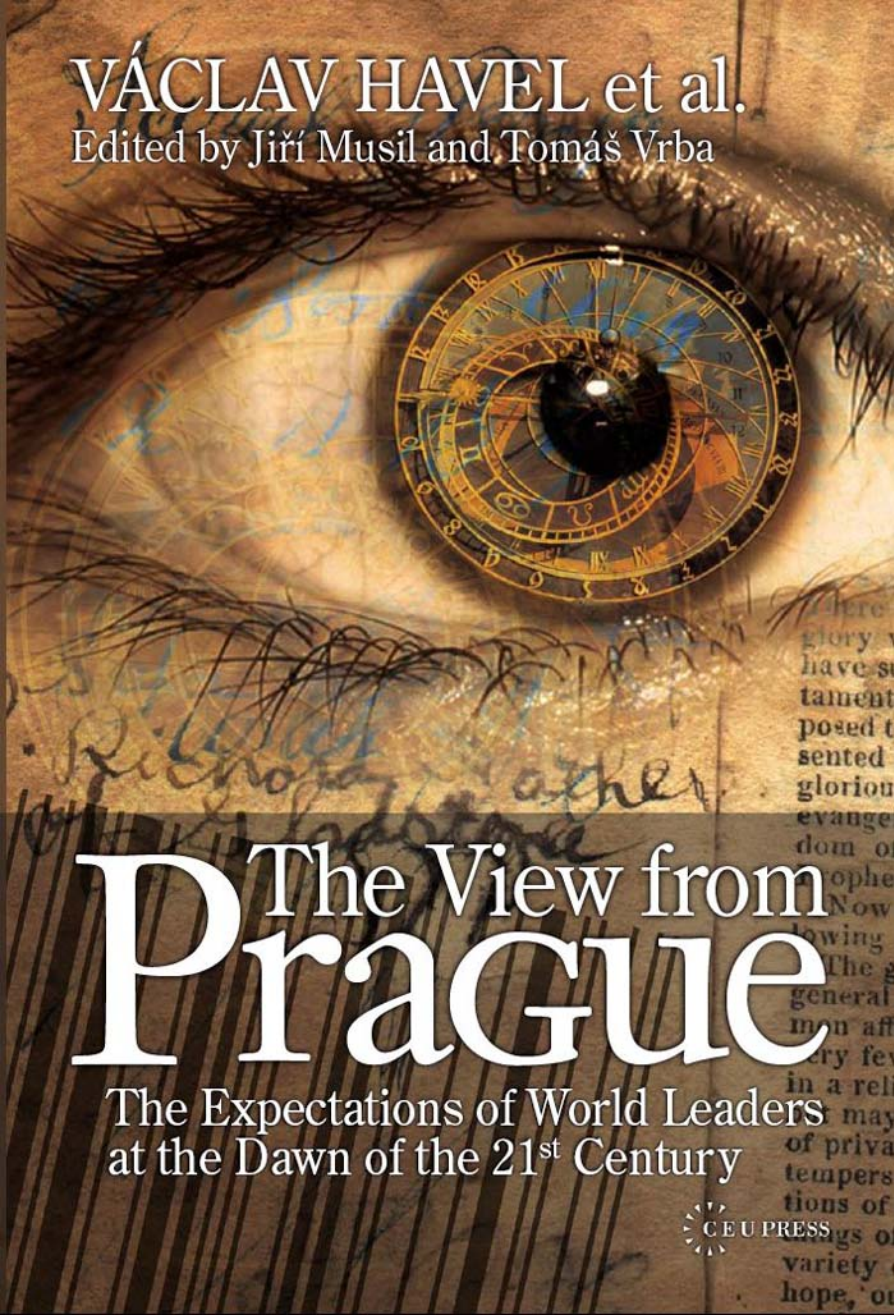
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The View from
PRAGUE
The Expectations of World Leaders
at the Dawn of the 21st Century
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# THE VIEW FROM PRAGUE

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*The Expectations of World Leaders at the Dawn of the 21st Century*

**Václav Havel** et al.

Edited by
Jiří Musil and Tomáš Vrba


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# Contents

# Editorial Note

This book is the result of the Forum 2000 conferences initiated by Václav Havel and Elie Wiesel, and which could not have been realized without the understanding and support of Yohei Sasakawa, Chairman of the Nippon Foundation of Japan. Since 1997 the conferences have taken place regularly every year in Prague. Our book is based mainly on the first five conferences which were held in the Spanish Hall of the Prague Castle. An important part of the conferences were also "The Multi-religious Reflections" that took place in St. Vitus Cathedral at the Prague Castle. After Václav Havel's presidential term ended, the Forum 2000 conferences continued—albeit in a more modest form—and since 2002 its location has moved from the Prague Castle to various halls of the city.

The Forum 2000 conferences have not been large-scale meetings of specialists or politicians seeking to address specific global problems, such as population growth, urbanization, environmental damage or the status of women. They have not been congresses on a single major topic, but rather assemblies of leading world figures—Nobel laureates, politicians who helped to achieve peaceful solutions to conflicts and wars, leading intellectuals and academics, as well as artists and writers—who exchanged views in a spirit of goodwill. Their common aim has been to identify links among the major issues of today and to look for ways to overcome or forestall the major threats facing humanity.

In its first part, the book presents two essays written by Václav Havel. The first one deals with spiritual preconditions for the global survival of humankind, and the second one is the quintessence of Havel's views on the world which we have inherited as well as his views on our hopes for the future. The book closes with Havel's per-

sonal reflection on the deeper meaning and aim of the Forum 2000 meetings.

The second part of the book deals with problems and visions of the world today as seen by the participants of Forum 2000. The chapters in this part analyze and interpret the ideas that were expressed by the speakers and interlocutors of the first five conferences in which they tried to identify and understand the primary issues facing mankind globally. Some of the studies, especially the essay on the state of the world economy, also used the insights of the conferences held after 2002, which were mainly concerned with socio-economic gaps between macro-regions of the planet.

The reconstruction of the ideas and visions of the Forum 2000 participants was made possible by the annually published *Conference Reports*. These reports, which contained verbatim transcripts of all keynote speeches, reactions of the panelists and interlocutors, offered a rich documentation of the opinions, ideas and visions of the invited intellectual and political world leaders. To transform this rich information into a condensed synopsis we have contacted a group of scholars and asked them for their reflections and observations on the main issues discussed. They were asked to summarize the main thoughts of the conferences, and to compare the ideas expressed on the Forum 2000 to mainstream contemporary thinking on globalization processes.

These rapporteur reflections deal with the main dimensions of globalization and with their synchronicities as well as asynchronicities. The chapters analyze and interpret the impact of globalization processes on societies and cultures, they analyze the transformation of religion in a globalizing world, political globalization, the state of the world economy and last, but not least, global environmental problems. The last chapter is written from the perspective of an observer who wishes to express the inclusive and complementary approach that we stress in our endeavor: the rationality of analysis and recognizing the importance of ideals.

All manuscripts were submitted by their authors in late summer 2005.

*Editorial Board of Forum 2000 Foundation*

# List of Contributors

VÁCLAV HAVEL is a former President of Czechoslovakia and the Czech Republic (1990–2003). Mr. Havel is a playwright, political activist, one of the first Spokespersons for Charter 77, and a leading figure of the 1989 Velvet Revolution. He is also the founding father of Forum 2000, which organizes major annual international conferences, roundtable debates, Students' Forums and other activities.

TOMÁŠ HALÍK is currently a professor of sociology at Charles University in Prague; he is a Czech Catholic priest and president of the Christian Academy in Prague. He has published several books on religion in contemporary societies. Among the most recent are *What is not Trembling is not Firm* (2002, Prague), *Addressing Zacheus* (2005, Prague) and *Invoking and Non-invoking* (2006, Prague). Mr. Halík has also taught at Oxford University, Cambridge University and a number of other respected academic institutions around the world. He is a leading figure in interfaith dialogue, and he organized "The Multi-religious Reflections" as a part of Forum 2000 conferences.

TAKEAKI HORI is an advisor to the President of the Nippon Foundation and closely cooperated with the Forum 2000 Foundation in Prague in organizing the Forum 2000 conferences. Mr. Hori is an economist and anthropologist and the author of several books about the South Pacific Islands and Oceania, to the list of best known belongs *Tuna and the Japanese: In Search of a Sustainable Ecosystem* (1996, Tokyo). Mr. Hori is a visiting professor at Charles University in Prague.

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VÁCLAV MEZŘICKÝ is a Czech ecologist. He is a Professor and Head of the Department of Environmental Law at Charles University in Prague and former Deputy Minister of the Ministry of Environment of the Czech Republic. Mr. Mezřický is author of many books on law, environment, etc. Among his most recent books are *Environmental Policy and Sustainable Growth* (2005, Prague), and *Globalization* (2003, Prague).

JIŘÍ MUSIL is a Professor of Sociology at Charles University, Prague. He was previously Academic Director of the Central European University in Prague, Professor at CEU Budapest, and functioned as the first director of the renewed Institute of Sociology of the Czech Academy of Sciences in Prague. In 1999, Mr. Musil was elected the president of the European Sociological Association. He has functioned as a consultant to the UN, UNESCO, IFHP and other international professional associations. He is author of the study *Fifty years of Urban Sociology in USA and Europe* (2003, Paris), co-author of *The Birth of Metropolis: Urbanization of Czech Lands and Europe* (2002, Prague), and editor of *End of Czechoslovakia* (1995, Budapest).

Jiří Pehe has been the Director of New York University in Prague since May 1999. From September 1997 until May 1999, he was Director of the Political Department of the Office of the President. Earlier he directed the Analysis Department at the Open Media Research Institute and Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty in Munich. In the years 1985–1988 he was chairman of the Department of East European studies at Freedom House in New York. A well known commentator of political and social events, he has published hundreds of articles and analytical studies, and he gives lectures on political science at New York University, Prague and at Charles University in Prague. He is also author of the book *The Tunnelled Democracy* (2002, Prague).

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# *How the Idea of Forum 2000 Emerged*

*The idea of organizing a meeting of the "wise" in various fields of human endeavor and from various parts of the planet to reflect on the state of the world emerged in the second half of the 1990s. It was linked with two names: Václav Havel and Elie Wiesel.*

*As President of the Czech Republic and a well-known European intellectual, Václav Havel was often invited in the second half of the 1990s to visit various countries on every continent. In 1995 and 1996, he visited Australia, New Zealand, the United States, Japan and Brazil. In speeches delivered during these visits, Václav Havel more and more frequently reflected on the new situation in the world after the disintegration of its bi-polar configuration, which provided a certain stability, in spite of all the problems it posed. After the collapse of Communism and the disintegration of power in the Soviet bloc, a new configuration arose that brought with it new, as yet unknown, global problems. The new situation was also the result of major technological and economic changes occurring from the 1970s onwards. In the early 1990's many people, including politicians, had not, however, realized their significance.*

*In a speech entitled "The Future of Hope" delivered in Hiroshima, Japan, in December 1995—fifty years after the dropping of the atomic bomb on the city—Václav Havel very clearly stated his conviction that the world was once again under threat. This threat was derived from the conflict of civilizational or cultural or religious groups, not from what is termed "the clash of civilizations." He posed very clearly the question of how to face the new growing danger:*

> What kind of world order, what system of global cooperation should we build to avert the danger that our grandchildren may

> experience horrors far more dreadful than World War II, whose end we are now commemorating after fifty years? How can we avoid the possibility of new Hiroshimas?[1]

*Without minimizing the significance of efforts to avert this threat with the aid of political institutions, treaties and agreements, in Hiroshima he emphasized very clearly the need for a deeper foundation, which would allow humanity to avoid major conflicts and wars. This foundation is the awakening of a general responsibility built on the awareness that* "…the key to solid human coexistence, and to a life that does not become a hell on the earth, lies in respect for what infinitely transcends us, for what I call the miracle of Being."[2] *He also reflected on* "…the necessity to proceed much more forcefully than before, to reveal and identify that which unites us rather than that which divides us. It is in this that I see the principal challenge for the coming century and the coming millennium."[3]

*It was significant that Elie Wiesel and Václav Havel met in Hiroshima in 1995. They were aware of the alarming signs of new conflicts in the world and recognized, in a very similar way, the responsibility of intellectuals and politicians for the fate of the world. Havel's own words most clearly describe the birth of the whole concept:*

> The idea of holding an event like this came about for the first time in a conversation with Elie Wiesel, in Hiroshima, where we met while attending another conference. Quite soon thereafter we established contact with Mr. Yohei Sasakawa, without whose participation at an intellectual, organizational as well as material level, these Conferences could not have existed."[4]

*The idea of holding the Forum 2000 conference in Prague was fleshed out in the spring of 1996. In the summer of 1996, Václav Havel organized two meetings of like-minded Czech intellectuals and politicians at his country*

1 From the lecture "The Future of Hope" given on 5 December 1995 in Hiroshima, in: Václav Havel (1996) *Václav Havel 1995,* Prague and Litomyšl: Paseka, p. 179.

2 Ibid., p. 180.

3 Ibid., p. 181.

4 See Václav Havel's "Why Forum 2000?" at the end of this publication.

*house at Hrádeček where he explained what Forum 2000 was intended to be. Fairly quickly a planning committee, cooperating closely with the Office of the President of the Republic, was set up to organize the conference. At first it was assumed that there would be only one conference, but the success of the first conference in 1997 changed the original project. Forum 2000 became a series of continuing conferences.*

*Today, ten years after the first Forum 2000 conference, when we can already look at the first annual reports with hindsight, it is evident that they represent important historical material, capturing the state of mind of an influential group of people. The conferences took place at a pivotal time, when the optimism inspired by the collapse of the authoritarian systems in Central and Eastern Europe was already fading, and fears for the future were not yet as strong as they are today. The terrorist attack on the World Trade Center in New York occurred shortly before the last of the introductory series of five major Forum 2000 conferences. This necessarily marked its course and also the declaration that marked the end of the first series of the conferences. It must, however, be emphasized that the financial crisis in Asia in 1998, the bloody massacre carried out by the Taliban in Mazar-i-Sharif in Afghanistan, the war in Kosovo, the bombing of Belgrade, the democratic revolution in Yugoslavia, and a series of other events throughout the whole period of the Forum 2000 conferences signaled that the world already found itself amid new tensions and conflicts capable of provoking a new global catastrophe in the future.*

*The present publication seeks to document how leading world intellectuals, scientists, religious leaders and politicians, both from Europe and North America, Australia, and from Asia, Latin America and Africa, reacted to this reality. A deeper level of our work consists in the effort to understand the diverse reactions to the present state of the world on the part of thinkers representing the world's main religions, which still form the foundation of the major cultural regions of today's world. In this respect we follow Max Weber's tradition of understanding the role of religion in structuring the human values that shape the conduct of people in the political sphere as well as in the economy.*

*Despite the efforts of the majority of conference participants to seek what major cultural and civilizational groups on the planet have in common, we could not overlook the fact that even they saw the world we live in today as a place full of serious social, economic, cultural and political tensions. This situation, in our assessment, illustrates how justified were the fears of conflicts*

*between the various civilizational and cultural groups in the world which Václav Havel and other participants of Forum 2000 conferences expressed.*

*In brief, the publication wishes to be a contribution to the historiography and sociology of ideas at the end of the 20th century/beginning of the 21st century and to add to the understanding of the political implications of the ideational conflicts that have been identified. It wishes, also, to demonstrate another phenomenon of our time, the speed of cultural and social changes that accompany the globalizing societies of our planet as a result of one of the deepest transformations it has ever gone through. In a period characterized by rapid change in almost all the numerous spheres of the lives of the often unsettled and, moreover, manipulable masses of the population, it is especially important to understand the ideas and suggestions for resolving the contemporary problems of the world which guided two significant groups of persons in their reflections and activities: on the one hand, those who reflect systematically on these issues as intellectuals, and on the other hand, those who have had personal experience of acting as politicians in countries beset by dramatic and often bloody conflicts.*

*Time proceeds at a relentless pace, particularly nowadays. Nonetheless, efforts to grasp the major outlines of contemporary history are justified, albeit highly risky. This volume is just such an attempt. It seeks, in an analytical fashion, to present a picture of how the world was perceived by a group of people whose thinking helped change it, or whose activity has influenced developments. Before long this book will be evidence of their foresight or their misapprehension.*

*Jiří Musil and Takeaki Hori*

# Part I.

## Our World

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# Spiritual Preconditions for Our Common Global Survival

*Václav Havel*

We live now—for the very first time in human history—in an era when our planet is enveloped by a single civilization. Virtually the entire population is connected by the myriad links of communication and contact, shared models of behavior, habits, trading patterns, and so forth. The roots of this modern civilization lie in Europe; it is there that its spiritual foundations began to evolve through an amalgamation of the classical tradition with Jewish and Christian spirituality. This civilization, developed over two millennia, has embraced the concepts of historicity, progress, development, searching and discovery. It has brought forth the belief that humanity is the master of this world, capable of rationally describing and controlling it. Furthermore, it has demonstrated an underlying concept of expansion and conquest. This particular feature of the European, and later Euro-American, civilization has manifested itself in various ways over the course of time. But regardless of precisely how expansion took place, one thing is clear: this civilization did not blanket the world by a historical accident or coincidence. Rather, expansion is part of its essence.

The present civilization has, as we all know, a thousand advantages. It has enabled humanity to enjoy numerous achievements—from the incredible advancement of science and technology, augmenting the range of human knowledge at an amazing pace and enhancing certain aspects of what may be called the comforts of life, to the cultivation of coexistence, as it has been embodied in the modern concept of human rights and democracy. At the same time, however, certain aspects and results are in fact problematical. Humanity appears to be irrevocably losing what various civilizations previously have had—a link with the eternal

and the infinite, and a resultant sense of humility and responsibility, a relationship to the world as a whole, to its metaphysical order, to the miracle of creation, to the Earth, to the universe, to our own future and to the mystery into which we have been thrust.

Disastrous outcomes of modern civilization's deficiencies can already be seen in a variety of dangers—from environmental, social, demographic and cultural threats, to such ills as terrorism, drugs or depersonalization in today's gigantic cities. Libraries brim with information about these threats, offering horrifying analyses and even more horrifying prognoses. Thousands of conferences, including United Nations summits, have been convened to deal with them. Numerous technical or systemic proposals seek to confront these menaces. And yet, there is still little hope of fundamental change.

Oddly enough, modern humanity seems to embody an essential inconsistency: while our cognitive capacity allows us to clearly see the dangers facing the human race, our ability or our readiness to combat these dangers in a truly resolute fashion and on a global scale is very limited.

We have, then, two possible courses of action.

We can take an ostrich-like approach, disregarding the long-term global problems in the hope that they will have no fatal effects within our lifetime and concerning ourselves instead with just today and tomorrow, or—when we happen to be politicians—with our momentary image on television or with our chance of winning the next elections. We can dismiss the warning appeals or questions of those who are worried with a simple answer: that modern science will undoubtedly produce new achievements to solve these problems.

The other alternative is to give the situation truly serious consideration, risking the outcome that our thoughts or warnings may go unheeded.

For my part, I advocate the latter course. This is actually one of the reasons I have been dealing with this subject, trying time and again—to the extent of my limited powers—to stir the stagnant waters of apathy that surround me. And this is what has determined the main theme of my deliberation: What can be done? Why has so little been done so far? Where should we start?

A voice that wants to make a serious impression in the present circumstance is most likely to succeed when it has a scientific background. All the proposed solutions to the fundamental problems of the present

civilization have therefore been of a largely technical or systemic nature, and considerable ingenuity has gone into devising sophisticated procedures. These could perhaps work—if it were not for the fact that nobody puts them into practice. Their application is hindered by the modern way of life itself. There is not enough readiness to pursue solutions that go counter either to the established habits or the immediate interests of people, nations, communities, corporations or various lobbies. Whenever we inquire into these problems, trying to identify the possibilities for responding and the reasons why no one is trying, we always wind up against a hopeless lack of will and inner urge to act, that is, against barriers in the realm of human awareness or mentality.

This has increasingly convinced me that a change of course is impossible unless something begins to change in human minds, in humanity's attitude toward the world and the values of life, in our ways of thinking and our perception of responsibility. Only this kind of change can generate the will to change our behavior and, eventually, to undertake the systemic changes as well. However, I am far from objecting to the kind of systemic changes that are now proposed. I am just saying that they can be implemented only as a result of a more profound phenomenon—a change in the way humanity views life. That, unfortunately, cannot be done through even the best technical tricks, administrative measures or systemic reforms.

I simply feel that the one thing that can avert the various impending disasters facing our civilization at the beginning of the third millennium A.D. is profound change, or even a revolution in the realm of the human mind. If such change is to be truly effective today it must be global and universal.

We can only speculate about the nature of such change and the circumstances that may bring it into being. Nevertheless, let me point out where I see an avenue that may possibly make it happen.

Today's civilization envelops indeed the whole planet, thus allowing us to see the same products, the same ads, the same TV series, and branches of the same transnational banks or giant corporations nearly everywhere. International pop music is heard wherever we go, and the young people wear the same jeans. All this, however, is but a thin and recent veneer. Underneath it we find multiple layers of diverse cultural, social and political traditions formed in different areas in the thousands of years when those different worlds had minimal contact.

Our contemporary civilization could thus be compared to a common room in which we are doomed to live together, but which does not change the fact that each of us is a different being. More than that: as we become more numerous, and the conforming pressure of our civilization increases, we seem to be ever more irritated by others' dissimilarities, feeling an ever greater urge to defend our individuality against all that may tend to dissolve it in some cosmopolitan sauce—or even against anything that is simply different. Such sentiments, combined with rapid population growth, lead many to see an enormous threat in the conflict between different cultures, religious worlds or spheres of civilization, or a whole cascade of conflicts among nations. In other words: parallel to the process of global unification in today's civilization, there is an opposite development unfolding simultaneously: nations and whole regions are reawaking and asserting anew, often quite aggressively, their own ways of life, their unique identity, their traditions, their history, their deities, their habits, their cultures. We may say that the closer our proximity, and the more evident it is that we are all in the same boat, the more vexed we become with one another. Moreover, the common civilization that so dangerously presses us together, provoking the mutual animosities, offers us at the same time the most miraculous modern weapons and makes them widely available.

A way out must therefore consist in a change in the realm of mentality. Such a change must not attempt to impose forcibly one form of spirituality upon everyone else, as it happened in the pursuit of the conquest of America and the spread of Christianity. It must respect the individuality of all different spiritual, religious and cultural traditions.

It is a fact: we are heading irreversibly into a multicultural and multipolar world. Those who do not understand that understand nothing.

But is any regeneration of the human race, revolution in human thought or renaissance of humanity's sense of responsibility at all thinkable in such a multifarious and multicultural world?

In my free time I enjoy reading books about the origins of humanity, about the most ancient times of humankind and the earliest religiosity, which dates further back than was believed until recently, and about the history of the different religions. Both this reading and my visits to the various continents have strengthened my feeling that the roots or the points of departure of the different religions are in fact much closer to one another than they may appear to be today.

Whatever the different gods look and act like, and whatever rituals or magic people use to approach them, we always find in the deepest roots of all beliefs and religions one and the same thing: they remind us that we are neither the supreme nor the most powerful of all creatures and that the world has a mysterious order of its own which infinitely transcends us and which we should respect. Within this order, everything is recorded in some mysterious fashion, so that nothing once done can be undone. Somewhere beyond our horizon everything is tested for its true worth; we should therefore act responsibly even when no one sees us, and also with regard to posterity.

All religions, the most ancient ones especially, command us to honor the earth on which we live and not to tamper arbitrarily with its endless and manifold riches. These constitute—as today's ecologists would say—a single interconnected system in which interference with any of its parts, even one that may appear isolated, could cause irreparable damage to the whole.

All religions have embraced the principle of guilt and punishment, that is, the idea that if humans violate the god-given order they will eventually have to pay for it. This awareness of a higher will and higher order, the notion of good and evil forces, as well as many other widespread religious or cultural thoughts, often enshrined in myths or fairy tales, reflect humanity's deepest archetypal experience of the world and of ourselves. Likewise, the whole moral order—the basis for any possible human coexistence—draws from the many different religions or ethical codes, written or unwritten, very similar points of departure and very similar imperatives: that we should respect the authority of the order of the universe, and of the creatures who embody this order, and that we should not defy their will; that we should honor the family and love our fellow humans; that we should not kill, lie or steal; that a guest coming with good intentions should be given a friendly reception; that self-denial is preferable to self-indulgence; that humans do not live on bread alone, and so on.

For the reasons I mentioned above and many others, emphasis is often placed on the differences between individual religions and cultures rather than on that which they share. Different names of gods, different liturgies, rituals or habits have sparked countless local conflicts or wars, while attempts at multi-religious dialogue are largely confined to the domain of intellectuals.

But if humankind's only way out of this narrow pass is a far-reaching spiritual regeneration, it must now be a universal regeneration, based on respect for the different religious worlds and emanating from what is common to them all.

It just seems to me that it no longer suffices to seek political reconciliation between people of different denominations or to try to find keys to the future among the instruments of the technical civilization and offer these keys to the various cultures. Nor can we simply copy the expansion of the European, and later Euro-American spirit, set of values, lifestyle and vigor that characterized the birth of this civilization. I am deeply convinced that we must take another course. We should look for the common roots of human spirituality and religiosity, undertake a new reflection of the moral order in them and try to translate the universal moral imperatives of that order into the jointly accepted standards and rules of human coexistence.

It is necessary to restore humanity's sense of responsibility for this world, and this responsibility must have a metaphysical anchor.

Never again will those endeavors be successful which were regarded as forceful imposition of one's own god upon those of other faiths. They can succeed only when people have understood—to put it very simply—that they all have one God, though He may have a thousand faces, and that their duty is not to convert those who call Him differently, but to respect those different names as well.

You undoubtedly expect me to project these general thoughts into some concrete political suggestions. You may be disappointed, because what I am putting down about their political consequences is also rather general.

1) I believe that the international community should finally say in no uncertain terms that the world is no longer, and will never be again, a sphere of interest of one or two or three great powers but a multicultural and multi-polar community in which all must be equal, work together on matters of global concern and jointly confront the common threats.

2) The principles and rules of such cooperation should be based on a "common minimum," that is, on humanity's attitude toward ourselves, our fellow humans, the society, the Earth and the world that are shared by all the traditions of culture and civilization that make up the spiritual wealth of the human race today. This means, among other things, that

the interests of all, and of future generations, must not forever take second place to particular interests or immediate preoccupations.

3) These traditions give rise to a general moral order and a sense of responsibility for this world. That, in turn, brings forth many other things: commitment to environmental protection, to social justice, to cultural equality as well as to the agreed standards of human rights and norms of democratic order.

4) The future order of the world should systematically foster association of states and nations on a footing of equality in regional groupings that would constitute a natural bridge between national states and the world community. Such regional alliances must be absolutely equal and must have a chance to cooperate as such, according to the rules which they have agreed to observe.

5) All this should spark a speedy fundamental reform of the United Nations that would provide for adequately proportioned representation of the different continents and spheres of civilization in UN bodies, rid the organization of excessive bureaucracy and enhance its power. The UN should become truly an organization of the people of this planet rather than a domain of governments. It should be able to adopt universally binding norms generated by a sense of global responsibility and have effective instruments to enforce these norms in the public interest.

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# The World We Have Inherited, Our World Today, and Hopes for the Future

(Opening Speech of the Forum 2000 Conference in 1997)

*Václav Havel*

Our conference follows a series of similar events organized over the years by the foundation established by Marion and Elie Wiesel, some of which I had the honor of attending; it also, however, has unique and individual features distinguishing it somewhat from the mentioned series. I am hinting not only at the items on its agenda, not only at the external framework of the conference and accompanying events, not only at its ambition to establish a certain tradition, but mainly at the circle of its guests. Invitations to this conference have been sent out to about 100 prominent personalities from public life: philosophers, political scientists, politicians, scientists, religious authorities and intellectuals from all cultural regions or areas of civilization in the contemporary world. Of course, not all the invited have been able to attend. Nevertheless, I think that those of you who did find time to travel to Prague are a truly brilliant sample of the people who, on this planet, are engaged in the most fundamental questions of its destiny.

Before I assume the part of a keen listener to your debate, I shall try to outline in a brief, and indeed rather simplified, manner my personal expectations of this conference. Humankind today is well aware of the varied spectrum of threats looming over its head. We know that the number of people living on our planet is growing at a soaring rate and that within a relatively short time we can expect it to number tens of billions. We know that it will be almost impossible to feed so many people. We know that the already deep abyss separating the planet's poor and rich could deepen further, and dangerously, because of this rapid population growth. We know how difficult it will be for people of various nationalities and cultures to coexist crowded so dramatically

together, and we know how many different kinds of conflicts such a situation can prompt.

It is also a commonly known fact that modern humankind has been destroying the environment on which its existence depends, that it is ever faster exhausting non-renewable sources of energy and other riches of this planet, that its activities are contributing to global warming, to the build-up of the greenhouse effect, to the enlargement of the holes in the ozone layer, and that it is disturbing the balance of all eco-systems. We all know, too, about the danger into which humankind is hurling itself by developing, producing and proliferating nuclear weapons and weapons of mass destruction in general. And finally, we all know about the current, and the expected future rise of social problems, crime, drug abuse, and various forms of human alienation and frustration, in the event of the further concentration of people in large agglomerations, destroying natural human communities and bonds. Any one of us could certainly go on listing similar threats for a long time, describing them in more detail and in rich colors, explaining how deeply they are entwined. Hundreds of books have been written about these threats; some have even become topics of expensive global summits.

I see a large, yet typical, paradox for our era in the fact that although contemporary humanity has been aware of these dangers, it does almost nothing to confront or avert them. It is fascinating how preoccupied people are today with all kinds of catastrophic prognoses. How common it is for titles containing impressive evidence of the disasters into which we are tumbling headlong to become best-sellers? Yet people take very little account of these disasters in their everyday activities. For so many years now this warning data has been taught in schools and yet the effect of this knowledge on human behavior is so small!

Does not every school-child today know that the resources of this planet are limited and that if they are exhausted faster than they are recovered, this would mean we could not but be doomed? And still we continue in our ways and, moreover, we do not even seem perturbed. Quite the contrary. Rising production, and therefore also consumption, is sensed as the main sign of the success of a state, and not only of poor states where such feelings could be justified, but also of the wealthy ones, cutting the branch on which they are sitting by their ideology of stupidly indefinite and senseless growth.

It seems to me that what is critical now is not to point out again and again such horrors that may be lying in wait unless our global civilization changes its essential direction. Today the most important thing, in my view, is to study the reasons why humankind does nothing to avert the threats about which it knows so much, and why it allows itself to be carried onward by some kind of perpetual motion—basically unaffected by self-awareness or a sense of future options and, as it seems, virtually incapable of being affected.

I believe and hope that our conference will touch on this topic. Indeed, the prerequisite of any change for the better is first to correctly identify the situation that needs to be changed and then to analyze its causes.

It would be unfair, of course, to deny the existence of numerous projects designed to avert this danger or to limit it, as well as the fact that a lot has been done for the implementation of such projects. However, all attempts of this kind have one thing in common—they do not touch at all the basic trends of development from which sprout the threats I am speaking of, but merely regulate their impact using technical or administrative instruments. A typical example of such instruments are legal acts, ordinances or international treaties stipulating how much toxic matter this or that product may contain, or how much toxic waste this or that plant may discharge into the environment. I am not criticizing these types of standards or safeguards against any type of threat. Quite the opposite, I am glad that something like this is being done at all. I claim only that these are technical tricks reducing the unfavorable impact of other techniques—without, however, such regulatory activity having any effect on the substance of the matter.

What then is the substance of the matter? What indeed could change the tendencies of today's civilization? What could really stop the perpetual motion that we have not been able to control so far?

It is my deep conviction that the only option is for something to change in the sphere of the spirit, in the sphere of human conscience, in the actual attitude of man towards the world and his understanding of himself and his place in the overall order of existence. It cannot suffice to invent new machines, new regulations, new institutions. It is necessary to understand differently and more perfectly the true purpose of our existence on this earth, and of our deeds. Only such a new un-

derstanding will allow the development of new models of behavior, new scales of values and objectives in life, and through these means finally bind a new spirit and new meaning also to the specific regulations, treaties and institutions.

In short, it appears to me that it would be better to start from the head rather than the tail.

It would be welcome, of course, to hear whether you share this conviction of mine or perhaps, relying on your life experience, your knowledge and your beliefs or faith, what further and more specific points you would like to add to this topic.

One of the reasons I believe that a true and essential turn for the better can derive only from changes in the sphere of the spirit arises from an observation of mine. Whenever I encounter any kind of deeper problem of civilization anywhere in the world—be it the logging of rain forests, ethnic or religious intolerance or the brutal destruction of a cultural landscape which had taken centuries to develop—somewhere at the end of the long chain of causes that gave rise to the problem at issue I always find one and the same reason: a lack of accountability to the world and responsibility for it.

There are countless types of responsibility, perceived as either more or less pressing, many of which vary naturally among individuals. We feel responsible to ourselves or for ourselves, for our health, our performance, our welfare; we feel responsible for our families, our companies, our communities, our professions, political parties, churches, regions, nations or countries; and somewhere in the background of all these feelings of responsibility there is, in every one of us, a small feeling of responsibility for the world as a whole and for its future. Don't we all feel that the world does not end at the moment of our death and that it is wrong to act as if we do not care if the floods come after we are gone? Nevertheless, it seems to me that this last and deepest responsibility, that is responsibility for the world, is very low for a number of reasons and is actually dangerously low against the background of the fact that the world today is a more interlinked place than ever before in history—and that we are de facto living one global destiny and that almost anything that happens anywhere in the world may, in one way or another, affect the lives of us all.

And yet we live in a world that seems to legitimize very strongly all kinds of possible and impossible particular interests yet seems unable

to properly legitimize universal interests, those which reach beyond the framework of the family, company, party, state or current generation, namely those interests that could be expected to dominate in today's globally networked world, one threatened by a multiplicity of civilizations. Those who pursue such interests—not superficially and only verbally, but truly sincerely—are today being pushed more obviously to the margins of society as idealists standing apart from the real state of affairs.

The current world is dominated by several great religious systems whose differences seem to be coming increasingly to the fore, forming the background to many real or potential political and armed conflicts in the present and future. In my opinion this fact, which is understandably attracting the concerned attention of all observers, somewhat conceals a considerably more substantial circumstance—the contemporary global civilization inside which the tension within the areas of individual religion is taking place is, in essence, a deeply atheistic one. Indeed, it is to date the first atheistic civilization in the history of humankind. Simultaneously, it is the first civilization that embraces the whole planet.

The reason I am stressing this fact at this moment is, I hope, obvious: the atheistic nature of this civilization coincides deeply, I believe, with the hypertrophic pursuit of individual interests and individual responsibilities together with the crisis of global responsibilities. Could the fact that humanity thinks only within the limits of what lies in its field of vision and is incapable of remembering also what lies beyond, whether in the temporal or spatial sense, not be the result of a loss of metaphysical certitude, of vanishing points and horizons?

Could not the whole nature of the current civilization—with its short-sightedness, with its proud emphasis on the human individual as the crown of all creation and its master, and with its boundless trust in humanity's ability to embrace the universe by rational cognition, could it not all be but the natural manifestation of a phenomenon which, in simple terms, amounts to the loss of God? Or, more specifically, the loss of respect towards the order of existence of which we are not the creators but mere components, to the mysterious inherent meaning or spirit of this order, to its memory capable of not only recording that part of our deeds concealed from others but of recording it for eternity, that is of evaluating our deeds from the point of view of eternity?

Could it not be that the issue is a crisis of respect for the moral order extended to us from above, or simply a crisis of respect for any kind of authority higher than our own earthly being, with its material and thoroughly ephemeral earthly interests? Succinctly, could not the crisis of responsibility and accountability for the world as a whole, and for its future, be but the logical consequence of the modern conception of the world as a complex of phenomena controlled by certain scientifically identifiable laws, formulated for God knows what purpose—that is, a conception that does not question the meaning of existence and renounces any kind of metaphysics or any kind of metaphysical roots of its own?

I have been thinking about the basic questions and paradoxes of contemporary civilization for many years and in recent times I have even had the opportunity of encountering different aspects of these issues in various countries on all continents. And without my view being burdened a priori by any kind of paradigm, I have become repeatedly and increasingly convinced of the validity of that which I have just outlined. It is for this reason that I shall be especially interested in the views of this assembly of wise people, to see how they either refute, or on the other hand supplement, my convictions.

To put it simply, amongst other things, I expect this conference to give me and many others an answer to the question as to whether I am right or mistaken in thinking that the crisis of much needed global responsibility is in principle due to the fact that we have lost the certainty that the universe, nature, existence and our lives are the work of creation guided by a definite intention, that it has a definite meaning and follows a definite purpose, and, together with this certainty, also lost all and every humility towards what reaches beyond us and surrounds us. This loss is, of course, accompanied by the loss of the feeling that whatever we do must be subjected to a regard for a higher order, of which we are part, and to a respect for an authority in whose field of vision every one of us is permanently present.

I have mentioned that the image of today's world reflects the predominance of several great religious systems which are playing an increasingly important role—or, rather, whose mutual "otherness" seems to be becoming increasingly important, and that many people actually perceive a conflict between these different religious worlds as one of the threats humankind will encounter in the future.

Yes, after the fall of the colonial system and the end of the bipolar division of the world, and due to the population boom, and the growing self-confidence and influence of various countries and continents lying outside the limits of the hitherto dominant Euro-American sphere of civilization, humankind is actually entering a world whose characteristic features are multi-polarity and multiculturalism. So far it would seem that the more tied the various civilizations and cultural and religious groups are by the bonds of a single global civilization—unavoidably exerting a unifying influence—the more they try to confront such a grip by emphasizing their sovereignty, inalienable identity, specificity, or simply things by which they differ from the circle of the other groups, as if one lived in an epoch of accentuated spiritual, religious and cultural "otherness." This growing accent is indeed another large threat to this world.

But how can we restore in the human mind a shared attitude to what is above, if people everywhere have a different image of that which is above and everywhere feel the need to stress "otherness"? Is there any sense in trying to turn the human mind to the heavens when such a turn would only aggravate the conflict among our various deities?

Of course, I am not an expert on the various religions, but from all I know about the main ones, learning about them over time and from direct contact with them, I have gained the indelible impression that they have much more in common than they admit or are willing to admit. From the basic point of departure—that is, that this world and our existence here are not a freak chance of little meaning but are part of a mysterious, yet integral, act whose sources, direction and purpose are difficult for us to perceive in their entirety—to the large complex of moral imperatives the act applies in addressing us, it is surprising that all this seems to unite the various religious systems. While the specific aspects of their traditions, accents, liturgies and interpretations remain, in my view, immensely important, they are not a dominant factor. What, on the other hand, does dominate is the similarity in what the various religions ask of us, as human beings, or how they perceive us.

The last but perhaps most important question I would like to ask is whether a way out of the current bleak situation could not be found in the actual search for what unites the various religions and cultures, in the search for common sources, principles, certitude, aspirations and imperatives, a purposeful search; and then, applying means adequate to

the needs of our time, to cultivate all matters of human co-existence and endeavor as well as the treatment of the planet on which it is our destiny to live, and to suffuse it all with the spirit of what I wish to call, with your permission, the common spiritual and moral minimum.

Do you suppose this might be a way to stop that blind perpetual motion dragging us into hell, or would it seem to you to be unrealistic and naive? Can you conceive that such a general and universal recovery of the human spirit and human responsibility for the world, such an—as I once called it—"existential revolution," could be provoked only by some unprecedented shock or disaster, or is it within the power of wise people to bring it about by their own will and by joining their forces without the need for any appalling impulse from the outside? Can you imagine that the convincing words of wise people would be enough to achieve what has been described, or would we need, like in the past, charismatic prophets or modern messiahs, or even some kind of historical miracle?

Distinguished friends, I would be very surprised if any two of you were to give an identical answer to the several, very general questions I have posed here. It is not, however, our purpose to reach an agreement on something of neutral content, or on a compromise, and then to issue that as a joint manifesto nobody would bother to read because it is too vague. We can bravely leave that procedure to official conferences and summits. The agenda of this assembly is different: an opportunity for its participants—and they truly are a varied group—to express, in the most original and interesting way possible, their own views of the issues that are undoubtedly of concern to us all, and to turn the mutual exchange and confrontation of these views into a true forum, a forum as a space where people reflect on matters concerning everybody, and discuss them.

Thank you for listening, and I wish us all a successful meeting. I also wish you a pleasant stay in Prague and hope you will absorb some of its special atmosphere—let it be an enrichment for you, at least to the same extent that your presence here and the ideas you voice enrich my fellow citizens.

# Part II.

## Confronting International Discourse on Globalization: Problems and Visions of Our World Today as Seen by the Participiants of the Forum 2000 Conferences

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# The Importance of Context

*Jiří Musil*

## Introduction

It was President Václav Havel's intention that the first Forum 2000 conference in 1997 should bring together internationally eminent people at Prague Castle to reflect on the world we have inherited and now inhabit, and also on its future hopes. It was to be an attempt to take stock of the past, to review the present state of the world and sketch out hopes for its future. The very first conference was attended by world politicians who had helped to resolve conflicts in various parts of the world, alongside eminent scholars and writers—many of them holders of Nobel Prizes—as well as representatives of the world's religions. It was clear from the outset that the emphasis would be placed on the spiritual, cultural, ethical, social, environmental and political dimensions of the global situation. The majority of participants shared an awareness of the risk of new tension and destructive conflicts if the economic and technological linkage of different parts of the world did not go hand in hand with the shaping of common global moral values and rules of mutual relations.

By no means, however, did the conference seek to avoid discussion of the sharp economic, technological and political conflicts around the world now or in the future. Nevertheless, it was obvious that the Prague conferences were not to be specialized scientific meetings to solve difficult economic questions of global dimensions. On the other hand, it also emerged that economic and technological changes, tensions and conflicts could not be entirely neglected in discussions about the spiritual and cultural state of the world. The present author is also convinced that many of the world's key social problems, particularly the growing discrepancies between the rich and poor countries of the world, are the result of certain economic policies.

At the same time we would like to emphasize that economic and social relations are increasingly assuming a semantic character. The consequences of our cooperation and conflicts are more and more dependent on the expression of their significance and meaning, and also on how that significance and meaning are interpreted. Thus international agreements, disagreements and conflicts are increasingly an expression of efforts to master the language and issues that we use to understand the world and intervene in it. In this respect "culture matters" more and more these days as asserted in the title of a recent book by Lawrence E. Harrison and Samuel P. Huntington.[1]

From the first conference in 1997 it was equally clear that we must deal not only with harmony in our world but also tension and conflicts. And we also approached the future of the world as an open issue, aware of all the contradictions and dilemmas in the world, but also the responsibilities and possibilities. And in that respect the Forum 2000 conferences were based on the conviction—albeit not always explicitly stated—that the nature of the future will largely depend on mutual understanding among the major world cultures and civilizations, the mutual relationship of the world's religions and a recognition of the common as well as the conflicting and distinct moral bases of the great cultures and religions. We realized that in the complex situation of today's world, in which there is a global dearth of great politicians or thinkers, an academic perception of the situation was not enough. It was thanks to Václav Havel and his opening address at the 1997 conference that Forum 2000 and its participants strove for more than just a diagnosis of the state of the world. Many of them put forward creative proposals for solving what they regarded as key problems. Havel's appeal for a readiness to seek, express and implement vital transformations in the fields of ideas, morals and politics was sympathetically received by many of the participants who themselves readily came forward with proposals for specific measures that could be taken by the influential and powerful of the world. Yet despite that creative and practical approach, the gloomy question remains to be tackled whether the globally influentially people in power, whom Forum 2000 indirectly addressed, realized what actual measures should be advocated and

1 Cf. Lawrence E. Harrison and Samuel P. Huntington (ed.) (2000) *Culture Matters: How Values Shape Human Progress,* New York: Basic Books.

how they were to be achieved, and, last but not least, how to reach agreement with those who had different opinions about the direction of change.

## The Importance of context

Today, almost ten years since the first conference, we are fully conscious of the fact that the content of the conferences, as well as the speeches of the individual participants and the discussions that took place at the forums, were influenced not only by the long-term civilizational and cultural context—what Fernand Braudel called the *longue durée*—and by the profound structural transformations that different parts of the world and the world as a whole were undergoing, but also by specific events occurring at the time of the conferences.[2] We are also aware that in framing the conference within secular and event time—in Braudel's sense—we have not avoided a certain ethnocentrism. Specifically speaking, in spite of the efforts made, the focus was essentially western. This is absolutely clear to us as we look back on the conferences with a degree of hindsight. The very fact that we regarded our "western" year 2000 as a landmark that evoked the need for deeper consideration of the present and former state of the *entire* world, was described by one of the conference participants as evidence of our narrow and essentially European outlook.

Nevertheless, in spite of that valid criticism, one cannot deal with issues to do with the relationship between culture and globalization without framing our discussions both within the dimensions of the twentieth century *as a whole* and within the context of the *last twenty years* of the last century, and the major social processes and trends. Moreover, the first Forum 2000 conference in 1997—which was originally intended to be a one-off event—sought to take stock of our "short century"—in Hobsbawm's sense.[3] We are now aware that the Forum 2000 conferences took place at a time of extremely significant shifts in the political, economic and cultural make-up of the world.

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2 Fernand Braudel (1949) first divided historical time into three categories in his book *La Méditerranée et le monde méditerranéen à l'époque de Philippe II*. Paris: Armand Colin.

3 Cf. Eric Hobsbawm (1995) *Age of Extremes: The Short Twentieth Century 1914–1991*. London: Abacus.

Whereas certain western intellectuals had the impression that the collapse of the Communist regimes in Europe from 1989–1991 marked "the end of history," the period during which the Forum 2000 conferences were held fully signaled that no end would occur in Fukuyama's sense.[4] Completely new, demanding problems have emerged, along with new, dangerous tensions and new serious conflicts. And many of them have already occurred outside Europe. Towards the end of our series of conferences there came the terrorist attack on the World Trade Center in New York, an attack that became the most palpable symbol of the fact that the world had entered an era of global conflict of a new type.

Forum 2000 thus became a living testimony of a sometimes hesitant consideration of these new concerns, perils and possible future catastrophes. These reflections are among the hidden dimensions of the Forum 2000 conferences, and the purpose of the present publication is to demonstrate, among other things, this change in the understanding of the world. It is evidence of the perception of contemporary history, and of shifts in thinking, and of the enormous complexity and uncertainty of the present world. Above all, however, it is a specific historical record of the change in the perception of the world in the minds of leading intellectuals of international standing. The transformation is far from insignificant. Thanks to the realistic positions taken by some of the Forum participants we are aware that there is a risk that the 20th century's catastrophes could be repeated, albeit in a different guise.

The two following quotations—one from the beginning of the 20th century, the other from its end—are a warning against naïve and historically-uninformed optimism and a call for incessant caution and an unremitting struggle for the respect of fundamental ethical rules, not only among individuals, but also throughout the public sphere and in relations between human communities and cultures. In the words of Yohei Sasakawa, the conference participants sought to confront possible future disasters by accepting and implementing common values: "Messages have been sent out from Prague to be heard by the people

4 The idea that the collapse of the Communist regimes in Central and Eastern Europe signaled the end of history was advanced by Francis Fukuyama (1992) in his book *The End of History and the Last Man.* New York: Free Press.

of the world. At the core of these messages were common values that could be shared by all and for us a way to realize these values...it had become clear...that the latter is more difficult."[5]

The twentieth century, which our series of conferences started to take stock of, was often perceived as a great opportunity for humanism on a global scale. The first quotation, from the American daily newspaper *The Chicago Tribune* of 1901, encapsulates those hopes:

> The New Century
> Exit the nineteenth, enter the twentieth century… With the marvelous material progress of the century has come a long train of blessings… The century has witnessed an increase of liberty, free thought, education, religion… It has witnessed a vast improvement in appliances for making life more enjoyable and in prolonging it by improved sanitation and greater medical and surgical skill… It has not surpassed its predecessors, however, in the development of beauty or in the progress of art, architecture, music, or literature.
>
> Perhaps the change will come in the twentieth century. The purely material may claim less attention and Mammon come to be less regarded… The world may have less of the useful and more of the beautiful. The intellect of mankind, tiring of the material, may turn towards the higher things… Standing upon the threshold of the twentieth century it looks as if it would be the century of humanity and a keener realization of the brotherhood of man. This will be a grander achievement than the discoveries of science or the triumphs of art.
> (*Chicago Tribune*, 1 January 1901)

At the first Forum 2000 Elie Wiesel brought the first session to a close with words that summed up the history of the 20th century in a concise and dispassionate fashion, which, nevertheless could not conceal its nightmarish content nor the contrast with the optimism that prevailed at the beginning of the century. Hence Wiesel's perspective on the future, after the experiences of the past century, differs from that

5 Cf. record of Yohei Sasakawa's address in the *Forum 2000 Conference Report*, 14–17 October, 2001, Prague: Forum 2000 Foundation, p. 10.

of the *Chicago Tribune*'s editor in 1901. It is more a series of burning questions voiced with fear of people's incorrigibility:

> The outgoing 20th century, which Hannah Arendt termed the most violent in recorded history, has transgressed civilization's limits both in good and evil. Yes, the two totalitarian ideologies which, though different in outlook and method, more than ever before pushed humankind to the open abyss, have been vanquished. But in the field of medicine, unprecedented triumphs have been recorded. In the domain of science and technology, society has accomplished astonishing miracles, but on the level of social consciousness and moral philosophy and sensitivity to events, it is sadly lagging behind. Granted, man has conquered visible space and discovered hidden secrets of matter. But what has man learned of what is taking place in the human soul? What does the human being know of what is awaiting him or her as he or she watches on television the victims of starvation in Africa, the corpses in refugee camps or the war orphans in devastated villages?
> (Elie Wiesel, Forum 2000 Conference 1997. Opening Session)

Although most of the Forum 2000 participants strove to discern the deeper currents of present events and, by interpreting them, help get an insight into the action of the enormous global technological, economic, social and cultural changes, the conferences were also affected by the "concrete events" of Braudel's time that took place in the years before they started and during the five years they took place. It is therefore worthwhile recalling some of them:

- 1978 The Camp David talks give hope for peace in the Middle East
- 1979 Outbreak of the Iranian revolution; its leader, Ayatollah Khomeini, returns to Teheran from exile
- 1982 The rapid expansion of the ozone hole provides evidence of the critical situation of the global environment
- 1983 HIV virus identified
- 1986 Disaster at the Chernobyl nuclear power station
- 1986 Gorbachov presents a program of radical reform of the Soviet system

– 1989 Massacre of students demonstrating in Tienanmen Square in Beijing
– 1989 Collapse of Communist regimes in Central and Eastern Europe
– 1990 Reunification of Germany
– 1990 The leader of the South African ANC, Nelson Mandela, released from prison
– 1991 Kuwait invaded by Iraq; outbreak of first Gulf War
– 1991 Collapse and demise of the Soviet Union; creation of a looser Commonwealth of Independent States
– 1991 War breaks out in former Yugoslavia; Vukovar destroyed
– 1992 The dissolution of Czechoslovakia; two new, independent states are created on 1 January 1993: the Czech Republic and the Slovak Republic
– 1993 The Maastricht Treaty on European unification comes into force
– 1993 Pentium fast chip invented for PCs
– 1994 Genocide in Rwanda; almost one million Tutsis murdered by Hutus
– 1994 Hundreds of thousands of people die from hunger in Sudan
– 1995 168 people killed in a terrorist attack on a public building in Oklahoma City, USA
– 1997 Hong Kong reincorporated in the Chinese state after 154 years
– 1997 Princess Diana of Great Britain dies in a car crash in Paris, France
– 1998 President Clinton's private affair rocks the United States
– 1998 The financial crisis of several Asian countries destabilizes world markets; the term "casino capitalism" is coined
– 1998 Bloodshed at Mazar-i-Sharif in Afghanistan fomented by members of the Taliban
– 1999 War in Kosovo; bombing of Belgrade and other targets in Serbia
– 2000 Uprising by democratic forces in rump Yugoslavia and the overthrow of President Milosevic, who is brought before the international Court in the Hague in 2001
– 2001 Terrorist attack on the World Trade Center in New York City

– 2001 China joins the World Trade Organization (WTO) and continues to show rapid economic growth
– 2002 The United Nations announces that over half of the world's inhabitants live in urban areas: the largest cities in the world are located chiefly in Asia, Latin America and Africa

## Perceptible processes and trends

The tide of events—that we have only sketched—which preceded Forum 2000 and continued throughout the series of conferences induced a sense of uncertainty and chaos and a feeling that our world is out of control. The intention of this chapter is to indicate and give a sense of at least the main social and cultural processes and trends perceptible in the world today. Many of the events mentioned were concrete manifestations of major shifts in political and economic relations among the main actors of today's world, as well as of a shift in the social status of different regions of the world, a shift in culture and values, and changes in the environment. Clearly such an attempt cannot be successful without a certain amount of generalization and theoretical abstraction. The chapter will largely seek to confront the theoretical sociological and anthropological models of social and cultural changes within the major world civilizations and the models of their interaction, with how this change was perceived by the Forum participants. I think one may dare to assert that this was not an ethnocentric view of the state of the world on the part of those living in the western part of the world. What happened was quite clearly of global significance and affected all continents and parts of the world. Simultaneously other societal, technological and cultural changes were occurring that were not simply the result of the implosion of the Soviet system. There emerged a highly complex current of changes, transformations and evolutions that occurred in parallel, and they influenced, intersected and complemented each other, so that it is extremely difficult to reveal their overall pattern.

