

United Nations Day Celebration and the Cultural Realization of Junior High School Students in Labangal District: Basis For Program Development

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Abstract

United Nations Day celebrations serve as a vital tool in fostering global citizenship, promoting cultural awareness, inclusivity, and international cooperation among students. These events help students develop a deeper understanding of global diversity and shared responsibility, reinforcing essential values such as unity and peace through intercultural dialogue (Banks, 2008; UNESCO, 2015). This study examines how United Nations Day celebrations influence the sociocultural development of junior high school students in Labangal District. The research involved 353 students across all grade levels, ensuring an equal and diverse representation. Gender distribution was nearly balanced, with 53.54% male and 46.46% female, confirming that gender did not significantly impact participation. A notable finding of the study is that demographic characteristics such as year level ($p = 0.027$) and

gender ($p = 0.280$) had no statistically significant effect on students' socio-cultural realization. This suggests that students, regardless of grade level or gender, exhibited similar levels of cultural knowledge, global issue awareness, attitudinal change, and behavioral intentions. Despite high satisfaction ratings across all parameters in the implementation of the United Nations day celebration, students' overall sociocultural realization remained at the "Beginning" level, with cultural awareness scoring the highest (75.92%), while global issues awareness and behavioral intentions scored the lowest (67.51% and 67.76%). These findings highlight the need for enhanced educational strategies within cultural activities to foster a deeper understanding of global issues and strengthen students' engagement in global citizenship.

Keywords: United Nations Day, socio-cultural development, global citizenship, student participation, cultural realization

I. Introduction

United Nations Day celebrations serve as an essential platform for fostering global citizenship, promoting cultural awareness, and encouraging international cooperation among students. This yearly event commemorates the foundation of the United Nations and provides valuable opportunities for discussions on global peace, cooperation, and cultural diversity. Studies suggest that educational activities emphasizing cultural diversity and global perspectives enhance students' empathy and intercultural competence (Williams & Turner, 2022). Despite its importance, there is limited research on how United Nations Day celebrations directly impact students' cultural realization. In the Philippines, the Department of Education (DepEd) has released memoranda supporting the celebration's significance, including **DepEd Memo No. 065, s. 2020** and **DepEd Memorandum No. 310, s. 2023**, which highlight its role in strengthening international cooperation and cultural appreciation in schools. While educators recognize its importance, there is a lack of systematic guidelines for maximizing its effectiveness. Addressing this gap will provide practical insights for educators and policymakers in improving global citizenship education.

1.1 Objective of the Study

This study seeks to assess the influence of United Nations Day celebration on the socio-cultural realization of junior high school students in the Labangal District as a foundation for program development. To better understand participation trends, it aims to evaluate respondents' demographics by year level and gender. It also looks at the degree of implementation of United Nations Day celebrations, concentrating on key areas such planning and organization, student involvement, resources and materials used, and educational content presented. Furthermore, the study evaluates students' socio-cultural realization in terms of cultural understanding, global issues awareness, attitudinal shifts, and behavioral intentions, with the objective to determine how well the celebration promotes global citizenship. It also determines whether there is a meaningful association. Between the implementation of United Nations Day celebrations and the socio-cultural realization of junior high school students in the Labangal District, as well as whether socio-cultural realization is associated with respondents' demographic information. Based on these findings, the study proposes an upgrade program to increase the effectiveness of United Nations Day celebrations in developing cultural knowledge and global participation among students. By addressing these objectives, this study hopes to provide insights that will assist educators and policymakers in developing more structured and impactful cultural initiatives within schools, ensuring that students benefit from immersive learning experiences that shape their understanding of global diversity and cooperation.

II. Methods

This study employed a quasi-experimental research design to assess the impact of United Nations Day celebrations on the cultural realization of junior high school students in the Labangal District. Since random assignment was not feasible, this method allowed for the examination of changes within the same group of participants without requiring a control group (Campbell & Stanley, 1963). The study focused on key components such as planning and organization, student participation, resources and materials used, and educational content delivered to determine their influence on students' socio-cultural realization.

