

A Global Architecture for 2020

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PART I

AN OUTLINE OF IDEAS

1. Any vision of a global architecture for 2020 must be premised on how humanity will perceive itself at that time. If the perception is as it is now - a world of nation states driven by the quest for national prosperity through economic and military power, with only minimal concern for the powerless in the world and for the global environment - the present global architecture is likely to resist significant change.
2. If there is a change of perception towards a world in which nation states remain, but perceive national self interest to require shared empowerment in a less unequal global society and a sense of caring for the planet, a new global architecture can emerge to facilitate human needs. It is in that latter context only that we can envisage a reform of our present outmoded institutions and the attitudes that sustain them.
3. In this context, a new global architecture should have among its prominent features the following:
 - a) a reinforcement of the spirit of the Charter of the UN through reform that equips it for the needs of 2020. Prominent among these is the reform of the Security Council to make it more representative and free of the dead hand of the veto;
 - b) a new global financial architecture is needed which establishes representative superintendence of the global economy, directed towards enlargement of social and economic justice worldwide. Neither existing international financial institutions nor the market can fulfil this essential function;
 - c) larger participation of global civil society within the institutional architecture - both within a reformed UN system and new institutions outside it. The elements of enlightened protest that currently seek to be heard, however overwhelmed by elements that simply seek violence, must be brought into the councils of global policy-making.
 - d) A much stronger institution must be designed charged with securing the survival of a planetary environment that will sustain human habitation with enforcement powers no less effective than those that pertain to preserving security in its conventional sense.
 - e) There must be an authority to facilitate the provision of global resources for global needs. Not to achieve at the international level what tax revenue aims to provide at the national level will result in an architecture that is largely dysfunctional.

4. 'Realists' will assert that the global change of perception identified in paragraph 2 above as the precondition of a new global architecture is unlikely to occur by 2020. They will assert that 20 years ago in the early 1980s when the Brandt Commission on International Development Issues produced its Report North-South: A Programme for Survival, the prospect for such change was better than it is now. How then do we make progress toward a global architecture for 2020.

5. My answer is that we cannot surrender to 'realism'. I do not discount its negative force, but the challenge it generates is to redouble our efforts to induce a more propitious environment for change. In fact, effort to change 'reality'. That is easier said than done, but it must be attempted and not just with desperate hope but with belief in the ultimate triumph of rationality as homo sapiens confronts survival. The very fact of this Encounter and the enlightenment that drives it are a sign of that rationality which justifies the effort in advancing towards a new global architecture for 2020.

PART II

EXTRACTS FROM THE EXECUTIVE SUMMARY OF THE REPORT OF THE COMMISSION ON GLOBAL GOVERNANCE

This Part contains succinct extracts from A Call to Action which was the Executive Summary of Our Global Neighbourhood - the 1995 Report of the Commission on Global Governance - to the extent that they are relevant to the identified paragraphs of the Outline. Extracts from the Outline are in bold; extracts from the Executive Summary are in italics.

If there is a change of perception towards a world in which nation states remain, but perceive national self interest to require shared empowerment in a less unequal global society and a sense of caring for the planet, a new global architecture can emerge to facilitate human needs. It is in that latter context only that we can envisage a reform of our present outmoded institutions and the attitudes that sustain them.

A Call to Action - pg 5

At the same time, nation-states find themselves less able to deal with the array of issues - some old, some new - that face them. States and their people, wishing to control their destinies, find they can do so only by working together with others. They must secure their future through commitment to common responsibility and shared effort.

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States remain primary actors but have to work with others. The United Nations must play a vital role, but it cannot do all the work. Global governance does not imply world government or world federalism. Effective global governance calls for a new vision, challenging people as well as governments to realize that there is no alternative to working together to create the kind of world they want for themselves and their children. It requires a strong commitment to democracy grounded in civil society.

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A great challenge to leadership today is to harmonize domestic demands

for national action and the compulsions of international co-operation. It is not a new challenge, but it has a new intensity as globalization diminishes the capacity to deliver at home and enlarges the need to combine efforts abroad. Enlightened leadership calls for a clear vision of solidarity in the true interest of national well-being - and for political courage in articulating the way the world has changed and why a new spirit of global neighbourhood must replace old notions of adversarial states in eternal confrontation.

In a real sense the global neighbourhood is the home of future generations; global governance is the prospect of making it better than it is today. But that hope would be a pious one were there not signs that future generations come to the task better equipped than their parents. They bring to the next century less of the baggage of old animosities and adversarial systems accumulated in the era of nation-states.

The new generation knows how close they stand to cataclysms unless they respect the limits of the natural order and care for the earth by sustaining its life-giving qualities. They have a deeper sense of solidarity as people of the planet than any generation before them. They are neighbours to a degree no other generation has been.