The Forum 2000 conferences took place at a time when it was clear that the main global processes and trends included:

1. The end of political and military bilateralism, whose main actors had been two distinct social systems, represented on the one hand by the United States and its NATO allies, and on the other by

the Soviet bloc, to which the non-European socialist states were more loosely attached. After 1989 there emerged a pronounced trend toward the hegemony of the United States, which has provoked all sorts of reactions and which is in permanent competition with the concept of multilateralism.

2. Since the 1960s political conflicts between states and ethnic groups have increasingly assumed the character of terrorist acts against civilian populations and cities.

3. The growing social disparities between the so-called North and South which are linked with the failure of earlier development strategies. This trend in recent years has been modified by robust economic growth of China, India and some other Asian countries.

4. The growing practical implementation of neo-liberal economic policies which go hand in hand with various diffuse but no less important social and cultural changes, such as belief in the omnipotence of the market to organize the life of society, and not only in the economic sphere.

5. The decline of the social state as a tool for the emancipation of the broad social strata and as a barrier to the polarization of society.

6. An intensification of the trend away from a universal understanding of modernity towards a so-called multiple modernity, respecting, above all, differences in culture and values among different parts of the world.

7. The continuing rapid urbanization of the third world, leading to the creation of many mega-metropolises including the problematical social and environmental issues linked to them.

8. A slower global population growth rate, which nevertheless does not eliminate the problems to do with the relationship between population size and the satisfaction of people's basic needs. On the one hand, the size of populations in Asia, Africa and Latin America is growing fairly rapidly, while on the other, population growth in most of the European countries has declined sharply and there is talk of the "extinction of Europe." Europe is in the middle of population crisis.

9. A considerable number of authors are of the view that the quality of the environment is constantly declining worldwide and the world's environmental balance is increasingly at threat. There are, however, environmental dissidents who disagree with this assessment.

10. Positive trends, such as the creation of major economic and political groupings—of which the EU is the most successful example. The military, and to a certain extent the political, stability within the European Union, are accompanied by destabilizing processes in other parts of the world. Some pessimistic authors compare this global situation to the situation in Europe prior to World War I.

11. The increasing mutual influence of cultures in different parts of the world, as well as clashes between them in all areas of life. It applies to religion, pop music, art, clothes and also food. In contrast to this trend, which may be described as cultural hybridization, is the dominance of English as a new *lingua franca* and an instrument of cultural homogenization, in the sense that the linguistic dominance of English is often linked with the weakening of other linguistic cultures.

The pre-1914 world, i.e. the world of the "long" 19th century, was a mixture of hopes, uncertainties and forebodings. Much of the 20th century was taken up by wars or preparations for wars. Our epoch is full of ambiguities or even poly-valences—almost everything has at least two aspects in people's minds. Risks are opportunities and threats at one and the same time. While in certain spheres of life flexibility may offer new opportunities it destroys old certainties at the same time. Globalization, which, at the time Forum 2000 started to deal with it, was largely regarded as a continuation of the process of modernization, is regarded in the non-western parts of the world as an instrument of "westernization". There were pronounced differences between the views of participants from Europe, the USA, China, India, the Middle East, Latin America and Africa of the increasingly interconnected world. It is difficult for an awareness of points of correspondence to contend with the sectionalism of participants representing individual cultural areas of the world.

Concern for the future increasingly forms the background to all the discussions. The great hopes that prevailed after 1989, particularly in the western world have gradually faded away and are overshadowed by what Max Weber described as disenchantment. Admittedly the processes of globalization and its various aspects are described and analyzed in hundreds of specialized and popular publications, but they remain inscrutable and often unintelligible for the general public. An awareness of the extreme complexity of the world, a world which at the same time has shrunk thanks to transport and telecommunications technology, together with an awareness of changing identities of

individuals as well as of national and other human communities, and an awareness of the incoherence of the changes experienced by entire populations all induce the feeling of an uncertain and threatened future. That was the framework—sometimes more apparent, sometimes less—within which the Prague meetings of leading international figures took place between 1997 and 2001.

It must be added that since 11 September 2001, that awareness of the complexity and incoherence of the world has been joined by fears of a new kind of worldwide conflict, which is not waged solely between armies, but uses the strategy of terror against civilian populations. Midway through the Forum 2000 conference series, as a result of the growing number of terrorist attacks and particularly in view of the attack of 11 September 2001, the world realized that alongside the processes of economic, political and cultural integration of a large area of the world, particularly Europe, we were entering a new phase of international warfare. Two antithetical processes occurring in parallel and at the same time were to provide the background to the Forum 2000 conferences: the simultaneous disconnection and connection of separate parts of the world. The conferences were thus taking place both at a historical turning point and at the time when our perceptions of the state of the world were being transformed. At the first two conferences there still prevailed a retrospective assessment of the "century of violence" as Indian participant Ashis Nandy dubbed it in 1998, and expressions of hope that the 21st century would be one of peace and cooperation.[6]

Wars in former Yugoslavia, the massacres of the Taliban, growing international terrorism, and the financial crisis in Asia and some states of Latin America, as well as a clearer awareness of the risks of what had been termed "casino capitalism," started to alter the atmosphere of the conferences. There was increasing concern and, later, fears of new conflicts, of further terrorist attacks and of an inability to confront new and still unknown challenges. As a result, Forum 2000 became—as is particularly evident in hindsight—a mirror of the changing thinking and attitudes of important groups of intellectuals in today's world.

6 Cf. Ashis Nandy's speech at the second Forum 2000 Conference in 1998, *Forum 2000 Conference Report*, 1998, Prague, Forum 2000 Foundation, pp. 31–34.

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# *How to React to a Plurality of Cultures*

*In the West we have a tendency to emphasize the cultural diversity of Europe as one of the factors underlying its intellectual dynamism and we pride ourselves on the gradual establishment of tolerance. We forget, however, that in other parts of the world also, where diverse cultures have come into contact and competed, even in the distant past enlightened people sought ways to achieve what we now denote as multiculturalism. Amartya Sen reminded us of this recently in his book* The Argumentative Indian: Writings on Indian History, Culture and Identity.[1] *At the end of the 16th century the Mughal Emperor Akbar organized in his palace a gathering of holy men and thinkers representing the major religions and skeptical philosophers who denied the existence of a transcendental deity.*

William Dalrymple, *who reviewed the book, recalled that:*

> In this way Akbar set up the earliest known multi-religious discussion group, where representatives of Muslims (Sunni and Shia as well as Sufi), Hindus (both Shaivite and Vaishnavite), Christians, Jains, Jews, and Zoroastrian Parsees came together to discuss where and why they differed, and how they could live together. There was also a party of atheists represented in the discussion.[2]

*In the discussions, representatives of the individual religions and intellectual schools presented their worldview and sought a path towards a common life. Their search was the natural fruit of the considerable ethnic, cultural and*

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1 Amartya Sen (2005) *The Argumentative Indian: Writings on Indian History, Culture and Identity,* New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux.

2 William Dalrymple (2006) "The Case for India," *The New York Review of Books,* Vol. LIII, No. 3, pp. 28–30.

*religious heterogeneity of the Indian subcontinent. The diversity of opinions, beliefs and competing ideas in India created what Amartya Sen terms the "argumentative tradition" of South Asia. For this reason, according to Sen, Emperor Akbar could also state:* "no man should be interfered with on account of religion, and anyone is to be allowed to go over to a religion that pleases him." *Giordano Bruno made a similar statement at approximately the same time, when he was burnt at the stake on the Campo dei Fiori in Rome for his views.*

*The Forum 2000 conferences aimed at a remarkably similar goal to that of the enlightened Mughal emperor five centuries before. The human mind, if it uses its capacities properly, evidently reaches similar conclusions in different parts of the world and at different times, especially on occasions when it is responding to essentially analogous social and anthropological conditions. The following chapter tries to show how those deemed "wise" at the end of the twentieth century balance, on the one hand, the heterodoxy of our world and, on the other, the immensely deep changes implicit in the term globalization. The similarity with the efforts of thinking people in a quite different part of the world five hundred years ago is surprisingly auspicious.*

# Globalization, Society and Culture

*Jiří Musil*

The topics discussed at the Forum 2000 conferences were undoubtedly determined chiefly by the profound structural changes occurring in the contemporary world. The choice of topics was influenced to a less explicit but significant degree by the differing reactions to those structural changes on the part of the main cultural regions of the world. At the same time it is clear that the composition of the conference participants also had an effect on what was discussed there.

Even a simple analysis of the list of participants at all five conferences says a great deal about the attitudes and viewpoints that prevailed at Forum 2000. The following are some data about two factors we regard as cardinal: the participants' professions and the regions of the world they represented.

Analysis of the composition of the conference participants indicates that politicians were the largest group. They made up almost a fifth of the participants (19.2 percent). Many of them were Nobel Peace Prize winners—people who had personally helped end conflicts in diverse parts of the world. The second major group consisted of sociologists, anthropologists and historians who constituted 18.5 percent of the total. The third group comprised representatives of the major world religions (11.9 percent) and there were an equal number of student representatives. The writers and artists group was also quite sizable, comprising 7.3 percent of the total, equaling the representation of political scientists and economists. There followed natural scientists and doctors, who constituted 6.6 percent, journalists (5.2 percent) and philosophers (4.6 percent). The remainder was made up of those whom it was difficult to classify in a particular professional or social group.

As for the breakdown of participants according to geographical region, it is evident that Europeans were in the majority. Participants from

21 European countries made up almost half of the participants (47.7 percent). The second biggest group consisted of guests from 15 Asian countries, who represented 23.2 percent. North America provided 19.2 percent of participants, while those from Latin America and Africa both represented 4.6 percent of the total. One speaker came from Australia. In total 49 countries were represented at Forum 2000.

The choice of participants in terms of profession was not fortuitous. It corresponded to the intentions of the Forum's prime movers, and of Václav Havel in particular. It was his conviction that the Forum should not be a meeting of specialists dealing with specific—albeit important—topical world issues, such as population growth, climate change, increasing poverty, etc. Instead it was to be an opportunity for an exchange of views among eminent figures who have excelled in literature, the natural and social sciences, politics; people noted for their awareness of spiritual responsibility; people who have assisted in the solution of long-running conflicts and who are united by their concern for the future of the planet. The Forum was intended to deal with complex issues that politicians in leading posts avoid tackling because their complexity involves political risk. The aim was to provide an atmosphere of mutual understanding and tolerance in which it would be possible to investigate the intellectual, cognitive and cultural roots of different political philosophies and programs that seek to alleviate the global hotbeds of tension and regional conflicts. It was never the intention to gloss over the dilemmas, rivalries and enmities that abound in today's world. Nevertheless it is regrettable again and again that the discussions on global spiritual, cultural and social issues were insufficiently attended by representatives of the major economic corporations, practicing economists, and people associated with framing economic and social policies.

The regional representation of conference participants did not correspond fully to the Forum's declared objectives. Most of them represented European countries and the United States. The representation of non-western areas was inadequate overall and above all we lacked personalities from the world's most populous countries, China and India, and from Africa. Only relatively better was the representation of the Near and Middle East, and Japan.

## Most frequently discussed themes

The profile of the participants also influenced what topics were most frequently discussed. From an analysis of the content of all contributions, particularly those dealing with philosophical, cultural and social issues, there emerged five main groups of topics tackled by the conferences.

First and foremost there was the phenomenon of the world's *incoherence and inconsistency*, displayed in a *chaos of ideas and values*. It was almost surprising how much attention the participants devoted to questions dealing with values and their transformation and conflicts. The *crisis of values* was most often associated with the growth of subjectivism, individualism and hedonism. And this critique of individualism was not associated solely with the West; it was remarkable how many thinkers, politicians and scientists from the so-called Third World expressed misgivings about growing subjectivism and hedonism in their part of the world. Some of them associated these changing values with the transformation of traditional societies into modern societies, and the view was even expressed that what was happening in many non-western societies at the present time was essentially a shift from *Gemeinschaft* to *Gesellschaft,* to use the language of Ferdinand Tönnies.

In second place among the most discussed topics was concern for *growing social inequality*, both between continents and countries, and within individual countries. Most of the participants shared the view that the gap between the rich and poor areas of the world was widening. Unease at growing social inequalities was often linked with criticism of the excessive role of the free market and fears about the gradual and deliberate dismantling of the social state. It was expressed most frequently in speeches by participants from Europe and the USA, but also figured in speeches by guests from Latin America and Asia.

In third place was the discussion of *the relationship between religious and non-religious interpretations of the world and society.* There was above all repeated reference to the relationship between science and religion and between the rationalistic legacy of the Enlightenment and new philosophies that were critical of rationalism. A further theme in this part of the discussions were reflections on the relationship between ethics

and politics. This exchange of views was clearly related to issues of the crisis of values, the creation of hybrid cultures and the overall intellectual metamorphosis of contemporary societies as noted in the first group. Here too these contrasting philosophies and interpretations of the world were regarded, particularly in the contributions of sociologists and historians, as part of the profound social changes and transformations of social systems taking place in Western and non-Western societies alike.

The fourth most popular area of discussion concerned *the definition of globalization.* It centered particularly on the question of various competing concepts of globalization (whether it was a new phenomenon or a continuation of something that already existed), reactions to globalization and the impact of globalization on the third world. In seeking solutions to problems induced by globalization, Forum 2000 laid major emphasis on the need to create a global civil society and global ethics.

Surprisingly, only in fifth place was discussion of issues related to *the role of nation states in a globalizing world.* In the course of it fears were voiced about the fate of democracy, fears based on the decline of nation states which are considered as the only safe foundation of modern democracy. There was also naturally an exchange of views on the contemporary form of human identity, the parallel existence of several identities and the possibility of linking and harmonizing them.

Apart from those five main areas of debate, Forum 2000 dealt with numerous other questions, a number of which should be mentioned, such as: the role of education and the university in a globalizing world, mass media and globalization, and international organizations and how they operate. The main ideas emerging from the discussions will be included under the five main thematic headings.

Although, fortunately, not much time was spent discussing what constitutes globalization and whether it is a new historical process or a new form of existing interaction between different regions of the world, we will nonetheless commence our review of the main themes of the conference with the definition of the *concept of globalization.* This is for practical reasons: most people regarded globalization as a term that, in its broadest sense, expresses the profound metamorphis that all contemporary societies and cultures of our planet are undergoing to various degrees. They agree with David Held and Anthony McGrew, who stated that “the discourse of globalization seems to offer a convincing

analysis of the contemporary human predicament…the notion of globalization has become the leitmotif of our age."[1]

Moreover, one of the Forum 2000 participants, Karan Singh, expressed this idea even more strongly: the creation of the global society that we are now witnessing is the most difficult transition in human history to date. And we should be aware of this.

So it is no wonder that the aim of the Forum's prime movers was to promote understanding of this leitmotif. That is another reason why I think it right to start our reflections on the results of the Prague conferences by presenting how the Forum participants understood the concept of globalization. This will provide a firmer framework for an analysis of the main sociological and anthropological themes of the entire series of conferences.

## The perception of globalization at the Forum 2000 conferences

The Prague conference demonstrated that there is no universally accepted definition of globalization. Hillary Clinton indicated this at the beginning of her address in 1998 when she said "it is hard sometimes even to define what one means by it." Indeed some of the participants denied that the concept of globalization was crucial to understanding what is happening in today's world. Nevertheless, most of the speakers regarded globalization as a concept that could help explain the basis of the changes occurring in almost all spheres of human existence at the present time.

The term was not yet used at our first conference in 1997, but in preparing the next three conferences we were aware that "the goal of the next three conferences should be finding answers to the central question: what next with the world and the global human community."[2] The 1998 conference was conceived in such a way as to elucidate the main aspects and consequences of globalization.

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1 David Held and Anthony McGrew (2001) "The Great Globalization Debate: An Introduction" in *The Global Transformations Reader: An Introduction to the Globalization Debate*, David Held and Anthony McGrew (ed.), Cambridge, UK: Polity.

2 Cf. preface by Jiří Musil in *Forum 2000 Conference Report*, 11–15 October, 1998, Prague: Forum 2000 Foundation, p. 5.

We perceived globalization first as a complex and multifaceted process involving current *political systems* and patterns of governance in different parts of the world and in the world as a whole; secondly, as a process that has *economic aspects* including the relationship between emerging world markets and local identities; and thirdly, as a process with *cultural dimensions*, particularly the relationship between global civilization and cultural identities, and related to questions of universality and the plurality of human rights. Eventually it transpired that the question about the nature of globalization and its impact could not be answered at any of the conferences.

During the first series of conferences (1997–2001) a specific concept of globalization crystallized at our "meditative" meetings. At the end of his keynote speech, Adam Michnik described the phenomenon he called "Prague globalism."[3] It had two components. The first could be defined as analytical. It was based on the conviction that all kinds of human societies—from small communities up to large states and unions of countries—are integrated not only by functional, chiefly economic, relationships, but also by relationships between individuals, groups and the state, i.e. a social contract between citizens and the state, and equally by certain shared ideas, what Edward A. Shils has called core values of a given society.[4] Furthermore, within those three dimensions of integration of every community there must exist a certain degree of consistency. The conferences also indicated that the bigger the community the more important is the role in the integration exercised by semiotic or symbolic elements, i.e. world view, and basic moral values and rules.

The second component of that "Prague globalism" that gradually emerged in the course of the conferences was normative. It sought to respond, in the spirit of Václav Havel, not only to what is, but also to *what ought to be, and what should be done in the given global situation.* This normative approach gave rise to the concept of global moral minimums, that was formulated at the first Forum 2000 conference by Helmut Schmidt: "A common minimum of ethical standards as a basis on which to live together on this globe does become an imperative not

3 *Forum 2000 Conference Report*, 11–15 October, 1998, Prague: Forum 2000 Foundation, p. 191.

4 See Edward A. Shils (1982) *The Constitution of Society*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

only for individual behavior, but also for religious bodies, for political authorities, for nations, and as well for corporations which conduct manufacturing or trading or financing internationally as well as intranationally."[5]

The major emphasis on the normative and ethical concept of globalization did not restrict analytical considerations about *the nature of globalization and its attributes.* As in the case of most discussions on this theme, at the Forum 2000 conferences this boiled down to two basic approaches.

On the one hand views were expressed that globalization was above all a contemporary method of connecting international markets, and its motor was said to be the growing international division of labor, the economic specialization of different countries and regions, and transactions on international markets. This is essentially a variation on the neo-classical economic theory that is sometimes described as the *transactional model.* In the sense of that neo-classical theory, globalization is essentially a positive society-wide process resulting in a growth of the world economy, and in the final analysis increasing prosperity for all and all-around social development. It must be pointed out that no one at the Prague conferences explicitly presented the transactional model in such an unadulterated form. Several speakers of a liberal persuasion tended to stress the positive consequences of such a model. They maintained that in economic and technological terms, the world was already globalized, so it was necessary to accept this fact and adapt the forms of governance and also the social policies of individual countries to it.

On the other hand, some speakers asserted that the concept did not regard economic factors as the sole motor of globalization processes, but saw them also as the result of various technological, political and socio-cultural shifts. Some participants even regarded economic globalization as the outcome of cultural changes.

Like most social processes, globalization is not predetermined in any hard and fast way and can assume distinct forms. This is due precisely to the pluralist nature of globalization, and also to the fact that

5 Helmut Schmidt at the Forum 2000 Conference in 1997, at which he called for the adoption of a Universal Declaration of Human Responsibilities. Cf. *Forum 2000 Conference Report*, 3–6 September, 1997, Prague: Forum 2000 Foundation, p. 30.

all social and economic processes, including those that result in a linking of global markets, are embedded in specific historical and social conditions. This essentially institutional and pluralist understanding of globalization provides a scope for the entire process to be influenced by social and cultural considerations.

A narrow economic interpretation of globalization was explicitly rejected by Anthony Giddens:

> In my view ... it's an absolutely fundamental mistake to equate globalization with the spread of the global market place, a view that I think both sides tend to hold. To me globalization is a much, much more profound process than simply an economic one. It is driven above all by the communications revolution ... You could say that the current global era begins from the point at which the first effective satellite system was sent up above the Earth. The time at which you had instantaneous communication across the Earth simply changes many things right through from our personal lives through to global systems.

In Giddens' view, therefore "Globalization...is all about communication, not primarily about markets or the economy."[6]

A number of speakers, including Hillary Clinton, Leszek Kolakowski and Osvaldo Sunkel considered *globalization to be a stream of parallel social, technological, economic and political changes*. It is not a consistent stream, however. Its substance varies and it flows at a variable pace, thus engendering many dangerous disequilibria and inconsistencies. Among the most important of these is the rapid spread of global markets without the creation of legal and political rules for the new forms of economic processes. Many inconsistencies and tensions also result from gaps between economic globalization, and ethical and political rules created during the centuries of nation states.

An undoubted contribution of Forum 2000 was an intense awareness of the discrepancies, inconsistencies and disequilibria between the

6 Keynote speech by Anthony Giddens at the conference in 2000, which was devoted to the role of education and knowledge in the contemporary world. *Forum 2000 Conference Report*, 15–18 October 2000, Prague: Forum 2000 Foundation, p. 14.

main currents of change affecting the world. All participants were aware that we live in a world that Anthony Giddens in one of his books has called a "runaway world." At the Forum 2000 conference in 1998 the Chilean economist Osvaldo Sunkel sought to describe, analytically, the contradictory nature of the globalization processes. He expressed it in the form of four theses:

> The first thesis is that globalization has a dualistic character: there is a part of it that is true, objective reality, but there is a part of it that is a myth and ideology. My second thesis is that globalization is a very long-term cyclical historical process; it is not something that was invented last year. My third thesis is that globalization is unequal, partial, heterogeneous, unbalanced and elitist. And my forth thesis is that globalization is a dialectical process. It has positive and negative aspects.[7]

As the conclusions of the conferences have proved, however, an awareness of the complexity and inconsistency of the globalization processes has had a positive effect in the end. First of all, such a state of uncertainty and danger engenders a sense of responsibility and a realization of the urgent need to reflect on a whole set of rules that should govern private and public life in future. The globalized world urgently needs new rules, a new legal framework. The pragmatic watchword "business as usual" is insufficient in this situation. The awareness of disparateness, combined also with an awareness of the risks entailed in the situation, provided the starting point for reflection on new forms of global ethics, global governance and global institutions. In my opinion it brought out the crucial need for a normative approach, and the legitimacy of seeking visions and even utopias. In a polemic with Henry Kissinger, the British Indian sociologist Krishan Kumar asserted the need for utopias: "I think Utopia is a good, not a bad word; and, I think it is a healthy, rather than unhealthy instinct in Western thought. We do need to think in Utopian terms if we want to get anywhere."[8]

7 Osvaldo Sunkel at the 1998 conference, *Forum 2000 Conference Report*, 11–15 October 1998, Prague: Forum 2000 Foundation, pp. 101–102.

8 Krishan Kumar, discussion contribution at the 1998 Conference. Ibid., p. 71.

One of the most important results of the Forum 2000 conferences is the assertion that there exist multiple modernities as well as multiple globalizations. This approach was stressed particularly by the representatives of Asian and Latin American countries. It was a legitimate reaction to sometimes oversimplistic and homogenizing notions of the economic, political and social model of the West as a universal model for the future organization of the world. Integrative processes inspired chiefly by the action of communications technologies, the neo-classical transactional model of the world economy, and involving the export of western cultural products are resisted by broad sections of the public in Asia, Africa and Latin America.

Unless we accept the concept of multiple, pluralistic globalization, we will be confronted by the dualistic dilemma expressed by the American political scientist Benjamin R. Barber, who counterposed McWorld and Jihad. Krishan Kumar aptly summed up that dilemma when he declared:

> McWorld seems to me entirely appropriate for the forces of globalization, taking McDonalds as a kind of emblem of the tasteless global product, Jihad is slightly less the right word, but it is meant to imply that there is a reaction to this homogenizing, globalizing McDonaldization of the world which emphasizes particular local, ethnic, national, perhaps rather regressive anti-modern or premodern forces.[9]

This dualism creates the danger that the present civilization process could be dichotomized, to acceptance of the view that there is one alternative for the world: McDonaldization or Jihad. Not only is this a false description of what is actually happening, it is also unacceptable in normative terms as a prescription for what should happen in the world. In this respect, I believe Krishan Kumar expressed the view of the prevailing majority of conference participants. Globalization should take a third path—a partnership based on the contributions of all the great world cultures, religions and ethnicities.

9 Ibid., pp. 69–70.

## A world of contradiction and the crisis of values

One of the most important messages voiced by participants from all continents, from the first conference to the last, was the fear of a possible collapse of social systems—or non-systems according to some—in the world. It must be added that in the view of certain participants in Forum 2000, this was not so much a fear as a hope, providing an opportunity for a more humane development.

Some participants expressed these fears explicitly and very clearly, such as Carlos Felipe Ximenes Belo, Bishop of East Timor and Nobel Peace Prize laureate:

> Nowadays we are facing a major crisis. Our generation is not only approaching the end of this millennium, but what we are seeing also is chaos in the world around us. Our current generation is in fact losing the very foundations of values upon which we have built. It is not just one value or another as was the case in major historical events. Today what is at issue are values per se, and very often their existence, i.e. the existence of these values is not endorsed at all.[10]

Others tended to emphasize our inability to understand the world and distinguish between important and less important issues. It was expressed most aptly by a man who, more than most, is aware of the dilemmas of practical politics: Henry Kissinger. At the second Forum 2000 conference in 1998 he summed up his view of this dilemma with a concise sentence: "What we need is some idea of the structure of the world." Unless we manage to distinguish between what is important and what is not, we will not cope with the challenges that await us. Kissinger put it in a nutshell:

10 Speech of Bishop Belo at the 1997 conference, Forum 2000 Conference 1997, Conference Report, Prague: Forum 2000 Foundation, p. 93. It should be recalled, particularly for those of us from the West, that East Timor was a Portuguese colony for 420 years. After 1975 it was repeatedly devastated by Indonesia, which occupied it. The book by Joseph Nevins (2005) *A Not-So-Distant Horror: Mass Violence in East Timor,* Ithaca: Cornell University Press, states that the massacre of the population of East Timor in the wake of the Indonesian invasion was one of the bloodiest in modern history. Two hundred thousand people were killed, a third of the entire population. For those who lived through that period, the relations between the human communities must have seemed like a war of everyone against everyone else, without any common values.

> ...all of the issues that I have briefly sketched revolve around the question of significance. All the tough political decisions are very close decisions, and if you don't have a road map through them, the art of politics, of political solution, to understand what is a little problem and what is a big problem, and not to deal with little problems as if they were big problems—if we don't master them, then we're not going to master the age of globalization.[11]

And remarkably enough, a man from an entirely different background, Abdurrahman Wahid, an Indonesian intellectual and leader of the largest Muslim organization, voiced a similar idea: "From my interaction with millions of people I come to the conclusion that as human beings we are now overwhelmed by our own problems. We are overwhelmed by our inability to find the right answers to those problems."[12]

Other participants tried to explain this situation. According to them it was the result of the unmanageable and far-reaching nature of the technological, cultural and social changes occurring in the world. It was put most aptly by the Indian thinker, poet and politician Karan Singh. Even though, in his view, the entire history of mankind can be conceptualized a series of transitions, Karan Singh stated: "It is now clear that we are involved in what is, perhaps, the most fundamental of all transitions, the transition to a global society." [13]Antje Volmer mentioned another factor, namely, the uncontrollable pace of change in which we find ourselves. People are only capable of absorbing a certain number of changes of their material, social and cultural environment within a given period of time.

In the view of certain participants, such as Cornelius Castoriadis, the present changes in the world prove there is no linear moral political and spiritual progress. We must simply accept that there are periods of stagnation and regression in history. It was significant that a large number of participants were inclined to the view that the world is currently

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11 Cf. keynote speech by Henry Kissinger at the 1998 conference. *Forum 2000 Conference Report*, 11-15 October, 1998, Prague: Forum 2000 Foundation, pp. 24 and 25.

12 From his speech at the 1997 conference, *Forum 2000 Conference Report*, 3-6 September, 1997, Prague: Forum 2000 Foundation, p. 159.

13 Karan Singh advanced this thesis in his keynote speech at the 1998 conference. Cf. Forum 2000 Conference 1998, Conference Report, 11-15 October, 1998, Prague: Forum 2000 Foundation, p. 60.

in a stage of stagnation and in danger of regression. One speaker—and interestingly enough, it was the leading American commentator, William Pfaff—compared the situation in the West today with the state of the Roman Empire before its collapse. A somewhat less pessimistic view was voiced by Immanuel Wallerstein. According to his theory of the development of the world social system, we are currently at least at the beginning of the end of one major epoch of western civilization, the period of liberalism; and in his view the first half of the 21st century will be much more difficult and much more unstable, but also much more open than anything we have experienced in the twentieth century. We are entering a new period of a transition and "the time of transition will be a terrible time of troubles, since the stakes of the transition are so high, the outcome so uncertain and the ability of small inputs to affect the outcome so great."[14]

The majority of the participants avoided such unequivocal and chronologically specific forecasts. The prevalent view was expressed by the British sociologist Michael Mann, who works at the University of California. Mann considers that present-day neo-liberalism tends to suppress the rights acquired by lower social classes during the political struggles of the 19th and 20th centuries. If it succeeds at this, it will cause the emergence of new dictatorships and despotisms—and the catastrophes of the 20th century will be repeated. "The world's fascism and communism are probably dead, but movements of the left and the right resembling them will probably resurge, claiming to unite the organic people against its local and foreign enemies."[15]

In Mann's view, human communities are not determinist systems in Wallerstein's sense. They are more freely (and sometimes inconsistently) organized structures of power, the economy, knowledge and values. The relationships of these structures have changed in the course

14 Discussion contribution by Immanuel Wallerstein at the 1997 conference. Cf. *Forum 2000 Conference Report*, 3–6 September, 1997, Prague: Forum 2000 Foundation, p. 110.

15 Mann used the term "organic people" because in his writings he makes a distinction between liberal and organic democracy. Organic democracy emphasizes the people's singular will—an obvious reference to Rousseau's concept of *la volonté générale* and populist ideas of "the people" often associated with nationalism. Cf. his exposition at the 1997 conference, from which the quotation about the new types of left-wing and right-wing autocratic regimes is taken. *Forum 2000 Conference Report*, 3–6 September, 1997, Prague: Forum 2000 Foundation, pp. 123, 126.

of history and will continue to do so in the future. Due to this lack of system human communities are susceptible to change and to the risks that Wallerstein spoke about. In that respect, the three eminent sociologists who attended the first three conferences, Castoriadis, Mann and Wallerstein, had much in common. In their view history was and will always be full of surprises, reversals, stagnation and crises, and it is not advisable to rely on the optimism of traditional liberals, which is rooted in Enlightenment philosophy. It is not borne out by historical experience.

This standpoint received the support of a large number of contributions, particularly on the part of the Western participants. They too were afraid of chaos in the field of ideas and values, which they thought would be one of the main causes of problems in the future. That view was shared by representatives of non-Western societies. Karan Singh went so far as to ask whether our planet was not some kind of gigantic Titanic, and many others feared the collapse of present-day civilization precisely because of dangerous changes in values. Repeatedly, in different terms and mostly in a critical vein—sometimes unconsciously maybe—they were actually talking about the risks involved in the transfer from a social order that Ferdinand Tönnies described as *Gemeinschaft* to the social order he described as *Gesellschaft*. It was also implicitly a discussion about the loss of community values and what Max Weber described as "disenchantment of the world," and the death of God. This formed the implicit background of many of the contributions, proving how crucial and vital discussion about the relationship between tradition and modernity still is, even if it was not explicitly mentioned.

According to many of the Forum 2000 participants, western and non-western society is experiencing a loss of values, particularly a loss of generally accepted values. This is the outcome of growing subjectivism, relativism and individualism in all areas of life, as was stressed by Bishop Belo, who quoted the German philosopher Hans Jonas: "Relativism has been everywhere around us, there are no well-founded values, no value seems to be strong enough to be permanent enough and this in fact is regression from the very meaning and purpose of life."[16]

16 Unfortunately it has not been possible to discover from which of Jonas' works Bishop Belo quoted. See *Forum 2000 Conference Report*, 3–6 September, 1997, Prague: Forum 2000 Foundation.

The Chinese thinker Joseph Chan from Hong Kong, a long-standing scholar of Confucianism and Liberalism, linked excessive individualism with communism and capitalism alike:

> I want to emphasize also that the danger of excessive individualism, the abuse of rights and materialism, may come as well as from capitalism ... these problems could be caused by the tight state control over people's lives ... When these post-communist countries became liberated and democratized, people's long suppressed desires for ownership and wealth were unleashed. [17]

Another of the participants, the former Chilean President Patricio Aylwin Azócar singled out "individualism and consumerism, which are so strong in today's culture," as two of the three main dangers of our times. African-American Harvard professor Cornel West concurred with this, pointing to the decline in the meaning of public life among young people, and commenting that today's younger generation had discovered "new ways of being in the world, narcissistic, hedonistic, individualistic."[18]

Oscar Arias Sanchez, the former President of Costa Rica and holder of the Nobel Peace Prize, looked for ways of countering the cynical, selfish, envious and hypocritical ethic which he accused of prevailing in the 20th century, with values of solidarity and sympathy that we should strive for in the 21st century.

Alongside these essentially communitarian and sometimes socialist arguments, voiced largely by participants from Latin America, India and China—liberal views tended to be in the minority. Some liberals sought a third way between individualism and communitarianism. The Polish politician Hana Suchocká, for instance, strove to combine traditional communitarian values with liberal principles. She feared social atomization and recommended a strengthening of the family's role to forestall it. At the first conference Ralph Dahrendorf also reflected on the dangers involved with the necessary reform of the welfare state: "Aspects of the welfare state had a very important role in creating social cohesion, so that the necessity of reform, which exists in many countries, must

17 Ibid., p. 46.
18 Ibid., p. 144.

not be used to destroy the solidarity … which has been institutionalized. This is a big subject..."[19]

Equally important in this connection was his comment on capitalism. It was clear from the contributions of many of the participants from Latin America and Asia that they basically blamed western forms of capitalism for the erosion of common values and the decline of community. Dahrendorf above all stressed that there existed various forms of capitalism, each of which created different conditions for the maintenance of social cohesion. In an indirect criticism of neo-liberalism he said it would be stupid to think that the text-books published by the economics department of Chicago University were the only possible expression of capitalism. And the same applied to democracy, which also has various forms that either reinforce or undermine social cohesion. Nevertheless, he took a clear stance against the radical communitarian opinions at the conference, seeing the danger of a strong and authoritarian political system with an excessive emphasis on common values. Alternatively, he stressed the concept of an open society.

Indeed, the confrontation between the liberal view of the present world situation and the communitarian and socially-oriented view could be felt in almost all areas of discussion. It was particularly evident in the discussions about the second group of topics, namely, issues of inequality, the role of the market and the welfare state.

## Social and other inequalities, the role of the free market and the welfare state

One of the topics that reappeared again and again in the discussions was the question of social inequality. Participants expressed concern not only at the growing gaps between rich and poor regions of the world, but also at inequalities within individual countries. A number of speakers directly or indirectly linked the present international conflicts with the growing polarization between the living standards of world regions and between individual countries. Social tensions and conflicts in individual countries caused by unequal access to jobs, education, health care and other components of the social infrastructure or better social status could be described as a resurgence of "the welfare issue" (although it is of a different character than in the traditional industrial societies). The

19 Ibid., p. 58.

Forum indicated that it was aware of these new dimensions, but did not undertake a detailed analysis.

Views about the growing gap between the rich and poor parts of the world were expressed by representatives of both rich and poor countries. They agreed on the description of the situation, but differed in their views and opinions about the cause of the gap. The growing disparity between the rich and the poor is not solely economic in character, most frequently expressed in per capita income in dollars. It also concerns health, measured in terms of life expectancy at birth or infant mortality levels, or culture, measured in the amount of illiteracy in a population or the percentage of those with a higher education. But poverty can also take the form of a low level of communication with the outside world.

Some participants voiced their fears about the polarization of the world into rich and poor at the very first conference in 1997. As Jack Lang put it laconically on that occasion: "Inequality is growing between countries and within individual countries. One billion people live on a budget of one dollar a day."[20] Others, such as Jeffrey D. Sachs, devoted a lengthy speech to the issue of poverty and wealth in world today. Like Lang, Jeffrey Sachs stressed the crucial fact of the world's division into rich and poor: "...we are 6 billion people living in conditions of material inequality that are the greatest in human history."[21] Two hundred years ago, humanity's material conditions were much more equal, because the entire world was poor by today's standards. However, over the past two centuries a small part of the world had become rich, while much of the rest of the world remained depressingly poor. In his speech, Sachs stressed that it was important not only to be aware of the huge gap between the rich and poor of the world, but also to understand the deeper causes of this reality of the present-day world.

Sachs suggested that the world should be viewed in terms of three main divisions. The first is located almost entirely in the temperate zones of the world and has a population of some 900 million people. It consists of North America, Western Europe, North-east Asia and Oceania. It has distinguished itself from the rest of the world by its efficient use of science and technology. In this part of the world, with a sixth of

20 Jack Lang's discussion contribution at the 1997 conference. Ibid., p. 81.

21 From Jeffrey D. Sachs' keynote speech to the third conference on 13 October 1999. *Forum 2000 Conference Report*, 10–13 October, 1999, Prague: Forum 2000 Foundation, p. 162.

the world's population, average per capita income is about 30 000 US dollars. And Sachs expressed the view that this part of the world was working more dynamically than ever before.

Sachs characterized the second part as being on the near periphery of the advanced core. Geography was a factor in this to a certain degree. It includes for example such countries as Poland, the Czech Republic and Mexico. In this near periphery incomes are considerably lower than in the first section—varying from 3,000 to 10,000 US dollar per capita, but the economies of those countries are linked with the economies of the high-technology and knowledge-based societies.

The third division Sachs called the "distant periphery." It is located largely in the tropical zone where people are exposed to difficult ecological conditions and low agricultural productivity, as well as tropical diseases. The majority of the population is poor by Western standards. It consists of one third, if not 40 percent of the world's population. It currently lacks the economic mechanisms of development, being essentially dependent on the export of raw materials.

In Sach's view, the fate of the world would depend on whether it would be possible to close the major gaps in living standards between the first and second parts of the world and between the second and third parts. Above all, development in the distant periphery is full of uncertainties, and the development strategies pursued to date by international organizations such as the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank and the World Trade Organization have not proved successful. And the other international organizations striving to create a socially less polarized world, including the United Nations, lack the strength and resources to change the situation.

Frederik Willem de Klerk identified the contrast between poverty and wealth in today's world as one of three factors that would influence the world in the 21st century. Other factors are globalization and the persistence of devastating ethnic and religious conflicts.

> In the new millennium, it will be less and less possible to ignore the stark reality that a large part of the human population still lives in unacceptable poverty, misery and repression.[22]

22 From Frederik Willem de Klerk's keynote speech at the 1999 conference. *Forum 2000 Conference Report*, 10–13 October, 1999, Prague: Forum 2000 Foundation, p. 48.

De Klerk acknowledged that the proportion of people living in absolute poverty over the past forty years had fallen from two thirds to one third. This represented some progress, but it was necessary to realize that the total number of people living under the poverty line has remained almost the same while the size of the world population doubled since 1960. Even more serious in De Klerk's view was the fact that the disparity per capita between the poorest one-fifth and the richest one-fifth of the world's nations has widened from 30:1 in 1960 to 78:1 in 1994. As a representative of the African continent he emphasized that most of the poorest fifth of the world's population live in Africa and that many African countries in recent years have started to fall behind not only the rich countries of the world but even behind many other developing economies. More than any other continent Africa is prey to AIDS, famine and poverty, civil wars and ethnic cleansing. The situation must not be ignored because sooner or later the African catastrophes must impact the rest of the world. Consider that the populations of Europe and Africa are more or less the same size, i.e. some 750 million, within fifty years the European population could fall to 640 million, while the size of the African population could soar to two billion. If that were to happen it would involve enormous risks, which is why it is necessary to consider appropriate measures to confront it. But, as de Klerk declared, whatever happens, it will not be possible "to marginalise an entire continent. Europe and the world cannot accept a new de facto apartheid between a rich and white north and an impoverished and unstable black south in the continent of Africa."[23]

The theme of growing gaps between the rich and poor parts of the world cropped up in various contexts in the speeches of many other conference participants and the situation was rightly regarded as one of the main potential destabilizing factors in the world of the 21st century. Unfortunately there was not enough time or expertise to provide reliable indications as to whether those gaps would widen or not. Awareness of that deficiency provided a spur to the organization of some conferences on a smaller scale to deal with issues related to the gaps between the world's rich and poor. We will return to this later when we compare the results of our conferences with those of analyses carried out by specialized institutions.

23 de Klerk, ibid.

However, other aspects of social inequality in today's world were discussed at the original five major conferences. Those discussions chiefly centered on three issues: inequalities within individual countries, inequalities between men and women in the world today and the social impact of the decline of the welfare state.

*Social inequalities within individual countries* are clearly related to wider social conditions and the level of development of social policies. In those places where a welfare state has existed for many years and it has involved income redistribution, palliative measures exist to protect citizens from manifestations of absolute poverty. This probably explains why the European participants in the discussions on the social and cultural aspects of globalization did not mention the inequalities in their countries. And yet it is evident that polarization processes are occurring in Europe between regions of various countries, and the gaps between the rich and poor areas of certain countries, such as Italy, Poland and Spain are now considerable; and in all European countries part of the population lives in poverty.

It is obvious, nonetheless, that major social inequalities are more frequently the subject of political and sociological discourse in countries designated as developing, or according to the current neutral terminology "emerging markets." Comparative studies of poverty have shown that Latin America has the largest rich-and-poor gap. This was confirmed at the 1997 Forum 2000 conference by the former Chilean President Patricio Aylwin Azócar, who stressed the specific aspects of Latin America and the critical attitude of much of its population to the situation it faces. According to Aylwin this is largely the result of the "deep contrast between the standard of life of the rich and of the poor" in the countries of Latin America.[24] In Aylwin's view general social inequality resulting from the existing economic model is one of the three main concerns of the present time.

Criticism was also voiced regarding *other aspects of inequality* in contemporary societies. The Indian philosopher and politician Karan Singh, directed his criticism at certain religious movements when he declared:

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24 See his contribution to the 1997 conference. *Forum 2000 Conference Report*, 3-6 September, 1997, Prague: Forum 2000 Foundation, p. 61.

> Women can no longer be relegated to a secondary position in the new globalism. Indeed the suppression of the feminine, as several creative thinkers have pointed out, has been at the root of much of the horror and violence that we have witnessed in our own century.

Riane Eisler, an American cultural historian linked women's unequal status in today's world with what she described as "the dominator model or way of life," and which she placed against her vision of "a partnership model or way of life." The status of women in society is a sensitive indicator of the degree of partnership in society.

From Latin America there was heard open criticism of the socially negative impact of globalization and neo-liberal economic concepts. The Chilean economist Osvaldo Sunkel made the point that reference was chiefly made to the positive aspects of capitalist expansion, growing productivity and competitiveness of firms, while a process he called "the disruption of the social fabric" was ignored:

> If one were to make a list of what is declining, disappearing, weakening, in terms of public goods and services, it would include public education, public health, preventive medicine, health insurance, social security, public transportation, low cost housing, public broadcasting, environmental protection, personal protection, help for the handicapped, and land-use planning.[25]

Sunkel's conviction was that the welfare state, which he regarded as the greatest achievement of the 20th century, was at risk, and its destruction would mean a return to "savage, unbridled capitalism."

Reflections on the social impact of a globalization narrowly conceived as the consistent *implementation of free-market principles on a global scale* constituted a considerable part of almost all the Prague conferences. They emerged on such different occasions as Henry Kissinger's thinking aloud about the political system's in today's world, Gareth Evans' thoughts on the unforeseen effects of the free market, or Richard

25 Discussion contribution by Osvaldo Sunkel at the 1999 conference. *Forum 2000 Conference Report*, 10–13 October, 1999, Prague: Forum 2000 Foundation, pp. 30–31.

von Weizsäcker's reflections on how to reconcile the effects of the free market and social cohesion. Many other participants referred to the problem directly or indirectly.

Based on his experience as a world politician of conservative persuasion and university professor, Henry Kissinger cannot be accused of left-wing bias in respect of the free market. All the more interesting, therefore, were his reflections on the relationship between the market and political processes:

> For years now, I have been uneasy about this view of a global economy in which the whole world operates as one market, and in which people are asked to accept suffering for the efficacy of an abstract market—without other criteria ... I have predicted that this will lead to some sort of a debacle because societies will not accept unlimited deprivations. Now we have the global economic crisis. In my view, the global economic crisis has become so severe because technical economists have looked upon it without regard for the political and moral capacities of the people involved.[26]

A similar warning was issued by the former foreign minister of Australia, Gareth Evans:

> Those who worship at the altar of the completely free market, here as anywhere else, are worshipping a very false god indeed. Free markets are never perfectly efficient... free markets are never equitable in delivering benefits, or even basic subsistence, to all those who need it ... accept the opportunity of globalization; but work like hell at all levels to moderate and smooth and channel and civilize the impact of that phenomenon.[27]

The viewpoint of those who would like to domesticate the globalizing market was also expressed by Kurt Biedenkopf, Prime Minister of Saxony, who occupies a right-of-center position in Germany's political spec-

26 Keynote speech by Henry Kissinger at the 1998 conference. *Forum 2000 Conference Report*, 11–15 October, 1998, Prague: Forum 2000 Foundation, p. 24.

27 Gareth Evans' discussion contribution at the 1998 conference. *Forum 2000 Conference Report*, 11–15 October, 1998, Prague: Forum 2000 Foundation, p. 66.

trum: "Uncontrolled economic forces, for which you cannot blame the market but a lack of control and order, endanger freedom, human rights and the stability of societies ... it is unacceptable that we organize a society in which you gain profit by destroying the stability of regions."[28] The German philosopher Nikolaus Lobkowicz spoke in a similar vein at the first conference in 1997, where he warned against relying on the free market economy to solve all the problems of our time. In Lobkowicz's view this type of economy is a great success of modern times, but it is not a universal panacea. On the contrary, it can create new problems.

The views we have quoted so far represent a moderate position, which seeks suitable ways of combining the market with politically regulated economic processes. Alongside them at the conferences there were speakers with more radical opinions, even though they, too, were seeking effective ways of linking public policies with the market; however, they were in the minority. They included Osvaldo Sunkel, a critic of neo-liberal economics. In his opinion the market was intended to play an absolutely decisive role in the "neo-liberal package" and have precedence over the state and society. It was his belief, however, that most people wanted society and democracy to be under state control and for the state to interact with the market according to agreed rules. What currently exists at the international level was described by him as "private globalization" and a "public void." In the eyes of the most radical critics of a globalization regarded as the creation of an integrated world market (who, at the Forum 2000 conferences, included Ashis Nandy, for instance) the entire process is a mechanism that destroys culture and the way of life of the weaker world players.

## Science, religion and ethics in a globalizing world

The third cluster of topics that aroused the greatest interest at the conferences, particularly the inaugural one, were philosophical and those that focused on understanding and defining the conceptual bases of our reflections on the future. The main stimulus of those discussions was President Václav Havel's opening address. In a way the discussions were a confirmation that the entire world is torn by profound cognitive and moral divergences but also witness to the search for new values to form the basis of a future global culture and global policies. The fact that multi-religious

28 Ibid., pp. 119–120.

reflections became a regular feature of the Forum 2000 conferences and that they were attended by representatives of all the great world religions was an explicit statement by the Forum of its intention to seek jointly with others moral values that would link mutually tangent and mutually communicating parts of the world. Even before the inauguration of the Forum we were convinced that without common global values, and without a minimum degree of integration of global values, the level of global economic integration already achieved would not last. Above all, without this minimal integration of values a new form of global governance, which was so needed, could not come into existence.

Thanks to Václav Havel's opening address (which is reproduced in full at the beginning of this publication), and the presence of leading representatives of world religions, philosophical and religious issues were among the main themes of the discussions at Forum 2000 conferences. The question to which the conference participants paid the greatest attention was the relationship of religion and spiritual philosophies to modern science, rationalism and secularism. Other topics of those philosophically oriented discussions included the relationship between western and eastern thinking and the search for global ethical minima, as well as the relationship between the values of traditional societies and the values of societies described as modern.

