



**OPEN LETTER**

**TO OUR LEADERS**

**&**

**TO ALL PEOPLE**

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**#demandglobalchange**

**#bethechange**



Earth, March 24<sup>th</sup>, 2016

Dear leaders,

Dear every other temporary resident of the same tiny place we call Earth,

The fact that I have published this letter in the aftermath of the airport & metro attacks in Brussels, may seem to suggest that this horrible event has triggered a thought process that ultimately resulted in writing this text. To be honest, I actually wanted to do something similar immediately after the attacks in Paris last year. I have tried to organize my thoughts and feelings; however, nothing was written.

I am referring to two specific events which took place close to my home, identifying those as what triggered me to write this text and at the same time seemingly ignoring all of the horrible things that happen to people in a lot of countries around the world on a daily basis. The reality, however, is different. In fact, the combination and frequency of all those other events have triggered me to push through this time.

This letter contains a lot of opinions and feelings. It's obviously biased and heavily influenced by Western ideas (because that is where I live). Everyone has opinions and feelings. I'm fortunate enough to be able to share mine, because I happen to live in a country that embraces free speech. Honestly, I would love to hear the opinions and feelings of the people that don't have this luxury. I'm sure it would be a game changer, I'm also sure it would enrich my life and make me a smarter person.

I realize this has become a rather lengthy document, but I wanted to make sure it provides sufficient background on the complexity involved. I don't claim it holds "the absolute truth", and I may be wrong on many things. I hope you will read it without prejudice and with an open mind.

The primary goals behind this letter are:

1. To provide food for thought, to make people aware of our own behavior and to create visibility on the existence of deeper reasons, the bigger picture (more specifically, identifying the gap between the true challenges and the approach by our leaders to deal with them);
2. To support the call for action, as explained in <http://bit.ly/demandglobalchange>;
3. To ask for your help to spread this message, to increase global awareness, to make sure our leaders get to see how we feel about their approaches, to demand global change.
4. Eventually convince our leaders to get together and to deal with the root causes in a proper manner.

I hope you will at least try reading most of it, and let it sink in. If you don't feel like reading everything in detail but would like to support the initiative anyway, please make sure to read the last 2 pages. - Thank you.



## What do we know (and how do we feel about it)?

It is pretty hard to deny media impact, more specifically how the media is able to influence our perceptions and feelings. Media coverage of certain events only seem to provide one-sided perspectives, often driven by the conglomerate who owns the news feed. In other cases, events are hardly deemed worth mentioning at all, which means the media has already made a selection of what is of interest to the audience and what is not.

We could have lengthy discussions about our inconsistencies when it comes down to valuing life based on where people were born, and how this process is influenced by many things. In any case, there are no excuses for our own behavior and our own decision to apply different standards when evaluating events that have sprinkled our lives for the past years and years, for decades... for as long as I have lived and much longer.

More than 30 people have died in Belgium, the world is outraged. At least, the Twitter, Facebook, political and celebrity world. The part of the world that has access to media and is 'informed' by media. In any case, the entire world should be outraged, as the killing of innocent people can never be justified.

We are united in mourning. We are united by grief. We are united in a lot of things, or at least, that's what we like to believe. We zoom in on each individual case and accelerate emotions, the feeling of pain, grief and hate. We cry, we hug, hold hands, sing songs, finally take the initiative to invite our foreign neighbors over for dinner.

At the same time, lots & lots of innocent people die every day in other countries, but we already stopped caring about them a long time ago. Emotions, if any, are far less pronounced as the ones we feel when similar events happen closer to our homes. There are no "minute of silence" moments, no candle lights, no flowers, no projections of flags on big buildings for them. No interviews with families of victims or first aid helpers. No honoring of the brave. When available, media happily broadcasts images of their dismembered bodies, as if they were dehumanized cattle, yet censors similar images from people in our own countries. Their blood sells, ours hurts.

Frequent, horrible events from abroad are ignored, or briefly mentioned as "just another" incident. Incidents closer to home are spread all over the place, for days and weeks to come.

This is not a new phenomenon. This style of selective reporting has been going on for many many years, for much longer than most of you think.

