Fire is technology. We can use it to warm our food and our home or it can burn down our neighborhood. It's all a matter of how we choose to use technological resources, or abuse them.

In order to think effectively about a problem, we must first properly define it. “World peace” is an inevitably nebulous concept, meaning a lot of different things to different people. Most obviously it means finding ways to avoid war and other forms of destructive conflict, and the impulse underlying that idea is to reduce involuntary suffering as much as possible. Taking that perspective, we can also see that we should also seek to reduce [structural violence](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Structural_violence), which is to say suffering caused by systematic conditions which may not have anything to do with war.

Something has been changing in recent decades, however, in that technological development has been accelerating and making new approaches to old problems possible. A veritable explosion in the power of computing and communications technologies has driven deep changes in other technical areas (e.g. biotechnology, manufacturing), while simultaneously altering the ways in which people relate to each other. Given the scale of these changes, it seems reasonable to seek direct technological solutions to problems such as world peace, which could not traditionally be approached in such a way.

The scientific and technological advances occurring in this unusually blessed century portend a great surge forward in the social evolution of the planet, and indicate the means by which the practical problems of humanity may be solved. They provide, indeed, the very means for the administration of the complex life of a united world. Yet barriers persist. Doubts, misconceptions, prejudices, suspicions and narrow self-interest beset nations and peoples in their relations one to another.

 Technology requires long supply chains to build and cross-border cooperation to develop, both of which are easier if states cooperate rather than compete. Even as technology evolves to suit military objectives, and is often guided by the military (the Internet [began in part](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/ARPANET)with U.S. Department of Defense funding), we might be about to enter a sort of*Pax Technologica*of global stability through, in part, technology.

We have already seen an explosion of services through which emergent networks can solve problems in rapid, flexible ways which centralised organisations are simply not capable of matching. Such networks appear naturally adept at solving structural violence problems. Once we have made that observation, it is only a small step to suggest that if the balance of power in our society were to shift from centralised to decentralised (i.e. distributed) institutions then we would not only have an increased ability to reduce the suffering associated with structural violence, but we would also have reduced the ability of centralised institutions to wage war. It is something of a tangent that we do not have time for here, but we should note that this need not imply a reduction in defensive capability, but merely a limit on central government’s ability to command an entire society’s resources in order to engage in spurious military adventures overseas.

It should be clear that if such a trend were to take hold across at least a significant proportion of developed nations, then the resultant reduction of conflict and suffering would benefit many millions of people

All of the technology in the world of humans was born from within us and is a reflection of our potential. We use finite resources from our planet that come at a cost. Will we use our resources to create technology for the betterment of all or for the destruction of everything that we cherish? I suppose that it is a choice in the way we want to use or abuse them. On this small planet, anything we do to others or to nature we are ultimately doing to ourselves. Choose peace!