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A Prayer for Children

Subramuniaswami, Sivaya Each conference of religious and political leaders that we have attended has resulted in positive changes in the world. The Parliamentary Earth Summit in Rio has been no exception. Actually, it was by far the most religious of them all. How can this be? You might ask. Well the others, the one in Oxford in '88 and the high-level meeting in Moscow in '90, laid the foundations for an unprecedented meeting of minds. The Global Forum group that gathered in Rio were many of the same souls who began their seeking for answers together at the first two gatherings. It turned out to be a meeting of hearts.

During the three days we were together in Rio, I noticed something very interesting. All of those there were professionals, the most accomplished leaders in their field, whether it be business or art or politics. Naturally, they were extremely well-informed. While all this was going on, there was yet another group of professionals of quite a different kind. These were the lamas, swamis, acharyas, roshis and contemplatives. For the most part, they listened quietly and you might assume that they were not contributing as much as their more verbal brothers and sisters. That, however, would be a very wrong assumption. In the old days just having such a soul in the village was considered the greatest of blessings. His or her presence was enough to make the rains fall, make the yield their gifts, make the community harmonious.

These deep souls were like that in Rio. Saying little, they saw much. Their serene presence had a cumulative effect on all present. While the others, these professionals of the spirit remained silent witnesses. So attentive were they, so mindful, so serene in their own being that they gave everyone else in the chamber another view, another possibility of how our difficulties on the planet could be approached. Without words they said so much that would have been less perfectly expressed if they had given a speech. Of course, not all could remain silent, for we

would have ended up in turning the palace into a monastery. We needed professionals of the external; and we needed professionals of the within. The fact that both were present explains to me much of the success of our work together in Rio.

On the second day I was asked to give a prayer along with members from other faiths. May we share it with you? "Everyone here in this historic building and in the many other conferences being held in Rio is trying to look into the future and see the fate of the world's children. The only way to look the future, is with the third eye. The best way to pray for the children is to go into the past, when we were all five years. Fifty years. Fifty-five years when the air was pure and you could drink from any stream.

"In those days, not so long ago, the earth was pure. Peoples' minds were much more content. We want to bring these conditions back again. That is why we are all here. By going forty years into the past, we can look ahead forty years into the future, to a day when the earth and the water will be pure, and we do not, any longer, see the air that we breathe. History repeats itself and so does quality of life.

"I was greatly impressed with the wonderful street children who were brought in to speak to us so courageously today. I think we all would prefer that they leave here and be put into a school, rather than go back on the streets of Rio.

"The prayer today is a universal prayer. It is for the children of the world. As someone said earlier, children are 50% of our human population, but they are 100% of our future. By caring for them, we care for ourselves in the future. By loving them, we send our love into the future. And by neglecting them, we neglect the future.

"It is the cosmic sound Aum. Aum is the sound of the universe. Aum awakens the life force in all of us. The feel of life force makes us realize we are a one human race. The energy within me. The energy within each of you. The energy within me. The energy within each of you. The energy within the animals, and the birds, and the fish, microscopic intelligence is the same energy. Some call it God. Some call it life force. But, regardless of the name, it is the same in all of us. As I look around

these chambers, I don't see religious leaders. I don't see political leaders. I see a one universal energy in all of us that is headed in the right direction. Let's all pray now together for the children of the world by chanting the one universal sound." Aum Aum Aum, three times was sung out loudly by all present.

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