Blaming the media for the dual emotions is not entirely fair either. They certainly have a role, as we're not the ones who demand the hypocritical way of reporting incidents. For some reason, we don't fight it either. Perhaps the video quality of the events in other places of the world doesn't excite you? Perhaps the impact would be bigger when footage is in high definition, full color, captured in 3D and from 50 different angles? Tell me, I'd love to hear what does it for you.

Be honest with yourself, I bet most of you even feel indifferent about some of the terrorist attacks that have happened in the Western World if they were not close enough to your home.



No need to "send your prayers" or "keep people in your thoughts". No need to "stand with them" or anything like that. As long as those are just words, you're only fooling yourself, satisfying a perceived moral duty. To religious people, prayers & thoughts may provide some strength, but are they truly sufficient? To atheist people, prayers could even trigger an opposite effect, causing more damage.

More than 30 people have died in Belgium. Around 130 people died in Paris. Even when combined, it is just one of the tips of a giant iceberg. Perhaps not even the tip.

Refugees are forced to flee their houses, the places they grew up at and call their home. People like you and me, young and old, religious and agnostic, well educated and less educated, try to escape from the very same terrorism that we call barbaric and inhumane. Yet we treat them like animals and tell them to go somewhere else. Small children, some of them the age of my own daughter and even much younger, are subject to the same cruelties and horror that we're trying to shut out of the lives of our own children. The only difference is that we only have to push a button on our television to do so. There is no escape for them.

Put yourself in their shoes. How would you feel if the rest of the world doesn't seem to truly care about you, taking away the last piece of hope that is left in your mind and body? How would you feel if your identity is taken away, your purpose and reason for existence, and all of it is replaced with a generic label?

What will happen to these kids when they grow up?

Who will you blame for the potential behavior of some of them after stigmatizing them first?

What will happen to your own kids when they grow up? Who will they blame?

I don't know how to explain that to my kid.

I am ashamed about all of that. I am ashamed of our dual standards, of the selective emotions, of the violence itself and of how humans treat each other.

I'm also sick and tired of it. #JeSuisSickAndTired

**We are at war.**

World War 3? Or even 4 already.

I know, this is a bold statement. Without a doubt, people will feel that I am overreacting, or I am giving in to what terrorists want. Other will call me stupid (some already did), but please allow me to clarify my statement further first.



We are at war with each other. All of the major powers in this tiny little world are at war with each other, and with nature at the same time. Perhaps it's more accurate to see it as an asymmetric war that started a long time ago and doesn't follow our numbering scheme.

The acts of terror that we see on a daily basis are, in fact, just reactions to a bigger war, and take advantage of that bigger war. To some of them, it looks like a fun party and they just want to join in.

We're killing each other, and to make things worse, many of our great leaders have access to nuclear weapons, pointing at ourselves. No wonder aliens don't feel the urge to visit us. We're not a threat to anyone else in the galaxy. Good job.

Efforts are taken to try to contain symptoms of unknown problems, while at the same time some of these efforts are just making the problem bigger and bigger. It's a self-fulfilling prophecy. The responses to the side effects of this bigger war are, by definition, handled in a reactive, symptom-solving approach, with little to no results.

I know that all of this is a bit vague, but simply look at the way our governments are responding to the terror threats.

Focus goes to defense mechanisms and individuals. More soldiers on the street. Close the borders and keep people out. Bomb this town. Kill the terrorists. Kill a religion. Access controls here, checkpoints there. Associate terrorism with a religion, and then blame the religion for not fixing the problem. Blame refugees. Blame the people that caused people to become refugees. Blame others.

Someone is clearly convinced that the terrorists are stupid and bound to our rules, and that they are somewhere else, but not amongst us. That way, we can pretend the problem is not here and that it is not our fault.

I fully understand that (mostly local) efforts are taken to deal with the effects of (mostly local) policy from the past. The reality is that I haven't heard or seen anything that has proven to be really effective in addressing the issues so far, local or global. Fighting a recurring headache using pain medication is not so effective if that headache is caused by a giant tumor.

