

NOTE: This document can be shortened by cutting at the end of page 6 or page 14

Think globally, act locally:

Considerations related to a municipality-driven global referendum on the creation of a democratic world parliament

Initially prepared for **Per Norbäck**, a member of the City Council in Vallentuna, Sweden, by **Jim Stark**, Founder and Co-President of Vote World Parliament (VWP) and author of *Rescue Plan for Planet Earth*. This copy is for the use of _____ and the city council of _____, _____.

<https://voteworldparliament.org/> - the Vote World Parliament NGO and the active ballot
<http://www.rescueplanforplanetearth.com/> - the book about the global referendum strategy
<https://voteworldparliament.org/allies-initiatives/authors-campaign/> - list of 120+ supporting authors

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

The goal of our work at Vote World Parliament (VWP) has been to collect, one by one, two billion or so “yes” votes on a ballot intended to authorize the creation of a democratic world parliament. That goal remains, but VWP is opening up a “second front,” where we will try to apply our “bottom up” strategy through existing political institutions. In short, **we are aiming to get a resolution calling for a global referendum on a democratic world parliament passed by the UN General Assembly by mobilizing city and town councils!** (See draft United Nations resolution on pages 5 and 6 of this document.) “Can’t be done,” you say? Read on.

In the 1980s, I headed Operation Dismantle, a Canadian NGO set up to promote gradual and balanced nuclear disarmament by the then-superpowers, the USA and the USSR. We got one city council to agree to piggyback a local referendum (using our ballot wording) onto its next municipal election. We parlayed that one victory into a whole campaign. In the end, more than 200 Canadian cities and towns held referendums in tandem with their municipal elections, at their own expense (2¢ per voter). We got millions of votes ... and we educated a nation. The full story is at the “Books” page under the “VWP Information” tab of the VWP site—click on Part #1 of *Cold War Blues*, then scroll down to Chapter 8, “Municipal Referendums.” And remember, *there was no Internet back then!*

This time, the goal is a democratic world parliament, and this time, we are global rather than national. And we don’t have to ask municipalities to actually conduct referendums either—we have the Internet for that ... *and it’s free!* There are a number of things that should get the job done. Here is a list of suggestions as to how to proceed:

1 The global referendum has already begun online. **Inform yourself** about it by spending a few minutes visiting <https://voteworldparliament.org/>, and **cast your own vote** (we will assume that with almost 95% “yes” votes so far, through the first 21,600+ ballots, you are in favour of the proposition on the ballot). Ask a minimum of **100 people** in your city or ward how they would vote in a global referendum (**as worded above**) and ask them if they would be pleased to see their municipal council take a leadership position on this issue.

Assuming the results of this **informal survey** are positive, give them to the local media and to all councilors in your city or town.

2 Set up an appointment for you and your spouse or a friend to **meet your city councilor** at his or her office. After explaining the situation, **ask him or her to vote in the online global referendum** (see URL above), and **ask him or her to vote “yes.”**

3 Assuming this happens, ask your city councilor if he/she would be willing to **lobby all other councilors to vote in the global referendum** and also to **propose a resolution in council to endorse the global referendum and call on all citizens of your city or town to vote online**. Tell your city councilor that you will lobby other councilors (unless he or she wants to take on the leadership role in council), and seek commitments of support for the VWP global referendum resolution (below) when it comes up for a vote in council.

4 Ask your councilor to agree that if council endorses the global referendum initiative, the **mayor should then be asked to contact other mayors in your country** (as many as possible) to see if their councils will join in a movement that should eventually lead to the sending of a **letter or email to the mayors of all capital cities in the world**, asking them to follow your council’s lead and support the global referendum proposal.

5 If things get this far, ask your councilor if he or she will to agree to send a **letter**, signed by all supportive councilors in your city or town, **to your national head of government**, asking him or her to **propose the draft UN resolution in the UN General Assembly**, or at least commit your country to supporting such a resolution in the General Assembly if the resolution is brought forward by a worthy group of co-sponsoring nations. (See draft United Nations resolution at pages 5 and 6, below.)

6 If things get this far, ask your councilor if he or she will encourage sending a **letter**, in the name of all the city, provincial and national politicians from your country who are in favour, **to the heads of all national governments**, asking them to commit to **voting in favour of the UN resolution** if it is brought forward **in the General Assembly**.

We’d like to establish *as fact* the existence of a powerful **global mandate** from the entire human race by **2015** or so, so please get going on this list as soon as possible. If you have any friends or family members who feel as strongly as you do on this issue, please send them a copy of this document and ask them to assist in this campaign.

It should not be assumed that all people who intuitively support this effort to establish a democratic world parliament know everything there is to know about it, nor should it be assumed that anyone supporting this campaign needs to know in detail how a democratic world parliament can be accomplished, and/or why it is necessary for the very survival of humanity. However, open discussion before a vote is a core democratic principle, so the decision has been made to attach a longer **backgrounder** to this short document so that those who are interested can learn more (and there is also the VWP website, mentioned above, or the book, *Rescue Plan for Planet Earth*).

Good luck with your local campaign, and please keep us informed of your progress.

Jim Stark and Ted Stalets, Co-Presidents, Vote World Parliament
voteworldparliament@webruler.com or Ted@VoteWorldParliament.org

Draft resolution for the _____ City Council

Provided by Vote World Parliament
voteworldparliament@webruler.com
<https://voteworldparliament.org/>

MOVED BY _____

SECONDED BY _____

WHEREAS the global referendum on the creation of a democratic world parliament is receiving about 95% “yes” votes from all over the world, and the citizens of _____ would surely be expected to support the creation of a democratic world parliament and would want the municipal council of _____ to take meaningful actions towards this goal;

and

WHEREAS the establishment of a democratic world parliament is likely the only way to end war, ensure human survival and deal effectively with other supranational issues;

and

WHEREAS the great majority of sensible people deeply appreciate the benefits of and the need for democratic governance at the municipal, provincial and national levels and would be inclined to support this same alternative-to-anarchy at the global level;

and

WHEREAS the ballot wording for a global referendum on this option has been formulated very precisely 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?”;

and

WHEREAS the mandate from a **successful** global referendum could be taken as legally binding under international law and would be politically compelling in any event (“successful” in this context is defined as a situation where at least 50% of all human adults have voted, and at least 67% of these votes are in the “yes” column);

and

WHEREAS the principle of subsidiarity indicates that all political problems should be dealt with by the smallest appropriate political unit, and since the issue of global security (the protection of the Earth and its people) is not being handled at all well by governments above the level of the city or town, city and town councils are legally permitted and morally bound to act as best they can to assure that a democratic world parliament is established as soon as possible;

BE IT RESOLVED THAT:

- 1) _____ Council will ask all local adults (16 years old or older) to participate now in the Internet-based global referendum on the proposed creation of a directly-elected, representative, transparent, and democratic world parliament (see <https://voteworldparliament.org/> for details about this global referendum) and will upload a digital voting booth onto its municipal website for this purpose (to upload the voting booth link, see <https://voteworldparliament.org/shadowbox/getballot.html>).