In this context, a new global architecture should have among its prominent features the following:

- 3a) a reinforcement of the spirit of the Charter of the UN through reform that equips it for the needs of 2020. Prominent among these is the reform of the Security Council to make it more representative and free of the dead hand of the veto;

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Reform of the Security Council is central to reforming the UN system. Permanent membership limited to five countries that derive their primacy from events fifty years ago is unacceptable; so is the veto. To add more permanent members and give them the veto would be regressive. We propose a process of reform in two stages.

First, a new class of five 'standing members' should be established to serve until the second stage of the reform process. We envisage two from industrial countries and one each from Africa, Asia, and Latin America. The number of non-permanent members should be raised from ten to thirteen, and the votes required for a decision of the Council from nine to fourteen. To facilitate the phasing out of the veto, the permanent members should enter into a concordat agreeing to forgo its use save in exceptional and overriding circumstance.

The second stage should be a full review of the membership of the Council, including these arrangements, around 2005, when the veto can be phased out, the position of the permanent members reviewed, and account taken of new circumstances - including the growing strength of regional bodies.

- 3b) A new global financial architecture is needed which establishes representative superintendence of the global economy, directed towards enlargement of social and economic justice worldwide. Neither existing international financial institutions nor the market can fulfil this essential function.

A Call to Action - pg. 13

The time is now ripe to build a global forum that can provide leadership in economic, social and environmental fields. This should be more representative than the Group of Seven or the Bretton Woods institutions, and more effective than the present UN system. We propose the establishment of an Economic Security Council (ESC) that would meet at high political level. It would have deliberative functions only; its influence will derive from the relevance and quality of its work and the significance of its membership.

The ESC's tasks would be to:

- *continuously assess the overall state of the world economy and the interaction between major policy areas;*
- *provide a long-term strategic policy framework in order to promote stable, balanced and sustainable development; and*
- *secure consistency between the policy goals of the major international organizations, particularly the Bretton Woods bodies and the World Trade Organization [WTO].*

The ESC should be established as a distinct body within the UN family, structured like the Security Council, though not with identical membership and independent of it.

- 3c) Larger participation of global civil society within the institutional architecture - both within a reformed UN system and new institutions outside it. The elements of enlightened protest that currently seek to be heard, however overwhelmed by elements that simply seek violence, must be brought into the councils of global policy-making.

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UN reform must reflect the realities of change, including the new capacity of civil society to contribute to global governance.

The General Assembly should be revitalized as a universal forum. Regular theme sessions, effective exercise of budgetary authority, and the streamlining of its agenda and procedures should be part of the process of revitalization. We also propose an annual Forum of Civil Society consisting of representatives or organizations to be accredited to the General Assembly as 'Civil Society Organization.' It should be convened in the General Assembly Hall sometime before the Annual Session of the Assembly. International civil society should itself be involved in determining its character and functions.

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For such a process to have the best prospect of securing agreement on a new system of global governance, there will need to be careful preparation. Civil society must be involved in the preparatory process, which should reach out to even wider sections of society than the processes leading up to recent world conferences. Many views must be examined, and many ideas allowed to contend..

- 3d) A much stronger institution must be designed charged with securing the survival of a planetary environment that will sustain human habitation with enforcement powers no less effective than those that pertain to preserving security in its conventional sense.

A Call to Action - pg. 15

The Trusteeship Council should be given a new mandate over the global commons in the context of concern for the security of the planet.

- 3e) There must be an authority to facilitate the provision of global resources for global needs. Not to achieve at the international level what tax revenue aims to provide at the national level will result in an architecture that is largely dysfunctional.

A Call to Action - pg. 14

It is time for a consensus on global taxation for servicing the needs of the global neighbourhood. A start must be made in establishing schemes of global financing of global purposes, including charges on the use of global resources such as flight-lanes, sea lanes, and ocean fishing areas and the collection of revenues agreed globally and implemented by treaty. An international tax on foreign currency transactions should be explored as one option, as should the creation of an international corporate tax base among multinational companies

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Whatever the dimensions of global governance, however renewed and enlarged its machinery, whatever values give it content, the quality of global governance depends ultimately on leadership. Throughout our work, we have been conscious of the degree to which the realization of our proposals depends on leadership of a high order at all levels.

As the world faces the need for enlightened responses to the challenges that arise on the eve of the new century, we are concerned at the lack of leadership over a wide spectrum of human affairs. At national, regional, and international levels, within communities and in international organizations, in government and in non-governmental bodies, the world needs credible and sustained leadership.,

It needs leadership that is proactive, not simply reactive, that is inspired, not simply functional, that looks to the longer term and future generations for whom the present is held in trust. It needs leaders made strong by vision, sustained by ethics and revealed by political courage

that looks beyond the next election.

This cannot be leadership confined within domestic walls. It must reach beyond country, race, religion, culture, language, life-style. It must embrace a wider human constituency, be infused with a sense of caring for others, a sense of responsibility to the global neighbourhood.

