

# GLOBAL TIMES MAGAZINE



GLOBAL CHAMBER OF BUSINESS LEADERS

*Sixth Edition*

**CATASTROPHE IN SLOVENIA:  
THE NIGHT WHEN  
NATURE SHOWED  
ITS DESTRUCTIVE POWER**

**A CALL FOR HELP AND SOLIDARITY:  
IN JUST MINUTES, PEOPLE  
HAVE LOST DECADES OF  
EFFORT AND HARD WORK**

**BIG** GLOBAL TIMES INTERVIEW

**ENRIQUE ACOSTA  
GONZALEZ**

**GCBL'S DELEGATE FOR THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA**

# GLOBAL TIMES MAGAZINE



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Sixth Edition | 6-2023 | MMXXIII



South Edition

# TABLE OF CONTENTS:

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- 4 ..... DEJAN ŠTANCER: **PRESIDENT'S FOREWORD**
- 6 ..... DISASTER IN SLOVENIA: **FLOOD CATASTROPHE**
- 7 ..... WEATHER CATASTROPHE: **NATURE'S DESTRUCTIVE POWER**
- 12 ..... DISASTER IN SLOVENIA : **A CALL FOR SOLIDARITY**
- 13 ..... YBLP: **A CALL TO JOIN THE YBLP PROGRAM**
- 15 ..... KEITH MASON: **BUILDING HIS LIFE'S LEGACY**
- 20 ..... KEITH MASON: **ABOUT MASONMERCH SPORTSWEAR**
- 23 ..... COVER STORY INTERVIEW: **ENRIQUE ACOSTA GONZALEZ**
- 26 ..... COVER STORY INTERVIEW: **ABOUT THE US NAVY**
- 30 ..... COVER STORY INTERVIEW: **ABOUT TALLAHASSEE**
- 35 ..... COVER STORY INTERVIEW: **ABOUT FLORIDA**
- 37 ..... COVER STORY INTERVIEW: **ABOUT THE UNITED STATES**
- 39 ..... EMERGING BLOCK DIVISION: **GLOBALIZATION**
- 49 ..... UN: **IMMINENT RISK OF WORLD WATER CRISIS**

**2023** GLOBAL CHAMBER OF BUSINESS LEADERS **THE YEAR OF OPPORTUNITY**  
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## MESSAGE OF THE PRESIDENT:

Dejan Štancer, President of the Global Chamber of Business Leaders

# THE OPPORTUNITY FOR A MAN TO TRANSFORM INTO A HUMAN BEING

Dear readers,

The days of sorrow and restless nights are a distant memory, and the night that robbed those around me of their lifelong efforts is but a blur. It is an irrefutable fact that the lives of at least five individuals will be lost as a result of this horrific tragedy. The magnitude of this calamity is unparalleled. It was quite the experience seeing nature's power firsthand. It's amazing how unpredictable and harsh it can be at times. I even witnessed water exploding - something I never thought I'd see! Unfortunately, I also saw houses, cars, and other items that don't belong in the water floating around. It was quite a sight, but I hope I never have to witness it again.

Lately, I have been deeply moved by the resilience of people. It's amazing how some have lost everything they worked so hard for, yet they remain grateful for their lives and remain optimistic. It's heartwarming to see them care more about their loved ones, neighbors, and even strangers than themselves. The most beautiful thing I saw was the way strangers came together to support and encourage one another. They even opened their homes to those in need, without discrimination. This experience has shown me the incredible power of love and solidarity, which is rare to see in today's world.

I feel hopeful when I see how people come together in times of such horror. It reminds me that we still have the ability to connect with one another and experience happiness and empathy. These moments make us forget about material possessions and focus on what truly matters - our relationships with each other as human beings. It's heartwarming to see people show their true selves and compassion towards their fellow humans.

As the Global Chamber of Business Leaders is built upon principles of ethics and solidarity, I would be delighted if we could collaborate to assist those in need. The GCBL center is located just a short 15-minute drive from one of the most affected regions, where many individuals have lost everything. Let us work together to find ways to lend a helping hand.

After all, in difficult times, it's important to remember that our faithful and supportive friends and companions will shine the brightest.

Yours sincerely,

Dejan Štancer



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Catastrophic Floods in **Slovenia**

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## A DISASTER OF BIBLICAL PROPORTIONS:

GTM Editory

# THE NIGHT WHEN NATURE SHOWED ITS TRUEST DESTRUCTIVE POWER



Europe is currently experiencing severe weather disasters, which are likely due to climate change and possibly astrology. Slovenia, a small Central European country with excellent infrastructure, has been hit particularly hard. In just three weeks, the country experienced extreme heat, hurricane-like winds, tornadoes, hail, and thousand-year rains (200l/m<sup>2</sup>) that caused devastating floods and destruction.

Despite having a top-notch natural disaster notification system, Slovenia was unable to prevent the destruction caused by the unprecedented rainfall. Rivers flooded and hydrologists detected alarming conditions in 100 rivers, with 25 reaching record-high water levels. The rain, wind, and lightning combined with the unstoppable waters caused landslides, buried roads, and destroyed countless homes and buildings.

Two-thirds of the country is underwater, with many cities cut off from the world and thousands of people isolated from their neighbors. Electricity and clean drinking water are scarce, and rescue efforts are hindered by poor visibility. Sadly, eight people have lost their lives so far, and at least five are still missing. The extent of the damage is not yet known, but initial estimates suggest it could exceed 10 billion euros.

Over just three weeks, Slovenia experienced a series of extreme weather events including scorching heat, hurricane-force winds exceeding 200 kilometers per hour, tornadoes, large hailstones weighing over 1 kilogram and measuring over 10 centimeters in diameter, and intense rainfall that caused the most severe floods and widespread destruction in the country's history.

Slovenia is a well-organized and compact country located in Central Europe, with a coastline along the Adriatic Sea and a rich history of medieval culture. It's situated between Austria's highlands and the coasts of Italy, Croatia, and Hungary. Recently, the Global Chamber of Business Leaders relocated its headquarters to Slovenia due to the

country's excellent infrastructure and access to structural funds from the European Union. However, there are concerns about the decline of Slovenia's infrastructure in recent times.

The night of August 4th will be a memorable one for many Slovenians and tourists. A massive amount of precipitation fell in just one night, breaking records and shocking even meteorologists. Despite having one of Europe's top natural disaster notification systems, Slovenia was no match for the force of nature, which proved to be stronger and faster, but unfortunately also quite brutal.

Sirens alerted people to a natural disaster and many firefighters and civil defense workers quickly responded. However, the rivers in the highlands erupted like volcanoes, unleashing destruction in their path.

To comprehend this tragedy, it's important to note that hydrologists detected concerning conditions in roughly 100 rivers across the country. These rivers began to flood, and approximately 25 of them had water levels that were record-breaking - the highest in history. The severe rain, wind, and lightning were now accompanied by the unstoppable force of water, which annihilated everything in its path. Centuries-old trees were uprooted and toppled, and the rivers used

Continue



Sandi Zajc is a volunteer firefighter who bravely responded to the catastrophic floods. When asked about his profession, Sandi stated that he believes firefighters are born, not made. During the rescue mission, Sandi and his fellow firefighters rescued 22 children who had taken refuge on the roof of a kindergarten. However, the floodwaters tragically washed away Sandi's home and all of his possessions.



them as weapons to demolish houses, bridges, and other structures. Cars, fence parts, entire bridges, houses, and furniture were swept away by the raging waters. In one image, a gas boiler was seen being carried by the river, and smoke was billowing out of it.