The discussion on the relationship between religion and science and the essentially philosophical discussion on the nature of present-day civilization hinged on the crucial issues put to the entire assembly by Václav Havel in his address at the opening of the first Forum 2000 conference. Attention subsequently focused on three of them. The first related the present contradictory state of global civilization to atheism and the loss of God:

> The contemporary global civilization … is, in essence, a deeply atheistic one. Indeed, it is to date the first atheistic civilization in the history of humankind. Simultaneously, it is the first civilization that embraces the whole planet … the atheistic nature of this civilization coincides deeply, I believe, with the hypertrophic pursuit of individual interests and individual responsibilities together with the crisis of global responsibilities. Could the fact that humanity thinks only within the limits of what lies in its field of vision and is incapable of remembering also what lies beyond, whether in the temporal or spatial sense, not be the result of a loss of metaphysical certitude,

> or vanishing points and horizons? Could not the whole nature of the current civilization—with its proud emphasis on the human individual as the crown of all creation and its master, and with its boundless trust in humanity's ability to embrace the universe by rational cognition, could it not all be but the natural manifestation of a phenomenon which in simple terms, amounts to the loss of God?[29]

Václav Havel's second question asked whether the present crisis of global responsibility was not the outcome of our loss of faith in the sense and purpose of our private lives and the lives of our communities; whether it was not the result of a loss of faith in providence:

> I expect this conference to give me and many others an answer to the question as to whether I am right or mistaken in thinking that the crisis of much needed global responsibility is in principle due to the fact that we have lost the certainty that the universe, nature, existence and our lives are the work of creation guided by a definite intention, that it has a definite meaning and follows a definite purpose, and, together with this certainty, also lost all and every humility towards what reaches beyond us and surrounds us. This loss is, of course, accompanied by the loss of the feeling that whatever we do must be subjected to a regard for a higher order, of which we are part, and to a respect for an authority in whose field of vision every one of us is permanently present.[30]

The third main question Václav Havel placed before the conference participants was what to do in a situation in which several different interpretations of the sense and purpose of the universe and our human existence exist together side by side: "But how can we restore in the human mind a shared attitude to what is above, if people everywhere have a different image of that which is above and everywhere feel the need to stress 'otherness'? Is there any sense in trying to turn the human mind to the heavens when such a turn would only aggravate the conflict among our various deities?"[31]

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29 Václav Havel at the opening session of the first Forum 2000 conference in 1997. *Forum 2000 Conference Report*, 3–6 September, 1997, Prague: Forum 2000 Foundation, p. 12.

30 Ibid., pp. 12–13.

31 Ibid., p. 13.

Most of the discussions in Prague about ideological issues of the present-day world hinged directly or indirectly on the three questions put by Václav Havel. These were supplemented, however, by several other, no less important, issues.

Few topics illustrated the current plurality of fundamental philosophical and religious bases of the contemporary world as powerfully as the discussion about Havel's three questions. Nevertheless, Forum 2000 did not draw attention solely to the well known differences between the philosophies and religions of West and East and between the main modalities of the monotheistic religions, but also the differences and even conflicts of opinion between representatives of the same major cultural spheres, such as India or Europe.

Thus, for instance in the discussion about the relationship between science and religion three main positions emerged. The first highlighted *the danger of conventional rationality*, the danger of the Enlightenment tradition, and the risks of science that developed from western culture. That position was expressed by a very heterogeneous group of people—the Indian psychologist Ashis Nandy, the Czech playwright Václav Havel and the American writer John Silber. Moreover, Thor Heyerdahl's view that the split between science and religion in the 20th century was a fatal problem for mankind that we must overcome was implicitly severe criticism of Enlightenment rationalism and modern science. Mistrust of rationalism and science was most explicitly voiced, however, by Ashis Nandy:

> ... we must affirm that rationality is not a philosopher's stone. It does not give us a solution to anything. In fact we are living in times when rationality, particularly conventional rationality and "crackpot realism" (which goes by the name of rationality), has itself become a menace to human survival … much of the suffering in recent decades has come not from crusades or from the Jihad, but from a very calculated, rationally calculated, form of violence, almost as a by-product of the Enlightenment vision.[32]

32 Ashis Nandy's response to Weiming Tu's intervention at the 1998 conference. *Forum 2000 Conference Report*, 11–15 October, 1998, Prague: Forum 2000 Foundation, pp. 133–134.

Just as frequent, however, were contributions *in defense of rationalism and science* and they were not only from representatives of the natural sciences such as the Nobel chemistry laureate John Polanyi, who defended science as a product of the liberated intellect, as an intellectual, as an intellectual activity revealing shapes that exist in reality, and as an activity governed by the search for truth. There were also politicians such as Shimon Peres or the economist Jeffrey Sachs who emphasized the positive role of science. In Peres' view, while science might not solve all our problems, it undoubtedly offers new scope; science and the technology related to it are now the main source of wealth and power. Jeffrey Sachs defined the role of science along very much the same lines.

A vigorous case was presented by those who saw no contradiction between spirituality—although Václav Havel had fears for its existence in today's world—and rationalism, or the secularism of scientific knowledge. These speakers constituted a sort of third group. Interestingly, the clearest exposition of this position was made by two participants who did not belong to Western cultural circles. Referring to the cultural conditions for achieving mutual understanding the Indian philosopher Karan Singh declared: "What is needed, in fact, is creative symbiosis between science and spirituality, and it is by this alone that we can achieve our collective goals."[33]

That symbiosis of science and religion was dealt with in interesting and specific terms by one of the scientists present, the well-known oncologist Claude Jasmin. In his view science and religion have a strong link, namely, concern for others, to which he applied the neologism *alterity*. Science and religion are both about doing something for others, so one should avoid emphasizing one at the expense of the other. They are both striving for ethical progress.

Wole Soyinka from Nigeria, the first African to be awarded the Nobel Prize for literature, made a very original defense of secularism, and what might be termed gnoseological and ethical humanism. In his view, humanity is the only reality than can be perceived both subjectively and objectively. Only a secular approach to mutual negotiations and agreements has hope of success, because it is open to all. Only a humanistic approach to life can open the way to social liberation for those who, like

33 Karan Singh's keynote speech at the 1998 conference. *Forum 2000 Conference Report*, 11–15 October, 1998, Prague: Forum 2000 Foundation, p. 63.

himself, "make no pretence of being on a first-name relationship with the Divine Mind." He expressed his view of religion in the following words: "Intuitions and revelations, which become structured into faiths and religions, can remain only affairs of private conviction …"[34]

There was a similar emphasis on humanism as the basis of an ethical concept of politics in a contribution by Polish historian Bronislaw Geremek, who stated: "The dignity of the human being can be, for instance, connected to the fact that man is created by God. But it can also be understood in the humanistic dimension, as something unique connected with the human being, and such a personal approach is one that joins all religions and also agnostics." Humans should be considered in human terms. This humanistic approach, sometimes linked with criticism of today's churches, was voiced by a number of speakers including the Japanese political scientist Seizaburo Sato and the former German President Richard von Weizsäcker. Sato appealed for the full acceptance of non-religious people and warned of the dangers of new religious movements, and Weizsäcker criticized present-day churches, saying that their ideological disputes were a threat to peace more often than not.

One of the most interesting exchanges of opinion at Forum 2000 was the discussion between Václav Havel and the physicist Fritjof Capra at the first conference in 1997. Capra agreed with Havel's emphasis on the spiritual nature of the order of existence of which humanity is a part. He rejected, however, Havel's view that this order of existence is governed by a definite intention, a definite purpose. In Capra's view "…the notion of purpose and intention is a human projection, it is a reflection of a linear human thinking and so in a subtle way it is a consequence of an anthropocentric view that you yourself criticized. And I think we do ourselves a disservice by narrowing our view of creation by assuming purpose and intention."[35] He countered Havel's providentialism with his own systems theory of the universe. Instead of viewing the universe as a machine composed of elementary building blocks, the material world considered to be a network of inseparable patterns of relationships, and the planet as a whole to be a living, self-regulating system. According to this concept evolution is not seen as a competitive struggle for existence

34 *Forum 2000 Conference Report*, 3–6 September, 1997, Prague: Forum 2000 Foundation, p. 36.

35 Ibid., p. 22.

but rather as a cooperative dance in which creativity and the constant emergence of novelty are the driving forces. Capra himself has termed this attitude to the universe the "ecologization of the world."

The controversy about the providentialism of the universe and human history divided the Forum participants into two groups, the first, religiously motivated, stressing the meaning of existence and the other, skeptically minded, rejecting the search for meaning or considering the human mind incapable of ever solving such a problem. There was one obvious outcome of that exchange of views, however: the quest for deeper orders of nature and human existence remains an indispensable part of our life, even in a period that is all too fascinated with its cognitive and technical level. And the background to striving to comprehend that order, as was evident from many contributions to the discussion, is the search for harmony between humankind and nature, and humankind and the cosmos.

Within that latent context of the search for order, it was only natural that Forum 2000 should also deal with ethical issues and specifically *the need for a global ethic.* If ethics is understood as a set of rules governing human behavior in order to achieve stability and harmony, it was inevitable that the Forum's reflections on the state of the world would also deal with the issue of global ethics.

The outcome of the Forum's discussions on global ethics were to constitute one of its most important messages. To a great extent this was thanks to Hans Küng. In his view, a new world order could not emerge without a new world ethic. As he explained:

> Globalization calls for a "global ethic" … Globalization of ethics does not mean a uniform ethical system. As a matter of fact I prefer, in English, the word "ethic" to the word "ethics", which is more the doctrine and the system, I believe in "ethic", in the sense of the inner conviction of human being but, of course, it needs special general common standards, not a uniform ethical system but a necessary minimum of shared ethical values, basic attitudes and standards, to which all regions, nations and interest groups can commit themselves.

Like many other speakers who pleaded in favor of a global ethic, such as Helmut Schmidt or Prince el Hassan Bin Talal, Hans Küng was aware

of the cultural and religious differences between different regions of the planet, and also of the difficulties involved in bringing such an ethic into existence. The main obstacle, in Küng's view, was not the lack of appropriate political structures, but chiefly a deficit of ethical and political will. Prince Hassan expressed the opinion that the most difficult part of globalization is, and will be, the creation and inward acceptance of multicultural universalism. He nevertheless expressed his belief that some common humanist code could be developed.

## Nation states in a globalizing world

It is now apparent within sociological, political and even literary discourse that primordial phenomena, and not just ethnicity, but also gender, regions, localities and other axes of identity are superseding former dominant and traditional sociological themes such as inequality, status or the role of the state. And this occurred at a time when the phenomenon of globalization was discovered and properly thematized. Therefore the relationship between various forms of universalism and particularism is becoming a central theme of discussion on specialized and political issues.

A variation of one of those central themes is the relationship between globalization and the role of the nation state in contemporary societies. That was also apparent at conferences where this question was dealt with most frequently. All the three main standpoints were expressed in the Forum 2000 discussions from 1997 to 2001.

The first standpoint, put forward now and then, was that in the 21st century the nation state would probably decline and disappear as the political organization of contemporary societies. The second standpoint, defended by rather more speakers, was that multiple identities would emerge, enabling regional and national identities to be combined with supra-national identities. The third standpoint, which had the greatest support, was that the pace of decline of the nation state due to globalization has been over-estimated; nation states would remain on the political scene for the foreseeable future but would simply be transformed. Almost nobody explicitly embraced traditional nationalist views. From time to time, however, particularly in discussions about the fate of so-called third-world cultures, speakers would call for the protection of primordial cultures and lifestyles to be prioritized. At the

conferences the call was mostly for a sort of third way, particularly in the speeches of participants from Asia, Africa and Latin America.

Among those who ventured to consider the decline of the nation state in the not too distant future was Karan Singh. As with Ernest Gellner, Singh's premise was that nation states are historical phenomena.[36] In Europe they have existed for about 400 years as part of the Westphalian model, and just like all historical phenomena they too may be expected to disappear. At the 1998 conference Singh considered that this might already happen in the 21st century: "...today, the nation state seems to be so well entrenched that any thought that the nation state might wither away would be a shock to many people, but I feel, by the end of the next century, the nation state may well have withered away—and perhaps the withering away of the nation-state is the way for absolution and salvation for the human race."[37]

A self-confessed idealist and visionary, Karan Singh perceived the future as an opportunity for the emergence of a pluralistic, multipolar and multicultural society. Yet he was aware of the danger that the opposite might happen and the future world might be dominated by a single nation and a single culture.

A sort of middle position was adopted by participants who, like Frederik Willem de Klerk, believed in an equilibrium between supra-national political structures and nation states. One of the student participants, Joerg Forbrig from Germany, defended this middle position on the grounds that the nation states are losing their influence for two reasons. On the one hand, an increasing number of their roles are being taken over by supra-national organizations and institutions; and on the other, there is the increasing growth in influence of minorities and groups that are active on the sub-state level. Another argument in support of this third way was advanced by the leader of the French European Movement Jean-Louis Bourlanges: "Now... concerning this discussion between the general interest of humankind and the national interest. It seems to me that what we are witnessing today is a gradual erosion of this opposition, of this contradiction... We are seeing more

36 Cf. Ernest Gellner (1983) *Nations and Nationalism,* Oxford: Basil Blackwell; and Ernest Gellner (1997) *Nationalism,* London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson.

37 Karan Singh's discussion contribution at the 1998 conference. *Forum 2000 Conference Report*, 11–15 October, 1998, Prague: Forum 2000 Foundation, p. 85.

and more dependence or inter-dependence. Our national interests, our particular interests, in fact, are overlapping with the general interests, in fact, the difference between the Fatherland and the Motherland."[38]

Most of the conference participants who spoke on the issue of the nation state and its future were in favor of the third position, which might be described as the "realistic" one. They expressed, in a variety of ways, the idea that nation states, such as in Europe, had lost some of their significance, yet still remained an important component of the present world in organizational, economic and cultural terms. Even though a number of speakers personally called for the creation of a post-national, cosmopolitan citizenship, their sociological realism did not permit them to ignore the strength of the current nation states. Nation states are much more viable than either the liberals or socialists of the 19th century supposed. Krishan Kumar tried to find an explanation for this:

> ...the reason why nationalism and ethnicity continues to be so strong is because the nation state is the only legitimate actor currently on the world stage, in other words the only model that groups can aspire to for achieving some kind of self-running of their lives ... We don't accept the models of non-national citizenship sufficiently well, the concepts are not well defined, the institutions don't exist very much, and so nationalism and the creation of the nation state becomes the only goal of this kind, regrettably."[39]

A similar standpoint was adopted by another sociologist, Michael Mann.

According to Mann, who is known as a historically-oriented sociologist, the theory that globalization weakens the nation state is exaggerated. And if European developments in the 20th century are advanced as proof of the declining role of the nation state, the question must be raised whether this development was not instead a reaction to the wars between European nation states in which 100 million people died. The threat is particularly great when religion is connected to the nation and when either the nation or state is considered to have "organic purity."

38 Jean-Louis Bourlanges at the 1998 conference, ibid., p. 43.

39 Comment of Krishan Kumar at the 1998 conference, ibid., p. 84.

Globalization undoubtedly weakens the standing of the nation state, but the forces that form it are still very strong. As intellectuals we can reject it and we can strive for transnational formations, but even within them the nation state retains its strength.

It was the Polish philosopher Leszek Kolakowski who expressed most eloquently—and with a certain bitterness—the attitude of resignation to the possibility of changes in this respect:

> Despite the pious wishes of the 19th-century socialists and liberals who expected that national problems would soon go away with globalization of civilization, the opposite has happened … In spite of those hopes, a national or ethnic awareness grew stronger, more radical and more militant than it used to be. We might deplore all this, of course, but we cannot simply cause those factors to go away by pious incantations if we are in favor of tolerance, and so on. We have to face this unpleasant reality.[40]

It would seem that, in its discussions about the nation state, Forum 2000 touched on one of the sensitive issues of today's world. Events in Europe in recent years indicate that the skeptical realists sensed the mood of the times better than the rest. Moreover it is still unclear—in spite of the assurances of some representatives of non-European parts of the world that nationalism does not represent a threat in their countries—whether industrialization and modernization in those countries might not lead to a tragic repetition of the events familiar from 20th-century Europe.

## Specific attitudes to the social and cultural aspects of globalization expressed at Forum 2000.

Dozens of conferences were held in the 1990s dealing with globalization. Globalization became an almost dangerously fashionable topic and few concepts engendered by the social sciences were taken up so readily by journalism, politics and even in daily life, in a certain guise. What was specific about the Forum 2000 conferences, and conversely, to what extent did the standpoints of the Prague conferences concur with the

40 See the comments of Leszek Kolakowski in ibid., p. 81.

views expressed at other conferences and by other authors? At various points, this introductory survey has touched on what was specific about Forum 2000, such as Adam Michnik's comment about "Prague globalization" or Václav Havel's desiderata for the Forum discussions. The remainder of this chapter on the sociological and anthropological aspects of globalization will compare the ideas of Forum 2000 more systematically with the main currents of opinion that have emerged elsewhere in the world. This will help gauge the importance of the Prague meetings of the world's intellectual, political and religious elite.

### *The concept of globalization in international discourse and at Forum 2000*

Scholars studying globalization most often express the view that no generally accepted theory of globalization exists. In their view, several mutually competing streams of thought can be distinguished in this respect: "no singular account of globalization has acquired the status of orthodoxy."[41] All of them have political implications, i.e. they do not have only analytical and interpretative functions. The main streams are: (1) theories of globalization based on neo-classical economy, (2) neo-Marxist theories, especially world system theory and its modifications, (3) multi-dimensional and pluralistic theories.

The first group of theories approaches the term "globalization" with a skeptical perspective. The authors belonging to this group, such as G. Thompson, P. Hirst and A. Rugman, express the view that the term globalization simply describes the process of internationalization, i.e. the growing interactions between national economies and societies.[42] According to this view, globalization is not a new phenomenon, rather it is a continuation and expansion of existing international trade links. Intensive globalization in this perspective already existed at the end of 19th century.

The second group of theories conceives globalization in neo-Marxist terms, i.e. as a project serving the consolidation of the capitalist world system and Western imperialism. David Held and Anthony Mc-

41 See David Held and Anthony McGrew, "The Great Globalization Debate," p. 2.

42 See Paul Hirst and Grahame Thompson (1999) *Globalization in Question*, 2nd edn, Cambridge: Polity; Alan Rugman (2001) *The End of Globalization*, New York: Random House.

Grew describe this stream of thought in the following way: "Instead of providing an insight into the forces shaping the contemporary world order, the idea of globalization ... performs a rather different function. In essence, the discourse of globalization helps justify and legitimize the neo-liberal global project."[43]

The third theoretical stream—being pluralistic—is applied by different political orientations, including social liberals and social democrats, as well as by some conservatively-oriented groups. In the view of the representatives of this third stream, globalization is neither an instrument of Westernization nor a concept serving as an intellectual background for international neo-liberal policies. For people supporting this third perspective, such as David Held, globalization is an expression of deeper structural changes in the scale of modern social organization:

> Globalization... denotes the expanding scale, growing magnitude, speeding up and deepening impact of transcontinental flows and patterns of social interaction. It refers to a shift or transformation in the scale of human organization that links distant communities and expands the reach of power relations across the world's regions and continents.[44]

The Forum 2000 proceedings were a mirror of the spectrum of views described above. Most of the participants espoused the third—pluralistic—concept of globalization and emphasized its civilizational and cultural dimensions. Narrowly economic or narrowly political concepts of globalization were rare. Nevertheless there were those for whom globalization was a notion intended to render more acceptable the spread of the Western way of life to the whole of the world. Fortunately, there was no attempt at academic dissection of globalization as a concept. Instead discussion focused on the moral, social, cultural and political state of a rapidly shrinking world, in which different world views and values are in conflict more than ever before.

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43 David Held and Anthony McGrew, 2002, *Globalization–Anti-Globalization,* Cambridge, UK: Polity, p. 4.

44 David Held and Anthon McGrew, op. cit., p. 1.

*Contradictory views of the world and the crisis of values*

Without a doubt, fears of cognitive and moral chaos, of growing gnoseological and ethical relativism, of difficulties to do with multiculturalism and various types of fundamentalism constituted the core of the most challenging parts of the discussions at Forum 2000. The exchange of views at the Prague conferences documented well the present world situation as described by the Czech scholar Jaroslav Krejčí at the end of his book on "understanding the currents of history." According to Krejčí, potential conflicts between civilizations are now shifting from a horizontal position, i.e. clashes between civilizations, to a vertical one, i.e. conflicts within those civilizations. Pro-Westerners, who constitute a substantial part of the cultural elites of many non-Western countries, are clashing with the defenders of local traditions who enjoy the support of the broad mass of the population in those countries. Conversely, Western nations are experiencing problems with assimilating immigrants from countries whose civilizational values and lifestyles are often at odds with the lifestyles of Western countries.[45]

Forum 2000 also drew attention to the phenomenon of the hybridization of cultures and ideological paradigms. Although there was insufficient time to document the mutual interpenetration of world cultures or to describe a more detailed description of the various types of diffusion and exchanges of different cultures, the conferences definitely were a spur to further reflection on these issues. Moreover the history of the formation of the major religious systems, including Christianity, are full of examples of syncretism and the mixing of philosophical and cultural orientations in the recent and more remote past. Have the various world cultures not simply entered a new phase of formulating answers about the nature of the human condition in a contemporary context?

Cultural hybridization does not only concern the western part of the world. African Christianity has certain specific characteristics that Europeans find surprising. In the United States new syncretic religious movements are mushrooming. Studies of the modernization process in Buddhism, as reflected in the book *Rebuilding Buddhism* by Sarah LeVine and David Gellner (p. 50), deal with remarkable changes that

45 Jaroslav Krejčí (2005) *The Paths of Civilization: Understanding the Currents of History,* Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

are affecting other world religions also.[46] Thanks to their inner strength these religions are absorbing impulses from outside and assimilating them while preserving their basic identity.

Unfortunately, it was only in speeches by certain participants such as Ashis Nandy that Forum 2000 touched on a situation in which smaller—and hence weaker—cultures come into contact with the robust influences of Western civilization. These influences are capable of disrupting the original cultures, including their moral codes and images of the world and replacing them with the most superficial commercial versions of what is described as "western civilization." Since these are processes occurring at many places throughout the planet, we are appending to this chapter an article by the Japanese anthropologist Takeaki Hori, one of the organizers of and participants at the Forum 2000 conferences, which documents the process of extinction of just such a smaller culture.

Forum 2000 unfortunately did not deal in greater depth with global media policies and the fate of many aboriginal languages. This is a pity at a time when dozens or even hundreds of languages are rapidly disappearing. As a result the crucial issue of the world's declining linguistic diversity and its consequences, with its theoretical and practical aspects, was not dealt with. Another issue not dealt with was the question of multi-lingual identities, which is beginning to affect the European Union in particular.

Forum 2000 focused on the impact of the growing interaction of large regions of the world, the search for new forms of global governance and incentives for a reorganization of economic relations between the rich and poor parts of the world. Emphasis was placed on what Jaroslav Krejčí described as "horizontal position" problems.

No one, however, recalled the fact that the contradictory nature of today's world is partly the result of that great metamorphosis that Europe underwent from the early 16th century, which led to the emergence of science and capitalism, and subsequently to the industrial revolution and democracy, and is referred to by the rather vague term of "modernity."

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46 Sarah LeVine and David Gellner (2005) *Rebuilding Buddhism. The Theravada Movement in Twentieth-Century Nepal,* Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press.

Prior to that metamorphosis there were no great socio-economic disparities between the European civilization and the Muslim, Chinese, Indian and other civilizations; there are studies that maintain that Chinese society, for instance, was wealthier than European society at certain periods of history. The emergence and establishment of European modernity, a phenomenon that has not yet been reliably explained, led to the "secession" of Europe, and particularly its western part, from the rest of the world, which it started to out-distance in technological and economic terms, and in terms of civilization in general. This gave rise to a powerful West that frequently usurped political and economic power in other parts of the world by extremely brutal means. Politically speaking, that era ended after World War II, but in economic terms it still continues in many regions of the planet. The socio-economic gap between the wealthy countries of Europe, North America and Oceania, and other parts of the world has continued to widen over recent decades—as was stressed not only by participants from Asia, Latin America and Africa but also by speakers from Europe and America. The social polarization of the world has continued in spite of all the programs aimed at halting it. That reality underscored the discussions and was reflected in the debates on the sociological and anthropological aspects of globalization. In a polarized world issues of cultural identity loom larger and in certain circumstances a combination of national and religious identities can lead to dangerous confrontations and even military conflicts.

Forum 2000 did not raise with sufficient firmness the issue of whether the dynamic of Western societies, which gives rise to constant value shifts and a plurality of lifestyles, is not inherent in every society with a competitive and innovative growth-led market economy. In other words, is the present state of affairs not a permanent characteristic of capitalist industrial societies? Or is the sign of a major transition—which has been in progress for centuries already—from one state of relative stability to another state of equilibrium and stability? And if it truly is a historically identifiable transition, will it not come to an end at a certain historical moment? Or, on the contrary, is this not the case and instead are we now living for good in a "runaway world"? Can the dynamic of our civilization as we now experience it, particularly in technological terms, be a permanent phenomenon? Are there, or are there not limits to growth? Or does technological and economic development occur in lengthy cycles?

It looks as if there can be no solution to problems associated with the growing contradictoriness of the world, the radical relativization of values, and the overall "disenchantment" of the world unless humankind reflects more deeply on the spiritual, ethical and cultural consequences of the faster pace of history and the impact of the major societal changes it is undergoing. This does not mean we should abandon an analytical approach to the separate aspects of these changes. On the contrary, we must be specific, we have to ask what are the specific effects of new technologies, new kinds of work, new kinds of tiredness, new health risks, new educational needs, new economic institutions and rules, and the new lifestyles associated with them. And we must also ask whether these changes are occurring differently in different parts of the world. Will the technological changes that are undoubtedly one of the driving forces of the rapid changes in contemporary society lead to the cultural and social homogenization of the world? Forum 2000 came out in favor of multiple modernities and multiple globalizations, but what are the conditions of such an evolution?

President Havel stressed that essentially we know the main risks of today's world, but we lack the will to confront them actively. But isn't that contradiction a challenge to us to understand the reasons for the state of indifference towards our probably tragic collective fate?

### *Social and other disparities in today's world*

Forum 2000 noted that, in absolute terms, the disparities between the rich and poor parts of the world had attained proportions unprecedented in the history of humankind. And the point was made not by a representative of the developing countries, but by the American economist Jeffrey Sachs. In certain areas of the world the "social question" had once more surfaced in its traditional form, i.e. with the risk of renewed social conflicts, political destabilization and a trend towards authoritarian regimes. In the view of Forum 2000 what is particularly dangerous in global terms is the growing gap between the poorest countries—most of which are in Africa—and the rich nations.

In this respect the Prague conferences concurred with most world poverty analysts. In a study published in 2001, Thomas W. Pogge described the contrast between world poverty and world wealth in the following terms:

> The 900 million people lucky enough to reside in the Western zone of affluence are responsible for 86 percent of world consumption expenditures, 79 percent of world income, 58 percent of world energy consumption, 47 percent of all carbon emissions, and 74 percent of all telephone lines. By comparison, the poorest 1.2 billion of the world's population have to share only 1.3 percent of world consumption, 4 percent of world energy consumption, 5 percent of world fish and meat consumption and 1.5 percent of all telephone lines. Global inequality, with all its ramifications, undoubtedly ranks by far as the greatest source of human misery today.[47]

From the literature dealing with international comparisons of poverty it emerges that most authors agree on the importance and extent of the problem, but they differ over whether world poverty and international disparities are growing or not, as well as over whether globalization is the main cause of the growing disparities. However, the answers to those two questions determine to a certain degree the nature of the measures required to reduce global economic disparity.

Opinions about the global poverty levels, about the extent of disparities and about whether the gaps between the rich and poor countries are growing or not, are a specific illustration of the disparateness and inconsistency of reflections on the present state of the world, which is also borne out by the experience of Forum 2000. At the risk of slight over-simplification, three main schools of thought can be identified within these reflections: (1) neo-liberal and pro-globalist, (2) critical and neo-Marxist, and (3) social-liberal.

Although most analysts agree that the absolute disparities in income between the richest and the poorest countries are growing and assuming unprecedented dimensions, the neo-liberals stress that this says little about the trends of global gaps. They maintain that the most important indicator is the relative income gap.[48]

Studies by the World Bank and several other international institutions indicate that the relative income gap on a global scale narrowed

47 Thomas W. Pogge (2001) "Priorities in Global Justice," in Thomas W. Pogge (ed.), *Global Justice,* Blackwell, Oxford; See David Held and Anthony McGrew, *Globalization–Anti-Globalization,* pp. 77–78.

48 Relative income gap measures the difference between the income of the typical individual and world average income, calculated as the percentage of the latter.

between 1970 and 1985. Those studies also draw attention to major regional disparities. In east and south Asia the relative income gap narrowed rapidly while in the sub-Saharan countries of Africa it widened. The neo-liberals also stress that the extent of absolute poverty in the world is on the decrease and point out that many older statistical studies, when calculating the extent of world poverty, committed the error of failing to take into account the population size of China and India and the enormous significance of poverty reduction in those, the most populated, countries of the world. Neo-liberals conclude from this that economic globalization is a positive trend in social terms, and is in fact the only effective means of reducing world poverty. In their view, the major social disparities between different parts of the world are due to the fact that certain countries fail to integrate rapidly enough into the world economy. In similar vein, the creation of a global free-market is regarded as the best way to eradicate poverty and the major global disparities.

The critical current, whose main exponents are neo-Marxist authors, asserts that the neo-liberal analysis gives rise to an inaccurate picture of the social state of the world. Poverty and inequalities in the world have grown in recent decades because the profits from economic globalization are unequally distributed both inside countries and between countries. These authors maintain that the gulf between the richest and poorest countries has widened according to many indicators. In 1960 the income of 20 percent of the richest countries was only 30 times greater than the income of 20 percent of the poorest. In 1997 that ratio had risen to 74. The growing gap between the rich and poor areas of the world resulted in political destabilization, engendering all sorts of ethical problems and leading to a new division between those who benefit from the processes of economic globalization and those who lose. This is a new situation in which the old division into the rich north and poor south is already ceasing to apply. According to the most radical neo-Marxist positions within this particular current, summarized by David Held and Anthony McGrew, "unless neo-liberal economic globalization is tamed (…) a 'new barbarism' will emerge as conflicts spill over into the global 'zones of peace' fuelled by growing global poverty, exclusion, disempowerment and inequality."[49]

49 David Held and Anthony McGrew, op. cit., p. 83.

The third group, which we have dubbed the social-liberal, is less doctrinaire than the previous two. It also operates more with empirical and historical data. One of the theses of the authors in this group is the observation that social and other disparities between different parts of the world have always existed and are probably a permanent component of the world order. They acknowledge, however, that modern history has led to a widening gap between the rich and poor countries. Some authors also accept the neo-Marxist thesis about the division of the world into core and periphery—although this is even accepted by liberal economists as Jeffrey Sachs demonstrated at Forum 2000. The main emphasis of this current of ideas is to stress the role of the state, national development strategies and effective economic governance. This is based on a comparison of economic and social development in various developing countries. There are not only the increasingly impoverished countries of sub-Saharan Africa but also successful states such as Singapore, Thailand and Malaysia. This is evidence that the division of the world into the increasingly poorer and increasingly richer is not fatally determined by the mechanisms of the present-day global market economy but also by other factors. In other words, political organization, cultural patterns and ways of thinking also count. Part of their thinking is the conviction that the instruments of the welfare state will continue to be decisive in reducing poverty and inequality, and determining national policies to fight poverty in individual countries. The proponents of this position stress that the social policies of individual nation states will continue to play a decisive role in limiting poverty and social inequalities.[50]

Most of the conference participants held views similar or akin to this social-liberal current, which bases itself on impartial analyses of current global changes and insights into history. So, in fact the position on the new form of the global social question did justice to the deeper philosophical standpoint—what Adam Michnik dubbed the Prague concept of globalization.

50 This view is expressed by Robert Gilpin (2001) *Global Political Economy,* Princeton: Princeton University Press; and also P. Hirst and G. Thompson, *Globalization in Question*.

### *Global ethic*

The major discussion about the intentionality of the world, human anthropomorphism and the relationship of religion and science that animated the first conference of Forum 2000, transcended the bounds of the philosophical themes that usually suggest themselves in relation to the processes of globalization. However, the Prague conferences also dealt with a philosophical question that is part of deeper reflection about globalization, namely the issue of global ethics, whose content and format have already been the subject of several publications. These naturally focus on the basic definition of the concept of global ethics, as Hans Küng did at the Prague conferences, and also on the object and subject of this new ethical sphere.

Most of the authors charting the present shaping of a global ethic emphasize that it is tied to the definition of "political good." In that respect the shaping of the principles of a global ethic draws on the tradition of political philosophy that led to the emergence of the theory of democracy, which, of course, was bound up with the emerging nation state. Political good in that theory of democracy lay in the process of citizen's participation in politics, which through the intermediary of elected representatives expresses the collective will. What is the significance of this if the subject of this will are not citizens of a "world" state? And what might be the object of such an ethic? In what direction is it heading? Held and McGrew give the following answer:

> ...the political good today can only be disclosed by reflection on the diversity of the "communities of fate" to which individuals and groups belong ... political good is entrenched in overlapping communities, and in an emergent transnational civil society and global polity. Disputes about the political good should be disputes about the nature and proper form of the developing global order.[51]

The possibilities of such a global ethic coming into existence are, according to Held and McGrew, contingent on the existence of the following circumstances: first of all, the reality that a shared identity in the past was always the outcome of an intensively expressed political

51 David Held and Anthony McGrew, op. cit., pp. 90–91.

construction (not even the nation is a natural, biologically rooted community); secondly, the fact that in the world today's individuals participate in associations that are territorially very diverse and in groups that transcend the borders of nation states; thirdly, that the shaping of a global ethic is facilitated by the fact the globalization depletes nation states and infringes on their sovereignty and autonomy; fourthly, awareness that the fates of national communities are no longer in their own hands alone; fifthly and lastly, national communities are now incorporated into a network of regional and global structures of governance, which changes and restricts the ability of nation states to provide their citizens with the same structure of rights and duties.

As a result of all the complex economic, social, cultural and environmental changes it is necessary to change the direction of existing political philosophies and ethics that are constructed along "isolationist" lines. Today's world "...is not a world of closed communities with mutually impenetrable ways of thought, self-sufficient economies and ideally sovereign states."[52]

The present discourse on ethics is no longer concerned solely with the rules of life in national communities, but also raises questions concerning the intersections and contacts of mutually overlapping societies, traditions and languages. Their content must therefore be mediated between various cultures, spheres of life and languages. If we realize this then we will not perceive the present world as one full of incoherency, contradictions and conflicts, as it was perceived by most of the participants at the Prague conferences. This incoherency is most likely precisely the "material," the object, which requires the shaping of a new global ethic. It was undoubtedly to the credit of Forum 2000 that this need was expressed in an explicit way.

## The future of the nation states

In the previous section, dealing with the emergence of a global ethic, we stressed that the key element of many ambiguities associated with globalization is the ambiguous definition of real collective subjects, which constitute the organizational, legal and economic axes of today's world.

52 Onora O'Neill (1991) "Transnational justice" in David Held (ed.) *Political Theory Today,* Cambridge, UK: Polity, p. 282.

In the modern era the most important of those subjects was the nation state. Forum 2000, essentially in line with the main current of opinion in global discourse, demonstrated that although the role of the nation states is declining, nation states as legal, economic and cultural subjects also have a strong position in a globalizing world. They are not becoming extinct, nor are they being "replaced" by transnational political subjects. Rather, one can say that they are being complemented by new economic, legal, cultural, scientific and other institutions, organizations and associations. What can be observed is the emergence of a new type of network not only of mutually linked individuals, but also of those collective subjects.

In the present international discourse about the future of the nation state this position represents an imaginary "central" stream. To put it simply, one may assert that nation states will continue to exist, and they will continue to be quite important, but this importance will not be based on legal, political and economic forms of sovereignty, but more on cultural identity. Nation states will increasingly be "fate communities," based on geographical, linguistic, historical and cultural identities. In a sense it will be a return to the period preceding the formation of the nation states, which were the product of general modernization and were deliberately created. In that respect, without discussing it in so many words, Forum 2000 accepted the modernist theory of the nation formulated by such authors as Ernest Gellner or Benedict Anderson.[53] In the light of this, it is clear from the discussions that have been going on for several years already that the key problem in the future will not be the fate of the nation state as a legal entity, but the fate of national cultures and languages. Hence the current focus on the question of the globalization of the media, cultural imperialism, the dominance of the English language and the creation of some kind of vague globalized style, but even here critically minded authors point to the fact that it is no zero-sum game, but the formation of a new and more complex cultural pattern. Within it some "old" cultural layers connected with national cultures will continue to exist, but alongside them there will emerge new, global and other layers, which will have the character of

53 See Ernest Gellner (1997) *Nationalism*, London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson; as well as Benedict Anderson (1991), *Imagined Communities*, London, New York: Verso.

cultural hybrids, as it is most evident, for example, in the development of pop music. The fluidity of cultural patterns, their flexibility and ability to assimilate new and disparate elements has been demonstrated on many occasions by cultural anthropologists. On the other hand, the discussion of cultural and anthropological processes sends a warning about the possible extinction of entire cultures, particularly smaller ones.

# Two Examples of Socio-Cultural Disintegration Caused by Globalization

*Takeaki Hori*

## Primitive stage of hegemonies emerging in Papua New Guinea

As it was one of my specialized studies, I strove to do my field studies mainly in the South Pacific Islands in the early 70s. While studying economic anthropology at the University of Sydney, Papua New Guinea came to my attention as my main field. At that time, Papua New Guinea (PNG) was still part of Australian territory. But, in 1972, soon after my first visit, PNG recovered full independence. However, society remained unchanged. Tribal wars continued one after another. Under such circumstances, one Japanese paper mill company decided to set up a chip factory in Madan area, in the upper north of PNG Main Island, where they could have easy access to the enormous tropical rain forests.

They obtained lumbering rights covering a massive area of tropical rain forests and in order to secure the large-scale lumbering, they recruited a great number of young people from local villages in the vicinity.

All of a sudden, a modern labor-management as well as production system was transplanted to the island, where a traditional, yet tribal autonomous system was still dominant in the community.

I was very much interested in the social transition and how a cash-crop economy would impact the village where employees were born and raised.

At the beginning, the company adopted a cash payment system. They paid wages in cash to employees on a weekly basis, and it didn't take long time before the traditional social system was being challenged. Particularly, young people emerged to threaten the established power structure of the village. The impact of a cash economy was enormous.

In order to secure high productivity massive loading capacity was top priority. They opened the jungle and built wide roads deep in the forest for heavy trucks, and a non-stop transportation service around

the clock was established between the logging site and the milling factory in town. It was robust young truck drivers who took the leading role in changing the traditional village system, whether they recognized this or not. The traditional social system was quickly challenged and village authority based upon seniority was in decline.

Before the paper mill company was established, the most important community work in the village was to regularly clear the ground for coconut plantations or village farms. Every villager, including children and women, was mobilized to share in the communal labor of cutting weeds. Soon, young people learned how to avoid the obligation.

Some excused themselves by saying that to honor the shift work for the company was the top priority because cash had become the main resource to support the household economy. Some others tried to bribe children by giving them some change and asking them to take over their own workload. A few small shops were soon opened in the village because of the expected cash. Some adventurous youth were quick to learn about the "down payment system" and bought motorcycles. The introduction of the motorcycle brought a real revolution to the village. Traveling by motorcycle greatly expanded the range of their daily activities at one stroke. They could easily make a long distance excursion in a day, thus eventually, paving the way to explore a completely new world; it was easy to find girl friends who lived in remote villages. A Western type of dating became possible away from the eyes of parents.

In addition to this spectacle, traditional authority within the family or village was eroded and challenged. Some industrious youths worked hard to save their earnings, thus accelerating the stratification of a class system and dividing villagers between poor and rich. Western types of music, fashion, sport shoes or even T-shirts started to become popular among young people. Even a small pub was opened in the village, to which young boys flocked over weekend. Individualism and convenience of service came to be recognized as one of the important qualities for their daily life.

The value system was in transition and the friction between generations became evident. At the very beginning, the company paid their wages weekly on Friday. On receiving the cash, most of the young employees rushed to the bar and stayed until they spent their last penny.

Gradually, the cash income system became a driving force fostering individualism, and soon after, Western music, fashions such as trendy

sport shoes, and T-shirts acquired popularity. In the village, small pubs and convenience stores were successively opened. Soon the cash economy was deeply rooted in the village.

Finally cash started permeating the rest of the society of Papua New Guinea, which had long remained separated from the main-stream of the modern world. In other words, the cash economy became an object for worship. It was a new phase of the so-called "Cargo Cult."

Looking at these transitions, is it possible that we can see, through the process of social changes taking place in Papua New Guinea, the germination of the primitive stage of hegemony?

I have no intention of making such an impetuous conclusion here. But, I can easily mention a similar transition both in the past and the present such as the Meiji Restoration in Japan or contemporary China, which has been enjoying the emerging economic advances. The fact that I would like to emphasize here is the social occurrence or transformation which took root in the society right after the introduction of the market economy. Among many changes, two factors, "resistance to the new system" and "wisdom for adaptability" were the most apparent phenomena, which quickly prevailed to young generation as social consciousness as I have seen in PNG.

Among many young intellectuals, there was one sensitive, yet smart person, who sensed the transfiguration and confusion of emerging capitalism on rise. His name was Michael Somare, then a journalist working at a local radio station in Madan. He anticipated the future of Papua New Guinea and formed a political party called "Pangu Pati" for the first time after the independence of PNG. At the first general election, he won overwhelmingly. Thus, he had the honor of filling the first page of the history of the independent PNG and was appointed as the first Prime Minister of the independent PNG.

He was worldly enough to predict that international conglomerates together with hegemonic countries would set their greedy eyes on the abundant natural resources of Papua New Guinea. Unless a system was quickly established to protect the natural resources from foreign interests his homeland would be recolonized by capitalism again.

He proposed a so-called "resource nationalism," which was to maximize the local processing of natural resources. However, he was not confident enough to launch such a diplomatic policy by himself. PNG still was vulnerable as a newborn state and in order to consolidate or to

secure the position of independence, he thought that a multinational, collective approach was necessary.

He immediately proposed a so-called "spearhead diplomacy" to neighboring Melanesian countries and appealed for a common doctrine or policy towards Australia and Western industrialized countries. He predicted that these industrialized countries would increase the pressure to open up the market for the sake of capitalism.

Even though these Melanesian countries were blessed with relatively rich natural resources, they were still powerless in international business and finance. Thus, he invited Fiji, Vanuatu and the Solomon Republics to join the body. The main aim of this body is to make it clear to the outside world that they oppose any capitalistic intervention by big powers such as England, France, America or Australia particularly in the development of natural resources. Also, the Melanesian Spearhead carried with it another implicit message addressed to the other South Pacific Islands countries.

P.M. Michael Somare was smart enough to offset the idea of hegemony by stressing the originality and the leading role of PNG in the Spearhead alliance vis-à-vis other South Pacific Islands Countries. PNG quickly gained the leading political position in the South Pacific region, and became a new regional hegemonic power.

The consecutive flow of Western culture ranging from consumerism to overseas investment into PNG, where the indigenous social system was still preserved and dominant, was a real eye-opening process. And, I interpreted this movement as the model of transition, which could verify that there is an aggressive aspect to globalization mainly in the area of economy.

That is what I tried to suggest in order to seek out the conceptual conversion of hegemonism from an anthropological standpoint. As a result, it became visible that hegemonism is another form of ideology. This eventually led me to the following inference that the "manifestation (or executing) phenomenon of ideology brings incessant globalization."

## Globalization hits the South Pacific Islands

In the great navigation era, Captain Cook extensively explored the South Pacific Islands over three times. Regardless of his motivation, I

was also tempted to explore the South Pacific Islands, but with a different curiosity. For some reason, I was convinced that it would be possible to trace signs of an undeveloped globalization together with the conversion process of colonization. So, I was obsessed with reading a variety of history books about the South Pacific Islands.

In the dramatic encounter with Western civilization, the South Pacific Islands were exposed to the thrust of the Musket and Christianity, which in a sense, symbolized the iron culture and the Bible crusade mission. Unfortunately, this self-sustaining, yet isolated island culture was powerless in the face of an aggressive Western civilization backed up by military power, even though the South Pacific Islands unique culture has flourished over several thousand years.

Unique cultures together with native islanders were pushed to the edge of extinction. One question rises: What was the driving force for Western powers to explore and to colonize the new world in such a competitive, yet harsh way? A high school history textbook gives us an answer easily.

During colonialism, European hegemonic states such as Spain, France and England were fighting for leadership and had tried to maximize the interests and influence of their sovereignty in Europe. Eventually, the European market was saturated. The growth of population and distribution of its resources had reached the limit. There was no other way but to reach outside of Europe in order to seek out new markets. Africa became the first victim of the expansion of colonial powers. It was followed by India, Asia, the Caribbean, Latin America and the South Pacific. The impact of the Western invasion was devastating in every aspect. Sharp axes made of iron were a miracle for the indigenous islanders. They could hardly believe the impact of the gun, which could instantly knock down people standing at a distance with one bang.

They interpreted a chronometer as the detached heart of man. They could pick up the heart and hear the sound of the beating.

At the same time, the technological innovation in Europe brought further leaps in the field of oceanic navigation as well as ship building technology, which accelerated further colonization of the New World. As a result, new information and knowledge was brought back to Europe. It became a one-sided monopoly game. There existed only two worlds: losers and winners.

Western European civilization became dominant, second to none. The impact, which the New World would call a "Great Transition in human history," is today matched by the "Digital Revolution."

I would dare to say that the "Digital Revolution" will be one of the motivating forces for current globalization. The Chief of Tahiti really concentrated on gathering iron nails from western navigators and mobilized young local girls for this purpose. It didn't take long for the Tahiti Chief to change his target from nails to muskets. In Tonga, the king of the islands was rather short-tempered and couldn't be bothered to go through normal trading transactions in order to obtain iron nails. He attacked the boat at night and set it on fire. He plundered all available nails, which were pounded in the boat.

Why were they so charmed by iron? If we look at old catalogues of exhibitions of traditional weapons, which had been used in the South Pacific region, you could understand. Bows, spears, clubs and shields were made of animal bone, stone or wood. The characteristics of iron, durability, solidity, a sharpened edge, meant that it was overwhelming and destructive. By hammering a few nails on the conventional club it turned into a powerful weapon. There is no need to describe the destructive power of the musket. Actually, most of the chiefs, not only in Tahiti, but also in Hawaii quickly conquered whole islands with guns and established a unified kingdom. But the overall power of the Western European countries was predominant and set their tragic destiny, eventually leading to colonization.

Simultaneously, the clergymen who had accompanied their conquistadores were quick to stampede social traditions, cultures and pagan customs. When we look at this destructive, crusade movement from an anthropological standpoint, it could be said that islanders were totally enslaved because they lost their physical contact with their soil, time and space zones related with their own locality.

However, their traditions and custom never died. When we have a close look at the situation in the South Pacific, there are so many Western tourists roaming around in the region and seeking out "Paradise" or "Arcadia." Certainly, paradise was lost and tourists are simply chasing the image of lost paradise. But, some indigenous traditions were inherited spiritually from generation to generation and are now openly being revived.

Take the example of the Maori in New Zealand. They went through atrocity, faced all kinds of suppression, segregation and humiliation over time. But, unlike the aborigines in Australia, they somehow succeeded in maintaining their ethnicity and traditions. When we talk about New Zealand culture nowadays, we still consider the strong influence of the Maori culture. Tradition and customs deeply rooted in the locality must be immortal like the phoenix. It won't change at the gene level.

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# *The Importance of Religion*

*When Max Weber sought the reasons and factors underlying that deep process of change which led not only to the rise of capitalism but also to what is termed modernity, he judged that they included an alteration in the theological content of European religion. In very simple terms, according to him, European capitalism would not have arisen without Calvinism. In his opinion it was one of the factors underlying the change which led to Europe abandoning the framework of feudal agricultural societies and beginning to change, at first into a mercantile, and then into an industrial capitalist society. There were doubtless more factors underlying this change—as we know thanks to decades of historical and sociological research—but the changes in religion certainly played an important role in it. In contemporary Western and some Asian societies religion certainly does have a very different status than it did 100 or 200 years ago. The churches have lost their former significance and influence. On the other hand, however, as Ernest Gellner pointed out in his work:* Language and Solitude. Wittgenstein, Malinowski and the Habsburg Dilemma[1] *it is evident that the basic orientation of values, what sociologists call "core values," of individual societies and often, also, their ways of thinking, are embedded in the religious tradition of given societies. For example, when one looks at European societies today it is possible to distinguish societies with a majority Catholic, Protestant or Orthodox orientation. It is therefore even more necessary—if we want to understand today's world—to know the core values and the basic cognitive styles of individual major cultural regions of the world, whose axis was and remains (perhaps in a hidden form) the major world religions. In this sense it is not possible to fully understand the social, political or economic development of individual parts of Europe—such*

1 Ernest Gellner (1998) *Language and Solitude: Wittgenstein, Malinowski and the Habsburg Dilemma,* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

*as Scandinavia or the Iberian Peninsula—if account is not taken of the long term religious orientation of these regions, which is reflected in all fields of human activity. For this reason, but also because an element of the Forum 2000 conference was a multi-religious gathering of representatives of the Christian religion, Judaism, Islam, Buddhism and Hinduism, we devote a special chapter to the question of religion in a globalizing world. The fact that some recent conflicts in the world have assumed, once again and perhaps somewhat surprisingly, the form of religious clashes, is another reason for us to deal with this subject in more detail.*

# The Transformations of Religion in the Process of Globalization

*Tomáš Halík*

Globalization theories vary in their emphasis on various aspects of the process. Thus we can distinguish socio-economic, socio-political and socio-cultural theories. It would appear that whereas formerly analyzes of economic factors and political consequences of globalization prevailed, in the recent period specialized interest is also increasingly focusing on the cultural and spiritual implications of those civilizational changes. This is because the globalization process also affects the sphere of value orientation, lifestyle and ways of perceiving the world—and these changes in the spiritual sphere are projected back into the behavior of people in the economic and political spheres.

A whole number of authors have drawn attention to the fact that globalization does not simply imply the global expansion of one type of civilization ("modern," Western) along with its values and lifestyle. Rather it is the emergence of a qualitatively new civilization which affects and transforms society from the mutual interlinking of different "worlds." Western civilization released forces that have a different effect in other cultural contexts than the West anticipated or was accustomed to. "The movement of modernization" also evokes dramatic defensive reactions as well as various consequences that can only be tackled on a global scale. The adoption of such decisions requires consensus, a view from a broader perspective and the ability to transcend ways of thinking that the West used to take for granted.

A notable pioneer of socio-cultural analyses of globalization is the sociologist Roland Robertson. In Robertson's view globalization is paradoxical, in that it brings about both absolutism and relativism. It is a process involving a "universalization of particularism"—the global spread of Western culture that grew out of Christian foundations, and also a "particularization of universalism"—whereby Western culture

comes into closer contact with other cultures, and its claim of universal validity collides with the fact of plurality and is thereby relativized. This paradox also affects the fate of religions: their form and social role are transformed; certain features dwindle down while others suddenly blossom.

