

# Towards a New Paradigm of Global Development\*

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*Measures taken by different states to fight the COVID-19 pandemic have aggravated the crisis signs and symptoms in socio-economic development of individual countries and the global world and have made the issues of their further changes particularly topical. Basing on the analysis of possible models of socio-economic development, the present article reveals the nature of the contemporary systemic crisis and proves the necessity of changing to a new paradigm of global values. It is revealed that necessary prerequisites for the transition to the new paradigm were created by the fourth industrial revolution. The authors clarify the understanding of information society as a stage in humankind evolution, based on the widespread use of digital technologies and the direct connection between production and consumption. The authors formulate the conditions for implementing the strategy of sustainable development of the global world, implying the harmonization of interests of different social groups and creation of a new social environment corresponding to the twenty-first century technologies. The article reveals that person's highest values are their identity and achievement of their personal best in the physical, intellectual or spiritual sense. In this connection, the strategic task for forming the future is to ensure the achievement of this unique, objectively existing global aim of the development of humankind, all countries and each person.*

**Keywords:** *paradigm, global development, global values, development goals, sustainable development*

## Introduction

The modern world is passing through the era of global transformations when digital technologies dramatically affect the relationship between consumers and manufacturers, workers and employers, society and government, and contributes to the transformation of social institutions and the system of social networks, of almost everything we do – of our lifestyle, work, learning, leisure, thinking, and decision-making mechanisms (Peters, Besley, and Araya 2014: 12). As a consequence, the development of digital technologies gives rise to a transformed pattern of values and needs, mechanisms underlying the functioning of

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social institutions and social networks, makes the threats more acute and brings new challenges for sustainable development of the humankind (Inglehart 2015; Leisinger 2014; Miller 2015). According to some scientists, these processes question the existence of global values as such (Annan 2003; Rorty 1989), and indicate that universal values may only exist at local and national levels (Stepanyants 2008: 13–14). Supporting these statements means admitting that humankind will not be able to agree on its future and define a strategy for its development, and that it will continue its way toward an unforeseeable future by trial and error. However, a new developmental strategy could also be built for the global community, provided the global goal of modern humankind development is determined correctly (Bell 2002; Jacobs, Nagan 2012; Leisinger 2014).

The problem of determining the humankind development goals is one of the focal points in reports to the Club of Rome. Thus, the report titled ‘Goals for Mankind’, which was prepared in 1977 under the editorship of Ervin Laszlo, highlights that one of the prerequisites for a viable future of the whole humanity is a shift to global goals (such as global security, global food issue, global control of the use of energy resources and raw materials, global development focused on improved quality of living and social equality in the distribution of benefits) and global solidarity (Laszlo 1977).

In 2000, the United Nations Millennium Declaration adopted by the General Assembly set forth certain fundamental values that are essential to international relations in the twenty-first century, including freedom, equality, solidarity, tolerance, respect for nature, and shared responsibility (UN 2000), as well as defined eight Millennium Development Goals aimed at halving the poverty rates by 2015 (versus 1990) (*Ibid.*). The Millennium Development Goals Report highlighted that the mobilisation of efforts at national and global levels had resulted in the most successful reduction of poverty rates in all human history: the MDGs had helped to lift more than one billion people out of extreme poverty. However, the report states that the global community failed to address the goal-specific tasks completely and achieve the development targets (UN 2015).

In 2015, the United Nations General Assembly adopted the Post-2015 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The corresponding resolution stated that the greatest global challenge and an indispensable requirement for sustainable development was eradicating poverty in all its forms and dimensions, including extreme poverty (UN GA 2015). The United Nations General Assembly defined seventeen sustainable development goals until 2030 that are integrated and aimed at ensuring the balance of three sustainable development components (economic, social, and environmental), as well as 169 targets (UNDP 2015). Besides, a commitment was made to continue the work that was initiated during the period of the Millennium Development Goals in order to meet their targets completely.

The global goal of the humankind is a self-sufficient development, it is important on its own and should not be part of any other development goal. In 2011, the United Nations General Assembly adopted Resolution No. 65/309 ‘Happiness: Towards a Holistic Approach to Development’, which highlights that, ‘*happiness as a universal goal and aspiration embodies the spirit of the Millennium Development Goals... and unsustainable patterns of production and consumption can impede sustainable development.*’ The UN Member States are invited to pursue the ‘*elaboration of additional measures that better capture the importance of the pursuit of happiness and well-being in development with a view to guiding their public policies*’ (UN 2011).