Large parts of the country have been submerged in water, with up to two-thirds now affected. Many cities have become disconnected from the rest of the world, and even neighbors have been separated as the floods have washed away roads and homes. The torrential waters have triggered numerous landslides, burying houses and cutting off thousands of people from the outside world.

The affected areas have also experienced power outages, leaving people without electricity to boil the undrinkable water. Phone signals are also unavailable, making it difficult for rescue operations to be carried out. The army and air force are experiencing difficulties reaching those in need due to poor visibility and extreme weather conditions.

Regrettably, it has been reported that the initial night alone resulted in the loss of four lives (based on current data), with at least five individuals still unaccounted for. Thousands of individuals are stranded without communication. Their current state of well-being remains

Continue



Selfless army pilots, police officers, rescuers, firefighters, civil defense members, and numerous volunteers are working tirelessly to quickly resolve the aftermath of those stranded on rooftops, buried beneath landslides, and disconnected from the rest of the world, some of whom may have sustained injuries.

uncertain, and the extent of the damage caused by the natural disaster is not yet fully understood. Preliminary estimates suggest that the cost of damage could exceed one billion euros.

In times of crisis, the loss of human life is an irreplaceable tragedy. The recent natural disaster, the worst seen since World War II, has left a devastating impact. However, the people of Slovenia are known for their strength in togetherness and have already rallied to support one another.

Both strangers and neighbors have stepped up to lend a hand, with skilled workers and builders arriving with heavy machinery to clear away debris and rubble. Communities have offered shelter and residents have provided essential items such as food, clothing, and footwear. The support of neighboring European countries has been felt with aid convoys, military units, and firefighters coming to provide assistance.

Slovenia is an integral part of our global family and it is important that the Global Chamber of Business Leaders provides any possible support. In times of hardship, true companions reveal themselves, and it is crucial that we stand together in solidarity.

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Once again, the immense power of nature's wildness was on full display. After centuries of rainfall, hail, lightning, and wind, it is clear that humans remain captive to their own actions and those of their predecessors. Nature will only respond to us in kind based on what we have done to it over time. It is only through solidarity that we can hope to survive against nature's force, for we will all become its victims one day.

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Slovenia is an integral part of our global family and it is important that the Global Chamber of Business Leaders provides any possible support. In times of hardship, true companions reveal themselves, and it is crucial that we stand together in solidarity.




## Video gallery



**DEJAN ŠTANCER,**  
GCBL President

„Although no-one underestimated nature and all possible services in the country were on standby, but the raw power of nature was of such intensity that it cannot even be described in words. Anyone who has not experienced something like this cannot even imagine what such a disaster really looks like. It was the first time I saw the water rising so fast, and this drumming, and how the water washed away apartment buildings, concrete embankments, and how cars were floating on the water... Terrible. I feel sorry for the people who, in just a few minutes, lost everything they worked hard for all their lives... But I also cried when I saw what solidarity means and how people know how to help each other and cooperate if we only want to. It is often said that fortune smiles upon the brave. After experiencing it firsthand, I now understand the true meaning of courage.“



Collaboration is absolutely essential  
in providing aid for those impacted  
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e: [info@gc-bl.org](mailto:info@gc-bl.org)



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## KEITH MASON:

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# BUILDING HIS LIFE'S LEGACY BRICK BY BRICK WITH PASSION AND PURPOSE

If you look at Keith Mason's headshots in a suit, you might very well think that it was a poster for a new instalment of the James Bond movie franchise. Interestingly enough, he could be as he is no stranger to the film industry.

However, in spite of his movie prowess and admirable success within the entertainment industry, Mason is also an astute businessman, devoted philanthropist and revered individual all around. A former athlete within the sport of rugby, the UK-based Multi-Creative holds the position of the Member of Board of Advisors at the Global Chamber of Business Leaders (GCBL).

He has certainly forged an amazing career in different fields and disciplines. Asked about his paths from being a rugby player to movie star to entrepreneur and what were the most valuable personal and/or professional lessons learnt, he said,

"My journey has been incredibly rewarding and challenging. Transitioning between vastly different forums within my career paths allowed me to explore my passions and discover new talents. The most valuable lessons I've gained are the importance of adaptability, perseverance and embracing new opportunities with an open mind. Personally, it has taught me to be resilient in the face of change, while professionally, it has shown me the power of diversifying my skills and interests."

It is for some of these skills, his experience and personal traits, he was seen as an asset for the GCBL.

"As a Senior Advisor for the Global Chamber of Business Leaders, I've been able to leverage my skills, expertise, network and experience to provide valuable insights and guidance to the organisation. Through my role, I actively contribute to shaping the GCBL's initiatives, fostering collaborations between businesses and identifying opportunities for global growth and development."



Zoning in on his core strengths, the focused trailblazer opined,

“As a businessman, my core strengths lie in strategic thinking, networking and leadership. These strengths have worked in my favour by enabling me to identify promising business opportunities, build valuable relationships with key stakeholders and lead teams effectively. Having a strong strategic vision has been crucial in making informed decisions that have contributed to the growth and success of my ventures.”

With such attributes and intuition, and with the GCBL being committed to their social responsibility goals, what specific ideas does he have for aligning the GCBL with strategies for social responsibility in general, and in the U.K, specifically?

“My journey has been incredibly rewarding and challenging. Transitioning between vastly different forums within my career paths allowed me to explore my passions and discover new talents...”

“The GCBL can make a significant impact in the United Kingdom business-wise by facilitating international collaborations and partnerships. Additionally, the organisation can contribute to the community by promoting sustainable business practices, supporting local entrepreneurship and investing in social impact projects. To align the GCBL with strategies for social responsibility in the United Kingdom, key areas of focus could include environmental sustainability, diversity and inclusion in the workplace and community engagement programs.”

He continued, “Encouraging member businesses to adopt eco-friendly practices, promote diversity in their workforce and actively participate in local community initiatives can have a positive impact on society while also benefiting businesses in the long run.”

“The GCBL can benefit from the country’s strong financial sector, skilled workforce and robust infrastructure, while also contributing to the country’s economic growth and development.”

Speaking of which, he drew attention to the citing that reportedly, the United Kingdom is ranked as one of the easiest countries in which to do business. What does he think is/are the strongest or most beneficial business category/ies that the GCBL can do marketing within?

“With the U.K’s reputation as one of the easiest countries in which to do business, the GCBL can focus marketing within sectors such as finance, technology, renewable energy and the creative industries. These sectors offer tremendous growth opportunities and are well aligned with the global business landscape.”