Robertson was one of the first to deal with the issue of "religion and globalization." Whereas thirty years ago many sociologists continued to accept the prevailing thesis about secularization and thought that the role of religion would rapidly diminish worldwide, Robertson predicted as early as the 1970s that religion not only would retain its social importance in post-industrial society, it would actually play a significant role in the process of globalization. Robertson rejected the view that what had been observed in modern Western society in terms of the separation of religion as a detached sphere of society and its separation from politics—the "privatization of religion"—was a universal phenomenon. Many assumed that what Europe had experienced must sooner or later apply to the entire world. If we abandon the preconceived notions of the Euro-centric interpretation of history however, we discover that on a global scale, European developments—and this applies particularly to the religious situation—tend to be an isolated exception rather than a universal phenomenon. Although non-Western cultures adopted the Western concept of "religion" created by the Enlightenment, they lent it an entirely different meaning. Religion became one of the most important vehicles of group identity. Particularly in those places where various groups felt jeopardized by the unifying pressure of globalization religion experienced revitalization and repoliticization—and this truly became a universal phenomenon.

Let us try to summarize in a few propositions the analyses of sociologists, politologists and religionists and then briefly comment on them.

## Deprivatization and repoliticization of religion

At the end of the 20th century, the German sociologist Thomas Luckmann revised his opinion that the secularization of modern society means the decline and possible disappearance of religious faith: he proved that faith does not disappear but simply "shifts" from public life and external forms, i.e. institutional church-oriented forms, to the

sphere of individuals' private lives.[1] Religion does not die out but becomes "invisible"—*it is privatized*.

At the very least, in a number of European countries there is continuing tendency towards the "individualization of faith"—a declining willingness of believers to identify fully with traditional ecclesiastical institutions and a consequent weakening of the previous functions of those institutions in public life. However, during the last quarter of the twentieth century these phenomena have been overshadowed by a new trend, which is even more marked, and, unlike the secularization of certain European countries, has a global character: the massive accession of religion to public life and politics in particular.

In his best-seller *The Revenge of God: The Resurgence of Islam, Christianity and Judaism in the Modern World,* French sociologist Gilles Kepel documents the political offensive of the monotheistic religions against the liberal order.[2] He cites as examples the "Islamic revolution," the influence of evangelical groups on political life in the USA and of conservative Judaism in Israeli politics. He also mentions the Catholic movement *Communione e Liberatione* and (wrongly in my view) John Paul II's vision of the "re-evangelization of Europe." The American sociologist José Casanova coins, for similar phenomena (he analyzes the role of religion in Spain, Poland, Brazil and the USA), the term *"deprivatization of religion."*

> …the term deprivatization is meant to signify the emergence of new historical developments, which at least qualitatively, amount to a certain reversal of what appeared to be secular trends. Religions throughout the world are entering the public sphere and the arena of political contestation not only to defend their traditional turf, as they have done in the past, but also to participate in the very struggles to define the modern boundaries between the private and public spheres, between system and life-world, between legality and morality, between individual and society, between family, civil

1 Thomas Luckmann (1967) *The Invisible Religion: The Problem of Religion in Modern Society*, New York: Macmillan.

2 Gilles Kepel, (1994) *The Revenge of God: The Resurgence of Islam, Christianity and Judaism in the Modern World*, Cambridge: Polity.

> society and the state, between nations, states, civilizations, and the world system.[3]

Since the 1980s, in Casanova's view, religions have made ample use of the fact that according to the rules of modern society they can enter the public sphere insofar as they respect the principles of freedom of religion and right to privacy.

Another American sociologist, Mark Juergensmeyer, has described the attempts of world religions to intervene actively in public life and assert morality in politics. He notes the link between traditional religions and modern politics.[4] Globalization and the end of the bipolar world did not bring the end of history, but the resurrection of local communities on a religious and ethnic basis. The ethnic elements and religion are being linked throughout the world as "religious nationalism." In various parts of the globe, in the African countries, in Iran, Egypt, Israel, Palestine, Mongolia, India, Sri Lanka and the whole of Central Asia, religious and ethnic movements constitute the opposition to secular nationalism. Juergensmeyer was one of the first authors prior to 11 September 2001 to pay attention to "religious terrorism," particularly in South Asia and the Middle East.

At the end of the 20th century, it is hard to find a major conflict in which religion does not play a significant role, even though it is possible there may be differing views about whether and to what extent religious symbols and ideas are simply used and misused as a cover and tool for interests of another kind and origin. Religious radicalism and fundamentalism should not, however, overshadow the important political role played by religions and religious institutions in the process of peaceful conflict resolution and in the transition from right- and left-wing dictatorships to democracy and civil society—it will suffice to recall the role of the Catholic church in Poland, Spain, Chile, the Philippines, and Nicaragua, etc., or the part played by the activity and authority of Pope John Paul II in the fall of Communism and the process of European integration.

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3 Jose Casanova (1994) *Public Religions in the Modern World*, Chicago–London: University of Chicago Press.

4 Juergensmayer, Mark (1993) *The New Cold War*, Berkeley: University of California Press.

## Necessity to reinterpret the "secularization paradigm"

The political role of religion and the rapid growth of so-called "new religious movements"—both within traditional religions and religious institutions and more often outside them—are cited most frequently as reasons for abandoning or at least radically revising the theory of secularization. For many decades this theory was virtually an unchallenged paradigm in the sociology of religion. These days, however, specialized writing on the status of religion in the contemporary world mostly distances itself at the outset from the view that in the historically foreseeable future we may expected some kind of universal abdication of religion and its replacement by some other phenomenon, such as science—a view that was held by certain advocates of Enlightenment and Positivist theories. These days the secularization theory is often regarded as a scientific mistake that stemmed from an invalid generalization of the crisis of specific functions of certain religions in certain specific geographical areas, which, from a truly global perspective, may be regarded as marginal and exceptional. Nowadays, when serious authors use the term secularization as a feature of the contemporary world (or more specifically of a specific part of Europe) they are at pains to define it more precisely and distinguish it from "secularism"—an ideological plan for propagating and accelerating an anti-religious program. David Martin, in his book *A General Theory of Secularization*, provides possibly the most detailed treatment of the various concepts of secularization; he sums up his analyses by declaring that it is no longer scientifically tenable to regard secularization as a general, unified and irreversible process.[5] Likewise Fenn maintains it would be wrong to portray secularization as some kind of historical pattern such as natural events—it is an ongoing contest between individual actors, whose outcome is uncertain.[6] Stark and Bainbridge, for instance, who tried to apply the theory of rational choice to religion and carried out extensive empirical research into religiosity, came to the opinion that secularization is simply one phase of normal cyclical development of religion (sects turn into

5 David Martin (1979) *A General Theory of Secularization*, New York: Harper & Row.

6 Richard Fenn (1978) *Toward a Theory of Secularization*, Connecticut: Society for Scientific Study of Religion, Storrs.

churches, churches wane, appearance of innovations—new cults).[7] The secularization phase in the Europe of modern times did not leave behind a society without religions, it simply resulted in the decline of one form of religion. Belief remains and is simply in search of new expression. The churches have lost their influence in society rather than religion and the greatest crisis is faced by the "secularized churches," i.e. those that made the greatest efforts to accommodate to "this world." Not only is religion surviving, but it is enjoying a boom precisely in its transcendental and supernatural forms. Where churches are weak we may expect the emergence of more and more "new cults" (unencumbered by older traditions and hence more flexible in respect to the new situation), where churches are strong the trend will be towards "sects" (innovations within existing religions).[8]

## The relationship between religion and politics is not solely the relationship of church and state

If we study the relationship of religion and politics on a global scale, then we are likely to come to a further conclusion: *the Enlightenment paradigm of the "separation of Church and State" is now outdated as a key to understanding these issues.* This concept was a historically determined instrument for protecting the State (and civil society) from the risk of domination by a powerful church and also protection of the freedom of religion from interference by the State. It grew out of the medieval power struggles between Pope and Emperor and also as a response to the religious wars of the seventeenth century and attempts by absolutist monarchs to dictate their subjects' faith. I am sure we can still appreciate and assert all sorts of legal and political principles that prevent mutual interference and interpenetration of state and church institutions. However, if we wish to understand the relationship between religion and politics today, a concept focusing on the relationship of State and Church is no longer adequate: *because the term "Church" has ceased to convey the complexity of today's religious life, in the same way that "the State" is no longer an exhaustive or accurate designation of the political re-*

7 Rodeney Stark and William Bainbridge (1987) *The Theory of Religion*, New York – Bern: Peter Lang.

8 Ibid.

*ality*. Likewise, the principle of "separation" sounds quite absurd and old-fashioned at a time of globalization, when every possible sector of life is interlinked.

The era when the theme of religion and politics could be treated simply as the relationship between two institutions—the churches, with their monopoly on religion and the state with its monopoly on political life—is long over. *The dynamic of religious life today is by no means confined to "the Church" or churches* particularly if this term is used in a legal sense to describe the institutional aspects of the community of believers. As we have shown, religiosity is expressed today chiefly in a multiplicity of new currents, whether within traditional religions and religious institutions or beyond their confines.

In the unstoppable process of globalization the role of the nation state is also diminished. Civil society is by no means represented as markedly as it was a century ago by traditional institutions such as the State, political parties, or trade unions. It would seem that here also the future belongs far more to social movements and international networks of non-governmental organizations of every kind. Traditional church institutions, in common with the State, the political parties or the trade unions, continue to play an irreplaceable role in today's world, but they are by no means as important as they once were in transmitting values, creating a "common language" or influencing life-styles and thinking.

Political and religious life pulsates dynamically in the political, social and religious movements and groups that sometimes operate within the structures of states and churches, and sometimes outside them. Sometimes they transcend those structures *and become international and ecumenical*. It will be very interesting to watch how the relationship between the new social and religious movements and initiatives develop.

There are many positive examples from settings in which civil and religious initiatives managed to join up at local, national or international levels and help promote greater maturity in civil society, the necessary subsoil of a democratic system. It will suffice to remember, for instance, the beginnings of Solidarność in Poland, when civil and religious initiatives worked alongside church leaders and political activists to bring about a radically positive change in the country's political system and thereby make a major contribution towards political change throughout Central Eastern Europe.

Let us now consider the various consequences of globalization in the religious sphere.

## Globalization and religious plurality

One of the most eminent present-day sociologists, Peter L. Berger, has studied in depth the process of secularization. He initially regarded it as a phenomenon that would spread from Europe to other continents as a consequence of "Westernization," although he later rejected this hypothesis. In Berger's view secularization leads to the *de-monopolization* of religion: the most significant characteristic of today's world is no longer secularization but religious plurality. Religious orientation is now a matter of free personal choice. Religions have ended up in a market situation where they are in mutual competition but where also, in many cases, individual denominations have greater mutual understanding and sometimes even create pacts and "cartels." Religious institutions increasingly assume bureaucratic features and believers no longer have such strong links with them; religious life is becoming laicised. However, this situation, in which no religious group is able to assert its claims to universalism, leads not only to tolerance—often accompanied by relativism—but also to fanaticism. Relativism, the need to choose and the difficulty of finding one's way in a multi-colored world can often cause anxiety in many people and this in turn arouses fundamentalist tendencies. Thus religion is confronted with the difficult task of finding a middle path between fanaticism and relativism.[9]

Jose Casanova demonstrates that in pluralist societies, and particularly the USA, the character of certain world religions changes, particularly Judaism or Catholicism.[10] American Judaism has, in its turn, influenced Judaism in other parts of the world, including Israel. It is also possible to show the influence of American Catholicism on the 2nd Vatican Council—which recognized the principles of religious freedom and tolerance—and through the intermediary of the Vatican Council, on world Catholicism as a whole.

9 Peter Berger (1993) *A Far Glory*, New York: Doubleday.

10 Jose Casanova (1994) *Public Religions in the Modern World*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

"American Buddhism" is currently in a process of evolution. Will this transformation of Buddhism (such as its closer ties with psychotherapy) have an influence on Buddhism, not only in the Western world but also in the traditional Buddhist countries? May we even anticipate the eventual development of a "Western form of Islam" that will influence the traditional Islamic countries in return?

## Alternative forms of religion

The younger generation of sociologists of religion criticize the "classics" of their field for having paradoxically fallen victim to a "theological" concept of religion when they talk about the decline or demise of religion. They had focused on the traditional ecclesiastical forms of religion and because of that reductionist approach to sociology that had failed to pay enough attention to other forms of religiosity, which, unlike the traditional forms, have flourished and expanded since about the mid-20th century. In observing the vigor of these new religious formations the younger generation of sociologists have come to the conclusion that religion is not disappearing from the present-day world, but simply changing.

The new formations have gradually acquired the designation of "new religious movements." Whereas in common parlance (strongly influenced by the media) these new formations are most frequently referred to as "sects," this designation is generally rejected as pejorative in academic circles. Some authors do use it, but in a strictly defined sense. Within the category of "new religious movements" a distinction is made between two main types: *"sects,"* which are generally created within the framework of existing religions and religious institutions and alongside them *"cults,"* which generally come into being and gain support outside the boundaries of traditional religions and "official structures." Leading figures of such cults often make no effort to win "members" or a broad "basic membership," but instead influence society through their media appearances or through a therapist-client relationship.

Sociologists who subscribe to the functional concept of religion (those who seek to define religion not in terms of its "subject" but its social role), often regard religion as an anthropological or cultural constant, asserting that there has never existed a "religionless society"—wherever the role of traditional religions declines their role (or at least certain aspects of the "religious role") is taken over by other institutions

and social components, such as the media, sport, popular music, etc. Politologists have studied "political religions" (particularly the efforts of totalitarian regimes to offer their own "faith," ceremonies and "mystique" to legitimize their social order and demand the greatest possible loyalty to the regime). The sociologist Robert Bellah, along with many other authors, has introduced the concept of *civil religion*, originally coined by Rousseau to describe efforts to express the "sacred basis" of nation and state.[11] A frequent topic of study is the French version of "civil religion" that the Jacobins tried to introduce as a substitute for Catholic ceremonies, or the American version, a set of ideas and symbols intended to strengthen in Americans an awareness of the special mission of the United States and to give loyalty to the homeland the character of a sacred commitment. Some authors have wondered whether, after the present wave of new religious movements has waned, the idea of globalization, the concept of the unification of humanity and a "new world order," might not become some kind of "new religion." Some of them have already pointed to the paradox that the western understanding of international order, which does not have religious legitimacy and tries to remain a "naked public place" (a public space protected from the influence of any religion), requires such a degree of devotion that this secular entity becomes "sacrosanct" and thereby represents a provocative challenge to traditional religions, who perceive this understanding of politics as idolatry.

## The causes of fundamentalism

Nowadays the term "fundamentalism" is generally taken to mean an attempt to evade complex choices and difficult positioning in a multifaceted reality: a "return to basics," simple principles, frequently a black-and-white vision of the world and the demonization of "aliens." It is one of widespread reactions of individuals and groups to the disconcerting complexity of life in a globalizing world and to the alleged or real threat to individual or group identities from the "homogenizing" pressure of "global culture." The "fundamentalist" mentality can also be encountered outside the religious sphere—it can also apply to nationalism or

11 Robert Bellah (1992) *The Broken Covenant: American Civil Religion in Time of Trial*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

certain radical ecological groups that condemn modern civilization and call for a return to "a simple life according to nature." (It is debatable, however, whether one may employ term "fundamentalism" that used to denote specific groups in Protestantism in such a broad sense; some scholars maintain that this term—like the term "sect"—is now pejorative and hence inadmissible for academic discourse.)

In the religious sphere it would appear that some of the "new religious movements," in particular, display a radicalism verging on fundamentalism, whereas the traditional religious institutions, thanks to their thousands of years' experience tend to be more capable of adapting to differing cultural conditions and are sometimes even more disposed to dialogue with others, as well as to sensible compromises. If certain sociologists are correct in maintaining that religion and "religious innovations" always start as "sects" and become "churches" only in the course of time, then it comes as no surprise that the embryonic phase tends to be more attended by uncompromising fundamentalism than later institutionalization. Nevertheless in those cases where traditional religion is revitalized as a "counter-culture" in reaction to "modernization" and secularization imposed from outside (such as the "Muslim revolution" against the pro-Western regime of Shah Reza Pahlavi in Iran), fundamentalism assumes its most militant features. Radical religious fundamentalism tends to be disseminated by young people who have studied or worked in the West but feel unaccepted by the West and also (often unconsciously) feel themselves uprooted from their own civilization. Fundamentalism is often a desperate or panic reaction to its exponents' own doubts rather an expression of true firmness of belief. Of course not every "fundamentalism" ends up as fanaticism, and even in the case of fanaticism a distinction must be made between "quiet fanatics" and those fanatics capable of resorting to violence, as well as between "primary fanatics" and those who allow themselves to be induced by their fanaticism.

## Globalization helps increase the influence of "global religious leaders"

A striking of this is the enormous international influence of such figures as Pope John Paul II or the Tibetan Dalai Lama due, not only to the personal charisma (and personal history) of those religious leaders, but

also to their readiness and ability to make ample use of modern means of communication, and to combine direct communication with individuals and with large groups of people in various parts of the globe. Personalities of that caliber cease to be regarded solely as representatives of their religious community and are respected instead as representatives of the "spiritual dimension of life."

## Mutual contact between religions sometimes reinforces syncretism and a "multiple religious identity"

Since time immemorial a frequent reaction to the "intermeshing of worlds" and mutual contacts between world religions has been a tendency to borrow individual elements or even create a kind of synthesis a "super-religion" containing all the previous traditions, dispersing them in a sort of soup, accessible either to specific initiates or to "humankind as a whole." Gnostic and neo-Gnostic quests for "higher conscious" feature particularly in the multi-hued New Age movement and in currents of "post-modern spirituality," as well as in attempts to link mystical elements of the world's religions with features of psychotherapy, "human potential development," etc. These experiments in "religious Esperanto" generally end up as obscurantist sects.

Another interesting product of the convergence of different religions is the "multi-religious identity" that has become a subject of religionist and psychological study particularly in the recent period. This is a fairly common phenomenon in Asia, particularly Japan, where a single individual can owe allegiance to several religious traditions, without their being regarded as "competing systems." What is new are attempts to create similar syntheses out of several monotheistic religions that traditionally asserted a claim to exclusivity (unlike Asian spiritualities). These days not only in the Asian countries, but also in the West, one can come across people who regard themselves as Christians or Jews and at the same time Buddhists or Hindus.

## Ecumenical strivings and inter-religious dialogue

Quite different in character from attempts to do away with natural religious plurality are ecumenical endeavors (rapprochement between Christian churches) and inter-religious dialogue. Unlike the earlier

"unionist movement" (attempts to incorporate orthodoxy and other churches of Eastern Christianity into the Roman Catholic church) ecumenical strivings—one manifestation of which, on the Catholic side, was the Second Vatican Council of 1963–65—seek a unity that would respect the identity of the individual traditions; their aim is more "brotherly understanding" and close co-operation than institutional uniformity (albeit between and within the different churches there are different views of the final aim of ecumenism). Inter-religious dialogue (sometimes also referred to as a "greater ecumenism") transcends the bounds of Christianity and concerns the relationship between religions, particularly the relationship between the great monotheistic religions: Judaism, Christianity and Islam (dubbed "Abrahamic ecumenism"). Contacts are also ongoing between monotheistic religions (essentially Christianity, apart from rare exceptions on the part of the other "Abrahamic faiths") and the "far-Eastern religions"; however, the question is to what extent the term "religion"—which is purely Western and in its broadest sense emerged within Christianity during the Enlightenment period—applies to the spiritual paths that originated in India.

Some Christian theologians have been trying to discard that Enlightenment concept of "religion" as an outdated Euro-centric prejudice, so that they might interpret the encounter of Christian faith with "Buddhism" and "Hinduism" neither as the clash of competing religious systems nor a suspect syncretism, but instead as an opportunity for "inculturation" of the Gospel into the lifestyle and mindset of non-European cultures (analogous to the "inculturation" of the Gospel into Greek, Roman, Celtic or Slav cultures of Europe, which, in any case is not the homeland of Christianity). Nevertheless, the uncertainty surrounding the notion of religion can also lead one to ask, as have various theologians and religionists already, to what extent Christianity itself is necessary linked with "religion" and whether the current form of Christianity in "post-Christian" Europe can still be described as religious.

This also begs the question, raised repeatedly in recent years by the author of these lines, whether the specific status of Christianity—which displays both religious and non-religious features—does not qualify Christianity to play the role of a kind of interpreter and mediator between the world of traditional religions and the secular world of the West, since it shares significant features with both of them.

## Emerging efforts at dialogue between political and religious elites

International political and diplomatic organizations have been showing great interest in dialogue with representatives of the world's religions, particularly in the recent period. Emblematic of that trend was the summit of religious leaders at the United Nations in 2000. This was also the inspiration for Forum 2000's initiative in creating a platform for meetings between representatives of the worlds of science, politics, philosophy, art and religion. Particularly emblematic of this spirit was Václav Havel's appeal (in October 2001) to representatives of the world's religions to seek dialogue and a fruitful exchange of experience not only among themselves, but also with politicians, statesmen, scientists and business people. The atrocious attack on New York by Arab "religious terrorists" in September 2001, gave rise to a positive riposte: leaders of world religions and political leaders clearly feel a need to protest against the misuse of religious symbols and emotions in power struggles, and likewise against the promotion of any faith by violent means.

The non-conformist Catholic theologian Hans Küng, in particular, has stressed that the prerequisite for world peace is peace and ungrudging dialogue *between religions*. "*The Global Ethic Project*"—used as a title for one of his books—and the foundation he established—concentrates chiefly on voicing those moral principles that are identical or analogous in the different religions.[12] These should constitute "ethical minima" as a consensual basis for a global renewal of politics, culture and the economy on a world scale. Moreover, several religious leaders—particularly Pope John Paul II and the present Dalai Lama—have always stressed that believers are "experts in humanity" and religions are energy banks of hope and moral renewal. Quite often we hear appeals not to leave the shaping of political and economic life up to "invisible market forces," but instead to actively collaborate in the creation of a new world order. Were a "global village" not to stand on certain shared spiritual foundations it would be a house standing on sand, or even on a minefield. In this regard we may recall once more a work of one of the first heralds and "prophets" of globalization, the Jesuit thinker and natural scien-

12 Hans Küng (1997) *A Global Ethic for Politics and Economics*, London: SCM Press.

tist Teilhard de Chardin. His vision of the creation of a "noosphere" is a corrective adjunct to the purely technocratic or macro-economic perspective on civilizational transformations. The Czech philosopher Jan Patočka regarded Teilhard (along with Ernst Jünger) as one of the thinkers who, amidst the harsh conditions of World War I experienced the mysterious feeling of fellowship for sufferers on both sides at the front and became aware of "life's leaning out into the night of non-being" and thus fostered the "solidarity of the shaken."

## The risk of the "clash of civilizations"

The risk of the "clash of civilizations" inherent in the unprecedented contact between civilizations differing particularly in their religious roots was dealt with in a book by the American political scientist Samuel Huntington. This international bestseller has been the subject of many commentaries, particularly in connection with the events of 11 September 2001.[13] While Huntington sketches out a possible apocalyptic scenario of world conflict, he also stresses that he is not a "prophet of doom," but simply issuing a warning and urging preventive measures, including the encouragement of inter-religious dialogue.

## Globalization and religion in the light of discussion at Forum 2000 conferences

### *Meditative gatherings in Prague Cathedral*

At the express wish of Václav Havel, the main initiator of the Forum 2000 conferences, distinguished representatives of the world religions and religious thinkers were invited to these discussions. In the preparatory discussions prior to the first Conference, the idea was mooted of not restricting their participation to the discussions in the discussion chamber, but to send an important signal to the public at home and abroad in the form of a joint prayer meeting of representatives of the five most widespread world religions in the holiest location in the Czech lands, the Prague Cathedral of Saints Vitus, Adalbert and Wenceslas. Representatives of Christianity (various Christian churches), Islam,

13 Samuel Huntington (1997) *The Clash of Civilizations*, New York: Touchstone.

Buddhism, Hinduism and Judaism subsequently met there each year above the tombs of the Czech saints and read excerpts from sacred texts of their tradition, addressed a message and joined together in silent meditation, before finally lighting a candle as a symbol of hope that understanding among the believers of various spiritual traditions might prevail over attempts to use religion to unleash hatred and violence. The first meeting was organized with the assistance of representatives of the San Egidio community, which already had considerable experience in the sphere of inter-religious dialogue; all the meetings were chaired by Tomáš Halík. The meditative evenings at the Cathedral were the only event in the framework of the Forum 2000 conferences which members of the general public were free to attend and there was quite a large response on the part of the people of Prague and the media. Conference participants—including experienced politicians—testified to the fact that this part of Forum 2000's tradition had the most powerful emotional impact on them.

Dr. Hilde Kieboom, a representative of the San Egidio community, declared the following when inaugurating the first of those gatherings in the Cathedral: "Religion and politics were no longer separate reigns. They could cooperate. But then difficulties arose. Ethnic and nationalist conflicts exploded as never before. Examples of peaceful coexistence between different cultures broke down in a disastrous way. … A lot of the present conflicts do have religious roots or connotations. We hear people interrogate religions about their sense. Are they a factor of confusion and division in society? What can religions really mean for mankind? In the face of an ever more complicated society a kind of pessimistic resignation often paralyses the hearts of believers. In an age where society is waiting for hopes and dreams they can yield, we cannot imprison the treasure of religion in a sacred cage by a feeling of generalized powerlessness and indifference. Peace is the name of God. And religions have to remind society of this. In every religious tradition the value of peace is written in its fundamentals. Religions are called upon to collaborate more than ever with all constructive partners in society in the name of peace."

"The various religions do not have power on their own. Considering their own weakness, religions can lament their situation and dream of imitating the great ones of this world. We even see religious persons become prisoners of a conflictual logic, even, in the most extremist ex-

pressions, as a disapproval of life. But do they not become in the end spiritually poor and a ridiculous copy of civil and political authorities? We are convinced that religions do have an energy of their own, their own kind of power which differs from that of this world's. We have called it the weak strength of religions. Over the past years, starting in Assisi, we have realized that only the ancient arms of forgiveness and dialogue can purify an environment which has been polluted by personal and collective feelings of violence. It is necessary to fight against this pollution by disarming the hearts of people."

"Religions do not want war and they cannot be used for it. There is no such thing as a holy war. Only peace is holy. In this sense something is still unfinished. This is an incomplete revolution that may occasionally turn into indifference or barbarity. The political changes must be followed by changes at the level of people's consciences. They must turn to reconciliation and the building of bridges. Religious duty is the reconciliation of hearts. This genuine but essential dream has an echo in different hearts and religions and it is also a need. Today we try to reach the depth of these peace energies by listening to the various religious traditions. And we do believe that the weak strength of encounter and dialogue can change history and build, in the new millennium, a new era of peace." (Hilde Kieboom, 1997)[14]

On the same occasion a year later, Tomáš Halík had the following to say: "If the process of globalization consisted solely of overcoming political and economic boundaries, it would lead to a cold and dangerous world. The process of globalization must be accompanied by efforts to overcome the boundaries in the realm of culture and mentality, ideas and emotions. Here we must count on the presence of the barriers of prejudice and many disabling experiences from the distant and not-so-distant past. Therefore, the process of the world growing together in this subtle realm is much more complicated than communication on an economic or political-diplomatic level. However, neglecting this level

14 NB: the quotations throughout the following section have been taken from speeches and discussion contributions during the various conferences of Forum 2000 in the period 1997–2002, and also from speeches made during meditative gatherings of representatives of the world's leading religions in the Prague Cathedral of Saints Vitus, Wenceslas and Adalbert, which were a regular part of all the conferences held at the Prague Castle.

could lead to a situation where the construction of the entire 'global society' would be built on sand, if not a mine-field."

"The establishment of cultural understanding and the sharing of values necessarily incorporates dialogue among the religions of the world. It is required that 'multiculturalism' be changed into a process of communication. It is impossible to be satisfied with a cheap form of tolerance in the sense of a 'non-aggression pact' or solely a free market of ideas, even though these variations are far better than a religious war or attempts at totalitarian domination. It is necessary to proceed further: to listen to each other, to seek that which binds us and that which separates us, to try to understand this as something that can enrich us rather than something that threatens us." (Tomáš Halík, 1998)

*A spiritual diagnosis of the times and the role of religion*

Many interesting views were also expressed during the various meetings concerning the role of religion in our world. In his inaugural address to the first conference, Václav Havel declared: "The contemporary global civilization inside which the tension within the areas of individual religion is taking place is, in essence, a deeply atheistic one. Indeed, it is to date the first atheistic civilization in the history of humankind. Simultaneously, it is the first civilization that embraces the whole planet. The reason I am stressing this fact at this moment is, I hope, obvious: the atheistic nature of this civilization coincides deeply, I believe, with the hypertrophic pursuit of individual interests and individual responsibilities together with the crisis of global responsibilities. Could the fact that humanity thinks only within the limits of what lies in its field of vision and is incapable of remembering also what lies beyond, whether in the temporal or spatial sense, not be the result of a loss of metaphysical certitude, of vanishing points and horizons? Could not the whole nature of the current civilization—with its short-sightedness, with its proud emphasis on the human individual as the crown of all creation and its master, and with its boundless trust in humanity's ability to embrace the universe by rational cognition, could it not all be but the natural manifestation of a phenomenon which, in simple terms, amounts to the loss of God? Or, more specifically, the loss of respect towards the order of existence of which we are not the creators but mere components, to

the mysterious inherent meaning or spirit of this order, to its memory capable of not only recording that part of our deeds concealed from others but of recording it for eternity, that is of evaluating our deeds from the point of view of eternity?" (Václav Havel, 1997)[15]

A representative of the Asian continent also spoke about the role of religion in a globalizing world: "Religion plays a very important role in the process of establishing the value of social pluralism and cultivating the individual's spiritual strength. This is the reason that there is a great trend in the world toward religious revival and spiritual awakening as the curtain falls on the 20th century. In the tide of globalization, religion will shoulder the heavy burden of balancing the developments between materialistic and spiritual civilizations. Nevertheless, as we face the new era, religion should have a new essence and expression."

"Religion should return to its original essence, beginning with its concern for human character and social needs. It should not only focus on individual practice, but should present a social vision that is integrated into the trends in the development of civilization. It should build a new horizon filled with spiritual balance and social harmony."

"Religions ought to develop more tolerance. The new interpretations of religious tenets ought to be toward greater accessibility. The tenets believed and gods worshipped by each religion may differ; however, their pursuit of the truth and respect for nature are the same. Therefore, the development of religion should not be toward more exclusiveness, but toward observing principles of mutual respect and peaceful coexistence."

"Religion should be even more closely linked with society. Religion is the spiritual pillar of support for society, while society is religion's patron. Therefore, religion is not a spiritual activity divorced from society, but rather should be a concrete realization of its fusion with the social pulse. Only by embracing the ideals of the lay world can religion reach more converts to work jointly for the realization of a beautiful vista." (Lee Teng-hui, 2000)

15 See full text above, pp. 15–22.

*Tolerance alone is not enough*

Many speakers stressed the need for dialogue and tolerance among the religions and the recognition of plurality as a positive phenomenon. Nevertheless some speakers warned against superficial syncretism and preferred the term "respect" to the concept of "mere tolerance." "How should we educate the young to tolerance without seducing them to doubt whatever deeper truth, to relativize all firm beliefs and convictions, to conduct their lives without solid guidelines and moral issues?" asked Nikolaus Lobkowicz, a philosopher of Czech origin. "This problem is particularly acute, of course, for religions. But it is precisely religions, it seems to me, that have a way, or could make visible a way, in which to handle the problem. They, the religions, must seek within their own teaching, it seems to me, a positive interpretation of rival religions. After having violated their rights for centuries, we Christians have recently achieved this with respect to Jews. They are older brothers. But we have still not achieved this in relation to Islam, for example, although the latter has known a positive interpretation of Christianity since its very beginning. As millions of Muslims live all over Europe today, this issue has become urgent. In other words, firm beliefs, without whose existence tolerance risks turning into indifference, have to look for positive, or at least benevolent, interpretations of convictions contradicting them. In this way, they can educate advocating tolerance without putting themselves into question by succumbing to relativism." (Nikolaus Lobkowicz, 1997)

Respect, rather than "tolerance"—that is how one might sum up the thinking of one of Forum 2000's founders, the writer Elie Wiesel: "I don't like a word that has been used today, with very good intentions. I don't like the word tolerance. Tolerance is in a way, I don't know, it's degrading. Who am I to tolerate you? You are a free person. I would rather replace it with respect. We should fight for respect. I must respect other religions, I must respect other political theories, unless they become murderous. But in general it is the key word, at least, that should govern these discussions and perhaps our lives." (Elie Wiesel, 2001)

Bishop Bello spoke with urgency about religion's mission of peace: "All religions should see to it that we have a form of solidarity built in the world that would lead to securing peace for the world of today. Religions at this time should be based on some of the fundamental prin-

ciples we are talking about. There are ten tasks or ten issues that could be summed up like this: the first is love for God, which is a guarantee of authenticity and stability of love for our neighbors. It is important that religious moments become a factor of unity and peace building in the world. All the errors, all the mistakes of the past should not be seen as something committed by religious leaders, or people who believed, who had some religion, but these mistakes were made by people who did not understand the very fundamentals of religion. Religion can enrich us but it can also be misused. What is important is that man has a purpose, has an intention, and no scientific research can generate this purpose. … Different religions that accompany churches on their way to the third millennium can play a very important role in the world today, which is characterized by materialism, by a lot of selfishness. On the basis of different cultures full of narcissism, individualism and other characteristics, religion must help us promote the feeling of openness, at the same time guaranteeing self-reliance for each of us, but we should always understand the transcendentalism of God. Is God within the framework of Abraham's faith—be it in Judaism, Christianity, Islam—the only creator, the only creator of the unique mankind? Our return to this transcendentalism should always respect the dignity of all other people. … Reconciliation, co-operation and the very patient building of a constituency by dialogue is absolutely essential. We need to mobilize everybody, we need to change humankind to be able to cope with such threats as nuclear weapons, but not only for the bad, also for promoting some very fundamental human values. We are at a crossroads of history: to be or not to be? There is still a very dangerous possibility: we would be no more and yet we need to be more. And being more will also mean getting rid of all oppression. The question is whether we shall manage to be this 'more' as I call it, or whether we shall not be at all. In other words, we need to get out of this pile of death, we need to make use of the operative capacity that is available to us for further development. To be more than we are or not to be at all." (Bishop Belo, 1997)

### *Respect for religious plurality*

The Indian thinker and politician Karan Sing regards respect for the plurality of spiritual paths to be a condition of truly peaceful coexistence: "This necessarily involves a creative and continuing dialogue between the great religions of the world. … The essential point, which needs to

be accepted, is that there are multiple paths to the divine. From the dawn of recorded history, the quest for the divine has been a major dimension in all world's great civilizations. The divine has been accessed in different ways, described in different words and portrayed in different forms. This plurality of paths to the divine is one of the most striking features of human history, well expressed in the famous Vedic dictum—*Ekam sad vipraha bahudha vadanti*—the Truth is one, the Wise call it by many names. It provides the ideological foundations for the Interfaith movement. We can all hold firmly to the belief that our own religion is the best path to the divine, but it is unacceptable to use terror and oppression to force this view upon people of other faiths. Who are we, denizens of a tiny speck of dust in the cosmos, to seek to limit the immeasurable effulgence of the divine to one particular entity, one particular point in time, or one particular text? There are billions of suns like ours in our own galaxy, billions of galaxies in the boundless universe around us. Is it not the height of hubris for us to claim a monopoly of divine wisdom or an exclusivity of contact with the divine? … Moving beyond the terrible traumas of the twentieth century, therefore, we now need to create new songs, new symbols, new myths, a new dimension of awareness to sustain and support the new global consciousness. This, indeed, is at the heart of what thoughtful people around the world, consciously or unconsciously are attempting, whether in science or philosophy, religion or any other field of human activity. It is most appropriate that Forum 2000 in the year 2000 has highlighted the theme of spiritual values. Love, compassion, mutual understanding, respect for teachers and elders, equal regard and protection for women, special care and consideration for children, commitment to healing Mother Earth of the ravages inflicted on her, conflict resolution and creation of a climate of peace are all spiritual values that need to be highlighted." (Karan Singh, 2000)

The Lutheran Bishop Jonson likewise asserts the positive aspects of religious pluralism over mere polite tolerance: "Religions will continue to play a decisive role, providing a source of ultimate hope, offering symbols and the language of cohesion and universal ethical values. In spite of all that we call secularism, man's inherent religiosity will always find old and new expressions. The pressure and the trials of traditional as well as new religions is a hallmark of our era, but the religious language of identity is often that of loneliness. And this may be particularly

true of Christianity. This makes room for exclusivism and fear. The challenge as we enter the next millennium is therefore not the threat of secularism, but the need for authentic pluralism. As the cry for ethnic, national, racial and religious identity grows loud we must learn to acknowledge the limits of our own spiritual experience and understand other faiths in their own terms. … Plurality and diversity are found in every religious community. But through pluralism, which is a condition for peace and a shared future in the world, there is much more than a recognition of plurality and mutual respect. Pluralism is to actively make a home not only for oneself but also for one's neighbor in this multi-faceted world. It is to worship God transcending all particular languages and images. It is to affirm that God is greater than our understanding. It is to trust the spirit of God giving life and truth for all. It is a drive to find out how others have known God, to seek the depth of one's own faith by encountering other sacred traditions. It is to understand the suffering of others in the past and the present. It is to maintain one's own commitment and in this it differs from relativism—it assumes not only openness but commitment. Pluralism as distinct from tolerance assumes equality and neutrality. Dialogue which is a real two-way language encounter is the very basis of pluralism and must become the language of tomorrow. As we enter the third millennium of Christendom the world is already a global multi-religious forum. The potential conflicts supported by confessional loneliness and institutional power are many. But the opportunities to draw from the old spiritual sources, to refresh and renew the whole human community and to develop an ethos of common destiny, are also ours." (Jonas Jonson, 1997)

In addition to respect for pluralism, another Protestant thinker, Hans Ucko, calls for religious communities to engage in critical reflection as a condition for genuine inter-religious dialogue and cooperation based on partnership: "The task of religion in today's globalized world is to start looking upon the other as the significant other, and to begin working through education. First of all, we must learn the virtue of tolerance, not a tolerance in the sense that we will merely endure the presence of the other, but in the sense that we begin working towards appreciation of the other. This has historically not been the case, religions have focused on themselves and have looked upon the other, the stranger, in a margin. Today, I think, it is important to include the other as part of

our own religious self-understanding, so as not to have the other only in the margin but as someone who is helping us understand ourselves. But for this we need self-criticism. And I think one of the most important lessons for us today, as we come close to each other, is to allow self-criticism to play a role in our religious communities and in our religious education. Often in inter-religious interactions, we are used to presenting our ideals, and the slogans of our religious traditions. Today maybe we need to also take a look, and a deep look into our history, as religious communities, and have this plan to interact with each other. … This is, I think, something that calls for a continued discourse, a continued reflection that goes beyond the grand interfaith gatherings, but focuses on particular issues, bringing together people from different walks of life. It should not perhaps rely on declarations, but rather on developing our education in our madrassas, in our synagogues, in our churches, in our temples so that we begin to take religious plurality as something God-given and as something to appreciate." (Hans Ucko, 2002)

The Orthodox Patriarch of Constantinople, Bartholomew, warned against utopian attempts to create some new universal religion: "We are already standing before the danger of a significant deviation in the history of the world, because—although we all accept global society, the family of all humankind—as something worthy, in which everyone will be able to develop freely their own personality, some people may still be tempted to attempt to exploit others. By this, we mainly refer to ideological prevalence, both cultural and totalitarian, which is worse than political servitude."

"Ideological totalitarianism is expressed today, for the most part, by religion-based, fundamentalist movements, whose followers consider it their duty to globally impose the religious faith from which they usually derive. Of course, it is right for each faithful individual to profess that he or she finds the fullness of truth within his or her faith. Nonetheless, it is not right to refuse others the freedom to have a different understanding and faith. In expressing the faith of the Orthodox Church, we accept the dimension of the universality of the human race, namely the unity of humankind in God, and the acceptance of the diversity of others as the foundation of love, which is the very being of God. Globalization—being a human activity towards unity—should not conceal any ideological or religious totalitarianism. … The unity of humankind will not come

through the mixing of religions and the creation of a new man-made universal religion, which would be an amalgamation of metaphysical faiths and moral principles from various religious origins. If religion bears a true relation to God, as it should, and is not just a man-made creation, and if God is a personal entity, as we believe and know by experience that he truly is, then every human idea regarding religion as conceived by the human will is destined to collapse. Even if this man-made religion manages to survive, it will be a delusion, for which there is no worthy reason to work. Our positive vision as religious leaders is, and always will be, the recognition by all people of the uniting force of love." (H. H. Patriarch Bartholomew, 1999)

*Reflection on own experience*

Some speakers gave instances of tolerance from their experience of their own traditions. "My case is typical for young Japanese generations: they are open to the system of religion, they belong to many religions, and they try to pick up the common elements of these religions. … Their naturalness of mind is the base for their understanding of religious systems, and thus many people say that the Japanese are very tolerant of religious differences. But in the core of the Japanese mind, they are not faithful to any one religious system, but instead try to pick up the religious teachings of many religions. From cradle to tomb is a common saying, but my Tibetan teacher told me that the most important time is before the cradle and after the tomb, so I think that it is possible to think before religion and after religion. The modern Japanese attitude to the 21st century's religion is to include in the study an understanding of religion before religion and after the systems of religion." (Shinichi Nakazawa, 1999)

Rabbi Friedlander from London always conveyed with conviction the extremely valuable, but painful experience of the Jews: "I speak as a president of the World Conference of Religions for Peace. … We know the logic of aggression, which inexorably leads to more violence, and moves far away from the original sources. I am afraid that there are similar aggressive patterns within religion, where the personal position is affirmed to the point where it eliminates any awareness of other religions and their authentic approach to God. The fires of fanaticism can

rage through sanctuaries and destroy the faithful. Thus, in the Torah, we read of the sons of Aaron, Nadav and Avihu, 'They placed strange sacrifices before the Lord, which God had not commanded, and a fire came forth and destroyed them.' The Torah does not tell us what the strange offering might have been. Traditionalists feel they wanted to make changes; liberal thinkers recognize the fanatic fire of faith, which is self-destructive and leads religion into rigidity and estrangement from the world. In our time of globalization, we cannot afford to erect walls around ourselves. We need an open religion, not one that is closed to all except a few faithful devotees. The logic of excluding others is a false fire in our houses of worship. We have to remind ourselves that there is no monopoly of the sacred space, which exists between God and humanity. There is also a logic of love and of mutual understanding, This, more than anything else, is a contribution which religion can make to the world at this crucial time." (Albert H. Friedlander, 2000)

Karan Singh, for his part, stressed Hinduism's inspirational contribution towards a spirituality in tune with the most crucial and burning issues of our time: "Being the oldest continuing religion in the world, Hinduism has some special features, which need to be briefly pointed out for a better understanding of the Hindu vision. … In sharp contradiction to the Semitic religions, which go back to single texts, prophets and Gods, Hinduism incorporates multiple paths of the divine. It believes that the entire universe, not only the tiny speck of dust that we call planet Earth, but the billions upon billions of galaxies in the boundless universe around us are all permeated by the divine. It also believes that the divine spark exists in all beings, particularly in human beings who have reached a stage in evolution where they can work positively for union with the divine. … There is a clear realization that if nature is destroyed, humanity itself will be in grave danger—a possibility that the ruthless exploitation of nature in this century threatens to make a reality. The ancient Hindu dictum 'the earth is our mother and we are all her children' represents the basis for a new eco-friendly vision for the future. Secondly, Hinduism is strongly in favor of interfaith dialogue, harmony and understanding. Not being a proselytizing religion and not claiming any monopoly in the field of spiritual growth, Hinduism is happy to cooperate with other religions of the world in building a harmonious society for the future. The interfaith movement, which is now

beginning to grow around the world, thus represents an area in which Hinduism, with its pluralistic and multi-faceted background, can play a very positive role. It is quite clear that the religious fanaticism, fundamentalism and violence that have disfigured history down through the long and torturous corridors of time are still active in many parts of the world and continue to pose a major threat to peace and tranquility. Any vision of the future must therefore involve a strong interfaith movement that cuts across religious, ethnic, linguistic and geographical barriers."

"The third area in which the Hindu vision of the future can be of special significance is gender equality. For Hindus, the concept that God has to necessarily be male is patently unacceptable. Indeed, in the Hindu tradition the feminine principle in the form of the Goddess is invariably worshipped along with the deity and also occupies an independent space in the Hindu pantheon and psyche. This view, when related to human society, can help us to outgrow the crude sexism of the past that relegates women to an inferior position and reassert the fact that all human beings, regardless of their race or religion, nationality or gender, must enjoy equal rights and responsibilities in the emerging global society."

"These are only three areas where the Hindu vision can help in structuring a sane, harmonious and equitable global society in the next millennium." (Karan Singh, 1999)

One of the Buddhist participants warned against the fanaticism of some of the new religious movements that have sprung up as a reaction to secularization: "One of the major characteristics of modern industrial civilizations is their strong drive for secularization. So, once any society is modernized, or industrialized, trends toward secularization are inevitable, but at the same time there is a wider effect, the birth of new religious movements, many of which are more narrow-minded, more hostile to other religious believers. These two trends are, according to my understanding, mutually very closely connected. … A human being cannot live on bread alone. This fight of the strong appears to have been produced by the development of industrialization. Human beings cannot survive alone on physical satisfaction of their needs. Human beings have spiritual desires to be filled. One of the previous speakers said that atheism is spreading. Atheists are those people who do not believe in the existence of the single Creator, God with a capital G, but the concept of

the atheist is not alone in rejecting the concept of the single Creator of the world. In the Buddhist tradition, in which I was raised, there is no concept of a single Creator; neither does it include the concept of the atheist. We should be free from such kinds of bias. It is spread throughout the non-religious people, while the existence of people who are indifferent to religion is only one aspect of modern civilization. We should pay due attention to the more dangerous one, that is the revival of narrow-minded religious movements. Which is one of the most important challenges we, human beings, are facing now." (Seizaburo Sato, 1997)

*Religion and politics*

The theme of "politics and religion" cropped up repeatedly during the various conferences. The American political scientist Francis Fukuyama highlighted the fundamental link between the secular concept and the traditions of Western Christianity: "This is the essential question that we face today. Are those rights that we assert in the West truly universal and what are the appropriate claims of other cultures against them? Now, I think that as a historical act, the relationship between Western Christianity and contemporary secular human rights is incontestable. It is not an accident that modern liberal notions of rights grew up in the soil of modern Christendom, and in particular after the Protestant Reformation. Any number of philosophers—Tocqueville, Hegel, even the arch-antidemocrat Nietzsche himself—argued that modern liberal democracy, is in fact a secularized form of Christianity. But despite that cultural origin, we have to ask ourselves whether the invention of this concept of rights, despite that fact that it comes from the West, is not in some sense a universal acquisition." (Francis Fukuyama, 2001)

The American political scientist and theologian Michael Novak also spoke about the relationship between democracy and the Judeo-Christian tradition of "Biblical realism": "For many years the term human dignity was only a noise made by lips. Yet no century in history has been so drunk and utopian, and so disoriented morally by pretty pictures of the future. Murders were committed in the name of ideas about the better organization of society, ideas that we learned to call ideology. It was enough to make a speech about a better future for humanity to cast suspicions. … I think it is important to see that this struggle back from

nihilism is working out of an ethic; it's already well advanced. Now, for a Jew or a Christian it's not surprising at the end of the Second World War to have discovered how important it is to cling to truth. The truth is another name for God, and to rediscover that what they had been afraid of was something important in them."

"Now, the last point I want to make has to do with institutions. Certain sorts of institutions are compatible with Judaism and Christianity and others are not. And I'd like to speak of Biblical realism. Those institutions which are designed to facilitate discovery, which assume that humans are never at their final destination: they are always at the pilgrimage, they are always at the position that the Messiah has not come, the time has not come. Yet they need institutions which allow them to criticize and self-correct. Jews and Christians are commanded to prepare the way for God before he comes again, to build up the kingdom of God but it is not yet. It is always not yet. And this, I think, is the role of democracy."

"Why democracy? It took a long time to get, by trial and error, the right institutions because democracy is not rule by the people. The founders of the United States at least were quite self-conscious about the fact that they did not want to found a democracy, they wanted to found a democratic republic, to check the capacity of the executive. And so they invented representative government and the separation of powers and many other devices. If you want the rule of law and you want the protection of human rights you must account for human sinfulness, human vice, human evil, human ambition, greed and the rest, and you must take protections against it. The concept of sin is a powerful political concept." (Michael Novak, 1997)

Former South African politician Frederik Willem de Klerk spoke of the need to seek a new model for the relationship between state and religion: "To what extent is terrorism an explosion of the tension between secularized societies and religion? There is this increased suspicion of believers that the liberal secular society is a one-way road leaving religion behind. In my view, we should take this very seriously, that there are moral requirements which so far find their most adequate expression in the language of religion. They should not be pushed aside, but adequately translated into the language of our liberal societies. This has not been fully achieved yet. There is an unfinished dialectic process on

secularization in our Western societies. Science and tolerance are important but insufficient to give adequate answers as to what our moral obligations are." (Frederik Willem de Klerk 2001)

*Political power and the prophetic authority of religion*

Rabbi René-Samuel Sirat, for his part, challenged the representatives of the world religions to show greater courage in fulfilling their prophetic and critical role vis-à-vis political power and its representatives: "A representative of any religion—whatever they defend, whenever they want to be truly sincere, loyal to their ideals, loyal to their missions, if they want to be at the same time a component of this harmony—needs to get rid of whatever is related to politics, because this is the reverse of their mission. This is not to say that a political mission is something that we should look down upon. I do feel that politicians are extremely responsible, and this responsibility at the end of this century is absolutely enormous, and we should try to help politicians to cope with all these new responsibilities. But our Jewish tradition has taught us that whenever there is a meeting of these two different powers, religious powers, political powers, economic powers, and so forth, the result is bad. I think that religious representatives should call upon all the rulers, all the kings—it's a kind of interpellation in fact. And I would say that some representatives of different religions are not courageous enough. They find their place only in their temples, in their churches, in their mosques, and so forth, like all the prophets who turned to King David. They should tell their contemporary rulers what is wrong and what is right, because by doing this they would help us develop more harmony." (René-Samuel Sirat, 1997)

Tomáš Halík also urged religion to continue with the de-sacralization of politics in the light of its prophetic struggle against idolatry in the face of totalitarian regimes: "Therefore, a religion that would turn away from the world and its problems in disgust would truly be the opiate of the people or an opiate for the people, as Marx claimed. It is the right as well as the responsibility of a religion to step forth into the public sector, but not in a manner whereby it concludes a partnership or a non-critical alliance with some political power, but rather in a manner that provides a certain critical corrective influence as well as an inspiration."