Governments are deploying technology that invades our privacy (because the bad guys are amongst us already?). They decide to put more police on the street. They increase a so-called threat level to an artificial 'maximum' value. (I don't even know what 'maximum' means, and I am curious to hear the excuses they'll use if they have no other option than to add another level, and another one, and another one.) The word maximum seems to suggest that it can't get any worse. At least the Belgian minister of the interior is clear on the fact that this level is not linked to an individual terrorist, but merely a reflection of the general severity of the problem. To that point, I'm not sure we can capture this in a limited set of numbers.

Everyone realizes that none of these measures will prevent a determined (or perhaps 'desperate' is a better word) terrorist from blowing himself or herself up in a crowd somewhere. If we admit to be afraid when that happens, that our heart beats in fear, we are told that it is wrong because that's what the terrorists want. If we call this a war, we're told to



keep our mouth shut because it is what the terrorists want. I'm trying to remember when we started caring about what the terrorists want or don't want us to do.

As a result, most of us blindly accept the measures and refuse to argue about them, because it implies admitting that we don't believe these measures are able to take away our fear, that we question the validity of their reassuring words of comfort and security. It would mean we realize that the measures are not effective at all and, thus, cause more fear and panic.

If an approach doesn't work, all efforts seem to go to putting the blame on others.

If you're lucky enough to live in a country which has not been the stage of an attack yet, think about what your government is doing to prevent it from happening. Is it by design, or pure luck? If they are doing something, are they really trying to fix the root cause?

### **Attacks against “values” and “democracy”.**

Our leaders are using words such as "values" and "democracy" to describe the targets of the attacks. I'm not sure what some of them have been smoking, but first and foremost, the attacks are targeting random, innocent people. People like you and me. Refugees. Children that just want to play. Young people and adults that are in the middle of doing ordinary, day-to-day things. People from various parts of the world. People who want to enjoy a gathering with friends, or had planned to go on holiday. 'People' is the commonality of these stories. Human beings. Each one of them, just like you and me, functioning as the center of their own view on the world, with a unique consciousness, but with universal feelings & desires.

Speaking of democracy - there is no democracy in most of the places where the terrorist attacks happen. In fact, the vast majority of the attacks don't even happen in the Western World.

Even in our society, democracy is just a legal term that is used to justify decisions taken by our governments. We elected them, gave them a blank check, and we're paying the bills. That's not democracy. That's how our legal systems have implemented democracy today. We're told to accept and defend this belief, or to join the political game too, to enter the theatre where many say a lot, few actually talk, but eventually nobody listens. Nobody is interested in our voice. They clearly think that they are smarter than us. Better than us.

With regards to values: what values are we trying to protect exactly? The ones that show compassion for other human beings? The ones that trigger emotions when seeing unfair treatment? Or the ones that are based on our own comfort? The so-called higher level of civilization? No wonder the terrorists look down at us and our inconsistencies.

Are we even allowed to question the statement that terrorists are attacking our democracy and values, and thus question the definition of those terms? Is it politically correct to do so? Does "politically correct" even make sense, or is it rather a '*contradictio in terminis*'?



Wouldn't it be more accurate to simply state that the terrorist attacks are targeting innocent people, people that are not in a position to help or protect themselves? Or would that cause us to realize that this is happening on a much larger scale already, in other parts of the world, and we are even doing the same thing to other innocent people to a certain extent?

### **Blame, throw mud, look for excuses, repeat.**

I'm not against politics. I believe they have a role to play. I'm not left wing nor right wing. I'm not a fundamentalist peace activist who demands achieving an unrealistic goal such as putting a ban on all weapons. I'm pragmatic in many views, and I often have a hard time voting for just one party because of it. However, I am not excited about the future defined by our politicians.

In a way, as part of our culture, the way we were raised and the way our society has evolved, we have been indoctrinated to support the decisions of a small group of people: our leaders. We have put our lives in their hands and, at the same time, simply ignore the fact that we end up with an illusion, a demonstrated false sense of security. Instead of looking for underlying reasons, for patterns, for root causes, all too often efforts are put into blaming others and blaming each other.