Being someone who doesn't only invest his time and energy in business





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**GULF STATES REGION**

*Chapter*

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ventures, he also remains committed to being a beacon of light to others. He identifies with those who weren't privy to the 'best of the best' in their early lives, and so, he has a bit of a soft spot for those whom he deems as similar to him. He also has an inclination towards children.

Mason has been putting much effort and dedication towards raising funds for medical treatments for young children suffering from neurological injuries. What is his source of inspiration for such kind and noble behaviour?

"My source of inspiration for engaging in charitable Causes, especially raising funds for medical treatments for children with neurological injuries, comes from a desire to make a positive difference in the lives of those in need. I believe it is our responsibility as individuals and

"Representing the Global Chamber of Business Leaders at the Annual Gala was a significant honour..."

businesses to give back to the community and support those facing challenges."

Asked about major projects and initiatives that he's been a part of within recent years, he touched on one of the most recent ones. In June of this year, he was a proud ambassador representing the Global Chamber of Business Leaders at the Annual Charity Gala hosted by the Tafida Raqeeb Foundation in Kensington, London. What did that partnership mean to him and what is his ultimate wish for children who face grave neuro-rehabilitation challenges and other life-threatening health challenges?

"Representing the Global Chamber of Business Leaders at the Annual Gala was a significant honour. My ultimate wish for children facing grave neuro-rehabilitation challenges and other life-threatening health issues is that they receive the best medical care, support and love they need to overcome their obstacles and lead fulfilling lives. It is essential to advocate for increased awareness, research and funding to improve the lives of these children and their families."

"Apart from this project, I have been involved in various initiatives supporting education, healthcare and environmental conservation, among others." As loyal to Causes as he is, he started *MasonMerch* where most profits from the sale of his merchandise go directly to entities/organisations that require much needed funding for their continual work for the recovery and well-being of young children. "My fundraising initiatives often involve branded merchandise, where a portion of the proceeds goes towards supporting the charitable Causes that I am passionate about. Through the sale of these branded products, we aim to raise awareness about the Causes, while also generating funds for important projects and initiatives."



Still continuing to build his brand and creating one of the highlight reels of his life, he is enjoying the success of the movie, "The Punished" in which he is starring. It has received rave reviews and even much attention in the United States of America. He has not branded himself as being one-dimensional. "The Punished" is a film in which he is starring in an emotionally charged role. Giving an overview of his experience in his career in the entertainment industry, he spoke of the creative process for the film, how involved he was and what it has been like bringing it to fruition for the world to see.

"(This movie) has been a remarkable journey in my career in the entertainment industry. It took me ten years to secure a leading role in a film and the opportunity with this particular film has been a dream



KEITH MASON is a GCBL Board of Advisors Member,  
Famous Movie Actor, and Philanthropist

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come true. The creative process in the film involved collaborating closely with the Director and fellow actors to bring our characters to life. It was a deeply emotional and intense experience and being involved in the entire filmmaking process has given me a profound appreciation for the art of storytelling through cinema."

"The Punished" can be seen at theatres and is also available for streaming on various platforms. With much pride, Mason declared,

"The movie's reception by the public has been overwhelmingly positive and I am grateful for the support and praise the film has received." With many fond memories, Mason expressed that while there were challenges, there was a favourite part of the journey surrounding this film thus far. "My favourite part of the journey surrounding "The Punished" has been witnessing the impact that the film has had on its audiences.

Many people have shared their personal stories and emotional connections to the movie, which makes all of the hard work and dedication worthwhile. The most challenging part was undoubtedly

the emotional toll it took to portray the character authentically and convincingly.” Mason also stars as an Irish detective in another recent film, "The Chosen", which is genre-based as a supernatural thriller.

Always keen on serving from his heart, he offered his top pieces of advice to anyone but moreso, young adults, for pursuing a career in a non-traditional field or job.

“Embrace your passions. Follow your interests and find a career path that aligns with what truly excites you. Passion and dedication will drive you to overcome challenges and achieve success. Be adaptable and open-minded. Non-traditional fields often require flexibility and the willingness to learn new skills. Embrace change and be open to exploring new opportunities. Build a strong network. Networking is essential in any industry. Connect with like-minded individuals, mentors and professionals who can offer guidance and support throughout your journey. Building a strong network can open doors to new opportunities and collaborations.”

In spite of his obvious success over the years and the much anticipated continued success, Mason will always embody humility and be a champion for others however he can. He has built his life and career on the premise that the underdog is the proverbial phoenix who always rises from the ashes. His early life “in the streets” did not deter him from having star-studded aspirations. His autobiography titled “Against All Odds” encompasses stories of his troubled youth as a teenager, gaining access to life as a professional rugby player, his foray into a film career and much more.

“Everything I’m doing is to inspire kids out there who are struggling on the streets. You see, I represent the people at the bottom. People of no hope. That’s where I came from as a kid (but) I turned a negative into a positive.”

**KEITH MASON can be found online on most social media platforms, including LinkedIn, Facebook and Instagram.**



Article End

Keith Mason has launched a non-profit sportswear brand to help raise funds for a £25 million brain injury hospital for children in the United Kingdom who are not provided NHS treatment.

Funds to be generated through the sales of the MasonMerch sportswear line will be donated to the Tafida Raqeeda Foundation towards the construction of the hospital.

The MasonMerch non-profit clothing are available for sale via:  
<https://shop.gutentog ltd.com/collections/keith-mason>

Every single purchase of the MasonMerch sportswear stands to help save the life of a little one who is counting on the benevolent support of everyone to survive.

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*Keith Mason*

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## ENRIQUE ACOSTA GONZALEZ:

GTM Editory, Enrique Acosta Gonzalez

# LEADING THE WAR ON STAGNATION IN BUSINESS WITH LOVE AND FAITH

From fighting for his country as a Naval Officer to fighting for entrepreneurs to gain success in their businesses and troubleshooting issues on behalf of corporate entities, Enrique Acosta Gonzalez has the calm disposition of a trained Armed Forces professional and the accommodating nature of a close friend. His Naval career before retirement spanned thirty years and he has achieved monumental success in the entrepreneurial world as a Leadership Coach, author, podcast host and more. About his authorship, Acosta Gonzalez said,

"I have had the privilege of co-authoring four books of which two became bestsellers. I have another co-authored book coming out in early October 2023. The first book, 'A Lion's Pride: The Scars That Silenced Kings' was a personal journey about how I struggled and overcame my obstacles. My second book 'Voices For Leadership' was a collaboration of forty authors and we shared our individual perspectives on important topics for leaders.

My third book was released this month and it was a collaboration of Latino and Latina leaders and we shared how we overcame the journey in the Hispanic community amidst the American culture. Lastly, 'The Leadership Source' is a book that dives into specific leadership challenges and how a leader can navigate them and get their people to better pastures."

A multiple-time recipient of awards, he shared,

"I have been fortunate to gain the admiration of peers and the awards community and have been selected for various State, national and global awards. I received the 2023 Top 200 Biggest Voices in Leadership and 2023 Global 100 Executive Coach of the Year (awards). I also received the Top 10 Inspiring Leaders of 2023 and 2023 Best CEO Mentorship & Leadership Development Firm – Florida."

