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World Future 2008 – A Conference Highlight

“The Great Challenges Today and Tomorrow”

presentation by Dr. Jerome C. Glenn

Director, Millennium Project, World Federation of United Nations Associations

synopsized by Jay Herson

More than 1000 enthusiastic futurists attended the recent 2008 annual meeting of the World Future Society, “Seeing the Future Through New Eyes,” in Washington DC. In a special event session entitled “The Great Challenges Today and Tomorrow,” Dr. Jerome C. Glenn, Director of the Millennium Project of the World Federation of United Nations Associations, welcomed attendees with a summary of global challenges:

1. How can sustainable development be achieved for all while addressing global climate change?
2. How can everyone have sufficient clear water without conflict?
3. How can population growth and resources be brought into balance?
4. How can genuine democracy emerge from authoritarian regimes?
5. How can policymaking be made more sensitive to global long-term perspectives?
6. How can global convergence of information and communications technologies work for everyone?
7. How can ethical market economies be encouraged to help reduce the gap between rich and poor?
8. How can the threat of new and reemerging diseases and immune micro-organisms be reduced?
9. How can the capacity to decide be improved as the nature of work and institutions change?
10. How can shared values and new security strategies reduce ethnic conflicts, terrorism and the use of weapons of mass destruction?
11. How can the changing status of women help improve the human condition?
12. How can transnational organized crime networks be stopped from becoming more powerful and sophisticated global enterprises?
13. How can growing energy demand be met safely and efficiently?
14. How can scientific and technological breakthroughs be accelerated to improve the human condition?

15. How can ethical considerations become more routinely incorporated into global decisions?

Further details on these challenges and how they vary by continent can be found in: Glenn, J.C., Gordon, T.J. and Florescu, E. *2008 State of the Future*, The Millennium Project, World Federation of United Nations Associations, Washington, DC. (www.stateofthefuture.org)

Jay Herson is Managing Editor and a frequent contributor to FUTUREtakes.