The study surveyed **353 junior high school students** from **Lanton High School and Labangal National High School** in General Santos City, ensuring a diverse representation of participants. The research assessed **cultural awareness, global issues awareness, attitudinal changes, and behavioral intentions** to evaluate the effectiveness of United Nations Day celebrations in fostering global citizenship. Grounded in **Piaget's cognitive development theory (1936)**, the study recognized that adolescents aged **12–16** continue to integrate logical thinking with their growing understanding of cultural norms, traditions, and global issues. Their developmental stage makes them receptive to activities such as United Nations Day celebrations, which emphasize **global cooperation, diversity, and inclusivity**.

In this study, the stratified random sampling technique was utilized as the sampling method. As detailed by Lemm (2020), this technique represents a category of probability sampling that permits researchers to increase accuracy (reduce error) compared to simple random sampling (SRS). The population is divided into unique, non-overlapping groups, or strata, based on a significant dimension, and then a random sample of individuals is gathered from each stratum. By employing Slovin's Formula calculator with a confidence level of 90% and a margin of error of 5%, the researcher identified a sample size of 353 junior high school students from Lanton High School and Labangal National High School in the Labangal District, thereby assuring a representative selection. The student population was organized into subgroups according to grade levels—Grade 7, Grade 8, Grade 9, and Grade 10—thereby facilitating proportional representation. In each stratum, students were randomly selected to eliminate selection bias and ensure an accurate depiction of the overall student demographic.

The research instruments embraced a structured survey questionnaire and a researcher-developed assessment designed to evaluate both the execution of United Nations Day celebrations and their impact on students' socio-cultural awareness. The Demographic Profile Section collected fundamental data regarding gender and grade level, while the Level of Implementation Section scrutinized critical domains such as Planning and Organization, Student Participation, Resources and Materials Utilized, and Educational Content Delivered, employing a 5-point Likert scale. The Socio-Cultural Realization Section assessed students' Cultural Awareness, Global Issues Awareness, Attitudinal Changes, and Behavioral Intentions through a ten-item evaluation framework.

To ensure the validity and reliability of the research instrument, it underwent rigorous evaluation by six educational experts possessing advanced degrees or Master Teacher Position. A pilot test was conducted, with statistical reliability confirmed through Cronbach's alpha (0.86) for the survey and KR-20 (0.80) for the test questionnaire, thereby indicating robust internal consistency. Enhancements informed by expert feedback significantly augmented the questionnaire's efficacy, ensuring a precise assessment of the impact of United Nations Day celebrations on students' cultural awareness.

The **data collection** involved administering finalized researcher made **questionnaires and a researcher-made test** to randomly selected junior high school students from **Lanton High School and Labangal National High School**. Surveys were conducted during a designated period, with clear instructions provided to ensure **accurate and honest responses**. The researcher oversaw the process to address any issues and maintain consistency. Post-

collection, responses were reviewed for completeness, entered into a database, and analyzed using **statistical methods** to evaluate the effectiveness of **United Nations Day celebrations** in fostering sociocultural realization. Findings were compiled into a report with recommendations for program improvements.

Both **descriptive and inferential statistics** were used. **Descriptive statistics** summarized students' **demographic profiles**, participation rates, and overall event implementation through **frequency distributions, mean, and standard deviation**. **Inferential statistics**, including **Pearson Product-Moment Correlation**, examined relationships between **event implementation (planning, participation, resources, content)** and sociocultural realization (**cultural awareness, global issue awareness, attitudinal shifts, behavioral intentions**). **Logistic Regression Analysis** assessed whether **gender and grade level** influenced sociocultural realization. All tests were conducted at a **0.05 significance level** using statistical tools such as **SPSS and Excel**.

The study was conducted with ethical clearance from Sultan Kudarat State University, ensuring informed consent, confidentiality, and respect for respondents' well-being. Personal identifiers were removed, and data was securely stored. Cultural and gender sensitivity was upheld, ensuring fair representation of diverse perspectives throughout the research process.

III. Results and Discussion

Table 2.

Profile of the Respondents in terms of Year level

Profile of the Respondents		
Year level	Frequency(f)	Percentage(%)
Grade 7	102	28.9%
Grade 8	75	21.25%
Grade 9	80	22.66%
Grade 10	96	27.20%
Total	353	100.00%

Table 2 displays the demographic profile of the respondents based on their year level, emphasizing the distribution of junior high school students who took part in the survey. Grade 7 students made up the largest group of the 353 total answers, accounting for 28.90% (102 students), showing active participation in the United Nations Day events. Grade 8 students had the lowest representation, accounting for 21.25% (75 students), which could indicate lower participation levels than other grade levels.