His own support for friends and colleagues alike is not lost on others, including the Executive Team at the Global Chamber of Business Leaders (GCBL). Having been appointed as the Delegate for the United States of America, he did not waste a second in embracing what can only be coined as organic team spirit. What is the most significant thing for him having been appointed in this position?



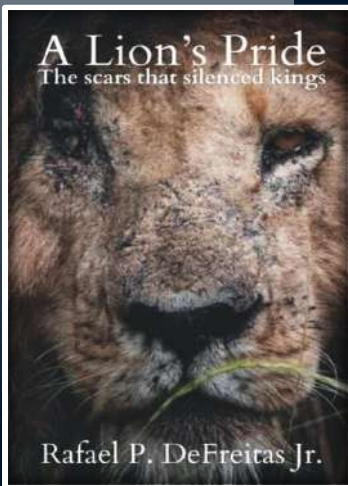


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What was his vision going forward in said position? Acosta Gonzalez remarked,

“It is a great honour to represent my nation in this capacity. The most significant thing is to be a part of a world-changing and impactful organization that addresses the true needs of life and our global citizens. My vision is to be an integral part of the solutions we seek through our efforts and to bring about global improvements in the areas we focus on.”

Speaking of execution, and also knowing that the GCBL is an organisation with thousands of Executives and Members who are based all over the world, what would be his vision for the GCBL to accelerate their growth potential, strategically speaking?



“I have had the privilege of co-authoring four books of which two became bestsellers. I have another co-authored book coming out in early October 2023.”

“I believe the Delegate Appointment system we currently have is a great way to establish a footprint around the world. The GCBL can accelerate their growth potential by implementing a strategic vision that encompasses digital transformation, membership engagement, partnerships, advocacy, data-driven decision-making and other initiatives that can create a thriving ecosystem for global businesses and their communities. This is the year of opportunity and the GCBL is poised to make a lasting impact.”

It is said that when America sneezes, the world catches a cold. How did he think the United States of America has revolutionised business or contributed to global business trends over the decades and/or within recent years?

“The U.S. has been at the forefront of technological innovations that have transformed business processes and industries worldwide. From the development of the internet and personal computing to the rise of Silicon Valley and the tech industry, the U.S. has been a major driver of digital transformation and the tech revolution. They have a vibrant entrepreneurial ecosystem and the culture of innovation and risk-taking has given rise to numerous successful start-ups. American start-ups have disrupted traditional industries, introduced new business models and set trends for global entrepreneurship. They also have been a pioneer in promoting globalization and the expansion of multi-national corporations. American companies have established a



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significant presence in various countries, contributing to the integration of global supply chains and the spread of Western business practices. Overall, the United States' history of entrepreneurship, technological leadership, and influential business practices has played a crucial role in shaping global business trends, driving innovation and propelling economic growth worldwide."

The U.S is cited within the top five most populated countries in the world. With dozens of States and countless Counties, how and in which key areas can the GCBL infiltrate the business sectors within the country?

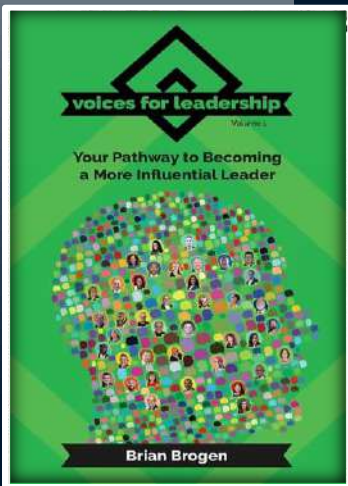
"The GCBL can focus on key areas and strategies that enable effective outreach and engagement and some approaches to consider can be:

**Regional Expansion:** Instead of targeting the entire country at once, the GCBL can strategically expand regionally. Identify cities or States with a strong business culture and enthusiastic entrepreneurs and establish teams and events in those areas first. Gradually expand to other regions based on demand and success.

**Strategic Partnerships:** Forge strategic partnerships with local businesses, organizations and community groups in the areas where the GCBL wants to establish a presence. Collaborate on events, promotions, and initiatives to leverage each other's resources and networks.

**Community Engagement:** Engage with the local communities where the GCBL operates. Organize community events, charity drives and youth development programs to build a positive relationship with residents and businesses.

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## ABOUT THE US NAVY

The United States Navy (USN) is one of the eight uniformed services of the United States and the maritime service branch of the United States Armed Forces. It is the largest and most powerful navy in the world, with its active battle fleet tonnage exceeding the next 3 navies combined, including 1 allies or partner nations of the United States as of 2012. Additionally, it has the highest combined battle fleet tonnage and the world's largest aircraft carrier fleet, with eleven in service, two new carriers under construction, and five other carriers planned. The United States Navy has 336,978 personnel on active duty and 101,583 in the Ready Reserve, making it the third largest of the United States military service branches in terms of personnel.

As of June 2019, it has 290 deployable combat vessels and more than 2,623 operational aircraft. The Continental Navy, established during the American Revolutionary War, is the origin of the United States Navy.

The modern United States Navy maintains a sizeable global presence, deploying in strength in such areas as the Western Pacific, the Mediterranean, and the Indian Ocean. It is a blue-water navy with the ability to project force onto the littoral regions of the world, engage in forward deployments during peacetime, and rapidly respond to regional crises.





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**Digital Marketing and Social Media:** Utilize digital marketing and social media platforms to reach a broader audience across different States. Create engaging content, promote upcoming events and interact with businesses to build a strong online community.

**Innovative Member Experience:** Focus on creating an innovative and immersive member experience during events. Incorporate technology, interactive elements and entertainment to attract and retain members.

**Youth Development Programs:** Establish youth business development programs in various regions to identify and nurture young talent. Partner with local schools and academies to create a pipeline for future GCBL members and leaders.

**Localization of Marketing Efforts:** Tailor marketing efforts to resonate with specific regions and communities. Understand the cultural



“My vision is to be an integral part of the solutions we seek through our efforts and to bring about global improvements in the areas we focus on.”

nuances and preferences in different States to build a more relatable brand.

**Strategic Branding and Merchandising:** Develop a strong brand identity that represents the values and aspirations of the Chamber. Offer attractive merchandise and memorabilia to increase brand visibility and member loyalty.

**Collaboration with Colleges and Universities:** Form partnerships with colleges and universities with strong basketball programs. Engage with student communities and leverage their support for GCBL events.

**Media Coverage and Broadcasting:** Secure media partnerships and broadcasting deals to increase the Chamber's visibility and reach. Television, radio, and online streaming platforms can help attract a larger audience.

**Corporate Sponsorships:** Pursue partnerships with national and regional corporate sponsors to secure funding and gain access to their marketing channels.

**Data Analytics and Member Insights:** Utilize data analytics to gain insights into member preferences, patterns and market potential. Data-driven decision-making can guide the Chamber's expansion and growth strategies.

By employing these strategies, the GCBL can gradually infiltrate the business sectors within the United States, establishing a strong presence in various regions and building a loyal and enthusiastic



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member base across the country. Patience, adaptability and a deep understanding of regional dynamics will be key to the GCBL's success in this ambitious endeavour."