To that point, purely blaming them would put us in the same spot. We don't need more blaming. We need people to rise above political differences, we need people to realize that a long-term global approach is needed, covering local needs, but with a better focus on the global complexities. This is a global battle. Asking politicians to resign is not the answer, unless someone clearly refuses to change or prevents change. Replacing them with others doesn't guarantee anything. This isn't just a local political problem, and in most cases the problems aren't caused by current leaders either. We need our leaders to open their eyes, to identify what exactly is wrong, to change attitude and approach, and to realize that perhaps we're fighting the wrong enemies, with the wrong weapons. This is not the time to throw mud. People expect our politicians to lead. People are sick of the childish behavior, of politicians making a fool of themselves, and making the people they represent look like idiots too. People are tired of the wrangling, tired of listening to political squabble, of politicians using their voices to play an out of tune "what if" concert and creating the illusion that they can change the past.

Let me be very honest here. **I am afraid.**

Not of the terrorists as such. This statement has nothing to do with the absolutely pointless statistics that claim that I have a bigger chance of dying in a car crash than to get killed by a terrorist. Frankly, that is just another mechanism to minimize the problem. It means absolutely nothing to anyone that is the victim of one of the attacks, and thus it proves nothing. Period.



I'm afraid, very afraid, of the current approach to deal with issues, the lack of global organization and incentive to deal with the problem in a proper manner, and the rise of globalization on the other hand, still too fragile to make a difference, yet providing a lot of power to the hands of a small group.

I'm afraid that this document is accurate.

Some individual local measures will help mitigate some local symptoms, but we are lacking a global approach. It's not what our leaders do that scares me, it's what they are not doing.

We are at war, but it's not a traditional war. It's not the civil/military war that the terrorists claim to be after. Although it obviously makes sense to prevent people from hurting someone else, it may not even be just a war against individual terrorists as such.

It's a war against ourselves, the things that divide us, the selfish goals and individual powers, the lack of meaning and purpose, the devaluation of life itself. It's a war against the things that prevent us from creating a better world for everyone, a war against taking away the reasons why people are fed up.

As I said before, I'm sick and tired of it.

## **Do we know the enemy?**

To keep it simple: I believe that you can't fix a problem if you don't know what the problem is, and if you don't accept a problem as being a problem. We cannot fully understand certain behavior if we don't know what triggered the behavior in the first place. This probably applies to all of us, it applies to the mechanics of action and reaction, and it also applies to this war.

So, let's apply it to the terrorist attacks, the responses to those attacks a.k.a. the solutions presented by our governments.

Any response I have seen so far to the attacks that happen close to our homes, is based on reducing symptoms, minimizing the visible impact of the problem, and often involve throwing wild guesses here and there. Some of the approaches could be useful as part of something bigger, but none of the approaches will work by itself. People respond to those responses, creating a vicious circle based on symptoms, reaction after reaction. At the same time, we neglect to look at the bigger picture. As stated earlier, our responses to similar events and issues, that happen far away from home, are simply non-existing. We're blindfolded by our focus on the local effects, the local responses to those effects, making the problem smaller and smaller, closer to home.





In general, very little to no effort is taken to understand root causes, and accepting certain things as a root cause. We label the effects as root causes. Even the use of the word terrorism has become a commodity, a convenient tool to suppress criticism and to justify actions. Perhaps it would be too painful to admit that our own society and so-called 'Modern Western Advanced Culture' plays a major role in the root cause.

All efforts seem to focus on fighting the visible and tangible form of terrorism. I think we all agree on the desired result of our battle. To get there, we also need to agree on the target. None of the countries can fix the problems by themselves either. That's how big the challenge is.

Do our leaders truly know what the root causes are? If they do, are they focusing on addressing the local issues to avoid confrontation with the bigger problems? To divert our attention away from it? Is it intentional, or driven by fear? Do they feel that solving the problem would cause more harm to them than what terrorism is causing to our people?

### **“Ideology” versus “religion”**

In my opinion, the terrorist attacks are tangible results of an ideology that evolved over time. Ideologies don't have boundaries. The use of media-campaign-related mechanisms & propaganda may suggest that there are boundaries (such as race, nationality or religion), but the reality is that the ideology is everywhere.