2) Assuming that the Council of _____ proceeds as outlined above and the local online referendum results are positive, the mayor of _____ should write the mayors of other major _____ cities and towns asking them to follow _____'s lead, and then also write (co-signed by others) to the mayors of all capital cities in the world, asking them to take actions analogous to those taken by _____.

3) _____ Council will ask our national government to seek other national governments as UN co-sponsors, after which our national government should (with this group of co-sponsoring nations) propose a resolution in the General Assembly calling for the formal global referendum. (See the draft UN resolution below, or at <https://voteworldparliament.org/draftUNresolution.pdf>.)

4) _____ Council will ask our national government to offer to host a conference to discuss all issues related to the creation of a democratic world parliament, including and most especially the construction of a democratic world constitution.

Straw vote results (if applicable):	IN FAVOUR _____	Final vote results:	IN FAVOUR _____
	OPPOSED _____		OPPOSED _____
	ABSTAIN _____		ABSTAIN _____



NOTE: What you see above is a composite resolution, with all four requests in one resolution. It is likely wise to go at these four requests individually. In other words, leave the preparatory clauses as they are, but include only the first “operative” (BE IT RESOLVED THAT:) clause for the first request to Council. If the first one succeeds, at a later municipal council meeting, the same preparatory clauses could precede the second operative clause. In some places, all three remaining operative clauses could be combined into one resolution, depending on the experience of the first resolution, and depending on the feedback you get from lobbying efforts in this regard. Perhaps once real momentum is established there will be municipal councils that pass the VWP resolution exactly as presented above, with advance knowledge (from lobbying) that the resolution will pass unanimously.

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 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 nationality, 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, 2017;
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 a Democratic World Parliament, and report back to the next Session of the General Assembly.

* * * * *

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?



NOTE: If a given country—say Canada—conducts a formal national referendum in conjunction with a national election as asked by the UN resolution, all votes previously submitted by Canadian citizens to the Internet-based (online) referendum would be rescinded.

Backgrounder

for the short document (above or attached) entitled
Think globally, act locally: Considerations related to a municipality-driven global referendum on the creation of a democratic world parliament

by Jim Stark (jimstark@webruler.com — <https://voteworldparliament.org/>),
Founder and Co-President of Vote World Parliament and author of *Rescue Plan for Planet Earth*

“Peace is a product of law and order; law is essential if the force of arms is not to rule the world.” Former U.S. Supreme Court Justice William O. Douglas

1 Preamble

This is about *accountable* global governance. Although most people fail to join the dots, the fact is that in many respects, we already have world government. The problem is that the agencies that perform global governance functions (the G8 and the G20, the World Trade Organization, the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund and the UN itself) are not democratic at the present time, nor do they pretend to be democratic, nor are they likely to become more democratic through internal reform.¹ The creation of a *democratic* world parliament is the solution to the world’s biggest problems, and a global referendum is the only legitimate vehicle through which such a new institution can be approved. Now that Vote World Parliament (VWP) has defined the means by which a global referendum can be conducted, the time has come to do it. (Go to <https://voteworldparliament.org/> for more details, or read *Rescue Plan for Planet Earth*, available at <http://www.amazon.com/> as an eBook or a soft cover book. Go to <https://voteworldparliament.org/pdf/prshort.pdf> or <https://voteworldparliament.org/pdf/prlong.pdf> to see press releases about the portable ballot, also known as the uploadable voting booth.)

2 Starting points and fundamentals

The human failure

Even within a family, desires, preferences and opinions often clash, and there are almost always family rules, explicit or implicit, by which such conflicts are resolved. Our world is suffering severely, and in grave danger, because humanity has failed to govern itself in an accountable way at the level of its most serious problems, the planetary level. There is now an analysis of this problem and a credible proposed solution that ought to bring hope to all of humankind.

¹ At times (and all the time in certain ways) the American government (acting alone or in concert with what it likes to think of as a “coalition of the willing”) serves as the world’s policeman, which is to say that the USA sometimes plays the role of a world government, usually uninvited and often resented.

Fight or talk

For as long as there are sharp differences of view, people will either fight them out or talk them out. Since the invention of WMD (weapons of mass destruction, especially nuclear weapons), war has become obsolete, self-destructive and potentially omniscidal (capable of destroying all human life on Earth). As such, eliminating war has become an essential precondition for indefinite human survival. (There are also other potential human causes of our extinction, such as global warming, and other less dramatic global problems that cry out for global solutions, solutions that are currently not being provided by the UN or any other institution of global governance, and which can't be provided by such existing institutions.) The only way to eliminate war now and forever is to provide for the talk-it-out approach, to create institutions that are required to negotiate and implement solutions that are accepted by the parties in conflict and supported by the human race generally.

World law

Talking out differences requires a meeting place² and rules by which debate is conducted and all issues resolved, and all of that, including the implementation of agreed policies, requires money (taxes). The rules by which political decisions are made are called laws, and so our choice is between anarchy—no rules at all—and law.³ People should be able to select their lawmakers democratically and depend on their institutions of governance to provide, before all else, security. And if state-sponsored military services cannot provide security,⁴ “we, the people” have a human right to provide for our security by creating a democratic world parliament to deliver non-military and political solutions to problems that could earlier have led to war. This institution would of necessity be directly-elected and representative, and it would require the ratification (by the majority of living human adults) of a world constitution at a later date. The law that is made on global issues by a democratic world parliament would be called “world law.”⁵ It differs from “international law” in that the latter pertains exclusively (or almost exclusively) to the management of relations between and among nation-states, and world law will “reach to individuals,” as the legal term has it.⁶ (Please note: the existence of world law would not remove or even diminish any right to self-defence held now by an individual or nation-state, but will play an active role in distinguishing between *actual* self-defence and the bogus claims of self-defence that are often used, particularly by nation-states, to try to justify aggressive uses of violence.)