"Professor Jonathan Sacks, London's Chief Rabbi, whose liberal Jewish thinking is very close to my Christian thought processes, said that a legacy of the old Israelite religion consists of three things—three types of authority: royal authority which, in modern terms, is the management of power; pastoral authority which is based on maintaining and cultivating certain symbols and traditions that are necessary for society (in modern terms, this can be defined as a certain social hermeneutics); and the third, which I view as the most important, is prophetic authority which is the authority held by guardians, the guardians of power, whenever it has the tendency to disengage itself, the task of its critics becomes the fight against idolatry."

"Should religion clear the public arena, then sometimes, because religion is a certain anthropological as well as social constant, politics become a religion for the people and become dangerous. Two secular movements were declared the most destructive during the course of human history—Communism and Nazism. Nazism, which detested Judaism and Christianity, killed 8 million Jews, and Communism, which detested all religions, brought about the deaths of tens of millions of people in its concentration camps. These were political secular religions and proved to be very destructive; thus it is a great call to those who watch over spiritual traditions to try to at least be on guard, to play a critical and prophetic role to ensure that secularism, which breaks off communications with spiritual traditions, does not become demonic." (Tomáš Halík, 2003)

### *Islam and violence*

Great attention was paid to Islam, the difference between Islam and its traditions of tolerance and Islamism—a political misuse of Islam. This theme was particularly topical at the conference held in October 2001, practically the first such meeting of representatives of Western and Islamic culture since the terrorist attack in the USA on 11 September.

A year before the terrorist attacks in the USA, Yousif al-Khoei advocated education as the best way to prevent fanaticism: "Islamic civilization has always been engaged in the global processes of interaction and exchange, which exist at different levels today. I see no inherent contradiction between globalization and Islamic tradition. Indeed, throughout

its history, Islam has been both a recipient and initiator of globalization—its interactions and processes."

"If I may begin with a small example on the level of ideas: Medieval Islamic philosophers were, in great part, the medium for reviving, in the West, the legacy of earlier civilizations, such as the ancient Greeks. Indeed, inherent within Islam is the attachment of spiritual and ethical values towards the protection and promotion of knowledge, a process which in itself has left Western civilization with an enduring and positive legacy. … The Muslim world today is, by and large, the developing world. … Many contemporary Muslim societies have been largely shaped by the more recent legacy of their colonial subjugation. Their development has therefore been stifled, like much of the developing world. This context needs to be understood if we are to comprehend the differential impact of globalization. The social reality in these societies is, in many cases, poverty, lack of access to education, elitist maintenance of the status quo through military muscle, environmental degradation, lack of rule of law and denial of civil liberties. How the vastly different elements of these societies will meet the various challenges of globalization is yet to be seen. Important indicators are already in place that do allow us to consider the advantages and disadvantages of globalization on our world."

"Let us look at some of the disadvantages first. The idea of cultures is important here. Some have pointed to the idea of cultural hegemony—the 'McDonaldization' of the world. It is sobering to bear in mind that some multinationals are richer than most developing states. Moreover, in an era where there is now only a single superpower, which has the potential to impose its hegemony—cultural, economic and political—through these global channels, it is all the more important to guard against the erosion of traditional and, in many cases, powerless societies who wish to preserve their ways of life. This is as important for parts of the Muslim world as it is for the rest of the developing world."

"The communications and technological revolution have also had a profound impact. The advances of information technology and the sheer volume of its availability and accessibility—albeit mainly to politically and socially empowered elites—poses a number of questions and challenges. Muslim societies are, in the main, recipients of this phenomenon."

"Globalization, however, also has potential advantages. It has the potential to give a larger role to the United Nations and the idea of an international mechanism, substituting the cold-war ethic for a new pattern of international interdependence and cooperation. Thus, paradoxically, globalization can actually help in diffusing power, rather than centralizing it. It also places human-rights values and democracy as a basis of politics and social development. It leads to a global village that, it can be argued, removes barriers between nations in many different areas of cooperation; allows for greater economic relations; facilitates social and cultural mixing; and ultimately can even reduce xenophobia and mistrust."

"With this latter point in mind I would like to turn to looking inside—that is, to challenges within Islamic tradition. It is important to unlock the crucial role Islam can and does play in accentuating the positive aspects of globalization. … Thus, Islam also injects an ethical dimension to how we treat the environment—in the modern age environmental problems, as well as the economic aspects already touched upon, are of course intrinsically global in their implications. The solutions therefore are also global and Islam recognizes this and the need for understanding and cooperation across boundaries."

"On a more theoretical level, the concept of *ijtihad*—of interpretation of holy texts—also has important implications. *Ijtihad* allows Islam to adapt to changing circumstances and environments. It militates against a rigid, traditional one-dimensional view—wholly inadequate in such a dynamic era of globalization—while remaining firm on universal principles."

"I began my talk by suggesting a link between spiritual and ethical values towards the protection and promotion of knowledge. Education, I continue to believe, is the key to solving many of our problems. Deny education and you deny fundamental freedoms all religious traditions have been espousing since the dawn of humanity. Deny education and you allow the infiltration of bigotry, prejudice and extremism. Deny education and you allow abhorrent practices to occur without criticism and sometimes under the name of tradition, religion or nationalism." (Yousif al-Khoei, 2000)

Francis Fukuyama stressed the need for a differentiated approach towards Islam: "I think that the growth of modern liberalism and the rise

of the secular state was born precisely in the inability of Western societies to reach a religious consensus over their political basis. And the background for that was the intense sectarian struggles of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. In fact, the Czech Lands, where we hold this meeting, were the site of many bloody battles, sectarian battles between different sects of Christians contesting over which religious order would prevail in which territory. And it is precisely against the horror of things like the Thirty Years War, that early liberals like Hobbes and Locke and Montesquieu all began to argue that it was necessary to separate religion from politics, precisely because religious consensus would never be possible. I would argue that Islam faces a similar choice today. The insistence on the unity of religion and politics, I think, not only separates Muslims from Christians, or Muslims from the secular West, from Jews, from Hindus, from other cultural groups, but in the longer run, it seems to me that it is also going to separate Muslims from each other, for precisely the reasons that religion separated Christians from each other during the wars of religion in Europe. As our politicians, both East and West, have been telling us over the last few weeks, it is not clear that there is a single interpretation of Islam. It is not clear that Islam itself necessitates an intolerant fundamentalist view that unifies religion and political power. And, in fact, I think if you look at the world and the diversity of strands of Islam, both historically and at the present moment, it is clear that that is one among many choices. That there have been more liberal movements and ways of thought in Islam. I think that contemporary Iran, having experienced theocracy for the past twenty-three years, is likely to be an important source of that. And so I think that this is a question of secularism and the need for religious tolerance, one that Muslims themselves must contend with." (Francis Fukuyama, 2001)

One of the Islam thinkers also spoke of the need to differentiate between mainstream and radical Islam: "As a Muslim, I'm quite horrified, as, I'm sure, are the overwhelming majority of the Muslims around the world, by the terrorist attacks in New York and Washington. For three reasons: first, obviously, the loss of so many innocent lives, which is utterly condemned in the holy book, the Koran. The loss of one innocent life equals the loss of the whole humanity in the Koran. And, also, let us not forget that many of the victims in those terrorist attacks, some

thousands of them, were of the Muslim faith. And this is largely ignored by the media. Secondly, I am sad because the great faith of Islam, which is encompassed by one-fifth of humanity, has become the main victim of this tragedy with very, very serious consequences for the future. The third reason why I'm sad is because the children in our schools—we have Islamic schools in London and New York—have to face constant harassment, a barrage of intimidation and racism that is of no fault of their own. And there is a very strong possibility, that, if this kind of language, some of which we heard this morning, continues, these children will develop a siege mentality with very, very serious consequences for generations to come. … On the question of a clash of civilizations, between the civilized and uncivilized worlds, and the use of terms such as 'Islamic terrorism' and so forth, we have to be very careful not to turn the theory of a clash of civilizations into a self-fulfilling prophecy. There is no civilized and uncivilized world. There is only one world, and the evils of terrorism. Terrorism is terrorism. There is no Islamic, Jewish, or Christian terrorism."

"My final point is to do with … the clash between fundamentalist Islam and human rights. I would say, if you actually go back to the fundamentals of Islam, the very early days of Islam, it's actually extremely progressive. It emphasizes the respect for life and property. It talks about dialogue with other faiths. There's a whole chapter in the Koran about Mary and Jesus. There is freedom of worship, *lakum deenakum waliya deen*, which means: 'You have your religion, I have mine.' There are a lot of verses empowering women. Islam, don't forget, gave women a legal personality some 1,400 years ago when Europe was living in the Dark Ages. Islam worked hard to abolish slavery. Islam spoke about respect for the environment. I think it's really all our duty to encounter these profound explorations of the tradition and tolerance within each religion—it's not just Islam, but within each religion—and not allow the bin Ladens and Saddam Husseins of today to hijack the Islamic agenda." (Yousif al-Khoei, 2001)

Another distinguished Muslim, Sheikh Muhammed Ali, spoke in similar terms in autumn 2001: "It was really a barbaric terrorist attack on the whole world and on the whole people. I wish to make this clear—that these attacks are against all religions, against Islam. Those people are a cult, they are not belonging to any religion, and they are not belong-

ing to Islam as a great religion. This tragic event was an attack on our shared civilization."

"On my topic, secondly, in discussing the Islamic doctrine of human rights I would like to distinguish such a doctrine from the human rights practices and the abuses in certain Muslim countries. Abuses of human rights in so-called Islamic countries like Afghanistan or, for that matter, in Iraq, which is my country, no more reflect Islam's view of human rights than did the practices of Torquemada and the Inquisition in the Middle Ages or the Nazis in Germany reflect Christian doctrine with respect to human rights; or, for that matter, did the Baruch Goldstein attack in Hebron reflect the attitude of Judaism towards the freedom of religion. It is individuals, be they Muslims, Christians, Jews, Tamils or Hindus, who may abuse human rights, not the theological doctrines themselves."

"For a better understanding of Islam's view towards human rights, one must start with one key difference between Islamic political thought and Western political thought, as such thought has emerged since the Enlightenment through the works of philosophers such as Rousseau. This difference relates to the concept of sovereignty. To whom does political sovereignty belong? In Islam sovereignty belongs to God. He is the ultimate giver and with whom ultimate power resides. In Western political thought, especially liberal democratic political thought, sovereignty belongs to the people. It is the people who have sovereignty and who convey it to the governments. Therefore, governments obtain their legitimacy from the people and lose it if the people withdraw their support for a government. As I said earlier, under Islamic political doctrine, it is God, and not the people, who provides legitimacy to a government and to its laws. The effect of this difference is that under Islamic political doctrine, even if people wanted particular laws or particular governments, those governments or laws may not be legitimate if the particular law or government is in violation of God's will. Respectively, such will is conveyed in the Koran and interpreted by Islamic scholars. I am a Shiite Muslim scholar and I have been educated as such. As a result I will provide an outlook on Islam and human rights with a particular Shiite Islamic view. In practice, though, the basis of doctrine is substantially similar to all schools of thought with certain minor exceptions."

"The basis of Islamic law from which the Islamic Doctrine of Human Rights has evolved is the Koran, which we Muslims believe is the

word of God and the Sunni, of the prophet, Mohammed. All His sayings and practices led the Islamic community. In the Shiite Islam, unlike certain other schools of Islamic law, we have a doctrine known as *Ijtihad* which provides that Islamic law can continue to be interpreted and renewed taking into account existing circumstances. For those who are lawyers here, *Ijtihad* is somewhat similar to positivism in the development of legal doctrines. Certain other schools of Islamic law, most notably the Handbelli school, from which the Wahaabi and Salafis, have emerged, have essentially banned this doctrine of legal renewal and positivism. The Taliban are followers of these schools, which is why they want to implement a state that is very similar to that one that existed one thousand five hundred years ago. By contrast, the Islamic Republic of Iran, has a very different basis. A system of government has incorporated the doctrine of *Ijtihad*."

"Having laid the groundwork, I will now briefly describe certain key concepts relating to Islam's view of human rights. Under Islamic law, the right to life is protected in the Koran. There is the following saying, whoever kills a human being except as punishment for murder or other crime in the land shall be regarded as having killed all mankind. The execution of another human being is only allowed for proscribed crimes and then after the open trial. I know that there are differences of opinion with respect to this matter in the Western world but I would like to point out that execution as a form of punishment is permitted under certain state laws in the United States and the U.S. Supreme Court has not decided to overrule state law on constitutional grounds. I am also aware that it has been alleged that it is acceptable under Islamic law for a Muslim to kill a non-Muslim. This is absolutely untrue and indeed the Prophet has clearly stated in this regard there is no differentiation between a Muslim and a non-Muslim. Under Islamic law, the right to liberty is also protected. Withholding someone's freedom is very much against the laws of Islam. The Islamic law is very clear that no citizen can be imprisoned unless his guilt has been proven in an open court. To arrest a man only on the basis of suspicion and to put him into prison without due process of law and without providing such man with a reasonable opportunity to defend himself is not permissible in Islam. In this regard I do not see that much difference between Islamic law and, for example, the due process clauses of the Fifth and Fourteenth Amendments in the U.S. Constitution."

"Other universal human rights, while incorporated in, for example, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, are also incorporated into Islamic doctrine. For example, the prohibition of torture and other cruel treatment, freedom of association, freedom of expression, freedom of consensus and convictions, and the protection of property are all doctrines incorporated into Islamic law. I do, therefore, believe that the Islamic Doctrine on Human Rights substantially incorporates, indeed precedes, more modern concepts of human rights. There are, however, certain differences and I will try to explain their bases. One, as indicated above, there are certain aspects of Islamic law that are incorporated into the Koran and in the Prophet's sayings that we Muslims believe are absolute and are not open to interpretation. Therefore, if we are to accept Islam, we have to accept it in its entirety, which includes certain aspects of it that may be criticized as infringing on the rights of humans. Second, women's rights. Islam is often criticized for treating women in a manner that is not equal to men. For example, a woman's right to intestate inheritance is half that of a man. On its face, this may be hard to defend, however, if one looks at it in a wider context I hope that we can come up with a legitimate and reasonable explanation. In a marriage, under Islamic law, it is the obligation of the male to provide for the household and the children's upbringing even if the wife is working and has her own income. Moreover, unlike the practices, for example, in Afghanistan where women are not allowed to work, Islamic doctrine prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex in the workplace. Indeed, women are entitled to any job a man is entitled to, with the exception of certain hard labor jobs."

"Third, freedom of religion. Under Islamic law it is prohibited for a Muslim to revoke his religion. This may be deemed a curtailment of the right of a human being to choose his or her religion. Perhaps one way to look at it is to compare it with the law of treason. There is a rationale there. It is a law that is there to protect the community of Muslims. In this regard, although apostates are condemned to death, there is a due process of law relating to that, there are procedures to attempt to bring the person back into the faith and to ensure that such a person has truly renounced the faith. Fourth, freedom of expression. Islam generally protects the freedom of expression, whenever and wherever a person chooses to do so. However, there are limits. These limits also exist

in other countries. In the United States, for example, we remember the Pentagon Papers and the U.S. government's attempts to stop their publication."

"Fifth, and I want to finalize my remarks. I believe that Islam's doctrine with respect to human rights is substantially similar to the Western conception of human rights. There are, however, some differences which I have briefly described above. However, in my view, these differences are somewhat marginal in the wider context of the respect of the rights of individuals. Also, I would like to add that the abuses of human rights in Muslim countries are not really based on the fundamental doctrines of Islam. These abuses of human rights were, and I am sad to say, continue to be conducted for political reasons. And the perpetrators of these abuses tend to use the religion of Islam to legitimize their behavior. To conclude, I would like to go back to the saying of the great humanist Mahatma Gandhi. On being asked about his fathers and their religions he said, 'I am a humanist. I am a Hindu, but I am also a Muslim a Christian, a Farsi and a Jew. I believe that the basic principle of respect for human rights is contained in all these religions.' As the holy Koran states, all people, we made you of male and female, of different races and tribes, so that you may intermingle with each other. The most devout of you is the most honorable, God is the most knowledgeable, and knows your inner being." (H.E. Sheikh Mohammed Mohammed Ali, 2001)

### *A call for the creation of a spiritual coalition*

In the Prague Cathedral at the end the 2001 conference Václav Havel voiced an urgent appeal to the representatives of the world's religions to create a "grand spiritual coalition" and a "globalization of good." That appeal can be said to have summed up why initiators of Forum 2000—and particularly Havel himself—laid such stress on the presence of religious representatives and the theme interreligious dialogue.

> Statesmen, politicians and other public figures cannot completely fulfill their responsibility for the maintenance of peace, prosperity and respect for human rights in their countries if they drift away from the spiritual roots of their cultures, which you represent. It is

our deep conviction that one of the basic keys to healing this sick world is the cultivation of a humble openness to all so that the mind of contemporary humanity can draw from those roots.

This world is linked together in thousands of ways into one global, though enormously diversified, civilization, and it will be even more interlinked in the future. The recent events in the USA have been a drastic reminder of how evil is being globalized. Crime, violence, fanaticism, arrogance, selfishness as well as a lack of consideration for people, nations and nature is spreading throughout the world with the aid of the latest science and technology.

For this reason I believe that, in the interest of a "globalization of good." The time has come for people who feel a responsibility for the future of humankind on this planet. We believe that the spiritual inspiration and moral strength for such an alliance should spring from the heart of the world's religions. Your work is therefore of enormous and unique importance. We urge you to use all your authority in favor of the common struggle against everything that threatens human dignity and to confront together all attempts to veil hatred and violence with religious arguments or to misinterpret holy teachings, symbols and traditions to justify the expression of hatred and violence. Please continue in all your efforts towards deeper mutual understanding and dialogue among world religions, as well as towards a dialogue between spiritual authorities and those who shape our world in the areas of politics, economics and science.

Please support all those who are seeking what is common to the various religious traditions, and who assert the importance of humility, love of one's neighbor, and respect for the natural and cosmic order.

We believe the time has come to create a kind of "Grand Spiritual Coalition," which would enhance the existing endeavors of the cooperation of the world's religions, and their joint efforts to confront together the forces of destruction in the name of respect for life and human dignity, brotherhood, the equality of nations and a just world order, as well as concern for the interests of future generations. The task of such a "spiritual coalition" would be to seek and promote the basic ethical values shared by people of goodwill everywhere, and in the spirit of those values to influence the life of the world community. (Václav Havel, 2001)

# *Awareness of the Relations Between Economics, Politics, Knowledge and Ethics as a Starting Point for Global Governance*

*The majority of authors dealing with social theory at the present time have abandoned the rigid systematized concepts of the organization and integration of society which still prevailed in the 1960s. Nevertheless, the effort to understand the complex relations between sub-systems of society, i.e. economics, political power, cognitive elements of society and basic orientation of the inhabitants' values remains one of the main aims of sociological, anthropological and political analysis. This also holds for the study of the relations between major world cultures.*

*Max Weber's old questions about the relationship between* Wirtschaft und Gesellschaft *(Economy and Society), or those of Talcott Parsons on the relations between the four functional imperatives operative in all human societies (i.e. adaptation, goal attainment, integration, latent pattern maintenance) or Ernest Gellner's more recent questions about changes in relations between* Plough, Sword and Book, *or economics, power and knowledge in human history emerge with new urgency precisely in the context of globalization processes. Today, however, these questions assume another form, because they no longer concern merely the role of regulators in the integration of national societies but also the role of relations between economics, politics, knowledge and ethics in the formation of a supranational entity and ultimately of the whole world. This is clear also from the endless discussions on the integration of the European Union, in which the question of the correlation of economic and political integration has been a central theme for a long time now. It is no less evident when seeking ways to harmonize the processes of globalization. The question of how to ensure a balance and synchronization between, on the one hand, the changing global environmental conditions, the rapid changes in communication technology, the changes in the institutional forms of economics and trade which lead to the creation of powerful transnational corporations and, on the other hand, slower changes in the political frameworks, ethical norms, cultures*

*and religions of individual cultural areas of the planet is today a central question of globalization—nevertheless it still remains without clear answers.*

*It is then natural that the effort to identify the relations and connections between technological, economic, political, cultural and ethical elements of the globalization process was among the most interesting achievements of the Forum 2000 conference. Most frequently the discussion centered on the relation between the rapid technological and economic integration of the world and the very slow creation of political institutions and rules capable of responding to this already highly globalized world. The gap between the state of the global environment and the political instruments to regulate global environmental processes is also alarming.*

*Inevitably, ideological differences over assessing the overall effects of globalization underlay the majority of discussions. On one side were those who are convinced of the positive effects of the spontaneous economic processes, especially the expansion of the free market and the limiting of economic protectionism. On the other side were the advocates of some regulation of these processes in view of their potential negative social and environmental effects. The world finds itself, in the view of the second group, beset by serious imbalances and discrepancies which could pose a threat to it. If these divergences prove to be long-lasting, they would most probably lead to major social and cultural tensions, which are usually fertile ground for armed conflict. According to the opinion of the majority of conference participants it is by no means certain that technological and economic globalization will in itself automatically lead humanity to a more harmonious world.*

*There must therefore be a new effort today to search for and reflect on possible forms of relations between the techno-economic and the socio-political aspects of globalization. Ways must be sought to avoid imbalanced social development of major regions of the world, i.e. processes of global social polarization resulting from spontaneously functioning market mechanisms. On the other hand, means must be sought to leave some necessary elements of regulation untouched in instruments limiting economic, social and cultural freedom. The following chapter deals with political globalization and attempts such thinking. Quite intentionally it forms the conclusion of the analytical chapters because future global governance will have to harmonize the processes of social, cultural, economic and environmental globalization. The author points to the reality that the Westphalian model of international order is at an end, but also to the eventuality that the future model of international and global governance might assume a whole range of forms.*

# Political Globalization

*Jiří Pehe*

One of the most evident features of the globalization process is the discrepancy between the fast pace of economic and technological globalization on the one hand, and the extremely slow pace of political globalization, on the other. Whilst the number of supranational economic entities has soared in recent decades, and modern technologies, particularly in the communications field, increasingly disregard the frontiers of nation states, so far the most visible expression of the political effects of globalization has been a weakening of the role of nation states. Nevertheless, there has been no creation of powerful supranational institutions that might prove worthy partners of the supranational economic molochs, or prove capable of creating a regulatory framework on a global scale analogous to those that exist at the national level in developed democratic societies.

Equally astonishing is that there is little discussion of the tardy globalization of political institutions compared to reflection about the effect of globalization on culture and economies of the developing countries, or about ecology. Evidence of this was provided by the past series of Forum 2000 conferences. Whereas many of the discussions dealt with the impact of globalization on culture, education, the economy or social conditions, relatively few speakers—many of whom were leading politicians and political scientists—dealt with the issue of what kind of political organization we need at the global level.

This is significant per se. Whether the lack of discussion on this topic reflects a certain degree of confusion about what sort of political changes globalization will or should entail, it would appear that some of the best-known international thinkers who regularly attend Forum 2000 gatherings do not consider the issue to be a priority. Nonetheless it is obvious that if the gap between the process of economic globaliza-

tion and inadequate globalization of political institutions grows wider it could not only give rise to social disturbances on a global scale, it could also mean we are incapable of seeking political responses on a planetary scale to the existing and very real global threats.

At Forum 2000 in 1998, Henry Kissinger described the problem as follows:

> For years now, I have been uneasy about the view of a global economy in which the whole world operates as one market, and in which people are asked to accept suffering for the efficacy of an abstract market—without other criteria… In my view, the global economic crisis has become so severe because technical economists have looked upon it without regard for the political and moral capacities of the people involved. They have turned a currency crisis into an economic crisis, and an economic crisis into a political crisis in many countries. Now they find that without a political framework, they can't even solve their technical problems.
>
> It is absolutely imperative to try to come to some understanding of what the structures of the political world should be. We can multiply lending institutions and we can come up with this technical gimmick or that technical gimmick. That does not solve the problem that if the societies that have to implement the solutions are no longer considered to be just societies by their populations, and if the whole system is thrown into question, none of the technical solutions of the IMF and others will work.[1]

The American economist Jeffrey Sachs spoke in a similarly cautionary vein at the 1999 conference of Forum 2000, when he analyzed the problems entailed with the vision of global political governance.

> The challenge of global governance is that of creating effective international institutions. The international system is in imbalance. The Bretton Woods institutions have reached the limits of their legitimacy. The UN system is emasculated, the European Union

1 NB: the quotations here have been taken from speeches and discussion contributions during the various conferences of Forum 2000 in the period 1997–2004.

acts like a rich country exclusive club. The World Trade Organization is also at risk of legitimacy even in its early years because the developing world already feels that rich-country interests have hijacked it, for example in the area of intellectual property rights. So, we have a very serious and unfulfilled challenge. Then, we have the long-term challenge of crucial importance, but one that is not going to be solved overnight—and that is to re-constitute the system of global governance. This requires the democratization of international institutions, and permanent funding sources for international institutions. I believe that we will have a global tax in the future: this would mean that the needs of the global society would not be fulfilled by good will and aid, but by the shared contributions of the world—and it would eliminate the sense of hegemonic control that Washington somehow thinks will solve world problems, but are not solving world problems right now.

The problem with today's arrangements is that we have global markets, but we have a political system based on the sovereign state. The political state based on the sovereign state has always been very troublesome, because relations between states have often led to war, but I think that in today's world, when you have global, interconnected markets, the threat has become much greater. This is because markets—the global financial markets—have reduced the ability of states to perform the functions that they were able to undertake before—the regulatory functions, the welfare functions—because those functions require either taxation or regulation. Since capital is mobile, it can move away and deprive the country of wealth that could possibly be redistributed.

## Four basic approaches

In analyzing what was said about political globalization at the various Forum 2000 conferences as well as what experts on globalization continue to write about this process in various publications, four basic approaches can be observed with regard to achieving more effective global governance.

The first is represented by those who call for the creation of some kind of world government. Clearly reflections along these lines tend to be utopian at the present time; so far the world is not moving in the di-

rection of global government. Nevertheless these considerations cannot be rejected at the theoretical level.

The second approach consists of proposals for effective reform of the existing institutions, such as the UN, the IMF, the World Bank or the World Trade Organization. Advocates of this approach maintain that these organizations constitute the rudiments of global governance—they simply do not function as they ought. They just need reforming.

Another school of thought asserts that it would be a good idea to use on a global scale the models of administration and governance that have proved effective in various parts of the world at regional level. The European Union is frequently singled out as a model that could also function on a global scale. Others propose the expansion of organizations such as the G7. In that case, the ideal model is one of global hegemony exercised by several dozen developed nations.

The fourth school of thought consists of various proposals for completely new forms of global governance, assisted by a global civil society, network governance, etc. There is also talk of polycentric government.

## World government?

The idea of a single world government is nothing new, of course, and did not first emerge with the onset of globalization. In the past many powerful empires claimed to rule the world. None of them actually succeeded in ruling the entire known world, however.

In the 1930s the idea emerged for a voluntary unification of the world under a single government and the first world federalist organization was founded in 1937. In 1938 the Federal Union was founded in Great Britain. A world federalist organization was founded in the USA in 1939 which still functions under the name of the Association to Unite Democracies.

In 1945 the "Committee to Frame a World Constitution" was established and met regularly in Chicago where it actually drafted a World Constitution. Then in 1947, five small federalist organizations decided at Asheville, North Carolina, USA, to merge and create an organization dubbed the United World Federalists. Those endeavors continue to be pursued by The World Federalist Movement (WMF), whose objective is the establishment of world government. It was set up in Montreux,

Switzerland, in 1947, by 51 organizations from 24 countries. Its Secretariat is now located in New York. It regards itself as a global citizens' movement with member and associated organizations in many countries throughout the planet.

WFM wants a world federal government to establish global rule of law and uniform regulations. This goal is to be achieved particularly by the continual strengthening and democratization of existing world institutions, which would gradually acquire global constitutional powers.

At Forum 2000 in 1997, the well-known former Russian dissident and human-rights activist Sergei Kovalyov tabled a proposal for the creation of a world government that could have been formulated by WFM. He stated inter alia:

> I suggest that we formulate a global government or a world-wide government. This is something we have ridiculed, or a number of people have ridiculed on a number of occasions, but I am sure that this idea will return, based on the concept of human rights, that is social freedoms, equality and legitimacy. This concept should then become the basis of a new social order. It is important to guarantee all the rights of minorities. It is also important, first of all, to guarantee the rights of individual human beings and, by guaranteeing these rights, we can then hope for more security and unity of mankind. The very foundations of human rights require a unity of humankind, because only in such a situation can all these rights be applied…These questions of freedom, security and so forth should be controlled by a world-wide government or a world-wide parliament, which would then create an international order, which would replace the rather chaotic world of international treaties, agreements and often incompatible regulations. This will then have the force of law and it will have priority over other norms and treaties. In this global code, human rights will supersede everything else. What I see in front of me is also the possibility of establishing a world-wide or global court, a court which would try to find solutions or try to settle those conflicts that have an impact on the whole of mankind and any violation of human rights should be brought before this court.
>
> And also in the field of the executive branch, there could be something like the United Nations today or the Council of Europe. But its powers, its authority, would be much greater. This author-

> ity, or this body, would then be responsible for security and for the further development of human-kind and each individual country. All human rights and freedoms would once more be the very essence or the very foundation of their work. This, of course, will touch upon the sovereignty of each country, because some of the sovereignty will be delegated. It would also mean that our military forces or the military forces in each of these countries would become part of this global or world-wide security body. And each country would then retain only police forces.
>
> I believe that certain components or elements of this new world order already exist. They are far from perfect, but they do exist. I believe that these components of this new world order are not typical of the work of the United Nations. I believe that trying to improve or to reform the UN is a blind alley. It will lead us nowhere. It does play a certain important role; it has played an important role. We have seen certain successes, but this is not to be seen as a forum of nations. It is a forum of government administrators. In the United Nations there are a lot of people who try to defend or promote only the rights of individual nations.

The need for a world government was also mentioned at Forum 2000 in 1999 by the Chilean economist Osvaldo Sunkel, who stated:

> The greatest void in the international system, with which we are beginning the 21st century is the lack of democratic world government. We have a kind of executive government, particularly in the economic sphere, the 16th to 19th street complex—what was called the Wall Street-Treasury complex—and we have a military center of the world, but we don't really have a political one, and we don't have a legislative one. People are not represented at the world level, there is no world parliament, there is something of a judiciary, but not much. So, perhaps, what we should concentrate on in the future is how to bring about democratic representation at the world level.

An original scheme for creating an international political order was proposed at the Forum 2000 in 2004 by a number of participants. The proposal for setting up a World Future Council Initiative (WFCI) was presented by Jakob von Uexkull.

We noticed at the moment, decision-making is not just inefficient, it isn't even effective in the sense that even decisions taken are not being implemented, and millennium goals is just one example. Why is this? Because there is a lack of trust in political institutions and, increasingly, in all institutions of society.

How can we rebuild trust? By bringing together, we suggest, in an ongoing forum, persons who are trusted, who have ethical integrity, and we noted that there is an existing initiative working to do this, called the World Future Council Initiative. This council would not claim to represent others, but to speak up for our shared values as world citizens, and not just for narrow consumer values, and to speak up for the interests of future generations. It would not be a competitive organization, but an inclusive process framework to bridge this existing implementation gap.

It would, ideally, have about a hundred members world-wide, globally representative, from three categories, wise planetary elders, pioneers, and youth leaders. And they would come out of a global consultation process which, in fact, has really been ongoing for some time. It would work with thematic commissions or global-issue networks. We found there was an almost complete overlap between the issues we had identified and the issues which Jean-François Rischard had identified as those needing urgent action on the global level. And it would be composed of representatives of various stakeholders with knowledge of this issue who would also be able to work together and cross-fertilize each other, so we would avoid the dangers of over-specialization.

The council would work with national members of parliament now being linked electronically through the so-called e-Parliament initiative, to make sure that the recommendations are being brought into national parliaments and implemented there, on a sort of step-by-step, issue-by-issue basis, depending on the most urgent priorities. Even before that stage is reached, we felt this council would help to deepen and de-trivialize public debate, which of course is a precondition for informed democratic decision-making. It would build on existing work, like the Earth's Charter, for example, but it would fill a crucial missing ethical dimension. It would bridge the often-lamented gap between demands for proposals which are realistic today; this one is, it can be implemented with comparatively few resources now, and the demand for problem realism.

The idea of the WFCI was further developed by Jeremy Hobbs, who proposed that it should operate under UN auspices and acquire legitimacy at the national level also. The WFCI would also operate as an intermediary between NGOs, the UN and national governments.

## The reform of existing institutions

A somewhat different approach to political globalization than proposals for world government is adopted by those who advocate the reform of existing institutions. And yet these two currents of thinking are not mutually exclusive. For instance, the WFM has put forward a number of proposals for reforming the UN, which would transform it into one of the pillars of a world government.

Former Portuguese premier, Mario Soares, outlined a similar vision at the Forum 2000 conference in 2000, when he declared:

> The answer to globalization… cannot be given by the new economy, let alone increasing world trade. The answer must be given by better international financial regulation, which, in my view, urgently requires reforming such institutions as the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund. At the same time, we need to reinforce the United Nations and give it more funds since it is the only international institution which can legitimately try to create a new world order, one which is more just, free and equal. A world government capable of being effective in the fight against famine, lack of education, disease and disruption of the environmental balance of our planet should be created through the UN and not through some representatives of rich countries, like the G7.

Czech President Václav Havel, under whose auspices the Forum 2000 conferences are held, spoke about the reform of international institutions at the 1999 conference, where he said:

> I have personally experienced that the political structures of today's world, beginning with the United Nations, are immensely cumbersome and immensely bureaucratized. Nevertheless, their importance is growing and will continue to grow. In the century to come, various regional organisms will play an increasingly impor-

> tant role between nation-states and the global community, and an ever greater role will also be played by the world community as a whole. But its structures must be debureaucratized, imbued with a human spirit, and inspired with an ethos.

Discussion about the reform of certain existing institutions in order to better reflect the needs of a globalizing world is conducted essentially on two levels. The first level concerns institutional reform in the line with the changing strength and needs of certain regions of the world. In 1998, Karan Singh spoke along those lines at the Forum 2000 with reference to the need to reform the UN.

It is essential that the whole United Nations system should be restructured in order to make it more responsive to the realities half a century after the end of the Second World War. At present, the five permanent members of the Security Council represent just about one-third of the human population, while two-thirds are placed in a secondary position. This situation emerged at the end of the war, when the victors understandably arrogated to themselves a special status. However, the world has changed dramatically since then. It is clearly anomalous that countries like Germany and Japan, with their amazing post-war resurgence, huge nations like India and Brazil, and the whole African continent should remain outside the pale of permanent membership of the Security Council. A creative restructuring of the United Nations is long overdue. And, although discussions have been going on for some time, I would submit that it would be most appropriate if the matter is clinched in the year 2000, so that in the next millennium there could be a more equitable world order.

A few years later, in 2005, a discussion on reforming the United Nations took place within that very organization. The goal was to create a more effective organization by widening the Security Council to include several major countries and implementing other institutional changes. The attempts virtually fizzled out, however, after the heads of state failed to agree on the proposed reforms at the UN summit in September 2005. Nevertheless the discussion about the proposals was fairly interesting.

It transpired from those debates that both the politicians and theoreticians have realized that the UN is a fairly toothless institution at the present time; one incapable of tackling crisis situations effectively, not

to mention the fact that it is rarely capable of preventing them. It was also evident that the aspiration of certain large and rapidly developing countries to play a greater role—through the intermediary of the UN—clashed with the interests or selfishness of other countries. Perhaps the most important lesson of that discussion was that even though the nation states are becoming less powerful as a result of economic globalization, they are still the main obstacle to political globalization.

The other approach to possible reform of the UN is the view (held particularly within political and academic circles in the USA) that effective global governance with the assistance of the UN is out of the question unless that institution becomes, above all, a club of democracies. This is a certain off-shoot of neo-conservative philosophy about the need to propagate democracy, since stability and peace, in common with any agreement on the principles of global governance, can only be ensured within relations among democracies.

According to this view the main problem with the UN is that it places democratic countries and dictatorships on an equal footing, thereby relativizing the distinction between them. The authority of the UN will continue to wane—the theory goes—unless the politicians of the democratic countries find the courage to declare openly that full-membership should be conditional on the observance of certain principles, many of which were enshrined at the outset in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the UN Charter; consistent respect of such principles is only possible in democracies.

Therefore only representatives of states where free elections are held—those countries where the rule of law applies and where human rights are respected—can legitimately speak on behalf of their countries. Conversely, representatives of countries where the likes of Fidel Castro, Muammar al-Qadhafi or Bashar al-Assad are in power represent only their dictators.

Critics of this approach maintain that the UN cannot be simply a club of democracies, because of the need to involve non-democratic countries in the process. After all, they are also members of the "community of nations." Moreover, UN membership can serve to exercise pressure on such countries. The view is even voiced that democracy is a western invention and there exist all kinds of culturally conditioned concepts of human rights.

Interestingly enough, such relativizing critiques most frequently originate in Europe, which long ago created organizations that are elite clubs of democracies as member countries of the Council of Europe the EU member countries had to fulfill certain democratic criteria at the outset.

The advocates of UN democratization therefore declare that only something like an Organization of Democratic Nations would be capable of action—in spite of possible internal dissensions—because its members would share certain values and it would enjoy the requisite democratic legitimacy. Undemocratic countries would, on the contrary, have to know precisely the criteria for membership. For many of them, their endeavors to join a club of that kind—comparable to the Czechs Republic' striving to join the prestigious EU—would be more useful for them than hollow appeals by the United Nations.

## Global application of successful models

The third important line of thinking about the creation of operational global institutions is to make global use of institutions that have proved themselves at the regional level, particularly the European Union, which is regarded by some theoreticians as a fascinating (and largely effective) experiment whereby national government works in harmony with common political and economic institutions set up jointly by the member states. The EU is a common market allowing free movement of people, capital and goods. Most of the member states also use a common currency and the process of political and economic integration continues.

The EU is currently a hybrid, which combines the characteristics of an inter-governmental organization, a federation and a confederation. Some of the advocates of further integration speak of the need to transform the EU into a true federation, while others maintain that the present EU structures and decision-making mechanisms are its strength, because they require a process of constant political deliberation and negotiation at various different levels. The American political scientist Jeremy Rifkin speaks about polycentric governance, which he regards as a model for global governance.

Rifkin also argues that the EU is so effective that the European integration model will be adopted by other regions of the world. Some regional organizations, such as the Association of Southeast Asian Nations

(ASEAN), have already partly drawn inspiration from the EU. According to some authors, individual regional organizations will eventually strive for mutual integration, thus creating a kind of global alliance of several large political unions similar to the EU.

In his book *Free World,* Timothy Garton Ash predicts the mutual integration of both sections of Euro-Atlantic civilization: Europe and North America. The latter, in his view, are now linked by so many mutual economic and other ties (which continue to grow in number) that in the not-too-distant future there could arise something Ash calls an Atlantic Union.[2]

Certain authors believe that another model of global governance that has proved itself to a certain degree is the G7, which ought to be reinforced and used on a truly global scale, since, in their view, it represents a form of beneficial political and economic hegemony conducted by the most developed countries of the world. Those states could provide the world with a much needed center of political gravitation. For this to be possible, it would first of all be necessary to extend membership to other countries, as was done in the case of Russia, which now regularly attends G7 events, to the extent that the group is commonly referred to as the G8.

## New theories of global governance

Most of the present discussions about new forms of global administration and management are derived from the concept of "governance," which may be regarded as sensible administration, management and a process of government all in one, as distinct from the concept of "government."

Whereas "government" tends to represent a vertical power structure, the term "governance," even at the global level, implies rational administration assisted by horizontal relationships and networks. Within present-day political science a number of theories have emerged related precisely with the concept of governance.

The Czech authors Pavel Barša and Ondřej Císař have pointed out that so far the globalization debate has only been through two basic phases. In the first phase—the 1970s and 1980s—the debate focused on political economy: the dichotomy of the state versus the market. At that

2 Timothy Garton Ash (2004) *Free World*, London: Allen Lane.

time transnational corporations were regarded as the main challengers to state power.

In the mid-1990s the debate entered its second phase. Globalization ceased to be viewed as the outcome of spontaneous market expansion and the stress switched to the political dimension. Arguments for and against the existence of globalization viewed in economic terms gave way to consideration of globalization as a *social process*. Other actors started to be discussed apart from the transnational corporations and now the focus is on transnational pressure networks and transnational—and potentially global—social movements, as well as foundations, humanitarian organizations, churches, political parties, trade unions and media operating internationally.

In this context, people have started to ask whether some new model of transnational or global governance is not emerging from those global networks, one which would represent a major shift away from the vertical, hierarchically organized structure and towards polycentric governance, relying on networks and various actors at various levels, none of which are dominant.

Barša and Císař point out that the concepts of global government mean different things to different people. For left-wing and liberal proponents it holds out the promise of greater manageability of the global economy and global political processes, as well as greater democratic participation in decision-making processes at the international and global level.[3]

The right-wing interpretation of global governance reflects a narrowly managerial approach—instead of transparency and greater participation in international institutions, it simply stresses their greater efficiency.

## Three basic views of political globalization

Various categories have been invented in an effort to classify the various attitudes towards political globalization. Anthony McGrew divides the protagonists of the various approaches into globalists, internationalists and transformationalists.[4]

3 Pavel Barša and Ondřej Císař (2004) *Levice v postrevoluční době*, Brno: CDK, pp. 164–180.

4 Anthony McGrew (2004) in *A Globalizing World? Culture, Economics, Politics*, David Held (ed.), London: Routledge, pp. 128–167.

*Globalists* continue to argue in terms of the first phase of the globalization debate, claiming that in a globalized world dominated by supranational capital, national governments are increasingly powerless and unimportant. Whereas, they are too small to effectively tackle the global challenges affecting their citizens (such as global warming or the drugs trade), they are too big to tackle local problems (such as waste recycling). In Great Britain, for example, McGrew argues, the power of the government is so sapped by the supranational European Union, on the one hand and the increasing importance of institutions at the subnational level (such as the Scottish parliament), on the other, as well as by institutions that compete with the government for economic power (the supranational corporations).

*Internationalists,* on the other hand, maintain that the capacity of national governments to regulate the lives of their citizens and deal with global matters have never been so great as now. In their view, national states are not faced with extinction in the process of globalization; on the contrary, globalization enhances the importance of national governments in running human affairs.

*Transformationalists* emerged during the second phase of the globalization debate. They agree with neither of the other schools of thought and maintain instead that in a globalized world the national governments have to change their role and function. As a result a fundamental reconfiguration of the power, authority and legitimacy of national governments is taking place. Nation states are not losing their importance as the globalists claim, but their power is not on the increase either, as the internationalists maintain. They are having to adapt to a new context in which their power and sovereignty is shared with many other public and private institutions. This is manifested at one level, for instance, in the surrender of certain powers and part of their sovereignty at the supranational level (e.g. EU), and at another level in decentralization.

## A bit of history: From the Peace of Westphalia to Global Politics

For about three hundred years the principles of international order and inter-state relations derived from the Peace of Westphalia, concluded in 1648, at the end of the Thirty Years War. Under this system, as emphasized by McGrew and other authors, states connected with a specific territory were considered to hold sovereign power over that territory.

That process culminated in about the middle of the 20th century when the system of nation states prevailed throughout the planet. Under this system states have sovereignty over domestic matters and there no sovereign authority exists in respect of their mutual relations. International politics is governed by a system of treaties and conventions that cannot be enforced if individual nation states refuse to cooperate.

Meanwhile, around the middle of the 20th century, a process was initiated that increasingly calls into question the ability of nation states to tackle supranational problems through *international politics*. Instead people are beginning to talk in terms of *global politics* as a response to a whole number of phenomena related to the process of technological, information and economic globalization. Global politics differs from international politics in that it provides a framework for the creation of forms of global governance and management, which, although based on the nation states, also have a quasi independent existence.

A fairly dense network of regional institutions has gradually come into being (which cooperate with each other on a global basis) as well as inter-governmental organizations created by the nation states to operate globally (the UN, the World Bank, the IMF, etc.). Transnational links and flows have thus developed in virtually every field of human activity.

If we return to McGrew's three main schools of thought about the impact of globalization, we can see that for the internationalists, the Westphalian system is still the basic organizational principle of international relations, and there is no need to change it in their view: the nation states can cope with all the challenges of globalization within the framework of that system.

Both globalists and transformationalists argue that the Westphalian system can no longer meet those challenges. In their view, power is no longer primarily organized and exercised on the national scale but is increasingly acquiring supranational, regional and global dimensions. Consequently governance and politics are increasingly internationalized and globalized.

## Internationalization of the state

An attendant feature of the process of political globalization that is related to the creation of inter-governmental and other global networks, is the *internationalization of the state*. Over the past 50 years governmental activities have been considerably internationalized in response to the

multiplicity of processes that elude national jurisdictions, or have their roots beyond the frontiers of a given nation state while having a major influence on it.

Nowadays, almost every ministry of every nation state has a department of international relations that coordinates the country's activity in that particular field with partners from other countries. These relations are often direct and do not have to be sanctioned by central government. In this way supranational networks of those bodies come into being.

At the same time there has been a boom in the number of inter-governmental organizations that assist the governments of individual countries to coordinate and regulate activities at the global level. Whereas in 1907 there existed only 37 such organizations they now number around 350. In addition to such formal bodies as the World Health Organization or the IMF there are a large number of inter-governmental working groups and various international summits and conferences. It is also necessary to take into account the growing number of informal contacts enabled by the new technologies.

## Transnationalization of politics

A further important aspect of globalization in addition to the internationalization of the state is the *transnationalization of politics*. This refers to the growing number of political activities that transcend the national community or cut across various communities.

There now exist, for instance, hundreds of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) that cooperate with nation states in all sorts of spheres, e.g. the control of the movement of drugs, education, rural development or child protection, and also work with inter-governmental organizations such as the UN. These organizations create supranational networks that are increasingly linked as a kind of *global civil society*. Whereas at the beginning of the 20th century there were only a few hundred such transnational organizations in existence and their mutual links were sometimes tenuous, there are now over 5,000 of them and they constitute a considerably inter-connected supranational structure.

Barša and Císař offer a useful analysis of current attitudes to the global civil society. The term global civil society generally denotes the many actors currently operating within global political structures. One group of theoreticians tries to endow it with a clearly defined empiri-

cal meaning and protect it against alternative designations (such as "transnational civil society"). Other authors regard it as a description for "good" (i.e. pro-human rights, environmental, etc.) movements and NGOs and reject it as a concept reflecting the heterogeneity and complexity of current world politics. There are some who even maintain that the concept of civil society is too bound up with the concept of the nation state for it to be used to encompass global processes.[5]

Despite such skeptical views it is clear that the number of international non-governmental organizations (INGOs) is rapidly growing, and we are seeing increasing numbers of parallel summits, such as those organized by the opponents of neo-liberal globalization. More and more there is talk of the growing importance of translational links between various non-state actors, about a new reality: the transnational sphere, in which civil activists, social movements and committed individuals enter into mutual debates, conflicts and alliances.

Certain theorists who want to avoid the term "global civil society" use the expression *transnational networks*. These are either promoted at the global level by specific interests or consist of networks of activists promoting their ideas and values. Such networks are generally formed in political fields that have a high normative and value content.

At the Forum 2000 conference in 2004, Václav Havel had the following to say about global civil society:

> It is important—not only in our case, but also generally all over the world—to create an international civil society that exceeds the borders of state as well as those of supranational entities. That is the challenge of globalization, when the whole world is uniting and this globalization has a tendency to uniform and unify everything and inconspicuously manage everything from the center; including diversity. After all, those huge developing multinational corporations often offer a broader range of possibilities or products than a hundred small private companies. Nonetheless, it is diversity controlled and planned from the center; not authentic diversity coming from below. And this kind of diversity is the sort that should be supported, because it is one of the tools that can be used to tackle the negative implications of globalization.

5 Pavel Barša, Ondřej Císař, op. cit.

An interesting contribution to this debate was recently made by J. F. Rischard, who also took part in the 2004 conference. He maintains that one of the ways to solve the problem of global governance is to strengthen so-called global issues networks (GINs), which are extremely flexible networks for solving global problems that have several advantages: rapid problem solving, legitimacy, diversity and compatibility with traditional institutions.

They can operate rapidly because they do not rely on traditional (i.e. vertical and hierarchical) bureaucratic structures but use the benefits of the communications revolution in order to communicate directly across the frontiers of individual states.

They derive their legitimacy from the fact that they operate globally, to a great extent by focusing their energy on one specific problem. This increases their scope for mobilizing people. Rischard also reacts to the dilemma posited by Jürgen Habermas, who maintains that global governance means designing domestic policies for and at the level of the planet, although he recognizes one serious obstacle to this—the absence of a globally shared political ethos and culture. In other words citizens would have to acquire some shared global identity.

Rischard believes that the GINs themselves can help build global citizenship. An important role would be played in this by modern communications media that create a new concept of space and time.

The legitimacy of the GINs is horizontal and emerges from joint deliberations within their framework. These horizontal networks could exert salutary pressure in favor of greater political responsibility on the part of the institutions of nation states, because national politicians, who generally take decisions with an eye on the next elections (and often offer populist solutions), would now have to reckon with something much more extensive than just their own electorate—a global network offering expertise on a given issue.

The third advantage of GINs is that they combine three different approaches to the same issue: public (state), private and international civil society organizations. The advantage of expertise from such variegated players can provide a definite advantage.

The fourth advantage is that in spite of the pressure they exert, GINs are tolerant towards the institutions of the nation states—for one reason, because they cannot achieve their goals without them. As a result unnecessary conflicts with traditional institutions are avoided.

At the Forum 2000 conference in 2004, the Polish legal theoretician Viktor Osiatynski reacted to Rischard's proposals as follows:

> Mr. Rischard, I think that when you present the global issues network, I would very strongly urge that besides governments, business, and international civil society organizations, you include also national local civil society organizations, because they will be absolutely crucial to test. First, to get the feedback on the ground level for whatever norms could be set, but second, to test how it works. International civil society or inter-governmental organizations will not be able to function without first doing that or will be biased by their own interests in trying to assess how the solutions work.

## Horizontal networks

A radical view of global governance is offered by Anne-Marie Slaughter, who argues that for some time already the international community has not been operating only as a system of relations between the governments of nation states, but increasingly as a system of horizontal networks that are chiefly created by various sections of the government in the nation states and NGOs.[6]

Police investigators, financial market regulators, judges or legislators increasingly cooperate within the framework of transnational networks, within which information is exchanged and activities are coordinated. The global cooperation of these individual components of state power is becoming more important than the cooperation of central governments. Alongside it there is an ever denser network of non-governmental actors.

In Slaughter's view, the model of global political networks is a possible solution to the basic dilemma of global governance: "we need global rules without centralized power but with government actors who can be held to account through a variety of political mechanisms." This accountability comes from their being rooted in various structures (particularly democratic ones) of the nation states.

6 Anne-Marie Slaughter (2004) *A New World Order*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, pp. 131–162.

The modern state is increasingly a multi-layered entity whose individual components perform domestic political tasks on the one hand but at the same time they are ever more intensively linked at the transnational level with their partners in other countries. In this way rules are gradually framed as well as a regulatory framework that functions on a global scale.