Typically, the more fanatical people are about an ideology, the more fanatical the actions can be, until they reach a point where they become visible and eventually impact our lives. As time goes by, and as ideologies continue to change and reshape over the years, and as actions evolve as well, we tend to do what we're good at. We classify them, give them a name, a brand, mark & stamp them, and use stronger words to do so. The terrorists have a fancy logo and name. we simply buy it. This allows us to identify them, group them, point a finger at them, blame them, refer to them as an outside organization, an outside problem. People that are not in our country yet. If we prevent people from entering our country, we avoid the issue. Them against us. It's convenient. It's also stupid. Recent attacks in the Western World show that some of them were born & raised here, influenced by others and ideologies. There is not a single wall or iron curtain that will stop this. In fact, it just accelerates the ideology.

What is even worse, is that the classification allows us to rate them and compare them with us. "We're better than them." "They are terrorists, evil". "We're the good guys". "Our ideologies are better than theirs". "Our religion is less violent than theirs". We even call them "Radicalized Islamists" or "Islamized Radicalists", because it's easy to do, because we can. It feeds the fear of people, making it convenient for them to agree with and making the enemy tangible and thus easier to destroy. On the other hand, if we decide to use those terms, we should also ask ourselves what has caused the Radicalization and/or the Islamization and/or the combination of both.



Some of us claim that the problem is a religion.

Read the Bible. Read the Quran. You'll find similarities, both good and bad. You'll find traces of violence in both, and lots of love in both. You'll also find words of hostility against other religions in both. Stupidity & intolerance are not bound to a religion; religion doesn't preach nor rule out stupidity & intolerance either. It's the interpretation of a religion by people, the way people have adopted the religion and are putting it into practice that determines the level of tolerance and co-existence with others; not the religion itself. Religions can be found in all layers of society, and you will find all kinds of interpretations too, regardless of the religion. In other words, if you look in a certain corner, you will see the corner. You will find what you want to be found. By itself, that doesn't prove anything about the religion though.

Allow me to ask a rather controversial and personal question. What is the first thing that comes to your mind when trying to imagine a situation that would push you across a moral border and would justify taking the initiative to hurting or even killing someone. Hate? Injustice? Retaliation perhaps? I don't think religion is part of that list.

Religion itself has nothing to do with the terrorist attacks. In recent cases, a certain religion is being abused and used as a provocation, as propaganda. It's being used as a convenient and cheap mechanism to provide so-called "higher" (yet false) justification when plain reason no longer works. If we reject the goals of the terrorists, why do we accept that this propaganda mechanism, the religious part of the story, would be true? Marketing of fear. It still doesn't represent the majority of people that believe, live and breathe the better part of the very same religion.

Perhaps our bias towards some of the religions are part of the problem, feeding the ideology. Perhaps our own religious beliefs have played a fundamental role in triggering some of the root causes. Our consistency related with doing the wrong things, and inconsistency to doing the right things. The combination of all of this could easily lead to an explosive cocktail. Think about it.

Does the entire religion-based debate really matter? Or better: does it change the approach to fix it? Maybe, but the solution is not to eradicate a religion. Think about how stupid that is. That would be like cutting off your fingers because your Aunt has a headache. Forget about what terrorists say in their propaganda. Focus on the facts, look at what they do and try to understand why, leaving out any religion-oriented propaganda from the story.

The problem is related with a 'belief', an ideology. Not a religion itself.

An ideology doesn't just die by removing people based on strict criteria. An ideology is not physical, cannot be pinned down to a specific place. It's bullet proof.

It cannot be stopped by closing the border and nothing prevents people that were born and raised in your country in the first place to adopt the ideology, if they find a reason to do so. Some people label these as "homegrown" problems, others are trying to find out why this was even possible in country A or country B. Suggesting that these are local issues.



Those are indeed valid questions, but let's not forget that we're dealing with an ideology. Pretty much like an airborne virus, ideologies spread easily via social media and through growing networks amongst people all over the world. An ideology based on common problems and goals will find ways to spread, as it has been the case for many many years, decades and centuries. Again, those are just the mechanisms. The ideology is already everywhere. It breeds where it finds ground to breed.

