## live your dreams

Is the challenge that we are facing at the beginning of the new century really all that new? Have not new technologies always brought with them a potential to change the world - for better or for worse? And have dreams to re-shape our whole society not always turned out to be mere utopia, while pragmatic action, on the other hand. lead the way to the future? Yes - and no. Utopias have always had their legitimation, as those who do not dream of a better society can never be convinced that our world has to keep changing. Young people have always been among the world's most "pragmatic dreamers". This book clearly shows where they want to lead the information society: away from the current "maximisation of power" in the hands of some few towards a humanized, peaceful and just world of tomorrow.

"It is not true that people stop pursuing dreams because they grow old, they grow old because they stop pursuing dreams!""

This book is written mostly by youth from different parts of the world and I feel privileged to write its Introduction in the knowledge that these young writers are expressing hopes, concerns, ideas and youthful experiences that will probably, and certainly hopefully, influence the shape of the new century.

I travel back to my youth and imagine myself living in the present times, and I am not at all sure whether the world that today's youth is beginning to inherit is exciting and full of opportunities as a result of the new technological achievements and promises, or, it is simply complex, difficult and evolving towards potentially catastrophic events largely beyond youth making and control. I am sure however that the planetary challenges facing youth, and indeed everybody today, are enormous in a huge range of areas and for a huge number of people, for instance, sickness, hunger, water, poverty, education, employment, housing, security, environment, etc. It just suffices to open our senses to the constant stream of alarming data, information and warnings emerging from diverse watchdog organizations and summits about the world's state and trends for the coming years - a blink in cosmic time - to either feel overwhelmed and hopeless, or, to feel the need and urgency for change leading to a better world for all.

The beauty of this youthful book is that it shows young people's serious awareness of the magnitude of the challenges ahead along with their hope, belief and determination to play a leading role in shaping the world of the 21st century – their world. The dominant discourse

### the author

is a burning aspiration and search for sustainability, e-inclusion, universal rights, justice, elimination of poverty, etc. Of course, this generous desire to improve the world is not new, but after almost two decades of selfishness, it is certainly a re-kindling in a new context of ancient dreams seemingly lost to the generations at present in power.

The doubt that comes to mind however is whether youthful dreams tend inevitable to fade as we grow old and face "socialization" into work and organizational cultures primarily driven by a governance of control, competition and generally power maximization. Clearly, it is never easy to challenge dominant governances that most of the time appear as "second nature" - "the way things have always been and will be." And this is particularly so in circumstances where secure employment is less and less to be taken for granted, and new categories such as employability and life-long learning are rapidly becoming critical in a society where information and knowledge have the primacy.

How then to ensure that dreams of a better world do not fade with ageing and "socialization", but rather become the source of innovation and change leading to an organizational and societal governance that takes responsibility for the goals of sustainable development and a knowledge society for the benefit of all. How to ensure that we can truly live by the principles of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights1) or by the intentions and commitments declared in worthwhile documents such as Agenda 212) and the Millennium Development Goals.31 wish I could have an answer! But there are no 'magic' recipes. At the end of it all, the answer lies in the hearts and minds of each and everyone of us and in the way we wish to live the



Alfonso Molina is Professor of Technology Strategy and Director of the **Technology Management and Policy** Programme (TechMaPP) of the University of Edinburgh, Great Britain, He was born in Chile where he trained as Electronic Engineer, and later came to Edinburgh, where he completed a doctorate in social studies of technology. He has written extensively on e-citizenship for all and on open source software for e-government, as well as on innovation and technological capabilities. Alfonso has worked on strategic documents for the European Commission in areas such as microprocessors, multimedia, information society, e-commerce, and technologies for major business and work challenges. He has worked with the cities of Edinburgh, Rome and Stockholm and he is Chairman of the international juries of the global contests: the Stockholm Challenge Award and Rome's Global Junior Challenge. Alfonso wrote the strategy documents for the Global Cities Dialogue and the Declaration of Helsinki on the digital divide. He also directs www.e-inclusionsite. org, a website contributing to the formation of a global e-inclusion movement.

gift of life in relation to our fellow human beings, the planet and beyond.