PART III

REFLECTIONS ON THE WAY FORWARD

In 1998, in advance of the Millennium Summit, the Commission had an assessment made of progress to date. The following was the conclusion then:

- Of the four substantive areas covered in the report, the security recommendations have had the best track record in terms of implementation. Clearly the Commissioners were attuned to the major arms control and disarmament movements in recent years, many of which have borne fruit. The biggest setback, from the Commission's perspective, has been the Security Council's retreat from peacekeeping responsibilities.
- The picture has been much more mixed on the economic recommendations. A number of suggestions for the WTO, IMF, and World Bank relating to trade, development, and debt have been at least partially implemented. On the other hand, movement on Agenda 21 has been modest, ODA is slipping, and the notion of an Economic Security Council has received mixed reviews at best.
- Many of the UN reform proposals have been debated and studied seriously during the inter-governmental deliberations and several have received positive attention (women, General Assembly budget authority, reviews of Regional Economic Commissions, UNCTAD, and UNIDO). There has been some progress on the appointment process for the Secretary-General, General Assembly themes, the Trusteeship Council, financial obligations, and coordination between the Second and Third Committees. The member states have wrestled intensively with a variety of proposals for reforming the Security Council. For all the progress that has been made on working methods, there has been remarkably little on composition or the veto. The suggestion for a right of petition and the creation of a Council for Petitioners apparently has not made headway.
- While there has obviously been substantial progress toward realizing an international criminal court, little has changed on the other international law ideas put forward by the Commission.

2. Despite the glimpses of progress, it was not overall a reassuring picture. The Millennium Summit, despite the Secretary-General's Report (*We, The Peoples*) calling for change in many areas, did not provide or result in a blueprint of a global architecture for the new century. Matters were to get worse as the US Presidential election in 2000 and political trends in the United States had produced setbacks in critical areas of international cooperation, such as weapons control and environmental protection. These setbacks both represent in themselves and contribute to an international climate unpropitious to multilateralism. If the Commission on Global Governance were working in 2001, it is likely that its Report would be more pessimistic than it was in 1995. The glass seemed half full then seems half empty now and, in truth, it is less full.

3. Accentuating the positive, however, account must be taken of the assertion by people worldwide of their disaffection with the international status quo and in particular, with the implications of liberalisation and globalisation for many of the world's people. However much the violence that marked international gatherings from Seattle to Genoa is rightly deplored, the protests represent a reality of which international leaders must take account. And that is beginning to happen. The prospects for more genuine progress towards democracy in international decision-making, whether on trade, international finance, the environment, AIDS, or drugs, are more encouraging. The large downside is in international security and the unravelling of post-war progress in weapons control.

4. The UN Secretary-General had called his Report to the Millennium Assembly '*We, The Peoples*.' The developments mentioned in the preceding paragraphs do not imply increasing ownership of global governance by the world's people. The very reverse. And this is a major area of disappointment - just when Civil Society seemed to be occupying more space in global affairs. It was an illusion. Global Civil Society has not occupied meaningful space in decision-making at either the national or global levels; and the fault does not lie entirely with governments, a few of whom have been serious about co-opting Civil Society into decision-making processes. '*We, the Peoples*' has remained a shibboleth. A global architecture for 2020 will have to be creative both in providing space for civil society and encouraging its occupation.

5. What this points to is the need for a new global architecture in which those more democratic processes can be nurtured. Some of this progress will have to come from existing institutions, eg. the WTO. In other cases, more radical reform may be required. The Security Council remains an area of weakness in the international system and it is a weakness (notably the dominance of the veto powers) that discourages progress in other areas. The fact that some are more equal than others in the central area of peace and security works against wider empowerment in other areas.

6. At least one new institution needs to be developed. The Commission on Global Governance called it an Economic Security Council. That might not have been the best name for it; but the concept was right: more democratic superintendence of the global economy. The reform of the Security Council would help progress in this direction too, but such progress cannot await Security Council reform. It has to be a central feature of a global architecture for 2020. The G8 appears to be recognising its powerlessness as a global directorate. Perhaps reform can begin in a more genuine way than so far attempted through its democratisation, ie, not the G8 consulting with others, but the G8 reconstituting itself by enlisting others. After all, if it is indeed powerless, it surrenders little in embracing change. If the Commission were working in 2001, I feel as well that it would have worked harder at institution building in relation to the environment. In 1995 it was valid to have had at least modest hope for the Commission on Sustainable Development and, as the years went on, such developments as the Kyoto Protocol (following on the earlier example of the Montreal Protocol) gave additional reason for hope. Now, with the Kyoto Protocol severely damaged, we need to think again of the environment in the context of a global architecture for 2020. The Commission had proposed restructuring the UN Trusteeship Council into a Council for the Environment. This idea repays further investigation.