THE AIMS OF INCLUSIVE DEMOCRACY

I. The ultimate cause of the present multidimensional crisis (political, economic, social, ecological, cultural) is the concentration of power in the hands of various elites, which is maintained and reproduced by the dynamics of the system of the market economy (in its present internationalised form) and its political complement, representative "democracy", i.e. the economic and political system that emerged in the West just two centuries ago.

II. Overcoming, therefore, the chronic crisis which started with the emergence of this system, and has worsened in the last few years with the internationalisation of the market economy, is not possible through the reforming of the system — as is utopianly supported by civil societarians, Green parties and organisations, who in the final analysis function as its apologists. Overcoming the crisis is possible only through the creation of a new form of political, social and economic organisation which secures the equal distribution of power among citizens at all levels (political, economic, social, cultural). Inclusive Democracy, therefore, is not simply a new utopia, but a new form of social organisation which aims at securing the equal distribution of power at all levels and consequently the final overcoming of the present multidimensional crisis. The ultimate aim is the creation of a Democratic World Order based on confederations of Inclusive Democracies, which will replace the hierarchical world orders of the present and the past.

III. Inclusive Democracy constitutes the highest form of Democracy since it secures the institutional preconditions for political (or direct) democracy, economic democracy, democracy in the social realm and ecological democracy. At the subjective level, Inclusive Democracy is grounded on the conscious choice of citizens for autonomy, and not on dogmas, religions and irrational systems or closed theoretical systems, which rule out any questioning about the ultimate grounds of these beliefs — the cornerstone of democracy.

IV. Political democracy involves the creation of institutions of direct democracy at the political level, so that all decisions are taken by the demotic assemblies (i.e. the local citizen assemblies at the level of the demos) which confederate at the regional, national, and ultimately continental and global levels and consist of delegates, who are subject to
immediate recall by the demotic assemblies. The function of regional, national and confederal assemblies is only to implement and coordinate the policy decisions of the demotic assemblies. Political democracy secures, therefore, the re-integration of society with polity, and replaces the state as a separate authority over the citizens – an arrangement which, essentially, has transformed citizens into subjects.

V. Economic democracy involves the creation of institutions of collective ownership of the productive resources (i.e. of the sources of social wealth) and collective control over them by the demotic assemblies. The market economy system, which has led to the present huge concentration of wealth at the hands of the few, as well as to unemployment, underemployment, insecurity, the degradation of social services and the ecological catastrophe, would be replaced by new institutions of democratic control of the means of production which aim at covering the basic needs of all citizens, as well as at securing the individual citizen’s freedom of choice with respect to the covering of his/her non basic needs, according to his/her choices for work/leisure. Economic democracy secures, therefore, the re-integration of society with economy, and replaces the money/market economy, which divides citizens into privileged ones, who more than cover every real or imaginary need they may have, and non-privileged ones, who are incapable of covering even their basic needs.

VI. Democracy in the social realm involves the creation of institutions of self-management in the factories, offices and generally the places of production, as well as in educational and cultural institutions (media, art etc.) The worker councils, the student councils, and so on, secure the self-management of the production places, the education places etc., guided by the general aims set by the demotic assemblies, as well as by the preferences of citizens as producers but also as consumers. A model describing how an economic democracy might function in general, and specifically how the decisions of citizens as members of the demotic assemblies might interrelate to the decisions of citizens as members of the self-managed institutions, is described in Vol. 3, No. 2 (1995) of the journal *Democracy & Nature*, and in more detail in the book *Towards an Inclusive Democracy* (Cassell/Continuum, 1997), ch.6.

VII. Ecological democracy involves the creation of institutions and a culture that secure the re-integration of society and nature. This means that the goal of economic activity is not the present eco-catastrophic "development" which is necessitated by competition and profit demands, but the covering of the needs of all citizens in a way that secures the true quality of life that only a harmonious relationship between society and nature can bring about. Ecological democracy, therefore, can be achieved neither within the present market economy system and the consequent "growth economy", nor within any system mainly aiming at growth, like the centralised system of "actually existing socialism".
VIII. Inclusive Democracy is neither the outcome of a dialectical unfolding in Nature or Society determined by some "laws/tendencies" of natural or social evolution, nor just another utopia like the ones that appear in the libertarian space. Inclusive Democracy, therefore, is incompatible with any closed theoretical system and of course with any religious (or not) irrationalism. The Inclusive Democracy project aims at building a massive movement that will be the synthesis as well as the transcendence of the social movements for socialism, democracy and autonomy, as well as of the new social movements for equality regardless of gender, race, ethnicity etc.

IX. The transition to Inclusive Democracy presupposes, therefore, the creation of a massive movement at the local, regional, national and ultimately continental and global levels aiming at replacing the system of the market economy and representative "democracy" with institutions of direct, economic, ecological democracy, as well as democracy in the social realm. This movement intervenes at all levels (political, economic, social, ecological, cultural) with the aim of creating new institutions and culture. This intervention does not manifest itself only through the creation of alternative forms of individual or social life ("by example"), direct action, or participation in the local elections, but through the combination of these and similar other forms of action — on the condition that all these activities will be an integral part of a comprehensive political programme of radical social change for an Inclusive Democracy. Participating in the local elections (the only elections compatible with the goal of Inclusive Democracy) aims only at the creation of ID-based institutions and culture at a significant social scale. The ultimate goal is the creation of a dual power in relation to the existing system, through the development of the massive consciousness brought about by the struggle against the existing institutions, as well as the struggle for the new institutions and the setting up of the new institutions themselves. When the majority of citizens has accepted the principles of democratic organisation and takes part in the new institutions en masse, then no power on Earth could stop the collapse of the old system of concentration of power at the hands of the few — the cause of all troubles for the majority of the human race (the transition strategy towards an Inclusive Democracy is described in detail in Democracy & Nature, Vol. 8, No. 1, 2002).

X. The intermediate goal is the building of a Network of Citizens for Inclusive Democracy which will aim at the creation of an alternative democratic consciousness, through political intervention as well as cultural activities, with the final goal of contributing to the creation of a wider political movement for the transition to Inclusive Democracy. A first step in this direction might be the creation of study groups which provide the opportunity to deepen the knowledge of activists on the various aspects of the inclusive democracy project including the crucial issues of strategy and tactics.