With respect to his leadership experience impacting the work of the GCBL, he stated,

"My leadership experience can help in the following ways:

**Vision and Direction:** By supporting and providing guidance to the vision of the GCBL, I can inspire and motivate team members to work towards shared goals.



"I believe the Delegate Appointment system we currently have is a great way to establish a footprint around the world."

**Strategic Thinking:** Applying strategic thinking to the GCBL's initiatives can help in prioritizing projects, allocating resources effectively and adapting to changing environmental and socio-economic conditions.

**Communication and Collaboration:** Fostering open communication channels, facilitating collaboration and creating an inclusive and supportive work environment by encouraging dialogue and information-sharing within the GCBL.

**Inspiring and Empowering Others:** By fostering a culture of empowerment within the GCBL, we can enable individuals to contribute their unique skills and ideas, leading to increased creativity and efficiency in achieving the organization's objectives.

**Adaptability and Resilience:** In the face of evolving environmental issues, we can bring resilience and agility to the GCBL, guiding the

organization through challenges and inspiring others to embrace innovative approaches to sustainability. This will help drive positive change, create impactful initiatives and foster a sustainable future."

Having gained and developed certain skills and capabilities from his Naval career, there are some personal attributes that now positively influence his work as an entrepreneur, generally, and as a Coach,



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specifically. What has he noticed about his own personal development?

“Some of the personal attributes I developed that aid me in my journey as an entrepreneur and Coach are humility, kindness, loyalty, ambition, discipline, creativity and sensibility.”

Very intentional about holistic growth and having the right mindset, how did a past particular or apparent failure set him up for success?

“There is one event that I will forever remember as a great failure that turned into my greatest success. It is the reason my slogan is 'Taking you from suckcess to success'. I was nominated and granted entry into a school normally reserved for senior military leaders of the highest level. I would have been the first in my paygrade and community to ever attend this school and that made me very proud.

I, unfortunately, allowed that sense of pride to turn into haughtiness and selfish pride. One day before I was to travel to the school, I called to ensure that I was the very first person to attend at my paygrade.

After I explained why I was calling, the individual on the other side asked to verify some information and then put me on hold. When they returned to the line, they informed me that there must have been some sort of error because a person in my paygrade would normally not be allowed to attend and being that I was not on site yet, they decided to cancel my orders and attendance at this Course. I did not attend and I also did not promote to my next paygrade. My career ended abruptly and I had to retire.

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## ABOUT TALLAHASSEE

Tallahassee is the capital city of Florida, located in Leon County. It is the only incorporated municipality in the county and became the capital of Florida in 1824 when it was still a territory. As of 2022, the population was 201,731, making it the eighth most populous city in Florida.

The Tallahassee metropolitan area had a population of 385,145 in 2018. Tallahassee is home to Florida State University, ranked 19th in the nation among public universities by U.S. News & World Report. It is also home to Florida A&M University, ranked the best public historically black university in the nation by the same publication, and Tallahassee Community College, which primarily serves as a feeder school for the other two universities. The city has a student population exceeding 70,000, making it a college town.

As the capital, Tallahassee is home to the Florida State Capitol, Supreme Court of Florida, Florida Governor's Mansion, and almost 30 state agency headquarters. It is also known for its many law firms, lobbying organizations, and trade associations, including the Florida Bar and the Florida Chamber of Commerce. Tallahassee is a recognized hub for scientific research and is home to the National High Magnetic Field Laboratory. In 2015, the city was awarded the All-American City Award by the National Civic League for the second time.



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I learned a very painful and costly lesson that day. Pride comes before destruction and a haughty spirit before the fall. I vowed to make humility my badge of honour and to be my first inclination. I will never know how far I could have gone if I had attended that school but I know that whatever I do today, if I do it in humility, I will never miss out on true joy."

It is said that closed doors lead an individual to their true destiny. Subsequently deciding to embark on life as an entrepreneur, what was the catalyst for the decision to go that route?

"The catalyst for me to go into my leadership career was the fact that I had a terrible person in a seat of leadership early in my career and I

"Being a leader comes with its share of responsibilities and challenges and there are indeed several prices to pay for taking on this role."

suffered under his care. I was determined to hone my leadership skills to provide a better leadership experience for others. The catalyst for me to go into my coaching business was the loss of my employment."

With Triad Leadership Solutions becoming his main focus, he sought to create and conceptualise strategies for individuals and organisations. What are his focus areas as a contemporary leader?

"Triad Leadership Solutions is a leadership development consulting company (where) our offerings span from Coaching (Personal and Professional), Assessments, Training and Mentorship." Delving into his work for his podcast, "Developing The Leader Within", he said, "(It) was created as an extension of our services and to give worldwide leaders an opportunity to share their experiences and impact the world of leadership through video and audio content. We cover a variety of topics that affect and impact leaders on a day-to-day basis and how they can leverage the knowledge we share to be ready to execute."

"If the pandemic taught us anything, it's that there is no one way to work. A worldwide event declared the bonds of corporations were null and void, and once people saw that organizations had an archaic system that benefitted businesses and not the workers, you got an outcry. Gone are the days of the 9-5, gone are the days of one place of business. You cannot put the cat back in the bag and act like we never saw it. Leading and managing the remote work force takes adjustment and strategy but by combining effective communication, flexibility,





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trust, and empathy, leaders can navigate remote work successfully while addressing the appeals of staff members and promoting a harmonious and productive work environment.”

He maintained, “The COVID-19 pandemic had both positive and negative effects on the business landscape, including an increase in start-ups. The pandemic accelerated the need for businesses to adopt digital solutions to survive. Start-ups with innovative digital products and services had an advantage during this time as remote work, e-commerce and online services became essential. The pandemic also created new market demands and opportunities. Start-ups were quick to identify gaps in the market and offer solutions to address the challenges arising from the pandemic.”

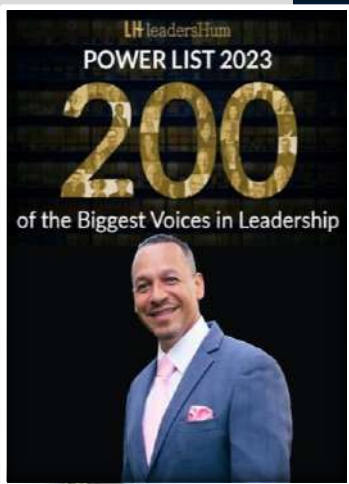
“The shift to remote work opened up new possibilities for entrepreneurship. With more people working from home, individuals had additional time and flexibility to pursue their start-up ideas. The economic downturn led to job losses in traditional industries. Many skilled professionals and entrepreneurs turned to start their own ventures during this period, taking advantage of the talent pool available in the job market. In some regions, Governments offered financial support and incentives to start-ups to stimulate economic growth and innovation during the pandemic.

It is important to note that while there was an increase in start-ups during the pandemic, many businesses also faced significant challenges, with some having to close down due to the economic impact of the health crisis. The start-up landscape remains dynamic and will continue to evolve in response to changing circumstances.”

Noting his stance that an individual should not hasten to become a leader because there is a price to be paid, he explored that thought and shared what he deemed to be the biggest misconception people have about being a leader.

