

Global citizenship, first and foremost, is an implied sense of belonging to a political community larger than that of our own state. It is concerned with the protection of human rights, the escape from poverty, lack of education and poor health, among many others; that afflict the lives of the global majority. As global citizens, we should be aware of the shared control over our environmental resources such as the climate system, the ozone layer and the seas. These responsibilities should not only be international (going beyond national boundaries) but also intergenerational (going beyond the succession of the generations).

Society plays a major role in influencing who we are and what we do. The distribution of food and energy around the world is unequal and unfair is due to several reasons: firstly, poorer countries are being shut out of, or are closing themselves out of competitive global markets. By being part of our global markets would enable them access to food and energy sources that might not exist in their country. This small but significant step of commerce would allow food and energy into poor, and out of rich countries. Secondly, an additional reason for the food and energy crisis could be blamed on terrible governance – a major reason and result of political instability and aggression. A third possible reason is the United Nation working not as well as they should be. Founded in 1945, its main aims are to facilitate cooperation in international law and security, economic development, social progress, human rights and achieving world peace. While these aims generate a demanding schedule for those who work in the UN, the comprehension of regional and global collaboration being essential in dealing with issues like an increasing global temperature and a change in climate should not be overlooked. From Chris Patten's "What Next?" book, he mentions that America and Europe should not see the global agenda as their own sole responsibility anymore. They should engage with other countries such as China, India, Brazil and even South Africa in the organisation of the world's problems.

What can we do with regards to the food and energy crisis, without placing more burdens on our children and grandchildren, without behaving as though we could do whatever we wanted, in spite of its impact on the world around us? Clearly, with the wealth of knowledge that we have on these topics, there is more than one way of dealing with this problem. Recently, food prices have risen abruptly; with the cost of staples such as rice and wheat double the price of what they used to be. With food crops either being destroyed by the increasingly frequent droughts and floods caused by climate changes or the crops being harnessed for biofuel as an alternative form of energy, there is a

decreasing amount of food supply for feeding our ever-growing population. To solve this problem, we should start with the uneven distribution of water around the world. While richer nations in first-world countries indulge in branded bottled water, which is fast becoming a fashion trend, there are many in the third world countries surviving from whatever water drips out of a shared tap in a village. I think that water should be divided fairly among nations – nations which are blessed with a higher annual rainfall or a large source of freshwater should share with countries that are land-locked or have limited areas for collecting rainfall. As a global society, we should not deprive people of water: a basic necessity in life, vital in agriculture and a principle need in food production. Why remove from a fellow human being of what is life-giving?

I don't deny that fuel was (and still is) an important part of human history. Coal powered the Industrial Revolution and the economic leap in the 19th century. For now, coal can last us for the next century and oil has been a focal issue in our newspapers for at least a few decades now; the want of oil continuously insatiable, making oil an ominous cause of bloodshed and conflict. Oil is a major security fixation with many powerful nations but instead of making it a commodity to be fought over, like water, we should share. It has been suggested that we develop cooperation between air and naval forces to look after the transport of oil through existing places that are particularly dangerous such as the Malacca Straits and the Straits of Hormuz. We should also keep seas open and safe. Henry Kissinger has also tried to start an oil-sharing system between the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) countries for times of emergency as well as to encourage countries to work together in areas like research and development. To date, this idea has been fairly successful in terms of developing alternative sources of energy, increasing the efficiency of energy and operating an information system on the international market. In implemented protocols like the Kyoto Protocol, industrialized countries agree to reduce their collective emissions of greenhouse gases – the goal being to lower overall emissions of 6 greenhouse gases over the period of 2008 – 2012. The best energy security policy is a good environment one. I believe that we should start using energy as frugally as possible, not only to leave our planet in a better state than it could possibly be, but also to prevent political clashes over the next few decades.

I feel that friendly sharing might be the answer to our world's current problems, albeit not the easiest of solutions. But whatever our decisions are, we should remember to leave this earth as it is for the generations to come, if not, all we fight for would be in vain.