The ideology itself is not even the main problem. The big issue is what caused the ideology to exist, to be developed, to be implemented, to radicalize people and what makes it easy to breed & grow.

### **“Root cause” versus “symptom solving”**

Perhaps more efforts should be put in trying to document and understand where the ideology really comes from. Is it an action that came out of nowhere, or a reaction to something? Why does it seem to be so easy to spread, why does it get adopted so easily? What is the breeding ground, and what are the reasons for the ground to exist in the first place? Is it because the people are influenced so easily, or is it because the problems are so big? What are the reasons behind the fact that the level of radicalization seems to be so much higher over here, and not so much in the Arab world itself? Is it mere perception, caused by the lack of visibility? Or is it because people don't tend to see the trees when they are already lost in the forest? Are the people that spread the ideology stupid & violent savages? Or are they, in fact, not so stupid at all?

If it is a reaction to something, do we really know what it is? What can we do to take away the reasons behind it? Is the ideology the problem, or are the many reasons behind the ideology the real problem?

Are we truly listening to the concerns and thoughts of people in the Arab world? How about other parts of the world? Or is it too inconvenient, too uncomfortable to do so?

Let's apply the concept to the other side of the equation: why are our governments fighting the symptoms? Similar to what the terrorists do, there is a reason for what our governments do. Why do governments all too often behave like meteorologists, perfectly able to explain why the results are different than what they had predicted?

I don't believe in conspiracy theories (nor in aliens, for the record) and I am convinced that our governments are not stupid either. (It's ok to feel different about it, but please try to imagine & to accept that they are not stupid). I cannot ignore the fact that there are many unknowns and question marks in the story. Lots of differences between words & actions. Words that seem to be focused on calming people down, avoiding panic, but also diverting people from the real problem. Statements such as "We will destroy them, we will win" sound familiar, as these are also the words used by the terrorist, in a similar tone and nature of arrogance. Power talk. A game of "comparing manhood".



The actions, on the other hand, don't seem to back up the statements. Actions are focused on fighting terror, but terror is not the root cause. Even in the fight against terror itself, are things really improving? In most Western countries, police, military & intelligence services are doing a great job, putting their lives in the line to “serve and protect”. Individual successes seem to give our leaders wings. The tone and arrogance levels change. Sadly, all actions still go towards the symptoms of terror, and not enough towards diving deeper into what causes the ideology that invokes terror. Obviously, these brave people, trying to protect us, are not to blame for this. They do the best they can, with the means they have. People make mistakes. Don't confuse those mistakes as root causes.

Individual successes are good, but it isn't until you know how big the problem is that we can measure if we're getting closer to solving it or not.

It's a well known fact that 'absence of proof is not proof of absence'. The lack of a terrorist attack in your country or town doesn't mean there is no problem.

You may care not so much about it right now... but in a certain way that also means that you don't care too much about the future of your own children, and certainly not about the future for the children of others. Guess what... same future, same planet.

If everything seems under control, you're not going fast enough.

Perhaps our leaders realize that they cannot fix the issue by themselves, that they cannot take away the root cause unless they are willing to

1. Put all pieces of the puzzle together; to document the various root causes that have lead to instability, to fear, to injustice, to anger and eventually to ideologies that call for violence;
2. Take the blame for the past (which may include damaging relations with other countries) in the process of documenting and linking the root causes together;
3. Take initiative to cooperate with everyone else (which, interestingly enough, means improving the relationship with some countries) to create a master plan, using a blank sheet of paper;
4. Make fundamental changes in the way they have organized our lives, or societies.

Maybe there are reasons to not fully organize themselves. Maybe they understand the issue very well, but also realize that agreeing on the issues is too painful.

Meanwhile, they cover up mistakes from the past with new mistakes, assuming that a future generation will fix the problems.

If you remove the future, you remove the problem, right?



## “Us” versus “Them”

As demonstrated by terrorists, ideologies are dangerously powerful, they bring people together, unite them through common views and goals, hopes and aspirations. Terrorists are organized by this ideology.

We're not. It's not a case of 'we' against 'them', because there is no united 'we'.

