



DEFINING A
NEW ECONOMIC PARADIGM

THE REPORT OF THE HIGH-LEVEL MEETING
ON WELLBEING AND HAPPINESS

2 APRIL 2012 · UNITED NATIONS HEADQUARTERS · NEW YORK

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The image is a stylized shot of a lush field and great blue skies, a representation of ***the greater universe*** signifying peace, happiness and well-being.

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*Happiness is the meaning and the purpose of life,
the whole aim and end of human existence.*

— Aristotle



The Royal Government of Bhutan wishes to extend its deepest gratitude to all of the presenters and participants who provided their valuable perspectives and ideas during the High-Level Meeting on Wellbeing and Happiness: Defining a New Economic Paradigm.

All contributions are gratefully acknowledged and warmly appreciated.

Photo courtesy of Jonathan Harris

FOREWORD BY

H.E. MR. JIGMI Y. THINLEY, PRIME MINISTER OF BHUTAN

On 2nd April 2012, at the United Nations headquarters in New York, an historic event took place.

The high-level meeting hosted by the Royal Government of Bhutan, brought together more than 800 distinguished participants including the President of Costa Rica, government ministers and diplomats from around the world, the United Nations Secretary-General, the Presidents of the General Assembly and Economic and Social Council, the UNDP Administrator, leading economists and scholars including Nobel Laureates, media, and civil society, business, and spiritual leaders.

On that day at the UN, a global movement was launched to create a new economic paradigm – one that has as its goal human happiness and the wellbeing of all life on earth; that recognises as key conditions for the new economy ecological sustainability, fair distribution, and the efficient use of resources; and that requires a healthy balance among thriving natural, human, social, cultural, and built assets.

This summary report of the landmark gathering is being distributed to all UN member states in the hope that governments will take policy actions to begin moving towards the new economic system. Examples of such specific policy recommendations are contained in the report appendices.

In addition, steps are being taken to convene a high level expert commission to elaborate the details of the new economy over the coming year for consideration by the 68th session of the UN General Assembly in September 2013. These experts will prepare detailed documentation, including thorough literature reviews and examinations of best practices, on the actual workings of the new economic paradigm, and its potential accounting and measurement systems, regulatory mechanisms, and financial, trade, governance, and other institutions.

On 2nd April, presenters and participants recognised the urgent need for a new global economic system. The present GDP-based system, they recognised, was devised prior to any knowledge of climate change or the finite limits of the earth's resources, and it prioritises material growth and consumption at the expense of nature and people. This system has depleted resources, degraded ecosystem services, accelerated greenhouse gas emissions, diminished biodiversity, and now threatens the survival of humans and other species. It has created yawning inequities, and is generating global economic insecurity, indebtedness, instability, and conflict.

At the same time, participants recognised that we have never had greater knowledge, technical capacity, material abundance, and productive potential to create a sane economic order and to achieve all its necessary conditions. We have the ability, for example, to feed everyone on earth healthily and sustainably. No one need go hungry!

I was awed, humbled and indeed inspired by the extraordinary response to our call for the high-level meeting, and by the brilliant constellation of great minds and leaders present. It gave me tremendous hope. It rekindled my faith in humankind; in its goodness and innate wisdom; and in the enormous potential to build a sane, secure, and happy world. And together that day, we shared vast knowledge, wisdom, and the will to break away from the tenacious grip of mindless consumerism.

I am confident that readers of this report will share that inspiration and work closely and determinedly with us to create, build, and bring into being a new holistic, sustainable, and inclusive economic paradigm that truly serves human happiness and the wellbeing of all life.

TASHI DELEK!

Jigmi Y. Thinley

Prime Minister of Bhutan

The background is a solid teal color with four stylized, light teal cloud-like patterns. Each pattern consists of swirling, organic shapes that resemble traditional East Asian cloud motifs. They are positioned in the top-left, top-right, bottom-left, and bottom-right corners of the page.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The world is desperately seeking change. People sense that important social, economic and environmental shifts are afoot. There are now over seven billion people on the planet. Technology is helping us to communicate, organise and learn on a global scale. Emerging economies are rising in all continents and the 'global middle class' is larger than ever before.

Yet inequality between the world's rich and poor continues to grow, both between and within countries. Extreme weather events are more frequent and severe, and adapting to changes in climate is now a reality. Demand for natural resources is increasing and contributing to the degradation of the environment. Food and oil prices set new records and acute debt crises cascade through the global economy.

Resolution 65/309 welcomed the offer of Bhutan to convene a panel discussion on happiness and wellbeing and invited member states "to pursue the elaboration of additional measures that better capture the importance of the pursuit of happiness and wellbeing in development with a view to guiding their public policies."

On 2nd April, 2012, the Royal Government of Bhutan convened the High-Level Meeting on Wellbeing and Happiness: Defining a New Economic Paradigm. More than 800 participants including political and government leaders, representatives of governments, international organizations, civil society organizations, media, and business, as well as leading economists, scholars, academics, and spiritual leaders from the world's major faiths participated in the proceedings. The full programme is attached as Annex VI.

The High-Level Meeting included an inaugural session that was chaired by H.E. Ms. Helen Clark, Administrator, United Nations Development Programme and Former Prime Minister of New Zealand. The Prime Minister of Bhutan, H.E. Mr. Jigmi Y. Thinley, delivered the opening address on the mission and purpose of the meeting. UN Secretary-General, H.E. Mr. Ban Ki-moon delivered the inaugural address, and supportive statements were delivered by the President of the 66th Session of the UN General Assembly, H.E. Mr. Nassir Abdulaziz Al-Nasser, and the President of the Economic and Social

Council, H.E. Mr. Miloš Koterec. H.E. Ms. Laura Chinchilla, President of the Republic of Costa Rica, delivered the keynote address. Transcripts of the remarks delivered during the inaugural session are available in Annex V.

Following the inaugural session, the meeting proceeded with panel discussions on four themes: well-being and happiness, ecological sustainability, efficient allocation of resources, and fair distribution. A total of 20 panellists delivered remarks across these four dimensions of the new economic paradigm, including Ms. Michelle Bachelet, Under Secretary-General and Director of UN Women and former President of Chile, Professor Joseph Stiglitz, Professor Jeffrey Sachs, Venerable Matthieu Ricard, Lord Richard Layard, Professor Robert Costanza, and Dr. Vandana Shiva.

Following a working lunch, Dr. Jacqueline McGlade, Executive Director of the European Environment Agency, moderated the afternoon session. It began with a video message from His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales, prepared specially for the High-Level Meeting. This was followed by interactive discussion with participants. The first part of the session was oriented toward gathering views from the participants on the four dimensions. The second part of the session concentrated on interventions intended to build links across the themes and to move towards action to build the new economy.

The meeting closed with a concluding statement on the next steps by H.E. Mr. Jigmi Y. Thinley, Prime Minister of Bhutan, followed by concluding prayers by spiritual leaders of the Hindu, Christian, Jewish, Muslim and Buddhist faiths.

More than two hundred of the 2nd April participants continued discussions on 3rd and 4th April in order to advance the outcomes of the High-Level Meeting and to begin creating concrete implementation plans. These follow-up meetings were structured around four working groups: Experts and Scholars; Communications; Planning, and Civil Society and Spiritual Leaders.

On 4th April, all four working groups convened in plenary sessions that were chaired by the Prime Minister of Bhutan. These plenary sessions provided an opportunity for each of the working groups to report on key outcomes, strategies, and recommendations, and to coordinate with each other.

Overall, the meeting produced several immediate outcomes that are captured in this report. The first is a list of 15 main recommendations that emanate from the rich presentations and discussions that took place over the course of the three days. These are captured in the final section of the report. Secondly, the deliberations of the Experts and Scholars Working Group resulted in a concise statement, entitled “Realizing a World of Sustainable Wellbeing and Happiness”. The statement acts as a guiding aspiration to advancing the vision of a new economic paradigm. The complete statement is presented in Annex X.

Furthermore, the Civil Society and Spiritual Leaders Working Group adopted two concise and powerful value-based Mission Statements that represents the strong spirit and commitment that exists in advancing the outcomes of the High-Level Meeting. These statements are presented in the summaries of the working group discussions on April 3rd and 4th.



Additionally, there was broad agreement at the High-Level Meeting on Wellbeing and Happiness that governments worldwide can take practical and immediate steps towards adoption of the new well-being and happiness-based economic paradigm. To that end, examples of the kinds of policies that are in line with the principles of the new economy, and which governments might consider for voluntary adoption, are provided in Annex XI. The last Annex to the report, Annex XII, contains proposals for next steps following the High-Level Meeting, including a suggested timeline.

In closing, the Prime Minister of Bhutan expressed his deep sense of happiness and satisfaction at the vast knowledge and numerous expert perspectives brought to the High-Level Meeting. He said the Royal Government of Bhutan humbly accepts the responsibility of undertaking key actions designed to facilitate future plans and efforts towards a new economic paradigm based on happiness and wellbeing. Subsequent steps in that direction include:

- Preparation of the present Report of the High Level Meeting for submission to the UN Secretary-General for onward distribution to member states;
- Requesting Head of Governments to consider adopting recommendations for policy action formulated by the High-Level Meeting;
- Reporting on the High-Level Meeting themes and outcomes, and on the key principles and dimensions of the new economic paradigm at Rio + 20, and;
- Convening a Commission to elaborate the dimensions of the proposed new economic paradigm, for consideration by the 68th Session of the UN General Assembly in 2013.

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INTRODUCTION
THE NEED FOR A NEW
ECONOMIC PARADIGM

INTRODUCTION

THE NEED FOR A NEW ECONOMIC PARADIGM

The world is desperately seeking change. People sense that important social, economic and environmental shifts are afoot. There are now over seven billion people on the planet. Recent decades have brought extraordinary improvements in life expectancy the world over. Technology is helping us to communicate, organise and learn on a global scale. Emerging economies are rising in all continents and the 'global middle class' is larger than ever before.

Yet inequality between the world's rich and poor continues to grow, both between and within countries. Extreme weather events are more frequent and severe, and adapting to climate change is now a reality. Demand for natural resources is increasing and contributing to the degradation of the natural environment. Food and oil prices have set new records and acute debt crises have cascaded through the global economy.

While current trends means that we have no choice but to act, there is much to gain by doing so. Change and innovation, through the testing and advancement of new models, have been a key determinant in human advancement. Nicolas Sarkozy, the former President of France, noted that the global financial and European debt crisis "doesn't only make us free to imagine other models, another future, and another world. It obliges us to do so." And the British Prime Minister, David Cameron, has brought wellbeing into the UK's core measures of progress, declaring: "Improving our society's sense of wellbeing is...the central political challenge of our times."

The international aspiration towards change was manifested when the 193 Member States of the United Nations General Assembly adopted by consensus Resolution 65/309 on "Happiness: Towards a holistic approach to development". The resolution described happiness as "a fundamental human goal and universal aspiration", noting that "GDP by its nature does not reflect that goal; that unsustainable patterns of production and consumption impede sustainable development; and that a more inclusive, equitable and balanced approach is needed to promote sustainability, eradicate poverty, and enhance wellbeing".



Inspired by Bhutan's development philosophy of Gross National Happiness, resolution 65/309 equally welcomed the offer of Bhutan to convene a panel discussion on happiness and wellbeing and invited member states "to pursue the elaboration of additional measures that better capture the importance of the pursuit of happiness and wellbeing in development with a view to guiding their public policies."

On 2nd April 2012 The Royal Government of Bhutan convened a '*High Level Meeting on Wellbeing and Happiness: Defining a New Economic Paradigm*' at United Nations Headquarters in New York. The meeting focused on elaborating a new global wellbeing and sustainability-based economic paradigm to replace a system that is in rapid decline worldwide.

The Prime Minister of Bhutan, H.E. Mr. Jigmi Y. Thinley, outlined the purpose of the High-Level Meeting in his opening remarks:

We desperately need an economy that serves and nurtures the wellbeing of all sentient beings on earth and the human happiness that comes from living life in harmony with the natural world, with our communities, and with our inner selves. We need an economy that will serve humanity, not enslave it. It must prevent the imminent reversal of civilization and flourish within the natural bounds of our planet while ensuring the sustainable, equitable and meaningful use of precious resources.

Business as usual cannot go on and tinkering with the existing system will not do. We need a fundamental transformation that the Tellus Institute calls *the Great Transition*. Our goal today is to launch the initiative for such a transition.

To that end, the Prime Minister outlined concrete outcomes and action steps that must come from the meeting, including the submission of the present report to the Secretary-General for distribution to all Member States; the distribution a set of recommendations to guide national economic policies based on wellbeing and happiness; and the establishment of a commission of experts to elaborate the details of the dimensions of the proposed new economy to be considered by the 68th session of the General Assembly in 2013.

The High-Level Meeting was attended by more than 800 distinguished participants, including political and government leaders, representatives of governments, international organizations, civil society, media, and business, as well as leading economists, scholars, academics, scientists, and spiritual and faith leaders.

The High-Level Meeting programme included an inaugural session; panel discussions on four themes – wellbeing and happiness, ecological sustainability, efficient allocation of resources, and fair distribution; a working lunch; and an interactive session in the afternoon followed by a closing session. The full programme of the High-Level Meeting is attached as Annex V.

More than two hundred of the 2nd April participants continued discussions on 3rd and 4th April to follow up on the outcomes of the High-Level Meeting and to begin creating concrete implementation plans. These follow-up meetings were structured around four working groups:

- Experts and Scholars
- Communications
- Planning
- Civil Society and Spiritual Leaders

On 4th April, to begin and end the day of discussions, all four working groups convened together in two plenary sessions that were chaired by the Prime Minister of Bhutan. These plenary sessions provided an opportunity for each of the working groups to report on key outcomes, strategies, and recommendations, and to coordinate with each other.

In closing, the Prime Minister of Bhutan expressed his deep sense of happiness and satisfaction at the vast knowledge and numerous expert perspectives brought to the High-Level Meeting. He said the Royal Government of Bhutan humbly accepts the responsibility of undertaking key actions designed to facilitate future plans and efforts towards a new economic paradigm based on happiness and wellbeing. Subsequent steps in that direction include:

- Preparation of the present Report of the High Level Meeting for submission to the UN Secretary-General for onward distribution to member states;
- Requesting Head of Governments to consider adopting recommendations for policy action formulated by the High-Level Meeting;
- Reporting on the High-Level Meeting themes and outcomes, and on the key principles and dimensions of the new economic paradigm at Rio + 20, and;
- Convening a Commission to elaborate the dimensions of the proposed new economic paradigm, for consideration by the 68th Session of the UN General Assembly in 2013.

This report will now present a more detailed account of the proceedings of the 2nd April High-level Meeting and the 3rd and 4th April follow-up meetings, followed by a list of resulting recommendations.

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INAUGURAL SESSION

PREFACE TO THE DELIBERATIONS

INAUGURAL SESSION

PREFACE TO THE DELIBERATIONS

The inaugural session was chaired by **H.E. Ms. Helen Clark, Administrator, United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the Former Prime Minister of New Zealand**, chaired the inaugural session. The session featured addresses by the dignitaries listed below. The full texts of their statements are attached as Annex VI.

- H.E. Mr. Jigmi Y. Thinley, Prime Minister of Bhutan
- H.E. Mr. Ban Ki-moon, Secretary-General of the United Nations, who gave the Inaugural Address
- H.E. Mr. Nassir Abdulaziz Al-Nasser, President of the 66th Session of the UN General Assembly
- H.E. Mr. Miloš Koterec, President of the Economic and Social Council
- H.E. Ms. Laura Chinchilla, Honourable President of the Republic of Costa Rica, who gave the Key-note Address
- Honourable Tim Fischer, Special Envoy of the Prime Minister of Australia to Bhutan and the Former Deputy Prime Minister of Australia
- H.E. Mr. Eero Heinäluoma, Speaker of the Parliament of Finland
- H.E. Ms. Jayanthi Natarajan, Special Envoy of the Prime Minister of India and Minister of State for Environment and Forests, Government of India
- H.E. Mr. Gilad Menashe Erdan, Minister of Environmental Protection, Government of Israel
- H.E. Mr. Joe Nakano, Parliamentary Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs, Government of Japan
- H.E. Mr. Ahmed Lahlimi Alami, Minister and High Commissioner for Planning, Kingdom of Morocco
- H.E. Mr. Jullapong Nonsrichai, Special Envoy of the Prime Minister of Thailand and Vice-Minister of Foreign Affairs of Thailand
- Lord Gus O'Donnell, Special Envoy of the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland
- Ms. Martine Durand, Chief Statistician, OECD, representing the Secretary-General of OECD

The delegations of China, France, Brazil, and the European Union delivered remarks in the afternoon sessions. The delegation of Luxembourg provided a written statement and requested that it be included in this report as Luxembourg's contribution to the High-Level Meeting.

In her welcome remarks, **H.E. Ms. Helen Clark** suggested that Bhutan's longstanding pursuit of Gross National Happiness (GNH) could inform the development of a new economic paradigm because this approach integrates inclusive economic development with "strengthening communities, protecting the environment, providing universal access to health services and education, and preserving traditional culture and heritage." She highlighted that Bhutan "measures the value of the nation's natural, human, social, and cultural wealth, and not just its material and capital assets."

Ms. Clark recalled the historic 1987 report of the World Commission on Environment and Development, *Our Common Future*, with the observation, "One of the key questions before the international community is: what could our common future look like? Bhutan is providing answers to that question." She expressed hope that discussions from the High-Level Meeting could foster a common understanding of how to build a sustainable future.

In his opening address, **H.E. Mr. Jigmi Y. Thinley, Prime Minister of Bhutan**, outlined the goals and objectives of the High-Level Meeting. He emphasized that development models led by Gross Domestic Product (GDP) no longer made economic sense, and that "the purpose of development must be to create enabling conditions through public policy for the pursuit of the ultimate goal of happiness by all citizens." He explained that Bhutan is witnessing growing global interest in its GNH-based development approach as an alternative development paradigm, and would like to contribute its experience to the search for holistic economic systems.

The GNH approach, he said, is based on the belief that happiness can be achieved by balancing the needs of the body with those of the mind within a peaceful and secure environment. GNH, Prime Minister Thinley said, is a sustainability based, wellbeing centric, inclusive economic model. He clarified that Bhutan is not a country that has attained GNH, and like most developing nations, continues to struggle with the challenge of fulfilling the basic needs of its people. However, what sets apart Bhutan is that it has adopted happiness as the most fundamental human need and goal.

The **Prime Minister of Bhutan** declared: “We desperately need an economy that serves and nurtures the wellbeing of all sentient beings on earth and the human happiness that comes from living life in harmony with the natural world, with our communities, and with our inner selves. We need an economy that will serve humanity, not enslave it. It must prevent the imminent reversal of civilization and flourish within the natural bounds of our planet while ensuring the sustainable, equitable and meaningful use of precious resources. Business as usual cannot go on and tinkering with the existing system will not do. We need a fundamental transformation...Our goal today is to launch the initiative for such a transition.”

The Prime Minister said he was humbled and inspired by the response to this call under the auspices of the UN General Assembly. He outlined the concrete goals and intended outcomes of the High-Level Meeting as follows:

- Compiling the present report for the Secretary-General to distribute to all UN member states, along with a set of policy recommendations that governments may choose to voluntarily adopt at their own pace and on their own terms to move towards the new economy;
- Elaborating the details of the four dimensions of the proposed new economy by a commission of eminent experts for the consideration by the 67th session of the UN General Assembly in 2013;
- Preparing a strategy to carry this process forward to Rio+20 and UN General Assembly deliberations on what must succeed the Millennium Development Goals after 2015; and
- Outlining initiatives to promote a global movement for the new wellbeing and sustainability-based economic paradigm.



Photo courtesy of Jonathan Harris

In his inaugural address, the **UN Secretary-General, H.E. Mr. Ban Ki-moon**, said “Bhutan has recognized the supremacy of national happiness over national income since the early 1970s,” and commended the Government of Bhutan for initiating the High-Level Meeting. The Secretary-General cited several other recent examples of national and international efforts toward more holistic approaches for measurement of progress, including:

- The recommendation by the Secretary-General’s [Global Sustainability Panel](#) to establish a set of indicators to measure progress toward sustainable development.
- Work by United Kingdom statistical authorities on “[National Wellbeing](#)”
- The European Commission’s “[GDP and Beyond](#)” Project
- The Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development’s (OECD) [Better Life Initiative](#).

The Secretary-General said that Gross Domestic Product (GDP) “fails to take into account the social and environmental costs of so-called progress.” He stressed, “Gross National Product has long been the yardstick by which economies and politicians have been measured. Yet it fails to take into account the social and environmental costs of so-called progress. We need a new economic paradigm that recognizes the parity between the three pillars of sustainable development. Social, economic and environmental wellbeing are indivisible. Together they define gross global happiness”.

The President of the UN General Assembly, H.E. Mr. Nassir Abdulaziz Al-Nasser also called for a sustainability-based economic paradigm to “bring a more inclusive, equitable and balanced approach that will promote sustainability, eradicate poverty, and enhance wellbeing and happiness.” Like the UN Secretary-General, he advocated a paradigm that considers economic, environmental, and social wellbeing. He encouraged Member States to “consider adopting practical steps towards policy shifts that will enable a sustainability-based economic paradigm.”

The President of the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), H.E. Mr. Miloš Koterec commended Bhutan’s initiative to forge “a holistic development path that seeks to integrate sustainable and equitable economic and social development with environmental conservation, cultural promotion and good governance.” He emphasized that development must be inclusive. Mr. Koterec

highlighted that the jobs crisis is focusing increasing attention on the social pillar of sustainable development, and that governments must promote job creation and decent work, particularly for youth and women.

H.E. Mr. Koterec stated that the High-level Meeting on Wellbeing and Happiness is extremely relevant for the initial discussions on the post-2015 development agenda that are currently taking place within the UN. He affirmed that ECOSOC “stands ready to provide a platform for multistakeholder discussions on how to move forward on defining a new economic paradigm for holistic development as well as assuring coherent and coordinated initiatives within the UN system.”

H.E. Ms. Laura Chinchilla Miranda, Honourable President of the Republic of Costa Rica, delivered the keynote address at the High-Level Meeting. She stated, “I am honored to open this conference as President of a country convinced that the purpose and meaning of development is not the sheer accumulation of wealth, but the wellbeing of the people and the pursuit of their happiness.”

H.E. Ms. Chinchilla explained that despite its modest resources, Costa Rica has managed to continually improve the quality of life of its people, and provided several examples of initiatives and results from the country’s comprehensive development path. Costa Ricans, she said, are aware that wellbeing is nourished by the interaction of economic, social, cultural, environmental and spiritual factors. H.E. Ms. Chinchilla elaborated: “The quest for wellbeing also demands a suitable balance between aspirations and achievements; between ‘I’ and ‘we’; between public and private; the institutional and the spontaneous; drives and limits; traditions and innovation; freedom and responsibility.”

The President of Costa Rica invited all meeting participants to reflect on two issues:

1. What are the best paths to stimulate a holistic approach to development?
2. How to advance methodological approaches to systematize good practices, explore results, and develop suitable measurements of wellbeing?

She expressed confidence that the High-Level Meeting would contribute to the development of “more comprehensive indicators on human development in its fullest sense” – tools that are necessary “to assess the results of our efforts, and eventually, adjust their course.”

Honourable Tim Fischer, Special Envoy of the Prime Minister of Australia and the Former Deputy Prime Minister of Australia, shared that as a result of his more than 25 years of travel to Bhutan, he has “come to deeply appreciate the evolution of GNH in all its dimensions,” particularly because it “tracks balance, harmony and real progress for the Bhutanese.” He explained that Australia strongly supports the further evolution and adoption of GNH and wellbeing measurements.

Hon. Tim Fischer said Australia welcomes the UN Secretary-General’s [Global Sustainability Panel](#) recommendation for the creation of a Sustainable Development Index, and strongly supports the [UN System of Environmental-Economic Accounts \(SEEA\)](#). He urged delegates to take the High-Level Meeting’s agenda forward in a purposeful way to the Rio+20 conference in Brazil. He welcomed the advent of GNH for future generations and encouraged all to bring the practical concepts associated with wellbeing and sustainability to the world.

H.E. Mr. Eero Heinäluoma, Speaker of the Parliament of Finland, identified the need for universally adopted indicators to enable the formation of policy for a new economic paradigm. He explained that Finland was “one of the first countries to agree on a national set of sustainable development indicators in the late 1990s,” has promoted the use of development indicators, and has created tools to make information more readily available for policy makers and citizens. For example, the [Findicator service](#), available in Finnish, Swedish, and English, provides a set of nearly a hundred indicators that describe the society at large. This innovative portal was developed in cooperation with the government and policy makers and businesses.

H.E. Mr. Heinäluoma also expressed that Finland fully supports the [Beyond GDP](#) Initiative carried out by the European Union, the OECD and other partners and shared that the current Government Programme of Finland includes the development of complementary indicators.

H.E Ms. Jayanthi Natarajan, Special Envoy of the Prime Minister of India and Minister of State for Environment and Forests, Government of India, thanked the Prime Minister of Bhutan for delivering a lecture on Gross National Happiness last year in India’s Parliament and providing valuable insights on how to pursue the goal of inclusive development meaningfully. She said that India shares Bhutan’s belief that “human development should be based in equal measure on material progress, social

inclusion, cultural life, and living in harmony with nature.” H.E. Ms. Natarajan stressed that material progress since the industrial revolution has cast tremendous pressure on the planet, and nations must address this challenge “together in a manner that is fair and equitable.” She called for the recognition of common but differentiated responsibilities, and respect for equity, and emphasized that processes must be inclusive, participatory, and truly democratic at both national and global levels. H.E. Ms. Natarajan also cautioned that a quest for additional indicators to complement GDP must not move away from inclusive growth. She called for the integration of all three pillars of sustainable development, and a paradigm for sustainable consumption that is anchored in the Rio Principles.

H.E. Mr. Gilad Menashe Erdan, Minister of Environmental Protection, Government of Israel, emphasized: “The traditional measures of growth, particularly GDP, relate only to short-term progress. They rarely provide a comprehensive assessment of the quality of life and wellbeing of our citizens.” H.E. Mr. Erdan called on the United Nations and its affiliate bodies to work together with Member States to promote a new global economic paradigm that will advance the wellbeing of all peoples. “The time has come to change the way we think about growth, and to realize that environmental and social issues are every bit as important to the wellbeing of our citizens as GDP,” he advocated.

H.E. Mr. Erdan pointed out that “if we fail our environment now, our environment will fail us in the future.” He explained that Israel’s Ministry of Environmental Protection and the Central Bank of Israel conducted a study that showed that stricter environmental regulations actually improve economic conditions in the short term. This finding led the Ministry of Environmental Protection to establish a set of indicators that are complementary to GDP. These indicators include both objective and subjective environmental, economic and social indicators, which are measured annually by state authorities. This is the first step in a long process designed to provide policy makers with a reliable, balanced evaluation of the wellbeing of their citizens.

H.E. Mr. Joe Nakano, Parliamentary Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs, Government of Japan conveyed that the government of Japan has organized and participated in national and international efforts to identify better approaches for promoting wellbeing. In December 2011, a Japanese government commission published a study that proposed 130 wellbeing indicators and discussed their policy implications. These indicators focus on bonds among families, local communities and nature.

A Panel under Japan's Council on National Strategy and Policy is now considering how the commission's findings can feed into concrete measures for government policy-making.

H.E. Mr. Nakano stated that the Government of Japan's input to the Rio+20 Outcome Document proposed happiness and wellbeing as new criteria for the development agenda to provide perspectives different than GDP. He also noted that in December 2011, Japan hosted the [Asia-Pacific Conference on Measuring Wellbeing and Fostering the Progress of Societies](#) in cooperation with the OECD, the Asian Development Bank and other relevant organizations. At this conference, 180 participants from 32 countries shared their initiatives on measuring wellbeing.

H.E. Mr. Ahmed Lahlimi Alami, Minister and High Commissioner for Planning, Kingdom of Morocco, said that anticipating the future, both on the individual and the collective level, requires experience in the process of participatory democracy. He described Morocco's success with participatory democracy over the last decade to illustrate the potential to illuminate a way forward. He explained that through regional, sector-specific and urban program contracts, partnership mechanisms with the State have ensured the participation of private operators, local authorities, elected officials and civil society representatives in the the definition of objectives and the implementation of reforms. At the local government level, the same partnership approach is used in the [Human Development Initiative](#) (known as INDH). Participatory reform processes have led to advanced regionalization and constitutional recognition of the country's linguistic and cultural pluralism, gender equality, and the roles of NGOs, youth and women in politics and the management of public affairs.

H.E. Mr. Alami further explained that Morocco's High Commission for Planning, which is in charge of statistics, has facilitated the country's adaptation to change by embracing better ways to measure economic performance and social progress through a better understanding of wealth and income disparities.

H.E. Mr. Jullapong Nonsrichai, Special Envoy of the Prime Minister of Thailand and Vice-Minister of Foreign Affairs, Government of Thailand, focused on the principles of moderation and sufficiency. He said that moderation is often mistakenly perceived as being at odds with capitalism and modernity, or associated with autarky. In Mr. Nonsrichai's view, moderation does not prevent prosperity, but rather is "a concept that will anchor sustainability."

H.E. Mr. Nonsrichai explained that moderation is one of the core principles enshrined in the “Sufficiency Economy” philosophy developed by His Majesty the King of Thailand, whom the UNDP awarded the United Nations first Human Development Lifetime Achievement Award in 2006. Sufficiency Economy is a philosophy that calls for “moderation and reasonableness, including the need for resilience to external shocks and self-immunity from impacts arising from internal and external changes.” H.E. Mr. Nonsrichai indicated that this philosophy was instrumental in leading Thailand out of the 1997 financial crisis and has been the guiding principle for Thailand’s National Economic and Social Development plans that promote human development, reduce income inequalities, and ensure sound foundations for sustainable economic growth. The philosophy has also helped the people of Thailand to cope with and recover from the unprecedented, severe flooding in Thailand last year.

In line with the belief that the principles of sufficiency and moderation are important for the achievement of sustainable development, H.E. Mr. Nonsrichai suggested: “A possible set of new indicators, such as Sustainable Development Goals, with moderation and sustainability as a core, are worthy of consideration in order to achieve the ultimate goal of improving the lives and wellbeing of all the people.”

Lord Gus O’Donnell, Special Envoy of the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, stated that he attended a meeting on 1st April organised by the Earth Institute at Columbia University, with experts from a range of disciplines and countries to discuss the World Happiness Report by John Helliwell, Richard Layard and Jeffrey Sachs. At this meeting, the importance of relationships, social capital and altruism was highlighted.