Meanwhile, Grade 9 students accounted for 22.66% (80 students) and Grade 10 students for 27.20% (96 students). The generally balanced mix across year levels allows for a

full investigation of pupils' cultural realization and engagement in the celebration. This data indicates student participation across several phases of junior high.

Table 3

Profile of the Respondents in terms of Gender

Profile of the Respondents		
Gender	Frequency(f)	Percentage(%)
Male	189	53.54%
Female	164	46.46%
Total	353	100.00%

The table depicts the gender breakdown of the 353 junior high school students who participated in the survey. The majority of participants were male students (189, or 53.54%), with female students (164, or 46.46%) making up a substantially lower number. The reasonably fair distribution ensures that opinions from both genders are appropriately conveyed, allowing for a more comprehensive investigation of the impact of United Nations Day celebrations on cultural realization.

This distribution implies that gender has no significant influence on participation rates in United Nations Day activities, indicating that both male and female students participate equally. The data enable for a gender-responsive evaluation of the event's success in promoting cultural understanding and global citizenship.

Table 4

Level of Implementation of United Nations Day Celebration

among Junior High School students in terms of Planning and Organization

Indicators	Range of Mean	SD	Description
1. The United Nations Day event was well-planned and organized.	4.47	0.64	Strongly Agree
2. Clear objectives were set for the United Nations Day celebration.	4.50	0.65	Strongly Agree

3. There was effective coordination among the organizers for the event.	4.44	0.63	Strongly Agree
4. The timeline for the United Nations Day activities was well-managed.	4.42	0.66	Strongly Agree
5. Roles and responsibilities for the event were clearly defined.	4.48	0.67	Strongly Agree
Section Mean	4.46	0.65	Strongly Agree

The table shows the assessment of United Nations Day celebration based on key indicators related to event planning and organization. The responses were measured using mean scores and standard deviations, with ratings based on a 5-point Likert scale.

Overall, the celebration was highly rated, with all indicators receiving "Strongly Agree" responses. The highest-rated aspect was "Clear objectives were set for the United Nations Day celebration" (Mean = 4.50, SD = 0.65), indicating that students recognized a well-defined purpose in the event. Roles and responsibilities (Mean = 4.48, SD = 0.67) and event planning and organization (Mean = 4.47, SD = 0.64) were also positively evaluated, suggesting effective execution and structured coordination.

Table 5

The level of Implementation of United Nations Day celebrations among junior high school students in terms of Student Participation

Indicators	Mean	SD	INTERPRETATION
1. Students were actively involved in the planning of the United Nations Day celebration.	4.46	0.69	Strongly Agree
2. There were opportunities for all students to participate in the United Nations Day activities.	4.48	0.70	Strongly Agree
3. Student feedback was considered in the planning of the event.	4.38	0.74	Strongly Agree

4. The activities encouraged students to engage in the event.	4.43	0.67	Strongly Agree
5. Students felt that their participation in the event was valued.	4.50	0.68	Strongly Agree
Section Mean	4.45	0.70	Strongly Agree

The table evaluates student participation during the United Nations Day celebration, using a 5-point Likert scale to measure engagement levels. The section mean of 4.45 with a standard deviation of 0.70 indicates strong agreement among respondents, suggesting that students felt actively involved and valued throughout the event. Among the indicators, "Students felt that their participation in the event was valued" received the highest rating (Mean = 4.50, SD = 0.68), showing that students perceived their contributions as meaningful. Opportunities for student participation (Mean = 4.48, SD = 0.70) were also highly rated, reinforcing the inclusivity of the event.

The lowest-rated indicator, "Student feedback was considered in the planning of the event" (Mean = 4.38, SD = 0.74), still falls within the "Strongly Agree" range but suggests a slight area for improvement in integrating student input during event preparation.

Overall, these results indicate that the United Nations Day celebration successfully engaged students, fostered active participation, and created an inclusive environment. The consistency in strong agreement across indicators highlights the event's effectiveness in encouraging student involvement. Future enhancements could focus on increasing student voice in the planning process to further strengthen participation and ownership of the event.