We're only united by grief and mourning. Not by action. Recent discussions about knowledge/information sharing & communication between various “allies” and “partners” offer additional clear proof that there is no “we”, no organized approach, no agreement on what the root causes are or what the solutions could be.

This is probably the most significant difference between them and us.

To fully understand the complexity and to support my statement that there is no "we", I would like to encourage you to do some research on just one of the global conflicts: Syria. Try counting how many parties are involved, who's fighting who, and who's supporting who. Try understanding why one party is fighting another party. Get it? That's just one country, just one of the many places where people are fighting people, where we are fighting each other. Why?

If we fully understand the mechanics and powers involved in those conflicts, why are we not really doing anything about it? Perhaps we don't fully understand it, perhaps we don't want to change our approach. In any case, a wise man once said that we can't expect different results if we continue to do the same thing. In other words, what got us here won't get us there.

An entirely different approach is needed.

As long as we think that we're better than them, as long as we don't start feeling the same level of outrage about every act of terror that happens against an innocent person, regardless of where they are, we are getting one step closer to one of Hitler's ideologies. We all know how that story ended.

## The terrorists

Allow me to share some thoughts about the terrorists too.

I wonder if most of them fully understand the reasons behind the ideology they're fighting for. Careful brainwashing & indoctrination works. It works on us; it works on them. The use of the right words, and carefully crafted 'evidence' and promises, will convince a lot of people, even if the message is driven by just a very small group of leaders. I wonder if the terrorists realize that their battle will provide nothing but a de-facto dictatorship. I wonder if they are sure that the goal they are trying to achieve will bring them closer to some of the problems that they are trying to solve.



They are clearly angry about something. Is it fair to put all the blame in their hands? Or take all the blame in our own hands? I don't think it's that simple.

Here is something simple: Taking the lives of innocent people using excessive weapons, is nothing but an act of cowardice. It's not courageous, it's not improving anyone's situation. It's weak. Dropping bombs on innocent people's houses and heads fits into that category too. Pushing people back into war zones, taking away their hopes and desires to have a normal life, to simply love and care for each other. Same thing.

Fighting the battle with words instead, using your bare hands to build something, with love and care, is much harder to do. It takes real women and men to do it. Not for the weak.

Terrorists decide to blow up people, innocent people that are not able to fix the problem either, rendering the remaining people too afraid to help fixing the problem. They resort to the use of mechanisms that demonstrate their weakness, their incapability to actually fix problems. They hurt others for reasons that apply to themselves too.

Dear terrorists, if you believe your bigger goal is worthwhile dying for, please do so. Go for it. Get together with as many like-minded people as possible and have a blast. All together; but leave anyone else out of it. You are making your own situation worse.

Violence alone doesn't fix problems. It never has, and it never will. Killing yourself won't get you to the goal you believe in. In fact, you're just abandoning the very cause you're fighting for, and making it more difficult for the ones you leave behind to reach that goal. It's just another act of weakness, it proves you're nothing but a coward, a loser. You're not fighting. You're running away, you're hiding.

## **Way forward**

We all have to work together to understand all of the root causes behind the problems, acknowledge them in an objective way, embrace them as opportunities to write history, to define a better future, and fix the global issues. We don't have to get along (although that would be nice), just working together would be a good start.

Let's identify & fix their problems first. If done well, it'll show the path to fixing the local problems too. Both are necessary, as we're talking about the same problems.

Again, as I explained, this letter mostly contains my personal view and opinion. I'm sure many of you will disagree. It's ok to disagree, but I also dare you to disagree with the fact that the current approach is not enough.

In any case, you have a choice. You have autonomy in how to respond to this.

You can either try to find the flaws in my document, or you can try to find the things that make sense and do something with that. You can wait for others to do something, wait until something happens closer to your home, or you can be a leader yourself, you can prove that



we are ready to unite for a common cause, an ideology. If you decide not to do anything, think about how that impacts your right to complain about the effects.

It's up to you. If you disagree with some of my views, I encourage you to write down your own views and to share them with others. Unless we create a momentum ourselves, somebody else will. Something else will.

The next 2 pages contain direct messages to our Leaders, and to everyone else. Please read them carefully. If you believe a different approach is needed, if you believe that we are not fighting the right battles, please help raise awareness about it.

