



# Vote World Parliament

— democratic world parliament through a global referendum —

**POSTSCRIPT — BALLOT WORDING CHANGES SINCE 2008**

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Between 2008, when *Rescue Plan* was first published, and the present (2012), one major change has occurred within the NGO<sup>1</sup> behind this initiative. As explained on page 137 of *Rescue Plan*, I knew that the missing ingredient at the global level of governance was an accountable world parliament, but I failed to realize that the focus of the proposition on the ballot should be on that missing ingredient, and nothing else. Once I was brought to understand the critical importance of that fact, the Board approved the revision of the NGO's name (from "Vote World Government" to "Vote World Parliament") as well as key changes in the ballot wording, as explained below.

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Like most political projects, Vote World Parliament is evolving. Originally (as presented in the companion book, *Rescue Plan for Planet Earth*) the ballot wording was:

**Do you support the creation of a directly-elected, representative and democratic world government?**

People assumed that we meant to create a world government where there was none at present. It was later realized that to a huge extent, we already have world government in the WTO, the IMF, the World Bank, the ICC and the UN (and in some respects and at some times, the government of the USA acts *as if* it were a world government). What we don't have is world democracy, and the key missing ingredient is an accountable world parliament. After much debate in 2009, the Board agreed unanimously to change the name of the organization from Vote World Government to Vote World Parliament, and to revise the ballot wording to read:

**Do you support the creation of a directly-elected, representative and democratic world parliament that is authorized to legislate on global issues?**

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<sup>1</sup> The term NGO stands for "non-governmental organization." NGOs are non-profits, and some, but not all, are registered charities. VWP is registered as a "non-profit" in the Canadian province of Québec under the name "VWG.org," but due to the political nature of our work, VWP is not a "registered charity" (it is "non-partisan," but it is still "political" in the broadest sense of the word).

[NOTE 1: This was done at a time when the total vote count was in the neighbourhood of 17,000 votes, and we considered whether we needed to re-start the overall vote count in light of the change in the ballot wording. Since a parliament is part of a government, and a democratic government must include an accountable parliament, it was decided that we did not have to restart the ballot count. Obviously, had the change been the reverse, from a “parliament” to a “government,” the verdict would have been different.]

Chapter 5 of *Rescue Plan* is about transparency at the new world body. The one argument that is used against the world democracy movement *which has merit* is the accusation that any world government would “inevitably” degenerate into world tyranny at some point in the future. Since transparency is the only reliable antidote for corruption, it was strongly recommended (indeed insisted upon) in *Rescue Plan* that a regime of “total transparency” be presented as an integral and sacrosanct part of the operating procedures of the new world body. In 2011, we were asked why we did not include that word, “transparent,” in the list of key adjectives describing what people were being asked to vote on in the global referendum. We realized it had probably been a mistake to not include that word from the beginning, and so after the Board considered the matter, it was decided (unanimously) to include that word now. Thus, in March of 2011, the ballot wording was altered to read:

**Do you support the creation of a directly-elected, representative, [transparent](#) and democratic world parliament that is authorized to legislate on global issues?**

[NOTE 2: Again, we faced a question of whether the vote count in the global referendum should be re-started at zero. After discussion, the Board decided unanimously that since the concept of total transparency was emphasized in *Rescue Plan* and was considered and intended to be a non-negotiable item since the very beginning of the project, inserting the word “transparent” was not a change in the concept at all, but rather a clarification, so we were again not obliged to restart the vote count at zero (the vote count by this time was a bit more than 21,000).]

[NOTE 3: The percentage of “yes” votes has been around 95% since the beginning of the project, and was not altered at all by either of these changes in the ballot wording. Also, if it is raised as an issue later, at a time when we have millions of votes, for instance, it will be a simple matter to delete the first 21,000 ballots and not affect the overall situation. It should also be noted that in these early days, before the referendum has gone viral, there is far more interest in our project by those who *support* world democracy than from those who *oppose* it. Once the global referendum has become well known, the true final tally is expected to be in the region of 70% in favour, 30% opposed, although that involves some guesswork. And it should be remembered that our definition of a global mandate that has the force and effect of world law requires that at least half of all human adults have voted and that a minimum of 67% of all those votes are in the “yes” column. (See Chapters 10 and 11 of *Rescue Plan* for the rationale behind these numbers.)]