Here this book is highly motivating because its authors have all placed their hearts and minds behind the dream of sustainable development in the knowledge society for all. They have witnessed, and reflected about the poverty, pollution, sickness, illiteracy, violence, etc. around them. They have seen the recurrent failures and inability of power-holders to tackle these problems beyond the torrent of words. And yet they have believed that something can be done through innovations and solutions at micro and macro levels of society. Thus throughout the pages of this book, they tell us about the use of electronic messaging to counter pollution, the establishment of online networks facilitating access for all, the role of international alliances in taking education to remote and poor areas, the hopes for the coming World Summit of the Information Society<sup>4)</sup> and so on.

Above all, they converge, explicitly or implicitly, onto a simple old-age message that remains as fresh as ever, with perhaps the difference that it may grow more urgent as this century grows in maturity and humanity grows ever closer. This message is: "we have to change our ways," "we must face and control the forces at present driving society and succeed in redirecting development in ways that are sustainable for the planet and humanity." Not surprisingly, those countries and sectors of society who hold the most power are seen as holding the greatest responsibility for leading this change. At the same time, it is clear that this is a very tall order indeed! especially at a period when the pursuit and enjoyment of naked power unfolds routinely in front of our eyes.

Yet this is the same societal order that has created the knowledge, technologies, resources and activities that make us think that it is feasible, right from today, to start eliminating poverty, hunger, sickness, pollution, illiteracy and other evils that everyday put us all to shame. "We can but we don't want" or "we don't know how" or "we are doing fine, it's a matter of time," seems to be the predominant attitude of power-holders today. But, for all we know and hear from the many international platforms, this century is likely to confront humanity with a "we have to," we either learn to live together and share the planet in a truly enlightened global multi-cultural civilization, or we sink into the worst our humanity can also produce. The challenge of the enlightened global civilization demands a sort of conversion to a different world outlook - a world outlook that gives primacy to people and lead us to act with social responsibility for today's and future generations. It means accepting, inventing, promoting, applying and enjoying a new global governance that puts people and the planet at the forefront.

Let us see the deep nature of this challenge, the reasons for hope, and the instruments that can be used to start threading the path of a better world from today.

### The Nature of the Challenge – from 'Globalization' to 'Humanization'

More than any other time in history, the emerging information society is stimulating and networking flows of people, tangible and intangible elements and factors, impacts, relationships and interactions at a global scale. This process of globalization however is not fulfilling its potential to generate a quantum leap in the

### who we are

development of a human civilization capable of growing and living in harmony within itself and with the planet.<sup>7)</sup> The reason is in the dominant power-maximizing governance of this process that privileges the flourishing of certain global flows over others and in certain directions over others, crippling the full potential to reach the "global village" or "single human tribe" in which freedom, democracy, justice and peace would reach global plenitude in harmony with the planet.

In this respect, globalization is not negative per se. "I it is the "tribal globalization" that favours the powerful within and between continents, countries, nations, regions, organizations and communities that is problematic. Thus unbridled and directionally-biased globalization of flows of money and goods has been highly profitable for the dominant economies, while for many developing countries it has meant crises, unfair subsidies and protectionism against their main products (particularly agricultural), and huge debts that have resulted in large flows of capital travelling from the weak to the powerful economies.

True some areas of the world have also benefited, particularly, large areas with attractive markets such China, India and Brazil that have been able to play on their strength as well as on internal industrial policies that have nurtured their industrial capacity. On the whole however, there is little globalization of labour markets and access to medicines that could alleviate poverty and crippling illnesses in the poorest developing economies, while "aid flows" are relatively pitiful and normally with strings attached when compared with investments of hundreds of billions in subsidies and war expenditure.

YOIS - Youth for Intergenerational Justice and Sustainability is a worldwide youth organization independent from party politics, which strives for the rights of today's youth and future generations. We are aware of the fact that most problems today cannot be solved on a national level. Therefore YOIS also acts on the International and European level, YOIS was founded by an international group of young people at the EXPO 2000 in Hanover. Recent YOIS activities included the co-organization of the Youth Summit for Climate in July 2001 at Bonn and PRODAY, an international, Internet-based education programme that is dedicated to making young people aware about the issues of sustainability. Our websites www.yois.org and www.yoiseurope.org serve as an open forum for dis-

cussions and information exchange for our

(source: www.yois.org)

members.

