

Is global citizenship in substance or in form?

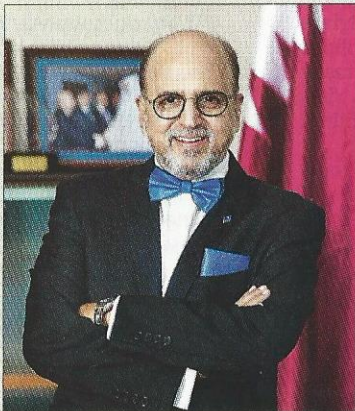
By Dr R Seetharaman

Global citizenship aims to empower people to lead their own action. Along with the knowledge and values that they have gained from learning about global issues, people need to be equipped with the necessary skills to give them the ability and confidence to be pro-active in making a positive difference in the world.

Global citizenship believes that we have the power as individuals: each of us can change things, and each of us has choices about how we behave. In our interdependent world, global citizenship encourages us to recognise our responsibilities towards each other, and learn from each other.

The global economy is naturally trans-national or global. The challenges that need to be addressed and overcome as we venture towards a borderless world are complex, and involve matters not only of trade and commerce, but also ethnicity, culture and ethics.

It is clear that with Internet access and participation in social networking sites, our current social being, in the age of globalisation, is no longer limited by locality; it has become a global existence. Due to social media advancements in technology and social networking, voices are being heard around the world. Social networking is now becoming a large part of how students learn and become aware of global issue. As social media enables students to find themselves in an interconnected world, it is important "to recognise the fundamental inter-connections among disparate people, places, and process, and the ways in which these influence and constrain



even apparently local and individual choices.

In our rapidly changing world, global citizenship is about flexibility and adaptability as well as about a positive image of the future. The increase in the number of countries allowing dual citizenship and non-citizen rights has made the acquisition of citizenship less pressing. We live in a changing world – the world is changing on account



of several factors, with globalisation, deregulation and consumerism being foremost among them. We also live in a world that is technologically-driven, a world that is interconnected and increasingly interdependent.

Today, there is greater recognition that, as we move towards a borderless world, politics and economics have to converge at a global level and that territorial integrity is merely incidental. Global governance structures that transform the dynamics of policy-making are becoming imperative to achiev-

ing sustainable economic growth. We're entering a new stage of international global relations where national policies could shape how globalization eventually develops.

It is estimated that 1% of the world's population carries two or more passports and hence global citizens can also be dual citizens. The main advantage of traveling with two passports is to travel in a wider range of countries. Countries such as Singapore and South Korea encourage dual citizenship upto some age.

Global citizenship should support global economic growth and enhance the welfare of the world's citizens, regardless of their national origin, ethnicity, race, gender, or age. It can do so by fostering global cooperation and the harmonisation of policies on monetary and fiscal issues; trade and the movement of labour, capital, and technology; health, education, and population; and the environment.

It should work with internationally renowned experts and practitioners to prepare a series of studies on key areas of global concerns. Economic integration will create more dynamic groupings and will transform the economies of many countries, hence, contributing to its sustainable development.

The 'single world' and 'global citizenship' concept can succeed by connecting the culture, diversity and development. As interaction between cultures, nations and societies increases – greater onus must be laid on economic integration as the first pillar of globalisation and the first mode of interaction between societies.

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