Table 6

The level of Implementation of United Nations Day Celebration among Junior High School students in terms of Resources and Materials Used

Indicators	Mean	SD	Interpretation
1. The resources used for the United Nations Day celebration were appropriate and effective.	4.41	0.77	Strongly Agree
2. There was sufficient availability of materials for the event.	4.48	0.69	Strongly Agree
3. The quality of the resources and materials used was satisfactory.	4.43	0.67	Strongly Agree
4. The resources and materials supported the educational goals of	4.45	0.67	Strongly Agree

the event.

5. Adequate preparation time was allocated for organizing the materials.	4.43	0.71	Strongly Agree
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Section Mean	4.44	0.70	Strongly Agree
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The table presents the evaluation of the resources and materials used during the United Nations Day celebration among junior high school students. Based on the responses measured through a 5-point Likert scale, all indicators received ratings within the "Strongly Agree" category, signifying high satisfaction with the availability, appropriateness, and effectiveness of the materials utilized during the event.

Among the indicators, "There was sufficient availability of materials for the event" received the highest mean score (Mean = 4.48, SD = 0.69), indicating that students felt well-equipped with necessary materials to fully engage in the activities. Similarly, "The resources and materials supported the educational goals of the event" (Mean = 4.45, SD = 0.67) reflects that the event successfully aligned its materials with its learning objectives.

While all aspects received "Strongly Agree" ratings, the lowest-rated indicator, "The resources used for the United Nations Day celebration were appropriate and effective" (Mean = 4.41, SD = 0.77), had the highest standard deviation, suggesting slight variations in student perceptions regarding effectiveness. Despite this, the section mean (4.44, SD = 0.70) confirms that the implementation of resources and materials was successful and well-organized, contributing to the overall effectiveness of the celebration.

These findings suggest that future events may benefit from continued resource optimization, ensuring accessibility and quality while addressing any minor inconsistencies in material effectiveness.

Table 7

The level of Implementation of United Nations Day celebration among Junior High School students in terms of Educational Content Delivered

Indicators	Mean	SD	Description
1. The educational content provided during the United Nations Day celebration was relevant.	4.46	0.68	Strongly Agree
2. The content effectively highlighted global issues and cultural diversity.	4.51	0.65	Strongly Agree

3. The delivery of the content was engaging and informative.	4.44	0.64	Strongly Agree
4. The content was presented in a manner that was understandable for students.	4.45	0.67	Strongly Agree
5. The event included diverse perspectives and voices in its educational content.	4.43	0.68	Strongly Agree
Section Mean	4.46	0.66	Strongly Agree

The result evaluates the **educational content delivered** during the United Nations Day celebration, measuring its relevance, effectiveness, engagement, and inclusivity through a **5-point Likert scale**.

The overall section mean of 4.46 with a standard deviation of 0.66 indicates that students strongly agreed that the educational content was well-executed and beneficial. The highest-rated indicator, "The content effectively highlighted global issues and cultural diversity" (Mean = 4.51, SD = 0.65), suggests that students recognized the event's success in emphasizing important global themes. This implies that the celebration fulfilled its role in fostering awareness of international cooperation and cultural inclusivity.

Additionally, indicators such as "The educational content delivered was relevant" (Mean = 4.46, SD = 0.68) and "The content was presented in a manner understandable to students" (Mean = 4.45, SD = 0.67) confirm that the information was accessible and meaningful to participants. The lowest-rated aspect, "The event included diverse perspectives and voices" (Mean = 4.43, SD = 0.68), while still receiving a "Strongly Agree" rating, suggests potential areas for improvement in incorporating more varied cultural viewpoints or interactive discussions.

These findings highlight the strength of the educational component in reinforcing global awareness and cultural sensitivity among students. Future enhancements could focus on expanding student engagement in discussions, incorporating more experiential learning methods, and ensuring even broader representation of diverse perspectives.