Lord O’Donnell explained that UK Prime Minister David Cameron is focused on taking practical steps to ensure the UK government assesses and supports quality of life as well as economic growth. The UK Office for National Statistics now has a programme for measuring national wellbeing. 200,000 citizens have been interviewed on life satisfaction, happiness and their view of how worthwhile their life is and how anxious they are. The results of this survey are feeding the development of new policies that will bring in more revenue, increase the productivity of public spending, and enhance people’s wellbeing. Civil servants in the UK are being taught to put wellbeing at the heart of their cost-benefit analysis.

Lord O'Donnell advocated for happiness and wellbeing to be reflected in the Sustainable Development Goals. He underscored that happier people are more productive, illustrating further that wellbeing and development go hand-in-hand. He called for leadership at the global, national and local levels to develop and implement existing policies that enhance development and wellbeing and improve the sustainability of the planet. In closing, Lord O'Donnell remarked that the High-Level Meeting is an example that the world can come together not just to solve crises but also to enhance the quality of life.

Ms. Martine Durand, Chief Statistician and Director of the Statistics Directorate for the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), explained that for nearly ten years, the OECD has worked to identify ways to measure the progress of societies beyond GDP. In 2011, the OECD launched the [Better Life Initiative](#), which draws on the themes identified by the [Stiglitz-Sen-Fitoussi Commission](#) established by French President Sarkozy. Ms. Durand explained that the Initiative's framework features 11 dimensions of human wellbeing, focuses on people rather than on the economic system, and considers both objective and subjective aspects of wellbeing. Ms. Durand elaborated that the framework also assesses how current impacts on assets will affect wellbeing in the future. Citizens can interact with the OECD about the determinants of wellbeing and happiness through the [Your Better Life Index](#) web tool.

Ms. Durand listed a number of countries that are engaged in the measurement of wellbeing, including the United Kingdom, Germany, Italy, Australia, Slovenia, Japan, Korea, China, Colombia, Mexico, Morocco, and India. In addition, she highlighted that the European Statistical System has adopted [50 measures](#) to promote the development of wellbeing indicators. She said this shows that policy makers are engaging seriously with statisticians on this subject, and that the translation of better measures into better policies is progressing. Ms. Durand also informed that the [4th OECD World Forum](#) on "Measuring Wellbeing for Development and Policy Making," organized jointly with the Government of India, will take place from 16-19 October 2012 in New Delhi following preparatory events in Mexico, Japan and Morocco.

Some of the main recommendations that emerged from the addresses by the high-level government representatives included:

- Happiness and wellbeing concepts should be included in the potential Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).
- New indicators to measure wellbeing should be advanced. Previous work on such indicators, for example UNDP's Human Development Index, the work of the Stiglitz-Sen-Fitoussi Commission of French President Sarkozy, and Bhutan's GNH Index, should be examined as models.
- Governments should measure the happiness and wellbeing of their people, and use the determinants of happiness and wellbeing to guide public policy. More than 30 governments are currently working with wellbeing indicators.
- A global index should be developed, following the structure proposed by the Stiglitz-Sen-Fitoussi Commission, to provide a planetary platform for measuring progress towards happiness.
- Broad participation of all stakeholders is required to ensure integrity and human development.

The background is a solid teal color with several stylized, light teal cloud patterns scattered across it. The clouds are composed of swirling, organic shapes that resemble traditional East Asian cloud motifs.

PANEL DISCUSSIONS
EXPLORING THE DIMENSIONS
OF THE NEW ECONOMIC PARADIGM

PANEL DISCUSSIONS

EXPLORING THE DIMENSIONS OF THE NEW ECONOMIC PARADIGM

The inaugural session was followed by three hours of panel discussions that aimed to elaborate four dimensions of the proposed new economic paradigm:

- Wellbeing and Happiness
- Efficient Use of Resources
- Ecological Sustainability
- Fair Distribution

This section of the report captures the main ideas presented within each of these dimensions, aiming to provide a more complete understanding of the new economic paradigm.

Summary of the Discussion on Wellbeing and Happiness

H.E. Ms. Helen Clark chaired the panel discussion on *Happiness and Wellbeing*. It featured six eminent speakers:

- Venerable Matthieu Ricard from Shechen Monastery, Nepal
- Professor Martin Seligman, Founder of Positive Psychology and Director, Positive Psychology Centre, University of Pennsylvania
- Dasho Karma Ura, President of the Centre for Bhutan Studies
- Dasho Karma Tshiteem, Secretary of Gross National Happiness Commission, Royal Government of Bhutan
- Professor John Helliwell, Professor Emeritus of Economics, University of British Columbia
- Lord Richard Layard, Emeritus Professor of Economics, London School of Economics

Before the start of the panel discussion on Wellbeing and Happiness, H.E. Ms. Clark invited Professor Jeffrey Sachs, Director of the Earth Institute at Columbia University, to report on the Workshop on

Happiness organised by the Earth Institute on 1st April at Columbia University. Professor Sachs shared the following findings from the workshop:

- The issue of happiness requires a holistic approach from many perspectives.
- Happiness has at least three meanings: happiness as a mood; happiness as satisfaction with one's life; happiness as a flourishing and fulfilling life that leaves an impact on society – referred to as eudemonia by Aristotle.
- All three of these categories of happiness can be measured and can be promoted by public policies and global goals such as the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).
- Gross National Product (GNP) by itself does not promote happiness.
- Life evaluation depends on many things, including: satisfaction of basic needs; employment and income; strength of one's social support network; trustworthiness of government; access to health care including for mental illnesses; having altruistic and compassionate values. Social support and good mental health are more important than income.
- Happiness is not only a state of mind and a trait, but also a skill. Happiness is an art of living and can be taught, learned and transmitted.
- The benefits to happiness include higher productivity, faster recovery from illness and lower mortality, more peace and more compassion.
- Governments can do much to promote happiness, including achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and meeting all basic needs; measuring happiness; promoting active labour market policies; promoting mental health; promoting compassion, altruism, and honesty; resisting hyper-commercialism (e.g. through limits on advertising); resisting corruption; creating institutions such as Bhutan's Gross National Happiness Commission.
- A new measurement system, as part of Sustainable Development Goals, is needed to complement and correct the national accounts. This system should measure happiness in its three senses, study the determinants of happiness so as to promote it, and include comprehensive green accounting.
- The epistemic community comprising of statisticians, economists, philosophers, teachers and others must join together to incorporate happiness into people's lives.

H.E. Ms. Clark then introduced the first panelist for the thematic discussion on Happiness and Well-being: Venerable Matthieu Ricard, a Buddhist monk from Shechen Monastery in Nepal and author of several books including “Happiness: A Guide to Developing Life’s Most Important Skill.”

Venerable Matthieu Ricard illuminated the common path toward happiness for all people. He said, “Happiness is a way of being that comes with genuine altruistic love, inner strength, inner freedom, serenity – that can be cultivated as a skill day after day, month after month.” He explained that “training the mind and transforming our self is not a substitute to improving the outer conditions, but it goes hand in hand with that.”

Venerable Matthieu Ricard emphasized that “the pursuit of happiness is intimately linked with altruism,” and stated that there is no such thing as selfish happiness, because “it’s at odds with reality; we are not separate entities. We need to have the sense of inter-connectedness and global responsibility.” Altruism is the core of all components of happiness; it must be nurtured to recognize and respect the interdependence of all beings. “Altruism and happiness are not a luxury, they are a necessity,” Venerable Matthieu Ricard contended. He further added: “If you have more consideration for others, you will do everything to make things better at the workplace, within the family, within your profession, so that you can flourish in life. And if you have more consideration for others, you will not sacrifice and jeopardize the only home that we have.”

Professor Martin Seligman, Founder of Positive Psychology and Director of the Positive Psychology Center at the University of Pennsylvania, contributed that he uses the acronym PERMA for the five psychological elements of wellbeing: P is positive emotion, including happiness. E is engagement. R is good relationships. M is meaning and purpose in life. A is achievement and accomplishment. Professor Seligman stated that all five of these psychological elements are measurable and teachable, and are being taught in schools and corporate settings.

“Why should the United Nations adopt wellbeing, happiness, as an end?” asked Professor Seligman. Because this would lead to more productivity, better health, and peace, he suggested.

Dasho Karma Ura, President of the Centre for Bhutan Studies, sketched a vision of a person and society in the image of Gross National Happiness (GNH):

GNH envisions a person to be bonded deeply to her safe and supportive community in which trustworthiness of the people is very high and in which the victimization of human beings by others is ideally non-existent.

The GNH index evaluates the level of giving and receiving of various gifts of social time, of goods, and of labour, and it assesses the cultural continuity of key elements of a community.

A community envisioned in GNH is set deeply in nature and ecology. Happiness of the inhabitants of such a beautiful, rugged land is assessed not only in economic terms. Nature's aesthetic stimulus can be directly healing as the inhabitants enjoy vivid colours and light, untainted breeze, silence in nature's sound.

Yet living in nature in Bhutan comes at a cost. The farmers of Bhutan lose a high proportion of their crop and livestock to wildlife damage and this is the price they pay for conservation. But this is also an indicator of ecology's health.

GNH envisions a person's basic good nature of kindness, generosity and compassion freed from the repression of selfishness, jealousy, anger, etc. Life satisfaction is evolved within five life domains. Emotions are surveyed in order to measure their relationship to important aspects of happiness. Because spiritual activities and positive emotions are associated, mental devices such as decreasing wandering of mind, meditation, and prayerful meditations, are also measured in the GNH index.

Time is included in the dimension of happiness as an independent element in GNH. The person envisioned in a GNH society should have no time poverty. He/she should experience the joy of slowness, and every day, he/she should enjoy the right of ample time to socialize, to active leisure, and for wholesome sleep.

The broad orientation of GNH is post-modern because it incorporates in large measure, non-material and social dimensions of wellbeing.

The next speaker on the panel was **Dasho Karma Tshiteem, Secretary of the Gross National Happiness Commission of the Royal Government of Bhutan**. Dasho Tshiteem defined GNH as "Bhutan's

development approach that seeks a balance between material wellbeing and the spiritual, emotional and cultural needs of society. It is motivated by the belief that happiness is the ultimate desire of every human being and that, therefore, it should be the purpose of development to create the enabling conditions for happiness.”

Dasho Tshiteem explained how the Royal Government of Bhutan (RGOB) operationalizes GNH:

- RGOB has created institutions such as the GNH Commission to guide Bhutan’s development.
- RGOB has fleshed out the idea of GNH into concrete indices and rules to introduce GNH into its policies and plans.
- RGOB assesses progress through this holistic framework. In order to inform and guide further development, surveys are undertaken every two to three years.

Dasho Tshiteem then elaborated the concept of GNH. He informed that it is made up of nine domains – living standards, health, education, environment, good governance, ecological wellbeing, cultural diversity and resilience, community vitality, and time use. He said that “if we compare these to the policy-making frameworks used by most governments, four out of the nine domains are usually absent. These are the domains of psychological wellbeing, community vitality, cultural diversity and resilience, and time use. Yet many studies show that these domains are also necessary and vital to the pursuit of happiness”.

Dasho Tshiteem provided suggestions for how governments could support psychological wellbeing and time use in a society. He informed that studies have shown that meditation enhances psychological wellbeing and thereby happiness. Recognizing this, Bhutan has incorporated meditation as an indicator in the psychological wellbeing domain of the GNH index. Surveys in 2007 and 2010 both found that the majority of Bhutanese do not meditate. Dasho Tshiteem explained that therefore, Bhutan decided to introduce meditation into all of its schools in 2010 as “a simple activity conducted for two to three minutes, one to two times daily, basically letting children experience stillness, every day, in the hope that they will get all the benefits associated with such activity – contemplation, reflection, concentration, tolerance, compassion, etc.”

“Time use is another domain critical for the pursuit of happiness,” stated Dasho Tshiteem. “In our GNH paradigm, time is life – not money. And the greater the alignment between what one really cares about and how one uses time, the higher the chances of being happy and, therefore, we promote through workplace policies, balanced time use.”

Dasho Tshiteem explained that surveys on these subjects are influencing budget allocation and development prioritization. In conclusion, he offered: “We earnestly believe that progress as measured by the holistic GNH paradigm will result in sustainable development and more meaningful and happier lives for our people.”

Professor John Helliwell, Professor Emeritus of Economics at the University of British Columbia, focused on three points brought forth from the World Happiness Report, which he co-authored with Lord Richard Layard and Professor Jeffrey Sachs.

- Happiness can be measured and measured well. It is often contingent upon the five factors of family and friends, good health, material sufficiency, freedom, and a trusting environment.
- Altruism and happiness are intrinsically linked. The power of altruism can be focused on the attainment of sustainable development at a global level. Altruism has always been powerful. People love to do things with and for others with whom they associate, whom they trust and whose lives they value.
- To solve issues of global sustainability, the identity of ‘we’ must be extended beyond the here and now, beyond the family, the tribe and the nation, to the earth. It must be extended beyond this generation to the ones that follow. That can be done in a way that builds happiness.

Lord Richard Layard, Emeritus Professor of Economics, London School of Economics, contended that the basic guiding principle for all individuals, including policy makers, should be to create the most happiness in the world and the least suffering, for both present and future generations. The case for happiness is a simple – happiness is the only good that is self-evident. It is simply understood as inherently good. Accordingly, governments must measure the happiness of their people and use models for the determinants of happiness to guide policy.

Lord Layard outlined external and internal influences on happiness. External influences include income, social solidarity, work, and economic stability. Among the internal influences, the most important are mental health. Mental illness accounts for one-third of disabilities worldwide, which is the very reason why it should be one of the government's foci. On internal factors, he also elaborated on altruism. What is important is that people can be trained to be more altruistic. Well-being comes down to the actions of the individuals, not the governments.

In closing, Lord Layard invited all to join a new movement that he co-founded called [Action for Happiness](#), “whose members pledge to lead their lives so as to create as much happiness in the world as they can – and, especially, as little misery.”

Summary of the Discussion on Efficient Allocation of Resources

Mr. Ajay Chhibber, Assistant Secretary-General, Assistant Administrator at UNDP, and Director of UNDP's Regional Bureau for Asia and the Pacific, chaired the panel discussion on *Efficient Allocation of Resources*. The panel addressed the relationships between metrics (including Gross National Happiness), individual experiences, social circumstances, and planetary resources. It featured two eminent speakers:

- Professor Joseph Stiglitz, Nobel Laureate and Professor of Economics at Columbia University
- Professor Jeffrey Sachs, Director of the Earth Institute at Columbia University

Professor Joseph Stiglitz, Nobel Laureate and Professor of Economics at Columbia University, opened by outlining some of the main findings from the [Stiglitz-Sen-Fitoussi Commission](#) that he chaired on the measurement of economic performance and social progress. Given the essential role of metrics in informing policy decisions, Professor Stiglitz underscored the importance of a “dashboard” of salient numbers, creating a system (as Bhutan did through GNH) beyond the standard measures. This is important because what a society measures affects what a society does, particularly in performance-oriented societies.

Professor Stiglitz briefly noted four of the major failures of GDP that were illustrated by the Commission. First, GDP fails to highlight that “different people partake of the wealth of our society in different ways.” GDP is an average number, which does not reflect divergent income levels within a society. A true commitment to equitable development, he continued, must attend to all strata of society, including the middle class and the poorest populations.

A second constraint of GDP is that it does not reflect sustainability. A useful measure must capture not just the wealth of this generation, but of future ones as well. GDP disregards unsustainable facets of growth, particularly with relation to global warming and the overuse of natural resources. Current levels of growth are not sustainable, particularly as they fail to account for natural capital accounts. Measures based on market prices do not reflect social values. A more complete “dashboard” of salient measures must include social and environmental metrics.

A third failure is one that has been discussed thoroughly in the High-Level Meeting thus far, namely that GDP does not adequately reflect wellbeing. Bhutan’s work in this area demonstrates that wellbeing can be measured scientifically and account for differences across individuals. The final set of constraints with GDP is technical issues, for example, how do things like leisure time get captured in measurement? As GDP rises, people often have less leisure time, yet the resulting impacts and trade-offs of this change are not accounted for in the GDP measure.

All of these shortfalls are important because they affect policy. For example, the decent work agenda is central, as without it, there can be very limited wellbeing. Ensuring decent work is not just a matter of GDP, but of avoiding human suffering. In terms of social capital, many policies adversely affect this because it is not captured and monitored in present systems of accounting. A prime example is globalization, which if mismanaged, can erode social capital by undermining the local economies that support and sustain strong communities.

In the context of today’s global economy, continued Professor Stiglitz, individual and family wellbeing relies on sufficient employment and decent work, social capital and connectivity, and an overarching economic framework that emphasizes development. The mainstreaming of measurements of these essential factors, he concluded, will usher in a truly transformative development process. Policy makers must be equipped to focus on the broad successes of an economy. Development is too important to be left solely to financial ministries and economic measures.

Professor Jeffrey Sachs, Director of the Earth Institute at Columbia University, began his presentation by reminding participants why a better understanding and more accurate measurement of wellbeing is so important. First, he noted the “paradox of affluence”, that is, how greater income does not lead to greater life satisfaction. Second is the experience of countries like Bhutan and Costa Rica, which at much lower levels of income, have achieved outsized levels of life satisfaction and happiness. Third, and perhaps most compelling, is that we have reached the limit of doing things the old way. We have reached certain planetary boundaries that not only undermine our prospects for growth, but also threaten our human survival. Professor Sachs noted that those living and working in the Horn of Africa and the Sahel know this to be happening already, as life is being undermined by the instability brought by extreme drought, lower precipitation, and other worsening conditions.

Professor Sachs highlighted that we are now seven billion people, with exponential population growth ahead. At the same time that poor countries are experiencing growth and reductions in poverty, which is positive, there is an increase in the level of human activity and growing stress on the planet. This is challenging, given that we are already unsustainable in the use of water, biodiversity, loss of habitat, and greenhouse gas emissions.

There are several implications to managing our resources effectively. First, we must acknowledge that consumption that brings no joy is actually bringing harm. Second, we will need a radical transformation of technologies, in order to feed, house and care for this growing human family. Third, we need to have Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) as part of the agenda for Rio+20 and beyond. Professor Sachs endorsed the incorporation of poverty eradication, social inclusion, good governance, and environmental sustainability as the means of ensuring happiness as “the central goal for humanity.”

Summary of the Discussion on Ecological Sustainability

Dr. Jonathan Patz, Nobel Laureate, Professor at University of Wisconsin and Director, Global Health Institute chaired the panel discussion on *Ecological Sustainability*. It featured three eminent speakers:

- Professor Robert Costanza, Distinguished University Professor of Sustainability, Portland State University, Editor-in-Chief of *Solutions* magazine, and Co-President of the International Association for Ecological Economics

- Dr. Mathis Wackernagel, Co-creator of the Ecological Footprint and President, Global Footprint Network
- Dr. Vandana Shiva, Scientist, Author, Founder of Navdanya, Recipient of Right Livelihood Award

This panel, which highlighted the links between ecology and human wellbeing, allied the World Health Organization's definition of health – as more than simply an absence of disease – to the health of the planet, reliant on intergenerational societal wellbeing along with the survival of its ecosystems.

The first of the three panelists, **Professor Robert Costanza of Portland State University, Editor-in-Chief of Solutions**, and Co-President of the International Association for Ecological Economics, emphasized the healthy ecological life support system required for sustainable human wellbeing and happiness. In the new geologic era of the “anthropocene”, the magnitude of human impacts on our ecological life-support system requires the reconfiguration of our economic system, Professor Costanza stressed.

Referring to the concept of planetary boundaries, Prof. Costanza indicated that three of nine major variables have already exceeded their safe operating space: climate change, biodiversity loss, and the nitrogen cycle.

From this, Professor Costanza moved to a discussion of Oxfam's variation on planetary boundaries, which includes also the elements that contribute to human wellbeing. These include factors that people recognize as contributors to their wellbeing and happiness in surveys, such as good social relations, participation, income, etc., but also factors that people do not perceive well, like ecosystem services, which nevertheless contribute significantly to human wellbeing and its sustainability. The “doughnut” between planetary boundaries and support of wellbeing represents the sustainable and desirable space for humanity. To live within this sustainable and desirable space, we need to recognize the contributions of all of our assets to human wellbeing, including our built, human, social and natural capital assets.

This type of positive vision for the future, Professor Costanza continued, is necessary to allow the transition to a new economic paradigm. We need to emphasize that creating this new society is not a sacrifice of quality of life, wellbeing, and happiness. Quite the contrary, failing to make this transition

will be a major sacrifice for humanity. Major social transitions have happened before in human history, usually as “tipping points”. Professor Costanza predicted that this meeting will be looked back on as a major tipping point in the creation of a sustainable and desirable world.

Dr. Mathis Wackernagel, Co-creator of the Ecological Footprint and President of Global Footprint Network, underscored the necessity of measuring ecological wealth in our current era of global overshoot. As ecological wealth is becoming even more scarce than financial wealth, nations’ success depends on keeping as close of a tap on ecological resources as they traditionally have on their financial assets.

In essence, “flying without a fuel gauge is dangerous,” noted Dr. Wackernagel. “Yet most nations operate without knowing how much “nature” they have and how much they use.” In developing Ecological Footprint accounting, Global Footprint Network has provided an ecological resource “fuel gauge” for nations and the world. The accounts show that currently most countries and the entire human enterprise are in ecological overshoot. It now takes our planet one year and 6 months to replenish what humanity uses each year. Also, these accounts show that over 83 percent of the world’s people are now living in countries that use more resources than their countries can renew. The latest results for nearly 200 countries are available at www.footprintnetwork.org.

According to Dr. Wackernagel: “The Footprint is a unique metric in that it allows anyone to compare people’s demand for biologically productive ecosystems with how much is available. The graphic power of the Footprint metaphor in many languages has helped communicate the resource challenge widely: reaching schools as well as policy circles. The detailed accounts behind Footprint estimates vividly underscore today’s life-threatening sustainability gap, and suggest ways how to close it.”

Ecological Footprint accounting, said Dr. Wackernagel, is built on “thinking like a farmer. It is simply comparing how much ‘farm’ we have to how much we use.” In other words, he explained, the Ecological Footprint (how much we use) measures people’s use of crop land, forests, grazing land, and fishing grounds as well as forests for providing resources and absorbing waste (particularly such as CO₂ from fossil fuel burning). In contrast, biocapacity (how much we have) measures how much of this biologically productive area is available to produce these resources and services.

This reality, said Dr. Wackernagel, directly impacts trade patterns and economic prosperity: “Countries have become increasingly dependent on large amounts of natural resources that their countries are not able to renew within their boundaries. While trade can balance out some of this demand, overall the demand is exceeding what ecosystems can renew. Therefore, even though resources are still relatively cheap, this increasing global demand is meeting a supply crunch. It takes ever more effort to harvest the fossil fuels and the minerals, and in some places the fresh water. **Also land is limited, and in many places soils are overtaxed or lost.** As a result, basic commodities such as food and fibers are becoming costlier. These resource dynamics are growing into significant drivers of economic performance. Economic planners ignoring these trends may put their country’s economy at peril.”

Comprehensive resource accounting, as the Footprint for example provides, can show structural challenges for countries — challenges that are already shaping present economic realities in many locations around the world — and it can also demonstrate opportunities for overcoming them. “These new realities,” concluded Dr. Wackernagel, “are now becoming key parameters for stable economies and securing human wellbeing.”

Dr. Vandana Shiva, scientist, author, and founder of Navdanya, began by thanking the Royal Government of Bhutan for “taking this very necessary step that humanity needs.” Dr. Shiva remarked that the old system of economy failed as it strayed from the roots of the Greek oikos (Home) it shared with ecology, with ecology meaning the science of the household, and economy referring to the economy of the household. “First the economy separated itself from ecology, and the laws of Gaia that sustain life and wellbeing. Then it separated itself from society, and it separated sustainable production from human wellbeing.”

That separation, Dr. Shiva argued, occurred by using the artificial measure of “growth” as GDP or GNP. Growth is based on a fictitious “production boundary,” which assumes that if you produce what you consume, then you do not produce. “In one fell swoop, sustainable economies that ensure human happiness and wellbeing were destroyed.”

Today, she said, the economic crisis created by the move towards even more “fictitious” ways of garnering profit (through derivatives, collateral debt, securitization, etc) has impacted the rich world in USA and Europe. “Both in the North and South we need a new paradigm that shifts the economy back to its roots in natural, social, and cultural wealth. This is why this session at the United Nations on wellbeing and happiness and on redefining the economic paradigm is so timely and urgent.

In an interconnected world of complex realities, the primary role of food and its systems must be prioritized, Dr. Shiva continued. “Most global problems, including the ecological crises of species extinction and climate chaos, the public health crisis, and the poverty crisis, arise from non-sustainable models of agriculture. It’s time to reclaim food as the basis of life,” she said, “and to shrink its ecological footprint.”

Exhorting participants to recognize the true importance of wellbeing, which is a material, economic, social, cultural and spiritual category, and cautioning them not to separate wellbeing from happiness by reducing the latter to a purely subjective category, Dr. Shiva concluded by heralding Bhutan’s current move towards completely organic agriculture as an example for every country to follow.

Summary of the Discussion on Fair Distribution

The Honourable Tim Fischer, Special Envoy of the Prime Minister of Australia and former Deputy Prime Minister of Australia, chaired the Panel on Fair Distribution. The panel featured four distinguished speakers.

- H.E. Ms. Michelle Bachelet, Under-Secretary-General and Executive Director of UN Women
- Mr. Ajay Chhibber, Assistant Secretary-General, Assistant Administrator, UNDP, and Director of UNDP’s Regional Bureau for Asia and the Pacific
- Mr. Enrico Giovannini, President, Italian Statistical Institute, and former Chief Statistician, OECD
- Mr. Narinder Kakar, Permanent Observer to the United Nations of the International Union for Conservation of Nature

H.E. Ms. Michelle Bachelet, Under-Secretary-General and Executive Director of UN Women and former President of the Republic of Chile, opened the panel discussion highlighting its timeliness within the context of Rio+20 discussions. She noted that if Rio+20 is to make a real difference, its main goal must be the wellbeing of *all* of humanity. Ms. Bachelet stressed that fair distribution is at the center of universal wellbeing and to achieve it, we have to be inclusive. In today's world, 75% of the global population is not covered by minimal social security. 1.4 billion people live on less than 1.25 dollars a day and about 2.6 billion people do not have access to adequate sanitation. We need a new paradigm that places fair distribution at its heart.

Several elements are needed if we are to ensure universal fair distribution. The first is ethical leadership; leadership that is inclusive and is concerned with how to balance, and create a more inclusive and balanced society; leadership that will work to protect and ensure human rights, women's rights, so that when we talk about "for all", we are not leaving behind women and young people. Second, we need to ensure access to essential goods and basic services for all, so that every human person lives with respect and dignity. A social protective system that can ensure people's basic needs are adequately met is feasible and affordable, especially if it serves to empower people and allow them to realize their full potential.

Mr. Ajay Chhibber stressed three main points. The first is that the trends indicate that inequality is increasing globally and we are starting to see the impact of this. This includes, for example, the Arab spring and the public action that's taking place in parts of Asia and Latin America. In response, some leaders are trying to put in place employment policies and social policies that will reduce inequalities. However, globally you have a trend towards much greater increasing inequality, with concern over global disorder.

A second thing Mr. Chhibber noted was the distinction between inequity and inequality. To some, this may be too a fine point, but consider that some inequality is reasonable as we strive for greater and greater human achievement. It is difficult to decry human innovation and wealth creation that might then lead to betterment in some particular person's life. However inequity, which is inequality that comes from discrimination, stems from organized systems that keep people out, women or other parts of society, which breeds more and more inequality. Mr. Chhibber argued that policy actions should be more focused on inequity.

A third point stemmed from UNDP's latest human development report, which explored how equity and sustainability are interlinked to each other. Mr. Chhibber cited as an example generalized policies like gasoline subsidies that are both inequitable and also unsustainable. He encouraged those interested in the importance of equity to sustainability to consult the latest Human Development Report.

Mr. Enrico Giovannini, President, Italian Statistical Institute, and former Chief Statistician, OECD, began by noting that fair distribution is a complicated concept because inequality can be thought of in at least two different ways. The first is in terms of the intra-generational dimension of inequality, that is, how we distribute income, as well as health opportunities, environmental benefits, and other factors affecting wellbeing, across different population groups (e.g. rich, poor, men, women, north, south and so on). This dimension helps us to measure what our societies are not able to deliver, such as the possibility for everybody to progress and to develop over the course of their lives.

The other dimension of the intergenerational inequality relates to sustainability. **Mr. Giovannini** asked “why should we care about future generations?” Essentially, we must start thinking in terms of vulnerability and the possibility that the future affects our lives today. In terms of measurement, we need to find ways to value the reduction of future risks. This would help to create a key political driver, that is, by rewarding policies that reduce future risks and vulnerability, perhaps over immediate gains or actions that shift the responsibility to the next generation. Such measurement would help to make sustainable development more achievable for all of us.

Mr. Narinder Kakar, Permanent Observer to the United Nations of the International Union for Conservation of Nature, speaking from an ecological perspective, highlighted the need to encourage and assist societies to conserve the integrity and diversity of nature, and to ensure that any use of natural resources is equitable, and ecologically sustainable. Ecological footprint assessments show that humanity is now using natural resources at a rate 50% faster than the capacity of the planet to regenerate. “This ecological degeneration cannot be separated from global economic realities that are increasingly dividing the rich and poor,” said Mr. Kakar, “since there is a direct relationship between income, consumption and environmental impact.”

Mr. Kakar highlighted some of the differentials mentioned in the November 2011 submission of the Royal Bhutan Government for the Rio+20 process, which noted that:

- 20% of the world's people consume 86% of its goods while the poorest 20% consume just 1.3%;
- The richest 20% use 58% of all energy and the poorest 20% less than 4%;
- 20% of people produce 63% of the world's greenhouse gas emissions while the other 20% produce only 2%;
- 12% of the world's people use 85% of the world's water;
- The richest 20% consume 84% of all paper and have 87% of all vehicles, while the poorest 20% use less than 1% of each.

"It is thus clear from the foregoing," said Mr. Kakar, "that the stress of poverty on countless fellow human beings is no less than the stress on the planet caused by the excessive lifestyles of the few."