Slaughter believes that nowadays many international organizations are no more than structures that provide an institutional front for the operation of horizontal networks of government officials from various nation states. Others are purely transnational in that their identity and loyalty is separated from the nation states and that they have certain coercive powers vis-à-vis the nation states.

## Network of networks or super-networks

Slaughter invented the concept of *networks of networks*, by which she refers to the fact that various networks of horizontal global governance (various components of government power of various nation states, networks of inter-governmental organizations, and networks of transnational non-governmental organizations) cooperate and create something like super-networks that interpenetrate and complement each other at various points and at different levels.

At the horizontal level these networks are "soft," which means that they have influence rather than coercive powers. But at the same time, however, some of these networks also acquire vertical dimensions. Vertical axes of power are created within them, either spontaneously or on the basis of inter-state treaties. This can lead to the creation of supranational organizations that have coercive powers not only vis-à-vis individual nation states but also vis-à-vis various actors in the horizontal networks. Slaughter analyzes the examples of the European Court of Justice and the coercive powers of certain components of the World Trade Organization.

With respect to the creation of *networks of networks* Slaughter maintains that, whereas in nation states there occurs a process of so-called disaggregation (a process involving the disintegration of an originally homogeneous entity composed of various constitutive components into those components), on a global scale, by contrast, there gradually comes into being a kind of disaggregated entity representing various networks

and their interactions. What Slaughter specifically has in mind is this: just as states lose part of their powers to supranational networks, inter-governmental organizations and the transnational civil society their vertical structures and ties are loosened. Individual components of state power continue to perform their domestic functions but at the same time increasing numbers of those components of state power also operate within the framework of supranational networks—often as if without the blessing of a central authority.

The transfer at the supranational level of various functions that formerly belonged entirely to nation states creates a mosaic-like supranational system of networks that mostly have no visible center. This disaggregated entity is far the best we have been able to achieve in terms of global governance.

## Weak states

One inconvenience in the vision advanced by Slaughter is the highly asymmetrical nature of the international community, not in only in respect to the oft-discussed discrepancies between the rich and poor countries, and between the democratic and authoritarian states, but also the differences between individual states in terms of their degree of stateness. This factor has been dealt with by the American political scientist Francis Fukuyama, well known for his controversial theory about "the end of history."

The international community currently consists of about three types of entities: fully developed classical nation states; post-modern supranational entities uniting states that have voluntary agreed to forgo part of their sovereignty in favor of such entities; and weak or failed states. Fukuyama focuses on the third category in particular.

He argues that the weak or failed states, which lack both strong central government and effective systems of horizontal administration, are extremely dangerous for the international community, and not only because they violate the norms of civilized behavior. Various terrorist organizations capable of obtaining weapons of mass destruction may one day be able to operate unchecked on their territory. Hence weak states are the greatest global threat.

It is no easy task building an effective state in such countries, however. There has to be a local demand for effective state institutions,

otherwise they have no chance of taking root. If state building is carried out under the guardianship of the international community, such as after successful military intervention, it is possible that occupying or peace-keeping troops may have to assume responsibility for the functions of the state for many years in certain countries.

In Fukuyama's view, the modern state need not be large, but it must be strong and effective. And if it is be legitimate, it must also be democratic. The effectiveness of a state is not measured simply in terms of the efficiency of the central government but also in the capacity of different components of the state power to operate effectively both at home and within the framework of supranational networks. Moreover, such networks, in cooperation with non-governmental organizations, can play an important role in state building where states have failed or completely collapsed.

In an analysis of U.S. and European views of how to tackle international threats, Fukuyama points to a major difference in the understanding of the state.

Americans tend not to see any source of democratic legitimacy higher than the constitutional democratic nation-state. To the extent that any international organization like the United Nations has legitimacy, it is because duly constituted democratic majorities have handed that legitimacy up to them in a negotiated, intergovernmental process. Such legitimacy can be withdrawn at any time by the contracting parties; international law and organization has no existence independent of this type of voluntary agreement between sovereign states. Europeans, by contrast, tend to believe that democratic legitimacy flows from the will of an international community much larger than any individual nation-state.[7]

Fukuyama partly explains these differences by reference to European history:

> The states of Western Europe concluded at the end of the World War II that it was precisely the unbridled exercise of national sovereignty that got them into trouble through two world wars in the twentieth century…The house they have been building for themselves since the 1950s called the European Union was deliberately intended to embed those sovereignties from ever spinning out of

7 Francis Fukuyama (2004) *State Building: Weak States and International Legitimacy*, London: Profile Books, p. 148.

> control again…Thus the continent that invented the very idea of the modern state built around centralized power and the ability to deploy military force has eliminated the very core of stateness from its identity.[8]

## Polycentric governance

Whereas Fukuyama is close to the American understanding of the role of nation states and of the international community, Jeremy Rifkin—an American political scientist and former advisor to the President of the European Commission Romano Prodi—unequivocally prefers the European model. In his book he actually maintains that the "American Dream" is gradually evaporating and being successfully superseded by the European model. In his view the EU is the first experiment in governance in the history of humankind to have moved away from being anchored (and limited) territorially towards global governance.

According to Jeremy Rifkin the EU may rightly be termed polycentric governance rather than classic government, which is linked with the territorial organization of power.

> Polycentric governance is decentralized and is not just about what governments do. Rather, said the late social theorist Paul Hirst and political theorist Grahame Thompson, "it is a function that can be performed by a wide variety of public and private, state and non-state, national and international institutions and practices." …It is a new political game that is far more complex and sophisticated, in which no one player can dominate the field or determine the outcome, but where everyone has some power to affect the direction and flow of the process.[9]

Polycentric governance is characterized by continual dialogue and negotiation between all actors in many different networks. Political leaders can only be successful in such a system if they operate as successful negotiators and not as would-be military commanders. The vertical system of power based on directives is replaced by coordination. Governance

8 Ibid., p. 153.

9 Jeremy Rifkin (2004) *European Dream*, New York: Jeremy P. Tarcher/Penguin, p. 225.

through networks is also, in Rifkin's view, an outcome of modern technologies and the internal organization of supranational corporations, which also continue to operate on the principle of horizontal networks.

In more general terms it is possible to see an obvious connection with post-modern theories of society, such as those advanced by Ulrich Beck, Anthony Giddens, or Zygmunt Baumann. These speak in terms of post-traditional society, the risk and uncertainty society, or liquid modernity, in which traditional vertical relationships founder in the process of growing reflexivity (constant challenging of what has been achieved) and must be affirmed anew over and over again in a kind of ongoing dialogue.

One of the key concepts in the new system of global governance is *partnership*, which is intended as an antithesis to the classical system of relations based on power hierarchies. Partnership presupposes cooperation within the framework of horizontal networks rather than vertical dominance. An anthology on this topic published by the German Alfred Herrhausen Society includes a score of contributions by such prominent authors as Fareed Zakaria, Benjamin Barber, Michael Ignatieff, Jeffrey Sachs, Robert Kagan and Mary Robinson.

By and large they agree that the new global order will be based on multi-layered cooperation among various structures in which the governments of nation states will be only one of many. Mutual trust in the world community cannot be built solely by means of treaties and other agreements whereby nation states maintain total sovereignty. Equally important is the horizontal network of individual components of the governments of nation states, as argued by Slaughter for instance, as well as the supranational civil society and various supranational communications fields. The rules of international coexistence thus come into being through ongoing dialogue at all possible levels and must be re-affirmed anew all the time. To use one of the terms of Anthony Giddens, it is a kind of dialogical democracy that is beginning to rub off onto international relations.

## Global governance

Global governance is above all a *process of political coordination* rather than a hierarchically structured system of institutions. This coordination operates on many different levels at the same time. The process

comprises tasks, which are the implementation of supranational rules and the management of issues that transcend national frontiers, shared jointly by the governments of nation states and inter-governmental and supranational private and public institutions. The aim of the process is to achieve common objectives at the global level, while the definition of these objectives is part of an ongoing dialogue involving all the actors mentioned.

However, if we look at it in terms of the schema sketched by McGrew, there are fundamental differences of opinion about global governance between internationalists, globalists and transformationalists.

Internationalists maintain that, in spite of new forms of governance and supranational dialogue, the main driving force of global governance is so-called "hegemonic governance," exercised on a global scale by one or more of the biggest powers. This position is fully in line with the internationalist view that nation states are still the main actors in the process of economic and technological globalization. Hence in this model the main role in global governance is played by the most powerful nation states, which can, if they wish, circumvent the most influential intergovernmental institutions, such as the UN, and impose their will.

Globalists view the process of globalization above all as domination of the global market. In their opinion the market dictates even to the most powerful states. Were we to caricature the position slightly, we might say that in the globalist world vision global rule is exercised by a fairly small privileged group of the "international bourgeoisie" that determines the ground rules and promotes global capitalism.

Transformationalists acknowledge the importance both of powerful states and supranational capital, but at the same time they maintain that fundamental changes are taking place in the structure of global governance as increasing numbers of actors assert themselves—without the existence of an obvious global center—at various different levels at which an ongoing global discourse is conducted. Whereas the internationalists and globalists stress a certain type of determinism, transformationalists emphasize reflexivity—i.e. the constant search for new models of global governance in the context of a critique of the inadequacy of the existing ones. In contrast to the two other approaches, which stress the *existing structures*, the transformationalists stress a *process*.

## Other attempts at categorization

Apart from the schema advanced by McGrew there have been a whole number of other attempts to appraise in a more systematic fashion the various forms of global governance. Jan Aart Scholte writes, for instance, that since the end of World War II, world order has evolved into a multi-layered system of global governance that has no central authority.[10] One of the ways to describe this system is the existence of four different layers of governance: extra-state (global and regional institutions), national, transnational, and sub-state.

The extra-state level includes the growing number of inter-governmental organizations that operate either by having their own jurisdiction that they can sometimes invoke even against nation states and their citizens, or as regional associations. These include the World Trade Organization or the European Union.

The national level of governance is obvious, just as it is increasingly obvious that nation states—whether voluntarily or under constraint—transfer many of their functions to the other levels mentioned above.

The transnational level consists chiefly of the growing global civic society, which increasingly ignores national frontiers. Meanwhile all sorts of groups, movements and initiatives cooperate with inter-governmental organizations and networks of government agencies from the different nation states. Their gradual integration into the global network is also enabled by technological progress in the field of communications. In this way a whole number of globally operating networks have come into being and exist de facto only in virtual space. Nevertheless with the help of modern technologies they are able to mobilize and coordinate their activities.

The sub-state level consists of institutions that come into being in increasing numbers in the process of decentralization of government—as states come to realize that they are too big to deal with certain issues. Meanwhile municipalities and regional authorities, as well as organizations answerable to them from within civil society, are increasingly organizing themselves in global networks and thereby circumventing central governments.

10 Jan Aart Scholte (1997) *The Globalization of World Politics*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Another attempt at a more systematic overview are the categories devised by Cary Cogliane in a book edited by Joseph S. Nye and John D. Donahue. He offers a well-arranged table of various forms of tackling global issues.[11]

INSTITUTIONAL REACTIONS TO GLOBAL ISSUES:

| **Type of reaction** | **Description of action** | **Legal authority remaining at state level** |
|---|---|---|
| Non-state action | Non-state organization networks create standards of conduct | All |
| Internal control | Nation states exercise control using their own regulations | All |
| Mutual recognition | Nation states agree on reciprocal recognition of internal rules of other states | All, but in certain cases the rules of others states are respected |
| Consensual rules | Nation states conform to international policies framed with other states by treaty | All, but the authority of the state is limited by treaty |
| Delegation | Nation states delegate authority to international institutions | Partial |
| Contraction | Nation states relinquish political authority in favor of another institution | None |

11 Cary Coglianese (2000) "Globalization and Design of International Institutions" in *Governance in a Globalizing World*, Joseph S. Nye and John D. Donahue (ed.), Washington D.C.: Brookings Institution Press, pp. 297–318.

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# *Economy in the Background of Many Discussions on Social and Ethical Problems*

*The Forum 2000 conferences were not intended as a substitute to the specialist discussions on the economic aspects of contemporary globalization. They did, however, deal with the social and political effects of the economic differences between what is usually termed the North and the South. They paid attention to the slowdown in the development of Latin American countries, to the financial crisis in Asian countries and to regions of extreme poverty, particularly Sub-Saharan Africa. The awareness that many tensions and conflicts in the contemporary world are linked with the growing polarization of the living conditions of people in rich and poor regions of the world led the organizers of the conference to organize a series of smaller meetings, after the first five Forum 2000 conferences held between 1997 and 2001, dealing especially with these global gaps. They sought ways to bridge them.*

*The awareness of the reality that a series of burning political problems in the contemporary world have their roots in unbalanced economic development led naturally to the conclusion that it is essential to have insight into the world situation from a global perspective in order to understand these problems and, potentially, propose practical steps to solve them. Some of the discussions during the conference moved in this direction. The most substantial of them was associated with the keynote speech by Jeffrey D. Sachs on poverty in the world, others were evoked by comments on the question of the causes of the excessive imbalances in contemporary societies. The majority of discussions usually led to reflections on the reciprocal relations of the free market and the regulated market. Forum 2000 thus confirmed that every serious discussion on the structure and organization of contemporary society quite logically usually passes on to a debate about the gains and losses linked with the consistent application of a predominantly liberalized or, alternatively, a predominantly interventionist economic model.*

*The drift of the following chapter is to set the discussion at Forum 2000 conferences in the context of the world economic situation at the end of the 20th century and beginning of the 21st century and to record the views of this remarkable group of intellectuals and politicians who met in Prague. Only knowledge of this broader economic background permits an understanding of the differences of opinions and attempts to bridge them, as witnessed by Forum 2000.*

# An Economic View of the World

*Jana Marková*

The world economic situation was a theme in many contributions and discussions at the Forum 2000 conferences. Even though a conference was never devoted to economic issues of globalization as the central theme, economics were in the background in many discussions both of social and of ethical problems—particularly in relation to the growing inequality between continents, between countries and within countries. Although Forum 2000 conferences are not at all focused on economic problems, very often they had to deal with the economic situation. Most frequent were discussions on economic globalization and the consequences of globalization on developing countries.

## The current situation in the world

The economies of individual countries and regions at the turn of the millennium developed very unevenly. In the 1990s economic globalization manifested itself more and more strongly, rapid growth in international trade and global financial flows had a significant influence on more and more economies. Along with the advantages of economic globalization, however, came financial shocks. The most striking was the currency crisis in Thailand in 1997, which also manifested itself in other Asian countries and elsewhere in the world. It appeared that liberalized financial markets represent a potential risk, especially for less stable economies, and that it is necessary to pre-empt this risk, not by deregulation, but by effective official oversight and controls on the financial markets.

At the end of the 1990s global growth fell to roughly 2 percent per annum. Japan was hit by a recession. East Asian countries and Russia faced financial crises. In contrast, North America and most Euro-

pean countries, including some countries in transition, as well as China and India, recorded relatively strong growth. Terrorist attacks in the United States in 2001 shook the world economy to such an extent that global growth fell to roughly 1 percent. The largest developing countries, China and India, however, managed to cope well with the global slowdown.

The present world economic situation, halfway through the first decade of the new millennium, is markedly differentiated. World economic growth in recent years maintains an average level of 3–4 percent, in developing countries growth has been the highest for the last twenty years, in advanced countries the strongest growth was recorded in North America, growth in Japan was moderate and in Europe weak.

The United States continues to experience strong economic growth, as do Australia, Canada and New Zealand. In contrast, growth in Western Europe is weak and no significant upturn can be expected in the near future. Higher growth can be observed in the eight new Central and Eastern European member states of the EU. In African countries, growth in 2004 was the highest for 10 years.

The greatest weakness in the world economy remains the slow growth in employment and the persistent high level of unemployment and under-employment in the majority of developing countries. The need to find employment for millions of workers in agriculture or in state enterprises in China constitutes a quite special case of this. Today the position of the United States, as main engine of world growth, is increasingly clearly a contrast to that of China. China plays an important role not only in East Asian markets but also in global trade. China functions as a catalyst in many economic areas where the presence of the United States is only felt exceptionally (as, for example, in the processing of raw materials which is insignificant for the USA but essential for industrial expansion in China).

Economic shocks, which strike from time to time, have an uneven influence on the world economy. The largest was the oil shock at the beginning of the new millennium when the price of crude oil rose by about 60 percent. The rise in the euro and the yen against the dollar is important economically. In 2004 the dollar fell to its lowest level against the Euro.

General agreement was reached at the Doha talks in August 2004 on lowering trade barriers, particularly in the fields of agriculture and

services within the framework of the WTO's Development Program for 2001–2005, and the World Trade Organization is continuing with further negotiations. At the turn of the millennium many other bilateral regional free trade agreements (RTAs) were concluded. The greatest support for trade activity is directed to Latin America, the Caribbean, and the Asia-Pacific region. More than a third of global trade now takes place in the framework of regional agreements. Further negotiations on observing WTO rules are required.

The question of financial flows is important, particularly for developing countries and countries in transition. In 2004 a fall was recorded in net private financial flows. The greatest source of these flows continues to be foreign direct investment, with a global growth rate of 6 percent per annum. The growth in the inflow of foreign direct investment was most significant in the Asian region and the Pacific. Significantly higher inflows of foreign direct investment were recorded by China, Hong Kong, India, Republic of Korea and Singapore. A significant change in the global flow of foreign investment is the focus of investment on the services sector. Among those countries providing investment are both advanced countries and developing economies such as China and India.

The preferred region for foreign investment is Europe. Great Britain, Poland and France are in the lead on job creation. The attractiveness of China is growing at a massive rate. China is the country most in demand for foreign investment. The care with which future investors study the customs and ways of working of this complex and rapidly changing economy testifies to the popularity of China.[1]

Central and Eastern Europe constitutes a suitable alternative to the Chinese market for foreign investors, especially in the automotive industry, consumer goods and heavy industry sectors. The reasons for Europe's popularity among investors are primarily the flexibility and diversity of the market. The high level of education is also a significant factor. The Central and Eastern European region has been transformed over the past five years from a low wage economy to a market with great potential. Similar indications can be found at the present time in China, Russia, India and Brazil. We can expect increasing innovation in these

1 Ernst & Young, *The Path to Success for Retailers and Consumer Brands in China*, 2005. Accessed online URL: *www.ey.com/china*, 3 July 2005.

countries over the next five years and their markets are becoming significant competition for developed economies.[2]

The *indebtedness of African countries* continues to be a massive global problem. Their hundreds of billions of dollar debts are growing at an enormous rate. In the spring of 2004, the Secretary General of the UN, Kofi Annan, French President Jacques Chirac and British Prime Minister Tony Blair called for a further effort to help the poorest developing countries, particularly those in Africa. This initiative would represent a significant shift on the question of debt relief for the poorest countries.

A further shift can be expected at the G8 summit meetings. Controversy remains over the question of responsibility for debt cancellation: whether individual states or creditors directly will bear it. Creditors could receive funds from the state to compensate for the amounts written off. An additional controversial point is the financing of debts, whether to sell or revalue the huge gold reserves held by the International Monetary Fund (further details below).

The European Union experienced the biggest enlargement in its history. With this latest, fifth, enlargement, it became a bloc with twenty-five members and 455 million inhabitants. Such a step cost the Union, its old member states and newly acceding countries, a great effort. It will be very difficult to come to terms with the new situation, as twenty-five sovereign states seek answers to all sorts of questions. The first test has been the hitherto unsuccessful deliberation on a European constitution. At this point it seems that the European Union has ahead of it one of the most difficult stages of integration in its history. The situation on further enlargement, since the entry of Romania and Bulgaria, is not at present completely clear within the Union.

## Economic globalization

At the present time world trade is highly globalized and this presents problems to people throughout the world. It is possible to interpret globalization in a number of ways. Discussion of it became more frequent in the mid 1970s, in connection with the reduction in tension between the United States and the Soviet Union. Somewhat later it manifested

2 Ernst & Young, *Emerging Economies Stake Their Claims, European Attractiveness Survey, 2005.* Accessed online URL: *www.ey.com,* 3 July 2005.

itself as a consequence of a series of several important global events: in particular the influence of the second oil crisis on western economies together with the fall in national product, the rise in inflation and the arrival of new political leaders (Margaret Thatcher, Ronald Reagan and Helmut Kohl).

Whilst we are discussing globalization, we must address various related aspects and their consequences. In particular liberalization and deregulation of markets, privatization of assets, retreat of state functions, diffusion of technology, cross-national distribution of manufacturing production, foreign direct investment and the integration of capital markets. All these economic phenomena when taken together in fact constitute globalization. Never before have these occurrences come together to such an extent, over such an area, so comprehensively and at such speed. It is precisely the intensity of the activity and the links between these various processes, which in themselves are long-known, which characterize globalization. It's not a question of the rise of a new phenomenon but of a new interplay of various historically well-known phenomena.

The usual definition of globalization relates to the growing integration of national economies in the areas of trade, finance, technology and the labor market by the removal of government imposed barriers to the free market. Understood in this sense globalization is actually a synonym for international economic integration. The extent and depth of such integration is determined by the speed at which the cross-border flows of goods, services, capital, technology and labor move in relation to the domestic production of national economies.[3]

We can, however, understand globalization in a broader sense, that is, in part, as the integration of political and economic institutions in the public sector, but also at the same time commercial practices in business.

In another interpretation globalization can mean technological and social revolution. In that case it is a broad process of development of many parallel elements: globally integrated manufacturing, specialized, yet mutually dependent, labor markets, privatization of state holdings and integration of technology across traditional borders of nation states. Such a globalized market reduces the demands for time and space as

3 Brigid Gavin (2001) *The European Union and Globalisation*. Cheltenham: Edward Elgar Publishing Limited.

a consequence of the technological and communications revolution, leading to the "networked economy."

The theme of economic globalization was mentioned many times at Forum 2000 conferences. Gareth Evans (1998) offered one definition of globalization: Globalization is a new economic reality, where everyone competes with everyone else. This reality is predominantly a consequence of new technology, in manufacturing or communications, thanks to which we can observe convergence across the world. Convergence of goods and services, which people want, or think they want; and convergence of supply, that is the capacity to satisfy the emerging demand. This convergence overcomes all known variations and differences between countries, cultures and political ideologies. We are all now participants in this process of globalization. We are all connected to it, whether we like it or not. Globalization presents a great opportunity and a positive challenge. Throughout the world the capacity to satisfy the emerging demand is increasing: manufacturing technologies are mobile, capital is mobile, skills and workforces are mobile and the rules of comparative advantage have been turned upside down. Countries and entrepreneurs who manage to adapt quickly can sell almost anything almost anywhere.[4]

Economic globalization often raises the question whether *national incomes of individual countries are converging or diverging.* According to some economists economic integration generally leads to economic convergence, with poor countries growing more rapidly than richer economies. But the opinion also exists that modern economic history implies above all divergence in income per head between poor and rich countries and that the gulf between them is constantly growing.[5]

It's not possible to say unequivocally which economists are right. The data can confirm both variants, whichever answer the author is seeking. Data sets which can be used to confirm the hypotheses are unfortunately limited, for the most part it is possible to obtain data on OECD countries or European countries. As we widen the data sets the elements of convergence, as a rule, disappear.

4 The quotations here have been taken from speeches and discussion contributions during the various conferences of Forum 2000 in the period 1997–2004.

5 Simon Reich (1998) "What is Globalization? Four Possible Answers." Working Paper, Notre Dame: Kellogg Institute.

Economic globalization can be observed in particular in connection with growing international trade, especially with increasing exports. The share of exports in a country's income increase economic growth and help its development. Foreign assistance programs are also part of economic globalization, even if they are health-related or related to education or job creation. At the same time, however, it is evident that globalization does not mean poverty reduction nor does it ensure economic or political stability.

Globalization in itself, nevertheless, is not a problem. The problem is the manner in which it is or, as the case may be, is not managed.[6]

## The influence of globalization on developing countries

Without firm management globalization can lead to devastating consequences, particularly in less developed countries. A globalization agenda managed by Western countries often promotes its own interests to the detriment of developing countries. Stiglitz (2002) speaks of the *hypocrisy of the West*.

Developing countries are encouraged to open their markets to foreign nationals, whilst the rich countries continue to maintain their long-standing barriers to the free market. This influence is pronounced in the market for agricultural products. Rich countries continue to subsidize their expensive and uncompetitive agriculture; at the same time, however, they force less developed countries to remove their support for the industrial sector. We can very easily find examples of such dealings in the European Union and its Common Agricultural Policy. Admittedly it is always being reformed, but the support which is obtained by European farmers is difficult to compete with.

Western banks make a profit from the liberalization of capital markets in Latin America and Asia, whilst developing countries in these circumstances experience the consequences of the use of speculative capital.

The projects which the West proposes, recommends and finances are also problematic. If they fail it is the governments of developing countries who must bear the cost.

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6 Joseph E. Stiglitz (2002) *Globalization and its Discontents*, London: Penguin Books.

It was possible at Forum 2000 conferences to listen to personal experiences from certain countries, governed by the advice of international institutions. Specific testimony was presented, for example, by Chan Lien (2003) and Tun Daim Zainuddin (1998).

Chan Lien considers it necessary to build in Taiwan a strong government with effective departments which make for modernization and good government in the country. It's a question of creating healthy institutions and legal framework, to over-arch economic reform. Significant investment in education and research and development are an important means of support for the productivity of the economy.

East Asian countries until quite recently managed themselves very well and were generally praised for their excellent performance. Perhaps, however, they made the mistake of opening their financial sectors and operations too swiftly, especially in the areas of currency trading and short-term capital. This is Tun Daim Zainuddin's experience. He criticizes certain advice and recommendations of international agencies.

These agencies recommended the relaxation of regulation of movement of capital, however they did not at the same time warn against the danger of speculative investors. Adequate preparation of institutions, so that they are capable of managing financial liberalization and creating the necessary regulation for it, is of paramount importance. Imperfect regulation permitted a great deal of speculation on financial markets in East Asia. In some affected countries this led to massive currency devaluation, withdrawal of financial resources from the stock exchange and outflow of foreign loans.[7]

Tun Daim Zainuddin sees the greatest lesson of the liberalization of capital in the country that global markets can play a fundamental role in the attempts to increase income but developing countries must themselves choose reasonable methods, rate and manner of integrating themselves into these global markets.

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7 This is dealt with in greater detail in:
Craig Burnside, Martin Eichenbaum and Sergio Rebelo (2001) "Prospective Deficits and the Asian Currency Crisis", *Journal of Political Economy,* 109 (6), pp. 1155–1197. See also: Steven Radelet and Jeffrey D. Sachs (1998) "The East Asian Financial Crisis: Diagnosis, Remedies, Prospects", *Brookings Papers on Economic Activity,* no. 1., pp. 1–90, and: Ramon Moreno (1998) "What caused East Asia's crisis?", *FRBSF Economic Letters,* 1998 (24). Accessed online: URL December 2005: *http://www.sf.frb.org/econrsrch/wklyltr/wklyltr98/e198-24.html*

## Global institutions

Reflections on the institutions which over-arch the global economic system were a frequent theme in the presentations of Forum 2000 conference participants. Lord Weidenfeld (1998), Hilary Clinton (1998) and Reizo Utagawa (1998) were amongst those who addressed this in their contributions.

Lord Weidenfeld referred to the importance of improving existing global institutions. Globalization facilitates the constant monitoring of all breaches of human rights and the realization of short-comings in politicians' work. Even if it may seem that we can do nothing against this, if one manages to determine a successful diagnosis, this opens up space to seek out the instruments for an effective therapy.

A balance between three elements—the state, the economy and civil society—is important in maintaining the stability of global society. Hilary Clinton referred to the grave problem of the globalized market: it is very difficult to introduce regulations into it and to determine precepts which would allow us to enjoy its benefits without suffering its excesses. Many difficult questions remain regarding how best to create and shape state and economic institutions to prepare a better future for world markets.

Reizo Utagawa also reflected on the consequences of globalization for world markets, on financial globalization and on the free movement of global capital. According to him globalization is initiated by global industry. In so far as finance is concerned, the problem consists in the fact that the means used by strong countries have a tendency to become global standards which inevitably have a significant influence on the industrialization of weaker countries. One can consider that everything has its beginnings in industry. But industry alone cannot bring stability to the human soul.

Reizo Utagawa believes that in reality one cannot change globalization. It is a mega-trend. In the first stages of globalization of the world's finances almost no one was aware that three elements of financial markets cannot co-exist: First are free transactions of short-term capital, second is independent financial policy on the part of government or nation state and the third is stability of exchange rates, currency stability. Reizo Utagawa warns that it is not possible to ensure all three satisfactorily at the same time and for this reason they are one of the most critical problems of global markets.

## Developing countries' debts

The intolerable *indebtedness of African states* remains a global problem. Although international organizations provide substantial foreign assistance, the indebtedness of African states remains the same and the standard of living in this region tends to fall rather than rise. The most indebted countries are sub-Saharan African states whose share of Africa's indebtedness amounts to 70 percent.

The massive debts of African countries came about in the 1970s and 1980s when it was recommended that they invest heavily in industry. The inexperienced governments of these young countries borrowed hundreds of millions of dollars to this end. After a short period of growth oil crises ensued in 1973 and 1979, along with a sharp fall in the price of raw materials and swift growth in interest rates. Economic shocks and traditional African instability, wars and corruption reduced the debtors to a hopeless state. New loans were used to pay off old debts, interest rates rose in a geometric progression. Many states ceased to be able to pay their debts or the interest. In a range of countries the ruling regimes refused to deal with the debts as alleged imperialist levers of former colonial powers.

These countries have been troubled by astronomical debts for a long time. According to estimates they may amount to 250 billion dollars. The unsustainability of such indebtedness in the poor countries is born out by the reality that these states pay out substantially more on debt repayment than on, for example, education or health.

At present, discussions are taking place on debt cancellation for 18 countries—predominantly African. This fundamental step would affect roughly half of the poorest and most indebted countries. Debt relief should not mean a reduction in other development cooperation funds intended for local development, support for food security and for the fight against pandemics: malaria, tuberculosis and HIV/AIDS.

Even if one succeeds in eliminating forty billion dollars of the debt of the 18 poorest countries with a further fifteen billion dollars in reserve for perhaps twenty other indebted countries it is evident that debt cancellation is not enough. It will also be necessary to increase direct economic assistance to African states and intensify technical cooperation in the areas of economic management, environmental protection

and sustainable development. The African states themselves, however, will also have to prove that they are serious about the fight against corruption, and especially that they will stop trying to solve every problem by wars. Only thus will the ambitious project of economic assistance to Africa have any chance of success.

Forum 2000 focused on the question of debt relief amongst other issues in the October 2003 workshop *External Debt: Issues of Sustainability and Legitimacy*.

The conference participants agreed that to improve the quality of future loans it was necessary not only to appreciate the validity of the demands of the creditors of the Southern countries, but to do so in a way which would draw a real distinction between loans granted to dictators—that is loans of a corrupt character—and loans which were abused and loans which really found a productive use. Forum 2000 proposes a new international insolvency framework which would go far beyond the current mechanisms of debt remission. The International Monetary Fund has concentrated in recent years on the creation of a Sustainable Debt Restructuring Mechanism (SDRM). Jürgen Kaiser (2003) concluded that the Initiative for Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC), which provides debt relief to poor and heavily indebted countries, is a step forward but in reality does not bring as much debt relief as the majority of countries in the south need.

Forum 2000 came up with various concrete suggestions and recommendations in connection with poor country indebtedness. It is partly a question of the legitimacy of the demands of private multilateral and bilateral creditors of counties of the south. Some independent organization should check them—not the International Monetary Fund or another agency controlled by creditors. Even in such a process it is necessary for transparency to apply. To ensure transparency and responsible management external audits are necessary to investigate what sort of loans were granted in the past to countries in the south. If we are unable to construct a realistic deterrent against the abuse of loans concluded by states in the south, we will probably not be able to put an end to illegitimate, on occasion questionable, debts and will not manage to raise the quality of credit offered to Southern nations.

## The economics and politics of international agencies

Among the *globalizing institutions* often heavily criticized, not just at Forum 2000 conferences, are the International Monetary Fund, World Bank and World Trade Organization (IMF, WB, WTO). The origins of these institutions reach back to the 1930s, to the time of the great depression. The post-war world needed a global institution to regulate world production, finance and trade. For this reason the World Bank and International Monetary Fund were established in the mid 1940s at the Bretton Woods conference. The World Bank was to help with the reconstruction of the world economy after the Second World War and the International Monetary Fund was to maintain an overview over international finances and observance of monetary regulations. Finally, an institution was founded to limit restrictions on trade. At the outset this was the GATT (General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade) organization, which was later replaced by the World Trade Organization.[8]

The idea of such international agencies was clearly not in itself bad. The situation was worse in relation to the objectives they had to meet and the means by which they attained them. Their main purpose should have been the provision of reliable information and unconditional assistance. The active role of individual governments in the opening of other countries' economies should have been fundamental.

There is much discussion especially of the direction of the policies which the institutions promote and recommend. Stiglitz (2002) criticizes the so-called Washington consensus (1980), whereby the IMF, WB and US Treasury agreed on the appropriate policies for developing countries—the *free market mantra.* This agreement changed the previously Keynesian orientation of these organizations' policy and introduced a new solution to market failure and new ways of employment creation. The new approach concentrated on market forces and avoided government managed solutions.

The reform of international agencies is inevitable. The changes should be particularly directed towards increasing transparency and reducing dependence on special interests of certain actors, pressure groups, ideological or political. Stiglitz (2002) criticizes certain IMF

8 Sarah Anderson and John Cavanagh (2000) *Field Guide to the Global Economy*, New York: The New Press.

policies and their "macro-rescue plans." The IMF is often at fault in the speed and sequence of its recommendations; its reflections are also often wrong in the broader social context.

Government interventions are often necessary, especially in developing economies to permit reaction to market failure. The IMF, however, offers an oversimplified strategy. Often it turns out that gradual reform would have been better than shock therapy. This was demonstrated for example in South East Asia, which was forced to open up its capital markets. As a result of this decision there were great problems in Asian economies which had been up to that point in a relatively good condition.

The misguided development strategies which the IMF recommends can lead to a situation where a market opened up in undue haste has to pay for its imports from foreign assistance and the exchange rate makes such a situation hopeless. Precipitous price liberalization can cause severe problems for traditional domestic producers.

Whilst we are considering the necessary reforms in the World Trade Organization (WTO), its role in global trade must be supported by the transparent functioning of its organs. The European Union is seeing to it that new regulations will be introduced which in certain areas will significantly broaden the mandate of the WTO and thus limit the functioning of individual states. The WTO is faced with institutional reform, which will facilitate global democratic governance necessary for and decisive in a globalized world.[9]

Many presentations at Forum 2000 were devoted to the problem of the dominant position of the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank and to the idea of a new global institution, including those of Karan Singh and Anne Summers. The IMF and other institutions are criticized for their poor efficiency and inflexibility, often also for their lack of transparency in their negotiations and financing.

Karan Singh (1998) draws attention to the possibility of replacing global institutions with regional organizations. The dominant position of the monetary policies of the World Bank and IMF provide invaluable support; however, several strong regional economic groupings have emerged which demand the profound reconstruction and reorganization of the out-moded system (which has already been in existence for

9 Brigid Gavin (2001) *The European Union and Globalisation*, Cheltenham: Edward Elgar Publishing Limited.

fifty years). Regional groupings of this type include for example North America and the European Union, ASEAN and SAARC, Latin America and Australasia. Especially, the European Union is a dynamic model for other regions.

Anne Summers (2001) reflects in her presentation on the possibility of establishing a global institution which would limit the excess of national interests in the WTO or the IMF. At the same time she refers to the global problem of sustainable development:

> There is no nationally led debate about a global parliament or integrated discussion on how the global commons might be protected. Yet these issues must form part of a holistic approach to tackling the sustainability and human rights issues effectively. We must also include poverty alleviation and other development issues in the sustainability debate. … But just as we are calling on governments and corporations to adapt and change, we recognize that we too must be able to respond to the demands of the planet and its people. We cannot remain a Eurocentric organization and we will not.

One of the reasons for the criticism of global institutions has been their questionable productivity and efficiency. Eduardo Aninat (2002) stressed the significance of the IMF, which uses its own mechanism to restructure the debts of poor countries. Indebted countries and creditors should agree on a manner of solving debt repayment so that economic development in developing countries might not be interrupted. The creditors of course have their rights, but on the other hand every country has the responsibility for its own economic and social development. Unsustainable international differences and inequalities cannot overturn the internal policies of governments. For that reason even indebted developing countries should be supported in reforms stimulating economic development. These countries should make use of recommendations for the development of capital markets and try to face up to global challenges.

Criticism of international organizations, chiefly the International Monetary Fund, World Bank and World Trade Organization has been frequent and trenchant at Forum 2000 conferences. David Korten was a harsh critic. Najma Sedeque also spoke sharply on the subject.

The World Bank with its loans de facto increases the international indebtedness of the third world. According to David Korten (2002) it would be better to replace the World Bank with an institution administered by the U.N., which would help indebted countries cope with their debt and would point out the global public responsibility for international society.

Najma Sedeque (2002) criticized the IMF's lack of transparency and irresponsibility. In addition she blamed the IMF that by its financial support it actually introduced corruption into some governments.

> You are not only allowing corruption, you are actively engaging in strengthening them and allowing them to browbeat their citizenry. That is simply not on. You have no business to do that; no private bank can do that. Everyone has to show their accounts, and you have to be accountable to the people who have to pay you back with interest.

Many conflicting opinions in global institutions flow from the difficulty of fully grasping the complexity of the processes of globalization. Globalization influences every country or region in a different way and every one considers something different as the dominant factor. It's evident that both problems of the ecological system and sustainable development and the influence of new technology on society are both important. It's also, of course, a question of balance in the economic system, in which savings, investment, growth and social development play an important role.

It was not possible to reach agreement on the complicated questions of global institutions at the Forum 2000 conferences. The discussions were enormously meaningful for participants in that everyone had a unique opportunity to listen to the others and try to begin to understand globalization seen from different perspectives and positions.

## Environmental economics

The globalized economy entails many negative consequences as has been described above. One of its very serious and long-term consequences is its disastrous influence on the environment. Environmental

economics concentrates on the question of the influence of the global economy on the environment.

*Environmental economics* is, in principle, the application of neo-classical economics to problems bound up with the environment. Environmental economics sees as the central problem the trade-off between consumption and the quality of the environment. The more households consume the more the quality of the environment deteriorates. The optimum is obtained in the situation where the average household's consumption and effect on the quality of the environment is balanced (the so-called theory of optimal pollution). According to environmental economists the free market does not typically lead to optimal pollution, because the economic actor in his production or consumption does not bear the full costs of pollution (the so-called problem of externalities) and we can expect that the deterioration of the environment will be greater than optimal. Environmental economics seeks instruments by which it is possible to prevent this adverse situation. Environmental tax reform, which neo-classical economics offers as a solution of environmental problems, is considered a complex instrument. Environmental tax reform consists in raising taxes on environmentally unfriendly activity (e.g. energy consumption, atmospheric pollution) and at the same time reducing tax on labor or capital. This indirectly motivates economic actors to choose more environmentally friendly forms of consumption or production.

One of the most important representatives of environmental economics is Herman Daly. Daly is the originator of the concept of the steady-state economy. The economy is an open sub-system of a closed, finite and limited system. Steady-state economy remains continually on a level which does not exhaust the environment beyond its capacity to regenerate nor pollute it beyond its absorptive capacity. It conserves a critical level of environmental capital. It is only possible to draw from non-renewable sources at the rate determined for the development of renewable substitutes. It is thus necessary to invest a part of revenue from the use of non-renewable resources in the development of renewable substitutes.[10]

The Forum 2000 conferences were only marginally focused on

10 Thomas Prugh, Robert Constanza and Herman Daly (2000) *The Local Politics of Global Sustainability*, Washington D.C.: Island Press.

environmental economics, even though it is a very important subject and in recent years has been continually growing in importance. In the future it will certainly be further discussed, not merely at Forum 2000 conferences.

## Regional integration and economic convergence

The ever more globalized economy demands an improved forum for international governance. Some problems are, however, better settled at a regional level. The principle of subsidiarity and optimal decentralization can be very useful. Regional arrangements are a necessary complement to a system of global governance. Development and the integration of the world economy can be supported precisely by regional integration. Regionalism as a form of international governance is especially related to a change in the position of the state. The possibilities of multilateral governance and formation of regulations presents advantages at the national, regional and global level. Regional integration is a form of middle way which conserves the citizens' overview and control over events.[11]

Regionalism means conserving certain advantages for the regions in the ever strengthening globalization process. We can speak of the so-called new regionalism, which does not concentrate merely on trade but rather on growing credit-worthiness and attracting long-term private capital. All this in the awareness that social solidarity must be conserved at a certain local and national level along with regional culture. Such a process is, however, very complicated as the experience of the European Union proves.[12]

European integration is an example of regional globalization. This regional integration was recently deepened in the largest enlargement of the European Union in its history and other countries should enter the Union in two years. The uniqueness of this situation enables us to explore enlargement from the point of view of economic, social and political development with regard to the transformation in the new member states and the Union as a whole.

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11 Jan Pronk (1998) "Globalisation and Regionalisation" in *Regional Integration and Multilateral Cooperation in the Global Economy*, Jan Joost Teunissen (ed.), The Hague: Fondad.

12 Mats Karlsson (1998) "Globalisation, Regionalism and Global Economic Governance" in: ibid.

Regional integration was the theme of a series of discussions at the Forum 2000 conferences even if there was not a separate block allocated to it. Antje Vollmer (1999) in her presentation recalled the significance of Europe. She sees Europe from various perspectives. Europe is a continent where the societies of "small" and "great" democracies are successfully bound together. Considerable credit for this is due to the large countries. But they could do nothing themselves without the agreement of their smaller neighbors. This good consensus is a consequence of the equal right of all countries to share in decision-making and common endeavors to overcome disagreements and contradictory opinions.

## Conclusion

Forum 2000 conferences addressed directly or indirectly many economic themes. Most frequently the question of the free market and economic globalization. Participants tried to find a way through the complex situation which the global market presents to developing economies.

International agencies, which endeavor in a certain manner to manage the global market, were subject to serious criticism by delegates. One cannot, however, say that the conferences unequivocally condemned the functioning of these institutions. Nor is it easy to search for the best form of assistance which these agencies might offer. It was also difficult for the participants in the discussions to seek a common way out because they called the same problems by different names. As a consequence agreement was not reached in the discussions. As they searched for resolutions to the problems which globalization poses participants in the conference were agreed in underlining the connection between global civil society and global ethics.

The conferences also addressed the extent and types of variability in the existing rules and institutions of the global economy. Negotiations referred to the connection of ecological globalization and economic regulations. Although economics is part of a wider environment, international financial institutions, national budgetary and tax structures and major firms do not as yet take it sufficiently into consideration.

One of the current problems on which the conferences had lively discussions was the indebtedness of African countries and the scope for debt cancellation. The workshop on *Foreign debt and the question of sustainability and legitimacy* came up with many useful proposals and

contributed to global discussions which should in the near future lead to the improvement of the situation in African countries.

For countries in transition the discussions on European questions and on the possibilities of further enlargement of the European Union were fruitful. Regional integration is one of the possibilities of accentuating the positive which globalization offers and meanwhile to limit the risk which the globalized market presents to a small open economy.

Besides the negative consequences of globalization on the situation in countries in the third world, globalization also has consequences for advanced countries, the shift in manufacturing to countries with lower labor costs or less protection for workers, for example. Globalization, according to many authors, threatens the conservation of a decent social state in the western world. Forum 2000 has not yet touched on these questions in its conferences. It is certainly only one of the many thus far neglected consequences of globalization, which were not perceived as sharply in the first years of the conferences at the turn of the millennium as now. The speed of changes which are happening in the world is huge and Forum 2000 endeavors to latch on to the burning questions as swiftly as possible.

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# *The Global Environmental Situation and Human Responsibility*

*A specific feature of the Forum 2000 conference was its emphasis on the responsibility of individuals, communities and political institutions for the state of the world in which we live and will continue to live. This perspective was characteristic of all the thematic groups of the conference. It also applied to the discussions which were devoted to the present state of the global environment and its future development. In this regard Forum 2000 introduced a new emphasis which is sometimes lacking in influential official documents produced by the UN and other international organizations dealing systematically with global environmental problems.*

*Through the speeches of Václav Havel, the scientist and philosopher Fritjof Capra, the theologian Hans Küng, the politician Helmut Schmidt, the ecologist Hazel Henderson and the sociologist Miklós Sükösd, Forum 2000 urgently recalled our moral responsibility for the environmental state of the planet. At the same time it indicated the connection between environmental questions and other topics dealt with at the conference. A clear majority of participants can be said to have accepted an ecological way of thinking.*

*Forum 2000 didn't hesitate to link specific environmental problems with philosophical questions relating to our contemporary perception of the world and our opinions on the fate of humanity. Forum 2000 laid emphasis on changing values, on ethical aspects of sustainability, on the necessity of limiting consumption and ultimately on changing lifestyles. Forum 2000 thus indicated the linkage between the global environmental situation and the anthropological sphere, i.e. people's way of life; the socio-psychological, i.e. orientation of values; and the economic, i.e. limiting the consumption of non-renewable resources. It pointed generally to the natural and social limits of economic growth. Without changes in the values governing the behavior of the major human societies towards the environment in which they live, it will probably not be possible to achieve improvements in the environmental situation.*

*Without knowledge of the basic facts about the current environmental situation in the world it is impossible to arrive at the conviction that a change in our perception of the world and our own fate on this planet is essential. In the light of the reality summarized in the following chapter, the call for consistent application of environmental principles to all areas of human behavior, issued by the 2004 conference, becomes more understandable.*

# Global Environmental Problems

*Václav Mezřický*

## 1. Prehistory and nature of environmental problems

The introduction to the conclusions of the environmental workshop at the first Forum 2000 conference notes the underlying theme that "the environmental problems which we experience have not only an ecological impact but also an impact on all of civilization."[1] The document then lists the main areas where the situation of the planet is deteriorating. They include: a) climate change, b) decrease in bio-diversity, c) increasing rates of toxins affecting the environment and human health, d) water scarcity and deterioration of its quality, e) destruction and degradation of systems supporting the existence of life, f) unfavorable regional development.[2] The list is an exhaustive survey of all the most important aspects of the environment and natural resources, whose critical state and the search for conservation instruments have been dealt with in recent years within the UN, as well as within other more or less formal associations, such as the meetings of the G8 group of industrially developed countries, the OECD, non-governmental environmental organizations, etc.

Although the theme of environmental crisis was mentioned in other meetings of the Forum, that environmental workshop was of central importance in dealing with the issue. It came to the conclusion that there was "a discrepancy between the clear awareness of the seriousness of environmental problems and the unsatisfactory results achieved towards solving them."[3]

Although Forum 2000 did not use the expression, the manifestations of the present environmental crisis could be described as the *historical setting* of our present reality. The manifestations of the crisis were first perceived in human society during the mid 1950s, initially in terms

1 Environmental Workshop of Forum 2000, 6 September 1997.
2 Ibid.
3 Ibid.

of a "demographic explosion."[4] In the same period the negative impacts of environmental pollution on the life and health of people and on nature as a whole began to be recognized.[5] The expression historical setting reflects how "kicks" are dealt to the usual models of consumption and production by the "mysterious foot" of ecological collapses of every possible kind.[6] At the same time the Forum debates operated within the terms of a controversy of much older date concerning the nature and future of our civilization. It is worth recalling that at the very beginning of the 19th century there had been a clash of views between the English thinkers regarding the direction and future of European or—more generally speaking—human civilization. An optimistic vision was expounded by the English philosopher William Godwin, who maintained that humanity would achieve such a moral level that there would no longer be any need for government, that reason would conquer "lust" and that society would consist of healthy and rational people.[7] His essay was a polemic with the now celebrated critique of Enlightenment historical optimism from the pen of the English economist Thomas R. Malthus, who was the first European thinker to warn that that if the population continued to increase in geometrical ratio, in the future it would lack the means of subsistence.[8]

Godwin's optimism, shared by a number of 19th-century thinkers (Saint-Simon, Auguste Comte, Herbert Spencer, John Stuart Mill, Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels), has found a champion in the post-modern period in the person of the historical optimist Francis Fukuyama.[9] The critique of that historical optimism in the post-modern era is probably most notably symbolized by the work of another American thinker, Samuel Huntington, *The Clash of Civilizations*.[10]

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4 Edward Rosset (1978) *Ekzplozija demograficzna*, Warsaw: Ksiazka i Wiedza, p. 5.

5 Theo Colborn, Dianne Dumanoski and John Peterson Myers (1997), *Our Stolen Future,* New York: Plume Books/Penguin.

6 Aurelio Peccei (1981) *One Hundred Pages for the Future*, New York: Pergamon Press.

7 William Godwin (1820) *Of Population: An Enquiry concerning the Power of Increase in the Numbers of Mankind.*

8 Thomas Robert Malthus (1798) *An Essay on the Principle of Population*, London: J. Johnson in St. Paul's Church-Yard.

9 Francis Fukuyama (1992) *The End of History and the Last Man*, New York: Free Press.

10 Samuel Huntington (1997) *The Clash of Civilizations*, New York: Touchstone.

## 2. Consideration of environmental problems by UN bodies

How did the Forum 2000 debates come to reflect two divergent views of 19th-century thinkers? To answer that we must compare the reaction to the environmental crisis within international organizations, and chiefly the United Nations. This will help explain how human society in its globally operating organizations has coped with the contradiction between the two-centuries-old vision of progress and the hard facts of biological and resource limits of planet Earth.

The world community's first reaction to the worsening state of the global environment was the *United Nations Conference on the Human Environment* held in Stockholm in 1972. The conference dealt with four main problem areas. It designated as the main problems the pollution of the environment by dangerous substances (emissions, waste, etc.) and the future disturbance of vital planetary systems (such as climate change), the rapid depletion of non-renewable resources (energy resources, mineral raw materials, etc.) and renewable resources (live nature), and called attention to the reduction in bio-diversity—the Earth's biological wealth.[11]

The final Declaration advanced the principle that man has the right to an environment of quality. It went on to state that man bears a responsibility to protect and improve the present environment for present and future generations. And finally it defined the principles of the relationship between the environment and development. The policies of states, says the Declaration, must support the development potential of the developing countries.[12] In the subsequent period central environmental bodies were set up, particularly in Western industrialized countries, chiefly in the form of ministries of the environment, and standards and pollution limits were introduced as a basis for protecting various components of the environment—water, soil, air and natural ecosystems.

The process of promoting awareness of the seriousness of the environmental crisis at the UN level was paralleled in intellectual circles. In 1968 the Italian economist Aurelio Peccei founded the Club of Rome, an association of scientists that initiated the publication of expert studies—the Club of Rome reports—on urgent problems of human civilization.

11 *http://www.unep.org/Documents.multilingual, www.un.org/geninfo/bp/enviro.*
12 Ibid.