² A real or a virtual meeting place, although the former is preferable.

³ In all democratic countries, people choose law over anarchy and appreciate the institutions that create law and apply and enforce it. Law works not primarily because of enforcement, but by virtue of the respect that most people have for the law and the control they feel they have over the periodic selection of lawmakers.

⁴ There is no defence against WMD, which is why the USA and the former USSR, during the Cold War, had to fall back on the concept of deterrence, and its unfunny acronym, MAD (mutual assured destruction).

⁵ For more on “world law,” see http://globalsolutions.org/files/general/WPTL_Jim_Ranney.pdf. Although there is no world law as yet, it has been discussed in detail for many decades by world federalists.

⁶ Municipal, provincial (or “state” in the USA) and national laws also “reach to individuals.”

The first world law

Francisco Plancarte is a lawyer, and is also the vice-president of VWP. Interestingly, he has pointed out that the mandate from a successful global referendum on the creation of a democratic world parliament would be the first “world law,”⁷ and will require humanity to construct a directly-elected and representative world parliament and construct a world constitution for the human race to vote on in a second global referendum (at a later date). In other words, he is suggesting that the mandate from a “successful” global referendum would be legally binding as an embryonic “world law,” and should have the same force and effect as a resolution or bill passed by a democratic world parliament.⁸

Subsidiarity and municipalities

Within any democratic country (like Canada), there are generally three levels of law; the municipal law (often called “bylaws”), provincial law, and national (or federal) law. The issues that these laws are designed to regulate or repair are almost never exclusively in a single legal embrace, and negotiations are sometimes needed where jurisdictions overlap. This complication does not negate the fact that in most circumstances, it is clear which level of government has *primary* responsibility for legislation, and overlaps only rarely cause serious problems. The same kind of overlap and need-to-negotiate will occur between a democratic world parliament and the governments of nation-states, and while it will take time (likely decades) to smooth out the processes, the addition of a fourth level of democratic governance (even if some of the other three are not democratic) should lead to a stable world situation within which all people can lead dignified lives and expect their rights to be upheld and defended by all levels of governance.

The rule of thumb for such a governed world is captured best in the well-known principle of “subsidiarity.” This concept states that problems should be dealt with by the lowest or smallest appropriate “political unit” (or lowest “level of government”). In other words, if a city council can adequately handle a particular problem, there’s no need for a provincial government (or the national government or a world parliament) to get involved. A fair and firm application of this principle of subsidiarity is essential if the world parliament is to become a stable, permanent and positive feature of the human future. Note that the city council is clearly the “smallest political unit,” which leaves only the question of whether it is an “appropriate” political unit for dealing with global issues. The well-known motto “think globally, act locally” is one response to this question, and an excellent response, according to many, especially if and when the higher levels of government are not coping with the problem at hand, or are themselves the problem, or are themselves intrinsic to the problem.

⁷ A point also made on page 120 of *Rescue Plan for Planet Earth*.

⁸ For more on this issue, see Chapter 10 (entitled “A legally binding mandate?”) of *Rescue Plan for Planet Earth*, by Jim Stark, available as a soft cover book (see http://www.amazon.com/Rescue-Plan-Planet-Earth-Democratic/dp/0978252659/ref=sr_1_1?ie=UTF8&s=books&qid=1296226060&sr=1-1-spell) or available as a digital eBook in Amazon.com’s Kindle store (see http://www.amazon.com/Rescue-Plan-Planet-Earth-ebook/dp/B003UHVR84/ref=tmm_kin_title_0?ie=UTF8&m=AZC9TZ4UC9CFC&qid=1296226060&sr=1-1-spell).

In the case of democratic global governance, the problem is the knee-jerk whinging that immediately erupts from national governments about “their” national sovereignty. While this paper is far too short for a thorough examination of sovereignty, suffice it to say that sovereignty belongs to the people, and as the authority to govern arises from the will of the people,⁹ we can and do assign the exercise of certain aspects of “our” sovereignty to municipal, provincial and national governments, and we still retain the right to assign the exercise of certain other aspects or *our* sovereignty to a democratic world parliament, if we decide that to be in our best interests. And we, the people, do not want a democratic world parliament to be sticking its nose into the proper business of our native nation, our province or our city (or town or rural district or county), unless of course these smaller levels of governance are not fixing what’s wrong or are themselves the problem. In other words, the national sovereignty of all nations should remain pretty much as it is now if a democratic world parliament is built, but nations will no longer have the right to kill the people of another nation en masse, since job #1 for the democratic world parliament will surely be the adoption of a new world law to criminalize war. (More on this below.)

So, this concept of subsidiarity has very important implications for municipalities. Back in the 1980s, when 200+ municipal councils in Canada agreed to conduct referendums on nuclear disarmament,¹⁰ court cases were brought forward by those who sought to counter this apparent intrusion into what seemed an obvious federal (national) responsibility and jurisdiction.¹¹ Two arguments helped successfully defend these municipal referendums in court. The first was the often-overlooked fact that the principal targets of nuclear missiles were population centres, which is to say cities, and as the intended “victims” of this crime against humanity, cities had every right to act. The second was the often-overlooked fact that (as it was phrased back then) “you can’t arm and disarm at the same time.” Although virtually all governments, including the USA and the then-Soviet Union, paid lip service to the goal of nuclear disarmament and the UN-endorsed McCloy-Zorin principles (or so-called “general and complete disarmament”), both superpowers were daily adding to their huge nuclear arsenals in spite of an existing *global* overkill factor of at least ten! The time had come to mention that “the king has no clothes,” and the courts understood that there is a *direct* role for the people to play in democratic decision-making, especially when the governments of nations are not only not coping with the problem, but *are* themselves the problem! The Cold War is finally behind us now, but in spite of big reductions in nuclear weapons, nuclear war is still potentially omnicidal, and no truly significant progress has been made since 1946 to strengthen global governance¹² such that the people of Earth can feel confident that the next time verbal or philosophical hostilities break out among two or more powerful nations, non-violent solutions *will* be negotiated, a final resolution of

⁹ At least in a democracy.