Table 8

The Overall level of Implementation of United Nations Day Celebration among Junior High School Students

Indicators	Mean	SD	Description	Intpretation
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Planning and Organization	4.46	0.65	Strongly Agree	Very High Implementation
Student Participation	4.45	0.65	Strongly Agree	Very High Implementation
Resources and Materials Used	4.44	0.70	Strongly Agree	Very High Implementation
Educational Content Delivered	4.46	0.66	Strongly Agree	Very High Implementation
Total Section Mean	4.45	0.68	Strongly Agree	Very High Implementation

The table presents the overall level of implementation of the United Nations Day celebration among junior high school students, measured across four key indicators: Planning and Organization, Student Participation, Resources and Materials Used, and Educational Content Delivered. All indicators received a “Strongly Agree” rating, indicating that students highly perceived the event as well-executed and effective.

Among the categories, Planning and Organization and Educational Content Delivered received the highest mean (4.46, SD = 0.65 and 0.66, respectively), demonstrating strong agreement regarding the structured coordination of the event and the relevance of the educational content. Student Participation (Mean = 4.45, SD = 0.65) reflects an active engagement among students, suggesting inclusivity in the activities provided. Meanwhile, Resources and Materials Used received the lowest mean (4.44, SD = 0.70), though still interpreted as “Very High Implementation”, suggesting that students acknowledged adequate materials but potentially saw areas for improvement.

The total section mean of 4.45 (SD = 0.68) further reinforces that the United Nations Day celebration was successfully implemented, promoting cultural awareness, global citizenship, and meaningful student involvement. The findings suggest that while all areas performed well, future improvements could focus on optimizing resource allocation and enhancing interactive learning methods to sustain high engagement and effectiveness in such celebrations.

Table 9

The Socio Cultural Realization in United Nations Day Celebration Of Junior High School

Students In Labangal District in terms of Cultural Awareness, Global Issues Awareness; Attitudinal Changes; and Behavioral Intentions .

Indicators	Mean Percentage	Description
Cultural Awareness	75.92	Beginning
Global Issues Awareness	67.76	Beginning
Attitudinal Changes	70.76	Beginning
Behavioral Intentions	67.51	Beginning
Over-All Mean Percentage	70.49	Beginning

Table 9 shows the socio-cultural realization of junior high school students in Labangal District based on four key dimensions: Cultural Awareness, Global Issues Awareness, Attitudinal Changes, and Behavioral Intentions.

Among these indicators, **Cultural Awareness** received the highest mean percentage (75.92%), indicating that students demonstrated a relatively stronger understanding and recognition of cultural diversity. This suggests that the United Nations Day celebration was effective in increasing students' appreciation for different cultures. However, despite this score, their level of realization still falls within the "**Beginning**" category, implying that there is room for deeper learning and engagement.

On the other hand, **Global Issues Awareness (67.76%)** and **Behavioral Intentions (67.51%)** received the lowest scores among the dimensions, signifying that students' awareness of international concerns and their motivation to take action remain at an early stage. The relatively low percentage in **Attitudinal Changes (70.76%)** further indicates that while the event fostered some shifts in perception, students may require additional structured activities to reinforce their attitudes towards global cooperation and empathy.

The **overall mean percentage of 70.49%**, classified under "**Beginning**", suggests that while the United Nations Day celebration successfully introduced socio-cultural themes, there is a need for **enhanced educational strategies** to deepen students' understanding and encourage more active engagement in global citizenship. Future initiatives may focus on **experiential learning, interactive discussions, and advocacy projects** to elevate students' socio-cultural realization beyond the introductory stage.

Table 10

Correlation Results between the implementation of United Nation Day Celebration and Socio-Cultural Realization among Junior High School Students in Labangal District.

Variables	N	Mean	SD	R-value	Relationship	P-value	Decision
Implementation of United Nations Day Celebration	353	4.45	0.36	0.15	weak	0.005	Reject Ho
Socio Cultural Realization	353	28.21	6.39				

Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Based on the finding in table 10 from the study is the weak but statistically significant correlation ($r = 0.15$, $p = 0.005$) between the implementation of United Nations Day celebrations and students' socio-cultural awareness. Despite expectations that a well-organized cultural event would strongly influence students' global understanding, the data suggests that the event's impact, while measurable, is limited in strength. This implies that United Nations Day celebrations alone are not enough to deepen socio-cultural realization and must be complemented by sustained educational initiatives.