Moreover, continued Mr. Kakar, an ecological perspective on fair distribution demonstrates that we are not all equally responsible for global environmental degradation. Ecological footprint analysis shows that about 70% of the world's population consumes an average of just 1.3 global ha of biologically productive space per person — well within the earth's carrying capacity of about 1.8 global ha per person. Global environmental decline can therefore be attributed to less than 30% of world's population, which consumes an average of 6.5 global ha of productive space per person. The ecological footprint of some developed countries is even much higher than that average of 6.5 global ha per person. "If everyone in the world consumed at the levels of the richest countries, we'd need **four** *Earth planets* to provide the necessary resources and waste assimilation capacity" noted Mr. Kakar.

Therefore, he remarked: "*An ecological perspective on fair distribution clearly indicates that we must begin to challenge the excess consumption of the few and the resultant waste, if we are to alleviate poverty without destroying the planet. Social equity in conservation means fair distribution of the benefits and costs of conservation among different social groups and individuals, who have differentiated needs, interests, rights, and responsibilities over resources.*" Broad participation of all stakeholders is required in national resource management and in policy development in order to ensure integrity and fairness in human development, Mr. Kakar concluded.



Photo courtesy of Jonathan Harris

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SUMMARY OF LUNCHTIME WORKING GROUP SESSIONS

SUMMARY OF LUNCHTIME WORKING GROUP SESSIONS

Following the morning session, the Prime Minister of Bhutan hosted a working lunch for all participants. Discussions were organized around each of the four dimensions of the new economic paradigm, as explored during the morning of April 2nd.

The working groups over lunch allowed for greater interaction and the exchange of creative ideas, tried-and-true practices, and lessons learned from past experiences. What follows is a brief summary of the discussions. A more detailed list of comments is available in Annex VIII and will inform the ongoing work after the meeting on fostering the implementation of the new economic paradigm.

In the lunchtime discussion group on wellbeing and happiness, ideas focused on the centrality of eradicating extreme poverty for achieving the new paradigm. This necessitates social inclusion and the empowerment of all people, particularly women and young people. There was also robust discussion on the need to ensure that the ideals of a new economic paradigm translate to policies and initiatives at the local level. Another strong theme was the need to learn from indigenous peoples, who are skilled at living in harmony with the natural world and preserving our environmental commons.

The group on ecological sustainability recognized this as a core dimension of the new paradigm, particularly owing to concepts such as intergenerational equity, nature's inherent value, and the interconnection between a healthy environment and human wellbeing. Some of the actions proposed to advance this dimension include strengthening ecological sustainability values in primary and secondary school curricula and valuing the time people spend enjoying and helping to preserve nature.

The discussion on the efficient use of resources underscored the need for full-cost environmental accounting to become a widespread practice. The group explored solutions such as creative ways to redefine what constitutes wealth in societies, supporting community-based efforts at improving resource use efficiency, and adopting "cradle to cradle" designs for as many goods and services as possible.

The fourth lunchtime group discussed fair distribution and noted that financial instrument and policies are an important tool to ensure this dimension of the new economic paradigm. The group also linked fair distribution of resources to the achievement of the decent work agenda, the widespread sharing of technologies and information, as well as greater transparency and good governance.

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OVERVIEW OF THE

AFTERNOON INTERACTIVE SESSION

OVERVIEW OF THE AFTERNOON INTERACTIVE SESSION

The afternoon session was chaired by **Professor Jacqueline McGlade, Executive Director of the European Environment Agency** and was designed to facilitate structured but interactive discussions amongst participants. The aim was not to arrive at a set of agreed-upon conclusions, but rather to gather ideas to help advance efforts to achieve the new economic paradigm centered on wellbeing and happiness. The comments below are not meant to be comprehensive, but rather aim to provide an overall sense of the dialogue and range of ideas that were discussed.

The session began with a videotaped message from **His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales**, who conveyed his support to the High-Level Meeting and its task of envisioning a new economic paradigm founded on the ideals of wellbeing and happiness. In the video message, the Prince of Wales said that a new paradigm is “an essential task that cannot be ignored.” Warning that “the grim reality is that our planet has reached a point of crisis” and that “the time for us to act is rapidly running out,” His Royal Highness noted that “we must have better information about the value of the Earth’s ecosystems to the economy and society as a whole, as well as the social, environmental and economic costs of what we do.” The complete statement delivered by His Royal Highness, the Prince of Wales is available in VII.

Sharing his belief in the intrinsic goodness of human nature and the prevailing desire to improve the conditions of society, Prince Charles cited Professor Joseph Stiglitz’s assertion that the mainstream paradigm of GDP does not provide relevant or sufficient information for the actors in the contemporary global arena. “Concentrating on making life easier by maximizing the output of one activity,” HRH the Prince of Wales posited, “has rendered us dangerously myopic to the impact this has on everything else and indeed upon ourselves.”

HRH the Prince of Wales illustrated the need to include a broader range of variables in economic measurements and resultant policy prescriptions by highlighting an initiative of the English crown: the [Accounting for Sustainability](#) project, established in 2004 to “measure what matters and count what counts.” As a set of clear, accurate, and measurable objectives essential to a framework of contributions toward sustainable development, this project provides one example of the concerted and collective actions necessary to confront today’s global challenges, Prince Charles concluded.

Following the videotaped message from HRH the Prince of Wales, the delegations of China, France, Brazil, and the European Union delivered statements.

The **delegate of China** commended Bhutan's GNH initiative and its encouragement of the international community to actively discuss and formulate a balanced, inclusive, positive and resource-conscious economic system. China expressed the view that the traditional mode of development requires replacement by a "comprehensive, coordinated and sustainable development that strikes a balance between economic and social development and environmental protection." In the ongoing effort to construct a set of indicators, the delegate called attention to the differences between and among countries and the consequent difficulty in applying a uniform set of criteria for sustainable development. The delegate of China concluded by welcoming further elaboration of Bhutan's GNH proposal, suggesting the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20) as an appropriate venue for discussion.

Building upon this point, the **delegate of France** framed the GNH discussion within the broader framework of Rio+20 and a potential (European Union-supported) "roadmap" for a transition to a green economy, one of the Rio conference's two central themes. Addressing sustainable development, she stressed the need for sustainability indicators, including the "carbon footprint," sustainable production and consumption, and social development indicators, as recently adopted by the French government. The delegate emphasized the larger context of these elements in developing the new economic system, suggesting that these efforts incorporate a variety of state and non-state actors, as well as previous work on indicators such as UNDP's Human Development Index. The delegate of France noted the reminder made by the delegate of China that each country must play its part so that all can be helped. Her delegation envisions Rio+20 as an opportunity to share and create tools to enrich progress in development worldwide.

The delegate of Brazil shared the hope that the High-Level Meeting will deliver messages for international cooperation and outlines for sustainable production and consumption. The delegate shared her country's support for Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), a potential outcome of Rio+20, if the process to develop them inclusively "enables hearts and minds to engage in their attainment." Like the preceding speaker, she provided examples of indicators that have been implemented nationally,

mentioning that sixty such indicators had been created in Brazil through disaggregating data on gender and regional inequalities. The delegate from Brazil concluded by underscoring the necessity of a rights-based approach to ensuring wellbeing, one that incorporates the rights to food, water and sanitation, health, and education, as part of the process towards full realization of development.

The European Union delegate noted that several initiatives are underway to develop new indicators, which can be used as measures of societal wellbeing, as well as measures of economic, environmental, and social sustainability. In 2007, the European Commission hosted the high-level conference “Beyond GDP”. The objectives were clear, but it was also noted that it is not easy to develop such indicators that are as clear and appealing as GDP, but more inclusive of environmental and social aspects of progress. Over time, progress continues and within the European Union, work is fully under way as testified by the recent publication of Eurostat’s feasibility study on wellbeing indicators. In line with the conclusions of the Stiglitz report, the work addresses the many dimensions of wellbeing; it combines various objective and subjective measures; and it tries to deepen our understanding of the relations between the various Quality-of-Life and wellbeing dimensions. The European Union delegate concluded by signaling their readiness to continue cooperating and contributing to work in this area because the need of having adequate indicators to address global challenges such as climate change, poverty, resource depletion, health and quality of life, cannot be questioned.

Following the above statements, two distinct panels of speakers presented thematic concepts and ideas as contributions to the participant discussion on designing the proposed new economic paradigm. Professor McGlade invited the panelists’ interventions interspersed with commentary and questions from the floor. These comments are presented below on the basis of the themes and ideas raised.

Swami Atmapriyananda, Vice-Chancellor of Ramakrishna Mission Vivekananda University, led the call for constructive and positive education as perhaps the most important facilitator of the mindsets necessary to support an economic paradigm based on happiness and wellbeing. Swami sourced his remarks from both the Hindu tradition in India and from a science-based secular ethics. Education rooted in values of forbearance, contentment and the oneness of the physical, mental, and spiritual world, Swami Atmapriyananda stated, should lead to a prevailing consciousness based on collective happiness.

A similar emphasis on values training characterized the remarks of **Dr. Skali Faouzi, scholar on Sufism from Morocco, and former member of the Council of 100 and World Faith and Development Leaders**. Heralding the example of the Moroccan city of Fez, Dr. Faouzi stressed the importance of the cultural paradigm of art and music as a platform for identifying shared values, and developing knowledge and wisdom to inspire a beneficial quality of life. Altruism, generosity, and humility – values absent from globalization and free-market capitalism, Dr. Faouzi noted, are essential foundations and tools to implement and accompany the new economic paradigm.

Abbot Roshi Joan Halifax, Buddhist teacher, Zen priest, and anthropologist, also referred to the great value of altruism and compassion, as “trainable pro-social mental qualities that engender profound mutual benefit.” In the face of prevalent violence, both structural and direct, Roshi Joan Halifax advocated the development of moral, social, and environmental responsibility and a systems perspective towards all species on earth. She shared a vision of parity inclusive of both women and youth.

In another perspective, **Dr. Asghar Ali Engineer, Head of the Institute of Islamic Studies and the Centre for Study of Society and Secularism**, asked rhetorically: is our development inclusionary? Given the vast disparity within our global circumstances, whose happiness are we discussing? As a precondition for contributions toward an economic paradigm based on material wellbeing for all, Dr. Engineer called for a global paradigm shift, one that begins with the industrialized nations’ reduction of pollution, as the costs of industrial patterns of development cost many and serve too few.

President of Green Cross International, Professor Alexander Likhotal, who spoke on behalf of former President Mikhail Gorbachev, stated his support to the Prime Minister of Bhutan for depicting the current economic system based on exploitation of resources as the source of the majority of our contemporary challenges. Professor Likhotal described an ideal economy as one that supports the majority of global citizens in their efforts towards happiness. He recommended that subsequent discussion on the new economic paradigm arising out of this conference focus on “tipping points” or catalysts for popular movements that would unleash vast global change.

“The time for talk is over,” declared **Hunter Lovins, President of Natural Capitalism Solutions**. Ms. Lovins underlined the necessity of creating “a route to prosperity” that does not jeopardize our collective future. She advocated the transformation of “cheater capitalism” into natural capitalism — an economy that is based on full and true-cost accounting and that overcomes the mainstream fixation on austerity. Ms. Lovins stated that solutions included the construction of a global educational platform using digital media and bringing the business community onto the road to sustainability.

Concluding by calling on the audience to participate in worldwide efforts towards a more prosperous and productive future, Ms. Lovins shared a story often told by the late environmental activist Wangari Maathai: A forest fire erupts and animals flee, all except the hummingbird, who returns over and over bringing drops of water in her beak. When the other animals mock her, the hummingbird simply answers, “I am doing the best that I can.” Like Maathai’s hummingbird, Ms. Lovins commended Bhutan’s initiative towards a safer and better future for all.

Rabbi Awraham Soetendorp, President and founder of the Jacob Soetendorp Institute for Human Values, and Earth Charter Commissioner, urged Bhutan to lead this effort and said others will follow. Going back to the 1992 Earth Summit, Rabbi Soetendorp highlighted the important role of faith-based organizations in “prodding” governments to make decisions that benefit the long-term interests of their nations and of the world.

Expressing a similar results-focused resolve, **David Cadman, President of ICLEI - Local Governments for Sustainability and representative of the World Mayors Council for Climate Change**, called for local application of GNH policies and grassroots-level pressure on all organizations to adopt similar ethos. He cited the example that when the Earth Summit finished in 1992 and there was one little clause in Agenda 21 that referred to Local Action 21 – over ten thousand communities around the world adopted Action 21 and began to look at implementation on their own local level. The same need to happen around the new economic paradigm. Mr. Cadman was passionate in concluding that “If the nations won’t act, act where you are. Make the local transform that national”.

Professor Mohan Munasinghe, co-recipient of the Nobel Peace Prize (in his capacity as Vice-Chairman of the United Nations Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change) and Chairman of the Munasinghe Institute of Development, raised the idea of designing Millennium Consumption Goals to ensure that the basic needs of all humans on the planet are met. Complementary to the Millennium Development Goals, these objectives would codify standards and limits of sustainable consumption and production, as part of a transition to a green economy and as part of the new economic paradigm envisioned in this gathering. Professor Munasinghe also recommended the practice of Tai-Chi and meditation for individual happiness and satisfaction.

Continuing in this vein, **Venerable Dr. Anil Sakya** suggested increased analysis of sustainable patterns of consumption, to reverse the GDP's over-focus on production. The paradigm of GDP, now "getting old," must "birth a newborn child," Venerable Sakya advised, — an economic system that serves the world better and promotes the values of moderation and resilience.

Finally, adding to the conceptual framework underlying the discussions at the meeting, **Dasho Karma Tshiteem, Secretary of the Gross National Happiness Commission of the Royal Government of Bhutan,** continued his explanation of the nine dimensions of happiness as a policy objective. He outlined these domains as: living standards, health, education, good governance, environment, cultural diversity and resilience, time-use, psychological wellbeing, and community vitality - during the inaugural session.

For the interactive discussion, Dasho Tshiteem discussed the following two domains.

- Community vitality, he noted, acknowledges the social element of human nature and the joy engendered by interactions and relationships. As a policy objective for governments, community vitality protects citizens from the loneliness and community breakdown associated with increased urbanization.
- Cultural diversity and resilience envelops the primary importance of identity, a key aspect of one's sense of wellbeing. Dasho Tshiteem spoke of the importance of cultural values in particular as central to identity and as an "anchor for sustainable development" through their encouragement of love, compassion, and respect for humankind, for other species, and for the environment, in an inclusive and timeless manner.

Discussants offered several insights, beginning with **Michael Pennock, Canada**, who remarked that his lunchtime discussion group unanimously requested continued leadership by the Royal Government of Bhutan — a suggestion that appeared to be welcomed by participants. **Ellie Johnston, SustainUS** questioned how this dialogue can be shifted into “the halls of power brokers” around the world.

Participants also offered many specific policy recommendations, focusing on several broad themes, including education, communications, a systems perspective, inclusivity, and the role of the United Nations. A few examples follow:

Many of the experts present emphasized the vital role of education in creating the structural change in mindsets necessary as a wide foundation for the new economic paradigm based on wellbeing and happiness. One participant suggested the creation of a learning platform to discuss success stories in moving towards new economic structures and methods of production and distribution, and to encourage learning through understanding effective best practices at all levels.

Making information widely accessible formed a key focus of several participants’ interventions. **Alexandre Jost of the French wellbeing think-tank Spinoza Factory** shared a recommendation of his lunchtime focus group: a global index, following the structure of the Stiglitz commission, to provide a global platform for determining progress towards happiness.

Anne-Kathrin Kuhlemann of Blue Economy, who underlined the importance of full-cost accounting to promote innovation and a fair economic order, also raised the need for increased and accurate information in education towards wellbeing and happiness. **Franklin Apfel of World Health Communication Associates** called for attention to context, to design education to promote happiness in urban and other settings.

Christoph Glaser of the International Art of Living Foundation outlined his group’s plans for happiness “apps” for smart phones, and for happiness training. Shifting to the subject of communications, Mr. Glaser shared ideas for a World Happiness Day as a venue for civil society participation, and for an annual World Happiness Award to celebrate and reward efforts towards global happiness. Another participant shared similar suggestions for the publicizing of a “happiness footprint”.

The encouragement of behaviour change through peer influence and sharing of models was recommended by **Constance Moffitt of People for Puget Sound**. In this vein, Mr. James D. Sano from **Geographic Expeditions** emphasized the potentially productive use and roles of social media and philanthropy in contributing to what **Professor Geoffrey Lipman of Greenearth.travel** described as “a rebalancing of values.”

Several participants underscored the importance of incorporating a systems analysis into the new economic paradigm. **Professor Vala Ragnarsdóttir, University of Iceland**, identified the need to link all different factors contributing to the four pillars proposed by Bhutan in both educating and designing the new order. **Sania Nishtar, founder of Pakistan’s Heartfile Health Financing and the Sania Nishtar Health Fund**, added that the determinants of systemic barriers to happiness, particularly within developing countries – poverty, hunger, illiteracy, social exclusion, inequity, gender disparities, etc – must be addressed and overcome to ensure true transformation. Ms. Nishtar noted that while we recognize these factors and are capable of measuring them, we are less able to measure their determinants. She underscored the importance of systemic determinants, as these factors lead to the failure to deliver on the wellbeing and happiness. She submitted that we must ensure a dimension to measurements of wellbeing that address systemic determinants if we are to design a new economic paradigm that is truly transformational.

A practical suggestion for application of a systems approach was contributed by **Ms. Sarah James of the Institute for Eco-Municipality Education and Assistance**, who suggested that developing proposals under each of the four tenants of the new paradigm (namely wellbeing and happiness, ecological sustainability, fair distribution and efficient use of resources), would be a concrete way of taking a systems approach.

Christopher Stampar of the Millennium Institute and the Nourish9Billion Campaign, advocated a complementary partnership between institutional-level pressure on governments and localized community-based mass movements. Mr. Stampar focused his remarks on sustainable agriculture, particularly food systems, as “an absolutely critical aspect of ecological sustainability.”

Inclusivity should be a defining characteristic of a new happiness-based economic paradigm, stated several participants. **Oren Lyons of the Iroquois Confederacy** advocated for the explicit inclusion of indigenous peoples in this planning process, along with concerted attention to sustain “all living beings of the natural world.” **Mr. Stampar** and **Ellie Johnston of SustainUS** emphasized the need for youth participation, while **Dr. Judy Kuriansky** added that aging populations must also be included. **Prof. Michael Depledge of University of Exeter** recommended the incorporation of the business community to effectively convey messages on happiness and wellbeing.

Richard Jordan of the NGO Committee on Sports suggested a UN Happiness Commission as a potential outcome of this High-Level Meeting, noting the United Nations as an important platform or venue to continue movement towards the new paradigm.

Other recommended practices to foster happiness and wellbeing included yoga (**Bhushan Deodhar**, on behalf of His Holiness Sri Sri Ravi Shankar), poetry (an entrepreneur and poet from Brazil), consuming organic goods, and implementing Bhutan’s suggestions in daily life (**Mario Chaparro from Colombia**).

Anne-Kathrin Kuhlemann from the Blue Economy seconded the idea of Hunter Lovins to enforce a real price for extracting natural resources in order to spur greater efficiency and innovation. She also underlined the importance of implementing systems design, as information is central to good decision-making about resource management. **Franklin Enfeld from World Health Associates** emphasized education and training, as well as the use of good design principles to promote happiness, particularly in urban environments.

Mark Williamson from Action for Happiness noted far more work is needed to get to a point where the happiness and wellbeing agenda is properly in the mindset of most world leaders. He cautioned around making this agenda anti-growth, but rather to think about the growth of something different, that is, the growth of happiness and wellbeing. This inherently means a more sustainable version of growth, a more equitable version of growth, and probably also a more financially stable version of growth, but not necessarily infinite economic growth.

In her concluding comments, Dr. McGlade emphasized the need for continued engagement by participants of the High-Level Meeting. She stated that “today is a beginning,” of collective work toward making the proposed new economic paradigm a living reality. She informed participants that the Report of the proceedings will be presented to the UN Secretary-General for distribution to Member States, and outlined the plan for the 3rd and 4th April expert task force and working group meetings.

Dr. McGlade also identified future opportunities for planning to carry forward the work begun on this day around the participation of the Prime Minister of Bhutan in the Rio+20 conference and bilateral meetings in Rio de Janeiro, and on a proposal for a commission on the new economic paradigm to be convened by the Royal Government of Bhutan. These and other endeavours, she concluded, will also help to bring both the qualitative and quantitative measures and determinants of sustainability, wellbeing and happiness into the global conversation.

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CONCLUDING SESSION

REFLECTIONS ON THE HIGH-LEVEL MEETING

CONCLUDING SESSION

REFLECTIONS ON THE HIGH-LEVEL MEETING

In closing, the **Prime Minister of Bhutan** expressed his deep sense of happiness and satisfaction at the vast knowledge and numerous expert perspectives brought into the mainstream by the High-Level Meeting. He said the Royal Government of Bhutan humbly accepts the responsibility of facilitating some key future plans and efforts towards a new economic paradigm based on happiness and well-being. Subsequent steps in that direction for which Bhutan would take responsibility include:

- Preparation of a Report of the High Level Meeting for submission to the UN Secretary-General and onward distribution to Member States;
- Requesting Head of Governments to consider adopting recommendations for policy action presented to the High-Level Meeting; and
- Convening of a Commission to elaborate the dimensions of the proposed new economic paradigm, to inform both Rio+20 and subsequently the deliberations of the 67th Session of the UN General Assembly in 2012.

The Prime Minister welcomed parallel efforts by participants to build together a global movement in support of the new economic paradigm. He said this inclusive support will count on youth participation and partnerships with like-minded civil society organizations, such as Lord Richard Layard's Action for Happiness. This movement will incorporate an effective communications plan, one that explores the opportunities for regular and social media and civil society organisations to encourage worldwide action toward a more holistic and meaningful economic development paradigm.

Finally, the Prime Minister thanked the participants and the two hundred people who committed to stay on for the subsequent two days of in-depth planning, implementation, and strategy. "This is the end of a historic day," the Prime Minister concluded, but he cautioned that celebration should wait until the UN General Assembly actually adopts concrete measures towards the implementation of the new economic paradigm.

The Prime Minister invited benedictions for the success of the endeavour launched this day and to send participants home safely and peacefully. To that end, spiritual leaders from the Buddhist, Christian, Jewish, Hindu, and Muslim faiths offered prayers.

Swami Atmapriyananda shared a small verse from the Hindu tradition, five or six thousand years old and beloved of Swami Vivekananda. He translated this motivating utterance as “Arise, awake, and stop not until the goal is reached,” a fitting encouragement to the participants at a fundamental moment in the creation of this global movement towards a happiness-based economic paradigm.

Abbot Roshi Joan Halifax shared the four vows of the Bodhisattva, central to the Buddhist faith. She prayed: “Creations are numberless – I vow to free them; Delusions are inexhaustible – I vow to transform them; Reality is boundless – I vow to perceive it; The awakened way is unsurpassable – I vow to embody it.” In her final words, Roshi Joan Halifax exhorted those present to awaken, and to seize opportunities rather than to “squander life.”

Sharing a Jewish prayer for strength and steadfastness, **Rabbi Awraham Soetender** asked God to help us “make this world into a place of cooperation, of love, of truth and righteousness.” In recognition of the oneness of humanity, he concluded in Hebrew, “Blessed are you, our God, for keeping us alive and for giving us the opportunity in health to reach this moment of hope.”

A similar recognition of our oneness arose in the prayers of a leader of the Christian tradition, Rev. Mardi Tindal. In a contemporary expression of a prayer that Jesus taught to his followers, she prayed to God: “Your commonwealth of peace, freedom, wellbeing, sustain our hope and come on earth. [...] For you reign in the glory of the power that is love, now and forever.”

Finally, **Dr. Asghar Ali Engineer** shared an Islamic prayer, in Arabic. In his own translation, he spoke words of praise to Allah, “who is the sustainer of this universe, and takes it to perfection and creation.” In the key message of his prayer, Dr. Engineer prayed: “[W]e invoke Allah to sustain this universe, which is his desire, and not to destroy it. We pray to Allah that he give us the strength to walk on the straight path, the path on which he has showered his bounties, and not the path of those who misuse these bounties and destroy nature.”

3RD & 4TH APRIL MEETINGS

LOOKING AHEAD TO CONCRETE NEXT STEPS

On 3rd and 4th April, more than 200 participants from the 2nd April sessions volunteered to attend two days of deliberations to work on the details and implementation of the new economic paradigm. They were divided into four Working Groups (WGs): **Experts and Scholars, Planning, Communications, and Civil Society** (with a subgroup of spiritual, interfaith, leaders).

The Groups focused on discussing strategies for implementation and action based on the discussions held the previous day. On the 4th of April, the four WGs presented their findings at two plenary sessions chaired by the Prime Minister of Bhutan. After each presentation, the floor was opened for feedback from participants. This section captures some of the key outcomes of the WGs' discussions, as shared during the April 4th plenary session.

Summary from the Experts and Scholars Working Group

The Experts and Scholars Working Group worked on the basic elements that define and constitute the new economic paradigm based on the discussions held during the High-Level Meeting on 2nd April.

The Group produced two main outcomes for the meeting:

- a. A concise and focused statement: “Realizing a World of Sustainable Wellbeing and Happiness” (see Annex X) for turning the vision into reality that reflects the consensus of all working groups. The statement calls for a more balanced approach is needed in the way human beings are managing wealth, i.e. natural, human, economic (defined as built and manufactured assets), social and cultural wealth.
- b. A set of recommendations for moving forward on key issues, including the establishment of a body to facilitate the “Great Transition”¹ from the current paradigm to the new economic paradigm.

¹ The concept of “Great Transition” was first introduced by the Tellus Institute, <http://www.gtinitiative.org/perspectives/values.html>

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Establishment of a new Commission on the New Economic Paradigm to refine, expand and elaborate the details of the proposed paradigm in a systemic policy framework.
- In order to understand how the various elements of this new paradigm are connected and how they change over time, an **integrated and holistic systems approach** is needed to bring together the four dimensions of the new economic paradigm. The approach must also be **transdisciplinary** (not only interdisciplinary); **participatory** (not only experts communicating with policymakers but all constituencies must be included in the studies and decisions); it must be **solutions-focused** (currently it is focused mainly on definitions, measurements and indicators); and it must use **adaptive management** tools.
- To promote strategic fair trade policies that enable autonomous development in sustainable industries and equitable exchange [as opposed to free markets], where tax havens are closed and profit are distributed equitably.
- To develop policy instruments that promotes savings toward environmentally and socially productive projects.

Specific issues that need to be addressed include, among others:

- **Definitions and measurements:** More work needs to be done on the wide range of definitions and measurements for wellbeing and happiness. The World Happiness Report that was produced by the Earth Institute at Columbia University for the meeting is an excellent source of ideas for an overview of current efforts underway.
- **Complex systems:** There is a need to develop better tools for integrative analysis to underpin GNH and to find opportunities for inclusive participation.
- **Institutions and governance:** A new agency for wellbeing and happiness should be established at the UN. However, establishing a new UN agency will take some time. In the meantime, there are UN mechanisms that can be used for disseminating information on the new economic paradigm, including the Committee for Development Policy, the Annual Ministerial Reviews of ECOSOC and the Quadrennial Country Policy Review (QCPR), the last of which will be addressed this fall by the General Assembly's Second Committee.

- **Financial systems:** The new economic paradigm requires different fiscal and regulatory systems: Further exploration is required around what reforms are needed for existing institutions, such as the World Bank and the IMF, and what new institutions are needed in order to serve the four dimensions of the new economic paradigm.
- **GNH enterprise:** The new economic paradigm requires a different approach to business enterprises for the production of goods and services. More specifically, there is a need for new legal structures, adaptive management thinking, and financial and tax incentives.
- **Education:** Values of altruism, compassion, respect, responsibility, indigenous values and becoming a complete human being need to be integrated in education systems.

Leading “The Great Transition”: The Global Wellbeing and Happiness Initiative: The general Terms of Reference for this suggested Commission are to facilitate the Great Transition from the current model, which uses production as a proxy for happiness and wellbeing (“more is better”), to one where happiness and wellbeing are directly targeted. The Commission will undertake research and promote actions to bring the new economic paradigm to general acceptance and existence. Its activities should be guided by both academics and a broad set of stakeholders. They should help in making new economic paradigm a credible functioning system, by explaining how the new paradigm will work in practice. Results should be disseminated widely, through the UN system and elsewhere.

There are two models that could be used to structure this Commission’s work, based on, among others, an all-inclusive, participatory approach, a commitment to contribute to a better society, and a effective use of available technology:

- **“Deliberative democracy”:** This is the model that the Government of Iceland used to draft the new constitution after the country’s financial markets crashed. In this case, people from the population were chosen at random to work on the Constitution; much of the work was done over the Internet.
- **The Encyclopedia of Earth, a peer-reviewed Wikipedia,** uses a model that takes advantage of the entire global expertise available to produce and modify documents instead of having only a handful of expert contributors. All top contributors are volunteers.

The Commission could establish a small leadership team or “facilitation team” to guide its work. Funding could be sought from those interested in sustainability, equality, justice, human development, and changing the world.

ADDITIONAL SELECTED RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE FLOOR

- A new science is needed to underpin the new economic paradigm, one that does not follow the traditional reductionist approach but rather a systems approach. Chaos theory may also provide useful insights; it has already been used successfully in social sciences.
- Use the concept of “sustainable happiness” to link happiness to sustainability in contrast to today’s advertising industry, which links happiness to consumption. This will help establish a new mindset. Furthermore, the new economic paradigm should address both “sustainable happiness” and “sustainable wellbeing.”

Positive psychology has much to offer for the study and dissemination of the new economic paradigm. Some excellent resources and studies include the International Positive Psychology Association (<http://www.ippanetwork.org/>), the Global Review of Wellbeing (<http://www.growthq.com>), Action for Happiness (<http://www.actionforhappiness.org>), and the VIA Institute on Character (<http://www.viacharacter.org/www/en-us/viapro.aspx>). The latter includes a survey on character strengths and virtues that facilitates the introduction, discussion and greater use of strengths such as compassion, courage, honesty, creativity in the workplace, educational and personal domains. “The Happy Movie” (<http://www.thehappymovie.com/>) includes vignettes from around the world on what makes people happy; it is a powerful dissemination tool on wellbeing and happiness.

Follow-up: The Group agreed to carry on the discussion by email, and perhaps create a Google group to provide further and more refined recommendations.

Summary from the Planning Working Group

This Group worked on the strategy and process to bring the messages of the new economic paradigm and GNH discussed during the High-Level Meeting on 2nd April, once refined, to relevant forums around the world. It identified and developed some of the elements of the strategy.

To kick off the strategic and planning process, the Group identified major conferences and events that are scheduled to take place around the world in the next 18 months. These include Rio+20, meetings of the G20, the Bretton Woods Institutions, The Clinton Global Initiative, and the Corporate Sustainability Forum. The planning strategy will identify ways to include the proposed new economic paradigm and GNH in the agenda of such gatherings, or at the very least, to share the message to them.