¹⁰ To put a finer point on this, it was “balanced and verifiable nuclear disarmament” that was the issue on the referendum ballot.

¹¹ There were challenges to the municipal referendums in the Supreme Courts of four Canadian provinces, and in every case, the right of the municipality to hold the nuclear disarmament referendum was upheld.

¹² Meaning, at a minimum, UN reform or restructuring, and more specifically and importantly, the addition of a directly-elected and representative world parliament to the political mix.

the dispute *will* be defined and steps towards the resolution *will* be implemented even if the angry governments of the involved nation-states don't trust each other.¹³

The lessons of Egypt—people power can trump all else

Even though the Egyptian “people power” revolution is very recent, and the hard part of re-writing the national constitution and establishing democratic governance institutions is yet to do or barely begun, there are lessons to be learned from that historic event. First, in a winner-takes-all confrontation between a national population and a dictator, even if the autocrat has *all* the money and *all* the military firepower, it is just foolish to assume that the “strongman” will win in the end. Indeed, once fear is broken, the people can emerge victorious.

Wael Ghonim, the young Google executive who masterminded what he now likes to call “Revolution 2.0” (also the name of the book he intends to write), understood that the new communications technologies such as Twitter and Facebook had political potential, and could “enable” a national population to rid itself of a hated dictator and demand that the new order be constitutional, based on law and the principles of democracy. At the time of writing (two days after Hosni Mubarak’s departure from Cairo), there is speculation as to which other Middle East regimes might be toppled by similar means, and several nervous dictators have already made major concessions to their protesters in hopes of not being driven out of their positions of wealth, power and privilege. So the question arises, can a people-power revolution (perhaps it would be best to call it an “evolution”) be launched *on a global scale* with any chance of success?

There are major differences between Egypt’s transformation and the transformation that the world should undergo.

First, more than 300 people died and thousands were injured in Egypt’s 18-day uprising, and deaths and injuries should be avoided if at all possible. The use of demonstrations on the street on a global scale is probably not needed (except perhaps as celebrations, or as a public relations effort in aid of the “yes” campaign). There are other more respected and proven tools at our disposal—principally, the referendum; in this case, an Internet-based global referendum.

Second, the use of new communications technology would be quite different at the global level. Instead of calling on people to occupy the streets and shut down the economy on a short-term basis, a computer or a cell phone can deliver a live referendum ballot into the hands of a would-be voter anywhere in the world! Some annoyed national governments may try to close down the Internet, but that backfired in Egypt, and will likely backfire in a similar way if it is done to stop the Internet-based global referendum.

Third, there is no “dictator” that we’d need to oust from power at the global level before anything constructive can begin, just a huge vacuum that begs to be filled and directed by

¹³ Just as two cities, both with police forces, would not be allowed to go to war by both the provincial and national governments “above” them, no matter what the merits of their complaints against each other.

“popular will.” And yes, we can create a functioning democratic world parliament even if there are some national governments that are still autocratic.¹⁴ It must be recalled that the directly-elected members of the DWP (they will probably be called MGPs, for Members of the Global Parliament) *do not represent national populations or national governments!* They are there to represent the people in their constituency¹⁵ and additionally the interests of the human race as a whole, or the planet as a whole (bearing in mind the overarching principle of subsidiarity mentioned above).

There is no definition of “democracy” that suggests that a nation ought to be governed by a collection of provincial leaders, or that a province should be governed by any collection of mayors. Mayors were never elected to run a province, and provincial leaders were not elected to run countries, so small wonder that national leaders have proven (through the partially-managed anarchy of the UN) to be poor choices to run the politics of the world.

The example of Egypt’s recent revolution inspires us to realize that although democracy has deservedly become the predominant ideology of the 21st century,¹⁶ the prospects for achieving democracy on a global level are suddenly much greater than they were a week ago, thanks in large part to the new Internet technologies at our service, the vision of Mr. Wael Ghonim and the courage of the Egyptian people. With luck and hard work, a strong global mandate for a DWP can be in our hands (or at least proven to exist) by 2015, and the democratic world parliament itself could be in place and operational by 2018 or 2020. And if we have a *lot* of luck and find within ourselves a *lot* of courage, we could well do all of this in a way that involves no loss of life or injuries whatsoever.

3 The plan

**Global thinking in _____, _____, organized by _____,
a member of Vote World Parliament, a global NGO based in Canada**

There is every reason for municipalities to get involved and provide to the people a way of at least expressing their will, in the hope that a sufficient expression of this will can bring the world closer to a decision on whether we are going to govern ourselves sensibly at the global level. There are several ways that a city council can serve its people on this very important quest. The quickest way is to have a current member of a city council who is willing to carry the ball, and as it happens, we have one such person even before the municipal campaign is officially launched. He is high school teacher Per Norbäck, and he is on the city council for Vallentuna, Sweden, a town near Stockholm with a population is

¹⁴ This will not be easy, but it is doable, either by seating expat nationals from a country in the DWP but not recognizing their votes, or by leaving the seats that are assigned for the delegates from constituencies in that country empty.

¹⁵ Albeit a constituency that is geographically contained within a nation—see Appendix #3 in *Rescue Plan for Planet Earth*, on pages 172 through 178 and see Chapter 8, “Implementation,” on page 93 for details or rationale. In the beginning, there will likely be about 700 DWP constituencies of approximately ten million people each.

¹⁶ I think a case can be made and needs to be made that democracy is the only ideology that has any chance of enduring into the 22nd century and beyond, and should eventually become as stable and as appreciated as the laws of physics.

29,752. He heads an NGO called Demoex, which stands for “Democracy Experiment.” So ... where to start?

