



THE PEACE CHILD GLOBAL MEDIA EVENT

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Background - Peace Child International:

In Papua New Guinea, when warring tribes made peace, they exchanged a baby to seal the peace between them. The babies grew up in the others' tribe and if, in the future, conflict threatened, the elders of the tribe would send out each child to negotiate a new peace between them. Such a child was called a 'Peace Child.'

The Missionary who discovered this story used it to explain how God sent His Peace Child – Jesus Christ – to negotiate peace between Himself and human beings. Peace Child International (PCI) uses it to show that elders can – and should! – empower their young people to take responsibility for important decisions relating to their future – like saving succeeding generations from the scourge of climate change. Founded in 1982, PCI has empowered young people to seek resolution to challenges from ending the Cold War and Apartheid, to conflicts in Central America and Ireland, to more recent challenges like sustainable development & youth unemployment. All have been resolved through the simple device of imagining a future in which the change has happened, then back-casting to the present to tell the story of how youth of today deliver that change in their lifetimes. The story that embodies this device is called: *Peace Child* – a musical written by David Woollcombe with songs by Cat Stevens, and his brother, David Gordon, based on *The Peace Book* by Bernard Benson.

In the 1980s, *Peace Child* helped end Cold War by working with the UN and high profile celebrities like John Denver, Liv Ullman, Jane Alexander, Susanna York and Peter Ustinov. Mikhail Gorbachev's Green Cross Intl. organisation was so impressed with it, they asked for a new version to be prepared to celebrate the 20th Anniversary of the organisation. The new version, *Peace Child 2050*, was performed in the Grande Salle of the UN Office in Geneva. It addressed the challenge of arresting climate change by re-constructing the UN. Though the Paris Climate Change agreement and the Sustainable Development Goals are welcome sign-posts, adherence to them is sadly voluntary – and the public at large are mostly ignorant about the detail of either of them while their governments busy themselves with issues which, beside these global challenges, are relatively trivial. The excellent leadership being offered by Al Gore, Leonardo di Caprio, the Post-Carbon Institute, the Stanford Solutions Project and others – is being all-but ignored by governments and the media is complicit in under-reporting, or mis-reporting, the seriousness of the issues. As Naomi Klein argues in her book, *This Changes Everything*, the current concatenation of crises requires people to rise up in a global and thematically unified mobilisation: that mobilisation is what this initiative is designed to engender.

Linked across national, ethnic and economic borders by the Internet, the current generation of young digital natives look on the dysfunctional UN with a mixture of pity and frustration. As an institution, it is well beyond its sell-by date – but no one has been able to come up with a narrative – a story – that can explain how the UN can be re-built in a way that will achieve 21st Century priorities with the machinery and attitudes available to us now. This global Media event is designed to give us hope by telling a plausible story of how it can be done!

What is a Global Media Event?

Event television is dominated by Sports events – the Olympics, the World Cup, the Tour de France. Political Media Events are dominated by elections and referenda. More searching events – like the CBS “Nuclear Winter” programme, or ABC’s “The Last Century” – are rarely attempted. But when done, they are frequently very popular and have a half-life in education that lasts for decades. The *Peace Child Global Media Event* is one such event, strategically targeted over FOUR stages to secure the maximum media and political visibility:

STAGE ONE: Announcement and Casting: The project begins with the casting of the international youth. The point about these youth is that they could be any young person concerned about his/her future. They need to be accomplished musical performers and they all need to share a passion to set the world to rights and get some change happening. Think “*??’s got Talent PLUS Passion and Informed Convictions!*” In PCI, we call this: *Incentivised participation*. Millions of young people want to be movie stars: this media search will incentivise them to create social networks of millions, raising their generation’s awareness of the problems they face and engaging them in the search for solutions. The story calls for a total youth cast of around 15-20 youth: we shall get major broadcasters to conduct a talent search to cast at least one from each of the major broadcast markets – USA, UK, France, Germany, Australia, Japan, India, China, Russia, Scandinavia, Arab Region, Brazil, Latin America(Spanish), Africa (TVC/eNCA). The story has cameo roles for star singers, and actors to play the roles of the Industrialist, TV Chat show host, US President, UN Secretary General and Story-teller. This last will be played by a different celebrity in each major Market, telling the story to local children in their mother tongue;

STAGE TWO: Interviewing the Experts: With a cast in place, the youth – and the producers – will interview the finest thinkers on UN reform, climate change, global governance and security: experts on climate change / green economy issues - like The Elders, the Post-Carbon Institute, the Solutions Project, Project Everyone and the leaders of various UN Agencies, think tanks, universities and NGOs. They will ask all of them the same, carefully crafted questions about: “*How can the UN deliver on its promise to save humanity from the scourge of war, deliver Education for All, Health for All, arrest climate change, eliminate poverty in a sustainable way and narrow the gap between the wealthiest and the poorest citizens of the planet?*” A comprehensive cast list of interviewees will be assembled to ensure that we get input from every relevant sector of society: politicians, business leaders, academics, media people and opinion-formers – led by those who speak most powerfully on these issues – like Bill McKibben, Mark Jacobson, Richard Heindorf, Amory Lovins, Naomi Klein, Jonathon Porritt, George Monbiot, Achim Steiner and others. The cast along with the producers and screen-writers will review their answers and develop a new version of the *Peace Child 2050* story. This will be fashioned into a screen play – building on the traditional, tried-and-tested songs and building blocks of the story, but varying the content to reflect expert opinion, the skill of experienced screen-writers and the passions of the young cast.

STAGE THREE: Making the Movie: The story is set on Peace Day 2050 – a global day of celebration when communities everywhere tell the story of how, back in 2015, a group of young people come together and change the course of history. Different language versions of the musical will be staged in the major broadcast markets to rationalise the use of song and dance. A Major stage version is planned for Mumbai, India using top Bollywood choreographers and costumiers to breathe colour, fun and energy into the movie. Different star Story-tellers narrate the show in different markets in their native language. The main cast scenes will be shot by a small crew, documentary-style in the different countries visited in the Story – climaxing at the UN in New York. Different cast members will be filmed delivering key lines in the film so that, for American audiences, an American youth will say killer lines; in Germany, a German youth; in Australia, Japan and China – an Australian, Japanese and Chinese youth etc. All stories reach the same climax where youth, enraged by the failure of leaders to secure a future for themselves and future generations, call a Youth Strike and engage the UN Security Council in a debate that results in global action to resolve the major issues facing the planet.

STAGE FOUR: The Global Media Event: A unique release strategy will be developed centred on a single ‘UN Day’ screening on October 24th in all major markets, followed by discussions afterwards with some of the key people interviewed in Stage TWO. This will be preceded by festival screenings and showings held at UN offices in New York, Geneva, Paris (UNESCO), Vienna, Nairobi, Bangkok along with screenings hosted by individual broadcasters in their capitals with political leaders debating the content with the young stars of the movie and other experts. The movie will continue to be available in its different language versions to enable the online debate to continue in schools and colleges across the world – with community and school productions of new versions of the musical encouraged with royalty-free production packages available to all. These productions and expert comments / opinion pieces will be monitored and posted online by PCI staff who will also promote educational debates and conversations between pupils and teachers across continents.

Conclusion: In this way, the *Peace Child 2050* Global Media Event will draw attention, not just to the many problems that the rising generation will face in their lifetimes, but also to the myriad solutions that exist to solve those problems. By creating a 100% positive spin, this global media event will engender hope and optimism about humanity’s future. It will also, point the way towards the kind of bold, courageous practical actions that the human family, especially its young people, must take to resolve our current global challenges.