The first, entitled *Limits to Growth*, was to be the best known of all. The significance of that classic—albeit not entirely incontestable—study lies in the fact that it defined all the relevant dimensions of global civilization whose monitoring provides a systemic picture of the state of the world. These dimensions include demographic growth, industrial development, depletion of resources, food production and environmental pollution.[13]

The report's prognosis that the observed trends of those dimensions were exponential in character and as a result world civilization would collapse within fifty years has not come true, of course.

A further milestone in ongoing reflection on the environmental and civilizational crisis was the establishment of the World Commission on Environment and Development by the UN General Assembly in 1983. The Commission drew up a report on the overall state of the world and published it under the title of *Our Common Future* in 1987.[14]

The report was significant above all for its fairly detailed and complex description of the basic global problems. It did not limit itself to the questions of the environment and resources. The commission had been asked to propose long-term ecological strategies for achieving *sustainable development* by the year 2000, as well as to assess the ways and means whereby the international community could effectively protect the environment, to formulate jointly long-term environmental projections and propose necessary measures for successfully implementing programs to protect and improve the environment.

The unifying idea of the report was summed up in the slogan "From One Earth to One World." The Commission also defined the concept of sustainable development as "development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generation to meet their own needs."

Of fundamental importance was the report's assertion of the interconnectedness of all aspects of the global crisis:

> Until recently, the planet was a large world in which human activities and their effects were neatly compartmentalized within na-

13 Dennis L. Meadows, Donella H. Meadows and Jorgen Randers (1972) *The Limits to Growth*, New York: Universe Books.

14 The World Commission on Environment and Development (1987) *Our Common Future*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.

> tions, within sectors (energy, agriculture, trade), and within broad areas of concern (environmental, economic, social). These compartments have begun to dissolve. This applies in particular to the various global 'crises' that have seized public concern… These are not separate crises: an environmental crisis, a development crisis, an energy crisis. They are all one.[15]

The report went on to elaborate the idea of sustainable development and the conditions that would be a more or less permanent guarantee of balance between the life of human communities and the limits of the Earth's natural systems. A realization of the inter-connectedness of various aspects of the crisis is reflected in the report's recommendations regarding populations, nutrition, bio-diversity and ecosystems, as well as energy, industry, urbanization, institutional gaps and international cooperation. The report stated categorically that the concept of sustainable development implies certain restrictions: "Sustainable global development requires that those who are more affluent adopt life-styles within the planet's ecological means—in their use of energy, for example."[16]

The report also identified short-comings in the activity and organization of existing institutions.

> The objective of sustainable development and the integrated nature of the global environment/development challenges pose problems for institutions, national and international, that were established on the basis of narrow preoccupations and compartmentalized concerns. … Yet most of the institutions facing those challenges tend to be independent, fragmented, working to relatively narrow mandates with closed decision processes. Those responsible for managing natural resources and protecting the environment are institutionally separated from those responsible for managing the economy. The real world of interlocked economic and ecological systems will not change; the policies and institutions concerned must…[17]

15 Ibid., p. 4.
16 Ibid., p. 9.
17 Ibid., p. 9.

The report summed up as follows the overall change of approach towards solving the environmental crisis as well as all aspects of the crisis of civilizations: "…approaches to environmental policy can be broadly characterized in two ways. One, characterized as the 'standard' agenda, reflects an approach to environmental policy, laws, and institutions that focuses on environmental effects. The second reflects an approach concentrating on the policies that are the sources of those effects."[18]

The report thus formulated a new understanding of environmental issues as being inseparable from economic and social questions and indicated that overcoming the environmental crisis would require changes in behavior and that it was necessary to concentrate on the causes of negative phenomena in order to protect the environment and solve the crisis of civilization in the broadest sense.

The United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED), held in Rio de Janeiro in 1992, adopted two key documents: *Rio Declaration on Environment and Development* and *Agenda 21*, both of them based on the material contained in the report *Our Common Future*.[19] In addition, two important agreements were signed at the conference, namely the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity.

The Declaration took up the report's conclusion that sustainable development required that environmental protection should be an integral part of the developmental process and could not be considered in isolation from it (Principle 4). The need to enable every individual to share in the responsibility for solving environmental problems is expressed in the Declaration in the principle of access to information held by public authorities and the requirement that everyone should have the right and opportunity to participate in decision-making processes (Principle 10). In order to protect the environment by eliminating causes of its deterioration at the outset the Declaration adopted the principle of precautionary measures that would prevent damage to the environment in those cases where there is a lack of scientific certainty about possible consequences of specific human activity and where there is a risk of serious or irreversible damage (Principle 15).

18 Ibid., p. 310.

19 Rio Declaration, *www.un.org/esa/sustdev/agenda21.htm-12k*.

Agenda 21 consisted of an extensive list of measures recommended to governments intended to help tackle civilization-related problems in detail and in general. Sections on social and economic measures head the list, followed by chapters on the protection and control of resources and strengthening the role of major social groups. The final section deals with the means for fulfilling the tasks implicit in the problems described.

Of particular significance for the subject of Forum 2000 deliberations are the chapters in the final sections entitled "Science for Sustainable Development" and "Promoting Education, Public Awareness and Training." The first assesses the importance of science in seeking solutions to the civilization crises, while the second deals with promoting the values of sustainable development within education.

Of greatest long-term significance, however, is the eighth chapter of the first section "Integrating Environment and Development in Decision Making." This was essentially the implementation of the Declaration's principles and recommended ways of integrating environmental protection into decision-making on the policy, planning and management levels, as well as possible ways of creating an effective legal and regulatory framework. Even more significant, however, was the recommendation to governments to adopt *national strategies of sustainable development.* The basis for this form of planning should be the reports prepared for UNCED by the individual governments. In order to implement this recommendation, Agenda 21, states, governments "should improve education and technical training…including interdisciplinary approaches in technical, vocational, university and other curricula."[20] It goes on to recommend that governments should: "strengthen national institutional capability and capacity to integrate social, economic, developmental and environmental issues at all levels of development decision-making and implementation."[21] It also states that governments should "encourage the development and implementation of national, state, provincial and local programs that assess and promote compliance and respond appropriately to non-compliance."[22]

In conjunction with the UNCED conference in Rio de Janeiro, the authors of *Limits to Growth* published a study, entitled *Beyond the Limits*,

20 *http://www.unep.org/Documents.multilingual.*

21 Ibid.

22 Ibid.

in which they declare that exponential growth of population, physical capital, resource consumption and pollution of resources was continuing unabated.[23] They estimated that there remained only twenty years to turn things round. In that respect they take a somewhat different approach from younger writers on global issues such as J. F. Rischard, whose study *High Noon* shifts the deadline for a remedy to global problems forward by ten years. Although his limit is also twenty years, it starts in 2002.[24]

The results of the UNCED must be assessed above all in terms of the progress achieved so far. Five years later, in 1997, United Nations held its *19th General Assembly Special Session (UNGASS)*, to review what progress the world had made in solving the civilizational problems since Rio de Janeiro. Its assessment was negative overall. It considered the state of natural resources, clean water, seas and oceans, forests, the atmosphere and climate, environmental pollution by chemical and radioactive substances and waste, desertification and other forms of soil damage, and the degree of reduction of biological diversity. The General Assembly was unable to register any improvement in any area, including the economic and social spheres. On the contrary, the global environmental situation had worsened in every respect. The entire special session was generally written off as a failure—particularly in the media: no agreements were reached and no new treaties were signed.[25]

Of crucial importance in terms of further development was the UN's *Millennium Summit* in 2000 at which the Secretary General Kofi Annan presented a report entitled *"We the Peoples, the Role of the United Nations in the 21st century."*[26]

The report dealt with the globalization phenomenon– for the first time in terms of civilizational crisis—assessing its positive and negative aspects. It states categorically that "… our post-war institutions were built for an inter-national world, but we now live in a global world." [27]

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23 Donella H. Meadows, Dennis L. Meadows and Jorgen Randers (1992) *Beyond the Limits*, Vermont: Chelsea Green Publishing Co.

24 Jean-François Rischard (2002) *High Noon: Twenty Global Problems, Twenty Years to Solve Them*, New York: Basic Books.

25 *http://www.un-ngls.org/documents/pdf/ED/15ungass.pdf.*

26 Kofi A. Annan, "We the Peoples, The Role of the United Nations in the 21st Century", *http://www.un.org/millennium/sg/report/.*

27 *http://www.un.org/millennium/sg/report/ch1.pdf,* p. 11.

For the first time it also stresses the role of global companies, which

> …occupy a critical place in this new constellation. They more than anyone, have created the single economic space in which we live; their decisions have implications for the economic prospects of people and even nations around the world. Their rights to operate globally have been greatly expanded by international agreements and national policies, but those rights must be accompanied by greater responsibilities—by the concept and practice of global corporate citizenship.[28]

The report also quoted the result of a survey of 57,000 adults in 60 countries sponsored by Gallup International in 1999. It emerged from the survey that two-thirds of the respondents were dissatisfied with their governments' environmental activity. Only in five countries were the majority of respondents satisfied with their governments' activity in this field. People in developing countries were the most critical in this respect.[29]

In the view of the report, public education was a fundamental priority. It noted an alarmingly low level of real awareness of the threats confronting humanity. As more and more people were living in cities, insulated from nature, there was a need for greater environmental awareness. The conclusion of the report recognizes that new technological solutions may solve some of the present problems but, in the words of Kofi Annan: "it would be foolish to count on them and to continue with business as usual." He again stressed that the environment must be better integrated into main-stream economic policy. It was therefore necessary to introduce a system of "green accounting." Finally he emphasized the need for sound scientific information.[30]

The most recent significant international event to deal with the global crisis of civilization was the *World Summit on Sustainable Development* held in Johannesburg in 2002. However, its results have also been largely unsatisfactory. The only major progress has been achieved by partial implementation of the plan regarding water. A decision was

28 Ibid., pp. 13–14.
29 Ibid., p. 16.
30 Ibid., pp. 63–65.

adopted to halve the number of people without access to safe drinking water by the year 2015. Of only relative significance is the pledge by participating states to halt the wastage of marine resources. Regarding the use of agricultural land, demands were made for modifications to trading, financial and credit policies, as well as the provision of agricultural subsidies. These instruments should free up unused potential husbandry on small farms, where a large part of the population works, particularly in the developing countries. Agreement was reached to halt the decline in bio-diversity by 2010. However, apart from the issues of water management, no relevant—or at least sufficiently specific and transparent—commitments were made in respect of the other conclusions. In this connection it is worth noting the wording of the Plan of Implementation where it states that the summit participants "acknowledge the importance of ethics for sustainable development and, therefore, emphasize the need to consider ethics in the implementation of Agenda 21." The summit finally called on all states to adopt sustainable development strategies by 2005, integrating economic, social and environmental aspects.[31]

A review of the UN's various meetings dealing with issues connected with the crisis of civilization in general and environmental issues in particular, reveals categorically that in the course of thirty years of dealing with the crisis its principal manifestations have been described with some precision and a number of relevant recommendations have been made. However the degree to which the agreed objectives have been attained is so far negligible. Meanwhile time is growing short. The experts' assertion that we have no more than twenty years to solve the basic problems is therefore cause for alarm.

## 3. The EU's Strategy for Sustainable Development

The development of the European Union's Strategy for Sustainable Development provides probably the most consistent demonstration, on a global scale, of the basic method's capacity to achieve equilibrium between humankind and nature.

31 "World Summit on Sustainable Development," *Plan of Implementation*, Johannesburg 2002, *http://www.un.org/esa/sustdev/documents/WSSD*.

The EU adopted the Strategy for Sustainable Development in 2001 at its meeting in Gothenburg. It complemented the Lisbon Strategy, adopted two years early, which was aimed chiefly at boosting the EU's competitiveness. The strategy was based on the principle "that the economic, social and environmental effects of all policies should be examined in a coordinated way and taken into account in decision-making."[32]

The Strategy for Sustainable Development focuses on the following problems:

- global warming
- the growing number of diseases resistant to antibiotics; long-term impacts of hazardous chemicals; threats to food safety
- poverty affecting one in six Europeans has negative consequences on health and results in more suicides
- aging of the population
- loss of bio-diversity; increasing volumes of waste; eroded viability of agricultural land
- effect of transportation (transport congestion); regional disparities

The strategy sets a series of tasks related to sustainability for the EU, for example:

- assessment of the effect of proposals on sustainability
- climate change: ratification of the Kyoto Protocol; production of 22% of electrical energy from renewable sources by 2010;
- transport: decoupling of transport growth and GDP growth; by 2004 prices to reflect costs to society better
- public health: introduce by 2004 a new policy for dealing with chemical substances
- emphasis on separating economic growth from the use of natural resources
- achieving the UN target for official development assistance of 0.7% of GDP

The Council of Europe's first assessment of the Strategy in 2002 was unfavorable. Even more unfavorable was the assessment carried out by

32 Meeting of the Council of Europe held in Gothenburg on 15 and 16 June 2001, *http://ue.eu.int/ueDocs/cms_Data/docs/pressData/en/ec/00200-r1.en1.pdf.*

the European Economic and Social Committee in 2004.[33] Its assessment centered on the four main issues tackled by the Strategy: climate change, transport, public health and natural resources.

The Committee concluded that the European Union was only at the start of the road towards sustainable development. Evidence for this was that in some key areas the EU Commission had only just started drawing up papers for specific strategies. According to the Committee, the Commission was aware of the incoherence of some of its policies and recognized the need for sound political leadership to overcome this.

> Strong political commitment will be needed to make the changes required for sustainable development. While sustainable development will undoubtedly benefit society overall, difficult trade-offs between conflicting interests will have to be made. It is necessary to face up to these trade-offs openly and honestly. Changes to policy must be made in a fair and balanced way, but narrow sectional interests must not be allowed to prevail over the well-being of society as a whole.[34]

In the Committee's view the policies for a sustainable development represented a radical approach to the development of society in the future and some painful decisions would have to be taken in the process. However, in this respect the Strategy was still "extremely woolly and far too abstract." The Committee called for the Strategy to provide clear answers on a number of issues, including:

- the implication for industrial operations and transport if the "factor 10 concept"—reduction of resource use to one tenth of present levels—is implemented
- what form competitive economies will assume if $CO_2$ emissions are cut by 70% worldwide
- what economic sectors will face difficulties? Which will see growth? How will the structural change pan out in practice and how will it be framed and supported at the political level?
- What specific policy measures will be needed to decouple transport growth from economic growth?

33 *http://europa.eu.int/comm/sustainable/docs/ces661-2004_ac_en.pdf.*

34 Ibid. with reference to COM(2001) 264 final.

Unless the Strategy provided satisfactory answers to these questions it could generate fears for the future and a lead to resistance to the policy of sustainable development. Nevertheless sustainable development was clearly "much more than 'just' traditional environment policy in a new guise using new methods." It was becoming obvious that certain economic practices at the global level actually generate many social and environmental problems rather than solving them. It was equally clear that in trying to resolve these problems environmental protection technology was reaching its limits.[35]

## 4. The state of the environment in 2005

The data, indicators, forecasts and models related to global environmental problems and their future evolution are based on various representative scientific findings. The general public have used them to put pressure on its parliamentary and government representatives in favor of a change of priorities in decision-making by public authorities.[36]

Environmental quality has started to improve at a local and regional level in different parts of the world. Nevertheless the global trend is negative. The attitude to environmental protection at the global level is more complicated because whereas a relatively small number of industrially developed countries are trying (to varying degrees) to tackle the issue of environmental protection, for most of the world, the priority is essentially unregulated economic development to ensure social development. This trend is due in particular to global poverty; almost half of the world's population lives on an income of less than 2 US dollars a day. According to estimates, around 1,200 million people have to struggle to survive on an income of less than 1 dollar a day. It is almost the same number as ten years ago.

Even though the people around the world are increasingly concerned about the environment, many global environmental problems continue to worsen as a result of the constant growth of capital, production and consumption. The nature of the problems is often quite surprising and unexpected even for the scientific community. The ratio between man's indisputable potential to affect the environment and

35 Ibid.

36 Documentation for this section prepared by Štěpán Hřebík, EnviConsult s.r.o.

genuine knowledge of the changes wrought as a result of human activity is still inadequate. In a whole number of cases phenomena that are regarded as global environmental problems can be, at least partly, the manifestation of natural processes—such as climate change—that are periodically repeated on our planet.

*Population growth, health and environmental migration*

The population explosion that was regarded as one of the major global problems at the beginning of the 1960s is no longer considered so dramatic in the light of its evolution over recent decades and forecasts based on it. The annual growth rate of the world population is showing a marked fall and now varies around 1.4 percent. Higher rates continue to be registered in the "third" world. It is estimated that the annual growth rate of the world's population will have fallen to 1.1 percent by 2020. The size of our planet's population has now reached 6,500 million and over the next fifty years it is expected to stabilize at the 9,000 million level. However, the population of the five poorest countries is expected to triple (1,700 million). At the same time the size of the world's population is a basic factor in the evolution of other global problems. Population growth and changes in consumption patterns continue to make growing demands on food production systems, for instance.

As stated earlier, a large part of the world's population lives under the poverty line. According to figures of the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), 815 million people suffer from chronic malnutrition and every day 15,000 children die from hunger. Every year some 11 million children die before they reach the age of five and malnutrition is the cause of half of those deaths. Moreover most of the children who survive that critical age suffer life-long effects of malnutrition: low growth, weakened immune systems, mental backwardness. The proportion of people in developing countries suffering from undernourishment and hunger has fallen from 35 percent in 1960 to the present level of 21 percent. The successes of the "green revolution" are contingent on the intensification of agriculture, resulting in greater fertilizer and fresh water use world-wide and soil degradation. Likewise, the use of genetically-modified agricultural crop varieties is regarded as one of the ways of increasing food production. The boundaries of agricultural crop

production methods have been widened. Global food production is already reaching its peak but is still does not meet the needs of the world population. Nevertheless it is estimated that it will have to increase by a further 40 percent over the next twenty years. Within the malnutrition-weakened populations of the developing countries, which also lack basic hygiene and in many cases are exposed to dangerous emissions, there is a great risk of the outbreak and spread of biological agents, which can became particularly virulent and infectious in such an environment and spread via various routes and media to the "non-weakened," vital section of the world population. A classic example is the pandemic of the HIV virus that causes Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS). The UN's Population Report indicates the increased influence of the HIV pandemic on morbidity and mortality, and hence also on the rest of the population. In the course of the present decade 46 million people are expected to die of AIDS in 53 of the worse effected countries, and a horrifying 278 million deaths are expected by 2050. In the affected countries of southern Africa, the incidence of HIV in the population is 25 percent. Sub-Saharan Africa also faces other significant biological risks, such as ebola or malaria, the incidence of which is on the rise. Infant mortality due to malaria is attaining levels of over 35 percent of under-fives in those areas. Poor hygiene in the developing countries increases the incidence of bacteria and microbes (percent occurrence of illnesses). This particularly concerns the causal organisms of cholera, typhus or hepatitis—illnesses that result in patient deaths in the absence of good medical care.

All the problems of the developing countries mentioned bring about increased social tension and occasionally result in armed conflicts. Environmental stresses of an economic and social character, as well as socio-economic and political consequences, damage to the environment, natural disasters and ethnic conflicts cause populations in various parts of the world to resort to environmental migration. The number of environmental refugees is constantly rising. According to the International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent (IFRC) there were some 25–30 million refugees in the world, two thirds of them in Africa. Some studies estimate that the figure of environmental refugees will rise to 150 million by 2050. The main destination countries are the developed industrial countries (USA and the EU countries), where the mounting wave of refugees is causing major social and political problems.

*Atmospheric quality and "the greenhouse effect"*

Damage to the ozone level has been constant over the past four years and has not deteriorated, i.e. the ozone holes are not expanding. Chlorine and bromine concentrations that peaked in 1994 are now falling. The basic condition for this development were international pacts (the Vienna Convention of 1985 and the Montreal Protocol of 1987, with its London amendment of 1990), which established strict limits on the use of substances causing ozone depletion and brought about a radical reduction in emissions (except, perhaps, for air transport). The situation is expected to steadily improve until the situation returns to normal around 2050.

The concentration of greenhouse gases continues to increase on a global scale, particularly $CO_2$ (carbon dioxide), $CH_4$ (methane), and $N_2O$ (nitrous oxide), caused chiefly by the burning of fossil fuels and agricultural activity.

Monitoring of long-term changes in the concentration of sulphur dioxide ($SO_2$) indicates a favorable trend. Over the past 15 years emissions of sulphur dioxide have fallen by as much as 80-90 percent in some European countries. No such success has been recorded in the case of nitrous oxides (NOx). NOx emissions and airborne dust (aerosol particles) are chiefly the result of transport and are the main cause of smog in large cities. Pessimistic forecasts of world oil stocks and the upward trend of NOx concentrations in 2005 forced the US government to promise large subsidies for the development of an alternative form of propulsion—hydrogen cells. The Toyota company has already introduced a hybrid propulsion mass-produced car. According to an "*Energy Innovations"* study the implementation of proposed measures could reduce $SO_2$ emissions to about 60percent of present levels by 2010 and NOx emissions to about 20 percent. The global trend largely depends on the future production of emissions in the newly industrialized countries, however, particularly in South-East Asia. The remote transmission of toxic substances has caused major damage in places where they are not released into the atmosphere. Oligotrophic terrestrial biotops (damage to forests and deforestation) and water ecosystems have been devastated as a result of acidification, such as in Scandinavia and Canada. Major acidification is also registered in southern China.

Tropospheric ozone is a major ingredient of "photochemical (oxi-

dation) smog" and there are increasing concentrations of it over industrialized countries. In higher concentrations it can have negative (toxic) effects on health and vegetation. This type of smog is no longer restricted to the territory of large cities but also occurs in open countryside.

*Quantity and quality of water resources: rivers, lakes, seas and oceans*

Freshwater is an important natural resource and its quantity and quality is closely monitored. Nevertheless in many countries of the world water does not meet standards established for the quality of drinking or industrial water or it is scarce. This applies particularly to the developing countries, of course. There are 1,200 million people around the world without access to clean water and 2,400 million people cannot maintain proper hygiene because of the lack of water. Over 3 million people die every year from diseases caused by infected water. The areas with the most serious problems are Saharan Africa and countries of the Middle East. According to forecasts, the area of territories affected will double by 2050 and two thirds of the world's population will live in areas with medium-high or high water stress.

Fresh water constitutes only 2.6 percent of the Earth's total volume of water. Just over a hundredth of one percent of the overall volume of water is water that humankind can use as a resource. It consists chiefly of river and lake water. The total amount is 93,000 $km^3$. Over the past 50 years the volume of used water has increased four-fold. At the present time human beings use 4,000 $km^3$/per annum. Of that 70–80 percent is used for irrigation, 20 percent is used in industry and only 6 percent is designated for household use. Most water is used for irrigating agricultural land that provides 40 percent of world food production (CSD). Since the 1970s, the area of irrigated agricultural land has increased by over 270 million hectares (FAO). Per capita water consumption in the developed countries varies between 120 and 300 litres per day. It is estimated that the annual per capita water consumption worldwide is 7–8 thousand $m^3$.

In the developing and developed countries rivers and lakes are intensively polluted by sewage and industrial waste water. According to the IMO, in 2004, 3–10 thousand million tons of ballast water is released into the environment world-wide every year. About 10 percent of the world's rivers may be regarded as polluted. Undoubtedly the gravest

problem of all is eutrophization, i.e. the enrichment of water with nutrients, particularly nitrogen (N) and phosphorus (P). Eutrophization is a natural phenomenon, but humans greatly contribute towards it and accelerate it, thereby enhancing its consequences. The source of these nutrients is above all intensive farming and sewage. Eutrophization is characterized by massive primary production, encouraging excessive growth of blue-green algae or "water weed," which is often toxic, and it causes a marked deterioration in water and wetland ecosystems.

Over the past 15 years the number of heavily polluted rivers in the developed industrial countries—polluted originally by readily degradable organic substances in particular—has fallen considerably. It is estimated that the release of waste water containing such substances has fallen by 50 percent. Inland waters are often polluted with toxic substances or substances with delayed effects (xenobiotics). These originate in industrial plants and agriculture. They include heavy metals (mercury, cadmium, arsenic) as well as organic substances (polychlorinated biphenyls—PCBs—organic pesticides). These substances are not readily biodegradable and are deposited in the tissue of living organisms with chronic effects. They can be carcinogenic. In recent years traces of various medicines have started to appear in the waters of developed countries and water treatment plants are not yet capable of eliminating them; they enter the environment through communal waste water, particularly from public health facilities. Research into their possible effects shows they can cause disorders of the reproductive cycle and affect sexual development.

The seas and oceans are polluted chiefly with crude oil and crude-oil products as a result of tanker accidents, the leakage of hydrocarbon compounds from pipelines and drilling rigs. Every year it is estimated that 10 million tons of crude oil leaks into the sea. One ton of crude oil is enough to pollute 6–12 $km^2$ of ocean surface. Improvement in the quality of surface waters is successful only on a limited scale and mostly in the most advanced countries.

### *Chemical management and toxic substances; waste*

Technological progress results in not only the production of familiar and "natural" materials but also the development and distribution of new synthetic materials that enter the environment via various chan-

nels. There are currently over 8 million known chemical materials in the world. However we have little information so far about their behavior and effect on living organisms. A big unknown is above all their synergic effect that can result in mutual reinforcement of the toxicity of materials that can be non-toxic themselves. There is still inadequate knowledge of all the risks. Data about the properties of chemicals is mostly hard to access. Information about acute toxicity is available mostly in the case of medicines and pesticides. In the case of about 75 percent of bulk chemicals it is impossible to define the potential risk even after analyzing the toxicity and eco-toxicity. There is also insufficient information about the volume/quantity of materials of anthropogenic origin in the environment.

Every year chemical industries worldwide produce over 400 million tons of chemical materials. Europe is the world's biggest producer of chemicals (38%). Some 70,000 chemical materials are used every year. Every year 500–1,000 new chemical substances are developed. Out of all the 100,000 known and regularly used chemical compounds possible toxic effects have been investigated in only 400 chemicals. In the case of 86% of the total number of 2,700 chemical substances sold in the EU countries in volumes over 10,000 tons per annum, there are no available data of their toxic affects. According to certain reports, the effects of chemical substance escape into the environment affects the health of 4–5 thousand million people. The toxic substances commonly occurring in the environment particularly include heavy metals and persistent organic pollutants. These chemically stable substances are stored in the environment over a long period of time with resultant bioaccumulation and their spread into the food chain. As a result their effects on life and health are even more significant. EU forecasts up to 2010 anticipate an escalating trend of toxic substance emissions. The EU wants to introduce retrospective control of chemical substances and remove from circulation those that represent a risk to human life and health (REACH program: *Registration, Evaluation and Authorization of Chemicals*).

By 1990, world production of waste amounted to around 9,000 million tons, 300 million tons of which consisted of dangerous waste. The amount has gone on rising since. In the OECD the total amount of waste produced has risen by about 20 percent since 1990. Average annual per capita production of solid municipal and industrial waste is estimated at around 4 tons. The EU strategy targets for treating waste have not

been reached. The most frequent method of treating waste is dumping in landfills or incineration. Nevertheless, over the past decade in the developed countries an increasing portion of waste has been used as secondary raw-material or for energy production. In some European countries the amount of post-recycling waste is as much as a third of the original amount. In the EU countries, about 50 percent of paper and 50 percent of glass is recycled. Nevertheless production and consumption patterns suggest that world-wide waste production will go on mounting.

*Climate change, natural disasters*

Increasing pollution and concentrations of contaminants in the atmosphere, particularly, $CO_2$ and $CH_4$, create the so-called greenhouse effect, which leads to an increase of global temperature and therefore climate change. Currently there is clear scientific evidence of ongoing climate change and the contribution of anthropogenic to its intensity. Models indicate that temperature could increase by 1.5–6.0°C worldwide. During many summer days of 2003 and 2004 the temperature in Europe remained within extreme values of 30–40°C. The average global temperature of the Earth's surface rose by 0.6°C in the course of the twentieth century, while the closing decade of the century was measurably warmer. The years 1998 and 2001 were the warmest years since 1861, when daily temperatures started to be measured systematically in various different places.

Global warming changes the relationship between the water masses of the oceans and the atmosphere, and other subsystems that help create the climate; these changes can take the form of changes in monsoon movements and the direction of ocean currents (impact on ocean circulation, the *El Niño* climate phenomenon), significant changes in ocean salinity and even the destabilization of entire biomes. According to models and scenarios drawn up particularly by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC SRES: IPCC Special Report on Emission Scenarios) there are indications of a slight diminution of the Gulf Stream. A major characteristic of global warming is the reduction of depositions of atmospheric rainfall and an extension of areas affected by water stress.

The melting of enormous glaciers in the Antarctic and Arctic is causing the ocean level to rise, which will undoubtedly result in the

loss of low-lying coastal areas. Island nations are most at risk. In the course of the 20th century the average levels of the world's oceans rose by 10–20 cm. Scientists forecast that the level of the Pacific will rise as much as 90 cm by 2070. More turbulent storms and warmer seas are destroying unique ecosystems, such as the Great Barrier Reef.

Extreme climatic phenomena are occurring more frequently and with growing intensity. They include particularly cyclones, tsunami waves and floods. According to the publication UN Facts and Figures, in 1998 alone natural disasters (floods, drought, storms and earthquakes) caused the death of 50,000 people and damage exceeding 90 billion US dollars. These figures for a single year exceed the total damage caused by natural disasters for the entire 1980s. In 2004 cyclone Heta, the most powerful in history, devastated Polynesia. It was accompanied by 90-metre waves driven by winds of 275 km/h. In December 2004 an earthquake measuring 9.0 on the Richter Scale caused tsunami waves that struck Thailand, India, Sri Lanka, Malaysia, the Maldives, Burma and the eastern coasts of Africa (a total of eleven countries on two continents). The current estimate of people killed is around 220,000 and nearly a million people lost their homes. In Indonesia alone there are 400,000 registered homeless as a result of the tragedy. Apart from the number of deaths Hurricane Katrina, which struck New Orleans in 2005, caused damage that was equal to the greatest natural disasters ever suffered by the United States.

Global warming and climate change create all sorts of economic and social problems. The most important include changes in the extent and productivity of agro-ecosystems, massive environmental migration and a wider spread and extent of infectious diseases.

As a result of the ratification of the Kyoto Protocol some limited successes have been achieved, but the situation has not fundamentally improved. The USA and the European Union are still among the greatest producers of greenhouse gases. The United States refuses to honor its obligations under the Kyoto Protocol to reduce its production of greenhouse gases by 7 percent, even though it now recognizes that humans contribute towards climate change; nevertheless, the US government points to the growing production of greenhouse gases in China and India. Emissions are certain to go on rising in the next two or three decades. Unless fundamental measures are adopted it is anticipated that 20,000 million tons of carbon will be released into the atmosphere

by the end of the 21st century and the concentration of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere will increase to 700 ppm. The greenhouse effect—i.e. the trapping of low-frequency thermal radiation in the atmosphere by greenhouse gases leading to rising temperatures, with destructive consequences for human civilization—will continue to develop.

*Changes in "land-use," appropriation and soil degradation*

World population growth brings with it the exponential growth of demands on land use, particularly to ensure food production, but it also involves an expansion of human settlements and the building of a technological infrastructure, particularly transport networks.

Forests currently cover about 27 percent of the world's arid land (35 million km²) and exert a crucial influence on climatic stability—they generate oxygen, while absorbing carbon dioxide, one of the main greenhouse gases. Only 40 percent of forests may be regarded as virgin forest, however. The rest are affected by human activity in some way (so-called semi-natural forests). The development of human civilizations has led to a continual process of deforestation (a reduction of 20–50%). At the present time the process particularly affects the developing countries of the tropical zone. According to FAO estimates, 150 thousand km² of forest were being destroyed every year during the 1980s, including 137 thousand km² of rainforest. South American accounts for 54 thousand km² of the total area. At the present time, annual deforestation is estimated at around 130 thousand km²; in other words, 1 percent of forests are being lost every year. In spite of the falling rate of deforestation the present extent of forest ecosystems is expected to be reduced by 15 percent before 2020. Among the main causes of deforestation are acquisition of land for agricultural production, as well as felling (25% of total deforestation), mineral extraction and large-scale projects such as roads and hydro-electric dams.

In arid zones, which account for 40 percent of total land area globally, particularly in Saharan Africa, south-west Asia and Latin America, desertification is occurring—i.e. the transformation of fertile land into infertile desert. This phenomenon affects some 70 percent of potentially productive arid areas and its manifestations range from reduced yields of agricultural crops and biomass to the total preclusion of any agricultural activity. The causes are extreme drought and intensive grazing or

other forms of excessive land use. Hence desertification is directly connected with the poverty of rural areas and the risk of famine and loss of water resources.

Both phenomena described are the main factors in soil degradation, which markedly threatens the quality and quantity of soil and the world's natural resources overall. Erosion of agricultural land is a global problem. Every year some 30,000 million tons of topsoil suffers erosion. Over 9 million km² out of 14.7 million km² are subject to general erosion due to water. A total of 2.4 million km² of agricultural and forestry land are at risk of so-called chemical degradation, i.e. through loss of nutrients (organic matter), salinization, and toxic contamination due to industrial activity. Underused water for irrigation results in the salinization of some 20 percent of the world's irrigated land. Every year an additional 1.5 million hectares are subject to salinization (CSD), which considerably reduces global agricultural production (WCD). The worst affected land is in semi-arid or arid zones. The physical degradation of soils is particularly due to soil compaction caused by inappropriate husbandry, whereby the porosity of the soil profile—i.e. its permeability and retention potential—is reduced. Human activities contributing most to soil degradation are excessive grazing (34%), deforestation (30%) and agricultural activity (28%). Additional factors are fuel-wood collection and industrial activity. Major factors in global soil degradation are water erosion (56%) wind erosion (28%) chemical degradation (12%) and physical degradation (4%). Overall, soil degradation has reduced global fertility by 13 percent since the end of World War II, and around 3 million km² of soil is degraded to such an extent that it has virtually ceased to have any productive function.

Urban sprawl, the unrestrained growth of cities and agglomerations, has become a global problem in recent years because of its enormous territorial demands. It is estimated that in Europe some 70 percent of people live in towns and cities that occupy about 25 percent of EU territory. Urbanization in the countries of Asia, Africa and Latin America, which now displays the fastest growth, assumes very specific forms. Because of demographic growth, high birth rates and falling rates of mortality, the number of city dwellers there has risen from 1 million in 1920 to the present 1,000 million. Annual urban population growth there amounts to 3-4 percent, while rates in the slum areas of those cities (*favelas, bidonvilles*) are almost double. A side-effect of urban devel-

opment in developing countries has been suburbanization, with all its social, economic and ecological consequences. It manifests itself chiefly in the degradation of the countryside in the surrounding areas of towns due to the pressure of new building developments. Soil is covered with asphalt or concrete. It is estimated that the number of people living in urban areas will have grown by over 4 percent between 1995 and 2010 and that uncontrolled urbanization will continue.

*Biodiversity and ecosystems*

Some 1.75 million species have been taxonomically named to date (bacteria: 4,000; protoctists: 80,000; invertebrates: 1,272,000; vertebrates: 52,000; fungi: 72,000; plants: 270,000). The total number of species has been estimated as 14 million. Tropical forest ecosystems are the most species rich environments. Although they cover less than 10 percent of the world's surface, they may contain 90 percent of the world's species of plants and animals. Coral reefs and Mediterranean heathland are also highly species-rich

Global bio-diversity is rapidly changing as a result of land conversion, climate change, pollution, unsustainable harvesting of natural resources and the introduction of exotic species. The World Conservation Union's Red List classified some 15,000 species as endangered species, including some 6,700 species of wild fauna and 8,300 species of wild flora. In 2004 some 31 percent of amphibians were threatened with extinction (compared to 2.9% in 1983), making them by far the largest category of species under threat. In addition some 20 percent of mammals (1,101 species) and about 12 percent (1,183 species) of birds are under threat. The numbers of threatened species in all categories of organisms are rising all the time. Over the past 150 years the actual extinction of species has increased dramatically. It is estimated that between 1850 and 1950 one species became extinct every year. At the present time probably 30,000 species of living organisms disappear annually. Analyses indicate that in the next one hundred years the rate of extinction of vertebrate species could rise by 15–20 percent. However, growth trends in the numbers of threatened species need to be treated with a degree of caution as the classification criteria in the Red List have changed and there have also been some changes in the taxonomic classification of fauna. Because of inadequate information it is impossible

to say precisely how many species have become extinct since the 1970s. According to a study published in the journal *Nature*, one million species of organisms will die out by 2050 due to climate change.

The greatest threat to bio-diversity is the devastation and loss of habitats, which is naturally most prevalent in places of highest human population density. The ecosystems most under threat at the present time include the rainforests and coral reefs. It is estimated that about 140,000 km² of rainforest is lost every year. Ten percent of coral reefs have already been destroyed and up to 50 percent could be destroyed in the coming decades. About 60 percent of the 227 major rivers have been radically or moderately altered by the construction of dams, new riverbeds or canals. All those physical alterations have had an impact on their ecological functions and caused the fragmentation of freshwater ecosystems and threatened their bio-diversity (WCD).

One way of protecting habitats is the system of specially protected areas. The total area of protected zones has risen steadily since the 1970s, increasing from 3 million km² in 1970 to over 12 million km² by the end of the 1990s. By 2004, protected areas constituted over 13 percent of the world's surface (19.5 million km²), almost 11 percent of which are IUCN protected areas. It is estimated that about 12 percent of the world's forests are located within protected areas (IUCN categories I–VI). North, Central and South America have about 20 percent of their forests in protected areas. An analysis of 93 protected areas around the world carried out at the beginning of this century showed that in most of those areas and parks negative influences have been halted; in this connection it should be pointed out that one of the features of our civilization that endangers the environment is mass tourism.

Invasive species are organisms that have successfully colonized ecosystems into which they were introduced; they are regarded as a serious global problem and the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) requires parties to the Convention to take all possible measures to prevent the spread of alien species and to control and eradicate those that threaten indigenous ecosystems, localities and species. On a recommendation of the CBD the Global Invasive Species Programme (GISP) was launched in 1996.

The spread of these species is due to artificial planting (colonization and agriculture) and random transport. Over 120 fish species have been artificially introduced into maritime systems, river estuaries and inland

lakes and many of them present a grave threat to the populations of indigenous species. Because of their adaptability and aggressivity invasive species represent a great risk to the natural bio-diversity of ecosystems.

January 2000 saw the adoption of the *Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety* aimed at ensuring that countries have an opportunity to assess the risks involved with biologically modified organisms imported onto their territory. Genetic manipulation is increasingly in the production of agricultural crops. The modification takes the form of targeted genome manipulation by introducing or eliminating certain genes. Public concern at the use of such bio-technologies is due to ethical views, fear of genetically modified crops in foods, fears of threats to the environment and also fear of concentration of economic power and technical dependence on the developed countries. In the USA, thirty varieties of genetically modified (GM) cultivated crops have been approved. In 2001, GM crops were produced on more than 52 million hectares, and the figure is growing. China is in second position after the USA in biotechnological research. The cultivation of GM crops is so far confined to a very small area. In spite of all its advantages, the use of bio-technology presents a potential risk to bio-diversity; in this case it is necessary to thoroughly implement the principle of preliminary caution.[37]

## 5. Conclusions of the Forum 2000 discussions and their assessment

Forum 2000 summarized the results of the Environmental Workshop into six topic areas. In the first of these, which was mentioned at the beginning of this study, environmental problems are defined as civilizational issues. The second enumerates these problems as a basis and central theme of Forum 2000 discussions and summarizes the reasons for failed attempts and how to deal with them. The third area goes one step further and tries to forecast future developments, indicating the ba-

37 CITES (*www.cites.org*), CBD (*www.biodiv.org*), WHO (*www.who.int/en*) FAO (*www.fao.org*), OSN (*www.un.org*), CSD (*www.un.org/esa/sustdev*), UNEP (*www.unep.org*) – GEO 2003, GEO 2004/5), IFRC (*www.ifrc.org*), IMO (*www.imo.org*), WCD (*www.dams.org*), OECD (*www.oecd.org*), UNDP (*www.undp.org*), IUCN (*www.iucn.org*), CREO (*http://creo.amnh.org*), GISP (*www.gisp.org*), IPCC (*www.ipcc.ch*) , BirdLife International (*www.birdlife.net*), Worldwatch institute (*www.worldwatch.org*), EU (*http://epp.eurostat.cec.eu.int*).

sic social and psychological obstacles to attempts at resolving a situation that already displayed the features of an environmental crisis. The fourth area also dealt with barriers, particularly barriers of an institutional, political and economic character. The fifth area had the character of an appeal and emphasized the limits beyond which the global social and natural system risked collapse. The final area comprised an enumeration and brief description of mechanisms that could and should reinforce the elements of global environmental security and stabilization and thereby pave the way for lasting sustainable development.[38]

In many respects Forum 2000 undoubtedly went beyond the limits of analyses such as those contained in the report of the UN Commission on Environment and Development *Our Common Future*.[39] It stressed above all the ethical dimension of the global problems and the demand for the definition of a kind of ethical minimum. In the Forum materials we read: "… it is not possible to enter the 21st century with the ethics of the 20th century… It is … vitally essential to change the priorities of shared common values."[40]

In his contribution at the conference in 2000, Fritjof Capra stated in this respect:

> Ethics refers to a standard human conduct that flows from a sense of belonging… Within the context of globalization, I can think of two communities that we all belong to. We all are members of humanity and as such our behavior should reflex the values of human rights, justice and dignity. ... We all are members of the Earth household… As such we should behave like the other members of the household: the plants, animals and micro-organisms that form the vast network of relationships that we call the web of life.

At the conference in 1998 Hans Küng declared with reference to wider issues, that: "…sustainability is neither a purely economic concept, nor a purely ecological concept. It is not even a purely scientific concept, but is basically an ethical demand."

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38 Environmental Workshop of Forum 2000, 6 September 1997.

39 *Our Common Future*, 1987.

40 Evaluation of the series of Forum 2000 Conferences, Prague, July 2001; all subsequent quotations from speeches are taken from that paper.

It must be said that there are weaknesses to Forum 2000's postulate. It is not entirely clear, for instance, from what roots the new ethical principles are to grow, since it is not merely a question of belonging to a community. Nor is it simply a matter of easily definable rational environmental reasons for new ethical minima. In the case of the developed industrialized countries of the so-called North because of urbanization most of the population are insulated from direct contact with the world of "primal nature" (Karl Marx) and this is an obstacle to a necessary change of awareness and return to natural values. Carl Gustav Jung makes the point clearly:

> What we face… is the risk that the whole of reality will be replaced by words. This leads to a dreadful lack of instinctiveness on the part of modern, particularly urban, people. They lack contact with full-blown, vital and breathing nature. These ways people know a rabbit or a cow only from the pages of illustrated magazines, lexicons or pictures and they think that have really experienced it, and later they are surprised that cowsheds 'stink' because the lexicon said nothing about it."[41]

This is not the case, of course, of the populations of developing countries and certain countries in transition (e.g. China, India, Brazil), where the majority of the population still makes a living from agriculture, albeit in circumstances where their attitude to nature often verges on the struggle for survival. Thus Forum 2000 issued a challenge without going more deeply into the socio-psychological, philosophical and above all existential conditions and potentialities for a new ethic to come into being.

Another postulate voiced by the Forum 2000 participants, particularly during the discussions in 2001, was recognition of the right to an environment as a human right. Although it is that right that is also enshrined in natural constitutions, its practical legal value remains debatable. The very requirement itself is an appeal to the state, which is supposed to be the guarantor of the quality of the public patrimony of the environment. However, even the Rio Declaration, which in its first principle proclaims the right of human beings to "a healthy and produc-

41 Carl Gustav Jung (1945) *Psychologische Betrachtungen*, Zürich: Rascher.

tive life," simply adds cautiously "in harmony with nature."[42] It thereby indicates that the guarantor of a more loosely defined "right to environment" is society as a whole, providing it respects the values of nature. The right to a (healthy, favorable, etc.) environment is closely bound up with the demand for a new ethic, without a change of behavior, and hence of consumption and production, society is incapable of guaranteeing such a right in today's circumstances. Here, too, the Forum raised an issue that deserves deeper and more thorough reflection—with account taken for the different conditions pertaining in the developed countries on the one hand, and the developing countries, on the other.

Another topic closely linked to the two previous ones is the question of upbringing and education. Hans Küng recommended a kind of basic framework for upbringing and education: "…what we need is an integral humane conception: humanity, in a cosmic context, as it has been emphasized from of old, more in the Indian and Chinese spirituality than in the Christian West. Instead of the exploitative domination of nature by human beings, we need an incorporation of human beings into nature." (1998)

Thor Heyerdahl drew attention to the basic problem of upbringing and education, which is to do with the very process by which the world and its problems are perceived nowadays: "The natural environment is still in command, even over man, and we must study the clockwork around us to understand and venerate it before we take it to pieces in an attempt to improve it. The fundamental difference between the 20th-century global civilization and all former cultures is the split between science and religion." (1997)

Fritjof Capra then specified how targeted education, based on positive knowledge of the natural sciences, is important for the harmony of nature and human activities:

> ... the great challenge is to create sustainable communities, that is communities which embody social, cultural and physical environment… We can learn valuable lessons from ecosystems because ecosystems are in fact sustainable communities of plants, animals and micro-organisms… We need to become ecologically literate … In science this new way of thinking is known as 'systems thinking'

42 Rio Declaration, *www.un.org/esa/sustdev/agenda_21.htm-12k.*

> ... Instead of seeing the universe as a machine composed of elementary building blocks, scientists have discovered that the material world is ultimately a network of inseparable patterns of relationship, that the planet as a whole is a living, self-regulating system. (1999)

In that respect the Forum would seem to have gone the furthest of all, by indicating that the theme of environmental crisis concerns the very foundations of human perception of the world and of humankind itself.

The theme of environmental policy instruments was apostrophized by Bedřich Moldan in his contribution, in which he referred to the need to deal not only with concepts and ideas but also with specific institutions. The next debater, Osvaldo Sunkel, also dealt with this when he pointed to the activity of global companies, which invest in the environment both because natural values are very scarce and because those companies have a long-term interest in maintaining their market, which is the entire world. Nevertheless such an evolution demands environmental stability.

To sum up: although in the course of its deliberations Forum 2000 was unable to tackle in detail the specific implications of environmental policy and the environmental crisis of civilization, it did deal with most of the essential and relevant mechanisms, whose introduction could help achieve sustainable development. Its identification of the social, psychological and political short-comings and obstacles that prevent the effectual implementation of such mechanisms was essentially sound. This applies particularly to the idea expressed in the conclusion of the Environmental Workshop that we lack the courage to spiritually and existentially grasp the technically conceivable extinction of our civilization.[43]

In reality, however, it is a matter of deciding whether or not there is justification for the universal belief in progress, a belief in some kind of autonomic—essentially technical—solution to present-day problems, and whether it is not simply a blind alley, one of the cultural experiments of a civilization under global threat from itself. There are plenty of critics of the Euro-American mentality's self-confidence and non-

43 Environmental Workshop of Forum 2000, 6 September 1997.

chalance. Some of them drew attention to the dangerous aspects of the behavior of modern man and his stereotypical perception and treatment of the world (and nature) even during the first half of the last century, as well as later, of course. They included José Ortega y Gasset, the previously mentioned Carl Gustav Jung and Konrad Lorenz.[44]

Not only did the Forum fail to transcend the critical judgments of those thinkers, it did not even take their major contribution into account in its assessment of the present-day world. Fritjof Capra came closest to that line of thinking:

> Today, the obstacles that stand in the way of ecological sustainability are no longer conceptual or technical, they lie in the dominant values of our society and, in particular, in the dominant corporate values. Corporate values and choices are determined today, to a large extent, by flows of information, power and wealth in the global financial network that shape societies. (1999)

A major challenge continues to loom before Forum 2000's future activity, because the controversy between Godwin and Malthus, mentioned at the beginning of this study, a controversy that symbolizes the fundamental problem of our epoch, is still not being discussed.

For obvious reasons Forum 2000 did not deal in great depth with the relevance and practical implications of implementing of the idea of sustainable development, i.e. the real possibilities of harmonizing the economic, social and environmental dimensions of human activity, nor the consequences that the acceptance of the sustainability vision would have for the lifestyle of the populations of the developed countries on the one hand, and the populations of the developing countries, on the other. The topics of debates on such issues would have to be more tightly and specifically defined.

From the strictly practical environmental point of view the way forward probably requires going beyond environmentalism, and perhaps not only in the developed industrialized countries. It is essentially based on a historical distinction between three phases of environmentalism:

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44 For example and particularly: José Ortega y Gasset (1932) *The Revolt of the Masses*, New York: W. W. Norton & Company; Konrad Lorenz (1987) *The Waning of Humaneness*, Boston: Little, Brown & Co.

protection, regulation and—in the recent period—investment. Environmentalists themselves believe the third phase corresponds optimally with the idea of sustainable development. This means that environmentalism need no longer tailor its agenda to the interests of industry and the unions, but, on the contrary, must develop environmentally sustainable projects conducive to a transformation of consumption and production (of energy, in particular), while protecting jobs and providing employment opportunities.[45] This concept also has its drawbacks: it also will find it hard to resolve the discrepancy between the high productivity of labor and an expanding population, particularly in the developing countries with a large excess of available labor.

Nevertheless the world is constantly changing, as suggested by the results of the G8 talks of the world's strongest industrial powers. Cancellation of the debts of poorest developing countries and the USA's recognition that human activity influences climate change are definitely major steps forward on the part of those with the greatest influence in the world.[46] Just how timely and effective these measures are, only time will tell.

But one thing *is certain*: as long as the deliberations of Forum 2000, which has made an indispensable contribution to promoting awareness of all aspects of the crisis of civilization, not only the environmental ones, will continue, they will be confronted with new and even weightier intellectual and ethical issues than when they started.

45 Michael Shellenberger and Ted Nordhaus, *The Death of Environmentalism, Global Warming Politics in a Post-Environmental World, www.thebreakthrough.org, www.evansmcdonough.com*).