The ballot wording is the first order of business

The ballot question for the global referendum has been well sharpened and reduced to its essentials over a period of seven years, and is no longer open to revision. We at VWP are confident that it is worded *exactly* right in these 21 words (in English): **“Do you support the creation of a directly-elected, representative, transparent, and democratic world parliament that is authorized to legislate on global issues?”**

Survey of attitudes in your ward (municipal constituency, or electoral district)

VWP recommends that you start by doing an informal survey of the constituents living in your ward, on the phone or door to door. Ask up to 100 constituents as to how they would likely vote if there were a *global* referendum asking all the people of the world whether they would support the creation of a democratic world parliament (read them the wording of the global referendum ballot, in red above, after explaining why you are doing this). In our experience, the vast majority of respondents will vote “yes.”¹⁷ The online referendum is getting 95% support, and we at VWP anticipate at least 75%+ support elsewhere. If the people you ask do not support the proposition to at least the 70% level, I suppose your experiment for a local referendum as defined in the municipal resolution might be over. However, we assume our ballot will pass everywhere. We could be wrong about that, but we don’t think so (we’ve been at this for six years, and we have laid the groundwork in a very careful manner).

Assuming the result is positive, you now have a basis upon which to ask the media to pay attention to what you are doing, and you have a basis on which to ask for a meeting with your own councilor and other councilors, to find one or two councilors who are willing to propose the municipal resolution (on pages 3 and 4 of this document).

If you cannot find even one councilor willing to cooperate, one method of proceeding would be to upload the portable voting booth (graphic link) to an established website and ask *all* the residents of your city or town to vote “yes” or “no” to the ballot question. (To upload the graphic link, go to <http://voteworldparliament.org/shadowbox/getballot.html>.) In other words, you really do not need the local council to do this local referendum, but if they don’t help in the process and then the referendum passes strongly, they risk looking a bit foolish. And if you upload the digital voting booth to a suitable website and it starts to catch on, you may well find a councilor, a minister, a priest a provincial or national politician or even a newspaper editor who will see the significance of what you are trying to do and call on the people of your city or town to go to that website and vote.

¹⁷ Mr. Norbäck is also considering a “sense of the school” referendum at the school where he teaches. This would be a consultative referendum only, since students under the age of 16 would be allowed to vote. Still, it is hoped that if this goes ahead, the students will feel that they were a part of the impetus that eventually led to the actions that their municipal council takes, and even the actions that national governments take if the municipal campaign has its intended effect.

Assuming you find a councilor (preferably two) to cooperate with you and to present the municipal resolution on the agenda of a future council meeting, don't just leave it to that new ally to carry the ball alone. If he or she sets up a meeting to lobby another member of the council, offer to attend, and offer to bring an opinion-leader (member of the clergy, business leader, educator, etc.) to that meeting to emphasize the fact that this idea has a fair amount of support in the community. If your one councilor has no time or is not up for lobbying his council mates in person, ask for a letter of introduction that will allow you to get meeting with other councilors, and perhaps with the mayor, in advance of the meeting where the resolution will be voted on. In preparing for a meeting with a mayor or a councilor, please note that the rationale for this municipal involvement is contained in the preliminary "whereas" clauses of the proposed municipal resolution above, on page 3, and all the particulars of this involvement of the city in this global issue are spelled out in the four operative ("be it resolved that") clauses on page 4. *If you have trouble getting a councilor to agree to move the motion as it appears on pages 3 and 4, you can trim down the demands on page 4 by deleting (for now) items #2, #3 and #4 (they can of course be reintroduced later, in further resolutions).*

Today, _____; tomorrow, the world

Assuming _____ City Council adopts the entire four-point municipal resolution and proceeds as outlined above, your mayor will then be writing the mayors of other cities and towns asking them to follow _____'s lead, and writing (with other signatories) to the mayors of all 194 or so capital cities in the world, asking them to take actions analogous to those taken by _____, and eventually causing an email or a letter to be sent to every national head of government in the world in support of the UN resolution. *There is not one single step between the launch and the completion of this campaign that is demonstrably impossible, too costly or even particularly difficult.*

Note: The draft United Nations resolution is on pages 5 and 6 of this document, above.

Who would have thought that a few Facebook and Twitter users could set in motion the momentous events in North Africa and the Middle East in early 2011? Who says we can't change the world for the better by thinking globally and acting locally? As Lao Tzu once advised back in the 6th century BC, "Do the difficult things while they are easy and do the great things while they are small. A journey of a thousand miles must begin with a single step."

Jim Stark,
Founder and Co-President,
Vote World Parliament

<https://voteworldparliament.org/> - the NGO and the active ballot

<http://www.rescueplanforplanetearth.com/> - the book about the global referendum strategy

<https://voteworldparliament.org/allies-initiatives/authors-campaign/> - 120+ supporting authors

What follows below is an addendum to the 14-page backgrounder document.

4 Additional considerations

More about the legal right to self-defence

Cities are legally permitted to act on global democracy precisely because of the failure of national governments to do so. To use international law, national law, provincial law or any other law as a basis to prevent municipalities from acting is to deny the humanity as a whole the right to defend and protect itself, a right that is justifiably guaranteed in all law to nations and, within nations, to individuals. No one will ever successfully dismiss self-defence as a natural right, nor should they, and once all people understand that they have this right at the global level, humanity will never agree to allow any level of government to remove that right. And the means of exercising and guaranteeing ourselves this right on a global level is not the creation of an enormous global army, but rather the creation of a directly-elected, representative, transparent, and democratic world parliament to resolve issues using world law, issues that in earlier times could have led to war or terrorist activities.

Criminalizing murder does not prevent all murders, but it does discourage it, and it does deal with murderers. Criminalizing war should greatly reduce the incidence and severity of war, and eventually eliminate war altogether. Criminalizing war and all other kinds of unjustifiable human violence doesn't remove the right of self-defence, but it does require the establishment of a judicial system to identify false claims of self-defence and deal with those who break this world law. It is not unusual to speak of the "family of man" or the "human family." If our species really is a "family," then all war is "civil war," human beings killing other human beings, and a democratic world parliament will criminalize mass murder (aka "war") just as surely as nations have criminalized murder.