The Group suggested including references to key texts and documentation in press releases and other communications, including references to the Experts' Report titled 'A Sustainable and Desirable Economy-in-Society-in Nature'. For this purpose, the planning group agreed on the following statement:

"The new paradigm of GNH is a holistic and systemic approach, both in terms of actors (civil society, business, government, and academia) and domains (social, environmental, economic), and thus utilizes a new comprehensive, collaborative and participatory process."

SELECTED RECOMMENDATIONS

- GNH is a holistic paradigm and as such it should include all constituencies: the private sector, civil society, governments and academia.
- Businesses in particular should be encouraged to attend GNH meetings and become part of the GNH movement. To persuade business to support and adopt GNH-friendly strategies, a strong business case for wellbeing and happiness needs to be developed and shared.
- Local governments and their mayors, communities, NGOs and other local groups can be very effective in pressuring for changes at the regional and national government levels. Therefore, this initiative should provide support for local governments and communities that are interested in implementing GNH-friendly models. In this context, a toolkit of best practices should be developed for local groups. For example, in Brazil, the municipality of Itapetininga has been successfully implementing the GNH concept at the local level. This example can serve as an example of good practice for others to examine and adapt to local circumstances.
- Youth must be part of this initiative, and should also be a target group. SIBE, a student-run

producer and broadcaster of live, interactive TV and documentaries produced by students at the University of Warwick, provides an example of engaging youth.

- Funding and capacity-building must be part of planning. The future Commission should consider establishing a Fundraising Task Force to assist Bhutan in this pioneering effort.
- Human rights and women's empowerment must be part of the proposed new economic paradigm.

Summary from the Communications Working Group

The Communications Working Group examined the components of an effective communications strategy to advance the new economic paradigm based on wellbeing and happiness. In this context, the Group initiated work to (1) develop a persuasive case on the need for the proposed new economic paradigm; (2) create a communications road map; and (3) address information management issues by leveraging communications technology.

The Group came up with the following recommendations:

- The case to persuade others of the need for a new economic paradigm should be based on justice (economic, social and environmental); the survival of the planet; the opportunities it opens for establishing profitable businesses; and personal wellbeing and happiness.
- To design an effective road map, different messages need to be developed for different audiences. In this context, there is a need to identify the target audiences, understand their perceptions, and customize the messages accordingly. Getting to know the various audiences will be useful to determine what definitions and measurements are the most relevant for messages targeted to each individual audience, and which are the most effective channels for communicating with each of them. Audiences identified thus far include governments, NGOs, professional trade associations, the general public, spiritual groups, communities and local governments, academia and friendship associations.
- Information management includes content sourcing, structuring and dissemination. There is a lot of content already out there; one needs to find it, structure it and customize it for dissemination among the appropriate targeted audiences. Issues related to open sourcing and copyrights need to be considered.

- Creation of communication products: website, social media tools, and livestreaming from future conferences and events.

ADDITIONAL RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE FLOOR

- The issue of **responsibility** for happiness and wellbeing has to be addressed at many levels, including strategic, communications and at the personal level. For example, in the case of governments, which have been identified as one of the target audiences, are governments responsible for happiness and wellbeing? At the personal level, individuals can take responsibility for their own actions, including what and how to consume.
- More substantive work needs to be done to be ready for a **conversation with economists** on the new economic paradigm. Economists will ask how the new economic paradigm will address issues such as economic growth, trade and financial systems and the transition to the new paradigm.
- **Communications is a two-way street**: it is not enough to put in place a communications system to bring the messages of the proposed new economic paradigm to other audiences; the system needs also a platform to take in ideas from them. Social media platforms can help to connect those who have participated in this meeting, and others that could not.
- It is important to **join the conversations about the green economy** and the numerous groups that are involved in it. To do this effectively there is a need to identify what the new economic paradigm brings to those conversations, and how it goes beyond the current discussions on the green economy. This requires an analysis of the principles of the new economic paradigm and how they differ from those currently discussed on the green economy in preparation for Rio + 20.
- The Communications strategy needs to be highly sensitive to the use of the different definitions of happiness and wellbeing so as not to create confusion. It also needs to effectively communicate how the old economic paradigm, which the new paradigm seeks to replace, has failed.

Follow-up: The Communications Group prepared a draft press release on the 2nd April High-Level Meeting for global dissemination. The Group also offered to assist the Permanent Secretariat on an ongoing basis.

Summary from the Civil Society Working Group and its Subgroup of Spiritual Leaders

This Group worked on the elements for a global movement around the proposed new economic paradigm based on the key messages from the High-Level Meeting on 2nd April. Some members of the group said that the Rio+20 meeting would be too soon to build a specific global movement at the level of civil society. The group recommended looking at a timeframe of 12 to 18 months, identifying strong local movements and funding organizations with likeminded interests, such as the Gates and Soros foundations and working out a plan to approach these groups. Meanwhile, as individual leaders in their communities, the working group members agreed to aim towards bringing their various organizations working toward the same goals, for example by using existing communication tools and channels.

Several group members voiced the idea that they cannot fully determine how the movement would work. Instead, they envision the emergence of a movement as the convergence of many existing systems, institutions, organizations and individuals who are already working separately toward the same goal. What they could hope to do would be to build momentum toward a tipping point that brings all of these actors closer together.

The working group adopted the following Values-Based Mission Statement:

“We, as inhabitants of an interdependent global ecosystem, recognizing our responsibility to future generations, call for humanity to shift fundamentally toward a world that is fair, open, honest, all-inclusive, compassionate, and sustainable. We resolve to act in the spirit of mutual respect and urgent purpose to create new economic, social and political systems that manifest these principles.”

The religious leaders within the working group met separately to prepare an interfaith statement concerning the new economic paradigm. They adopted the following statement:

RELIGIOUS LEADERS’ STATEMENT

“As leaders representing various spiritual traditions, we believe that in the new economic paradigm, the role of spiritual traditions is to preserve and transmit to future generations the wisdom and love

inherent in their own religious heritages, while simultaneously serving as a force for change to nurture unity, in the knowledge that the world is one community, interconnected, and interdependent.

The new economic paradigm is based upon compassion, altruism, balance, and peace, dedicated to the wellbeing, happiness, dignity, and sacredness of all forms of life.

Because external economic realities mirror internal psychological and spiritual realities, participants in the new paradigm pledge themselves to ethical conduct, reflecting and holding themselves to the highest level of integrity and virtue, increasing their sharing and dedication to others, and resilience in the face of challenges.

Because economics is based upon relationships, in the new paradigm, relationships are characterized by active service, justice, and cherishing the dignity of other's lives.

We commit ourselves to thus nurturing the new economic paradigm personally and collectively in our own faith communities. May the new paradigm swiftly blossom throughout the world for the benefit of all those alive today and future generations yet unborn."

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- Once people get involved in a global movement for happiness and wellbeing, there should be a framework for guiding for individual action and involvement. A top-down movement building approach would not work. We need to address how to make this a participatory process.
- Dialogue between various stakeholders should be encouraged. The development world is starting to talk to the environmental, social and spiritual worlds, which is a dialogue that has not happened before.
- The message of a movement for a new economic paradigm should be communicated via a three-pronged approach:
 - ◆ Reaching out to individual leaders of non-governmental organizations for building a movement. The working group highlighted the need to contact civil society leaders from the African continent, indigenous groups, youth movements and organizations representing the elderly, each of which were seen as under-represented in the working group itself and in the High-Level Meeting overall.

- ◆ Reaching out to individual spokespeople who have likeminded worldviews and are widely recognized as public figures.
- ◆ Facilitating the organization of grassroots-level conferences and interactions to spread the message of the new economic paradigm.

Establishment of a website (or the enhancement of an existing one) to serve as a clearinghouse for a global conversation on a new economic paradigm. Such a website should be accessible and individuals and organizations should be able to participate in it directly. It should include a contact management system that would allow people to register, become involved and generate and share content on their own activities. For example, people could share individual stories of what they have done themselves, to enhance their happiness and wellbeing in their communities, giving a personal view of what civil society is doing. The existing GNHUSA.org and Wikiprogress.org websites were proposed as possible platforms to be further developed for such a purpose.

Another proposal, relating to the creation and/or enhancement of a website for a global conversation, was the creation of toolkits for community organizations that would facilitate discussions and advocacy for a new economic paradigm in their individual communities. University students could be involved via a design competition. Students could be invited to design a community organizing kit. Content for the kit could be provided on the basis of the documents stemming from the High-Level Meeting. An award could be given to the student or group of students who design the best toolkit.

Relating to the creation of a funding mechanism for a global economic movement focused on happiness and wellbeing was the establishment of a “People’s Fund” or “Happiness Fund” that would provide crowd-sourced funding to community projects in the new economy. Anyone could contribute money to the fund and propose projects, subject to various rules. The goal for the fund would be \$7 billion dollars or one dollar for each person on the planet, with a short-term goal of \$150 million by some short-term date. This investment fund would differ from traditional capitalist governance by allowing an equal share of voting rights for each investor in the fund, regardless of their contribution. Like a cooperative, each individual contributor would get a certain number of votes to decide what projects get funded. Daniel Almagor, Mark Anielski, and Mario Chamorro volunteered to coordinate this initiative and invited others to contact them to become involved in working out the detailed arrangements.

Specific to the creation of a global movement among spiritual leaders in an inter-faith context, the working group made the following recommendations:

- The spiritual message should ideally have both breadth and depth to enable leaders to reach out to religious organizations at all levels.
- In many countries, there are ethnic groups that face the risk of losing their cultures and identities. It is important to take some responsibility for showing how ancient traditions and moral disciplines are at the core of a new paradigm for the younger generation. One way to draw focus from across society and across faiths would be to create a day of global wellbeing and happiness. On such a day, walks could happen in every village, in every city, to walk to places of worship and of education to study together to create a society focused on the new paradigm. We could organize teachers, students and families together to teach kindness, compassion, wellbeing and happiness in grass-roots movements.

Grove Harris volunteered to compile a list of inter-faith resources, including the World Council of Churches at the UN, the Indigenous People's Council, Actions of Churches Together, and the Center for Courage and Renewal, which focuses on becoming a community in ways that are ecological. It was suggested that Paul Hawken's book *Blessed Unrest* contains a large appendix of related organizations, and the wiserearth.org website is working to link such movements together. Meanwhile, the book *The Cultural Creatives* covers how to consider the demographics of different types of people and different mentalities in building these links.

- Specific religious movements that were seen as key to reach out to included: Islam, Jainism, Roman Catholicism, military and hospital chaplains, and new religions. Ken Kitatani offered to contact the Federation of New Religions in Japan in this regard.
- Rick Clugston of Earth Charter International volunteered to contact working group members by e-mail to participate in commenting on the zero draft of the People's Sustainability Treaty on Ethical and Spiritual Elements of Development that will be presented at the Rio+20 summit.
- Spiritual organizations that could be contacted include organizers of spiritual retreats, positive psychology and mindfulness and meditation (e.g., Dan Siegel, UCLA, who introduces the positive effects of meditation in a secular context), divinity schools such as the School of Chaplaincy in Maine, the Institute of Noetic Sciences, the Templeton Foundation, and the Mind-Body Institute at Massachusetts General Hospital.

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CONCLUDING STATEMENT

BY PRIME MINISTER OF BHUTAN ON 4TH APRIL

CONCLUDING STATEMENT BY PRIME MINISTER OF BHUTAN ON 4TH APRIL

In his closing statement on April 4th, the Prime Minister of Bhutan cautioned that moving to a new economic paradigm with wellbeing and happiness as goals will not be easy. He said that it requires transformation and change at all levels. Change creates a sense of insecurity; people resist change even if they know it is for the better. Yet, in their hearts, most people accept that change is required.

The Prime Minister expressed satisfaction on the beginning of this initiative. He said we have made a good start with the High-Level Meeting on 2nd April, where more than 800 people, from a head of state, government representatives, senior UN officials, Noble Prize winners and world-renowned experts in many fields had engaged in a dialogue on the way forward and endorsed an economic paradigm with wellbeing and happiness as goals. There will be many disappointments on the way, but we should continue with our commitment. The Prime Minister expressed his appreciation to the participants for committing three days of their time towards the High-Level Meeting.

The Prime Minister cautioned that our expectations from Rio+20 should not be high because it is only 11 weeks away and hence there is not enough time to prepare and engage effectively. He said the goal is to work towards September 2013 when the UN General Assembly will be deliberating on the new set of goals to update the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) that currently guide the UN's development agenda. He informed that the international community is moving towards the adoption of sustainable development goals. In this context, the objective of the High-Level Meeting is to present a case for the new economic paradigm for serious deliberations and consideration by member states. He expressed hope that this initiative will receive the support of the UN Secretary-General, given his on-going commitment and support to sustainable development.

The Prime Minister of Bhutan accepted the recommendation to appoint a Commission to lead the way towards the promotion and adoption of a new sustainability-friendly economic paradigm with wellbeing and happiness as its goals. He said the Commission would include the most eminent scholars who have done good work in this area and are committed to the advancement of this initiative. He expressed the hope that the Commission could perhaps be co-owned by the United Nations and operate in collaboration with the UN Secretary-General.

The Prime Minister further informed that as suggested by participants he would establish a small Permanent Secretariat in Bhutan. The Permanent Secretariat will need continuous support from all the participants to advance the High-Level Meeting's recommendations.

In closing, the Prime Minister of Bhutan called on everyone to continue working towards supporting a way of life that is “more meaningful, more sustainable, more just ... that will lead to the ultimate goal of Happiness.”

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LIST OF MAIN RECOMMENDATIONS

LIST OF MAIN RECOMMENDATIONS

The following is a list of the main recommendations resulting from the High-Level Meeting on 2nd April and follow-up meetings on 3rd and 4th April:

1. The current economic paradigm relies too much on the production of goods and services at the expense of nature and people, and future generations. The proposed new economic paradigm will require new indicators to better measure wellbeing and happiness. Previous work on such indicators, for example UNDP's Human Development Index, the work of the Stiglitz-Sen-Fitoussi Commission of French President Sarkozy, and Bhutan's Gross National Happiness Index, should be examined as models.
2. There is a need to establish a new Commission to work out the elements of the proposed new economic paradigm to be presented to the UN General Assembly for its consideration during its 68th session in 2013. At this session, Member States are scheduled to address the follow-up to the MDGs as part of the UN development agenda. The Commission could be co-hosted with the UN, perhaps in collaboration with the office of the UN Secretary-General. A Permanent Secretariat in Bhutan is needed to further support the Commission.
3. All stakeholders should take forward the recommendations and findings of the High-Level Meeting within the events and proceedings leading up to and occurring during the UN Conference of Sustainable Development (Rio+20) in June 2012.
4. All stakeholders should work towards the inclusion of happiness and wellbeing concepts in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) that are expected to complement the MDGs in 2015. They should encourage the SDGs to incorporate poverty eradication, social inclusion, good governance, and environmental sustainability as essential means of ensuring wellbeing and happiness as the central goal for humanity. Millennium Consumption Goals should also be explored to ensure that the basic needs of all humans on the planet are met and to limit excess consumption.
5. A new measurement system should be advanced to study the components of happiness and wellbeing within national contexts, and then promote the advancement of the conditions associated with these components. The measurement system should ultimately include comprehensive cost accounting that reflects not only economic but also environmental and social costs. Incorporating externalities, including pollution, into market prices and fiscal metrics is necessary to reflect social and environmental conditions in analyzing collective wealth.

6. In addition to measuring the wellbeing and happiness of their people, it is essential that Governments use the determinants of happiness and wellbeing to guide public policy.
7. The new economic paradigm should be fully aligned with UN principles and conventions that include human rights and the rule of law. A rights-based approach to ensuring wellbeing is necessary, one that incorporates the rights to food, water and sanitation, health, and education, as part of the process towards the full realization of development for all. The paradigm should also incorporate decent work, social capital and connectivity.
8. The new proposed paradigm should be grounded in inclusive societies and inclusive governments, with comprehensive, sustainable development policies and strategies that could ensure goods, services and happiness to the people. Inclusive and ethical leadership that places women and young people at the center of development efforts should guide this paradigm. A social protection system should be included to ensure that people's basic needs are adequately met.
9. The business sector, as the main producer of goods and services, is a key constituency and should be invited to participate in discussions to define and implement the new economic paradigm.
10. Existing UN mechanisms should be used to disseminate the new proposed economic paradigm, including the Committee for Development Policy, the Annual Ministerial Reviews of ECOSOC and the Quadrennial Country Policy Review (QCPR).
11. Values must be "rebalanced" towards wellbeing and happiness. A World Happiness Day and an annual World Happiness Award should be instituted to celebrate and reward efforts towards global happiness.
12. Governments can do much to promote wellbeing and happiness, including: achieve the MDGs and meet all basic needs; measure happiness; promote active labour market policies; promote mental health as an essential component to wellbeing; promote compassion, altruism, and honesty; resist hyper-commercialism (e.g. through limits on advertising); resist corruption; and create institutions, such as Bhutan's Gross National Happiness Commission, to support the advancement of wellbeing and happiness.

13. Sustainable agriculture, particularly food systems, should be highlighted as an absolutely critical aspect of ecological sustainability. The primary role of food and its systems must be prioritized.
14. Radical innovations in technology must be supported to ensure sufficient food, energy, water, and other essential services for the health and wellbeing of the earth's population.
15. Constructive and positive education is an important facilitator of the mindsets necessary to support an economic paradigm based on wellbeing and happiness. In this context, a broad-based learning platform is needed to identify, study and discuss best practices targeted to promote wellbeing and happiness. On the policy level, examples include Bhutan's GNH and Brazil's initiative in the Municipality of Itapetininga in the State of Sao Paulo. Best practices from other sectors, including business and civil society, should be included.

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**ANNEXES TO THE REPORT
OF THE HIGH-LEVEL MEETING
ON WELLBEING AND HAPPINESS**

ANNEXES TO THE REPORT

OF THE HIGH-LEVEL MEETING ON WELLBEING AND HAPPINESS

Annex I: Exploring the Vital Link between Sustainability and Happiness

Gross National Happiness: Towards a holistic approach to development

Thirty years ago, the Fourth King of Bhutan famously proclaimed that “Gross National Happiness is more important than Gross National Product,” thereby setting Bhutan on a holistic development path that seeks to integrate sustainable and equitable socio-economic development with environmental conservation, cultural promotion, and good governance.

This “happiness” has nothing to do with the common use of that word to denote an ephemeral, passing mood — happy today or unhappy tomorrow due to some temporary external condition like praise or blame, gain or loss. Rather, it refers to the deep, abiding happiness that comes from living life in full harmony with the natural world, with our communities and fellow beings, and with our culture and spiritual heritage, — in short from feeling totally connected with our world.

And yet our modern world, and particularly its economic system, promotes precisely the reverse — a profound sense of alienation from the natural world and from each other. Cherishing self-interest and material gain, we destroy nature, degrade our natural and cultural heritage, disrespect indigenous knowledge, overwork, get stressed out, and no longer have time to enjoy each other’s company, let alone to contemplate and meditate on life’s deeper meaning. Myriad scholarly studies now show that massive gains in GDP and income have not made us happier. On the contrary, respected economists have demonstrated empirically that deep social networks are a far better predictor of satisfaction and wellbeing than income and material gain.

It is significant that the term Gross National Happiness was first coined in direct contrast with Gross National Product — literally as a sharp critique of our current materialist obsession and growth-based economic system. And it is even more significant that the statement was not made in relation to Bhutan alone, but as a universal proclamation — true for the world and for all beings. The universal chord it struck explains why 68 nations joined Bhutan in co-sponsoring its UN General Assembly resolution in July 2011 on “Happiness: Towards a Holistic Approach to Development” that was passed by consensus, without dissenting vote, by the 193-member United Nations.

To the best of its capacity, the Kingdom of Bhutan is trying to put Gross National Happiness into practice at home. We have a long way to go. But we do try to place the natural environment at the centre of all our development policies. Our Constitution mandates that at least 60% of the Kingdom of Bhutan remain under forest cover in perpetuity. More than 50% of our country is under full environmental protection in national parks and wilderness areas. We vowed at Copenhagen always to remain a net carbon sink. Our stated policy and intention is to go 100% organic in our agricultural production.

And we don't view these policies as coming at the expense of human and social development. On the contrary, they have supported our increased wellbeing. Life expectancy has literally doubled in the last two generations. Health care and education are free, and rural health clinics and schools are sprouting throughout the country, with 99% of primary-aged children now in school. The core focus of our Tenth Five-Year Plan is to reduce poverty.

And in the midst of this rapid development, we are doing our best to maintain the values, principles, and practices of our dynamic, evolving culture and ancient wisdom traditions, which reflect in our deep respect for all life and in our strong family and community bonds. And the good governance pillar of Gross National Happiness could not be better demonstrated than in our Fourth King's effort to build constitutional democracy, including his own voluntary abdication from the Throne.

In all this, we are acutely aware that what we measure is what gets policy attention, and that what we count signifies what we value. And so, we now assess progress in the Kingdom of Bhutan according to nine domains — living standards, health, education, culture, ecological integrity, community vitality, time use, good governance, and psychological wellbeing. From those results, we create a GNH Index, and we use these indicators actively as a policy-screening tool. Indeed, no major policy is implemented in Bhutan if it fails the GNH indicator test. Since 2007, we have administered two national GNH surveys, and these measures now guide our policy.

But we have also learned that, to measure progress accurately and properly, indicators are not enough. GDP, after all, is not an indicator, but an accounting system. To challenge the continued dominance of narrow GDP-based measures, we are therefore building a new holistic accounting system that properly accounts for the value of our nation's natural, human, social, and cultural capital — and not only the manufactured and financial capital currently counted.

Globally, most of our true wealth as nations is currently invisible and ignored, and that is a dangerous illusion that leads to dangerous policies. So in February this year we released the first natural, human, and social capital results of our new National Accounts, which will be the foundation of the new economy we need to build. We found, for example, that our forests provide more than 14 billion dollars a year worth of ecosystem services — four times more than our whole GDP. And here our little country performs a huge service to the world, because 53% of that value accrues to those beyond our borders. Why? Because our forests regulate the climate, store carbon, and protect watersheds from which others benefit.

And yet, despite valiant efforts made by individuals, communities, and certain nations, human society will continue to hurtle itself towards self-annihilation unless we come together and act in concert. The time has come for global action to build a new world economic system that is no longer based on the illusion that limitless growth is possible on our precious and finite planet or that endless material gain promotes wellbeing.

Instead, it will be a system that promotes harmony and respect for nature and for each other, that respects our ancient wisdom traditions and protects our most vulnerable people as our own family, and that gives us time to

live and enjoy our lives and to appreciate rather than destroy our world. It will be an economic system, in short, that is fully sustainable and that is rooted in true, abiding wellbeing and happiness.

Sustainability is the essential basis and pre-condition of such a sane economic system. But an economy exists not for mere survival but to provide the enabling conditions for human happiness and the wellbeing of all life forms. The new economy will be an economy based on a genuine vision of life's ultimate meaning and purpose — an economy that does not cut us off from nature and community but fosters true human potential, fulfilment, and happiness.

Annex II: A Prime Minister's Urgent Call to Define a New Economic Paradigm based on Wellbeing and Happiness

The world is at a crossroads. The future of mankind and the planet is at stake. On 9 November the International Energy Agency warned: "Rising fossil-fuel energy use will lead to irreversible and potentially catastrophic climate change." Despite Rio, despite Kyoto, despite Copenhagen, CO2 emissions rose by 5.3% last year. Humanity is using up natural resources 35% faster than they can regenerate. And in Bhutan and Nepal, we can no longer stave off glacial melting that threatens devastating glacial lake outburst flooding, and shrinking sources of water for hundreds of millions downstream. There is no time to waste. Without immediate action, warns the IEA, by 2017 all CO2 emissions will be "locked in" by existing power plants, factories, buildings and other infrastructure.

Our global economic system is in rapid meltdown, starting with the financial collapse of 2008 and now manifesting in Europe's severe and spreading debt crisis. That economic system, based on the totally unsustainable premise of limitless growth on a finite planet, is the direct cause of the very policies that the IEA says are leading us to a calamitous end as evident in the growing frequency and magnitude of man made and natural disasters. And that economic system has produced ever widening inequities, with 20% of the world's people now consuming 86% of its goods, 84% of its paper, and 87% of its cars, while the poorest 20% consume 1% or less of each and emit only 2% of the world's greenhouse gases. That gap, coupled with the deep economic crisis, led the International Labour Organization to warn on 30 October that the world faces years of social unrest as economies falter.

The OECD warns, "without decisive action the outlook is gloomy." But the "decisive action" now required goes far beyond tinkering with the fundamentally flawed GDP-based economic system, which mistakenly counts resource depletion as economic gain. It was instituted at a time when economists did not know the limits of nature's capacity to support human economic activity, or that human activity could change the climate of the planet to produce what the UNDP calls "the greatest challenge facing humanity."

And yet, this moment presents an opportunity. The world is in need of an international consensus for the creation of a sustainability-based economic paradigm, with wellbeing indicators, national accounting systems that count natural and social capital values to assess the true costs and gains of economic activity, regulatory institutions, and systems of trade and incentives for sustainable production. There is the urgent need for measures to reduce pollution and drastically slow resource degradation while protecting and supporting the world's most vulnerable peoples.

The UN General Assembly resolution A/65/L.86, introduced by Bhutan with support from 68 Member States, and unanimously adopted by the UN, called for a "holistic approach to development" aimed at promoting sustainable

happiness and wellbeing. It thrust on my small country the responsibility of initiating steps for the furtherance of this resolution. It is therefore planned that key representative leaders from developed and developing nations, along with leading economists, scientists, and civil society and spiritual leaders, come together to issue a clarion call at the UN on 2nd April for a sustainability-based economic development paradigm to replace the current system.

To this end, it is hoped that the high-level meeting will call for the world's best experts, based on the best available knowledge to work together over the next year to hammer out the details of the measures, accounts, and financial mechanisms required for a happiness-based economic model for the consideration of the international community. Such a model, or aspects of it would then be available for incorporation into national policies on a voluntary basis.

Jigmi Y. Thinley, Prime Minister, Royal Government of Bhutan

Annex III: Background Concept Note for the High-Level Meeting

HOSTED BY THE ROYAL GOVERNMENT OF THE KINGDOM OF BHUTAN

United Nations Headquarters, New York 2nd April 2012

The 2nd April High-Level Meeting on Wellbeing and Happiness: Defining a new Economic Paradigm is intended as a landmark step towards adoption of a new global sustainability-based economic paradigm for human happiness and the wellbeing of all life forms, to replace the current dysfunctional system that is based on the unsustainable premise of limitless growth on a finite planet.

The Royal Government of Bhutan is hosting this meeting in direct pursuance of UN General Assembly Resolution 65/309, which was initiated by Bhutan, co-sponsored by 68 countries, and adopted by consensus at the 109th Plenary Meeting on 19th July 2011.

That resolution — titled “Happiness: towards a holistic approach to development” — states that happiness is a fundamental human goal and universal aspiration; that GDP by its nature does not reflect that goal; that unsustainable patterns of production and consumption impede sustainable development; and that a more inclusive, equitable and balanced approach is needed to promote sustainability, eradicate poverty, and enhance wellbeing and happiness.

Pursuant to this resolution, and in preparation for this meeting, the Royal Government of Bhutan, in collaboration with the Earth Institute at Columbia University, hosted a conference on happiness and economic development, the outcome document of which is being circulated at the 2nd April meeting. Dr. Jeffrey Sachs will report the outcomes of the Columbia University’s Earth Institute workshop on 1st April to The 2nd April High-Level Meeting.

Suggested outcomes of the 2nd April meeting will include:

- A report containing a synthesis of the discussions, thoughts, views, and recommendations from the meeting. This will be submitted to the Secretary-General of the United Nations who will be requested to share it with all U.N. member states.
- Voluntary and non-binding specific policy recommendations for governments in the short, medium, and long term
- Establishment of independent working groups to elaborate the details of the new economic paradigm
- A strategy to present the new economic paradigm during the Rio+20 conference in June this year
- A strategy for building a global movement and effectively communicating the new economy to reach the widest possible audience.

Member states of the United Nations will be represented at this historical gathering on 2nd April, which will also be attended by high government officials and politicians; leading economists, scholars and academicians; civil society and NGO groups; spiritual and faith leaders; international organizations; business leaders; and others.

In preparation for the 2nd April meeting, the Royal Government of Bhutan has consulted with the expert team of economists and scholars that was commissioned by the United Nations Division for Sustainable Development (UNDESA) to draft a long-term reference framework for a sustainable economy in preparation for Rio + 20.

These consultations produced a statement of suggested meeting outcomes that has been circulated to participants to guide and inform the 2nd April deliberations. In the spirit of shared information and collaboration, this draft outcome statement is also reflected in the expert report to UNDESA titled *A Sustainable and Desirable Economy-in-Society-in-Nature*. The actual outcome of the 2nd April meeting will be determined by the deliberations that day.

Annex IV: A Guiding Statement on Realising a World of Sustainable Wellbeing and Happiness

In preparation for the 2nd April meeting, the Royal Government of Bhutan consulted with the expert team of economists and scholars that was commissioned by the United Nations Division for Sustainable Development (UNDESA) to draft a long-term reference framework for a sustainable economy in preparation for Rio + 20.

These consultations produced the following statement of suggested meeting outcomes that were circulated to participants to guide and inform the 2nd April deliberations. In the spirit of shared information and collaboration, this draft outcome statement is also reflected in the expert report to UNDESA titled A Sustainable and Desirable Economy-in-Society-in-Nature.

Having gathered at the United Nations in New York on 2nd April, 2012, pursuant to UN General Assembly Resolution 65/309 on “Happiness: towards a holistic approach to development,” we are united in our belief in and pursuit of the following understanding, goals, and actions:

- 1.** 1. A fundamental human goal is the deep abiding happiness that comes from living life in full harmony with the natural world, and with our communities and fellow beings. This is consistent with the goals of the Earth Charter, the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), and the emerging Sustainable Development Goals.
- 2.** 2. Achieving this vision requires that we recognise our interdependence with nature and with each other. It requires a healthy balance among thriving natural, human, social, cultural, and built assets.¹ We recognise that these assets depend on the natural world, and that natural capital is generally non-substitutable. Sustainability therefore requires that we live off the interest generated by natural capital without depleting the capital itself.
- 3.** 3. Balancing and investing in all those dimensions of our wealth requires that:
 - a.** We live sustainably within the capacity of our finite planet to provide the resources needed for this and all future generations;
 - b.** These resources are distributed fairly within this generation, between generations, and between humans and other species;
 - c.** We use these resources as efficiently and effectively as possible;
 - d.** We respect and strengthen the cultural, community, health, knowledge, and spiritual foundations of our world to produce sustainable wellbeing, happiness, and harmony among all life forms.