Our research (Bondarenko, Aleshkovski, and Ilyin 2019) has found that humankind development in general proceeds for the sake of achieving the only ultimate goal that has

the meaning and content of satisfying the supreme need of every person – to become perfect physically, intellectually, and spiritually. It means that a person's supreme value is the person him or herself and the potential to attain perfection. The latter, in turn, will help a person become happy to a great extent. The Roman philosopher Anicius Boethius claimed that 'happiness is a state of perfection attained by a combination of all benefits' (Boethius 1999). Therefore, future is based on the principle of unity of the humankind with common goals and a viable motivation toward a new way of development for both the global community in general and every single individual.

### **Paradigms of Global Development with Reference to Social Development Stages**

Our research (Bondarenko 2014; Bondarenko, Aleshkovski, and Ilyin 2019) has found that two fundamental development paradigms can be distinguished within social development. The first paradigm is rooted in a direct relationship between production and consumption, while the second one is in an indirect relationship between production and consumption.

We distinguish three stages of social development within the concept of information society (Bell 1973).

The early period of the humankind development was characterised by the prevalence of a social order typical of the first development paradigm, which is expressed in a direct relationship between production and consumption. This is a pre-industrial type of production for oneself or on order for a particular consumer, when all the products produced by people were consumed. The needs of most individuals, however, were satisfied at a minimum level. Under such conditions, the development of human society in terms of the global goal was spontaneous.

With the improvement of technologies, emergence of division of labour, and the emergence of trade, market and money, the direct relationship between production and consumption was transformed into an indirect one. This gave rise to a new stage of development (*i.e.*, the industrial society), for which the second paradigm is inherent. The development of society in time and space accelerates with the transition to mass industrial conveyor-type technologies and growing international trade. Here production and trade are oriented towards the abstract mass consumer through a spontaneous form of communication with a particular individual, mediated by extended time and space, with the sole purpose of obtaining the maximum profit. In this context, the uncertainty of consumption leads to the emergence, and then to the augmentation of disproportions in the time intervals of production and circulation of goods. At this stage of social development, the period of circulation of goods is many times larger than the period of their production. This results in a separation of the dynamic movement of material factors of production, despite the multiple increases in their volumes, from their monetary form, both real and virtual. At this stage, the development of society in terms of the target (*i.e.*, to satisfy the supreme human need to become perfect physically, intellectually and spiritually), also occurs spontaneously. As a result, crises and other various negative phenomena in the development of human society recur, but on a global scale and with a higher risk of global catastrophes.

Information technologies, which gained momentum in the last quarter of the twentieth century, made the relationship between a producer and a consumer possible without intermediaries. Together with the development of fundamentally new flexible production systems capable of responding quickly to changes in technology and in the product range de-

pending on consumer needs, this could have become a prerequisite for a paradigm shift in social development. But the shift has not occurred. Rather than harmonizing the relationship between production and consumption, the development of information technologies has become a *finem in se* (end in itself) and an effective mechanism for shaping global markets. This trend has continued into the twenty-first century.

However, it does not mean that this trend is unlikely to change. Digital technologies of the twenty-first century may well serve as the basis for a new economy where production can meet everyone's needs. They can also contribute to the development of local self-governments, coordination of interests and digital equality at every local level. Digital equality will help equalize the economic development of individual territories and attain equality at the global level. This may result in a return to the first paradigm through the so-called additive technologies, which will ensure prompt and personalized, surplus-free production of any products with focus on a particular consumer. This means that production and consumption will tend to merge in an almost instantaneous process, in which production cannot exist without consumption, and consumption cannot do without production. This is what we call the essence of the post-industrial society as a society based on the direct relationship between production and consumption driven by digital technologies.

### **Conditions for the Emergence of a New Paradigm of Global Development**

The methodological problems of substantiating a new paradigm of the humankind development have been addressed in numerous publications of Russian and foreign scientists (Jacobs 2017; Horner 2020; Grinin, Korotayev 2010; Laszlo 2011; Miller 2015; Schwab 2016; Slaus, Jacobs 2013; Peters, Besley, and Araya 2014). In our opinion, the emergence of a new paradigm of global development may be triggered by the fourth industrial revolution, which brings about digital transformations in all spheres of social life, with various twenty-first century digital technologies being integrated rapidly into our life in all countries. In his report on Industry 4.0, the founder and permanent chairman of the World Economic Forum in Davos, Klaus Schwab, named the speed, scale and systemic nature of the modern industrial revolution as its main features, indicating the onset of a new technical and technological era. He pointed to breakthroughs in areas like artificial intelligence, robotics, the Internet of Things, self-driving cars, energy storage, and quantum computing. The fourth industrial revolution, in which we live today, is distinguished by economic feasibility and a higher level and quality of living. At the same time, it gives rise to new risks as well: increasing social differentiation, erosion of the middle class, and the threat of digital control (Schwab 2016).