*Because of the evolution of our ballot wording (explained above), the wording of a **draft UN resolution** presented in the 2008 published book is obsolete. **It should now read:***

[Available online at <http://voteworldparliament.org/allies-initiatives/draft-un-resolution/>]

**Draft United Nations Resolution**  
for a  
**Global Referendum**  
on a  
**Democratic World Parliament**

**THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY,**

**EXPRESSING** deep concern over the danger of nuclear war and the danger that WMD (weapons of mass destruction) may be used by non-national groups, either of which could imperil the existence of life on Earth,

**MINDFUL** of the profound problems (climate change, HIV/AIDS, etc.) that persist and worsen for lack of resources while more than one trillion (1,000 billion) dollars are spent on armaments every year,

**BEARING IN MIND** that all nations and all people need genuine security in the age of “overkill” weapons, and that real security is now possible only through the establishment of an effective and widely supported world authority,

**AFFIRMING** the interest of all individuals in expressing their preferences on a matter as fundamental as the survival of humankind, and indeed asserting a human right on the part of all adults to participate meaningfully in such a basic choice,

**RESPECTING** the principle of subsidiarity, whereby issues are handled by the lowest appropriate level of government, thus leaving national politics to national governments, local politics to municipal governments, and so on,

**REALIZING** that people of every background would be inclined to support the creation of a directly-elected world parliament that is authorized by the human race to adopt and enforce legislation on such supranational issues as security, justice, peace, and the protection of the shared natural environment,

**RECALLING** that Article 21 of the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights* provides that “The will of the people shall be the basis of the authority of government [and that] this will shall be expressed in periodic and genuine elections which ... shall be held by secret vote or by equivalent free voting procedures,”

**KNOWING** that because the will of the people is the basis of all political power and authority, a clear expression of that will in a mandate emerging from a successful global referendum must be given effect to by all national governments,

**ACCEPTING** that the principle above finds strong support in the *Declaration on the Inadmissibility of Intervention in the Domestic Affairs of States and the Protection of their Independence and Sovereignty*, whose Preamble states that: "... all peoples have an inalienable right to ... the exercise of their sovereignty ... and that, by virtue of that right, they freely determine their political status," which status may include "citizen of Earth" in addition to one's citizenship in a nation, province or city,

**REALIZING** that a substantial mandate from the people of all nations would provide an irresistible legal and political base of support for the eventual achievement of a world of cooperation, co-existence and civil governance,

**DETERMINED** to provide to all adult human beings the opportunity to formally express their views on this hopeful concept,

1. **RESOLVES** to seek the unanimous agreement of all Member States to a brief and simple expression of the goal of a Democratic World Parliament;
2. **DECIDES** to use this brief expression as the wording on the ballot in a Global Referendum on establishing a Democratic World Parliament;
3. **CALLS UPON** each Member Nation to voluntarily collect its "national component" of the Global Referendum before January 1, 2018;
4. **ENCOURAGES** each Member Nation to seek full and open debate of all sides of the issue prior to holding the vote among its national population;
5. **DETERMINES** that no one may cast a ballot before having attained the age of sixteen;
6. **RESOLVES** that the collection of each "national component" of the Global Referendum must be accompanied by United Nations supervision to ensure the fairness of the voting procedures; and
7. **DECIDES** to form a committee to study the proposal for a Global Referendum on the creation of a Democratic World Parliament, and report back to the next Session of the General Assembly.

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Suggested ballot wording:

**Do you support the creation of a directly-elected, representative, transparent, and democratic world parliament that is authorized to legislate on global issues?**