1. We have never had greater global capacity, understanding, material abundance, and opportunities to achieve these objectives. This includes scientific knowledge, communications, technology, resources, productive potential, higher education, and ability to feed everyone on earth. We are also inspired by many successful examples of legislation, initiatives, and best practices at multiple scales on which we can build.
2. However, we are moving in the wrong direction at an increasing rate. For example, global greenhouse gas emissions continue to grow, humanity is using resources much faster than nature can regenerate, biodiversity is diminishing rapidly, global ecosystem services are in decline, inequality is growing, more and greater conflicts and disasters are in the making, and political will is lacking. The United Nations has acknowledged that progress towards the MDGs has stalled.
3. “Business as usual” threatens the survival of humans and other species, and is no longer an option. On a finite planet, excessive consumption by high-income groups leaves less for others, increases social exclusion, and undermines wellbeing and human happiness.
4. Many of these dangerous trends are a result of our current, unsustainable, growth-based economic paradigm, which rests on flawed measures of progress. These measures largely ignore the value of natural and social capital and the distribution of wealth and income. They misleadingly count natural capital depletion and many human and social costs as economic gain. The architects of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) themselves counselled that GDP should never be used as a measure of welfare, as it incorrectly is today. The European Union, OECD, the Sarkozy-Stiglitz Commission, Japan, and many others have therefore recognised the need to find viable alternatives.
5. Unless we change the current economic paradigm, a fundamental cause of the current crises, we will never realise the world we all want. This paradigm, institutionalised at Bretton Woods in 1944, was devised prior to an understanding of (1) finite global resource limits and (2) the emerging science of wellbeing and happiness.
6. To move onto a sustainable and desirable path will require:
 - A fundamental change of world view to one which recognises that we live on a finite planet;
 - Replacing the present goals of limitless growth and consumption with goals of material sufficiency, equitable distribution, and sustainable wellbeing and human happiness;
 - A redesign of the world economy that preserves natural systems essential to life and wellbeing, and balances natural, social, human, and built assets;
 - Reclaiming the broad definition and goals of economics as the science, management, and wellbeing of our global household.

7. In order to realise the future we all want, we must build on prior work to develop the new economy in the following areas, including but not limited to:

A. WELLBEING AND HAPPINESS

- Promoting a dynamic culture through a common but differentiated approach that respects diverse cultural traditions;
- Nurturing the values, wisdom, and practice of our spiritual traditions, and harmony between them;
- Drawing from the wisdom of traditional and indigenous values and knowledge to develop appropriate policies;
- Supporting the arts and the creative commons;
- Promoting holistic life-long learning, including vital literacies required for wellbeing, such as ecological, civic, cultural, health, nutrition, science, financial, and other literacies;
- Empowering women, educating girls, and ensuring equality of opportunity;
- Improving mental and physical health by addressing the socio-economic, behavioural, spiritual, and environmental and inter-generational determinants of health, and recognising that health is a public responsibility;
- Supporting local economies and strong community networks;
- Strengthening social supports through family, community, workplace, and other relationships;
- Supporting the voluntary and civil society sector, and nurturing good governance;
- Promoting vibrant, critical, creative, and responsible media;
- Supporting research and dialogue on the causes and conditions of happiness.

B. ECOLOGICAL SUSTAINABILITY

- Establishing a system for effective and equitable governance and management of the natural commons, including the atmosphere, oceans, fresh water systems, and biodiversity;
- Investing in sustainable infrastructure, such as renewable clean energy, energy efficiency, public transit, watershed protection measures, green public spaces, clean technology, and support for green businesses;
- Consuming essential non-renewables, such as fossil fuels, more slowly than we develop renewable substitutes;
- Creating mechanisms to reduce resource depletion, pollution, and greenhouse gas emissions to stay

within basic planetary boundaries and resource limits, including taxes, cap and auction systems, and common asset trusts;

- Dismantling incentives towards excessive materialistic consumption, including educating for sustainability and banning advertising to children;
- Moving towards sustainable agriculture to feed the earth's population without destroying its biodiversity;
- Developing linked policies to balance population and consumption with the earth's natural, social and economic capacity.

C. FAIR DISTRIBUTION

- Reducing systemic inequalities, both internationally and within nations, by improving the living standards of the poor, providing an adequate social safety net, limiting excess consumption and unearned income, and preventing private capture of the common wealth;
- Supporting, promoting, and providing incentives for systems of cooperative ownership and management of enterprises;
- Instituting fair trade systems that promote sustainable production methods and fair returns to producers;
- Transferring technology to enable lower-income nations to shift rapidly to sustainable production methods and suffer no loss of competitive advantage as they transition to a sustainable economy;
- Establishing a system for effective and equitable governance and management of the social commons, including cultural inheritance, financial systems, and information systems;
- Creating fulfilling employment for all, which contributes to the common good, achieves better work-life balance, and nurtures healthy workplace relations.

D. EFFICIENT USE OF RESOURCES

- Using full-cost accounting measures to internalise externalities, value non-market assets and services, reform national accounting systems, and ensure that prices reflect actual social and environmental costs of production and distribution;
- Putting in place fiscal reforms that reward sustainable and wellbeing-enhancing actions and penalise unsustainable behaviours that diminish collective wellbeing, including ecological tax reforms with compensating mechanisms that avoid additional burdens on low-income groups;

- Implementing systems of cooperative investment in stewardship and payment for ecosystem services;
- Increasing financial and fiscal prudence by reducing speculation, ensuring equitable access to and responsible use of credit, and requiring that financial instruments and practices contribute to the public good;
- Ensuring access to and sharing of the information required moving to a sustainable economy.

Humanity must commit itself to strengthen and deepen the knowledge, political will, and action required to promote and sustain the wellbeing of all life, and to create a world in which every human being can pursue happiness.

Annex V: The Programme of the High-Level Meeting

HIGH-LEVEL MEETING ON WELLBEING AND HAPPINESS: DEFINING A NEW ECONOMIC PARADIGM

Hosted by the Royal Government of Bhutan, United Nations Headquarters, New York

Saturday, 31 March & Sunday, 1 April	
9 a.m. - 5 p.m.	Registration at the Permanent Mission of Bhutan, 343 East 43rd Street, New York
Monday, 2 April	
8 - 8.40 a.m.	Security Check at the UN Visitor's Gate (First Avenue, 45 - 46 Street) and Registration
8 - 8.40 a.m.	Registration at Conference Room 1 for delegates of Member States
8.50 a.m.	All participants to be seated in Conference Room 1
9 - 10.00 a.m.	Inaugural Session
9.00 - 9.03 a.m.	Welcome address by H.E. Helen Clark
9.03 - 9.09 a.m.	Address by H.E. Mr. Jigmi Y. Thinley, Prime Minister of Bhutan <i>(On the mission and purpose of the meeting)</i>
9.09 - 9.12 a.m.	Inaugural address by H.E. Mr. Ban Ki-moon, Secretary-General of the United Nations
9.12 - 9.15 a.m.	Address by H.E. Mr. Nassir Abdulaziz Al-Nasser, President of the 66 th Session of the UN General Assembly
9.15 - 9.18 a.m.	Address by H.E. Mr. Miloš Koterec, President of the Economic and Social Council
9.18 - 9.28 a.m.	Keynote address by H.E. Ms. Laura Chinchilla, Honourable President of the Republic of Costa Rica <i>(The Republic of Costa Rica is universally recognised for its outstanding achievements in environmental conservation and its exemplary sustainable development record)</i>
9.28 - 9.31 a.m.	Address by Hon. Tim Fischer, the Special Envoy of the Prime Minister of Australia to Bhutan and the Former Deputy Prime Minister of Australia <i>(representing a country that has taken a courageous lead in implementing carbon taxes to reduce greenhouse gas emissions)</i>

9.31 - 9.34 a.m.	Address by H.E. Mr. Eero Heinäluoma, Speaker of the Parliament of Finland (<i>which has one of the world's most comprehensive social welfare systems</i>)
9.34 - 9.37 a.m.	Address by H.E. Ms. Jayanthi Natarajan, Special Envoy of the Prime Minister of India and Minister of State for Environment and Forests, Government of India (<i>providing the perspective of a powerful emerging economy with a critical role in shaping the new economic paradigm</i>)
9.37 - 9.40 a.m.	Address by H.E. Mr. Gilad Erdan, Minister of Environmental Protection, Government of Israel (<i>taking a lead in alternative energy and clean technology, and having made a substantial contribution in providing irrigation solutions to a world faced with water shortages</i>)
9.40 - 9.43 a.m.	Address by H.E. Mr. Joe Nakano, Parliamentary Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs, Government of Japan (<i>representing a nation that has tested the limits of the conventional economic paradigm</i>)
9.43 - 9.47 a.m.	Address by H.E. Mr. Ahmed Lahlimi Alami, Minister and High Commissioner for Planning, Kingdom of Morocco (<i>a nation that has taken major steps to reduce poverty and open opportunities for its people - often called 'the Moroccan exception'</i>)
9.47 - 9.50 a.m.	Address by H.E. Mr. Jullapong Nonsrichai, Special Envoy of the Prime Minister of Thailand and Vice-Minister of Foreign Affairs, Government of Thailand (<i>speaking on the Thai concept of the "sufficiency economy"</i>)
9.50 - 9.53 a.m.	Address by Lord Gus O'Donnell, Special Envoy of the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland (<i>speaking on the UK's new wellbeing policy and measures</i>)
9.53 - 9.57 a.m.	Statement by Ms. Martine Durand, Chief Statistician, Organisation of Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) (<i>representing the Secretary-General, OECD, on its "Better Life Initiative on Measuring Wellbeing and Progress"</i>)
10.00 a.m. - 1 p.m.	Thematic Sessions on the Four Dimensions of the New Economy
10.00 - 10.05 a.m.	Prof. Jacqueline McGlade, Executive Director, European Environment Agency: <i>Outline of meeting schedule, procedures, and interactive dialogue format</i>
10.05 - 10.55 a.m.	Panel on Wellbeing and Happiness Chair: H.E. Helen Clark, Administrator, United Nations Development Programme and the Former Prime Minister of New Zealand
10.05 - 10.10 a.m.	Prof. Jeffrey Sachs, Director, Earth Institute, Columbia University <i>Brief summary of outcomes of 1st April Workshop on Happiness</i>

10.10 – 10.55 a.m.	<p>Panellists:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Venerable Matthieu Ricard, Shechen Monastery, Nepal • Prof. Martin Seligman, Founder of Positive Psychology and Director, Positive Psychology Centre, University of Pennsylvania • Dasho Karma Ura, President, Centre for Bhutan Studies • Dasho Karma Tshiteem, Secretary, Gross National Happiness Commission, Royal Government of Bhutan • Prof. John Helliwell, Professor Emeritus of Economics, University of British Columbia • Lord Richard Layard, Emeritus Professor of Economics, London School of Economics
Question and Answer Session	
10.55 – 11.15 a.m.	Break
11.15 – 11.45 a.m.	<p>Panel on Ecological Sustainability</p> <p>Chair: Dr. Jonathan Patz, Nobel Laureate, Professor and Director, Global Health Institute, University of Wisconsin</p> <p>Panellists:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prof. Robert Costanza, Distinguished University Professor of Sustainability, Portland State University, Editor-in-Chief of <i>Solutions</i> magazine • Dr. Mathis Wackernagel, Co-creator of the Ecological Footprint and President, Global Footprint Network • Dr. Vandana Shiva, Scientist, Author, Founder of Navdanya, Recipient of Right Livelihood Award
Question and Answer Session	
11.45 a.m. - 12.15 p.m.	<p>Panel on Efficient Use of Resources</p> <p>Chair: Mr. Ajay Chhibber, Assistant Secretary-General, Assistant Administrator, United Nations Development Programme, and Director of UNDP's Regional Bureau for Asia and the Pacific.</p> <p>Panellists:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prof. Joseph Stiglitz, Nobel Laureate, Professor of Economics, Columbia University • Prof. Jeffrey Sachs, Director, Earth Institute, Columbia University

Question and Answer Session	
12.15 - 12.45 p.m.	<p>Panel on Fair distribution</p> <p>Chair: Hon. Tim Fischer, the Special Envoy of the Prime Minister of Australia to Bhutan and the Former Deputy Prime Minister of Australia</p> <p>Panellists:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • H.E. Ms. Michelle Bachelet, Under-Secretary-General and Executive Director of UN Women, and the Former President of the Republic of Chile • Mr. Ajay Chhibber, Assistant Secretary-General, Assistant Administrator, United Nations Development Programme, and Director of UNDP's Regional Bureau for Asia and the Pacific • Mr. Enrico Giovannini, President, Italian Statistical Institute, and former Chief Statistician, OECD • Mr. Narinder Kakar, Permanent Observer to the United Nations of the International Union for Conservation of Nature
Question and Answer Session	
12.45 - 1.00 p.m.	Prof. Jacqueline McGlade, Executive Director, European Environment Agency: Introduction to breakout sessions over lunch; participants to be divided into different groups and topics.
1.00 - 3.00 p.m.	Working lunch hosted by H.E. Mr. Jigmi Y. Thinley, Prime Minister of Bhutan at the Millennium UN Plaza Hotel, One United Nations Plaza, 44th Street (between First and Second Avenue)
Assigned breakout group conversations over lunch.	
3.00 - 6.30 p.m. Afternoon Session	
Facilitator: Prof. Jacqueline McGlade, Executive Director, European Environment Agency	
3.00 - 3.07 p.m.	Screening of message from His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales

3.07 – 5.35 p.m.	<p><i>Open facilitated dialogue with participants, based on insights from the four morning sessions and breakout conversations. This session will be geared to achieving concrete and practical outcomes, including a statement on the new economy and the steps required to bring the new paradigm into being, such as building a global movement, action networks, and communication strategy, creating an expert task force to work out each of the dimensions, structures, and operating and regulatory mechanisms of the new economy in detail. The first part of the session will be oriented towards gathering views from the participants on the major four themes. Each short intervention will focus on actions and follow-up plans. The second part of the session will concentrate on interventions that will help build links across the themes. All the interventions from the breakout groups and the afternoon plenary will be recorded and brought forward into the working plans.</i> The following panellists are invited to the podium for parts of the afternoon discussion to offer brief comments based on their unique perspectives:</p> <p>Abbot Roshi Joan Halifax, Prof. Mohan Munasinghe, Hunter Lovins, Alexander Likhotal (representing Mikhail Gorbachev), Prof. Robert Putnam, David Cadman, Ven. Anil Sakya and Dr. Skali Faouzi</p>
5.35 – 5.45 p.m.	Concluding Statement by H.E. Mr. Jigmi Y. Thinley, Prime Minister of Bhutan: Next Steps: Towards Rio + 20 and Beyond.
5.45 p.m.	Concluding prayers by spiritual leaders of Hindu, Christian, Jewish, Muslim and Buddhist faiths
6.30 p.m.	Reception hosted by H.E. Mr. Jigmi Y. Thinley, Prime Minister of Bhutan, for participants at the International Institute of Education, 809 First Avenue (between 45 th and 46 th Street).
<p>Tuesday, 3 April and Wednesday 4 April</p> <p>Follow up implementation meetings. See addendum 1 for details</p>	
<p>Tuesday, 3 April</p>	
7.30 p.m.	Cultural Program to be held at Barnard College featuring traditional Bhutanese music and dance. <i>Venue: The Event Oval, The Diana Center, Barnard College, 3009, Broadway (Entrance at 117th Street – Broadway). See addendum 2 for transit details.</i>

Annex VI: An Opening Statements from the Inaugural Session

This Annex contains the written versions of opening statements, as available, delivered at the Inaugural Session of the High-Level Meeting on Wellbeing and Happiness on the 2nd of April. They appear in the order of their delivery in the session.

OPENING REMARKS BY H.E. MS. HELEN CLARK,

ADMINISTRATOR, UNITED NATIONS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME

Secretary General,

President of the General Assembly,

Prime Minister Jigmi Y. Thinley,

President Laura Chinchilla-Miranda,

President of the Economic and Social Council,

Excellencies,

Distinguished guests,

Ladies and gentlemen,

It is a pleasure to be invited by the Royal Government of Bhutan to open the Inaugural Session of this High Level Meeting on a “New Economic Paradigm” which places sustainability and the wellbeing of people at the centre of development.

We live in a world where economic crises, food insecurity, conflict, and natural disasters have affected the wellbeing of countless millions of people.

Twenty-five years after the Brundtland report on environment and development, and twenty years after the Rio Earth Summit, our world is still searching for the formulae which will support continuing advances in human development without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

With Rio+20 now fewer than three months away, today’s timely event offers an opportunity to engage in dialogue on the agenda for a sustainable future which can weave together the strands of economic development, social advancement, and environmental protection.

In July last year, the UN Resolution initiated by Bhutan on “Happiness: Towards an holistic approach to development” was passed unanimously by the General Assembly. That was a significant milestone for Bhutan, and I take

this opportunity to congratulate the Prime Minister and his Government on this impressive achievement.

Today, Bhutan is putting before us a framework for a New Economic Paradigm, based on principles of happiness and wellbeing, ecological sustainability, efficient use of resources, and fair distribution. The framework has been shaped by Bhutan's unique experience in applying the concept of Gross National Happiness which informs all its government policies. This approach integrates inclusive economic growth with strengthening communities, protecting the environment, providing universal access to health services and education, and preserving traditional culture and heritage. To help guide its policy choices, Bhutan also created a new accounting system which measures the value of the nation's natural, human, social, and cultural wealth, and not just its material and capital assets.

At UNDP, we have long promoted human development, based on an understanding that people are the real wealth of nations. Our vision is for development which enables people to live longer, healthier lives, to be educated, to have access to a decent standard of living, and to have the freedom to choose to live lives which they value. Our approach, like Bhutan's, balances the material and non-material aspects of wellbeing.

The vital link between sustainability and happiness in the New Economic Paradigm promoted by Bhutan resonates with what we in UNDP see as the central challenge of the 21st century: achieving sustainable human development.

One of the key questions before the international community is: what could our common future look like? Bhutan is providing answers to that question. I hope today's discussions will help us move closer to a common understanding of a sustainable future, and of how to build it.

ADDRESS BY H.E. MR. JIGMI Y. THINLEY,

PRIME MINISTER OF BHUTAN

Mm. Chairperson, President of the General Assembly, Mr Secretary General, Mm. President Laura Chinchilla of Costa Rica, Excellencies, Ladies and gentlemen,

The Kingdom of Bhutan and her people are honoured by your presence.

I believe an economy is not an economy if, at the very least, it does not cause economy. It ought to promote prudent use and management of scarce resources to make life stable and secure.

The GDP led development model that compels boundless growth on a planet with limited resources no longer makes economic sense. It is the cause of our irresponsible, immoral and self destructive actions. Irresponsible, because we extract, produce, consume and waste ever more, even as natural resources are rapidly depleting.

Immoral and unethical because having consumed far beyond our share of natural wealth, our reckless profligacy amid unconscionable inequities comes at the cost of what belongs to generations unborn. Self destructive, because, aided by technology, we are bringing about the collapse of our ecological life support systems. Having far outlived its usefulness, our fundamentally flawed economic arrangement, has itself, become the cause of all problems. Within its framework, there lies no solution to the economic, ecological, social and security crises that plague the world today and threaten to consume humanity.

Mankind is like a meteor, blazing toward self-annihilation along with all other innocent life forms. But this course can be changed if we act now.

Bhutan's role in the global search for a rational economic system has to do with the growing acceptance of our former ruler the 4th King's idea of GNH (Gross National Happiness) as an alternative development paradigm. Founded on the belief that happiness can be achieved by balancing the needs of the body with those of the mind within a peaceful and secure environment, it requires that the purpose of development must be to create enabling conditions through public policy for the pursuit of the ultimate goal of happiness by all citizens. In short, GNH is a sustainability based, wellbeing centric, inclusive economic model.

I wish to submit that, contrary to what many mistakenly believe, Bhutan is not a country that has attained GNH and it is not from a pedestal that we serve as a humble facilitator today. Like most developing nations, we are struggling with the challenge of fulfilling the basic needs of our people. What separates us, however, from most others is that we have made happiness, the most fundamental of human needs as the goal of societal change.

The growing interest in GNH, discontent with the existing metrics, understanding of happiness as a measurable good and the multiplicity of natural and manmade calamities, compelled Bhutan to take the initiative that led to the unanimous adoption, last year, of the resolution on 'Happiness: towards a holistic approach to development'. This resolution calls on Bhutan to convene a discussion "on the theme of happiness and wellbeing" while "acknowledging the need to promote sustainable development and .. the MDGs".

I am awed, humbled and, indeed, inspired by the response to our call for this gathering under the auspices of the UN General Assembly. This extraordinary constellation of great minds, nations, civil society, business and industry, spiritual leaders and concerned citizens gives me tremendous hope. It rekindles my faith in humankind; in its goodness and innate wisdom; and in the enormous potential to build a sane, secure and happy world. Together, we must share the vast knowledge, wisdom and the will to break away from the tenacious grip of mindless consumerism.

We desperately need an economy that serves and nurtures the wellbeing of all sentient beings on earth and human happiness that comes from living life in harmony with the natural world, with our communities, and with our inner selves. We need an economy that will serve humanity, not enslave it. It must prevent the imminent

reversal of civilization and flourish within the natural bounds of our planet while ensuring the sustainable, equitable and meaningful use of precious resources.

*Business as usual cannot go on and tinkering with the existing system will not do. We need a fundamental transformation that the Tellus Institute calls *The Great Transition*.*

Our goal today is to launch the initiative for such a transition. To that ambitious end, concrete outcomes and action steps are what must come out of this meeting. In this regard, I am deeply moved by the offer of more than 200 participants to kindly stay behind for two more days of follow-up meetings to synthesize today's deliberations into clear outcomes and implementable processes. They include, inter alia:

- a. Compiling a report to the Secretary-General along with a set of policy recommendations that governments may choose to voluntarily adopt at their own pace and on their own terms to move towards the new economy;*
- b. fleshing out details of the four dimensions of the new economy by a commission of eminent experts for the consideration of the 67th session of the General Assembly in 2013;*
- c. preparing a strategy to carry this process forward to Rio + 20 and UN General Assembly deliberations on what must replace the MDGs after 2015 and*
- d. outlining initiatives to promote a global movement for the new sustainability based economic paradigm.*

Challenging as these aspirations may appear to be, I am confident that we will, at the end of this day and two days hereafter, find reasons for pride and satisfaction in having contributed to the crafting of a new and bright chapter in human history.

I thank you and pray for the success of our historic endeavour.

TASHI DELEK !

INAUGURAL ADDRESS BY H.E. MR. BAN KI-MOON,

SECRETARY-GENERAL OF THE UNITED NATIONS

I commend the Government of Bhutan for initiating this important debate on the link between happiness, wellbeing and prosperity.

Earlier this year, I received the final report of my Global Sustainability Panel.

Among its 56 recommendations was the importance of establishing a Sustainable Development Index, or a set of indicators to measure progress towards sustainable development.

The panel noted that, while material prosperity is important, it is far from being the only determinant of wellbeing. Such thinking dates back to the earliest times.

It can be found, for example, in the teachings of the Buddha and Aristotle.

More recently, measuring success by wealth alone has been questioned in the groundbreaking Brundtland Report of 1987, the Human Development Index and the Commission on the Measurement of Economic Performance and Social Progress, established by President Sarkozy of France.

Bhutan has recognized the supremacy of national happiness over national income since the early 1970s.

It has famously adopted the goal of Gross National Happiness over Gross National Product.

Such thinking is now gaining ground in other regions.

Costa Rica is well known for being the greenest country in the world – an example of holistic and environmentally responsible development.

Compared to other countries with similar income levels, it ranks higher in human development and is a beacon of peace and democracy.

In the United Kingdom, statistical authorities are experimenting with “National Wellbeing”. The European Commission has its “GDP and Beyond” project.

And the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) has its guidelines of measurement of wellbeing.

Gross National Product has long been the yardstick by which economies and politicians have been measured.

Yet it fails to take into account the social and environmental costs of so-called progress.

We need a new economic paradigm that recognizes the parity between the three pillars of sustainable development.

Social, economic and environmental wellbeing are indivisible. Together they define gross global happiness.

There are now less than 75 days to the Rio+20 Conference on Sustainable Development. Sustainable development is one of the top priorities for my second term.

The world stands at a crossroads.

We need everyone – government ministers and policy makers, business and civil society leaders, and young people – to work together to transform our economies... to place our societies on a more just and equitable footing... and to protect the resources and ecosystems on which our shared future depends.

Connecting the dots between these issues -- between water, food and energy security, climate change, urbanization, poverty, inequality and the empowerment of the world's women – lies at the heart of sustainable development.

But it will take resolute will from all sectors of society.

Sustainable development recognizes that our economic, social and environmental objectives are not competing goals that must be traded off against each other, but are interconnected objectives that are most effectively pursued together in a holistic manner.

We need an outcome from Rio+20 that reflects this.

An outcome that says that happiness and wellbeing are measured in more than gross national income – and that they are fundamental goals in themselves.

I thank the Government of Bhutan, and the Prime Minister, for convening this meeting, and I wish you a most productive debate.

Thank you very much.

ADDRESS BY H.E. MR. NASSIR ABDULAZIZ AL-NASSER,

PRESIDENT OF THE 66TH SESSION OF THE UN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Your Excellency Jigmi Y. Thinley, Honourable Prime Minister of Bhutan,

Your Excellency Laura Chinchilla, President of the Republic of Costa Rica,

Your Excellency Ban Ki-moon, Secretary-General of The United Nations,

Your Excellency Miloš Koterec, President, United Nations Economic and Social Council,

Excellencies,

Ladies and gentlemen,

I am very pleased to attend today's High-level meeting on Wellbeing and happiness: Defining a new economic paradigm.

I would like to thank the Permanent Representative of Bhutan, Ambassador Lhatu Wangchuk, for inviting me to address this meeting. I would also like to commend Bhutan for having the foresight and wisdom to propose the theme of "Wellbeing and Happiness: Defining a New Economic Paradigm" as the principle theme for this high-level meeting.

As Member States reaffirmed in resolution 65/309, happiness is a fundamental human goal.

Striving for its attainment is a universal aspiration we all share.

Today's unprecedented ecological, economic and social challenges have, however, made the achievement of happiness and wellbeing an unachievable goal for many.

I would submit, therefore, that it is imperative that we build a new, creative guiding vision for sustainability and our future.

One that will bring a more inclusive, equitable and balanced approach that will promote sustainability, eradicate poverty, and enhance wellbeing and happiness.

In particular, as the theme of today's meeting suggests, a sustainability-based economic paradigm is needed.

A paradigm that takes into consideration economic growth and environmental protection, and tangibly leads to greater wellbeing and happiness.

I would therefore encourage Member States to consider adopting practical steps towards policy shifts that will enable a sustainability-based economic paradigm.

Our host today, the Royal Government of the Kingdom of Bhutan, has developed a unique Bhutanese model for measuring happiness.

Gross National Happiness aims to achieve harmony between the economy, the environment, and spiritual and cultural values.

It is considered far more important than Gross National Product, as it strives for more than material progress and the accumulation of wealth alone.

Ladies and gentlemen,

I welcome this important meeting.

I am pleased to note that a report from today's meeting will be submitted to the Secretary-General and subsequently shared with Member States.

I would end by noting that the far-reaching work of the United Nations aims to improve the lives of men, women and children.

Sustainable development is precisely about balancing economic, environmental, social and spiritual values.

This perfect harmony is what I personally consider brings happiness, wellbeing and prosperity.

As we are starting our week with this important theme, I simply wish you all happiness.

Thank you.

ADDRESS BY H.E. MR. MILOŠ KOTEREC,

PRESIDENT OF THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL

Distinguished guests,

Excellencies,

Ladies and gentlemen,

It is an honour to join you here today at this high level meeting on well being and happiness. I wish to thank His Excellency Mr. Daw Penjo, Acting Foreign Minister of Bhutan for inviting me.

I applaud the noble and ambitious initiative undertaken by Bhutan in forging a holistic development path that seeks to integrate sustainable and equitable socio-economic development with environmental conservation, cultural promotion and good governance. Here, I would like to add that such development should also be inclusive.

As you know, the United Nations has been promoting such development within the framework of among others, the Millennium Development Goals and the Rio+20 Conference.

With recent devastating natural disasters still fresh in our memories, we are inevitably becoming more aware of

the need to balance development with conservation, keeping in mind the rapidly shrinking and finite resources available. "Green growth" has been put forward as a promising way to address this need for a balancing act and in this connection I am pleased to see that today's meeting will look into various dimensions of holistic development, including ecological sustainability, fair distribution and efficient use of resources.

In addition to environmental concerns, due in part to the impact of the prolonged jobs crises, increasing attention is being focused on the social pillar of sustainable development. In order to ease the negative impacts of the jobs crises, governments must strengthen their policies and initiatives to promote employment creation and decent work, especially for the most vulnerable groups, including youth and women.

Excellencies,

Ladies and gentlemen,

As always, ECOSOC stands ready to play its part in providing a platform for multi-stakeholder discussions on how to move forward in defining a new economic paradigm for holistic development as well as ensuring coherent and coordinated initiatives within the UN System.

Tomorrow, the Global Preparatory Meeting on employment for the Annual Ministerial Review will take place in this very room. The 2012 AMR that will take place in July will focus on productive capacity, employment and decent work. The AMR will also address the particular labour market vulnerabilities of young women and men as well as nationally defined social protection floors for social and economic resilience. The Global Preparatory meeting will put a spotlight on the key policy and other requirements for building productive capacity and promoting inclusive and sustainable economic growth in developing countries, particularly least developed and vulnerable countries.

As you know, initial discussions on a post-2015 development agenda are taking place within the UN. Your discussion today on the pursuit of wellbeing and happiness for a new economic paradigm are also extremely relevant in this context. The post-2015 discussions are inextricably linked to the Rio+20 process and sustainable development will most definitely play a central role. In this connection, I wish to draw your attention to an ECOSOC briefing on the post-2015 development framework to take place on 4 April, which will cover the work of the UN Task Team on the post-2015 development agenda and will provide an opportunity to interact with some members of the Committee for Development Policy on their ideas and proposals for the post-2015 agenda.

I look forward to the active participation of all of you in these important events.

