of the Millennium Project is its network of experts that provide quick and easy access to international knowledge. Regular Delphi surveys are carried out to gain information about global challenges and to provide assessments of these challenges. The SOFI or State Of the Future Index enables one to make a historical comparisons of the results of this work. Global scenarios are developed concerning specific challenges that may be normative, exploratory or long-range in nature. Scenarios on issues such as the development of science and technology, counter-terrorism or peace in the Middle East are written in an open way without the use of formal scenario workshops. Reports mix quantitative and qualitative approaches in a very open and flexible way.



## The Network of Futurist Experts

The network is built upon on 25 nodes based in Argentina, Australasia, Brazil, Belgium, Canada, Central Europe, China, Egypt, France, Finland, Germany, the Gulf Region, Iran, India, Italy, Japan, Mexico, Russia, Silicon Valley, South Africa, South Korea, the UK and Venezuela as well as an Experiment-

tal 'Cyber-Node' based in Hawaii. These nodes are involved in planning the project and in the different surveys it performs. These nodes allow the project to connect global and local perspectives. They identify knowledgeable and creative people in their region, translate questionnaires, conduct interviews, and disseminate project findings.

## The 'State of the Future' Surveys

The issues and the solutions of our time are increasingly transnational, trans-institutional and trans-disciplinary. Decision-making increasingly factors in effects of globalisation. It is increasingly participative. Futures Research systematically explores, creates, and tests possible and desirable futures to improve decisions. The project's annual 'State of the Future' survey provides a global strategic landscape that public and private policy-makers may use to improve their own strategic decision-making and global understanding. Everyone is allowed to make use of the results. Business executives can use the research as input to their scenario planning, university professors, futurists, and other consultants may find the information useful in teaching and research. Nine 'State of the Future' surveys have been conducted until now. So far 1,983 experts have been involved in this work. The latest survey alone, conducted in 2005 involved 454.

In the 2005 survey, the evolution of **ethical issues** has emerged as being of increasing importance for the future. Examples of key questions arising in this context include: What ethical behaviour should guide corporate and economic decisions? What ethical issues are involved in attempting to improve global education? What new ethical challenges stem from biotechnology and public health? What is published or not by media raises ethical questions about censorship. What are the new questions of religion and moral philosophy? Is it right for people of wealth to have advantages? What is a future crime? From these questions, ethical principles and value statements were derived and the time horizon for their realisation assessed.

The project's **global scenarios** are based on simulations and drivers of global developments and take in even very long-term developments.

The **counter-terrorism scenarios** for example include descriptive scenarios like **Escalation**, **Counter Mindset** with a mind of restoring the right and proper image of Islam, **Root Causes** with a failure to end terrorism with military means but after a short period of expansion, terrorism loses ground, **Socratic Justice** with the help of the UN, **The Wild West** where terror meets terror and **The Peaceful Cowboy** scenario in which by cooperation with other nations improved internal security, enhanced intelligence and economic action are possible. Other scenarios include **The Next Year** about an invasion of the Taliban areas, **Fortress USA/OECD** with closed bor-

ders, **Establishing a Global Civic Ethic**, **Colonialism Reborn** and **Call on the UN**.

The **Science and Technology 2025 Global Scenarios** are:

- **S&T Develops a Mind of Its Own:** Collective human-machine intelligence has dramatically increased. Customized neural nutritional supplements, genetic medicine, universal cognitive development access, and TEF (Tele-Everywhere-Feedback protocol) with CyberNow clothing and glasses achieved miracles in human performance, social stability and economic growth. The forces behind Moore's law have not only accelerated computer capacity but also all phenomena connected to computing ...
- **The World Wakes Up:** The murder of 25 million people over a three-month period in 2021 in major population areas around the world by a self-proclaimed Agent of God finally wake up the world to the realization that an individual acting alone could create and use a weapon of mass destruction. In this case Congo virus genetically modified using available simulation software and a genetic engineering kit stolen from a university. The phenomenon was called SIMAD for Single Individual Massively Destructive ...
- **Please turn off the Spigot:** This concerns the Man of the Year 2025, an anti-science hero who is in fact pro 'responsible' science and regards science and religion as parallel. He writes about how scientific results are used, positively or as weapons on 'black markets'. Where there is concern for the work of one lab, another can take it up the work whenever funding is available ...
- **Backlash** is about moral issues and the evaluation of science. Arguments for the international control and regulation of science as well as for the self-regulation of science are given. Nevertheless risks deriving from science cannot be omitted. Under the Principles of Inviolability of Science with a kind of certificate, science blossoms, many new discoveries were made. Problems arise however and the Jakarta 2 resolution to establish a global science commission is signed with negative effects. Nobody works on 'risky' science anymore, horizons shrink, goals are diminished, the global economy winds down, poverty rises, and the safety zone of reduced risk that global regulation was supposed to provide proves not to be so safe after all ...