Our research (Bondarenko 2014) has shown three socio-economic models for the development of modern society differing in relations between the state, society, business and an individual.

*Model One.* Individual social groups at the local, national and global levels define their own development goals, which are divergent and may become a source of unpredictable tensions and conflicts. Under these conditions, social development will proceed by trial and error, and the future becomes uncertain. In our opinion, such an environment makes the transition to the first paradigm of global development unlikely. This model renders it impossible to achieve the global development goal, whereas the development of digital technology may even lead to a disaster on a planetary scale.

*Model Two.* The existing institutional environment remains unchanged. Development goals are defined by a limited group of people. They also develop strategies for socio-economic development and make managerial decisions in accordance with their own values and vision of the future. This model implicitly contains a high probability of the onset of a technological singularity, the explosive development of artificial intelligence and, ultimately, the subordination of human consciousness to artificial intelligence. Artificial intelligence and big data are designed to optimize economic development through a social control system. The widespread practical use of 'social credit' models will allow a government to create one of the most advanced systems for monitoring its own citizens (Gomart 2020). The finale in this model is a complete 'digital concentration camp', absolute control over all manifestations of human and social life. The risks to the individual and the global society are increasing. Under these conditions, the new global development paradigm cannot be affected. The second model of development is incompatible with the image of the future which assumes free development and improvement of each person.

The *third model* of socio-economic development suggests the use of digital technologies to the benefit of each individual and the coordination of interests between people in society, between the individual and society, between the consumer and the producer, with their help. This model ensures overcoming of negative trends in global development through the rational use of natural resources. One of the most critical and fundamental points of this model is the release of time that a person can use for self-improvement. New technology fosters new relations within human society, the understanding by actors of the advantages of evolutionary progress towards the goal of global development. Under these conditions, a person will be motivated for activities aimed at ensuring sustainable development.

In 2017, the Club of Rome published its anniversary report titled 'Come on! Capitalism, Short-termism, Population and the Destruction of the Planet', which substantiates the conclusion on the dominance of the second model of socio-economic development. The authors claim that humankind is incredibly fast approaching a global catastrophe, and the crisis of social development is growing. Humankind, however, is not only experiencing an environmental crisis, but also social, political, cultural, moral crises, a crisis of democracy, ideologies and the capitalist economy. The authors of the report are particularly concerned about the crisis in the value system and the modern model of economic development. According to the authors of the report, the salvation of civilization calls for a radical change in the paradigm of global development, the transition to a trajectory of sustainable development and the formation of a new worldview corresponding to it. The authors urge the governments of all countries to unite in order to strengthen cooperation in determining the advantages of 'living together' for the benefit of humankind (Weizsäcker, Wijkman 2018: 206).

The measures taken by various states to prevent the coronavirus pandemic (including digital passes, coronavirus certificates, and digital health codes) have brought the world closer to implementing the second development model. At the G20 online summit in November 2020, Chinese President Xi Jinping proposed the creation of an international mechanism of mutually recognizable 'digital health codes' that would facilitate orderly international mobility (Reuters 2020). Government agencies are trying to bring all activities of businesses and citizens under their control. As the Director of the French Institute of International Relations Thomas Gomart notes, the pandemic has accelerated the onset of the era of supervising capitalism where the collection and use of personal and collective data have become commonplace. And the ultimate goal is to impose certain models of management and behaviour (Gomart 2020). In turn, robotization and digitalization in all

sectors of the economy are capable of destroying millions of specialties, making even a highly qualified person unnecessary and giving rise to a kind of 'useless classes' (Harari 2019). Under such conditions, the risks of the existence of human civilization increase (Horner 2020).

In May 2020, the French newspaper *Le Monde* published an open letter from nearly two hundred public figures urging the leaders of states and citizens to change their lifestyles to prevent a global catastrophe. The authors argue that because of the coronavirus pandemic, simple adjustments of habits will not be enough, so they called for giving up the unviable logic of the current development of civilization and transforming the goals, values and principles of society's economic development (Le Monde 2020).

Therefore, admittedly, the global goal of humankind development cannot be achieved unless state and public figures recognize that the headlong introduction of digital technologies facilitates the realization of the most threatening challenges to the existence of the modern global system. With this in mind, governments must engage with their populations and the global community to place the third model of socio-economic development at the top of their agendas. To do this, they will have to develop a single strategy to implement that model in order to protect their countries and ensure both global security and sustainable development of humankind.

The main condition for the implementation of the third model and the selection of a new paradigm of global development - is not the building and establishment of mediated relations between the consumer and the producer, but of those that will manifest themselves in the so-called personalized production, that is in the fulfilment by the manufacturer of specific orders for each individual consumer without surplus production. New digital technologies are instrumental in this transition. Adequacy of the new industrial relations to productive forces, such as new digital and other advanced technologies of the twenty-first century, will minimize the use of resources, while helping increase people's free time, which will be invested in the intellectual, spiritual and physical growth of each person.