“Being a leader comes with its share of responsibilities and challenges and there are indeed several prices to pay for taking on this role. You assume greater responsibility, sacrifice personal time, have to deal with complexities, you have to handle criticism and pressure, you have to deal with the emotional burdens of your team, you have to make decisions and deal with all the consequences, you must manage conflict and be a role model, you are required to always be learning while enduring stress and burnout conditions, you can potentially deal with strained relationships.

Despite the challenges and prices to pay, effective leaders also experience great rewards, such as the satisfaction of achieving goals, positively impacting their team and organization and seeing personal and professional growth in themselves and others. Leadership can be incredibly fulfilling but it requires resilience, self-awareness and a commitment to continuous improvement.”



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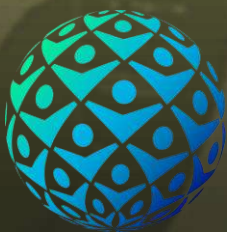
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ENRIQUE ACOSTA GONZALEZ, DELEGATE FOR THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA



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"The biggest misconception about being a leader is that it revolves solely around authority, control and having all the answers. Effective leadership is about empowering others, fostering collaboration and continuously learning and growing as a leader. It's a dynamic and adaptable role that requires a combination of various skills and behaviours."

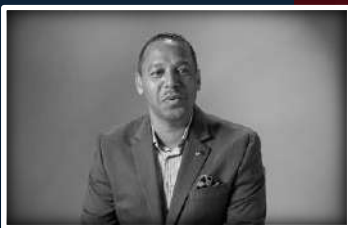
Leadership on organisational, corporate and non-corporate levels (retail industry, etc.) is being done on many fronts with the vision, mindsets, techniques, tactics and tools of generations gone by. In his professional opinion, what was needed to be done in order for there to be a shift to affect contemporary and mutually beneficial solutions, especially among the younger generations, namely, the Millennials and Gen-Zers? "To effect a shift towards contemporary and mutually beneficial solutions, especially among Millennials and Gen-Zers, several key factors need to be considered. Some steps that can be taken to foster positive change are empowering youth voices, addressing global challenges, meeting their educational and skill development needs, providing mentorship and leadership development opportunities, teaching ethical business practices, promoting and driving mental health awareness, fostering collaborations and partnerships, leveraging technology and digital platforms and recognizing and celebrating impacts by our young leaders."

Of course, it has to be acknowledged that change and team effort have to be involved in any process of evolution, even within business or other professional realms. Team-Building and Change Management being two areas of his business and with the GCBL being an organisation that is seriously inclined to honing a comfortable,

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Ep. 020



## ABOUT FLORIDA

Did you know that Florida is a state located in the Southeastern region of the United States? It is bordered by the Gulf of Mexico to the west, Alabama to the northwest, Georgia to the north, the Bahamas and Atlantic Ocean to the east, and the Straits of Florida and Cuba to the south. It is the only state that borders both the Gulf of Mexico and the Atlantic Ocean.

As of 2020, Florida has a population exceeding 21 million, making it the third-most populous state in the nation. It also ranks eighth in population density. Florida spans an area of 65,758 square miles (170,310 km<sup>2</sup>), ranking 22nd in area among the 50 states. The Miami metropolitan area, which is anchored by the cities of Miami, Fort Lauderdale, and West Palm Beach, is the state's largest metropolitan area with a population of 6.138 million.

Meanwhile, the state's most populous city is Jacksonville with a population of 949,611. Other major population centers in Florida include Tampa Bay, Orlando, Cape Coral, and the state capital of Tallahassee.





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productive space for its Executives, what would he recommend as they continue to build on 2023 being the "year of opportunity"?

"When it comes to team effort and change initiatives, effective leadership and collaboration are key. Some recommendations to ensure successful implementation (would be) establishing a clear and compelling vision for the change initiative; ensuring there is a capable and committed leadership team to guide the change initiative; fostering an environment of open and transparent communication; involving team members in the decision-making process whenever possible; and identifying individuals who are enthusiastic about the change and willing to champion it within the team. By focusing on these and other strategies, you can increase the likelihood of a

"The biggest misconception about being a leader is that it revolves solely around authority, control and having all the answers."

successful outcome in 2023 and beyond."

How important is it to build a community inside and outside of the GCBL?

"Support and collaboration are essential elements for personal growth, team effectiveness and organizational success. They enhance problem-solving abilities, boost motivation and create a positive and cohesive work environment. By fostering a culture of support and collaboration, individuals and teams can achieve their full potential and accomplish their goals more effectively. Building a community is crucial for the success and growth of the GCBL and any organization or group.

By fostering a sense of belonging, support and collaboration, a community can create a positive environment that benefits all of its members and contributes to the greater good. Similarly, engaging with external communities can have a broader social impact and further enhance the Chamber's reputation and influence."

His own reputation and influence are always at the forefront of his mind. His spirituality being a centrepiece in his life, Acosta Gonzalez said that at his core, one word to describe him would be a "servant". What would he want his personal and professional legacies to be?



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“Simply stated, a servant of God, a husband and father that loved, a citizen that cared for his neighbour and (who) led with his heart.”

One who is not shy about highlighting spirituality even within one's business life, how has his own spirituality positively impacted his path to success?

“Without faith, there is no hope for a bright future. Faith is the foundation of my life and it has guided me through some rough patches in my journey on earth. It has been through faith that I have been able to launch my business and keep striving to see the vision of a more potent and impactful leadership cadre come to pass. I will never shy away from speaking about God, my Saviour and Redeemer and my Comforter and Counsellor.

In fact, those who have the faith I speak about are more likely to succeed in business and anything they do in their lives. It sure has been a pillar in the way I execute everything I do. I would not be successful, have the influence or impact I do, without faith being my cornerstone. It truly is a privilege and honour to speak about and display faith in action.”

Article End



## ABOUT THE UNITED STATES

The **United States of America (U.S.A. or USA)**, commonly known as the **United States (U.S. or US)** or informally as **America**, is a country primarily located in North America consisting of 50 states, a federal district, five major unincorporated territories, nine Minor Outlying Islands, and 326 Indian reservations. It is the world's third-largest country by both land and total area. It shares land borders with Canada to its north and with Mexico to its south and has maritime borders with the Bahamas, Cuba, Russia, and other nations. With a population of over 333 million, it is the most populous country in the Americas and the third-most populous in the world. The national capital of the United States is Washington, D.C., and its most populous city and principal financial center is New York City.

Indigenous peoples have inhabited the Americas for thousands of years. Beginning in 1607, British colonization led to the establishment of the Thirteen Colonies in what is now the Eastern United States. They quarreled with the British Crown over taxation and political representation, leading to the American Revolution and ensuing Revolutionary War. The United States declared independence on July 4, 1776, becoming the first nation-state founded on Enlightenment principles of unalienable natural rights, consent of the governed, and liberal democracy.


With the Soviet Union's collapse and the subsequent end of the Cold War in 1991, the United States emerged as the world's sole superpower.