TakingITglobal is a worldwide youth network dedicated to involving young people into decision making —locally and globally. TakingITglobal's core activities are the development of Internet platforms for young people where social and political issues can be discussed, and the provision of access to the information society for people worldwide. One of the activities in 2002 is "Youth Creating Digital Opportunities", a multiyear partnership with a World Bank spin-off, The Global Knowledge Partnership, to engage young people to overcoming the digital divide.

(source: www.takingitglobal.org)

Social responsibility should play a major role in globalization. Thus we should also work to strengthen the "globalization of solidarity," as ex-President of Costa Rica Luis Alberto Monges put it. Indeed, the goal for this "crossroad century" should be an effective and balanced globalization of multiple interacting flows: including, financial, production, trade, profits, power but, also, flows of responsibility, solidarity, good-will, health, education, jobs, knowledge, culture, experience, etc.

The harmonious globalization of the totality of these flows would help shift the evolution of societies towards sustainable development and the knowledge society for all. This globalization is well beyond the current limited and biased process of "power-maximizing" globalization. It entails the globalization of the best of humanity for all humanity and the planet and, consequently, the globalization of efforts to combat all evils. For this reason, I prefer to call it "humanization."

A shift towards humanization implies evolving towards governances and institutions that favour much more human- and ecologically-centred processes of development. Ultimately this means de-emphasizing the dominant role of power-maximization while, simultaneously emphasizing social responsibility. In this respect, the situation is not all black and white and evidence tends to confirm the contradictory nature of the processes we are living through at the present time, that is, co-existence of major evils affecting large parts of humanity with potential to eradicate or greatly reduce these evils and their impact.

Indeed, we see the presence of elements and the foundations of a humanization governance and process clearly operating today. Thus, many organizations, communities and people are working to improve the life of fellow human beings in need across the world and, increasingly, this solidarity is global in its reach, scope and results. Furthermore, the people carrying out these activities are not exclusive to any kind of organization, although there are organizations and countless projects that are exclusively driven by solidarity. But we also find many solidarity and social responsibility initiatives, projects and actions in the realms of government, industry, academia and civil society organizations of all kinds.

The problem is that, in spite of all the advances, the existing socially responsible effort is simply not enough to counter-balance the impact of power-maximization. To shift the balance towards humanization, a much larger scale of socially responsible systematic and cooperative action is required. This would involve every type organization and community in their own spheres of activity. It would be at all possible geographical levels, joining forces, sharing, learning, innovating, and using old and new technology, to create transparent and sustainable solutions that, gradually, by the force of its benefits for all should create a more fertile ground for the flourishing of humanization. I believe that this "crossroad century" will lend force to humanization in a context of rapid and global communications. And the worst the tendency to catastrophe gets, the stronger will be the whirl-wind of change that, sweeping across the minds of people, institutional structures and dominant governances, will eventually lead us to take seriously the goals of sustainable development and a knowledge society for all. The question is: how bad must it get for such a big and complex societal change? This

### our partner

will depend on the resilience of the planet and the capacity of power-maximizing structures and governance to adapt themselves to the problems. But it will also depends on the growth or not of processes and institutions nurturing social responsibility.

#### Humanization Requires a Holistic Approach to Governance

To understand the true depth and extent of the difficulty for humanity to change, we need to realize that, ultimately, the obstacles and challenges reside in the dialectics of "man and its circumstances. "10) or "agency and structure," that is, ourselves and the structures and governances we have created and allowed to drive the world as if they were quasi-autonomous of people. Admittedly, today, the complexity of world development with its high degree of fragmentation and power-maximization does not lend itself to easy systematic management. It is thus much easier to surrender responsibilities to apparently spontaneous mechanisms that have naturally tended to favour the most powerful interests and, of course, benefiting many people but simultaneously excluding a huge part of humanity.11)

Change is therefore difficult, complex and long term because it requires a co-evolution of "man and its circumstances" ultimately expressed in a change in holistic governance, understood as:

The written and unwritten "legislation" that governs the behaviour, relations, interactions, calculations, transactions and conflict resolution between individual, groups, departments, companies, governments and so on from local to global levels and vice-versa. Governance shapes old and new constituency-building pro-

