



'State of the World' Roundtable Report

Tuesday 8th February 2022

Our prestigious launch event for 2022, the online *State of the World Roundtable* brought together over 100 members and guests, who were addressed by a brilliant range of speakers.

It proved to be a much-needed meeting of minds and covered significant ground on key global issues. The program focused on the topics of global economy; global pandemic response and preparedness; measuring progress; and mobilising for action on climate change.

The overarching message was the need to strengthen international co-operation and improve global governance arrangements, supported by new and emerging coalitions of private & public sectors and civil society, many of who are already affiliated with the Global Foundation

This message will help to frame the agenda for the Foundation's forthcoming face to face global meeting, the *Assisi & Rome Roundtable* from 21 to 23 May, 2022

Some of the specific messages to emerge from the roundtable were as follows:

As the world adapts to the idea of living with Covid-19, it was evident that so much upheaval over the past two years has brought the global agenda to a crossroads. ***"We are undergoing an economic regime change, a dramatic shift in the global economic landscape"***. This shift makes possible an emergence of change, not only economically, but in all areas of global concern. The ***'fragility of our planet'*** is evident more than ever; those in Australia have evidenced this with the recent flood disaster, and citizens of the world now demand ***"leaders who can lead."***

With continuing progress in science, innovation and technology there is now a higher interest in investment than ever before however we will see the emergence of new challenges, most pertinently the impact of inflation.

The roundtable assessed the current impact of climate change, as ***"here and now"***, no longer a future threat and no longer a discussion only for academics. The time has arrived for business and investors to take action and drive the momentum of change. However, with this comes the confusion of too many policy platforms being at cross purposes; this needs addressing through collaboration between nations.





“We need to find a ‘globally coherent’ approach to achieving net zero and preventing carbon leakage”.

The need for vital ongoing discussions, such as the Foundation’s Roundtables, particularly in the areas of climate action and international governance, were recognised by multiple contributors throughout the program.

There was clear agreement that global financial investment in achieving net zero was necessary but also in the global health response infrastructure so that health authorities may address and respond to emerging risks and learn from the unpreparedness leading up to the Covid-19 pandemic. So often we hear of ‘one in one hundred year’ events but the reality is that ***“our desire to globalise is driving up the risks”*** of new global health events. There is also a cycle of neglect in play as the world continues to be made up of “two halves” with only 10% of the developing world vaccinated against Covid. Inequality leads to new risks. Scientific expansion in preparation for the next event is vital and must also address vaccine hoarding and develop ***“faster mechanisms to share knowledge”***.

In what was a most timely assessment of the instability of global relationships, the world is presently witnessing the shocking state of war in Ukraine. Even before this outbreak of hostilities, there was a clear consensus from global governance experts that the ***“world is in crisis”***, a state of flux that is leading to tense divisions and polarised nations.

There was acknowledgment of some positive signs of improvement in relations between

the US and China and a hope that this could continue to develop. Speakers recognised the complicated territory that is ***“trying to understand Russia”*** and encouraged ***“twin tracks of dialogue”*** that involved multiple civil society actors, including women, young people, and grassroots representation.

What was clear going forward is that there is a need to improve the processes to measure actual progress on actions taken against commitments made, in relation to global change. Participants in the roundtable heard of the ***“importance of transparency and data”*** when measuring progress. All actors in society should be held to account and ensure that their respective commitments are acted upon.

We must now all ask this question of ourselves, ***“how can I be of service?”*** as we face this tumultuous time of global crossroads.

The *State of the World Roundtable* will now become an annual program to help set the agenda at the beginning of each year.

If you would like to know more about the *State of the World Roundtable*, please visit our website at [link](#), or contact the Foundation’s secretariat.

**The State of the World Roundtable was conducted according to the Chatham House Rule and therefore all quotes are unattributed.*