Three normative **Middle East Scenarios** round off the picture of the global scenarios. These are:

- **Water Works:** The need to increase water supply encourages political negotiations and helps to built trust in

the possibility of peace. UN troops enforce agreements and new forms of international collaboration cement the peace ...

- **The Open City:** A new Pope challenges Jewish and Muslim religious leaders to solve the question of governance in Jerusalem. Politics, power, and media all play a role in supporting a proposal for a solution that is ultimately adopted as a resolution of the UN General Assembly ...
- **Dove:** This is the name of a secret contested Israeli plan to de-escalate and unilaterally renounce retaliation to demonstrate that Palestinians were aggressors ... a separate debate is going on among extremist Palestinians. At the same time 27 Israeli pilots refuse to participate in future air raids. Like in a chess game, de-escalation was

possible and a series of non-aggression treaties and agreements are signed stating that Israel has a right to exist ...

The **15 global challenges** currently identified in the Millennium Project may come as no surprise. They include questions such as: How can population growth and resources be balanced? How can everyone have sufficient clean water without conflict? How can genuine democracy emerge from authoritarian regimes? How can the threat of new and re-emerging diseases and immune micro-organisms be reduced? How can policy-making be made more sensitive to global long-term perspectives? An important role of State of the Future Surveys, global scenarios and other works of the Millennium Project is to identify key questions for the future and explore these as fully as possible.

## Activities Derived from the Millennium Project

Companies sponsor studies by the Millennium Project only if they can expect to obtain useful results such as insights that apply to their own context and that they can use in their own strategic decision-making processes. Findings are applied by Millennium Nodes themselves in their own ongoing work. Sections of previous reports of the State of the Future have been used as university and high school texts.

Statements of the millennium project about global challenges do not represent consensus views. They are a distillation of a range of views from diverse participants. Data are not representative in the sense that they based on small survey samples. The diversity of opinions solicited means that issues raised and recommendations given may sometimes seem contradictory. Some may even sound like political clichés. Nevertheless this kind of background information about things to come seems is regarded as important by different decision-makers.

### The Millennium Development Goals

The UN Millennium Project 2005 led to the formulation of eight global millennium goals with targets indicating how these goals could be made measurable and operational. These were recommended for the UN in a report in 2005. They are as follows:

#### **GOAL 1: Eradicate Extreme Hunger and Poverty**

**Target 1:** Between 1990 and 2015 halve the proportion of people whose income is less than \$1 a day

**Target 2:** Between 1990 and 2015 halve the proportion of people who suffer from hunger

#### **GOAL 2: Achieve Universal Primary Education**

**Target 3:** Ensure that by 2015 children everywhere, boys and girls alike, will be able to complete a full course of primary schooling

#### **GOAL 3: Promote Gender Equality and Empower Women**

**Target 4:** Eliminate gender disparity in primary and secondary education, preferably by 2005 and in all levels of education no later than 2015

#### **GOAL 4: Reduce Child Mortality**

**Target 5:** Between 1990 and 2015 reduce by two-thirds the mortality rate for under-fives

#### **GOAL 5: Improve Maternal Health**

**Target 6:** Between 1990 and 2015 reduce by three-quarters the maternal mortality ratio

#### **GOAL 6: Combat HIV-AIDS, Malaria and Other Diseases**

**Target 7:** By 2015 halt and begin to reverse the spread of HIV-AIDS

**Target 8:** By 2015 halt and begin to reverse the incidence of malaria and other major diseases

#### **GOAL 7: Ensure Environmental Sustainability**

**Target 9:** Integrate the principles of sustainable development into country policies and programs and reverse the loss of environmental resources

**Target 10:** By 2015 halve the proportion of people without sustainable access to safe drinking water and basic sanitation

**Target 11:** By 2020 achieve a significant improvement in the lives of at least 100 million slum dwellers

#### **GOAL 8: Develop a Global Partnership for Development**

**Target 12:** Further develop an open rule-based predictable non-discriminatory trading and financial system with a commitment to good governance, development, and poverty reduction both nationally and internationally