This book would not have become a reality without the close cooperation of the Alcatel SEL Foundation, headquartered in Stuttgart/Germany, For 25 years the Alcatel SEL Foundation for Communication Research has been fostering scientifical research which contributes to improvements of Human-Technology Interaction in communication systems. The Foundation annually donors the Research Prize Technical Communication for Human-Technology Interaction. The Foundation promotes conferences and workshops at the Universities of Stuttgart (Theory and application of communication: Excellence Center Electronic Government). Darmstadt (interdisciplinary studies), Dresden (interdisciplinary research in mobility) and the Excellence Center Berlin for Information Society, which includes all Universities in Berlin. This German Science Network is contributing analytical material for the purposes of Global Information Society, a series of conferences deals with the Digital Divide and strategies to overcome it worldwide. In November 2003 the reader "Next Generation information society?" will be published in German. More than 30 leading experts analyze topics as "Is a new model of information society sought", ...Hinderings for worldwide Information Society" and "New business models for network applications". (D. Klumpp; H. Kubicek; A. Roßnagel (Ed.): Next generation information Society?, Mössingen-Talheim 2003).

(for more information, see: www.alcatel.de/stiftung)

cesses, such as the Internet or, more broadly, the information society, but it is also created and destroyed by them. It includes formal and informal organizational structures and decision-making steps, procedures, rules-of-thumb and routines for resource, rewards and punishment allocation. It includes power relations between individual and collective players at intraorganizational, inter-organizational as well as societal levels. It also includes mindsets resulting from different historical conjunctions such as crises, booms, re-organizations and so on. <sup>12</sup>

As such holistic governance is not just legislative rules. It is rather the whole ensemble of "rules of the game" that conditions and influences the behaviour of individuals, communities, organizations and societies in their specific states of developments. In this sense, it is closer to culture – deeply ingrained and resilient to change without a strong and compelling reason: negative or positive.

This holistic understanding of governance is crucial to size up the magnitude of the challenge involved in driving the development and implementation of ICTs and the knowledge society in directions that are consistent with the UN Millennium Summit goal of reducing poverty by half by the year 2015!

But if predictions about the dire state of the world coming from many international platforms are correct then what option do we have but to face this challenge with our full minds and hearts. This is exactly where youth leaders and organizations embracing the dream of a better society have the key role of refining this dream, carrying it forward into reality through becoming examples of social responsibility, solidarity and effective actions. This is largely the contribution made by the young authors of

this book through their stories, reflections and invitation to change paradigms and practices. May this special message hopefully reach the political will to advance determinedly towards sustainable development and the knowledge society for all!

#### Humanization Requires Dreaming Big – Acting Pragmatically

The development of ICTs and the knowledge society in the 21st century is giving rise to new concepts such as e-government, edemocracy, and e-citizenship, together with new forms of ICT-based organizations, voting, campaigning, communicating, interacting, learning, etc. A process of societal learning is at its early stages, offering plenty of room for creating and trying new ideas, actions, programmes, governance, etc. This is a great opportunity to advance from today's tribal globalization towards humanization and, particularly towards the knowledge society for all. After all, if it is not at these times of challenges, opportunities, threats and changes, when is it going to be that we soul-search deeply and find the ways to aim, work and progress towards a better world?

The key is to place people and the planet at the centre of the reflection and action, sharing and joining forces to build innovatively on the opportunities opened by the new technology and the many e-inclusion initiatives already taking place at all levels of society by all types of organizations communities and individuals. <sup>[3]</sup> The interaction between these two major factors alone should generate a movement of global reach that would help enhance quantitatively and qualitatively the impact of current and future humanization ideas, initiatives, results

## a little history (1)

and opinion at all levels, especially the grassroots. This is the essence of the 'global einclusion movement' (GeM) I foresee as the timely instrument to help effect targeted change in the direction of the knowledge society for all. In essence, GeM is a particular expression of the general humanization movement. It is fundamentally focused on e-inclusion and hence, in the eradication of poverty and associated evils, and the flourishing of justice, peace and development of human capacities for all (i.e., the knowledge society for all).

Of course, you may doubt, as I do myself, about whether this is really possible, or it is simply an impossible dream, an exercise in idealism or utopia that may be nice to imagine but far-fetched from the "real reality" with its "pragmatic solutions" that, for some reason, end up rather frequently by re-producing the situation.

