U.S.M. – THE UNION FOR SAVING MANKIND

By JACQUES CORY

\* COVID-19 crisis happened because of a severe misallocation of funds in fighting the virus.

\* The business world, leaded by the richest companies and persons, should conduct the fight.

\* The worst is ahead of us, with frequent pandemics, much deadlier and ruinous for economy.

\* Solutions to pandemics should be found within weeks instead of many months or few years.

\* For finding immediate solutions transnational private funds of $trillions should be allocated.

\* The U.S.M. shall be funded by the world’s most profitable companies and richest people.

The COVID-19 crisis happened because of a severe misallocation of funds in fighting the virus. The fight until now in one of the worst health & economic crises in the last decades was ineffective, insufficient and belated. Governments and international organizations have failed in fighting the pandemic, responding too late, wasting funds in an uncoordinated effort, with suspicions, mutual accusations, while the economy has entered into a deep depression, the world is in quarantine, with 30+ million sick people & over a million casualties. Furthermore, we have to be prepared to even worse pandemics, with a casualty rate of a quarter or a third of infected people, with viruses affecting mostly young people instead of elderly people of 70+.

The world cannot afford to be in a constant lockdown, with no flights, no tourism, very high unemployment rates, losses of tens of trillions, which are completely superfluous and could be avoided. The western world cannot respond to the viruses like the Far East countries which were affected much less than the US, France, UK, Spain, Italy, Benelux. On the other hand we cannot wait when every new virus appears to find a vaccine within a year or more, until all the tests are conducted, while the world is in quarantine, with unemployment and depression.

We are wasting our efforts instead of focusing on a concentrated endeavor to fight the virus. Populist governments and ineffective organizations cannot conduct the fight. Only business, the richest companies and banks, with the richest people in the world can cope with the crisis.

But the richest people and companies must transcend to the level of the task, they have to discard neo liberal approaches of: maximization of profits and valuation, which are unavoidably to the detriment of stakeholders – employees, customers, ecology and community, allocating at most 1% of profits to corporate social responsibility, avoiding paying taxes in the countries where they operate, investing billions in buyback of shares which affects badly financial stability and growth, emphasizing short term goals, discarding sustainability considerations, employing too high leverages, with massive layoffs, “creative” finance, inadequate corporate governance, too high ratios between highest and lowest salaries.

They need to change the mentality from cut-throat competition, street fighting, having the killer instinct, with war tactics, to: cooperation, transparency, ethics, integrity, humanity, accountability, creativity, moderation, returning to basics about the purpose of a company, the raison d’être of people, which is to contribute to society, employ workers, sell good & needed products, ensuring the stakeholders’ rights, ostracizing corrupt and unethical businessmen.

This will not be achieved in ordinary times, but we experience today extraordinary circumstances. We have now a unique opportunity to achieve those goals by combining forces in establishing a new corporation, the U.S.M. - “Union for Saving Mankind”, with an equity of trillions, funded by the richest companies and individuals in the world. U.S.M. would find prompt solutions to each virus and pandemics, with a concentrated, timely and massive investment, finding a solution not in many months or even years but within a few weeks.

The skeptics would respond that it is not feasible. With an investment of trillions, that are today sunk costs anyhow as we lose those in the depression, we can find adequate solutions to those problems. After all, we are not trying to find cures to cancer or achieve immortality; we just have to find a solution to a pandemic with a tiny virus. If it is impossible to find a cure within weeks, although I hope it is feasible, let us find ways to destroy the virus within weeks before it infects people, in a combined effort of businessmen and wealthy people from the US, China, Europe, Japan, from all over the world, who would cooperate instead of competing, benefiting jointly from the outcome according to the level of their investments, because they know that there is no other alternative, as those pandemics would destroy mankind, and of course economy and business. Governments have failed, but business could save the world.

Instead of keeping the reserves idle, with minimal return on investment, especially in those troubled times, with zero interest rates, depression, the richest companies would invest tens to hundreds billions of their reserves, and the richest people would invest billions or tens of billions of their wealth, in the equity of the new corporation, and will earn an adequate return on investment, however not maximizing their profits or valuation. What is the purpose of maximizing profits unethically and then invest some or most of it in philanthropy? Is it not better to invest the profits and wealth directly in a corporation that would save mankind?

Who would take the initiative to establish U.S.M.? Will it be Microsoft or Apple, Amazon or Berkshire Hathaway, Saudi Aramco or Industrial and Commercial Bank of China, Alphabet/Google or JP Morgan Chase, Bank of America or Agricultural Bank of China, Intel or Alibaba, Wells Fargo or Citigroup, Verizon or Toyota, Facebook or Samsung, Pfizer or Royal Dutch Shell, Volkswagen or Johnson & Johnson, Walmart or Exxon, Fannie Mae or AT&T, UnitedHealth or Roche, Nestle or Novartis, Cisco or Home Depot, Oracle or Walt Disney, Merck or Petrobras, or all of them? And I mentioned only some of Fortune’s World 50 Most Profitable Companies in 2020, which earned annual profits of $10B to $88B each.

Alternatively or jointly, it could be some of the richest people in the world who would invest in U.S.M. – Bill Gates or Jeff Bezos, Warren Buffett or Bernard Arnault, Mark Zuckerberg or Steve Ballmer, Sergey Brin or Larry Page, Amancio Ortega or Carlos Slim Helu, Alice Walton of Jim Walton, Mukesh Ambani or Michael Bloomberg, Francoise Bettencourt Meyers or Joseph Safra, Larry Ellison or Phil Knight, Elon Musk or Jack Ma, Francois Pinault or Ray Dalio, or maybe MacKenzie (Bezos) Scott, with a net worth of $36B, Charles Koch or Julia Koch, Jim Simons or Giovanni Ferrero, Jacqueline Mars or John Mars, Tadashi Yanai or Sheldon Adelson, Hui Ka Yan or Li Ka-shing, Vladimir Potanin or Michael Dell, Takemitsu Takizaki or Yang Huiyan, Alain Wertheimer or Gerard Wertheimer, Dieter Schwarz or Leonid Lisin, Qin Yinglin or Leonid Mikhelson, or all of them, who are some of Forbe’s list of the 50 richest people in the world in 2020 with a Net Worth of $17B to $113B.

The most profitable companies and the richest people in the world should set an example to their governments, to the world organizations and to humanity, without fighting or competing, but uniting efforts in a joint venture to save mankind from pandemics, to safeguard the economies and the business of the world, as this time only a united effort could prevail.

The world economy with its companies & wealth would be ruined if the U.S. would continue to accuse China, if each company would continue to develop before the other European, Chinese or American companies the vaccine to COVID-19, as countries and companies want to prevail, want to maximize profits at the expense of the others. This could work maybe in the short run and in the “old” world, but with the new challenges, with the existing threats of pandemics that would ruin the world, the old capitalistic neoliberal system cannot persevere, a new paradigm is needed, of cooperation, sustainability and ethics in order to save mankind.

This can be achieved only by companies, by individuals, and the richest people and most profitable companies should take the lead, where all the others have failed. Companies were established originally to benefit societies, to build roads, bridges, and today in 2020 new roads & bridges are needed in order to fight pandemics, and they will be built as in the past by companies & entrepreneurs, as they have the vitality & competence to save mankind and life.