Additionally, Global Issues Awareness (67.76%) and Behavioral Intentions (67.51%) scored the lowest among socio-cultural realization indicators, reinforcing the idea that while students enjoy the event and recognize cultural diversity, their understanding of global challenges and willingness to act remain at an early stage. This suggests the need for more immersive and action-oriented educational strategies beyond a single-day celebration to ensure long-term engagement with global citizenship values.

Table 11

Sociocultural realization significantly associated with the profile of the respondents

VARIABLE	Sociocultural realization		
Profile	p- value	Remarks	Decision
Year Level	0.027	No significant	Accept Ho
Gender	0.280	No significant	Accept Ho

Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

The analysis in Table 11 examines the relationship between students' sociocultural realization and their profile variables (year level and gender). The results indicate no significant relationship, as both p-values exceed the 0.05 threshold (Year Level = 0.027, Gender = 0.280), leading to the acceptance of the null hypothesis.

This finding aligns with Vygotsky's Sociocultural Theory, which emphasizes the role of social interactions and shared cultural experiences in shaping learning and awareness, rather than individual demographic factors (John-Steiner & Mahn, 1996). The data suggests that both male and female students exhibit similar levels of cultural awareness, reinforcing that gender does not significantly influence students' understanding of cultural diversity.

Furthermore, the absence of a correlation between cultural awareness and demographic factors underscores the importance of external influences, such as the quality of cultural education and exposure to diverse experiences, in shaping students' sociocultural realization. This highlights the need for structured educational strategies to enhance students' global awareness beyond demographic considerations.

IV. Conclusion and Recommendation

The study confirms that United Nations Day celebrations in Labangal District are highly inclusive, with balanced participation across all grade levels and genders. The event was well-organized and positively received, as evidenced by the "Strongly Agree" ratings across planning, educational content delivered, student participation, and resource utilization. Despite its success, students' sociocultural realization remained at the "Beginning" level, with Cultural Awareness (75.92%) scoring the highest, while Global Issues Awareness (67.76%) and Behavioral Intentions (67.51%) were the lowest.

A weak but significant correlation ($r = 0.15$, $p = 0.005$) between event implementation and socio-cultural realization suggests that while the celebration fosters cultural understanding, its overall impact remains limited. Additionally, demographic factors such as gender and year level did not significantly influence students' cultural awareness, emphasizing the need for enhanced educational strategies beyond the event itself.

To strengthen future celebrations the following recommendations were made by the researcher based on the following findings.

The schools should provide equal chances for all grade levels and genders by encouraging inclusivity through planned programming. Peer-led committees with diverse representation can foster collaboration, leadership, and teamwork, ensuring that everyone's perspective is heard. Mentorship programs, in which older students guide younger students, can increase involvement while also fostering important ties. Workshops on diversity and inclusion can help to reduce biases and increase confidence, ensuring equal participation. Recognizing all participants' contributions promotes inclusivity and fosters a friendly, engaged environment for events such as United Nations Day Celebration.

Teacher should collaborate with stakeholders by engaging parents, community leaders, and educators in planning and supporting the celebrations to create a more comprehensive

learning experience for students. Strengthen student engagement through encouraging students' active involvement through hands-on projects and leadership opportunities during the event. Assign students roles like event organizers, presenters, or discussion facilitators to boost participation and empower them with responsibility. enhance sociocultural realization by developing targeted activities that emphasize global issues awareness and behavioral intentions. For example, interactive workshops, real-world problem-solving tasks, and simulations of United Nations processes can help students understand global concerns and inspire meaningful behavioral actions.

Future studies may conduct a longitudinal analysis to determine how students' sociocultural awareness, attitudes, and behaviors evolve over time beyond the United Nations Day celebrations. This could provide deeper insights into the long-term effectiveness of such events. Future research can investigate how participation in United Nations Day celebrations influences students' real-world actions, such as volunteerism, advocacy, and participation in global initiatives. Future research may extend the investigation to other school events and activities that promote cultural awareness, such as multicultural festivals, international exchange programs, and cultural appreciation weeks, to compare their impact with United Nations Day celebration.

By implementing these recommendations, United Nations Day celebrations can evolve into a transformative experience, ensuring a lasting impact on students' cultural appreciation and global responsibility.

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