I happen to believe however that utopias, idealism, dreams, visions of a better world do play an important role in the development of people and humanity as a whole, provided they avoid sectarianism and extremes that tend to end up by violently discriminating and excluding other people and communities. Unfortunately, idealism and dreams of a better world are too often reduced to rhetoric and disregarded, even "disqualified" in the face of overwhelming pragmatism, often associated with pressures to accept and play according to the "real reality" of power maximization.

Both extremes are negative and crippling of the rich multi-dimensionality of humanity and society. At the same time they are not exclusive of each other, something very much in line with the fact that human beings are "creatures of contradiction." And here lies precisely the path

There are various opinions as to when the exact "birth" of the Internet was. One of these "birthdays" was in 1969, when the first Wide Area Network (WAN) was set up between computers in the two US cities of Stanford and Los Angeles. Before, computer networks always consisted of a central computer and "dumb" terminals, which only had a keyboard and a monitor, but no capacity for data processing. The new WAN, in contrast, was the first connection of two independent computers over a large distance. The network was soon called ARPAnet after the "Advanced Research Project Agency" which had set it up. One of its main political targets was to catch up with the technological advantage of the USSR, over which there was much concern in the USA ever since the Soviets had shot their first satellite, Sputnik, into orbit in 1957. During the first years, the new network only grew slowly: In 1969 the two universities of Santa Barbara and Utah were added, and even ten years later there were only 200 hosts on the ARPAnet. Each of them could be the central computer of a network itself, so that the ARPAnet - like the Internet today - was a network consisting of networks. On October 1984, around 1,000 hosts were counted, in 1987, approximately 10,000, and in 1989, their number rose to over 100,000. In 1989 the ARPAnet was liquidated and became a part of the National Science Foundation's (NSF) network, founded in 1986.

(source: Giesbert Damaschke in: Die Presse, Spectrum, 3.4.1999, p.X)

forward, in an apparently contradictory pragmatic idealism, that invites people to do two things simultaneously:

- To dream and aspire for a better world, for instance, in the form of "an information society for all," that is, a society without poverty, free, just, democratic, transparent and peaceful. A society that places people at the centre of its development and pursues "development as freedom," to use the concept on Nobel Prize Amartya Sen.<sup>10</sup>
- To seek to advance the realization of the dream in a form that is pragmatically well-informed, feasible, innovative, implementable and fruitful, in accordance with the magnitude of the challenge, difficulties and opportunities presented by the state of development of the circumstances/environment within which the effort to advance the dream takes place.

In fact, this is nothing new and surely all movements that have helped change the world have had these two components; and this is valid today as it will be in the future. Thus, as we face the challenges of this crossroad century, of the "knowledge society for all," I think that the first step is to embrace and live the apparently contradictory pragmatic idealism in full. Let us be "pragdealists" by blending dreams of a better world with practical actions to advance it, or even better "praxdealists" by blending dreams, science and practical actions for a better world for all. I believe the young authors in this book and many others like them across the world are implicitly pursuing "pragdealism" in their thought and actions. This force must be multiplied by the thousands in the positive and sharing environment of something like the global e-inclusion movement or other programmatic movement for a better world.

#### The Global e-Inclusion Movement – An Instrument for Humanization

One of the main manifestations of the knowledge society will be a "world of screens, connectivity and interactions" that will bring into our lives, at short time, events and developments happening in any part of the world. In this society, there is the potential to create new forms of democracy, empowerment and participation, eliminating the arrogant exercise of power by rulers who at the end of the day are perfect incarnations of the Machiavellian game of politics as the "art of remaining in power."15) People feel largely disempowered by this traditional style of institutional politics and they are turning increasingly to grassroot organizations and protest movements that are making their presence felt in a global scale, taking advantage of the opportunities of the networking technologies.