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## A BLOCK DIVISION OF THE WORLD IS EMERGING:

Global Times Editorly

# GLOBALIZATION AS WE KNOW IT WILL NO LONGER EXIST.



Through the previous three years, a series of unlikely events took place that radically changed decades of global processes. It is an exaggeration to claim that we are living in a "new normal" because changes are part of reality but we are witnessing a period of accelerated change in some important processes that have shaped the world since the beginning of the 90s of the last century and even earlier.

Most of these changes did not occur by themselves, quite unexpectedly, but the events of 2020, 2021 and 2022 acted as an accelerator of paradigm shifts that normally take much more time. It is not a complete replacement of the old forms but it is definitely a change in the shape of those forms.

The EU, USA and China are, by all accounts, the main entities that manage the new processes and determine the way the world will react to them but due to the inherent weaknesses and shortcomings of these world powers, the final result of the changes is uncertain.

### ***The economic situation in the US is surprisingly good.***

Considering the whole series of global crises in recent years, the situation is surprisingly good. This is far from what the US, EU or China would want and what is considered satisfactory in normal times but the events since the beginning of 2020 cannot be characterized as normal.

In April, May and June, the USA achieved GDP growth of 2.4 per cent on an annual basis by 0.4 percentage points more than in the first three months of this year. Real personal disposable income, adjusted for taxes and inflation, grew as much as 8.5 per cent in the first three months of this year and 2.5 per cent in the following three months.

Citizens' consumption is growing month by month. The total number of

Continue





employees is increasing and the unemployment rate is 3.6 per cent. The average wage of workers per hour is increasing to the current 33.58 dollars. From the end of 2021, investments in the construction of production facilities are growing at an unprecedented rate, even when adjusted for the rise in the price of construction materials.

The given data is nothing special in itself but when put in the context of the time, it becomes surprising. Not so long ago, at the beginning of this year, media polls of investors and stockbrokers from Wall Street showed a very pessimistic sentiment and most expected a recession.

***A partial victory over inflation.***

Considering the whole series of global crises in recent years, the situation is surprisingly good.

With all of the above, the fight against inflation succeeded. According to data for June, it dropped to 3 per cent. However, this is primarily the result of falling energy prices, and core inflation (increase in prices excluding food and energy) is still a relatively high 4.8 per cent.

It is a success albeit a partial one. Although the beginning of the big price rise was largely ignored, through 2022, great efforts were made to combat it. This was primarily done by the rise in interest rates, which is why interest rates on loans to citizens and companies rose sharply. The current average interest rate on 30-year home loans is around 7 per cent.

After the historically unrecorded growth of the money supply since the beginning of the pandemic, which caused a large increase in prices, the money supply is decreasing from the middle of 2022. At this rate, it will take years to return to pre-pandemic levels but it is fascinating that GDP is growing while the money supply is shrinking and interest rates are rising.

***China is slowing down more and more although the situation is stable for now.***

China's once fantastic economic growth has weakened. At the level of 2022, GDP growth amounted to 3 per cent, which is devastating for a country that not so long ago grew at double-digit rates. Currently, by the end of this year, it is predicted that the GDP will still grow between 5 and 6 per cent but such were the forecasts for last year as well.

Exports fell by as much as 12.3 per cent in June compared to the same month in 2022 and imports by 6.8 per cent. This is a strong signal of weakening foreign and domestic demand. Youth unemployment is 21.3



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per cent, and before the pandemic, it was around 10 per cent.

One of the problems that caused this was a mismatch between the type of jobs offered on the market and formal education. Young Chinese are increasingly educated and are looking for better-paid jobs with a certain prestige of which there are not enough in China. The growth in the number of highly qualified jobs does not follow the growth in higher education.

The real estate crisis, which filled the headlines of the world media last year, is not over yet. Despite large government incentives, real estate companies are still over-indebted, sales of new real estate have slowed down. Evergrande, China's best-known failed real estate giant, only recently released financial statements for 2021 and 2022, which

The biggest long-term problem is demography. In addition to labor shortages, demographic problems entail other problems with economic sustainability.

showed a loss of \$81 billion over those two years.

***The EU finds its way in new conditions.***

The EU is in the most unfavourable situation. The negative consequences of the war in Ukraine are felt more strongly, over the past two years, the separation of dependence on Russian energy sources has been carried out, and it has been economically lagging behind the USA for years.

The Eurozone is already in a technical recession with two consecutive quarters of GDP decline. Inflation is falling more slowly than in the USA and is 6.4 per cent.

This decline is predominantly the result of the drop in the price of energy and the risks for continued growth in food prices are still elevated. Compared to June 2022, the price of food is 13.8 per cent higher at the level of the entire EU.

The weakening of the EU economy can also be seen in the data on industrial turnover in Croatia. In May, it grew by 3.7 per cent on the domestic market but the decline on the non-domestic market amounts to 6.9 per cent. As the primary export market for companies from Croatia is the EU, the drop in foreign demand mainly refers to the EU.

The biggest long-term problem is demography. In addition to labor shortages, demographic problems entail other problems with economic sustainability. One of them is the degree of innovation, with which a problem will arise due to the smaller number of young highly educated specialists. However, the biggest problem is the (un)sustainability of a pension



## ***The appearance of globalization is changing.***

After a decade of development of general world globalization, it seems that different blocs are being created in the world. This does not mark the end of the globalization process but a change in its appearance. Multilateral globalization is weakening and bilateral globalization is developing.

This means that world trade, political and diplomatic rules are determined less and less by international supranational institutions, and more and more by the states themselves or groups of states. In the trade war between China and the US over the production and trade of microchips, there is little or no question of the opinion of the World Trade Organization (WTO).

The US did not even exploit domestic raw materials because it was cheaper to buy from China and South America

As recently as December 2022, China submitted a complaint to the WTO over US violations of free trade rules but it is unlikely that the US would lift restrictions on the export of microchips and the technology to make them even if the WTO asked for it.

Allies of the US, such as the EU countries, Japan, South Korea, Taiwan and others, have united to limit the import of microchips to China and make it difficult for it to develop this industry. On the other hand, China is openly increasing trade with Russia, exporting products that the country can no longer buy from the EU, and importing oil and gas, which Russia cannot sell to the EU.

## ***Tensions between the USA, the EU and China.***

Tensions exist between the US and the EU, especially over the issue of subsidies. The USA is accused of actually subsidizing its industry under the pretext of 'green technologies', thus putting companies that produce and export from the EU at a disadvantage.

The connection between the economies of the two powers is great. In 2022, the EU exported 500 billion Euros worth of products to the USA and imported 359 billion Euros. For the most part, they invest in each other, so US investments in the EU are four times higher than in East Asia, South Asia and Australia combined. Investments from the EU in the USA are even ten times higher than investments in China and India.

Despite all the listed problems, world trade is growing in value but also in tonnage. This is a major feature of globalization and the trend is unlikely to change. But that trade will be increasingly regulated, increasingly negotiated bilaterally between states instead of



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system based on inter-generational solidarity. Numerous countries have raised the retirement age in recent years and some are planning to raise the retirement age to 70. At the beginning of the year, France was rocked by violent protests over the pension reform that raised the retirement age from 62 to 64.

