



The Vision of Globalance and the Joyful Transition

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Founder and President of Globethics.net from 1 July 2016

Dear Participants of the Global Ethics Forum,
Dear members of the Board, Regional Programmes, National Contacts,
Dear members of the team and of my own family,
Dear guests, friends, brothers and sisters,

It is a moving moment to hand over the operational leadership as Executive Director of Globethics.net to my successor Professor Obiora Ike. It is a transition that I put under the title "The vision of Globalance and the Joyful Transition".

The Vision of Globalance

Let me start with the vision: What was my vision when I started Globethics.net and what is the vision today? On the occasion of the 10th Anniversary of Globethics.net in December 2014 I spoke about ten "Genes" that make up the DNA of Globethics.net: Values, Partners, Inclusion, Innovation, Networking, Service, Support, Entrepreneurship, Governance and Growth (see www.globethics.net/10th-anniversary#cs and the YouTube video at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=G5y8gHplLGM&feature=youtu.be>).

In the Strategy 2016-2020 of Globethics.net we state as our vision that: **"We envision a world where people and especially leaders act according to ethical values and thus contribute to achieving the sustainable development goals."**

Let me put this vision in the context of three phases of history during my lifetime:

1. 1945 to 1989 was the period of the Cold War. The bipolar world of capitalism and communism, of East and West dominated each sector of society and life.
2. 1989 to 2007 was the period of almost unlimited globalisation with the dream of one world without borders, global ethics and pluralism.
3. Since 2009, as a reaction to exaggerated neoliberalism, the virtual collapse of the financial system in 2007, the challenges of migration, the explosion of communication technologies and of social media, new nationalist, populist, protectionist and racist tendencies are emerging in many parts of the world on all continents.

Today, the 23rd of June the Brexit referendum is taking place in the United Kingdom. It is one of the expressions of this new bipolar world. It is no more about East and West and communism versus capitalism, but across all our societies and nations we see the deep division between those looking back to national, ethnic or fundamentalist identity and those looking forward to a united global world. The pendulum of neoliberal globalisation, extreme individualism, greed and ethical relativism now seems to go back to this other extreme.

In this context, Global Ethics and Globethics.net is a vision that continues to be valid, now more than ever a vision to follow. For almost four decades I have been engaged in the struggle for a development that is balanced, peaceful and sustainable, for "Globalance" which balances

economic, political, cultural and ethical globalisation as well as the global and the contextual, instead of a globalisation that is blind and focused only on economic growth. *"Globalance" continues to be my dream.* It combines the rights of individuals with the rights of communities, ethical principles with flexible relationships, the global with the local, unity with diversity.

As I wrote in the editorial of the last Globethics.net newsletter (No. 5/2016, June): "We have before us a great opportunity to create a balanced global world and for humanity to over-come the destructive swing of the pendulum between extremes. We have the chance to build a global community of human beings who are able to respect each other and live together in a dialectical way, willing to explore and accept differences and contradictions. I continue to be engaged for this dream to achieve "Globalance" - together with all of you and those 170'000 persons in our network and beyond".

The Joyful Transition

On the 1st of July 2016 the handover of the Presidency from Walter Fust to me and of the Director's role from me to Obiora Ike comes into effect. It is an opportunity for continuity and for innovation. Members of the team, the Board and stakeholders have asked questions such as "How can we be faithful to the vision of the Founder? What will change? What will we lose?" Let me summarise with four short reflections on my understanding of the legacy that I leave behind and on developments in the future.

Adult children and mature institutions: My wife gave birth to our four sons. They are all still alive and are grown adults (28 to 34 years old, three sons are here and one is in the US). I also founded four foundations. All are still alive and operating independently. So it is a good and joyful development in life to see biological children and institutions growing to adulthood and becoming independent while remaining in good relationship with their father and their founder.

Continued support: As President I will try my best to continue to support Globethics.net - in the new role - as much as I can. We will help each other to execute our roles with its responsibilities and limits in a good way. In agreement with Obiora I will accept some operational tasks as needed.

Faithfulness to values and openness to innovation: Changes are welcome as long as they serve the values and goals. So do not fear change, rather do it to improve and support the growth of Globethics.net (and do ask for advice from the founding "father" where needed, although I am aware that "children" sometimes need to make their own mistakes). Innovation is not a value in itself, only if it improves the possibility of achieving the goals and implementing the values.

Divine guidance: Most important is that Globethics.net is not my property even if I am the Founder. That is why the mission is in its name and not the Founder's name. In the words of my faith: I try to be a humble servant or instrument of God who gave the vision and mission for this foundation. So do not ask "What is the will of Christoph as Founder?" but "What is the will of God?" "What serves best the vision and values of Globethics.net?" Then I trust that Globethics.net will go in the right direction. I am very confident that Obiora Ike with all of you and all stakeholders including the Board and donors will bring Globethics.net to the next level of impact. It is a very joyful transition!

I close with a profound thankfulness to all of you, but first of all to my wife Susanne for her enormous generosity and encouragement. Without her we would not be here, then to the wonderful team and the very supportive Board, especially to the President Walter Fust for the excellent cooperation. We will give a special thank you and gift on Saturday in his presence. I am especially grateful to Walter Linsi and to Cui Wantian, not only generous donors and supporters but also good friends and advisors. But the greatest thank I express as Calvin did here in Geneva who always ended his speeches and publications with three words: *Soli Deo Gloria*, all glory belongs to God.

Geneva, 23 June 2016