The role of ECOSOC in the Rio+20 and post-2015 processes is particularly important given its role and mandate on development. With regard to the Rio+20 process, the Council is in a unique position to follow up on it, with the ability to integrate all three pillars of sustainable development as well as ensure that relevant commitments

are actually translated into concrete national policies. In terms of the follow up to the commitments and goals for the post-2015 development agenda, the Council is eager to follow up on the anticipated sustainable development goals.

Excellencies,

Ladies and gentlemen,

Today's high level meeting on a holistic approach to development embodies a perfect example of how governments can promote the work of the UN through the integration of sustainable and equitable socio-economic development with environmental conservation, cultural promotion and good governance.

I wish you every success in today's meeting and I thank you.

KEYNOTE ADDRESS BY H.E. LAURA CHINCHILLA MIRANDA,

PRESIDENT OF COSTA RICA

Honorable

Mr. Prime Minister of Bhutan;

Mr. President of the General Assembly of the United Nations; Mr. Secretary General;

Mr. President of the ECOSOC;

Madame Administrator of the UNDP and chair of this session;

Distinguished delegates;

Dear friends:

I am honored to open this conference as President of a country convinced that the purpose and meaning of development is not the sheer accumulation of wealth, but the wellbeing of the people and the pursuit of their happiness.

This conviction has guided us as nation for almost two centuries, and has brought me to this house of all the peoples and countries of the world.

We regularly come to the United Nations, in exercise of our equality as States, to forge a better common destiny.

Today, I come to the United Nations, enthusiast, to reflect on the wellbeing and happiness as fundamental variables to guide our public policies.

The exchange of ideas at this conference will contribute to define and systematize broader dimensions and more comprehensive indicators on human development in its fullest sense. This will enable us to have better tools for the benefit of our peoples; also, to assess the results of our efforts, and eventually, adjust their course.

Dear friends:

Whether in response to specific challenges, as a reflection of our history, or as an outcome of deeply- thought policy-making efforts, my country has always adhered to the concept and practice of comprehensive development, with a civilian vision and deep respect for the aims and rights of individuals.

Our first head of State was a teacher. And, since our Independence, in 1821, we began building a nation based upon democracy, solidarity, the rule of law, a cult of peace, and respect for the integrity and dignity of all our inhabitants.

In seeking these ends, our efforts have been constant. Along the way, we have experienced contradictions and setbacks. But we have not lost sight of the horizon. On the contrary, we have broadened it in response to new aspirations; among them, respect for nature and a deep commitment to sustainable development.

With modesty, but also pride, we can share initiatives and results from our path, which I summarize in some paragraphs.

In 1870, primary education became free and mandatory, many years before any other Latin American country, and even the United Kingdom or the United States. Seven years later we abolished the death penalty. In 1942 we established our social security system, which covers the entire population, including half a million immigrants. Thanks to this investment in human capital, which we have sealed with the constitutional commitment to devote 8% of our GDP to public education, we have been able to attract investments to the most sophisticated economic sectors; moreover, we have become the largest exporter of technology in our region, and in one of the developing countries more committed to innovation.

In 1948 we decided to consolidate the best of our civic values, and abolished the army. We chose to solve our disputes through the ballots, not the bullets; we decided to invest in schools and teachers, not garrisons and soldiers. This uninterrupted path turned Costa Rica into the most stable and longest living democracy in Latin America.

In 1970, well before the world grasped the risks of climate change, we created a network of national parks that provides special protection to close to 30% of our territory. As a result, we are today the fifth country in the world in environmental protection, and we aspire to become one of the first carbon neutral countries in the planet.

We certainly have enormous challenges ahead, in all the areas of development. But we don't back down in the toil to overcome them, with adherence to our values.

In our constant efforts of betterment, we expect that the international community will not abandon us. The narrowness that has prevailed in measuring development primarily in terms of income, has dramatically curtailed the possibility of middle income countries to participate in the major flows of international cooperation. This is a bad signal that, essentially, penalizes many countries that have been doing their homework with responsibility, persistence and transparency.

Today, Costa Rica certainly is a middle-income country, with high human development indexes. But, like so many others in this category, we still have many vulnerabilities; we still require international accompaniment to consolidate our development. This accompaniment is even more necessary if we consider that many of our vulnerabilities have become more acute because the big developed countries do not fully comply with their global responsibilities. For example, to the extent that a real and binding commitment of mayor carbon-emitting countries is not put in place, tropical countries as Costa Rica will keep paying a very high cost for the impact of global warming, either because of hurricanes, floods or prolonged droughts.

Therefore, this is a propitious occasion to make all of us aware of the importance, for both middle and low income countries, and the global community in general, to articulate a change of paradigm on development and international cooperation.

Dear friends:

If I have mentioned these data, convictions, aspirations and pending tasks, it has been to emphasize that my presence here responds to a national vocation and a sincere commitment to the international community.

I represent a country that, despite its modest resources, has managed to continually improve the quality of life of its people. We are interested in sharing that experience and in learning from others, to define better common pathways.

When, in 2009, the United Kingdom's New Economics Foundation awarded Costa Rica first place in its "Happy Planet Index," our collective reaction was one of perplexity, even surprise. We Costa Ricans have a strong spirit of self-criticism. We know our limitations, we are aware of our problems and, as free people, do not have a common definition of happiness.

But the classification activated useful analytical introspections and public discussions.

The recently released "World Happiness Report," edited by professors Jeffrey Sachs, John Helliwell and Richard Layar, has contributed with new insights, more profound investigative approaches, and more developed methodological tools in this area. In that Report, once again, our country shows extremely positive results.

Thanks to such inputs and contributions, today Costa Ricans are even more aware that the essence of our wellbeing, and that of any other people, is nourished by the dynamic and delicate interaction among multiple factors: economic, social, cultural, environmental and spiritual.

The quest for wellbeing also demands a suitable balance between aspirations and achievements; between “I” and “we”; between public and private; the institutional and the spontaneous; drives and limits; traditions and innovation; freedom and responsibility.

Societies, like human beings and nature, are complex systems that require adequate balances to survive and improve.

Based on these notions, I invite you to reflect, at least, on two issues:

The first is what might be the best paths to stimulate a holistic approach to development, one that may get us closer to the general wellbeing, in harmony with our fellow beings and our natural surroundings.

The second issue is how to move forward in building methodological approaches that better enable us to systematize good practices, explore results, and develop suitable measurements of wellbeing.

A few days ago, Secretary General Ban Ki-Moon reminded us that “thinking solely in terms of quantitative growth, as measured by gross domestic product, is not adequate”. No doubt he is right.

Happiness is a sentiment that nests within each person, and each person has a different concept of it, stemming from her or his individuality, affiliations and culture. There are many paths to reach it. But human history, as well as current realities, teaches us that the paths to wellbeing are deeply connected to the respect for dignity, and to the creation of opportunities to freely pursue our full and harmonious realization as part of the natural and social milieu.

I agree with Amartya Sen in that “freedoms are not only the primary ends of development, they are also among its principal means”. But essential as it is, freedom is not enough. From it should emerge well-based and legitimate decisions that actively generate adequate conditions for achieving human wellbeing, and that allow us to seek happiness in an autonomous way.

To conceptualize, systematize, put into operation, and measure such complex processes and elusive results is a task of extreme technical complexity. It also requires political courage, for it exposes those who govern to new areas of performance evaluation and accountability. That courage is necessary. And the effort is worth it.

The creation of the Human Development Index by the UNDP constituted a crucial advance in moving from the quest of growth to that of wellbeing. Twenty years after it remains alive and relevant. Other efforts and

comprehensive indexes have emerged, and are emerging, from public and private entities; from national, regional and international instances; from academic institutions, nongovernmental organizations, think tanks and advocacy centers. The “Happy Planet Index” and the “Global Happiness Report,” to which I referred before, are among those relevant efforts.

It is also worth mentioning the British Government’s instruction to its Office for National Statistics to begin measuring wellbeing in the United Kingdom.

But the more global initiative, unanimously embraced by the United Nations, is the one launched by Bhutan. It is thanks to this initiative that we have met today, in this house of all the people of the United Nations, and from now on we will be players in its evolution.

I am pleased to accompany you in this task. We will think and act with commitment, conviction, and hope.

Good luck in your deliberations. I thank you very much.

STATEMENT BY HONOURABLE TIM FISCHER,

SPECIAL ENVOY OF THE PRIME MINISTER OF AUSTRALIA TO BHUTAN AND THE FORMER DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER OF AUSTRALIA

Your Excellency Prime Minister Jigme Thinley

Secretary General Ban Ki-Moon

President of the General Assembly and President of the Economic and Social Council

Excellencies, Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen:

You can make a difference, we all here today can make a difference and Bhutan has made a difference to the wellbeing of the world, with the expanding concept of GNH.

In the 25 years or more I have been travelling to Bhutan I have come to deeply appreciate and be in awe of the GNH developments originated by king Jigme or K4, tracking balance, harmony and real progress for the Bhutanese- all well ahead of most OECD countries.

In this troubled world the need for looking beyond the economic is now becoming widely accepted, at the Trento economic festival and at world economic forums, thanks to Bhutan’s trail blazing ways.

2) Australia strongly supports the further evolution and adoption of GNH and well being measurements, we favour the so called 'dashboard' approach, we have published the document "measures of Australia's progress" broadly based and relating to the social and environment as well as the economic- here today we have several Aussies including Professor John Wiseman from Melbourne University.

3) The Australian government welcomes the UN recognition delivered by the UN Secretary-General's High Level Panel on Global Sustainability re: a sustainable development index and we strongly support SEEA or the system of environmental economic accounts. The unanimous 2011unga vote last year was a welcoming beacon for today and to the world.

4) Finally I reiterate Bhutan and the PM and team can walk tall, indeed we can all walk tall if we can take this agenda forward to the upcoming Rio+ 20 conference in Brazil.

I salute the advent of GNH for the 21st century, for future generations, for the short medium and long term. Hopefully in its own way it will also help the severely isolated and lonely in the modern madding crowded cities of the world, the unhinged and unwell, to help bring them back into purposeful society. Let us stand our ground against the odd economic naysayers and take the GNH message and practical concepts associated with well being to the world!

Ends

STATEMENT BY H.E. MR. EERO HEINÄLUOMA,

SPEAKER OF THE PARLIAMENT OF FINLAND

Mr. Prime Minister

Excellencies

Distinguished Delegates

Ladies and Gentlemen

Finland would like to thank the Royal Government of Bhutan for providing this opportunity to share our experiences and visions for new economic thinking.

Finland has built its economic growth on a comprehensive education, entrepreneurship and social welfare system. While decent work and sufficient means of living are vital ingredients of wellbeing, studies show that for Finns

happiness also means freedom, justice and equality and, increasingly, sustainability – all elements which are incorporated in the government policies of Finland.

Finland sees the Rio+20 Conference as a unique opportunity to rethink the current perception of growth and consumption. In today's meeting, we have the same vision: a new global framework for sustainable development where growth and wellbeing require new approaches in addition to the traditional monetary indicators.

While GDP is not sufficient enough to measure human wellbeing and the state of the environment, GDP cannot be substituted or complemented by just one figure or indicator only. Instead we need a set of carefully selected indicators to provide the full picture.

Finland has a long experience with indicators that monitor development and progress on a wider scope. We were one of the first countries to agree on a national set of sustainable development indicators in the late 1990s.

Furthermore, we have been pioneers in promoting the utilisation of the various indicators of development and have invented a number of tools to make information better available for both policy-makers and citizens alike.

Mr. Prime Minister,

There is a lot of work ahead of for the World Community on measuring sustainable development and welfare or wellbeing. We need to develop our tools and capacities, to have universally adopted facts and figures which will enable us to formulate our policies.

Let us support Rio+20 by making a political commitment to establish new indicators, then by committing ourselves to a UN-led process for developing such measures and lastly by mainstreaming the new measures into policy-making. This is a major challenge but I believe the end result will be sustainable development with all three pillars included.

Finland would like to thank Bhutan for taking this discussion forward together with other UN member states on our road towards Rio+20, a new development agenda and the implementation of sustainable development.

Thank you.

STATEMENT BY H.E. MS. JAYANTHI NATARAJAN,

MINISTER OF STATE FOR ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS, GOVERNMENT OF INDIA

Hon'ble President of Costa Rica,

Her Excellency Ms. Laura Chinchilla,

Hon'ble Prime Minister of Bhutan,

His Excellency Mr. Jigmi Y. Thinley,

His Excellency Mr. Nassir Abdulaziz Al-Nasser, President of the General Assembly,

His Excellency Mr. Ban Ki-moon, Secretary General of the United Nations,

His Excellency Mr. Milos Koterec,

President of the Economic and Social Council,

Madam Chairperson, Ms. Helen Clarke, Administrator, UNDP,

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am honored to be here to speak in this High level Meeting on "Wellbeing and Happiness": Defining a New Economic Paradigm".

We deeply commend the efforts of the Government of Bhutan and in particular the leadership of Prime Minister Thinley to bring the idea of Happiness into the larger discourse on sustainable development.

We were happy to co-sponsor the resolution adopted by the UN General Assembly on the subject last year, which has brought us all here today.

Our debate today is most timely.

We are just months away from the Rio Conference, where we would gather to chart a new future: a future free of want and hunger; a future where people live in harmony with nature, a future where social inclusion and development of all are nurtured and deeply valued.

Mr. Prime Minister, your country has been more than a friend to India. In our shared cultural ties, we have had much to learn from each other.

We were indeed honored that you came to Delhi last year to deliver the Prof. Hiren Mukherjee Memorial lecture in

our Parliament on Gross National Happiness.

I assure you that your thoughts have given us valuable insights as to what we should do to make our abiding goal of “inclusive growth” as meaningful as you have done for your people.

We share your belief that human development should be based in equal measure on material progress, social inclusion, cultural life and living in harmony with nature.

Madam Chairperson,

The symbiosis between human living and happiness is universal and eternal. Our religions, traditions and philosophies have all taught us to look for inner peace and happiness as the ultimate objective.

Ashoka, the great King of India, promoted peaceful existence based on social welfare, ecological responsibility, impartial justice and respect for all living beings.

But, the huge material progress that we have witnessed since the industrial revolution has cast tremendous pressure on planet Earth.

The inherent conflict is not between conservation and development, but between environment and the reckless exploitation of man and earth in the name of high living standards. As Mahatma Gandhi, the father of our nation said “Nature provides enough to satisfy every man’s need, but not every man’s greed.”

In an interdependent world, the answer to these pressing challenges lies in doing things together in a manner that is fair and equitable.

We all have a common responsibility but must accept that massive inequitable consumption of resources by some has created a deficit where there is hardly enough for those whose wants are yet to be met.

This demands that we also accept historical responsibility and agree that our responsibilities today must be differentiated. We must also respect the imperative for equity.

We have made significant progress but are still quite some distance away from achieving the Millennium Development Goals, including eradication of extreme poverty.

We are yet to wipe the tear from every hungry face. There are millions who still live without basic sanitation, health and clothing.

Progress and growth is essential to give these people a life of dignity and respect.

This needs to go hand in hand with ecological sustainability and the preservation of social inclusion.

Madam Chairperson,

We do, indeed, need to build a new economic paradigm that can help us achieve this. How else can we move towards sustainable development in an equitable manner unless economic growth, environmental protection and social sustainability nurture and preserve each other?

We must therefore re-evaluate the fundamentals on which our respective civic societies are based and the ideals by which they are sustained.

An ambitious order that seeks to achieve this must not only be harmonious but also inclusive. Such an order should both respect and create choices.

The problem for billions of people on this planet is lack of choices. The most effective guarantee for this is the integration of all three pillars of sustainable development on the basis of the Rio Principles.

Development process must be participatory in order to allow a full expression of these choices. The process should be inclusive not only at the national level and within the boundary of nations but also at the global level.

We are aware of limitations of the GDP as a measure of economic wellbeing of the country. However, balancing of economic, social and environmental dimensions in an accounting system of GDP is a challenging notion. The weights attached to each dimension vary over time and space, and differ according to national needs and priorities. Moreover, human well being cannot be captured effectively by any single index.

We should be mindful that, in our quest for additional indicators to complement GDP, we must not move away from inclusive growth. We run the risk of delegitimizing our developmental model if this balance is not achieved.

In fact, an appropriate way is to look at sustainable consumption patterns. The moment is opportune to devise a paradigm for sustainable consumption that is anchored in the Rio Principles.

We need to build effective international partnerships to give effect to these goals. Our late Prime Minister Mrs Indira Gandhi once said and I quote that "If there is to be a change of heart, a change of direction and methods of functioning, it is not an organization or a country – no matter how well intentioned – which can achieve it. There is no alternative to a cooperative approach on a global scale to the entire spectrum of our problems."

We must also make global governance truly democratic. The rules of global engagement cannot and must not be the privilege of a few.

I would like to conclude with the words of our father of nation: "I am inviting those people who consider themselves as owners today to act as trustees, i.e. owners, not in their own right, but owners, in the right of those whom they

have exploited. I will not dictate to them what commission to take, but ask them to take what is fair." I can assure you that India will live up to its obligations and global responsibilities in such a fair, equitable and just paradigm.

If we are able to do so, we are well on our way to achieve a sustainable economic paradigm.

I wish happiness to all. Thank You.

STATEMENT BY H.E. MR. GILAD MENASHE ERDAN,

MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION, GOVERNMENT OF ISRAEL

Your Excellency, Prime Minister Thinley, President Chinchilla, Ambassador Koterec, distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen,

It is a great pleasure for me to take part in this High Level Meeting. I wish to congratulate Prime Minister Thinley and the Royal Government of the Kingdom of Bhutan for their leadership and initiative on this very important issue.

This meeting is being held in the run-up to the Rio +20 Conference, when the world will look to us to provide real solutions to the many challenges that lie ahead. Achieving these solutions will require determination and political will on behalf of world leaders. It will also require changing the way our governments measure progress.

As Israel's Minister of Environmental Protection, I have stressed the need to fundamentally change the way we measure our development. The traditional measures of growth – particularly GDP – relate only to short term progress. They rarely provide a comprehensive assessment of the quality of life and wellbeing of our citizens.

I therefore have a deep interest in changing the way progress is perceived in Israel. Social and environmental factors are just as important as economic factors in measuring progress.

Excellencies,

For decades, conventional wisdom has suggested that protecting our environment hinders economic growth. But today, a new paradigm is emerging- one that calls for innovative ways to measure progress. Achieving stable and sustainable economic growth requires the integration of social and environmental factors in the measurement of progress.

We must remember that economic growth itself is not our ultimate goal. It is a means to achieve what all governments strive for- a better quality of life for our citizens.

With this goal in mind, my Ministry initiated a joint study with the Central Bank of Israel, which showed that stricter environmental regulations actually improve economic conditions in the short term.

At the same time however, we are still witnessing policy decisions that have a negative impact on the environment in the long term.

In light of these findings, we established a set of indicators that are complementary to GDP. These indicators include both objective and subjective environmental, economic and social indicators, which are measured annually by state authorities. This is the first step in a long process designed to provide policy makers with a reliable, balanced evaluation of the wellbeing of our citizens. It enables us to make more informed decisions and facilitates more effective policy making.

Excellencies,

The time has come to change the way we think about growth, and to realize that environmental and social issues are every bit as important to the wellbeing of our citizens as GDP. My hope is that the United Nations and its affiliate bodies will work together with member states to promote a new global economic paradigm- one that will advance the wellbeing of all peoples.

As we meet here today, we must think of tomorrow. The IMF and the World Bank will not be able to reverse the consequences of air pollution and water contamination. If we fail our environment now, our environment will fail us in the future. The banks of the world will not be able to save us from our own inaction.

We must remember that universal adoption of "beyond GDP" indicators will help create a more prosperous and sustainable future- where progress is not measured solely in financial and economic terms- but rather in our ability to enable environments in which all people can thrive.

Thank you.

STATEMENT BY H.E. MR. JOE NAKANO

PARLIAMENTARY VICE-MINISTER FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS OF JAPAN

Ms Helen Clark, Administrator of UNDP and Chairperson of the High-Level Meeting,

Her Excellency, Ms. Laura Chinchilla, Honourable President of the Republic of Costa Rica,

His Excellency, Mr. Jigmi Y. Thinley, Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Bhutan,

Distinguished Delegates and Participants,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is my great pleasure and honour to be given the opportunity to speak at this meeting on behalf of the Government of Japan under this beautiful spring sky of New York. I would like to commend Prime Minister Thinley and the Royal Government of Bhutan on their initiative to organize this important meeting. I am confident that under the able leadership of the Prime Minister and the Chair, we will have a fruitful exchange of views today.

Before I go into the main issue of today's meeting, on behalf of the Government and people of Japan, I would like to express once again our profound gratitude for the strong solidarity and warm support extended by the international community in the wake of the Great East Japan Earthquake last year. Reconstruction in Japan is making steady progress thanks to the generous support and words of encouragement received from the international community.

Madam Chair,

We all know that each individual feels happiness in his or her own way. The primary role of government thus should be to develop an environment in which its citizens may pursue their own happiness. Until recently, most policy-makers, especially those in Japan, believed that increasing per capita GDP was the best way to bring happiness to their people.

However, last November, when the people in Japan welcomed Their Majesties the King and Queen of Bhutan to Japan, in what was indeed the first State Visit since the earthquake, His Majesty's message and philosophy of Gross National Happiness (GNH) inspired so many Japanese. It reminded us of the importance of the bonds among people, referred to as "kizuna" in Japanese, and made us re-think what matters most in our lives. His Majesty's speech at our National Diet, by which I was immensely inspired, was quite moving and full of deep affection and solidarity towards the Japanese people. I would also like to take this opportunity to express our gratitude to Prime Minister Thinley for his visit to Fukushima, where he taught the meaning of GNH to school children there.

Madam Chair,

In fact, a number of recent studies have shown that, in many developed countries, including Japan, happiness is not proportional to economic wealth. This finding, often called the “Paradox of Happiness”, has given rise to international discussion on how to enhance individual wellbeing through government policies.

The Government of Japan has been spearheading national and international efforts to find better, more innovative approaches to promoting people’s wellbeing. Last December, a government commission published its study on wellbeing indicators and their policy implications. More than 130 wellbeing indicators were proposed, with a focus on bonds among families, local communities and nature. A panel under the Council on National Strategy and Policy is now following up the commission’s findings in order to present visions and concrete measures for government policy-making.

Madam Chair,

The “happiness agenda” seems to be gaining importance in the discussions on the post-2015 development agenda. In our input to the Rio+20 Outcome Document, the Government of Japan proposed to consider happiness and wellbeing as new criteria in order to provide different perspectives from GDP. Japan has also been actively promoting “human security” as a main guiding principle of the international development strategy. Human security promotes wellbeing at the individual level through protection and empowerment of people and communities.

In December last year, Japan hosted the Asia-Pacific Conference on Measuring Wellbeing and Fostering the Progress of Societies in cooperation with the OECD, the Asian Development Bank and other relevant organizations. One hundred eighty participants from 32 countries shared their experiences and country initiatives on this issue. On that occasion, the importance of different cultural values in addressing the issue of happiness was widely recognized.

Madam Chair,

In order to achieve sustainable development, economic growth must be married happily with people’s wellbeing. At Rio+20, the leaders in the world are expected to agree to further develop indicators to measure progress towards sustainable development. We are confident that happiness and wellbeing can play an important part in this endeavor. When we succeed, the wisdom of GNH will become our best partner to guide economic activities and government policies, which have mainly been defined by GDP. We very much look forward to working with the Government of Bhutan and other Member States and stakeholders to realize a happier, greener world, building on our fruitful discussions at this high-level meeting.

Last, but not least, I most sincerely wish for the happiness and wellbeing of all those who are present at this meeting.

I thank you for your attention.

STATEMENT BY H.E. MR. AHMED LAHLIMI ALAMI,

HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR PLANNING, KINGDOM OF MOROCCO

May I, first of all, express my profound esteem for His Majesty the King of Bhutan and extend warm greetings to the people of Bhutan. I should also like to congratulate the Prime Minister on this High-Level Meeting that tackles a subject which is of great concern for mankind today, and say how grateful I am for having been invited to participate in this meeting.

With inequalities, subjective poverty, security anxiety and environmental degradation on the rise worldwide, the “whirlwind” of globalization, swollen by the winds of freedom that have brought down the Berlin Wall is being abruptly checked today by the serious international crisis plaguing globalization. We still cannot grasp today the full scope of this crisis, or its effects and implications.

History teaches us that systemic-type economic crises often indicate that a given model of accumulation of wealth is no longer able to reproduce itself. By the same token, they usually herald the advent of a model which is better suited to the new material and cultural needs of society. The “Arab Spring” and the “Indignant Movement” have provided the most potent, spectacular illustration of those needs worldwide.

The declaration which has been submitted to our approval in this regard falls within the framework of a regulatory approach to this paradigm. It provides an investment platform where targeted economic, technological, scientific and cultural sectors constitute as many sources for the creation of wealth, for competitiveness and profit-making, as determinants of social cohesion and the wellbeing of the citizens. Viewed from this perspective, the declaration is tantamount to a blueprint for a New Political Economy which globalization needs today to break with certain ideological consensuses and give more effectiveness to its original promises. In this respect, the more its theoretical frame of reference is meticulous, its operating strategy coherent and its assessment of the economic and social impact credible, the more this declaration is likely to be embraced by all members of the international community. However, we have to keep in mind that countries will demonstrate different levels of commitment, in the light of their level of development and wealth. Indeed whereas the forthcoming changes are of long-term range, developing countries have often, under the pressure of the three-pronged transition they are facing: demographic, economic and societal to deal with short-term social demands for which remedies are urgently needed. Moreover, these societies in transition, which Emile Durkheim would have called “composite societies”, do not have the same homogeneous makeup as in developed countries in terms of economic, social and cultural relations and consumption pattern. Similarly, the perception of the wellbeing by their citizens is not always based on the same determinants, particularly when it comes to the importance given to environmental impacts and religious and spiritual considerations.

Going beyond immediate expectations and looking ahead to the individual and the collective futures require a

long practice of implication in the institutional process of developing, implementing and assessing public policies, or in other terms in participatory democracy. Morocco's experience over the last decade, following the enthronement of a new monarch, is particularly enlightening in this regard. Through a modus operandi of regional, sector-specific and urban program contracts, the participation of private operators, local authorities, elected officials and civil society representatives in the implementation of reforms and the definition of objectives has been ensured through partnership mechanisms with the State. The same partnership approach is used at local government level within the framework of the Human Development Initiative (known as INDH). This is a defining, "reign-long project" which seeks to reduce poverty - particularly in rural areas - as well as precariousness in suburban neighborhoods. This participatory reform process has culminated in a constitutional reform which has officially established both advanced regionalization and the constitutional recognition of the country's linguistic and cultural pluralism, gender equality and the role of NGOs, youth and women in politics and in the management of public affairs.

As one might expect, the depth and richness of the Moroccan experience have led the authorities in charge of statistical data production to review their scope of action in order to adapt to change. The High Commissioner for Planning, which is in charge of statistics, readily embraced new global trends, including those calling for better ways to measure economic performance - through a more stringent conceptual interpretation of wealth and its sustainability - as well as social progress, through a better understanding of wealth and income disparities. The same thing applies to extending the notion of standard of living to broader concepts of wellbeing and quality of life, which are to be measured by objective indicators as well as the sentiment of the population. This is what probably explains the favorable reaction to the quality of HCP's work, both at home and abroad, including within prestigious regional and international organizations such as the United Nations institutions, the OECD, the European Union and the World Bank, with whom we have excellent partnership relations.

Finally, it is quite fair to point out that Morocco has capitalized on the advantage which sets it apart in its geopolitical environment, namely its active leadership which enjoys a three-fold legitimacy: historical, constitutional and popular, and which harmoniously combines respect for the Moroccan cultural heritage and commitment to modernity. Over the past decade, Morocco has managed to achieve remarkable progress in terms of growth and social advancement, carving out a place for itself as one of the best performing emerging countries. This is where the phrase "the Moroccan exception" comes from.

STATEMENT BY H.E. MR. JULLAPONG NONSRICHAJ,

VICE MINISTER FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS OF THAILAND

Your Excellency Ms. Laura Chinchilla, President of Costa Rica,

Your Excellency Jigme Yoser Thinley, Prime Minister of Bhutan,

Your Excellency Mr. Ban Ki-moon, Secretary-General of the United Nations,

Your Excellency Ms. Helen Clark, Administrator of the United Nations Development Programme,

Excellencies,

Distinguished Delegates,

I am very honored to address you today, on behalf of Her Excellency Ms. Yingluck Shinawatra, Prime Minister of Thailand. Let me take this opportunity to express my appreciation to the Royal Government of Bhutan for hosting this important meeting, on a significant subject of great bearing to us all – how to develop a holistic approach to development that will promote sustainable happiness and wellbeing.

Excellencies,

Distinguished Delegates,

We meet today against the backdrop of political, economic and social sea change in many parts of the world. The prevailing economic difficulties in the West; the “Arab Spring” in North Africa and the Middle East; climate change and environmental degradation in all corners of the globe -- these have all made it incumbent upon us to seek new avenues to tackle these contemporary challenges.

Amidst all these changes just mentioned, a fundamental cultural change is also underway impacting the way in which we view progress and development. It has given rise to the view that the whole purpose of life, and of government, should be the wellbeing of the people rather than simply the creation of wealth. It has highlighted the fact that our world today lacks a clear philosophical focus for the promotion of sustainable and well-balanced development.

In the modern-day race for ever higher growth rates, I believe the global economy could be better served with the injection of some degree of “moderation”. Moderation is often mistakenly perceived as anti-capitalism, anti-modernity and pro-autarky. Many view that moderation prevents us from attaining prosperity, or from realizing our fullest potential. I share none of these perceptions. On the contrary, I view moderation as a concept that will

anchor sustainability. It is a concept that can alleviate the adverse impacts of contemporary challenges – whether economic, social or environmental – as mentioned above.

For Thailand, moderation is one of the core principles enshrined in the “Sufficiency Economy” philosophy, developed by His Majesty the King of Thailand, whom the UNDP awarded the United Nations’ first Human Development Lifetime Achievement Award in 2006. Sufficiency Economy is a philosophy that guides the livelihood and behavior of the Thai people at all levels, from family to community to country -- on matters concerning national development and administration. It calls for a ‘middle way’ to be observed, especially in pursuing economic development amidst a world of globalization.

