World Humanities Forum
Challenge and Responsibilities for a Planet in Transition

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“Since wars begin in the minds of men, it is in the minds of men that the defences of peace must be constructed”.

This declaration of UNESCO, not only represents the universal value of mankind; It should be taken as mankind's ultimate goal, and to be relentlessly sought and accomplished!

As an artist, I have, since the beginning of 21st century, through my paintings, reflecting the reality of society; but also turned my writings towards the concern of living space the future of mankind. For this, the UNESCO had in 2016, organised a Dialogue of Arts of Eastern and Western Paintings in Paris. At the opening ceremony, I read out my "Art For Peace" declaration and through the platform of Unesco to appeal to all artists to endeavour for peace through their works.

Today, I'm proud and honoured to stand on the platform of World Humanity Conference to talk about my dedication to arts and culture and promote movement of "art for peace" globally!

It took a long long time for Human being, to advance from the savage days of devouring raw meat drinking blood in the Stone Age to drill wood for fire; and to fishing, cultivating and hunting; to the civilised age of travelling in cars and boats. It took another six thousand years for human civilisation to move from Mesopotamia riverine culture to the slave society and feudal kingdom. Another three thousand years went past, before the arrival of Renaissance in Italy, around Fourteenth, Fifteenth Centuries. Human society began to break off soul and religious imprisonment and enjoyed freedom of thoughts and artistic creation. The
Industrial Revolution in the 17 century was also a follow-up events of these developments. This was followed by rapid development of economy, culture and science, which in turn ushered in several hundred years of European domination.

The development of human society from the eighties of last century to present day, the breakthrough of high technology and IT communication, and the wide spread of commerce, the original of model of economic development and the traditional operation had all drastically changed beyond recognition.

Just when the economy began to move into Globalization, the superpower and hegemony tried to build wall of economic protectionism.

Geopolitical scrambling and wars were stirred up by the economic protectionism. The competition and tussle of the U. S. and Russia in the Middle East has reawakened the Monster of NATO war. The confrontation and standoff of US and Russia has affected the economic cooperation, revival and development, In the Western Hemisphere. In the East, the US Japanese and the Philippines military alliance has stirred up political and economic storms in the South China Sea and Southeast Asia.

The history of human development is in a sense the history of wars. Wars, caused by disputes between different races, by border expansion and invasion, by looting of natural resources, were part and parcel of human history. Although human being, for over thousand years, had grown out of its uncivilised violent behaviour, the DNA of savages had hidden deep inside the human body. When unhealthy thoughts, power and wealth exerting themselves, that DNA would emerge to urge the human being to turn back to the savage days of "the law of the jungle"--plunging the world into one of political, economic aggression, cruel suppression and resources scrambling in modern and civilised times.

Taking a panoramic overall view of today's troubling world: geopolitical scrambling and aggression, military competition and arms race, international economic control and manipulation: the global picture before us is one of rapid changes in a flash! Dark clouds are over the
horizon. Prof Huntington's prediction of Conflicts of Civilisations, has sadly, come true!

The essence of difference of East/West cultures boils down to <Harmony vs Confrontation>; < Conquest and Rule vs Conciliation and Submission>." The Core concept and value of the Eastern Culture is in the structure of "Harmonious Unity of Heaven and Man". The Western Culture by contrast, believes in confrontation of man and nature, and man's probing and conquering of the nature. Eastern culture's idea of Harmonious Unity of Man and Nature leads to the belief that man is part of, or contained within, the Nature. Hence the birth of theory and scholarship that advocates that: Heaven, Earth, Man and all Material things are rolling into One, coexisting and mutually re-enforcing, and all together are moving in circle for ever and ever. This then is the Essence of the Eastern Culture; it may indeed represents the epitome of the universe!

The famous Chinese contemporary sociologist scholar Prof. Fei Xiao Tong, proposed, out of "self-consciousness" of the Eastern culture, the idea of "appreciate one’s own beauty; appreciate the beauty of others; and a sharing of all beauties", and "a Commonwealth of universe". His is truly a golden advice: he concluded that the relationship of human being, regardless of colour and race, national boundaries, they all have created, through their own life and endeavour, a cultural system, a culture and living custom with traditional characteristics. They should be mutually respected and appreciated, learning from each other, engaging in exchanges and assimilation. With this done, a global unity would emerge.

President Xi of China proposed in 2013, the "One Belt One Road Initiative", which is a blueprint for economic development of the century, transcending region, race, space and civilisation. At the Belt and Road Forum for International Cooperation in Beijing in May this year, Xi again quoted " the interaction between nations depends in the intimate relationship of people; which in turn depends on the connection of people 's hearts.” This reinforces the fact that mutual trust and understanding of people is built in the cultural exchanges, which leads to building of profound friendship among the people and friendly relations among
nations. As the ancient sage China said: "Take care of yourself when you are poor; do good for the world when you are well off"; "Those who are in possession of virtue and morality would receive plenty of help"; "Those who win the hearts of the people would rule the world.”

As the core concept of the Western culture adheres to the idea of "confrontation of man and nature", it has brought about the “conflict of civilisation” and international upheaval; Contrarily, the concept of “Unity of Man and Nature” of the Eastern culture, has given birth to “the Dialogue of Civilisations”, to build a harmonious world, befitting the historical space of the 21 century, which is changing rapidly, carrying with it opportunities and challenges.

By sheer coincidence, this premiere Unesco led "World Humanities Conference" gives expression to the spirit of "Dialogue of Civilisations ". In particular, the six themes of the Conference: “Humanity And The Environment”, “Cultural Identities, Cultural Diversities And Intercultural Relations: A Global Multicultural Humanity”, “Borders And Migrations”, “Heritage”, “History, Memory And Politics”, “The Humanities In A Changing World”. It is believed that this Conference would provide a silver lightning to the economic and political dark sky. It is also expected that this meagre lightning would bring warmth and hope to mankind, and usher in a new dawn!