More about subsidiarity

The principle of subsidiarity is central to our philosophy. It means that political problems should be resolved by the *smallest appropriate political unit*. In other words, if a nation can handle it, let the national government do so, without interference from the democratic world parliament (DWP). And if a provincial legislature can handle it, there is no need for interference from a national government or the DWP. And if a municipal council can handle it, then the provincial government, the national government and the DWP should stand aside and let the city or town government do the job. A city or town *is* the "smallest political unit" that was referred to in the definition of this critical concept of subsidiarity. The local council is also the level of government that is closest to the people, and as such, it has an intimate connection with public opinion.

In practice, of course, there are overlapping jurisdictions and personality conflicts and an array of political ambitions and secret agendas that tend to muddy the waters and gum up the works, but somehow or other, democracy muddles through, and negotiations lead to compromises, and the next issue arrives to dominate the political landscape. Life goes on.

Why not approach national governments first?

There are three huge problems in trying to get national governments and national leaders to support the global referendum. First, the higher the elected officials, the harder it is to even get in touch with them, and the more they try to insulate themselves from demands from the public. Second, national leaders are subjected to great pressures from outside the national borders, from other nations and national leaders, and usually feel those pressures more than the pressures that bubble up from the grassroots “here at home.” (They are also subjected to pressures from large corporations, religions and other institutions, and those pressures are often not avoidable.) And third, while the removal (by a DWP) of a right to use war as a tool of foreign policy is the main limitation on the freedom of any national government to make its own decisions, that fact will inevitably be interpreted by some as a dangerous and horrifying diminution of the “sovereignty” of the nation (just as some cities lamented their old right to militarily attack a neighbouring city when that right was effectively removed by the birth of the state, by the national government, which retained exclusive rights to the use of force to itself except for the use of small arms to deal with crime, which is allowed for provincial or municipal police forces).

Building clout from the bottom up

If I tried to make an appointment to spend half an hour with my Member of Parliament (MP) to try to persuade him or her to support the global referendum and the creation of a DWP, he or she would likely refuse to grant my request or send me off to meet with an executive assistant. How to break through? Well, if the mayors of most major cities in the MP’s constituency made the request, that’s a different story. At least the meeting would be held. But how can you get those mayors to do that? Well, you start with one, the one for the city or town that you live in (or that is nearest to you, if you live in a rural setting). How do you get a meeting with the mayor? He or she is busy, and may well refuse your request for a meeting. It would be a different story if the request came from a majority of the councilors, but how on Earth do you get them to agree? Well, again, you start with one, the councilor who represents your ward or your district on council.

If he or she refuses to meet with you, you gather together a group of people, a dozen or more, people from your ward who vote in municipal elections, and you then arrive at the councilor’s office and ask again for the appointment, in person. Asking politely obviously didn’t work, and if you are then stonewalled by a secretary or executive assistant, make a loud noise (they hate that), such as chanting, as people did in the streets of Egypt, until you get an agreement to meet at a later date, or right away. If that doesn’t work, call the local media and tell them to rush over to city hall to film your chanting and get a sensible reason from your elected councilor as to why he or she refuses to meet with you. *Never ever use violence, or even threaten to use, violence.* Even in this most negative scenario, where your councilor refuses to meet with you, never doubt that with determination, you can get a meeting with your councilor. He or she is paid by your tax money to represent you, and he or she will meet with you. And even if he or she refuses to assist you when you explain the purpose of the meeting, media coverage of your failed effort will impact

on other councilors, and the mayor, and you will not be taken so lightly the next time you arrive at city hall.

At the meeting, you should get the councilor to cast his or her own vote there and then (on the VWP website; <https://voteworldparliament.org/>). Then, assuming he or she voted “yes”, ask your councilor to request a meeting with the mayor, or at least lobby all other councilors to support the municipal resolution. Then collectively request that the mayor meet with your delegation, vote in the online global referendum and contact other mayors with a view to meeting as a group with the MP (Member of Parliament) who represents the national constituency that you live within. Once you have your MP, you publicize that fact and suggest that others go after their local councilor, and then their mayor, and then all other mayors in the region, then the MP representing them in the national government, then other MPs, and finally the prime minister or head of government. And through all this, remember, what we demand costs no money. We want their support, hopefully in an enthusiastic tone, and we want them to call on all their constituents (16 years old or older) to vote in the online referendum, either as presented on our VWP website or by way of a digital voting booth on the website of the municipality, or on an MP’s website. And not only is this request free of costs, it is righteous, and will be seen to be so by the people who are represented by these politicians.

It’s called democracy

As you may know, democracy is about political power that rises from the bottom up. The constitutions of many democratic states specifically mention that the authority to govern arises from the will of the people. Making that happen can be difficult, time-consuming and frustrating, but it can be done in small bites, and if you end up with the head of your national government agreeing with you that democratic principles can be and should be applied to politics at the global level, just as they can be and are applied at the national or provincial or municipal level, then you can get him or her to agree to at least support the draft UN resolution that would require, if passed in the General Assembly, every nation in the world to hold a *formal* national referendum (using the VWP ballot) in conjunction with their next national election, and with luck and common sense, the collectivity of these national results will amount to a global mandate that is considered legally binding under international law, and politically compelling even if it is not accepted as legally binding.

Cities can’t declare war on each other, and they are okay with that

This is about governance, and municipal councils are closer to the people than regional (county), provincial (state in the USA) and national governments. Municipal councilors are easier to contact and bring around to your point of view. They are also “appropriate” political representatives to engage on this global issue if only because all other levels of government either cannot or will not take effective action. And insofar as world peace is the primary goal of all this, there is always the argument (mentioned above) that cities are the main targets of nuclear missiles, and are therefore entitled *and obliged* to attempt to remedy that situation. And finally, cities no longer go to war with one another primarily

because there is a higher level of government forbidding that, a national government, and experience has taught cities that war between or among them is ridiculous, and that any argument between themselves and another municipality must have and does have a non-military solution, a law-based resolution. If humanity survives, the day must come when national governments feel the same way about war as cities do now.

Who represents what or whom? Applying democratic principles at the global level

There is no agreed-upon, democratic world parliament at this time, but we live under an *unelected* world government. Missing is the underpinning of democratic principles, the respect for our right to choose which party or which set of policies suits us best, the right to elect representatives to do as we need them to do, and the right to replace them with others should they fail to deliver as promised. This approach works at the municipal and provincial and national level in democratic countries, and the same ideas can and should be applied to our political life at the planetary level. At the UN, representatives represent nation-states or, more precisely, national *governments*. In a world parliament, those who are elected would represent the people in the constituency where he or she was elected, as well as the interests of the human species as a whole and the world as a whole, just like national Members of Parliament represent their constituents as well as the entire national population and the interests of the country as a whole.