Thank you



Dear Leaders,

Since the future of our planet depends on your decisions, since our so-called democracy depends on your individual initiatives, what are you going to do?

Do you really know what the problems are? Are you bold enough to admit what they are? Are you capable of being a true leader, ready to take a strong position and courageous enough to call out the others that only care about themselves?

Are you waiting for someone else to call for a united multi-faceted approach, where conditions are removed, interests and forces are combined to change the world into a better place? To reshape the world, redraw boundaries and to create brand new countries, great places where everybody would want to go to? Where everyone has a place they can call "home"? To acknowledge that there is enough money in the world to support it, and that there are enough skilled people in the world (including amongst the refugees) to build such a place, that there is enough power & technology to protect it, and enough business reasons to involve the corporate & capitalist worlds too, and to boost global economy. To remove those that preach violence in the name of terrorism, those that preach terrorism for whatever reason, those that look for a reason to throwing the next rock, rather than using it to build a safe place for their so-called enemies. To remove selective protection & policy of favoritism, to ensure we change the course of the world. To treat everyone with dignity and look for ways so everyone can save face.

Are you able to stop focusing on the failures of others, of putting efforts into highlighting the incompetence of other countries, of rating each other's intelligence services, but neglecting the bigger picture and minimizing your own role in the story?

After all, if you're not going to do anything different, you will get the same results. In this case, that means that things will get worse for all of us, including yourself, your children, your legacy. If you don't know what to do, ask the people. Ask others. Ask me. Think out of the box.

All you have to do in order to become a great nation is to take initiative to do the right thing and to inspire others to leave the differences behind. The number of inhabitants, the size of your country, the strength of your armed forces, the quality of your jokes, the sound of your voice doesn't matter. Nobody cares. If you want others to agree that you're a great leader, you'll have to start leading. A nation is not great because its own leader says it is. It's great when others agree it is.

The time is ticking for the children of the world and for the planet itself. The longer we wait, the more difficult it becomes to fix the problems.

Either you go for it, or we all lose. Either we unite or we will be united in failure.





Dear fellow citizens,

The children of the world need your help. As a first step, we have to create awareness about our behavior and of the lack of global initiative to deal with the real problems.

Please share it with as many people as you can. Translate it. Educate our leaders. Create a debate that goes straight to the point. Create a sense of urgency. Provoke thoughts. Become a leader and lead the leaders. Tell your leaders to forget what they were doing and to focus on the future. Tell your leaders that you are sick of it too, afraid of their approach and their lack of desire to change. Tell them that you expect them to do better.

Tell them why. Do something, even if you don't fully agree with all statements in this document. Keep the document as is or summarize it. Put your own ideas, thoughts & solutions on paper. Publish it on social media. But don't lose your focus on the lack of addressing the root causes.

If you want to raise your voice and support the initiative of demanding global change, there is a lot you can do with very little effort:

1. Share this with the media. Demand consistency. Demand them to report all incidents in the same way.
2. Share this with the press. Ask them to help to make sure our leaders get to see this. Ask them to confront our leaders with it. Ask them to be critical and to ask questions to raise awareness.
3. Visit & like our page on Facebook - <https://www.facebook.com/demandglobalchange/>  
Set a new Facebook "likes" world record, making it impossible to ignore that this is a global demand for global change.
4. Download the "Demand Global Change" logo from the Facebook page and use it as your own profile photo, to indicate your support of the initiative.
5. Share this initiative on Twitter. Link to the Facebook page, and get #demandglobalchange or #bethechange trending. Link people to <http://bit.ly/demandglobalchange>
6. Send it to your friends & family, to your neighbors & co-workers. Ask local celebrities to use their network to reach more people and to help out. Share it as much as you can. It just takes a brief moment to do so. The impact however, can be huge.
7. Send this document to your leaders, or other global leaders. Use social media and/or e-mail, make sure they get to see this. Build a new website. Add a link to this on your existing website.
8. Keep this message alive. Share it again next week. The week after. And so on. Never give up.

**Build an ideology of hope for everyone, be the change.**

**#bethechange**

**#demandglobalchange**