



THE PRESIDENT
OF THE
GENERAL ASSEMBLY

3 April 2018

Excellency,

Pursuant to General Assembly resolution 72/223 of 20 December 2017, I will convene the 2018 Interactive Dialogue of the General Assembly on Harmony with Nature during the commemoration of International Mother Earth Day on Monday, 23 April 2018 in the ECOSOC Chamber.

The Interactive Dialogue will provide a platform to discuss sustainable production and consumption patterns in Harmony with Nature, as to ensure that people everywhere have the relevant information and awareness for sustainable development and lifestyles in Harmony with Nature. The Dialogue also aims to inspire citizens and societies to reconsider how to interact with the natural world and to improve the ethical basis of the relationship between humankind and the Earth in the context of sustainable development.

In this regard, I would like to invite you and representatives of your Government to participate in the Interactive Dialogue.

The concept note is attached herewith and the provisional programme will be provided in due course.

Please accept, Excellency, the assurances of my highest consideration.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'M. Lajčák', written over the printed name.

Miroslav Lajčák

All Permanent Representatives and
Permanent Observers to the United Nations
New York

INTERACTIVE DIALOGUE OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY ON HARMONY WITH NATURE IN COMMEMORATION OF INTERNATIONAL MOTHER EARTH DAY

Theme: Earth Jurisprudence in the Implementation of Sustainable Production and Consumption Patterns in Harmony with Nature

UNHQ, New York, Monday 23 April 2018, ECOSOC Chamber

Background

Since 2009, the General Assembly has adopted nine consecutive resolutions on Harmony with Nature and resolution A/RES/63/278 designating 22 April as International Mother Earth Day. The aim of the General Assembly in adopting the above-mentioned resolutions has been to promote and reflect upon a non-anthropocentric, or Earth-centred, worldview. At the core of this worldview is the recognition of the intrinsic value of Nature, within which relationships between humankind and the planet are symbiotic, interconnected and in harmony with the natural laws of the Universe.

Rationale

Today, it is well understood that human well-being is inextricably linked to the well-being of Earth. To help heal and repair Earth, over the last several years there have been important advances in Earth Jurisprudence, notably in Earth-centered Law and Ecological Economics, that further the overall implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. These initiatives have the goal of ensuring that people everywhere have the relevant information and awareness regarding sustainable development and lifestyles in Harmony with Nature, as stated in Sustainable Development Goal 12, target 12.8.

Therefore, it is important to review and highlight their advances made to better understand how they would impact on our production and consumption patterns in Harmony in Nature. Both initiatives view members of the human community as members of the Earth community, and not masters of, while also recognizing our planetary limits. They view Earth not as an object to be exploited, but as subject deserving protection and respect and invite us to shift our consciousness of living at the expense of Nature for a consciousness of living in Harmony with Nature. Their goals are the mutual enhancement of the human-Earth relationship and fairness between generations.

The impacts of climate change are happening now. The sixth mass extinction¹ of plants and animals is happening now. The future of all life demands that we must reverse these destructive trends. There is an urgent need to inspire citizens and societies to reconsider how they interact with the natural world and how they govern themselves. Earth Jurisprudence argues that it is humanity's ethical and legal obligation to protect Earth, to give Nature a voice, and to acknowledge and share our individual and societal responsibilities.

We must highlight the principles, policies, and people that are advancing the non-anthropocentric paradigm of living in Harmony with Nature, and promote and amplify their voices towards the creation of new frameworks of law and governance.

Objective

The 2018 Interactive Dialogue of the General Assembly on Harmony with Nature will address how the above-mentioned legal and economic frameworks are being applied to further the implementation of sustainable production and consumption patterns in Harmony with Nature to advance the overall implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The Dialogue also aims to inspire

¹ <http://news.mit.edu/2017/mathematics-predicts-sixth-mass-extinction-0920>

citizens and societies to reconsider how they interact with the natural world and to improve the ethical basis of the relationship between humankind and the Earth in the context of sustainable development.

Questions

1. How can Earth jurisprudence help us to better implement sustainable production and consumption patterns in Harmony with Nature?
2. What promising approaches and actions should be implemented, replicated or scaled-up to advance an Earth-centred approach to attaining sustainable production and consumption patterns in Harmony with Nature?
3. How can citizens and societies interact with the natural world and improve the ethical basis of the relationship between humankind and the Earth in the context of sustainable development?