There is no definition of democracy that suggests that a nation ought to be governed by a collection of provincial leaders, or that a province should be governed by a collection of mayors. Mayors were never elected to run a province, and provincial leaders were never elected to run countries, so small wonder that national leaders have proven (through the partially-managed anarchy of the UN) to be bad choices to run the politics of the world. Even if we agreed that “government by referendum” (consulting the population on every issue) doesn’t work and can never work, there are good arguments to be made for a more frequent use of referendums (direct democracy) at every level of politics.

The “democratic deficit” that characterizes current institutions of global governance is the reason why there is general disinterest in these institutions among ordinary people. They aren’t “our” institutions. As Martin Luther King, Jr. said (paraphrased) “You cannot separate the means from the end because the means are the end in process.” Bottom line: A democratic institution can be established by force in some limited circumstances, but the most legitimate way to do it is through a clearly democratic and non-violent decision-making process. There simply has to be a global referendum that passes strongly in order to authorize the creation of a democratic world parliament.

In other words, if an institution is created to legislate on global issues, it will be doomed to fail unless its powers are approved by the vast majority of the people, and its members are directly-elected by the people (the number of constituencies and the number of people per constituency is dealt with on page 50 of *Rescue Plan*; it is recommended by several authors, including George Monbiot, that there be about 700 constituencies of about ten million people each). But before the first global election of political representatives to sit in the democratic world parliament, and before we begin to haggle over the constitutional

dilemmas that are sure to emerge, we must first establish clearly that a democratic world parliament is something the human race really wants; hence the global referendum as the necessary start point.

Transparency, the antidote to corruption

Transparency International is the global civil society organization (a coalition, really) that is leading the fight against corruption in politics and government. As they tell us, and as common sense would have it, the precondition for corruption to flourish is secrecy, and the cure for corruption is transparency. In theory, take away all secrecy, and you remove all corruption. Since the only kind of global governance that will faithfully serve the true interests of the human race and endure forever is one where the *minimum* condition is the complete absence of lies or corruption (and therefore a complete absence of tyranny), the obvious solution for the democratic world parliament (DWP) is a strict regime of *total* transparency. This may not be possible to do in real time, and it will be costly, but it can be done and must be done if we want the benefits of ultra-honest governance for the rest of human history (see Chapter 5 of *Rescue Plan*). This is especially true if we want that “rest of human history” to last for millions of years, or millions of human generations.

While it is not necessary and arguably impossible to include this aspect of the proposed democratic world parliament in the ballot wording of a global referendum, this is perhaps the most important element of the DWP proposal when it comes to reassuring the people, especially as there is no existing government (of a nation, province or municipality) that has never had even one instance of a corruption scandal. Since there is no adequate model at the national or any lower level of governance, we must revise the model at the global level. Specifically, we must solve the problem of corruption once and for all (and we can present this corruption-proofing regime to other levels of government as an example that they *may* wish to emulate). There must *never* be global tyranny, and therefore there must be in the DWP this permanent state of *total* transparency, such that any watchdog group or individual citizen can follow the words or the money related to any issue that is dealt with by the DWP. And if total transparency means recording and transcribing every word that is spoken or written by all elected officials and top civil servants while at their work, and translating all those words into all other languages, and making all such transcripts or audio recordings available to all people over the Internet, so be it.¹⁸

Without this promise of verifiable honesty or monitored integrity, it may well be that the human race will turn down the option of forming a democratic world parliament, and will suffer the almost inevitable consequence of human extinction. In a world parliament such as we propose, there must be a new tradition, such that *everything is public unless there is a compelling reason why it should in fact be kept private*, and even in such rare instances, the reason for privacy must be made public, and there must be an appeal process whereby a decision to conceal some information can perhaps be overturned. The people of planet

¹⁸ Machine translations (of written text) are getting very sophisticated, and machine transcription (audio to text) is surely coming in time. A virtually perfect lie detector would also help in the task of monitoring the integrity of top DWP officials (elected or otherwise), but such technologies are not now within sight ... and may never exist.

Earth deserve this level of transparency, and therefore we must insist on it. *Anything said or done in the public interest must be public, because anything not public is likely not in the public interest.*

The overall strategy

Online voting presents major challenges. VWP's ballot is available in 53 languages, and that is a very good beginning on the language problem. More importantly, however, is the vulnerability of online voting to fraud. Our site's security is now equivalent to that of a bank, and we have a "captcha" for validation of votes, but these measures don't mean it is impossible to corrupt our effort. We can opt for a far more twisted captcha, but while that may make it all but impossible for robots to defeat our precautions, if the captcha gets too weird, it becomes difficult for many people to validate their votes.

There is no perfect answer, so we propose to go full bore at the online referendum while preparing for the day when we can hand off the global referendum to those who should have taken responsibility for it already, the governments of nations, the United Nations. Once it has been made abundantly clear that the human race as a whole wants to govern itself globally through a directly-elected and representative world parliament, we shall find a national government to propose (with other national co-sponsors) a resolution in the General Assembly.¹⁹ If that passes, it will become the responsibility of each national government to conduct a *national* referendum (using a common ballot) in conjunction with its next national election so that national resources such as official voters lists and scrutineers can be employed to virtually eliminate voter fraud and encourage maximum turnout at the polls.

If Canada, for instance, agrees to run a national referendum using this ballot, votes from Canadians that were received previously in the online referendum would be rescinded, nullified. As well, it should be mentioned that if a given nation refuses to hold a national referendum in compliance with the UN resolution, online voting will simply continue for its citizens ... and it will be possible by other means (by opinion polling, for example) to ascertain the feelings of the population of that country even if the national government bans voting in our online referendum or otherwise messes up our online results. And it should be mentioned that the final result can be projected at a time when only a relatively small percentage of any national population has voted. To have a legally or politically binding global mandate, however, we need to *actually collect* a minimum of 2 billion votes (that's about half of the adult population of Earth), and at least 67%+ of those votes must be in the "yes" column, which is the usual high percentage needed in most nations to amend a national constitution. (For more about a legally or politically binding global mandate, read Chapters 10 and 11 of *Rescue Plan for Planet Earth*.)