As the century goes by and society grows ever more networked, this tendency will grow stronger with the result that movements will become a central ingredient of democracy, empowerment, participation and change. In this context, a movement must be understood as a "boundless, free flowing association of people sharing and pursuing in myriad ways the realisation of a dream. It is a space for leadership, creativity, innovation, emulation, cooperation, competition, fulfilment and disappointments in pursuit of change. It may be partly coordinated or simply loosely associated through mechanisms for sharing and learning about different experiences. The bond - whatever its manifestation- is simply the shared dream and the desire to do something about it."16)

Programmatic movements will emerge innovating democratic forms of governance

# a little history (2)

around focused, flexible, transparent and accountable programmes of action for a better world. They will bring together all relevant stakeholders from governments, private sector, civil society, community and individuals on a global scale, and they will interact and relate with other movements creating the force for change from present tribal globalization to humanization.

The spirit of the global e-inclusion movement points in this direction, with its aim at contributing to the UN Millennium goal of reducing poverty by half by the year 2015! (and why not eradicate it by the year 2030!) while making a reality of the "knowledge society for all" – a society in which democracy, social responsibility, cultural diversity and achievement, transparency, justice and peace constitute the dominant governance of human development.

As you read the pages of this book, you will see that the ideas, energies and will to act exhibited by today's young generation give reasons for hope and confidence in that the 21st century may indeed be the century of humanization. The condition is to maintain and nurture the dream but, above all, to work to make a reality!

(For footnotes, see the list at the end of this book)

In 1989 a new milestone in the history of the Internet was set, when Tim Berners-Lee, a young scientist at the European nuclear research facility CERN in Geneva, wrote a paper entitled "Information Management: A Proposal". To improve the communication processes at CERN. Berners-Lee proposed a hypertext system in which documents, whose content was interrelated, could be electronically "linked", and in which it would be possible to "jump" from one document to another without getting lost. During the following months, this new hypertext system evolved into the World Wide Web. The concept of the WWW made Internet use much easier. It had already been possible before to access any computer on the Internet, but the procedure to do so was complicated and demanded a lot of technical knowledge.

The WWW fostered the further rapid growth of the "network of networks" From 1989 to 1990, the number of hosts grew from 100,000 to 300,000, and in 1992, there were already more than a million hosts worldwide. A further, enormous "push" effect for Internet growth came in 1993, when Marc Andreessen developed the programme .. Mosaic". which facilitated even unskilled users to access the Internet, Later, Mosaic was to become Netscape, one of today's most used Internet navigators. Today, the Internet (for which the term "WWW" is commonly used as a synonyme") doubles its size approximately every 12 to 18 months.

(source: Giesbert Damaschke in: Die Presse.

### et cetera

#### Alfonso Molina: live your dreams page 10

- \*) Adapted from a letter attributed to Gabriel Garcia Marquez. "I would show men how very wrong they are to think that they cease to be in love when they grow old, not knowing that they grow old when they cease to be in love!"
- 1) www.un.org/Overview/rights.html
- www.un.org/esa/sustdev/documents/agenda21/english/ agenda21toc.htm
- 3) www.un.org/millenniumgoals/
- 4) www.itu.int/wsis/
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- 7) Soros, G., On Globalization, Public Affairs Ltd., Oxford, 2002, Gray, P., False Dawn, New Press, 1999, Also, Stiglitz,
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- 9) The essence of "humanization" is a long-felt aspiration found throughout history. Recent writings include, Sen, A., Development as Freedom, OUP, Oxford, 1999. Sen, A., Globalizzazione e Liberta, Mondadori, Miliano, 2002. Also Ekins, P., and Max-Neff, M. (eds). Real-Life Economics. Understanding Wealth Creation, Routledge, London, 1992. And Bello, W., Deglobalization. Ideas for a New World Economy, Zed Books, London, 2002.
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- 11) See writings in reference 6 above.
- 12) Molina (2002), op.cit., reference 3 above.
- 13) Also Molina, A., A Better World is Possible: An Invitation to Believe and Make It Happen, Report of Workshop on Digital Divide (Rome, 4-5 December 2002), TechMaPP, The University of Edinburgh, Edinburgh, 2003.
- 14) See reference 9 above.

- 15) Machiavelli, N., The Prince, Wrote in 1513. Full text translation by W.K. Marriott found in http://oregonstate.edu/instruct/phl302/texts/prince/prince\_contents.html
- 16) See Molina, A., The Digital Divide and The Stockholm and Rome Challenge, Paper presented at the Third Global Forum: "Fostering Democracy and Development through e-Government," Naples, Italy, 15-17 March 2001.