However, the mere transition to new production relations does not suffice to achieve the global goal. Achieving it requires the transition to a new model of socio-economic development in parallel with the development of a mechanism for the practical implementation of this model. First of all, the development of a mechanism for coordinating (in real time) the interests of the individual, society, business and the state should be addressed. As part of the development of such a model, special attention should be paid to creating a digital environment that would be safe for humans. The implementation of the mechanism for coordinating interests at any level may rely on the technology of building a distributed data registry (blockchain), which is currently a universal tool for the production, storage and maintenance of the integrity of big data. Nowadays, this technology is the backbone of many platforms designed for commercial transactions between peers acting without intermediaries.

Harmonization of interests and coordination of actors at the local level in the setting of self-government should eliminate disproportions, and desynchronization of socio-economic processes. As a consequence, disproportions and unevenness in development at the level of countries, and regions at the global level will be overcome. Once the disagreements are overcome and the problems are resolved at each local level, at a higher level there will only be those problems left to solve that are conceptually unmanageable at the local level. This means that at the global level only those disagreements and problems will be addressed and resolved that are of a global nature and require a macro strategy. This management model seems quite plastic and flexible. It is not just trying to adapt to the real-time agenda of our

ever-changing world, it is itself built into this change, based on the vision, comprehension and understanding of the global development goal, and carries a mechanism for achieving this goal. This approach makes it possible to implement the model of living together for a sustainable world, which was proposed in the anniversary report by the Club of Rome (Weizsäcker, Wijkman 2018: 191).

New technology of the twenty-first century may trigger the development of an economy of coordinated interests. Within such an economic model, an individual is really motivated for self-development, both physically and intellectually, for increasing their productivity in order to improve the quality of their life and the living conditions of the whole society. Everyone will be able to generate new knowledge in their own private interests, in the interests of society and the state, and, ultimately, in the interests of the entire global community, which, along with the production of only needed products, will create sufficient conditions for the sustainable development of mankind in general.

## **Conclusion**

The humankind has not yet gained sufficient intellectual potential or an appropriate scientific toolkit to identify and clearly substantiate the prospects for the development of global processes that affect all aspects of its existence, including economic, financial, social, political, demographic, migration, informational, technological and others. This, in turn, makes it impossible to shape up the future, which the humankind is likely to arrive at not only in the long term, but also in the coming decades.

To this end, there is a need to determine the worldview approach to our study into development patterns of the human community. First and foremost, this suggested the need to create a methodological research toolkit which could be used to determine objective global human values independent of consciousness and will and the global goal of humankind development. This may be the foundation for scientific understanding of the future of the human community, for which the development of science, technology and digital technologies will not pose a threat, but rather guarantee sustainable development.

The novelty of the new scientific paradigm lies in the fact that it helps determine the development patterns of the global community through understanding that the humankind pursues the only ultimate goal in its development, which is satisfying each individual's supreme need of attaining self-fulfilment or perfection physically, intellectually and spiritually. In fact, human potential to achieve this goal underlies the principle of the unity of humankind and is a condition for the implementation of the sustainable development strategy.

The study has made it possible for us to substantiate the statement that there are two paradigms of global development, one of which is characterized by crises and increasing risks for the existence of civilization, while the other, the one based on the twenty-first century technologies fosters sustainable development.

The fourth technological revolution has created the necessary prerequisites for the transition to a new paradigm of global development. Within this paradigm, the coordination of interests of each individual with the interests of others, if those are highly diverse, should take place at each local level and in real time. This becomes possible with the implementation of personalized production based on digital technologies on demand (without surplus production), reduced working time and increase of free time for the self-improvement of individuals. The latter is the only possible condition that can motivate each individual person to increase their intellectual potential and labour productivity, to

ensure accelerated and sustainable development in time and space towards the goal, with a simultaneous reduction in the consumption of all types of exhaustible resources.

Amidst the implementation of the global strategy for sustainable development, the most important role of states should be in creating a new environment of human existence which responds to the technologies of the twenty-first century. This is the only possible option for eliminating the causes of risks, ensuring security at the local, national and global levels, and, ultimately, carrying out an evolutionary transition to a trajectory of sustainable development of mankind. The strategic task for every country and all human society in shaping the future is to ensure the achievement of a single, objective global goal of mankind development.

To conclude, the practical use of the new toolkit makes it possible to develop a unified strategy for sustainable development at the local, national and global levels not by trial and error, but consciously, with an understanding of the global development goal, and to the benefit of every inhabitant of our planet.

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