“Sufficiency” in this case does not mean being self-sufficient or inward-looking. It means moderation and reasonableness, including the need for resilience to external shocks and self-immunity from impacts arising from internal and external changes. It means exercising intelligence, attentiveness, and extreme care to ensure that all policies and every step of their implementation are based on knowledge and careful consideration. At the same time, the spiritual foundation must be built from the people at all levels, so that they are conscious of moral integrity and honesty, and strive for the appropriate wisdom to lead their lives with moderation.

His Majesty’s philosophy has been instrumental in leading Thailand out of the 1997 financial crisis, reminding us that we should not try to bite off more than we can chew. It has been the guiding principle towards the development of Thailand’s National Economic and Social Development plans that promote human development, reduce income inequalities, and ensure sound foundations for sustainable economic growth. And most recently, the philosophy has been an important guiding principle for the Thai people in recovering from the severe flooding that came at an unprecedented scale last year. On behalf of the Thai government and people, I wish to take this opportunity to thank all our friends who have promptly provided support and extended cooperation during our time of difficulty.

Excellencies,

Distinguished Delegates,

As we lead up to the Rio+20 Conference this June, it is clear that much still needs to be done along the path to sustainable development. Thailand believes that the principles of moderation and sufficiency are important factors to bear in mind, in helping us achieve this objective. As the Millennium Development Goals, or MDGs, are about to reach their deadline in 2015, we need to think hard about the new development agenda that will continue beyond the MDGs. A possible set of new indicators, such as Sustainable Development Goals, with moderation and sustainability as a core, are well worthy of consideration in order to achieve our ultimate goal of improving the lives and wellbeing of our peoples.

In closing, let me leave you with the words of a wise man who once said: “Moderation is the silken string running through the pearl chain of all virtues.” On our part, let me reassure you that moderation, sufficiency, and sustainable development will continue to stay high on Thailand’s agenda. I look forward to the upcoming discussions on this important issue at this meeting.

Thank you for your attention.

STATEMENT BY MS. MARTINE DURAND,

CHIEF STATISTICIAN, ORGANISATION OF ECONOMIC COOPERATION AND DEVELOPMENT (OECD)

Prime Minister Thinley,

Excellencies,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

On behalf of the OECD, I wish to thank the Kingdom of Buthan and the UN for the privilege of allowing me to say a few words on the OECD’s work on wellbeing and progress.

Last year, on the occasion of the OECD’s 50th Anniversary, the OECD Secretary-General, Mr. Angel Gurría, launched the OECD Better Life Initiative. Research and analysis of statistical data have always been central to achieving the OECD’s mission of developing better policies for better lives. Indeed, for nearly ten years, the OECD has been working to identify ways to measure the progress of societies—moving beyond GDP and exploring the areas that matter most for people’s lives.

The framework developed by the OECD for the Better Life Initiative and published in the report entitled How’s Life? draws on the themes identified by the Stiglitz-Sen-Fitoussi Commission established by French President Sarkozy. It features 11 dimensions of human wellbeing which include not only people’s income but also their wealth, their jobs and working conditions, their health and skills, the time they devote to their families and friends, their ties with other people in their community, their capacity to act as informed citizens, the quality of the environment, their experiences of violence and victimisation, their feelings and life evaluations. The main features of this framework are that: it focuses on people, rather than on the economic system; it concentrates on outcomes, rather than inputs and outputs; it looks at the distribution of wellbeing among population groups, rather than at averages; and it considers both objective and subjective aspects of wellbeing. Sustainability is also built into our framework, but from a cross-cutting perspective to assess how our imprint today on a range of assets will impact wellbeing in the future.

Through Your Better Life Index, an innovative interactive web tool, the OECD Better Life Initiative also promotes dialogue with citizens on what they consider are the most important determinants of wellbeing and happiness.

The OECD work has informed a number of national and regional initiatives – taking the form of commissions, consultations, roundtables and frameworks – that have been launched over the past two years, such as in the United Kingdom, Germany, Italy, Australia and Slovenia. Today, many more countries, ranging from Japan to Korea and China, from Colombia, Mexico, Morocco and India are involved in measuring wellbeing. At the European level, the European Statistical System has adopted 50 measures to promote the development of wellbeing indicators.

This shows that we are progressing with the challenge of translating better measures into policies that improve the wellbeing of people and support the progress of societies and that policy-makers are engaging seriously with statisticians on this subject.

We strongly support the view that we should embrace a more comprehensive approach to development, with the notion of wellbeing at its core. We hope that the OECD framework can usefully contribute to the UN-led discussions on measuring wellbeing at the global level and that the 4th OECD World Forum on “Measuring Wellbeing for Development and Policy Making” organised jointly with the Government of India in New Delhi next October, following preparatory events in Mexico, Japan and Morocco, will also contribute to the on-going reflections.

It is vital that the current momentum is maintained through a strengthened link between what we measure and the decisions we make.

Thank you.

Annex VII: Statements from the Main Discussion

This Annex contains the written versions of statements made during the main discussions of the High-Level Meeting on 2 April 2012, as available. They appear in the order of their delivery throughout the session.

STATEMENT FROM DASHO KARMA URA,

PRESIDENT OF THE CENTRE FOR BHUTAN STUDIES

Vision of Man and Society in Gross National Happiness (GNH)

An eminent sociologist (Therborn G. 2011) described the UN as a multicultural repertoire theatre. He meant it and I mean it in a positive sense. I have been in the UN only in my imagination with Nickola Kidman while watching the UN in a thriller, The Reporter, shot here. I am honoured to be here today. May I express my gratitude to PM of Bhutan for his farsighted motivation in convening this immense meeting, with verve I should add, and also my gratitude to all of you for responding to his visionary call.

I have to stressfully condense GNH into 300 seconds. Let me briefly try to sketch the vision of man and society create-able in GNH image.

GNH envisions a person to be bonded deeply to her safe and supportive community in which trustworthiness of the people are high, and fear of victimization by other human beings is ideally non-existent. This does not of course save them from fear of ghosts! In the togetherness of community, she finds part of her meaning by forgetting her self-hood. In that envisioned community, relationship of belonging and support within and between households are deep. GNH index evaluates the level of giving and receiving various gifts - of social time, labour, and goods. It assesses the cultural continuity of key elements of a community like its dialects, artisan skills and village celebrations of ritual dramas and dances that can lead to a human being's peak experience of delight and self loss (Haidt et al 2008, See also Ehrenreich 2006).

A community envisioned in GNH is set deeply in nurturing ecology. GNH Index has as yet no physical measures of pollution and waste; so these are tracked imperfectly by perceptions. Happiness of the inhabitants of such wild, beautiful and rugged landscape arise not only from its economic benefits. Nature's aesthetic stimulus can be directly healing as the inhabitants enjoy vivid colours and light, untainted breeze, silence in nature's sound. All of these can also be blighted by haphazard modernization and ugly urbanization. Yet living in nature comes at a price to small farmers. They lose a substantial proportion of crop output and livestock every year to wild life ranging

from adored tigers to unloved porcupines (Stringer and Ura 2006). This heavy price that Bhutanese farmers pay for conservation is tracked in GNH Index, but such wild life presence is also symbol of ecological health.

A person envisioned in GNH and its index is embedded in values and visions of a fulfilling society. Her psychological attributes begin with freeing her basic good nature, of kindness, generosity, forgiveness, contentment, and compassion, from repression by blinding negative emotions like anger, jealousy, and selfishness. We should note too that selfishness and greed is increasingly organizational, involving institutions and corporations, rather than individual. Her life satisfactions in five life domains, mental health and stress levels are evaluated. 10 self reported emotions are surveyed in GNH index to assess the pattern of emotional life and their relations with other elements of GNH. Because of the association between spiritual activities and positive emotions (Dumbrun et al 2012, Stark and Meir 2008, Seligman 2004), such mental devices that decrease wandering of mind like meditation and meditative prayers are measured in GNH Index. Life is a series of moments, and in such sacred times, we can experience momentary emptiness of timelessness.

The domains of good governance, living standard, health and education in GNH articulate the familiar developmental perspectives. In the health domain, a person envisioned by GNH should have over 26 healthy days a month, have high self reported health, and must not suffer from serious deprivations from disabilities. In the parameters set for education domain, its indicators are broadened to cultivate values against self and other destructive actions in mind, body and speech. Certain alternative knowledge that are transmitted outside formal institutions are included in the education indicators. Knowledge transmission takes place everywhere and that is recognized.

GNH living standard indicators measures income, land and quality of housing that is the setting for the birth and growth of a family. Households' technological gadgets, appliances and machineries are reflected in other living standard indicators.

Finally, by including time as an independent element in GNH, a person envisioned in GNH society should have no time poverty. She should experience joy of slowness. And every day, she should enjoy a right to ample time to socialize, to active leisure, and to wholesome sleep.

Challenge to human progress and modernity driven by capitalism has come from its conflict with environment, equality and happiness. The broad orientation of GNH is postmodern because it incorporates in large measure non-material and non-consumption dimensions of wellbeing. Let me end here by saying that the future looks brilliant if we can continue moving ahead, by making man and societies in the image of nine domains of GNH like the golden spokes of a holistic wheel to reach the far-land of greater meaning in our lives.

TRANSCRIPT OF VIDEO MESSAGE FROM HIS ROYAL HIGHNESS, THE PRINCE OF WALES

Ladies and Gentlemen, I am delighted to be able to say a few words at this extremely important meeting and I can only apologize for doing so in such a disembodied way – but at least it helps reduce my carbon footprint!

It is hugely encouraging that such an eminent group has come together to discuss the need for a new economic paradigm with happiness and wellbeing at its core. I could not be more grateful to His Majesty the Fifth King of Bhutan and the Prime Minister of Bhutan for their bold challenge to the conventional way the world measures growth and economic success. As the Prime Minister said in February, it is hard to rock the boat, but rock it we must.

I'm afraid I have been doing this for more years than I care to remember because I have felt the globally accepted systems of accounting for success – whether in terms of profit, or G.D.P. – are not providing the right information for governments, business and other organizations, to take the right decisions given the challenges we face in the twenty-first century.

The grim reality is that our planet has reached a point of crisis. The time for us to act is rapidly running out. We are facing what could be described as a “perfect storm” – the combination of pollution and over-consumption of finite natural resources; the very real risk of catastrophic climate change; unprecedented levels of financial indebtedness, and a population of seven billion that is rising. The world is not even feeding its current population, let alone the nine billion expected by 2050!

It was Professor Joseph Stiglitz who said in his leading report on G.D.P. “those attempting to guide the economy and our societies are like pilots trying to steer a course without a reliable compass. We are almost blind when the metrics on which action is based are ill-designed or when they are not well understood.”

I happen to believe that, at its best, human nature strives for good. Contrary to what may all too often appear the case, humanity is driven by a desire to do what is best for society. The trouble is, our outlook has been profoundly conditioned by at least two centuries of an economic paradigm which tends to solve problems in isolation, one at a time.

Concentrating on making life easier by maximising the output of one activity has rendered us dangerously myopic to the impact this has on everything else and, indeed, upon ourselves.

If we are to improve our vision, we must have better information about the value of the Earth's eco-systems to the economy and society as a whole, as well as the social, environmental and economic costs of what we do – and, for that matter, what we don't do.

Without this, we operate with only a tiny fraction of the information we need and this leads to the impression that we must choose between promoting economic growth, protecting the environment or developing human happiness and wellbeing. Such an impression would be shown as a false choice if environmental sustainability and social wellbeing were appropriately included in our measures of economic success.

That is why I established my Accounting for Sustainability Project in 2004 – to ensure that we are measuring what matters and counting what counts. As a vital first step, last year, the Project helped to launch proposals for an International Integrated Reporting Framework in collaboration with business, investors, the U.N.... and everyone else that matters! This framework reflects the linkage between decisions taken now and their consequences for the future, and the reality that, in the twenty-first century, we will increasingly feel the consequences of global environmental constraints. There is growing recognition that business will need to be done differently if we are to thrive and prosper in the future. It is no longer possible for companies or governments to act alone. By developing the right partnerships, and providing clear and measurable goals at international, national and corporate levels, we will be able to build a global approach to accounting that might just help shed a little light to guide us in the right direction.

Last month my International Sustainability Unit convened a meeting of leading scientists, economists, institutions and government representatives to seek consensus on a programme that could assist countries to develop a broad-based economic analysis of food security whilst at the same time taking into account the constraints of energy, water and climate change. A clear and accurate accounting framework will be vital to underpin this and similar work that will move us towards sustainable economic growth.

It is clearly a daunting task to create a measurement framework which incorporates economic growth, social equality and wealth, and environmental sustainability, and, at the same time, provides a common set of goals for action by business and governments at the local, national and international levels. But it is an essential task which cannot be ignored or shirked if we are to develop a new wellbeing and sustainability based economic paradigm.

That is why I am delighted that the Kingdom of Bhutan is working to realize this vision and that so many leaders from government, the U.N., academia, civil and spiritual society are meeting to discuss these important issues today. As the Native American proverb says “We do not inherit the earth from our ancestors, we borrow it from our children.” If we are not to lock our children and grandchildren into a world with no future, and throw away the key, then inaction is not an option. I very much hope and believe that your discussions today will be an important and practical step in addressing the enormous challenges which confront us.

STATEMENT BY MS. DONG ZHIHUA,

COUNSELLOR, PERMANENT MISSION OF THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA

Mr. Chairman,

At the outset, the Chinese delegation wishes to express appreciation to Bhutan for convening this high-level meeting and welcomes the presence of and the statement by H.E. Prime Minister Thinley.

The gross national happiness (GNH) initiative by Bhutan has prompted the international community to actively explore a brand new economic paradigm for a balanced development of population, resources and environment and pay greater attention to the protection of natural resources, the maintenance of ecological equilibrium, the inheritance of traditional culture and knowledge, and the promotion of the happiness of the current and future generations. On the whole, this initiative conforms to the concept of sustainable development and is of positive significance. China would like to offer some preliminary observations and proposals:

First of all, in face of current multiple challenges such as the financial crisis, climate change, and energy and food security, the traditional mode of development that seeks economic growth at the expense of resources and environment is no longer tenable. Bhutan's initiative will help the international community to reflect on the current mode of economic development and explore a path to a comprehensive, coordinated and sustainable development that strikes a balance between economic and social development and environmental protection.

Secondly, since countries differ in natural conditions, resources endowment and level of development, there is no universal model for sustainable development and it is hard to apply a uniform set of mandatory indicators. Many developing countries are still struggling to achieve the MDGs. For them, eradication of poverty remains the primary task. The developed countries on their part should take the lead in changing unsustainable patterns of production and consumption.

Thirdly, we believe that while Bhutan's initiative has offered a new way of thinking for the international community on the promotion and realization of sustainable development, its content needs further substantiation and clarification. The feasibility and effect of some proposals such as calculating the environmental cost of the production process should be further assessed. We would welcome the government of Bhutan to host follow-up activities such as side-events during Rio+20 to facilitate further discussions on the relevant topic.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

STATEMENT FROM THE DELEGATE OF FRANCE

(INTERVENTION DE LA FRANCE)

Je tiens tout d'abord à remercier le Bhoutan pour l'initiative qui nous réunit aujourd'hui, afin de débattre de la question du bonheur et du bien être et de la définition d'un nouveau paradigme économique. Ces débats tombent à point nommé au moment où nous préparons collectivement la conférence de Rio + 20 qui doit renforcer les bases du développement durable. Mon pays s'associe aux remarques présentées au nom de l'Union Européenne.

Depuis longtemps se multiplient les interrogations sur la pertinence de la mesure de la performance économique fondée sur le PIB, avec l'idée que les chiffres du PIB ne sont pas suffisants comme mesure du bien être social ni d'un développement économique durable. Nous avons besoin d'informations supplémentaires afin de produire une image plus pertinente de l'état de nos sociétés.

*A cet égard, la France considère que la définition de **nouveaux indicateurs** pourra contribuer à œuvrer à une dimension plus humaine de la mondialisation, en prenant en compte, au-delà du PIB, indicateur nécessaire mais partiel, de nouvelles dimensions pour mesurer le bien-être des populations. Cette démarche doit s'inscrire, selon nous dans la perspective des travaux déjà initiés sur ce thème et qui ont abouti, à l'élaboration de l'Indice de Développement humain (IDH) par le Programme des Nations Unies pour le Développement en 1990.*

Mieux mesurer

Comme vous le savez, à l'initiative du gouvernement français, une commission a été instituée en 2008 débouchant sur un rapport en 2009 intitulé « la mesure des performances économiques et du progrès social », élaboré par les professeurs Stiglitz, Sen et Fitoussi. La plupart des statisticiens s'accordent déjà largement sur les recommandations de la Commission Sen-Stiglitz-Fitoussi.

Quels ont été les recommandations et les suites données à ces travaux ?

Au niveau français tout d'abord, nous avons élaboré deux nouveaux indicateurs dans le cadre du tableau de bord des indicateurs français du développement durable : l'empreinte carbone de la demande finale nationale (c'est-à-dire quelle est la part des émissions de CO2 mondiales dont nous sommes responsables par notre demande intérieure ?) et un indicateur de consommation et production durables (quelle quantité de matières sont produites et consommées au regard du stock de matières premières disponibles). En effet, comme l'a souligné le Bhoutan dans sa présentation, la question des stocks de capitaux qu'il convient de préserver est cruciale : capital économique et financier mais aussi et surtout capital naturel, capital humain et capital social. Le tableau de bord français des indicateurs du développement durable comporte également des indicateurs concernant la dimension sociale du développement durable, tel que la pauvreté monétaire (nombre de personnes vivant sous le seuil de pauvreté monétaire).

Au niveau international ensuite, des travaux ont été menés dans le cadre de l'OCDE (jeu d'indicateurs représentatifs de la croissance verte) mais également dans le cadre des Nations Unies, à l'image du « sponsorship » du rapport Stiglitz-Sen-Fitoussi. Cette initiative copilotée par Eurostat et l'Insee pour la France, a réuni quinze pays de l'Union européenne, la Suisse, l'OCDE et la Commission économique des Nations unies pour l'Europe. Ce groupe a été chargé de faire des préconisations pour la statistique européenne sur chacune des parties du rapport Stiglitz-Sen-Fitoussi qui comportait pour mémoire trois parties (mesure du PIB, qualité de la vie et développement durable-environnement). Le rapport adopté par le comité du système statistique européen (CSSE) en novembre 2011, a identifié environ 50 actions concrètes pour améliorer et développer les statistiques européennes dans les 20 ans à venir. Ces actions concernent :

1. Le renforcement de la perspective ménage et des aspects de répartition des revenus, de la consommation et de la richesse. Il s'agit de mieux utiliser les données des comptes nationaux concernant le revenu et la consommation et de les compléter par des indications sur leur répartition par catégorie de ménages, d'encourager l'élaboration de comptes de patrimoine et de prendre en compte les activités non marchandes dans les mesures du revenu.
2. La mesure multidimensionnelle de la qualité de vie. L'enquête européenne sur les revenus et les conditions de vie (SILC) devrait devenir l'enquête centrale pour mesurer la qualité de vie. Elle devrait comprendre aussi des questions sur le bien être subjectif. D'autres enquêtes statistiques peuvent être utilisées pour compléter les dimensions encore mal couvertes. Un groupe d'expert examinera comment agréger les différents indicateurs concernant une même dimension de la qualité de la vie, lorsque les indicateurs proposés mesurent le même concept et sont corrélés.
3. La mesure de la soutenabilité environnementale. Il s'agit de renforcer le système européen des comptes économiques et environnementaux et la qualité des données dans le domaine de l'énergie, du changement climatique et de la consommation de matière. Il s'agit aussi de développer des comptes de protection de l'environnement, des dépenses de protection de l'environnement et d'évaluation des actifs environnementaux, de calculer une empreinte carbone en liant des émissions de CO₂ au TES pour éclairer la perspective ménage, de développer des indicateurs de biodiversité et enfin d'améliorer les comptes environnementaux de l'eau et de l'air.

Mieux agir

L'idée est également qu'en modifiant les outils de mesure, on pourra agir sur les comportements, qui sont au cœur d'un développement plus durable. Je voudrais à cet égard rappeler nos ambitions pour la conférence de Rio + 20.

Dans le cadre de **la feuille de route des Nations Unies pour une économie verte et inclusive soutenue par l'Union européenne** dans les négociations de Rio, il serait intéressant d'introduire le développement d'un nouveau jeu d'indicateurs complémentaires au PIB. Celui-ci pourrait comprendre notamment l'empreinte carbone et

la consommation de matières, que je viens d'évoquer en ce qui concerne les mesures prises par la France, mais aussi des indicateurs portant sur le pilier social du développement durable. Il convient de souligner également le fait que cela doit se faire selon un processus d'élaboration participative impliquant tous les acteurs non étatiques et les enceintes œuvrant déjà activement sur ce sujet, notamment la commission des statistiques de l'Ecosoc et la division statistiques des Nations unies.

La France soutient également l'adoption du cadre décennal pour la consommation et la production durables tel qu'il a été négocié en mai 2011 lors de la 19^{ème} session de la Commission du développement durable des Nations unies. Celui-ci comprend en effet tout un ensemble de principes, valeurs, ébauches de programmes et recense toute une palette d'outils opérationnels, à adapter bien sûr à chaque pays selon son contexte national, qui permettent d'accompagner les changements de comportements de tous les acteurs, depuis la production qu'à la consommation et l'élimination. Nous pensons en effet que c'est en croisant les approches – réglementaires, volontaires, incitatives, informatives – et en s'adressant simultanément à tous les acteurs, que nous pourrons rendre nos modes de consommation et de production réellement plus responsables et respectueux non seulement de notre planète mais aussi de l'individu et de sa légitime aspiration au bonheur, l'un n'allant pas sans l'autre.

Au final toutes ces réflexions et leurs premières applications nous montrent qu'il faut aller plus loin et élaborer des outils que nous pourrons tous partager et enrichir de manière collective, gardant à l'esprit que ces mesures doivent bien sûr être adaptées aux contextes nationaux. L'échéance de Rio + 20 et la notion de développement durable dans ses trois dimensions, économique, sociale et environnementale, doivent être une occasion de progresser sur cette question de la mesure du progrès des sociétés et du bien être des êtres humains.

Je vous remercie de votre attention.

STATEMENT BY THOMAS MAYR-HARTING,

HEAD OF THE DELEGATION OF THE EUROPEAN UNION

Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Bhutan, President of Costa Rica, President of ECOSOC, Excellencies, Distinguished Delegates,

Madam President,

I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union and its Member States. The Acceding Country Croatia, the Candidate Countries Montenegro*, Iceland* and Serbia, the Countries of the Stabilisation and Association Process and potential candidates Albania and Bosnia and Herzegovina, and the EFTA country Norway, member of the European Economic Area, as well as Ukraine, the Republic of Moldova, Armenia, and Georgia align themselves with this declaration.*

Europe is a continent with many different traditions and languages, but also with shared values. One striking characteristic of the Lisbon Treaty, is that it puts to the forefront the values on which the European Union is based, human dignity, freedom, democracy, equality, the rule of law and the respect for human rights.

In an increasingly interdependent world of the 21st century, such values take on increased importance. Promoting these values, as well as peace and the wellbeing of the Union's peoples are now the main objectives of the Union. In the Lisbon Treaty, these general objectives are supplemented by a more detailed list, including the promotion of social justice and protection, the fight against social exclusion and discrimination, and the insertion of the objective of, a highly competitive social market economy.

While a majority of the objectives are not new, such as 'a high level of protection and improvement of the quality of the environment', 'the combating of social exclusion and discrimination', and 'social progress', however some are. One could mention for instance 'full employment', as well as 'social justice', 'solidarity between generations' or 'rights of the child', which were not mentioned in previous Treaties. The same goes for the objectives of 'respecting the Union's rich cultural and linguistic diversity' and 'ensuring that Europe's cultural heritage is safeguarded and enhanced'.

All this we feel, very much ties in with today's event for which we are grateful to the Kingdom of Bhutan for organising. The Resolution introduced by Bhutan and adopted by the GA last year on "Happiness: towards a holistic approach to development" (65/309) underscored that unsustainable patterns of production and consumption can impede sustainable development, and recognised the need for a more inclusive, equitable and balanced approach to economic growth that promotes sustainable development, poverty eradication, happiness and wellbeing of all people. We consider that the four dimensions of the discussion this morning- Happiness and Wellbeing, ecological sustainability, fair distribution and efficient use of resources, are key elements to ensure that the citizen feels totally connected with our world. As highlighted these remain at the centre of our objectives as a Union, besides of course the promotion of basic Human Rights, which we consider as a crucial component of human well being.

However, the question springs up how does one monitor progress towards what may be called 'an inclusive economy' at the national, let alone at the global level. Such monitoring would require indicators based on internationally comparable data and must be based in a conceptual framework and selected according to well specified criteria. There is agreement that the measurement of progress is essential in the sustainable development context, as well as in a transition towards an inclusive green economy and that a whole range of indicators for the three dimensions exist. However there is much to do to build on these indicators and other data sources before they are suitable to measure welfare and social wellbeing.

During recent years several initiatives were started to develop new indicators which can be used as measures of societal wellbeing, as well as measures of economic, environmental, and social sustainability. In 2007, the European

Commission, hosted the high-level conference “Beyond GDP”. The objectives were clear, but it was also clear that it is not easy to develop such indicators that are as clear and appealing as GDP, but more inclusive of environmental and social aspects of progress.

There are a number of other initiatives which sought to develop new indicators which can be used as measures of societal wellbeing, as well as measures of economic, environmental and social sustainability. I am happy to note that within the European Union, work is fully under way as testified by the recent publication of Eurostat’s feasibility study on wellbeing indicators. In line with the conclusions of the Stiglitz report, the work addresses the many dimensions of wellbeing; it combines various objective and subjective measures; and it tries to deepen our understanding of the relations between the various Quality-of-Life and wellbeing dimensions. We are ready to continue cooperating and contributing to work in this area because the need of having adequate indicators to address global challenges such as climate change, poverty, resource depletion, health and quality of life, cannot be questioned.

Madam President,

We are also grateful for the appropriate timing of the organisation of this event, which coincides with ongoing preparations for the Rio+20 Conference. Rio+20 presents an historic opportunity for all of us to renew our political commitment to the sustainable development and poverty eradication agenda and furthermore to initiate a profound, world-wide transition towards a sustainable future. In this regard, the EU and its Member States strongly believe that in Rio we should agree to accelerate and broaden the worldwide transition towards a green economy that promotes sustainable development and contributes to poverty eradication around the world, and we should agree on improved governance for sustainable development, including by strengthening the environmental pillar in this regard.

Our view is that a green economy is one in which policies and innovations enable society to use resources efficiently to enhance human wellbeing in an inclusive manner, while maintaining the natural systems that sustain us.

Madam President,

Let me conclude by saying that we look forward to continue engaging in a proactive way to ensure that the discussions today are not only reflected in the report of the meeting, but also in the discussions in the coming weeks leading to the Rio+20 Conference. Achieving wellbeing will require a change in our way of doing things and different forms of actions and policy measures implemented at different levels and by different actors. The need for action is clear, what is required is to ensure that all actors are engaged effectively towards an ambitious outcome for the benefit of all.

Thank you very much.

* Croatia, Montenegro and Serbia continue to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process.

* Iceland continues to be a member of the EFTA and of the European Economic Area.

STATEMENT FROM THE DELEGATION OF LUXEMBOURG

Unofficial translation

Excellencies,

Ladies and gentlemen,

I would like first of all to thank the Kingdom of Bhutan for taking the initiative to organize this high level panel discussion on the theme « Happiness and wellbeing : defining a new economic paradigm ». The pursuit of happiness is a fundamental human goal. This issue thus concerns us all.

Luxembourg fully subscribes to the intervention of the European Union. Allow me to add some elements pertaining to our national experience.

Luxembourg recognizes the true value of the concept of the “Gross National Happiness” index promoted by the King of Bhutan more than three decades ago. This concept is indeed based on four pillars to which Luxembourg also attaches great importance: (1) economic growth and development, (2) the preservation and promotion of culture, (3) the environmental protection and sustainable use of resources, and finally (4) good governance. It is in this context that Luxembourg co-sponsored resolution 65/309 entitled “Happiness: towards a holistic approach to development” which was introduced by the Kingdom of Bhutan.

If one uses the Gross Domestic Product or even the Gross National Income per capita as a reference, Luxembourg certainly enjoys one of the highest living standards in the world. GDP and GNI are however not the measure of all things, especially when it comes to assessing the sustainable development and quality of life of a society, two main branches in the analysis of wellbeing. For this reason, our Government launched in 2010 the “Gross National Wellbeing” (“PIBien-être” in French), a project to create a composite index designed to measure the progress of society and welfare in the long term. This index is being developed by the Survey Centre for Competitiveness, in partnership with the Higher Council for Sustainable Development and the Economic and Social Council of Luxembourg, on the basis of data provided by our National Institute of Statistics and Economic Studies. Civil society is systematically included in the reflection. So far work on the index has produced an initial list of 101 indicators. They are based in particular on the 2009 Stiglitz-Sen-Fitoussi report and on research undertaken in other countries in this regard. Recommendations will be presented in autumn 2012 to the Government.

In the year of Rio+20, it is important to note that the indicators of Gross National Wellbeing will also be used to update the indicators of our national plan for sustainable development. This plan aims to achieve a number of objectives in areas such as socio-economic equity, social welfare, economy and protecting the natural and human environment. It includes at this stage 27 indicators of sustainable development.

Excellencies,

Ladies and gentlemen,

In Luxembourg, negotiation and dialogue are practiced at all levels of institutionalized economic and social life. They are the foundation of social peace including, in return, social progress, social justice and respect for labor. This consensual approach, which is sometimes referred to as the “Luxembourg model”, has contributed to Luxembourg’s stability and social and economic progress, even in times of global economic and financial crisis. In Luxembourg, social conflicts are relatively rare thanks to a constructive dialogue between unions, employers and the government known as the “tripartite”. The future Gross National Wellbeing indicators will also reflect this reality.

To conclude, let me emphasize that our concern for wellbeing, quality of life and sustainable development does not stop at our borders. In the field of official development assistance (ODA), Luxembourg is proud to have been a reliable partner long since. In 1992, at the first Rio Conference, our Prime Minister announced that Luxembourg’s ODA would reach 0.7% of Gross National Income by the year 2000. We kept this commitment, and since 2009, our ODA exceeds the threshold of 1% of GNI. Faced with global and interdependent challenges such as poverty, climate change, insecurity, pandemics, economic crises and migration, it is imperative to continue our efforts to achieve the Millennium Development Goals in order to help developing countries and especially the least developed countries to ensure the wellbeing of their citizens.

Three years before the deadline for reaching the MDGs, much remains to be done. At the same time, we must reflect on goals beyond 2015 which will also have to be sustainable development goals.