¹⁹ See the full text of the draft UN resolution at <https://voteworldparliament.org/draftUNresolution.pdf>, or on pages 5 and 6 of this document.

Keep the UN?

VWP is agnostic on the question of whether the United Nations should continue to exist after the creation of the democratic world parliament. Most people would be reluctant to “throw out the baby with the bathwater,” and most people see some examples of useful work that has been done and is being done by the UN and its agencies. In the same way that the democratic UK could get along without its House of Lords and indeed without a monarch, people see little harm in keeping those institutions as long as it is clear that the *real* power rests with the House of Commons, which is directly-elected, representative, transparent, and accountable to the people, meaning it is the element of the British government that is the guarantor of democracy, the venue where democracy is practiced. Similarly, there are many positive items in the history of the UN, and as long as the General Assembly and the Security Council are ready to accept the superior authority of the democratic world parliament, the UN *Charter* can be re-written to include these two institutions *under the authority of the DWP*. Alternatively, the democratic world parliament can work under the authority of a world constitution that excludes the UN. Most informed opinion is to the effect that excluding the UN is neither helpful nor realistic, and retaining the UN has certain undeniable advantages in spite of the additional problems its continued presence poses.

Pre-referendum education

An opinion poll is not as good as a referendum for several reasons. In an opinion poll, no effort is made to educate the larger population prior to asking the key question(s) to the respondents. However, in a democratic election, it is considered necessary on principle and in practice to have public debates and discussions of the issues prior to voting day. Similarly, in a formal referendum, it is considered a necessity to have an open discussion of the issues prior to voting. In fact, it is the serious responsibility of those sponsoring a referendum to provide information so that citizens can make an informed choice when they vote.

More about direct democracy and indirect “representative” democracy

Direct democracy and representative (indirect) democracy are not enemies, although the reality is that those who are emotionally engaged in promoting one or the other often feel that way. The main aim of democracy is to have government policy reflect the will of the people, and sometimes that is best done with one form of democratic decision-making or the other. Ratifying (adopting) a national constitution is such a fundamental decision that it definitely *must* be made by the people at large in a national referendum. However, the fact is that government tends to be a highly complex endeavour, and it is difficult for all elected members to be sufficiently up on all matters to cast informed votes, which is one reason why party discipline (you vote the way your party leader says to vote) is often the substitute for personal investigation, discussion and decision. In any event, it is axiomatic that government by referendum does not and can't work.

Many decisions virtually make themselves anyway. The joke from the British TV sitcom *Yes Minister* was that if you are in a position to advise a prime minister or a minister, a civil servant should present three options, one that is far too expensive, one that carries high political risk and one that is ... well, almost perfect (door number three wins every time, or so the sitcom would have it). And when a lot of money is a stake or pressure from the populace is felt in more than one direction, there is no substitute for committee work and personal reflection on the contributions of witnesses. These are things that can't happen if every adult in the country is asked to vote on every issue or bill that comes up before either the parliament or the cabinet.

On the other hand, democracy is not well served if elected representatives get to make all the political decisions no matter what the people in their constituencies may think or feel about an issue. Demoex is an interesting concept and approach, and tends to suggest that more openness to public participation in decision-making would be a good thing. We at VWP tend to agree, though we think that both kinds of public policy decision-making, direct and indirect, are valid expressions of democratic values, and that over-emphasis on one at the expense of the other is not prudent.

That said, we return to a theme mentioned above, the conviction that some things, like the decision to ratify a new national constitution or amendment, or a new world constitution or amendment thereto, *require* consultation with the people and high levels of support for such decisions to stand (50% plus one of those who bother to vote is simply not enough as a basis to say that a critical referendum question has passed). And of course a global referendum is *mandatory* if we are to authorize the creation of a new order of law, world law, and the institutions to make, interpret, apply and enforce that world law. If humanity survives another hundred years, history books will surely read that the human race in the 21st century took the decision to establish a democratic world parliament by means of a global referendum, and then either succeeded or failed to fulfill the global mandate that resulted from that planetary vote.

The online global referendum

The online global referendum with an active ballot has been established since 2004. It has 21,600 or so votes as of February, 2011, which translates to about ten votes a day. So far, votes are 95% in favour of the ballot proposition, although that is expected to drop fairly significantly (to 80% or even less) when the opponents of world democracy get organized (sooner or later they will upload our portable digital voting booth onto their websites and encourage their friends and followers to vote "no".) Recently, we developed this portable voting booth, and anyone who has a website or other Internet presence can upload it to become a vote collector (see <https://voteworldparliament.org/shadowbox/getballot.html>). The hope is that this new device, a melding of Widget and Shadowbox technologies, will allow the online referendum to expand very rapidly (if not go viral) on the Internet.

A reasonable wager

Back in 1984, I bet Havi Echenberg (then-assistant to Ottawa's mayor) that Operation Dismantle (a nuclear disarmament group in Canada headed by myself) would get more than a dozen other municipalities to follow Ottawa's lead and take a decision to conduct a referendum on nuclear disarmament in conjunction with their next local election, at their own expense. Our bet was for a Big Mac (hamburger). In the end, Operation Dismantle got 200+ Canadian cities and towns to join in!

I never collected on that wager, but I didn't really care. I learned lessons that were worth far more than a Big Mac. I learned that one mayor of one city can mobilize other mayors from the same country, and I learned that the advent of a local referendum is a fantastic way to educate people on the issues involved with the ballot proposition. I learned that if you think globally and act locally, you can get a wonderful result. I am willing to wager any mayor a Big Mac that we can work bottom-up and end up with a democratic world parliament. This document presents a credible plan that should work. Please partner with VWP, and together, we will make it work.

Jim Stark,
Founder and Co-President,
Vote World Parliament

<https://voteworldparliament.org/> - the NGO and the active ballot

<http://www.rescueplanforplanetearth.com/> - the book about the global referendum strategy

<https://voteworldparliament.org/allies-initiatives/authors-campaign/> - 120+ supporting authors