

Introductory Note

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"We have to transcend our differences to transform our future." - Antonio Guterres

This publication is a reflection that when we are ready to transcend our differences by using a common ground, we can get together to transform our future and the future of our generations.

However a number of questions come to mind. What should be the common ground? How are we going to transcend our differences? Why are we so obsessed with what distinguishes us rather than what unites us?

I would be the first to say that societal wellbeing should be our common ground. Those contributing to this publication also indicate how and where this can be attained. However one key aspect which would lead us to reach this is the need to go beyond the self and be ready to listen rather than just hear, and in the process actively seek common positions and build around them.

In this aspect, one needs also to put together the value which different areas can contribute in our pursuit of wellbeing. The academic side, the policy side, civil society, the corporate world and every individual who means well, can make a change. But transformation will happen when we transcend our differences and build around them while respecting each others' contribution and perspective.

The contributors in this publication give us a myriad of perspectives on a number of issues which are having an impact on the core of our society; the people. People remain crucial and we need to actively seek ways how to retain people at the centre of decisions and developments which are taking place in a number of areas; from regulatory to economic decisions, from technology to policy making.

Perhaps it is time to put humanity back at the centre and in turn be 'the common ground' which leads us to transcend over our differences, in a way that we can redirect and transform our future.