Like Bhutan, we hope that the economic and financial crisis will be used as an opportunity to rethink our lifestyle, our patterns of consumption and production and our long term economic development models, in order to ensure sustainable development for all.

I thank you for your attention.

STATEMENT BY MR. ALEXANDER LIKHOTAL,

GREEN CROSS INTERNATIONAL PRESIDENT, CLUB OF ROME MEMBER

Making but not Painting the Economy Green

The world finds itself at an important inflection point. The choice is between a perfect storm of a progressively deepening set of crises or expanding perspectives of unprecedented opportunities.

The root causes of the crises we are witnessing rest on outmoded theoretical concepts, values and institutions. The remedies lie in the formulation of a new model appropriate to the conditions of the 21st century; the commitment to progressive values that integrate individual freedom and equitable cooperation to maximize the welfare and wellbeing of all; and the establishment of more effective institutions at all levels. For these reasons, practical experiments, such as the Bhutan's wellbeing and sustainability-based economic model, deserve to be thoroughly studied and widely discussed and disseminated.

How can we maximize our chances for the transition towards a sustainable, equitable and "happier" world? We can do this by:

1. *Developing a new economy, not just in theory but also in practice, so that:*
 - *Natural and social capital are correctly valued;*
 - *New financial markets deliver the goods and services humankind needs in and for a sustainable world;*
 - *Sufficient opportunities for suitable work are made available to allow a decent income for all.*
2. *Creating appropriate governance institutions on global, national and local levels.*

Five steps can trigger the response to the current economic and "unsustainable" development crises wrecking the world today.

1. Values-based approach to development.

Humanity's future and prosperity will depend on our understanding that universal and equitable distribution of all aspects of social capacity, opportunity and security is the most essential and effective means for promoting peace, prosperity and maximum welfare and wellbeing going forward.

2. Reconsider productivity.

Our economies incorrectly measure and value a wide range of goods and services essential to maintaining a safe, secure and sustainable planet. This systematic mis-evaluation (both under and over) is causing major problems, including the destabilization of the climate, the degradation of ecosystems and depletion of biodiversity, and it even undermines the social fabric of families and communities.

Natural and social capital must be properly valued in economic terms, and the economy must become “real” and be built on real values.

3. Increase energy prices.

This must be done to re-orient our markets so that real values are reflected in decisions. Elevated energy prices need not hurt the economy. Japan blossomed during the 15 years of highest energy prices. Energy policy must focus on integrated solutions to both climate, energy and global sustainability.

4. Create an alliance of sustainability winners.

Create an alliance of the “early birds”, the speedy frontrunners who will be the “game winners” of tomorrow; there is no need to wait as everybody (including traditional energy suppliers) will wake up to this call.

The “carbon justice” approach can propel low carbon technologies to the South. An alliance of champions on effective climate policy from America, Europe, Asia and leading “developing countries” (90% of the world’s population) can help provide the revolutionary shift needed to recalibrate our economy, protect our environment and achieve a truly sustainable development.

5. Re-balance private rights and public interests.

A prosperous and stable society requires a proper balance between, on the one hand, the role of the market to stimulate innovation and foster the healthy competition needed for the effective use of resources and, on the other, the role of government as the custodian of the common interest. Governments must provide a clear and predictable legal & regulatory framework and the control & supervision within which the markets could operate to achieve a balance between private rights & benefits and the wellbeing and prosperity of the community. Strong regulatory mechanisms are urgently needed to safeguard common public interests.

We face the need to evolve towards the higher social systems required to effectively manage new levels of technological capability, globalization of society, greater human mobility, etc. We should not focus on what seems to have been lost but on what humanity has until now never possessed. Society is evolving. Understanding the present in the light of the past, we see only the problems, resulting in gloom.

Understanding the present in the light of the future compels us to evolve, to see the opportunities within our reach. Green Cross International, founded in 1993 by Nobel Peace Prize laureate Mikhail Gorbachev, is an independent non-profit and nongovernmental organization working to address the inter-connected global challenges of security, poverty eradication and environmental degradation through a combination of advocacy and on-the-ground projects. GCI is headquartered in Geneva and is present in over 30 countries.

Annex VIII: Summary of main points from the working lunch discussions

The following is a compilation of some of the comments and recommendations from participants that emerged during the four lunchtime discussion groups:

Wellbeing and Happiness

- Eradicating extreme poverty is central to the happiness agenda.
- Happiness in practice is collective; it is not possessed and maintained individually, but rather shared with others and dependent on our surroundings.
- Our approach to wellbeing and development must include not only people, but also all living beings in the natural world. Indigenous communities are dedicated to the welfare of the commons and of the whole. Living in harmony with the Earth, they also know that ceremonies of gratitude are fundamental to our wellbeing and happiness.
- The UK has a very active All-Party Parliamentary Group on Wellbeing Economics. It works to foster debate and bring information about wellbeing economics to members of Parliament to ensure the issue is taken into account in policy-making and to make new policy propositions. This example could be replicated in other nations.
- Measuring GNH would help to enable coordination and cooperation between ministries within a nation, by requiring them to work on achieving the overall context and contributing for happiness and wellbeing.
- Apply the principles of ecological sustainability, happiness, fairness, and efficiency to each topical area to avoid the 'silo' approach. For example, plans for ecological agriculture should also abide by fairness, efficiency and happiness principles.
- Add a fourth domain to UNDP's Human Development Index: Happiness/Wellbeing/ Quality of Life.
- Diversity around the world – in metrics, government approaches, cultural differences, etc. – will long preclude development of common indices of wellbeing. The most effective approach from the top will be to foster and facilitate the development of local efforts to build one-planet awareness. Happiness will, in the end, almost always be defined and determined locally.
- Different frameworks should be developed for different levels of development.
- Broad principles need translation into specific programs for local government.
- Ensure aid agencies deliver the world's best practices of sustainable ways to meet energy, food, housing, sanitation and transportation needs.

- The ways of measuring and monitoring wellbeing should be strengthened. However, use measures as indicators, not masters.
- Policies for social inclusion are critical for wellbeing.
- Policies that promote empowerment of women should be promoted, as this is clearly linked to the wellbeing of women who are half the world's population, but still suffer discrimination and oppression worldwide.
- The youth also make up half the world's population. Engage and nurture the youth. Create a network of self-nominated "wellbeing champions," mainly young people to initiate bottom-up discussion and change processes.
- Focus on education. Enable students to understand their own feelings about "progress" and "success" through exercises. Education should be more experiential. Incorporate more philosophy and ethics to encourage responsibility. Foster co-learning across geographical boundaries using online tools. Systems thinking and systems analysis in education will lead to sustainability literacy. Shift the intention behind education from "preparing to get a job" to "achieving long-term and sustainable happiness."
- Encourage mentoring – pair leaders over 40 with those under 40 in partnerships involving mutual mentoring and support.
- Introduce concept of "happiness footprint" to raise awareness about the interdependence of happiness and wellbeing.
- Teach mindfulness widely to counteract the psychic hunger that causes materialism as the primary spirituality of our time. Nourish people's completeness as individuals.
- Bring mindfulness training and happiness/wellbeing criteria to government, business and civil society conferences.
- Conduct workshops and trainings on how to educate about GNH in a multi-cultural way.
- Host a "GNH in Business" Summit – engage major global corporations – perhaps the top 100 companies recognized for their commitment to triple-bottom line accounting and CSR policies.
- Work with the travel and tourism industry, the largest industry in the world according to the UN World Travel Organization (UN WTO).
- Bring scientists and those with traditional and spiritual knowledge together.
- Work with the media and social media to redefine and envision a better, more sustainable future.
- Patience will be a virtue, given the embedded nature of today's norms and metrics.

Ecological Sustainability

- Sustainable Development addresses the environment in economic terms; GNH facilitates a more complete and holistic form of valuation.
- GNH is relevant for energy policy. It's focus on intergenerational equity and full cost accounting support the movement toward renewable sources of energy and technical innovation.
- Humans cannot be separated from the natural world; therefore discussions about human systems must always be integrated with discussions about natural systems.
- The environment is primarily discussed as a utility and should be protected for its own inherent value. Value pristine nature and human interaction with it.
- Implement the precautionary principle, which has been broadly accepted in many forums.
- Primary and secondary school curricula should include ecological sustainability values and should foster understanding of interdependence.
- Self-understanding, mindfulness and connection with nature will foster respect for nature.
- More studies and advocacy should be undertaken about the connection between a healthy environment and human happiness.
- Enable entities that can navigate between corporate value to shareholders and values of not-for-profits, i.e.: common asset trusts, co-ops, "B" corporations.
- Call for a global food transition to 100% organics.
- Compile a global solutions database based on existing innovations in efforts aimed at promoting ecological sustainability through smart growth and design.

Efficient Use of Resources

- Full-cost environmental accounting is needed in order to value non-market assets and services. Prices must reflect actual societal and environmental costs of production and distribution of goods and services.
- It is important to gather qualitative data as well as quantitative data in the measurement of resources.
- Foster material altruism – share material goods and redefine what constitutes wealth.
- The transition movement in the UK helps people and communities to become more efficient.
- Cradle to cradle design and manufacturing should be adopted in production. Waste minimization should be valued in production contracts.

Fair Distribution

- Hurdles to fair distribution were identified as: widespread social desire for material betterment; advertising that promotes over consumption; corruption in politics, corporate governance and many spheres of public operations;
- Governments work in partnership with their citizens to limit the influence of special interests groups that do not work in favour of the public good.
- Financial instruments are required that responsibly manage resources in such a way that delivers on public goods and services without irresponsible levels of debts.
- Subsidies should be directed to poverty alleviation.
- Corporate responsibility should be promoted to the highest standards being developed internationally, as well as in many regions, countries and smaller jurisdictions.
- Dignity is an important measure and aspect for decent jobs and fairness.
- Sharing and transferring technology and information can have a positive impact of the equitable distribution of resources.
- Improvement of information and transparency is key. This leads to better accountability and reduces the corruption that prevents fair distribution.
- Encourage small scale, local production and consumption, which helps to respond to local needs and demands for good and services.

Annex IX: Closing Remarks from H.E. Mr. Jigmi Y. Thinley, Prime Minister of Bhutan

TRANSCRIPT OF HONOURABLE PRIME MINISTER'S CLOSING REMARKS AT THE HIGH-LEVEL MEETING ON WELLBEING AND HAPPINESS: DEFINING A NEW ECONOMIC PARADIGM

2nd April 2012 at UNHQ, New York

First I wish to extend my profound thanks to Dr. Jacqueline McGlade, Executive Director of the European Environment Agency, for the extraordinary way in which she has conducted the afternoon session and the way in which she was able to arrange for so many participants to speak from the podium as well as from the floor.

My only regret is that we could not hold this meeting for a longer period of time, because there were so many excellent ideas, and such great scholars, thinkers, and leaders who would have shared with us to an even greater extent the outstanding knowledge and wisdom they have developed over time, albeit, sadly, often on the margins of society.

But what I can say is that today we have successfully brought to the mainstream this amazing wealth of knowledge. And I think we will all be leaving here with the confidence and the knowledge that the holistic, sustainable, and inclusive economic paradigm that we will be building, will have the benefit of such a vast wealth of proven and convincing knowledge.

I wish to thank all those who did such excellent work chairing the various sessions, and to express my deep gratitude to the Secretary General of the United Nations, and to all the agencies and individuals who have helped make this meeting a success.

And I thank all those who have contributed to this amazing turnout today — the participants — all of you who have made this event meaningful and who, by your presence, are conveying to the world that it is time for us to change and that it is time for a new development paradigm that aims at bringing about wellbeing and happiness.

I thank you for the confidence that you have placed in Bhutan to continue to play the role of facilitator. We have great limitations, but I accept and Bhutan accepts this responsibility only with the confidence and with the knowledge that we have your support. [Applause]

Bhutan accepts this responsibility with humility, and it is with humility that I shall not be presumptuous enough to try and synthesize and summarize the discussions and the many contributions that have been made over the day. Let me go straight into the kind of actions that we shall be taking from here. We have had a great amount of

very stimulating and highly informed talk today, but I think our common concern is what actions will follow. Here is what we intend to do.

Firstly, as I also mentioned this morning we shall quickly prepare a report of the gathering for submission to the Secretary General of the United Nations, and request that this be distributed to all the member states.

I shall write directly to all my colleagues, the political leaders of all the UN member states, and request them to kindly consider adopting on a voluntary basis the recommendations for policy action that we have considered, that have been distributed to you, and on which we will further elaborate over the course of the next two days. And I shall follow up with them: I shall repeatedly remind them and enquire of them as to how many of these recommendations they are considering implementing, and how many of these have actually been incorporated in their policies. This I promise you. I shall write to every Head of Government.

By the power vested in me by you, again, I shall convene a Commission in the manner and of the nature that Dr. McGlade has mentioned, to elaborate the details of the various dimensions of the new economic paradigm. It is our intention, and it shall be my commitment, to work with this Commission and to ensure the Commission completes its work well before the summer of 2013, so as to make an input into and inform the deliberations of the UN General Assembly which at that time will in fact be considering the next steps and goals to be adopted after 2015 to succeed the eight Millennium Development Goals.

We shall together initiate and build a global movement in support of this new economic paradigm. And to this end we must all galvanize the support of the youth, of the people around the world, and in particular join hands with like-minded civil society organizations, such as the action for happiness initiated by Lord Richard Layard, and together make this movement for a new economic paradigm a reality and a worldwide global action.

We must all work together to create an effective communications plan to educate people worldwide. And to this end we should explore all the opportunities and possibilities that the social media will have to offer. Many have expressed the aspiration that the vision of the new economic paradigm will inform the Rio+20 deliberations. But that Summit is only 11 weeks away, the Commission will not yet have done its work, and our chances of influencing the Rio outcome are slim.

However, I will definitely report to Rio on this meeting, and do my best to represent, convey, and share some of the key ideas and recommendations generated by this meeting.

So these are the kinds of concrete steps we will take from our discussions today to begin moving the world to take action towards a more holistic and meaningful development paradigm. In all this, I look forward to continuing our collaboration with you.

I will look forward to seeing many of you in Rio where I'd be delighted to continue our conversation on this vital subject. Please feel free to write to me, and we shall ensure you receive all the documents and reports that emerge from this meeting.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank especially the 200-odd people who have committed to work over the next two days to synthesize the wealth of knowledge and information generated over the last two days, yesterday at Columbia University and today at the UN, and to consider concrete actions to implement these ideas in practice.

Thank you all very much. It's an historic moment that has come to an end. But it is not a moment and a time to celebrate. Let us hope and pray that by the end of 2013 when the United Nations General Assembly will have adopted this new economic paradigm, we will come together, perhaps here, perhaps in greater numbers, to celebrate. I thank you. Thank you. [Standing ovation]

I think it would be most appropriate, ladies and gentlemen, to request leaders of various faiths who are represented here today, to say a prayer and give us the benediction that we need to realize our vision, and to go home peacefully, rested, and happy.

Annex X: Refined Statement - Realising a World of Sustainable Wellbeing and Happiness

- 1.** A fundamental human goal is the deep abiding wellbeing and happiness that comes from living life in full, in harmony with our communities and fellow beings and the natural world. Realising this vision requires a healthy balance between all parts of our national and global wealth including our natural, human, economic, social, and cultural wealth.
- 2.** This balance is absent from our present system, which prioritises economic growth at the expense of nature and people. The current paradigm now threatens the survival of humans and other species, and is no longer an option. We need a fundamental transition to a new economic paradigm that serves human happiness and the wellbeing of all life on earth.
- 3.** The new economic paradigm requires four key conditions:
 - a.** A general education and awareness of the determinants and skills for sustainable wellbeing and happiness to enable individuals and institutions to choose actions that optimise flourishing, including meeting basic needs and care for others instead of the present goals of limitless growth and consumption;
 - b.** We live sustainably within the capacity of our finite planet to provide the resources needed for this and all future generations;
 - c.** These resources are distributed fairly within and between this and future generations, and between humans and other species;
 - d.** We use these resources as efficiently and effectively as possible, including through innovative, socially and environmentally responsible business models.

We now have the knowledge and technical capacity to achieve all these conditions.

4. There are many practical and proven actions that all people, governments, and other institutions can take to move rapidly to the new economic paradigm. For example:

- Governments, universities, hospitals and other organisations can buy from sustainable local sources, like organic farmers and fair trade groups.
- Governments can redirect military spending to wellbeing enhancing activities and eliminate harmful subsidies for fossil fuels, chemical agriculture, and other activities damaging to people and the planet.
- Instead, they can invest in renewable and efficient energy, public transit, green technologies, and improved education and physical and mental health services.
- Communities and governments can set up common asset trusts and more robust policies to govern and protect the natural commons including the atmosphere, oceans, and biodiversity.
- We can support the development of sustainable technologies in the developing world, and transfer technology and information to lower-income nations to aid the rapid transition to sustainable production methods.
- Governments can institute ecological tax reforms and payments for ecosystem services to reward sustainable and wellbeing-enhancing actions.
- They can reduce incentives to excessive consumption by banning such advertising to children, eliminating tax deductions for advertising, taxing unearned income.

Other recommended actions include:

- Facilitating innovative business practices and models including new forms of corporate structure and ownership models, product stewardship, green skills, and decent work for all.
- Increasing financial prudence by reducing speculation, ensuring equitable access to and responsible use of credit, and requiring that financial instruments and practices contribute to the public good.
- Advancing coordinated research, policy analysis, and implementation of wellbeing measurement, green accounting, integrated social, economic, and environmental modelling, risk management, and the politics of issuing and implementing recommendations.

A new Commission on the New Economic Paradigm, convened by Bhutan, will refine, expand and elaborate these and other measures in a systemic policy framework.

Annex XI: Policy Recommendations Emerging from the High-Level Meeting for Consideration by Governments

There was broad agreement at the 2nd April meeting at the United Nations that governments worldwide can immediately take practical steps towards adoption of the new wellbeing and sustainability-based economic paradigm. To that end, examples of the kinds of policies that are in line with the principles of the new economy, and which governments might consider for voluntary adoption, are suggested here.

Any effective policy must be compatible with ecological sustainability, fair distribution and efficient use of resources, and should contribute to the wellbeing of all life and to human happiness. Some policies will contribute to all these goals simultaneously.

All these policies are proposed in the spirit of “adaptive management,” and recognise that we must learn from outcomes and adapt to the changing conditions and local circumstances.

The following 12 policies are by no means a comprehensive list, but provide examples of initial steps in the right direction. Many are consistent with United Nations Environmental Programme’s “green economy” proposals, but also go considerably further in accord with the goals outlined in the 2nd of April High-Level Meeting at the United Nations.

1. In order to move towards sustainable production methods, governments should first remove perverse subsidies for fossil fuels, chemical inputs in agriculture, and other activities that are harmful to the economy and environment. They should reinvest those subsidies in activities that promote sustainable wellbeing and happiness, such as green technologies and poverty alleviation.
2. In order to promote the widespread dissemination of technologies that protect the environment and alleviate poverty, and to enable lower-income nations to shift rapidly to sustainable production methods without loss of competitive advantage, high-income countries must share and transfer technology and information. To maximise the public benefits of these technologies, countries should pool their technological resources and treat the resulting information as part of the global social commons.

To that end nations should also increase public investments in research and development for such technologies with the resulting information freely available to all. Nations should undertake to freely share and publish information on such technologies, including all subsequent improvements.

3. Public investment should heretofore be prioritised to:
 - investments in sustainable infrastructure, such as renewable energy, energy efficiency, public transit, watershed protection measures, green public spaces, clean technology, support for green businesses, and measures to ‘green’ tourism.

- health promotion and disease prevention, addressing the socio-economic, behavioural, spiritual, and environmental determinants of health; and
 - supporting holistic life-long learning that includes vital literacies required for wellbeing, such as ecological, civic, cultural, health, nutrition, science, financial, and other literacies; incorporate traditional and indigenous knowledge; empower women; and ensure equality of opportunity.
4. In order to move rapidly towards sustainable agriculture, support small-scale local production and consumption; eliminate unsustainable subsidies; ensure public procurement from sustainable local sources; invest in rural sector public goods including farmer education in organic methods; incorporate traditional knowledge into agriculture research and development.
 5. In order to promote the effective and equitable governance and management of the natural and social commons, governments should declare groundwater and open water, atmosphere, oceans, biodiversity, mineral resources, beaches, forests, cultural and sacred sites, etc., as common assets, and create common asset trusts at the appropriate scale. Such trusts must be legally obliged to manage these assets sustainably for the equitable benefit of current and future generations.
 6. In order to dismantle incentives to excessive consumption, begin by banning advertising to children and eliminating perverse tax deductions by businesses for advertising.
 7. In order to move towards local economies and fair trade systems that promote sustainable production methods and fair returns to producers, begin by government procurement from local, organic, and fair trade sources.
 8. In order to reduce systemic inequalities: tax systems should capture unearned income such as earnings on land and currency speculation; reinvest that revenue in public goods; and take other measures to increase the progressivity of taxation. Governments should introduce work sharing policies that reduce overwork, increase leisure time, and prevent layoffs;
 9. In order to value non-market assets and services, to measure progress more accurately and comprehensively, to internalise externalities, and to ensure that prices reflect actual social and environmental costs of production:
 - a. Create Sustainable National Wellbeing Accounts, which account for the value of natural, social/cultural, human, and built capital, stocks, flows and dynamics. [Recognising that such accounts constitute the essential foundation for the new economy, the Kingdom of Bhutan has begun to construct such accounts, and released the first valuations of natural, social and human capital in February this year.]
 - b. Create comprehensive Wellbeing Measures of Progress. [The Kingdom of Bhutan has developed a Gross National Happiness (GNH) Index consisting of nine domains — ecology, living standards, health, education, culture, community vitality, time use, good governance, and psychological wellbeing.]

- c. Work with other countries to build global consensus around these measures of value and progress in the medium term (1-3 years), towards a consensus building convention in 2014.
 - d. Confine Gross Domestic Product (GDP) to its original purpose as a measure of marketed economic activity, and as a measure of what we pay for those activities. Therefore governments must cease using GDP as the core measure of national wellbeing, progress and prosperity—a purpose for which it was never intended.
 - e. Explicitly acknowledge on the record and educate the public on the flaws of GDP-based measures when mistakenly used as wellbeing measures, and work with other governments to achieve short-term global consensus on the limitations of GDP-based measures as the EU, OECD, Sarkozy-Stiglitz Commission, and others have already done. Explicitly acknowledge the concomitant importance of valuing national, social/cultural, and human capital.
10. In order to reward sustainable and wellbeing-enhancing actions and penalise unsustainable behaviours that diminish collective wellbeing, institute: (a) systems of “payments for ecosystem services” and cooperative investment in stewardship wherein the beneficiaries of ecosystem services shoulder the costs of stewardship or share them with the providers; (b) ecological tax reforms that tax pollution and the depletion of natural capital, with compensating mechanisms that avoid additional burdens on low-income groups.
 11. In order to increase financial and fiscal prudence, implement measures to reduce speculation, ensure equitable access to and responsible use of credit, and require that financial instruments and practices contribute to the public good.
 12. Work actively and in good faith, in collaboration with governments and civil society partners, towards an international consensus conference that will formally begin adopting the new economic paradigm by 2015.

The new expert Commission emerging from the 2nd April meeting, whose composition will be announced in the near future, will build on these initial policy recommendations, and will create a comprehensive and systemic policy framework with recommended policy measures and regulatory mechanisms that can lead to actual implementation of the new economic paradigm.

Annex XII: Next Steps - Proposals for Moving Forward from the High-Level Meeting

One anticipated outcome of the High-Level Meeting at the United Nations on 2nd April 2012 was to create an expert task force to envision more fully the dimensions of the new economy over the coming year. This document was prepared and circulated prior to the meeting in order to provide potential guidelines for discussions on 3rd - 4th April among interested participants. It may be used to inform the sample terms of reference that will guide the subsequent work of a Commission or similar expert task force.

OBJECTIVE

Building on prior work, the Task Force will elaborate dimensions of the new economy and recommend practical and detailed frameworks, institutional structures, operating systems, and regulatory mechanisms for a new global economic paradigm based on sustainable wellbeing.

The new system, designed to ensure sustainable human happiness and the wellbeing of all life, will reflect fully the vision, principles, understanding, and objectives of the 2nd April 2012 statement on *Realising a World of Sustainable Happiness and Wellbeing*, but will also expand upon and modify that statement as needed.

The new paradigm will ensure a fully sustainable balance among natural, social, cultural, human, and built capital assets, and will be based on the following four fundamental tenets:

- Happiness and Wellbeing
- Ecological sustainability
- Fair distribution
- Efficient use of resources

TIMELINE

- By **31 December 2012**, the Task Force will produce a detailed document with executive summary on each of the dimensions and proposed operating mechanisms of the new economic paradigm, including but certainly not limited to the list below.
- Each document will build on prior work and will include descriptions of existing best practices, a comprehensive literature review and compilation of references, and explicit policy recommendations in each area.
- As well, one overview document will integrate and link these different dimensions of the new economy into a coherent whole and a consistent and sound framework and structure.

- An additional document will specify a recommended timeline, phases, and steps for the actual adoption and implementation of the new economic regime. This will include a “new Bretton Woods” convention to be held in 2014 for formal international adoption of the new system.
- By the **first week of January 2013**, those documents will be sent out for review to experts both in the specific defined areas and in some cases to review all the documentation as a whole. The full set of documents will also be posted on the web for public and international comment, consideration and feedback. All input, feedback, review comments, and responses will need to be received by **30 April, 2013**.
- From **May to August 2013**, the expert Task Force will revise the full set of documents based on the feedback, responses, and comments received, incorporating input as appropriate while adhering to the basic vision, principles, understanding and objectives of the 2nd April 2012 declaration.
- The full and final documentation will be completed by **31 August, 2013**, and presented for consideration to the **Fall 2013** United Nations General Assembly and other relevant United Nations and international agencies.
- As a short-term interim measure, the Task Force will present the outline of the new economic paradigm, and invite feedback and discussion, at a “side event” hosted by the Royal Government of Bhutan at the Rio+20 Summit in June 2012.

DIMENSIONS OF THE NEW ECONOMY

The Expert Task Force will elaborate on and produce documentation on all key dimensions of the new economy, including but not limited to:

A. HAPPINESS AND WELLBEING

- Promoting a dynamic culture through a common but differentiated approach that respects diverse cultural traditions;
- nurturing the values, wisdom, and practice of our spiritual traditions, and harmony between them;
- drawing from the wisdom of traditional and indigenous values and knowledge to develop appropriate policies;
- supporting the arts and the creative commons;
- promoting holistic life-long learning, including vital literacies required for wellbeing, such as ecological, civic, cultural, health, nutrition, science, financial, and other literacies;

- empowering women, educating girls, and ensuring equality of opportunity;
- improving mental and physical health by addressing the socio-economic, behavioural, spiritual, and environmental and inter-generational determinants of health, and recognising that health is a public responsibility;
- supporting local economies and strong community networks;
- strengthening social supports through family, community, workplace, and other relationships;
- supporting the voluntary and civil society sector, and nurturing good governance;
- promoting vibrant, critical, creative, and responsible media;
- supporting research and dialogue on the causes and conditions of happiness.

B. ECOLOGICAL SUSTAINABILITY

- Establishing a system for effective and equitable governance and management of the natural commons, including the atmosphere, oceans, fresh water systems, and biodiversity;
- investing in sustainable infrastructure, such as renewable clean energy, energy efficiency, public transit, watershed protection measures, green public spaces, clean technology, and support for green businesses;
- consuming essential non-renewables, such as fossil fuels, more slowly than we develop renewable substitutes;
- creating mechanisms to reduce resource depletion, pollution, and greenhouse gas emissions to stay within basic planetary boundaries and resource limits, including taxes, cap and auction systems, and common asset trusts;
- dismantling incentives towards excessive materialistic consumption, including educating for sustainability and banning advertising to children;
- moving towards sustainable agriculture to feed the earth's population without destroying its biodiversity;
- developing linked policies to balance population and consumption with the earth's natural, social and economic capacity.

C. FAIR DISTRIBUTION

- Reducing systemic inequalities, both internationally and within nations, by improving the living standards of the poor, providing an adequate social safety net, limiting excess consumption and unearned income, and preventing private capture of the common wealth;
- supporting, promoting, and providing incentives for systems of cooperative ownership and management of enterprises;
- instituting fair trade systems that promote sustainable production methods and fair returns to producers;
- transferring technology to enable lower-income nations to shift rapidly to sustainable production methods and suffer no loss of competitive advantage as they transition to a sustainable economy;
- establishing a system for effective and equitable governance and management of the social commons, including cultural inheritance, financial systems, and information systems;
- creating fulfilling employment for all, which contributes to the common good, achieves better work-life balance, and nurtures healthy workplace relations.

D. EFFICIENT USE OF RESOURCES

- Using full-cost accounting measures to internalise externalities, value non-market assets and services, reform national accounting systems, and ensure that prices reflect actual social and environmental costs of production and distribution;
- putting in place fiscal reforms that reward sustainable and wellbeing-enhancing actions and penalise unsustainable behaviours that diminish collective wellbeing, including ecological tax reforms with compensating mechanisms that avoid additional burdens on low-income groups;
- implementing systems of cooperative investment in stewardship and payment for ecosystem services;
- increasing financial and fiscal prudence by reducing speculation, ensuring equitable access to and responsible use of credit, and requiring that financial instruments and practices contribute to the public good;
- ensuring access to and sharing of the information required to move to a sustainable economy.

ENDNOTES

1. These assets, which overlap and interact in complex ways to produce all benefits, are generally defined as follows:

- a. **Natural capital:** The natural environment, its biodiversity, and the ecosystem goods and services they provide. These goods and services are essential to basic needs such as survival, climate regulation, habitat for other species, water supply, food, fibre, fuel, recreation, cultural amenities, and the raw materials required for all economic production.
- b. **Social and cultural capital:** The web of interpersonal connections, social networks, cultural heritage, traditional knowledge, trust, and the institutional arrangements, rules, norms and values that facilitate human interactions and cooperation between people. These contribute to social cohesion, strong, vibrant, and secure communities, and good governance, and help fulfil basic human needs such as participation, affection, and a sense of belonging.
- c. **Human capital:** Human beings and their attributes, including physical and mental health, knowledge, and other capacities that enable people to be productive members of society. This involves the balanced use of time to fulfil basic human needs such as fulfilling employment, spirituality, understanding, skills development, creativity, and freedom.
- d. **Built capital:** Buildings, machinery, transportation infrastructure, and all other human artefacts and services that fulfil basic human needs such as shelter, subsistence, mobility, and communications.