**Target 13:** Address the special needs of the Least Developed Countries, by providing tariff- and quota- free access for LDC - Least Developed Country exports, an enhanced program of debt relief for Heavily Indebted Poor Countries, cancellation of official bilateral debt, and more generous official development assistance for countries committed to poverty reduction

**Target 14:** Address the special needs of landlocked developing countries and small island developing states through the Program of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States and 22nd General Assembly provisions

**Target 15:** Deal comprehensively with the debt problems of developing countries through national and international measures in order to make debt sustainable in the long term

Additional targets for **least developed countries**, Africa, landlocked developing countries, and small-island developing states are:

**Target 16:** In cooperation with developing countries develop and implement strategies to create decent and productive work for youth

**Target 17:** In cooperation with pharmaceutical companies provide access to affordable essential drugs in developing countries

**Target 18:** In cooperation with the private sector make available the benefits of new technologies especially information and communications technologies

### The Impact of the Millennium Project

Critics of the Millennium Project claim it is superfluous because the problems and issues it raises are well-known. The results of the Millennium project in terms of 'questions raised' are clear, but answers to these questions would change the world. So is the Millennium project merely an idealistic endeavour?

Recommendations of the project comprise plans to achieve the Millennium Goals as well as guidelines for governance. The contribution of civil society is also discussed. Indicators for improvement are provided and achievements are evaluated. Specific needs of regions such as Africa or of countries in conflicts are also stressed. Special emphasis is placed on recom-

mendations for an international system to support country-level processes. Trade is an important point of discussion. Even the costs and benefits of achieving millennium goals are investigated and described. What remains unclear is whether progress on such issues arises as a result of the recommendations, as a result of other recommendations or as a result of progress towards general United Nations objectives.

It is true that many of the issues raised are well known. However if they are not gathered, written down and assessed, no one will listen. Without giving recommendations to the United Nations, how would they know? Who else would be interested in changing the world and improving the conditions for poor-people-without-a-lobby, if not the United Nations? So the recommendations in annual and special reports make sense. They serve as a reminder of the problems that are still unsolved.

Results of the millennium project are used to prepare general high ranking events such as summits. These lead to tangible outputs such as the United Nations Millennium Declaration, Resolution adopted by the General Assembly in its 8th plenary meeting on 8 September 2000, which is cited in Annex G-4 of the '2005 State of the Future' report, or in publications by the United Nations such as the 2000 'We the Peoples' address by Kofi Annan. In all these cases however it is difficult to trace back what the source of the single information is. This is a problem that often exists in foresight.

'Yes' the Millennium Project is an idealistic endeavour. The project is also run on a very low cost basis. It exploits opportunities to commit people and even companies to its goals. It informs the UNO, its nodes, different governments, companies, research organisations facilities and others. The information provide is not always surprising, not always really new, but it is an important part of the puzzle of what the world will be like in the future.

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## Sources and References

A major output of the Millennium Project is the annual report about 'The State of the Future'. The 2005 report includes a CD ROM containing collected works of the project, more details of the State of the Future, scenarios, indicators as well as an explanation of main methods applied in Futures Research.

- Annan, Kofi (2000): We the peoples, United Nations Department of Public Information, New York, [www.un.org](http://www.un.org)
- State of the Future 2005, <http://www.acunu.org/millennium/sof2005.html>

- State of the Future 2004, <http://www.acunu.org/millennium/sof2004.html> and previous versions
- UN Millennium Project (2005): Investing in Development. A Practical Plan to Achieve the Millennium Development Goals, [www.unmillenniumproject.org](http://www.unmillenniumproject.org).

Publications are available at [www.millennium-project.org](http://www.millennium-project.org)

For teaching and methodological purposes a CD ROM 'Futures Research Methodology – V.2.0', is available via the website [www.unmillenniumproject.org](http://www.unmillenniumproject.org)

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**About the EFMN:** Policy Professionals dealing with RTD, Innovation and Economic Development increasingly recognize a need to base decisions on broadly based participative processes of deliberation and consultation with stakeholders. One of the most important tools they apply is FORESIGHT. The EFMN or European Foresight Monitoring Network supports policy professionals by monitoring and analyzing Foresight activities in the European Union, its neighbours and the world. The EFMN helps those involved in policy development to stay up to date on current practice in Foresight. It helps them to tap into a network of know-how and experience on issues related to the day to day design, management and execution of Foresight and Foresight related processes.