The abolition of dependence on Russia for energy imports was carried out relatively well. This was helped by a mild winter but also by co-ordination among EU members and a great diversification of procurement routes. In fact, in recent months in Europe, the problem has been excess gas, so the price has decreased to the levels of mid-2021. multilaterally at the global level, and increasingly used as a negotiating tool/weapon in diplomatic matters.

Given that they have large reserves of raw materials, the USA and China are in a much better situation in this regard. The US did not even exploit domestic raw materials because it was cheaper to buy from China and South America but in order to meet the goal of self-sufficiency in the production of microchips and other key products, it is increasingly developing mining and other industries related to raw materials.

The EU is in an unenviable situation even though it has a wide network of free trade agreements, or they are in the process of negotiation but in the past, interest groups have often blocked such agreements, as is the case with Canada but also with the US itself (TTIP). Such agreements are more necessary for the EU because it is much more dependent on the import of raw materials than the USA and China.

### ***Will the changes bring improvement?***

Uncertainties about the future are growing over time and international co-operation is retreating in the face of the emergence of new bloc divisions. Some welcome the emergence of a multipolar and bloc world. Countries like India and Brazil try to remain neutral but they cannot isolate themselves from bloc conflicts.

Whether such a world will be more stable and richer than the previous one remains to be seen.

The trend of new conflicts around the world (the number of armed conflicts in Africa is the highest in several decades, We are faced with a whole series of military coups and attacks on democracy and human rights, for example in Zimbabwe.), tensions over Taiwan and other geopolitical tensions do not inspire hope for a more peaceful tomorrow.

However, nothing new, because throughout history periods of greater global connectivity, trade liberalization and co-operation alternate with periods of state closure, protectionism and conflict.

In uncertain times, such as the past three years, countries and people tend to isolate themselves. Every change benefits someone and harms someone, creates winners and losers. It will be the same now.



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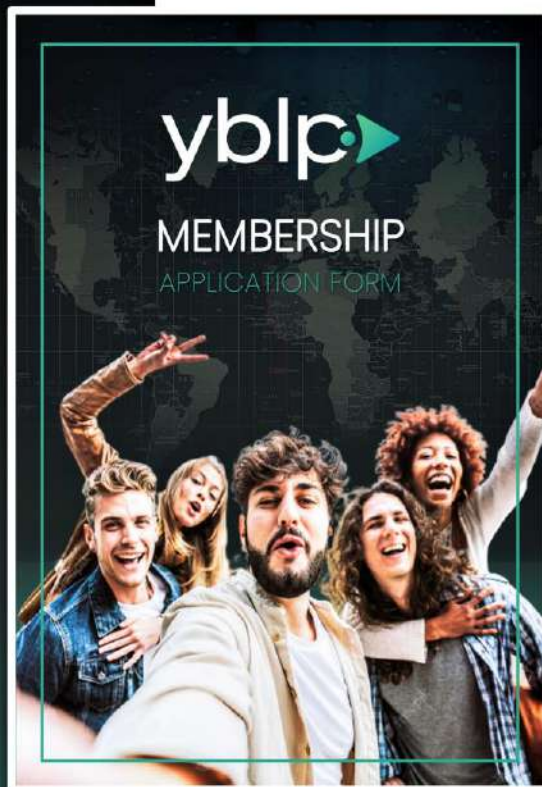
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## UN WORLD WATER DEVELOPMENT REPORT:

Global Times Editory, UNESCO

# IMMINENT RISK OF A GLOBAL WATER CRISIS, WARNS THE UN WORLD WATER REPORT 2023



**B**etween two and three billion people worldwide experience water shortages. These shortages will worsen in the coming decades, especially in cities, if international cooperation in this area is not boosted, warn UNESCO and UN-Water in the latest edition of the UN World Water Development Report.

Globally, 2 billion people (26% of the population) do not have safe drinking water and 3.6 billion (46%) lack access to safely managed sanitation, according to the report, published by UNESCO on behalf of UN-Water and released today at the UN 2023 Water Conference in New York.

Between two and three billion people experience water shortages for at least one month per year, posing severe risks to livelihoods, notably through food security and access to electricity. The global urban population facing water scarcity is projected to double from 930 million in 2016 to 1.7–2.4 billion people in 2050. The growing incidence of extreme and prolonged droughts is also stressing ecosystems, with dire consequences for both plant and animal species.

### **International cooperation: the key to access to water for all**

Nearly every water-related intervention involves some kind of cooperation. Growing crops require shared irrigation systems among farmers. Providing safe and affordable water to cities and rural areas is only possible through a communal management of water-supply and sanitation systems. And cooperation between these urban and rural communities is essential to maintaining both food security and uphold farmer incomes.

Managing rivers and aquifers crossing international borders makes matters all the more complex. While cooperation over transboundary basins and aquifers has been shown to deliver many benefits beyond water security, including opening additional diplomatic channels, only 6 of the world's 468 internationally shared aquifers are subject to a formal cooperative agreement.

On this World Water Day, the United Nations calls for boosting international cooperation over how water is used and managed. This is the only way to prevent a global water crisis in the coming decades.

### Partnerships and people's participation increase benefits

Environmental services, such as pollution control and biodiversity, are among the shared benefits most often highlighted in the report, along with data/information-sharing and co-financing opportunities.

For example, 'water funds' are financing schemes that bring together downstream users, like cities, businesses, and utilities, to collectively invest in upstream habitat protection and agricultural land management to improve overall water quality and/or quantity.



"There is an urgent need to establish strong international mechanisms to prevent the global water crisis from spiraling out of control. Water is our common future and it is essential to act together to share it equitably and manage it sustainably.

**Audrey Azoulay**, UNESCO Director-General

Mexico's Monterrey Water Fund, launched in 2013, has maintained water quality, reduced flooding, improved infiltration and rehabilitated natural habitats through co-financing.

The success of similar approaches in Sub-Saharan Africa, including the Tana-Nairobi river watershed, which supplies 95% of the Nairobi's freshwater and 50% of Kenya's electricity, illustrate the global potential of such partnerships.

Inclusive stakeholder participation also promotes buy-in and ownership. Involving the end-users in planning and implementing water systems creates services that better match the needs and resources of poor communities, and increases public acceptance and ownership. It also fosters accountability and transparency.

In displacement camps in the Gedo region of Somalia, residents elect water committees that operate and maintain the waterpoints that supply tens of thousands of people. Committee members partner with local water authorities of the host communities to share and manage water resources.

"Protecting and preserving this precious resource for future generations depends on partnerships. The smart management and conservation of the world's water resources means bringing together governments, businesses, scientists, civil society and communities – including indigenous communities – to design and deliver concrete solutions.

**António Guterres**, United Nations Secretary-General

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# WHAT GOES IN THE OCEAN GOES IN YOU.

*It is time to tell people and industry once and for all that we have one planet, one water, and that if we do not understand that plastic does not belong in nature, especially not in the sea, we will receive the worst possible condemnations. We will be condemned by our descendants who will because of our (in)action(s) be deprived of nature, water and food“.*

Dejan Štancer

CHAIRMAN





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