46 G8 meeting at Gleneagles in Scotland, 2005. *http://www.g8.gov.uk.*

# *The View of an Observer*

*The preceding chapters attempted to familiarize the reader with the content of the main discussions which took place at the five Forum 2000 conferences between 1997 and 2001. Those discussions gave rise to confrontations and misunderstandings but also to coherence and complementarity of opinions among an immensely heterogeneous gathering from all over the world. They touched on areas which are currently the main focus of global contestations: the clash of cultural groups, the hybridization of world cultures, the internal changes within world religions. Account was taken of environmental crises, economic integration and, at the same time, polarization of world regions and also the competition between contemporary models of global governance. Even if Forum 2000 did not constitute a narrow specialist academic debate, which we are familiar with from the series of recent publications on globalization, the viewpoints expressed at the conference were based on the profound expert knowledge of the individual participants—all of them leading figures in their field.*

*The indisputable strength of these chapters is that they also contain the view from within, the view of the authors, who themselves delivered key-note speeches at Forum 2000 or took part in the discussions. Some of the authors participated personally in the preparations for and organization of the conference.*

*We are lacking, however, the view of someone not so closely linked with the philosophical, sociological and political debates, the* spiritus movens *of the conference as Václav Havel conceived it. This should be someone who did not deliver a key-note address or participate in discussions as a member of the panel, but rather someone who took part in the conference as an attentive listener, fully aware of the topicality and urgency of the themes discussed. We needed the view of a committed outsider with a broad outlook, a view which would also notice subjects which might be side-lined in the process of dividing*

*thematic discussions into sociological, anthropological, theological, economic and environmental blocks. We needed someone who would look at Forum 2000 as an educated citizen, always reaching a conclusion and judging critically whether what happened at Prague Castle between 1997 and 2001 was something more than merely talks between undoubtedly well-intentioned people, simply offering general and well-meaning recommendations, immensely difficult, however, or quite impossible to implement. We found such a committed commentator in the literary critic Vladimir Karfik who didn't hesitate to flag both the strong and the weak points of the Prague conferences.*

# Both the Rationality of Precise Analysis and the Naivety of Ideals Are Needed

*Vladimír Karfík*

When Václav Havel opened the first of the Forum 2000 meetings, few imagined that the issues that he raised with his colleagues would become the main theme of all the discussions of the subsequent years of deliberations. The issues made an impression on the forum of extremely diverse personalities both because they were fundamental questions and because the speaker formulated them as the outcome of his own reflections and concerns.

In his keynote address Václav Havel meditated on the meaning of our actions and existence on this Earth, as well as on the ever increasing responsibility of individuals and our common global responsibility for the world as a whole and for its future. He also reflected on "the loss of respect towards the order of existence of which we are not the creators but mere components, to the mysterious inherent meaning or spirit of this order, to its memory capable of not only recording that part of our deeds concealed from others but of recording it for eternity, that is of evaluating our deeds from the point of view of eternity." The issues raised by Václav Havel, which were essentially metaphysical, were constantly to lend a sense of urgency to the discussions and an awareness of the deepening problem of a globalized world. The urgency in Havel's opening words reflected a fear that we might wait passively for current problems to be resolved by a sort of "existential revolution" resulting from some kind of world-wide catastrophe, instead of people bringing it about "by their own will and by joining their forces," i.e. means that are within our capacities and the scope of our culture.

The idea of convening an assembly of leading figures of present-day intellectual, spiritual and political life to discuss their experience with him and reflect on their personal visions of the future was undoubtedly inspired by the imminent millennial milestone. The urgency of such de-

liberations was not determined so much by that mysterious date, which was reminiscent for some of the equivalent moment in the calendar a thousand years earlier when people waited chiliastically for the end of the world, as by something of far greater topicality, namely the speed of change occurring within contemporary civilization, and particularly its economy.

Forum 2000, the brainchild of Václav Havel and Elie Wiesel, supported by Yohei Sasakawa, has provided an exceptional platform for tabling and articulating burning issues that require solutions in the nearest future. In his introduction Elie Wiesel recalled the main warning: Whatever occurs today will be felt tomorrow, and therefore we must regard concern about the present state of the world as something of absolute urgency. Václav Havel stressed that while we all share the same global fate, without respect for the moral order we cannot express sufficient personal responsibility for the world. In the very first speeches at Forum 2000 the demand was voiced for a "common spiritual and moral minimum." These basic ideas, discussed from all points of view, gradually became the leitmotif of the subsequent discussions in the following meetings of Forum 2000 in the period 1997–2005.

The individual meetings had specific sets of discussion topics. The task of the initial conference was to discuss which were the most burning issues of the present-day and attempt to designate the most important issues. This would provide a basis to discuss future prospects. The all-embracing title of the first conference "Concerns and Hopes," to a certain extent implied its content: hopes and responsibility; i.e. both responsibility for the world we live in—in the words of Jindřich Chalupecký, and the prospects, which cannot therefore be hopeless. During the discussions a number of problems were articulated which were to become the main themes of the subsequent conferences and summed up the most topical and burning issues of the present-day world and its nearest prospects.

At the second conference attention was immediately focused on the economics and current issues of globalization, which included the status of the nation state and the tension between global and regional interests. During the debates of the second conference the issue of human rights was frequently raised, as well as the ethical and cultural dimensions of contemporary civilization, and rightly so, since it was a question that pervaded not only the first two conferences but was

raised subsequently all the time as a fundamental issue of the working of contemporary society, both in the developed countries and in those countries that are inaccurately described as underdeveloped.

The following conference, whose theme was "Visions of the Developing World," could not avoid the issue of human rights and the globalization issue returned once more, although the main topics were to do, above all, with the mutual relationships of developed countries and economies in transition, as well as their common visions. In addition to these visions was the role of the world's religions.

The principal theme was very extensive—the role of education and science in the process of globalization, brought about and maintained by the potentialities of modern technology, on which it depends. The subtopic of the potentialities of education and science in the developed and developing world was similarly crucial, since without education and science there can be no technology and hence no globalization. Moreover, education and science are important particularly with a view to equalizing the levels of the developed and developing countries. Education is also related to the issue of spiritual values and the moral foundation of a globalized world, which was discussed in the sessions on education. An integral component and outcome of education is culture, which, in the era of globalization continues to play the same role in the extended market environment but its status is somewhat altered. Hence the issue was deliberately highlighted, somewhat provocatively, at the conference by the question: Is globalization a threat to the arts?

Whenever there has been discussion about the status of minorities in society, about the relationship of the developed and developing world and about tension or differences between religions, questions have been raised about the concept human rights and their assertion. For that reason the entire fifth Forum 2000 was given to the issue of human rights. It brought to light the breadth and importance of this issue in the modern world. Discussions first focused on the concept of human rights from the viewpoint of different currents of civilization, and in the light of different historical traditions and religious teachings. A related issue was the question of the universality of human rights: does intervention in defense of human rights constitute interference in the national sovereignty of a given country? Is it acceptable to intervene in the case of traditional humiliation and mutilation of women justified by tribal or religious traditions? Is such intervention not only possible but also justi-

fied and essential? What role do international organizations play in the defense of human rights? Is their commitment adequate or are such organizations restricted by the interests of the states which comprise them (e.g. the UN)? Ought an independent international organization to be set up exclusively to deal with human rights? Delegates also raised the issue of people's right not to be hungry (famines still occurring in tropical Africa and the duty of rich countries to show solidarity) and finally, a most burning issue: how to prevent illness due to poverty, inadequate hygiene and health care, and epidemics. The content of that discussion was harrowing and very specific and the conclusion was that health was a human right.

Those conferences inspired the basic theme of the next project: Bridging Global Gaps. As the name suggests, its various workshops, round-table discussion and subsidiary events focused on this most crucial issue of the present time and of the future above all. On the basis of the analyses carried out at the previous Forum 2000 conferences, the theme of bridging gaps between present day civilizations that had yet to be bridged, gave rise to more specific proposals for possible immediate and long-term solutions. In this way the Forum 2000 meetings returned to the burning problems created above all by the current processes of globalization.

The basic premise for encompassing the issues of today's world in a holistic way was the participation of outstanding individuals, representing diverse professions and ideological persuasion—philosophers alongside economists, clergy alongside politicians, ecologists alongside artists, students alongside publishers or journalists—and this ensured a complex survey of the basic questions. Equally important for formulating the issues from a one-world perspective was the participation of thinkers both from the rich North and the poor South, alongside thinkers having diverse experiences from East and West. Another fact should be mentioned here: delegates from countries in mutual conflict were able to bring their specific experience to the discussions. This was most marked in the case of the down-to-earth and fair-minded discussions between the representatives of Israel and Palestine, and the exchanges of views between politicians and thinkers of Muslim, Christian and Buddhist persuasion. All the proposals that were discussed and subsequently formulated emerged from differing social, political, economic and ethnic experiences and their various emphases reflected the varied

spiritual cultures of the participants. As a result, the conclusions and recommendations that emerged from the discussions of Forum 2000 have not only a particular, but also a universal character.

In the course of the multifarious discussions at Forum 2000, a number of areas of ideas emerged that proved to be of cardinal importance and attracted most frequent attention. The most burning issue was the theme of *globalization*, which affects developed and developing countries alike—with its various implications, such as the wealthier becoming wealthier and the poorer even poorer. This trend of the global economy over recent decades is unstoppable and irreversible, whether we like it or not, and we have all become a part of it. A related phenomenon has emerged in global development—a previously unknown economic reality—whereby everyone competes with everyone else.

In the course of the discussions the globalization process was characterized as the result of the boom in new technologies, particularly information and communication technologies. Demand can now be satisfied to an unprecedented degree, and it can also be stimulated and even created. In such a situation all that is required is a capacity to adapt, as anything these days can be bought or sold. Moreover, everything has suddenly become mobile: production technology and capital. In the case of the workforce mobility is more difficult, however, and this causes all sorts of problems as regards capital allocation. As a consequence, the rule of comparative advantage is ceasing to apply.

Forum 2000 has dealt with the crucial role of financial markets in the contemporary world, now that they have changed their traditional function and ceased to serve commodity markets, in order to become players on their own account and concern themselves with their own independent monetary products. In the era of globalization, financial markets have their own commodity—money, and they behave as if they were self-sufficient and had nothing to do with the world market of conventional commodity exchange. They move around the world uncontrolled at lightning speed thanks to advanced electronics and determine the state of the world economy. In a slight over-statement, Henry Kissinger pointed out that the market actually now consists of "people sitting at computer screens who probably do not even know where the country is located," and yet they decide about interest rates and are capable of suddenly causing speculatory waves that can cause an entire economy to collapse in a country they possibly know nothing about.

Among the causes of this new phenomenon is the disparity between economic and political knowledge. The latter is far less developed than economic knowledge and is therefore incapable of regulating current practices of the "global casino" with its speculative currencies, and particularly not when the players at the casino are concerned solely about profit and not the state of the economy or even the interests of the polis. Financial markets have ceased to heed the rules that managed to keep a rein on economic processes and economic power. Consequently, during all the meetings of Forum 2000 the delegates frequently called for speculative capital to be taxed. And it was significant that it was voiced not only by the representatives of countries that are most often afflicted by the "global casino."

Although globalization proceeds apace, the world market has no means of self-regulation in the face of this enormous expansion of trade, investments, production, communications, transportation, migration and travel. Markets are global but the political system continues to be the nation state. At the international level private globalization is supreme while public property is in a vacuum. Wherever there is an intensification of globalization there is an intensification of individualistic, utilitarian and competitive capitalist culture. This means an intensification of the disparities between those individuals who have useful abilities and those who lack such specific abilities. And these days it does not apply to individuals alone, but also to communities, countries and continents, and the present-day world is becoming more and more asymmetrical.

In a certain sense the present globalized market can restrict economic and social development. Traditionally that occurs where people live, i.e. not on a world-wide scale but on regional markets; moreover in the developed countries only a minority of the work force is employed by transnational companies and real events take place within those regional markets. This is also to do with the significance of the regions, because value systems on which the heterogeneity of society rests are created regionally and not on world markets, let alone in the modern global casino. In today's globalized world we are witness to transnational integration, the disintegration of nations, the weakening of the nation state, while at the same time there are efforts towards reintegration on different bases, such as civil societies, or regional, communal, ethnic or religious groupings.

On occasions the point was rightly made in discussions that, historically, the anti-monopoly laws in the USA were geared, from the start, to the protection of individual freedom, and by no means simply to the regulation of the market. The roots go even deeper: Michael Novak pointed out that on the first six drafts of the United States' seal the founding fathers used the word *virtue*, which does not relate solely to the nature of American democracy. It is an obvious reference to the intellectual tradition founded by Adam Smith. That is yet another reason why so much attention was devoted to globalization in all eight Forum 2000 conferences.

Global concern about the world might appear somewhat abstract as a theme, but it gave rise to very fruitful discussions. Those who took part in them agreed with Hannah Arendt that the dynamic last century was also the most violent century in human history and came to the conclusion that it was impossible to enter the new era with the morality of the twentieth century during which wars came to an end but immediately led to individual and collective violence, followed by an unprecedented growth of organized global crime and the drug trade, which was closely bound up with human trafficking and also the arms trade, whose effect is to transform various conflicts into an escalation of dangerous armed conflicts that undermine the stability of the present-day world. Forum 2000 therefore launched a pressing appeal for a change of priority in shared values. Even though the term "anthropolitics" was recalled in the discussions (by H. R. H. el Hassan bin Talal), delegates warned that the world is not ours. This expressed, on the one hand, an awareness that humanity was part of the living world of nature, and on the other, a realization that human beings were responsible for maintaining life on Earth. Kofi Annan issued a warning in a letter at the very outset of the Forum and the issue of sustainable development and concern for the environment—which is the context for everything else, our trade, our policies and our lives—was present in all the discussions down the years. Whereas the aim of the global economy is economic development and increased trade with a view to maximizing the wealth and power of the elite in the "network society," regardless of the degree of exploitation of the Earth, the aim of ecological planning is maximum sustainability of the "web of life."

The challenge for the coming century is to change the value system of society, to make it compatible with the requirements of ecologi-

cal sustainability and justice, and to create sustainable communities, in which the social, cultural and physical environments will be taken into account, and in which we can achieve satisfaction of our needs and aspirations, without curtailing the prospects of future generations. The desideratum of limiting consumption and self-limitation has far wider implications than its purely ecological significance. Essentially the demand for self-limitation, as expressed by Miklós Sükösd, also implies that we should control ourselves and suppress our natural aggressive drives, which would in turn help moderate our social and political behavior.

The overall majority of participants in the Forum's deliberations were of the view that it was necessary to reach agreement on a specific global ethical awareness and accept the principles of a common ethical minimum. This ethical imperative must not only govern the behavior of individuals but also that of religious institutions, political authorities and also large companies involved in production, finance and trade. Furthermore, the principles of an ethical minimum, as Helmut Schmidt, pointed out, must also apply to all media, not just the press, and also to radio and, above all, television, since it operates on the principle of pictures, which work more on the emotions than on rational perception and therefore has an unprecedented ability to manipulate public opinion in a demagogic fashion.

Of enormous significance is the fact that among those supporting the idea of an ethical minimum at the Forum 2000 meetings were several world renowned economists and financiers such as Jeffrey D. Sachs and George Soros.

The theme of *democracy* was discussed with an awareness of the plurality of democratic forms of human governance (in the same way that Lord Dahrendorf recognized that there existed many forms of capitalism). Views ranged from the skeptical assertion that democracy exists nowhere, that it is possible to speak only of a liberal oligarchy, to Sun Yat Sen's concept of the republic that combined the Chinese Confucianist historical tradition and the theory of modern society in a surprisingly modern form of state, based on three fundamental principles: the equality of individuals and the rights of minorities, the equality of citizens before the law and the protection of the people's rights by a democratic system, and finally, economic equality within a liberal free-market system.

The basic starting point of these discussions was the philosophical concept of otherness, or cultural difference, the relationship of the individual to another person, the ability to perceive and understand another person. There are no such things as good and bad civilizations, such descriptions apply only to individual and specific political organizations and institutions. However, democratic institutions are only democratic insofar as they guarantee the rights of minorities. In order to guarantee the freedom of minorities and the freedom of individuals to be different, systems must be subordinated to the universal validity of human rights, which in turn permit the existence of an open civil society—an issue that Sergei Kovalyov returned to repeatedly. Only consistent assertion of the sovereignty of human rights can prevent methods based on the logic of totalitarian systems from making inroads into democratic societies. There is a constant tendency for the logic of the methods of totalitarian systems to transform open societies into closed societies. Human rights can and must be protected even in those regimes that are not democratic. Conceptually speaking it is possible so long as human rights are enshrined in law, and society is run according to the rule of law.

One of the negative consequences of globalization is the growth of fundamentalism, which often becomes the expression of an aggressive assertion of old values and allows intolerance, hatred and fanaticism to infiltrate society. Wole Soyinka warned against the world-wide dangers of fanaticism. Of enormous significance, in that respect, were the multi-religious discussions on the vision of religions and the assemblies of spiritual representatives in St Vitus cathedral who sought to overcome barriers preventing different religions from coexisting and find paths towards mutual understanding on the basis of an awareness of common spiritual values.

Sharif M. Abdullah lifted a burning issue out of the realm of theory and posed it in a real setting:

> Unless we start talking about the Roman Catholic who is willing to kill Protestants, unless we're willing to talk to the Jewish separatists that are willing to kill Muslims, and the Muslim separatists that are willing to kill Jews, then we're going to end up with a 21st century that I don't want to live in. And, since this the only planet we've got, we don't have that as an option.

Yet churches and spiritual communities have more in common than what separates them, and they have an important role not only in promoting reconciliation among themselves but also reconciliation among different cultures and asserting universal ethics and thereby take a part in creating the moral climate in a globalized world. Not only do the three great world religions of Christianity, Judaism and Islam, have close affinities since they come from the same foundations, but the religions of the East also rule out hostility and violence.

*Economic rules are* not regarded as a law of nature, since they are a synthetic system (Hans van Ginkel). Economic rules should therefore be treated actively in a way that transforms economics to fit human dimensions. In the present globalized economy everyone competes with everyone else and uses the unprecedented degree of mobility which has led to the loss of previous comparative advantages. The development of global capitalism has proved to be much more rapid than our capacity to understand the competitive struggle (Henry Kissinger)—apart from that it is also due to the fact that our political awareness lags behind our economic awareness.

In a situation in which money has been freed from its original function and become a commodity in its own right, capital has become so mobile that it can make use of the facilities of instant communication to move uncontrollably around the world like in some global casino, capable of destroying, overnight, the economy of any country it pleases. It is therefore necessary to devise economic rules to protect against the speculative movements of capital and also protect the defeated in the global economic battle. This is no small matter: virtual finances are already three times greater than transactions in the real economy. Market fundamentalism is not capable of creating such rules, as proved by the financier George Soros. (And yet, according to testimony by Hazel Henderson and William Pfaff, the free market in the United States is governed by much stricter rules than comparable economies elsewhere in the world.)

Another entirely new phenomenon of economic development is the fundamental change of the economy, whereby the source of wealth has ceased to be a territory—its size or natural wealth—and is now the potential of the human mind, which is wider than a country's natural material wealth (Shimon Peres). A fifth of humanity lives within the sphere of cultural consumption and the largest firms of the present day

are in the field of media, information technology and telecommunications. Consequently there is a need for yet another change of priorities, since education and science are becoming the foundations of modern economics. A negative outcome of this developmental trend is the widening gap between the developed countries and the rest of the world. The accumulation of social capital is directly related to such a change of priorities.

Kurt Biedenkopf's understanding of globalization is that the game is global but life is local. This implies that there is no dilemma between global markets and local identities, because value systems derive from regional and local communities and their social, cultural and historical foundations, which are characterized by a natural plurality. This pluralism needs to be supported in the globalized economy. It is necessary to develop the diversity of cultural sources and bear responsibility for them. In the view of Hillary Clinton, developed society is based on three things: an effective state, a functioning economy and civil society, and each of those elements are crucial. It is necessary to accumulate and reproduce not only finance capital, but also specific social capital (Weiming Tu), whose importance is even greater in a globalized world and is in the interest of the global economy, irrespective of people's individual interests. The globalization process must not adopt the melting pot approach but instead assert the individual and communal identities.

Since globalization is essentially the offspring of culture, education and science, it was not simply symbolic but also logical that the deliberations of Forum 2000 should have been devoted to education, science, access to information, culture and the arts and their role in molding spiritual values and standards. What is crucial for the accumulation of social capital is *concern for education, science and culture* (Jack Lang). In today's world wealth is chiefly dependent on the state of science and education—a country's wealth and its cultural level are now in direct proportion. Creativity is the key attribute of modern systems; it is responsible particularly for the meteoric development of the technical aspects of our civilization. The fact that rich developed countries are increasingly wealthy while poor countries become poorer can be partly explained by the attention paid to science by the developed countries and how much they invest in it, as well as on education, because economic development and the creation of new technologies requires increasing numbers of qualified personnel.

The developing countries are poorer because they lack the money to invest in science and education, and therefore they not only lag behind in development but also their backwardness continues to grow. Redistribution of material wealth is less important than attention to education if the disparities of the present world are to be overcome. Again it is a matter of understanding and implementing priorities. Support for scientific research is costly, but investment in science is returnable and lucrative. The annual cost of necessary investment in education worldwide is not so enormous—roughly some six thousand million US dollars—being equivalent to the amount spent on cosmetics in the developed world in the course of a single year. Investment in a new system of education is essential particularly in the developing countries as the most effective way of overcoming backwardness and poverty, and that is what aid from the rich countries should focus on. Instead the tendency is still to divest the developing countries of their qualified specialists. To judge from the discussions at Forum 2000 the answer to the question what are countries to rely on when they lag behind in development is quite simple: on education.

It transpired that this was not a special issue but a matter of directing attention to those aspects of the human personality and human community that not only encourage economic and social progress, but are also capable of investing development with a human dimension and meaning. The role of intellectuals and artists is to observe and interpret society and draw attention to social memory. The absence of historical awareness is dangerous, particularly in today's global world, and history and art are capable of transforming the past into social memory and helping to come to terms with it. In that respect the discussion was extremely critical, but the conclusions were by no means inconclusive. Marian Plotkin's thesis that today's graphocentric culture was in crisis was rightly countered by Peter Gabriel's remark that the new communication technologies also offered scope for preserving and developing written expression. Critical attention in the discussion was focused on mass culture, whereby culture is reduced to the level of entertainment. Now more than ever before, culture and art is in the hands of illiterate market colonizers (Dubravka Ugrešić), who colonize them behind the mask of our own, albeit unused values, and in a way that we are not even aware of. These manipulators do not have the slightest responsibil-

ity, in the same way that the manipulators of the advertising media have no social conscience

We all share the same *common global destiny*. The global world can no longer put up with the fact that the advantages of modern civilization are enjoyed by only a minority of humanity, who at the same time over-exploit the world's natural resources. The elimination of hunger and disease is the vital task of the global economy and policies. We must not ignore the developing world, particularly Africa; it must be returned to the global processes and be enabled by means of sensible policies and economic aid to develop itself and forestall possible catastrophes. These are real tasks. However, it is necessary to proceed rationally: implementing fundamental tax reform, particularly where there is extreme pressure to exploit natural resources by "cut-price" raw materials that do not reflect the real value of this wealth on the market. It is also necessary to eliminate the "perverse subsidies" in the global economy, which maintain the untenable state of the worsening natural environment.

One of the last urgent tasks is to ease tension and eliminate armed conflicts in the world. This is a permanent task of the international community, but one minimum task could be fulfilled immediately: to achieve agreement amongst the arms exporters that arms will be under strict control and the industrialized countries will not cynically arm states with totalitarian regimes and that there will be a strict ban on the export of arms to places where conflict has broken out or is likely to occur. However not only arms kill. Conflicts are also caused by "intellectual mercenaries" that produce their commercial media hate industry. The communications media are too destructive and do not do enough to create an atmosphere of understanding. Frederik Wilhelm de Klerk pointed out that the reforming influence of economic development in solving instability is underestimated and that linking economies has a much greater power to transform unacceptable social systems than the use of force. South Africa's experience of sanctions showed that the burden of the negative effects of sanctions were borne chiefly by the ordinary people, while the exchange of goods would have done more to favor the democratic development and eliminate apartheid.

If conferences of such extraordinary breadth and on such momentous themes, attended, moreover, by leading world figures, are to pose questions about the state of the contemporary world then those

questions must contain both the rationality of precise analysis and the naivety of ideals. Even that great pragmatist of international politics, Henry Kissinger, stated at one of the conferences that in order to do great things it is necessary to be slightly naïve and ignore the practical obstacles, while bearing in mind that every great thing was an idea before it became reality. After all, planning the future is an activity that is more uncertain than predictable. The intellectual efforts invested in Forum 2000 will be regarded as a major investment in people's hopes and dreams. Yet the fact that amidst the deliberations the Prague Declaration could be formulated, which could submit a number of important proposals to such international organizations at the UN, the Bretton Woods institutions, the world religions and churches, as well as the world public, there can be no doubt that hopes and dreams are starting to be realized.

# Why Forum 2000?

*Václav Havel*

What is the meaning of this project? It is a venue for bringing together people representing widely different professions, sociologists, political scientists, philosophers, politicians, former politicians, people from various continents, people of various political convictions and religious denominations to talk in peace and quiet about the world of today, about our civilization, its contradictions and the threats that loom over it. We have spoken about environmental threats, about the widening gap between the rich and the poor, about the amazing growth of population and the extraordinary advancement of modern technologies.

We have spoken about a number of topics and their consequences, including the question of whether this global civilization spanning the entire planet, that seems to be pressing all of us ever closer together, does not provoke some stronger feelings, such as a desire to preserve our respective identities at all costs by means of defining ourselves in opposition to others rather than as neighbors to the others, under the influence of a fear of otherness, or aversion to those who are different. And we have also tried to chart ways out of these double-edged tendencies, or self-moving currents within our civilization today. We are asking ourselves whether it is possible to identify a certain common minimum of spiritual tenets that could unite people of different religions, different nations and different convictions—a set of principles that everybody could agree upon and that could serve as a starting point for humanity's coexistence on this planet.

The most recent developments—that is, the outbreak of terrorism—have given our conferences and the subjects on their agenda an added urgency. At the first level, these terrorist attacks require a response. This is the reason why an international coalition has been created with the aim of combating terrorism. At a second, deeper level,

however, I feel—and I am probably not alone—that there is more involved in this context. I see here a certain sign, a certain warning signal, a certain message, a certain appeal to our civilization. Bin Laden did not invent machine guns, or planes, or computers, or bacteriological weapons. There have always been fanatics, mass murderers and terrorists, but never have they had such a gigantic possibility to strike the entire planet and to threaten so many human lives. It seems to me that it is necessary to understand this sign, and to give thought to how the global advancement of civilization, the extensive technological progress, and the growth of human invention can be accompanied with a deepening sense of a global human responsibility. Responsibility for the world and toward the world, responsibility that would make it impossible for anyone, in one way or another, to abuse this immense advancement, and more than that—responsibility that would mobilize the human spirit and the good forces that lie dormant in the human race, in order that they confront all those major contradictions of today's civilization that we deal with at Forum 2000 Conferences.

I am convinced that it is the duty of all people of goodwill and of the international community to defend freedom, to defend the freedoms of individual lives, of people's dignity, of good human coexistence, of just relations among citizens, nations, and social classes. It is necessary to defend these, and when needed, to defend these by force, but, I am adding my own "but" to it: But it is not enough. For example, we cannot, in the name of fighting for the defense of freedom, silence ourselves, censor ourselves, or disable anyone who wishes to say anything about the major problems and themes and dangers of this civilization from saying so, only because we are in the process of defending these very freedoms. Yes, we are in the process of defending these freedoms; however that is exactly why, in my view, we are obliged to fulfill these freedoms, live them, and cultivate them. And this will equip us with even more energy to defend them.

Therefore, one of the most important things for a good future for the world is to stand up with quiet, humble and modest determination against all kinds of obsessions, against nationalistic, ideological obsessions and against obsessions with wealth. Globalization needs to acquire its spiritual, cultural, moral and human dimensions, respectively, and it needs to deepen these dimensions; otherwise we will end in a bad way.

The Forum 2000 has never been, and never will be, an institution. It has no members; it cannot make any decisions. It is really just a space for debate. But I think that this is precisely its advantage; it is a good quality.

Although in 2001 we adopted the "Prague Declaration" that quickly became part of UN official documents, no universal declaration exists that would express all that has been discussed here over the course of the nine years, one that would satisfy everyone and express all the ideas that have been raised here. But that is not what matters. What matters is the radiance—the radiance that the Forum has radiated, radiates, and will continue to radiate.

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# Appendixes

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# The Prague Declaration

*Approved by the Fifth Forum 2000 Conference*
*Prague, Czech Republic,*
*17 October 2001*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Globalization, as both a process and an already existing condition of the world, typifies the development of civilization at the beginning of the Third Millennium. Its powerful and omnipresent dynamic has undoubtedly been responsible for many achievements of benefit to humanity but it is also viewed by many as a threat in almost every area of human endeavor. The promise of universal well-being and prosperity, which lies at the heart of the modern age, has turned out to be an illusion. The vast majority of the world's population suffer from profound economic inequality, and are psychologically and culturally marginalized in the global society now coming into being, and in some cases are also marginalized in the societies of their own countries. In spite of the unprecedented flourishing of political institutions they lose control over their own destinies. The billions of dollars traded daily, the wide availability of health care and three decades of heightened concern about the ecological aspects of development have not protected the majority of humanity from the growth of every kind of hardship, including poverty, disease, and environmental degradation. The more dominant is the economic and technological globalization of humankind, the harder it is to control it by democratic political means. This is alarming. So far humanity lacks the courage and the will to choose the path of cooperation. The social basis and moral justification of globalization are increasingly called in question, on the grounds that apart from its positive aspects it threatens to unify culture and rob the world of its complexity and variety, as well as to heighten inter-cultural confrontation and impede mutual understanding. Equally imperiled are peaceful co-existence among nations and the very survival of humankind.

*The Prague Approach*

Every autumn for the past five years people have gathered at Prague Castle united, in spite of their many differences, by a common desire to seek and find answers to these questions. They have included distinguished world figures—Nobel laureates, prominent politicians, influential intellectuals and academics, artists and writers, as well as representatives of different world religions and spiritual currents. The Forum 2000 conferences have sought to explore less obvious, more controversial and profounder aspects of global development. Along the way, we believe, a unique and relevant approach to globalization has emerged in Prague, characterized in particular by a focus on spiritual, cultural and religious values. The Prague approach broadly reflects the critical spirit and intellectual tradition of this city located at the crossroads of European history, a city which emitted reforming ideas and spiritual impulses.

The series of Forum 2000 conferences has come full cycle. Its participants would like to share their conclusions with international decision-makers and those who have greatest influence on public opinion and therefore turn with particular urgency to politicians and religious leaders. But we address ourselves also to scientists and business people, creative artists and people in the media, and above all to young people everywhere. We appeal to all people who are not indifferent to the fate of the world to give responsible thought to the problems we seek to outline in this Prague Declaration.

## 2. PRINCIPAL CHALLENGES

The Forum 2000 Conferences held in the years 1997–2001 highlighted a number of serious problems facing the world on the threshold of the new millennium. Most of them were related to at least one of several aspects of globalization and sought to indicate the direction that reforms might take:

*Ethical Minimum*

The sheer extent and variety of violence that occurred in the 20th Century is something to be borne constantly in mind in the 21st Century.

It would be useful to assert a global ethical minimum reflecting humanity's fundamental moral principles that must be respected. It would comprise the injunction to treat every human being humanely as well as the golden rule governing relations between individuals and between human communities: "Do unto others as you would have done unto you; refrain from doing to others what you would not like them to do to you." Heightened ethical consciousness should help alleviate enormous human suffering, halt the degradation of the natural environment and limit the dramatic extinction of species and cultures. Global resources are allocated very unequally and inadequately. Therefore perhaps the greatest global challenges of all today is how to divert resources from arms and the drugs trade, and from excessive luxury and material consumption into efforts to combat hunger and disease, prevent violent conflict and solve problems associated with global warming and natural disasters.

### *Global Democracy*

The richness of life on Earth is demonstrated, inter alia, by the myriad ways in which human affairs are administered. It is crucial to protect the plurality of forms of governance and political participation. However, certain universal standards—perhaps best expressed in the concept of human rights—must be asserted unequivocally and the widest international support must be won for them. No human society or government is perfect but a clear criterion must be clearly enunciated in order to differentiate between democratic institutions, good governance and open societies on the one hand, and those forms of government that violate human dignity, discriminate against minorities and do not respect the rule of law, on the other. The challenge of global democracy is one of finding instruments and institutions that will equally protect globally shared values and local differences.

### *The Political Effectiveness of the Global Economy*

Global capitalism is the source of both growing wealth and growing tensions in the world. It would be impossible to maintain the legitimacy of global markets were they to benefit only one fifth of the global population while exploiting the natural and human resources of the remain-

ing four fifths. Unregulated competition and capital mobility eventually cause harm to individuals and societies. In this they represent the other extreme from totalitarian and command economies. Major challenges to the global economy—such as stimulating efficiency and development while protecting the losers and the environment—are not solely an economic problem, but have to be addressed by social and political institutions as well. Effective policies must be matched by political foresight and moral responsibility.

### *Local Identity, Social Capital and Human Development*

The ideal global economy is not one that is strictly regulated, but one that strengthens and enhances positive forms of local identities, increases social capital and develops human capacities and opportunities. The global economy must never be allowed to elude human control and for this reason its destructive effects must be offset by sustainable local development. The challenge lies in finding a balance between capital investments and investments in education, between comparative advantage and support for civil society, and between the role of state and the development of private activity.

## 3. WHAT TO NURTURE

Throughout the Forum 2000 series, the participants were involved in a search for values common to all world religions, cultures and communities, values that could become the core of global ethical codex, a common spiritual ground for humanity. It is unacceptable that the form of individual national societies should be determined by uncontrolled economic development and particular political conditions. Greater efforts should be made to nurture the real sources of values, the spiritual foundations of civilization, and to seek and assert a common ethical codex and a global concept of human rights, and on this basis create and cultivate political institutions aimed at regulating economic and technological globalization.

### *Article 1*
### *Solidarity, Equality and Inclusion*

In view of the present unequal distribution of resources and economic benefits there needs to be a global system of solidarity to protect the basic rights of all those who cannot fully participate, let alone compete, in international competition. The right to minimum and equal human treatment and the right of people to participate in matters having an impact on themselves should be cornerstones of global civilization in the 21st Century. This applies particularly to the position of women also, not least, those facing abuse in their own families and homes, which was movingly described in the course of our meetings.

### *Article 2*
### *Tolerance, Understanding and Protection of Difference*

The diversity of global civilization is one of its greatest assets—a pool of experience, knowledge and alternatives. Protecting different forms of governance and cultural expression as well as different religious faiths and lifestyles especially those that are small, weak or in the minority is therefore an imperative for global society. The right to be different should apply everywhere as long as it does not open the way to intolerance or violation of other human rights.

### *Article 3*
### *Respect and Responsibility*

All life on the planet, including human existence, is grounded in a higher order transcending our lives. As individuals, communities and societies, we should respect it and act accordingly as responsible custodians, overcoming the temptations of individual or group selfishness. Respect for humanity, for every human being, and for human life at every stage of development, as well as responsibility for the environment, are key preconditions for the sustainability, continuity and humanity of global civilization.

## 4. WHAT TO CHANGE

The values set out above are in no way new to humankind. Indeed, many of them are already referred to—albeit inadequately—in important multilateral conventions, various solemn documents and international legislation. However, many of them are not matched by adequate and functioning institutions. It has been the ongoing effort of Forum 2000 to define a global institutional framework that would allow these values to be translated readily into practical instruments, to overcome any possible internal conflicts and to set global priorities.

### *Article 4*
### *United Nations*

The largest and most representative of all global institutions is still lagging behind global realities. Voting in the Security Council still tends to reflect the distribution of power in the mid 20th century rather than the present need for effective global dialogue, universal participation, empowerment and a new ethos. Reform of the UN should be also aimed at creating a UN body to deal on a permanent basis with the environmental crisis. In the new century the UN should be more flexible and effective and able to take more rapid and appropriate action. This is the only way to enhance its authority.

### *Article 5*
### *International Law*

Although many global agreements have been signed and ratified, only a few of them have been implemented. International law needs to be reformed in order to overcome its volatile, inconsistent and non-binding nature and introduce effective, transparent and equitable mechanisms of enforcement. Just as certain limitations on individual freedoms and privacy help ensure greater security, so also there must be limitations on national sovereignty if international law is to be effective. Only then can global values prevail over particular interests and short-term considerations.

### *Article 6*
### *Bretton Woods Institutions*

The International Monetary Fund, the World Bank and the World Trade Organization are often the object of criticism, rejection and dramatic protests. These institutions have major potential to promote development where it is most needed and to cooperate in the creation of global economic, legal and ethical norms and their implementation. However in order to realize this potential they need to become more open, transparent, representative and more responsible in the wider context of their activities, in line with the great power and influence they wield. We therefore appeal to governments to exercise pressure on those institutions along these lines and also call for a more objective attitude on the part of the media, a more constructive and above all non-violent approach on the part of critics and demonstrators and greater commitment and creative thinking on the part of diplomats and economists.

### *Article 7*
### *World Religions and Churches*

The multireligious assemblies that have been an important part of Forum 2000 conferences have demonstrated that representatives of religions and churches are capable of seeking what unites them and valuing it more highly than what divides them. Religions hold great potential for the future of mankind; they can play an important role in reconciling different cultures, promoting a universal ethic and working together to create a moral climate in a globalized world. However under certain circumstances and in particular forms, religious ideals and symbols can be misused into order to escalate conflicts between minorities and larger groups and communities. We therefore appeal to believers of various religions and their leaders to support all activities aimed at promoting dialogue, mutual understanding and cooperation among people and breaking down the barriers between individual religions and spiritual currents, and to distance themselves from all expressions of intolerance and violence.

*Article 8*
*Transnational Corporations*

Global trade accounts for an ever-growing proportion of material wealth and the transnational corporations are primary carriers of growth, innovation and creativity. In many areas there is no one else to provide people with needed jobs, capital and technology. Economic globalization gives huge power and influence to multinational companies. However, their operations under global principles often disregard the local context, harm the environment and directly or indirectly violate human rights. If companies are to become responsible global actors, values—in the form of moral codices, social and environmental audits etc.—should play a greater role in their behavior.

*Article 9*
*Education and the Role of the Nation State*

Despite the continuing process of international political integration, nation states are major actors in international affairs. Most states today have democratically elected governments. The role of the state in the era of globalization should not be reduced, but rather transformed to reflect common global values. States should create a legal environment for non-governmental organizations and private companies and agencies to act as freely as possible and devote maximum resources to supporting education as basic conditions for a future of human dignity, as well as maintaining infrastructure and communication, and guaranteeing security and international cooperation. Regulation and enforcement should still be the state's ultimate responsibility.

*Article 10*
*Basic Education for All*

The United Nations, together with other international organizations and member states, should realize a worldwide program to guarantee free basic education to all children of the world as one of the main conditions for overcoming ignorance, want, and the terrorism that feeds on them.

*Article 11*
*Responsible Independent Media*

A particular responsibility is born by the mass media to ensure that they do not perpetuate and disseminate false information, stereotypes about other religions or ethnic groups, or a fascination with violence. This applies especially to media reporting in one cultural or religious community about another.

*Article 12*
*Global Civil Society*

Civil society has a key role in the transformation of global values into effective instruments. A vibrant, independent civil society should operate at local, national and global level. It plays an indispensable role in creating the vital fabric of relationships between morality, politics and economics, between markets and states, between the global and the local, i.e. at all levels and between them.

## 5. HOW TO CONDUCT A DIALOGUE

The enormous relevance of critical discussion of global problems has been acknowledged throughout the five-year conference series. The Forum 2000 conferences constitute a distinct experiment in terms of their scope, their informal atmosphere and the range of participants. Not only have they been an exercise in analyzing global problems, but equally—and perhaps more importantly—they have been an exercise in conducting a global dialogue on complex issues among people of many different views. This experience of creating a culture of sensitive but non-trivial global dialogue is an important part of the Forum 2000 message. The following principles should underlie the creation of a culture of meaningful and sustainable global discourse.

*Article 13*
*The Culture of Dialogue*

The way discussions are conducted is as important as the topics addressed in the debates. Unless others are accorded a respectful hearing,

unless the legitimacy of people's otherness, cultural differences and the variety of political forms is sincerely acknowledged, no global debate can have any meaning or achieve results. In the case of many complex topics or when there are major cultural differences or differences of opinion, establishing a culture of dialogue may be the only positive achievement for some time. However, we firmly believe that the experience of dialogue can be a solution and the path towards creating a culture of relationships, a kind of global civilization that would turn our planet into a safe and decent home for all its inhabitants.

### *Article 14*
### *The Broadest Possible Representation*

Inadequate opportunity to participate in such a dialogue and be regarded as an equal partner breeds frustration, a sense of injustice and distrust. When voices are ignored they find undesirable ways of drawing attention!

However, it is not in the power of any conference, not even Forum 2000, to make room for every voice that is raised around in the world. Nonetheless it is necessary to go on looking for ways to open the debating chamber to the voices of those who have so far been disadvantaged or discriminated against in some way and thus marginalized in the global dialogue.

### *Article 15*
### *Plurality of Opinions*

To strive for uniformity of views is not only misleading, but also breeds false cognitive—and hence moral and institutional—dominance. Representatives of different views—of more critical, non-conforming and disquieting attitudes—are essential for discovering global alternatives, for faithfully representing the global reality and building a credible global dialogue. Slow, complicated, costly and painful as such debates are bound to be, they establish a globally indispensable, long-term process of mutual learning, foster a culture of respect, promote a culture of respect and an atmosphere of fairness.

*Article 16*
*Helping to Build a Global Society*

Genuine dialogue is impossible in a situation in which one of the participants dominates the rest. It requires both honesty and caution. Global alternatives and viable solutions cannot be discovered unless invalid assumptions are questioned, false logic is challenged, particular interests are identified, and oversimplifications and improper generalizations resisted. The attitudes of all of us are strongly influenced by our experience and our particular vantage point. Through mutual discourse we must constantly seek and test the concepts, strategies and approaches that stand the best chance of becoming universal values and generally acceptable rules. Without a culture of global dialogue all attempts at cultivating a global society will come to naught.

## 6. AN APPEAL TO THE WORLD PUBLIC

The Prague Declaration covers a complex range of global issues and addresses a wide array of institutions and decision-makers. It is they who bear the greatest responsibility. However, the Forum 2000 conferences have been characterized by the informal and personal character of the debates. In that spirit of openness and trust we would therefore like to offer the Prague Declaration to all people of goodwill on our planet. Only when all human beings start to realize more fully their shared responsibility for our shared world can our belief be justified that what is hopeful in today's world will one day prevail over what threatens us.

# Participants of the Forum 2000 Conferences (1997–2001)*

Sharif M. Abdullah – Director of the Commonway Institute in the USA.

Tariq Jawaid Alam – Students' Forum 2000 delegate from Pakistan.

H. E. Sheikh Mohammed Mohammed Ali – Islamic scholar, researcher and politician. Human rights and political activist in the Iraqi opposition.

Oscar Arias Sánchez – Former President of Costa Rica. Nobel Peace Prize laureate (1987).

Timothy Garton Ash – Political scientist and writer, England.

Hanan Ashrawi – Former Minister of Education of Palestine, member of the Palestine Legislative Council.

Edith Awino – Students' Forum 2000 delegate, Kenya.

Mehmet Aydin – Dean of the Faculty of Theology at the University of Dokuy Eylül in Izmir, Turkey.

Patricio Aylwin Azócar – President of Chile between 1990 and 1995.

Mark Azzopardi – Students' Forum 2000 delegate, Malta.

Andris Barblan – Historian and political scientist, Secretary General of the Association of European Universities.

H. H. Bartholomew – Head of the Greek Orthodox Church.

Thomas Bata – Czech born businessman, Canada.

Walden Bello – Philippine professor of sociology and public administration.

Carlos Felipe Ximenes Belo – Nobel Peace Prize laureate (1996), East Timor.

Robert L. Bernstein – President of Human Rights Watch, USA.

Kurt Biedenkopf – Prime Minister of Saxony.

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* NB: Information about participants refers to the time of their stay in Prague.

Akin Birdal – Former president of the Human Rights Association of Turkey.

Lydia Bosire – Delegate of the Students' Forum, Kenya.

Jean Louis Bourlanges – Chairman of the European Movement in France.

Josep Bricall – Former President of the Association of European Universities.

Hans Van Den Broek – Member of the European Commission.

Ignatz Bubis – Chairman of The Central Council of Jewish Organizations in Germany.

Martin Bútora – Sociologist and writer, President of the Institute for Public Affairs in Bratislava.

Fritjof Capra – Physicist and systems theorist.

Cornelius Castoriadis – French philosopher.

Ladislav Čerych – Czech educationalist.

Joseph Chan – Sociology Professor at The University of Hong Kong.

Clement C. P. Chang – Founder of Tamkang University, Taiwan.

Tze Chi Chao – President of World League for Freedom and Democracy.

Shunling Chen – Students' Forum 2000 delegate, Taiwan.

William J. Clinton – 42nd President of the United States (1993–2001).

Hillary Clinton – First Lady of the USA (1993–2001).

Lord Ralf Gustav Dahrendorf – Political scientist and sociologist.

H. H. The Dalai Lama – Supreme spiritual representative of Tibet.

Frederik Willem de Klerk – Former President of South Africa. In 1993 he was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize together with Nelson Mandela.

Thomas A. Dine – President of the Radio Free Europe.

Waris Dirie – Somali born activist and fashion supermodel.

Ditta Dolejšiová – Students' Forum 2000 delegate, Slovakia.

Riane Eisler – Cultural historian, USA.

Kakuhan Enami – Representative of the Tendai school of Buddhism and envoy of His Holiness the Patriarch.

Amitai Etzioni – German born American sociologist and social psychologist.

Gareth Evans – Former Minister of Foreign Affairs of Australia.

H. E. Sheikh Fawzy Fadel el Zefzaf – President of Al Azhar Permanent Committee of Dialogue among Heavenly Religions.

Maria Celina del Felice – Students' Forum 2000 delegate, Argentina.
Joerg Forbrig – Students' Forum 2000 delegate, Germany.
Albert Friedlander – Rabbi of the Westminster Synagogue, London.
Francis Fukuyama – American writer and political scientist.
Jostein Gaarder – Norwegian writer.
Ivan Gabal – Czech sociologist.
Peter Gabriel – World renowned singer and propagator of ethnic music.
Joseph Ganda – Archbishop of Freetown and Bo, Sierra Leone.
Henry Louis Gates – Director of Harvard's W.E.B. Du Bois Institute for Afro-American Research.
Joachim Gauck – Former Federal Commissioner for the Stasi Files.
Bronisław Geremek – Historian and Member of the Polish Parliament.
Anthony Giddens – British sociologist, director of the London School of Economics.
Anthony C. Giffard – American scholar specializing in mass media. Member of the Board of the Inter Press Service.
Hans van Ginkel – Rector of the United Nations University in Tokyo.
André Glucksmann – French philosopher and writer.
Árpád Göncz – Former President of Hungary.
Norbert Greinacher – Professor of Theology, University of Tübingen, Germany.
Eduardo Marcal Grilo – Director of Gulbenkian Foundation; former Minister of Education of Portugal.
Teofisto T. Guingona – Vice president and Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Philippines.
Tomáš Halík – President of the Czech Christian Academy.
John Hall – Sociologist, McGill University, Montreal, Canada.
H. R. H. el Hassan bin Talal – Prince of the Jordan Hashemite Royal Dynasty.
Václav Havel – President of the Czech Republic from 1993 to 2003.
Hazel Henderson – Futurologist, USA.
Thor Heyerdahl – Norwegian ocean traveller and author.
Mae-wan Ho – Professor of Biology at the British Open University.
Takeaki Hori – Anthropologist, advisor to the President of the Nippon Foundation.
Victoria Pereyra Iraola – Students' Forum 2000 delegate, Argentina.
Mihoko Ito – Students' Forum 2000 delegate, Japan.

Vyacheslav Ivanov – Professor of linguistics at the University of California at Los Angeles, USA.

Marek Jacina – Students' Forum 2000 delegate, Canada.

Asma Jahangir – Lawyer, Chair of the Human Rights Commission of Pakistan.

Josef Jařab – Professor of English and American literature, Czech republic.

Claude Jasmin – Professor of oncology, France.

Wei Jingsheng – Dissident, father of the Chinese movement for modern pro-western democracy.

Jonas Jonson – Bishop of Strängnäs, Sweden. Member of the World Council of Churches.

Noerine Kaleeba – Renowned activist fighting HIV/AIDS, originally from Uganda.

Kóei Kani – Representative of the Japanese Tendai Buddhist school.

Dani Karavan – Israeli sculptor.

Yousif al-Khoei – Director of the London-based Al-Khoei Foundation, an international Islamic charitable institute founded by his grandfather Ayatullah Al Kohei.

Hilde Kieboom – President of the European Federation of the Communities of S. Edigo.

Kenzo Kiikuni – Professor at Tokyo Women's Medical University.

Henry A. Kissinger – American politician, diplomat and political scientist. Nobel Peace Prize laureate (1973).

Ivan Klíma – Czech writer.

Leszek Kolakowski – Philosopher of Polish origin. Resident in Oxford.

Ted Koppel – Anchor and Managing Editor of ABC News' "Nightline".

Sergei Kovalyov – Deputy of Russia's State Duma, human rights activist.

Meena Krishnamoorthy – Students' Forum 2000 delegate, Australia.

Martin Kryl – Students' Forum 2000 delegate, Czech Republic.

Krishan Kumar – Professor of social political science, lecturing in Central Europe, Great Britain and the USA.

Hans Küng – President of the Foundation for Global Ethics, Tübingen.

Jack Lang – Former French Minister of Culture.

Meir Lau – Chief Rabbi of Israel.

Anwei Law – Founder of Hansen's Disease Association based in the United States.

Petr Lebeda – Students' Forum 2000 delegate, Czech Republic.
Joshua Lederberg – Nobel Prize laureate for Medicine (1958), USA.
Marguerite S. Lederberg – Professor of Psychiatry at Cornell University.
Lee Teng-hui – Former President of Taiwan.
Flora Lewis – Correspondent of the *New York Times*, USA.
Ondřej Liška – Students' Forum 2000 delegate, Czech Republic.
Mikuláš Lobkowicz – Philosopher, former Rector of Munich University.
James Lovelock – British scientist and writer.
H. E. Jean Marie Cardinal Lustiger – Archbishop of Paris.
Khotso Makhulu – Archbishop of Central Africa.
Michael Mann – British historian, living in the USA.
Manfred A. Max-Neef – Rector of Universidad Austral de Chile.
Adam Michnik – Former Polish dissident, currently the Editor in Chief of the *Gazeta Wyborcza* daily.
H. E. Sheikh Abbas Mohajerani – Professor, a leading Iranian-born Islamic scholar.
Bedřich Moldan – Former Czechoslovak Minister of the Environment.
Jiří Musil – Czech sociologist.
Shinichi Nakazawa – Professor of Religion and Anthropology at the Chuo University, Japan.
Ashis Nandy – Director of the Center for the Study of Developing Societies, Delhi.
Hans Heinrich Nolte – Professor of Eastern European history in Hannover.
Michael Novak – Theologian and political scientist, USA.
Colm O'cinneide – Students' Forum 2000 delegate, Ireland.
Yael Ohana – Students' Forum 2000 delegate, Ireland.
Raimon Panikkar – Professor at the University of California, catholic priest, Hindu scholar.
Jelena Panza – Students' Forum 2000 delegate originally from former Yugoslavia.
Jiří Pehe – Director of the New York University in Prague.
Peng Ming-min – Political scientist, former dissident, Taiwan.
Shimon Peres – Leading Israeli politician. Nobel Peace Laureate (1995).
William Pfaff – Regular correspondent of the *International Herald Tribune,* USA. Lives in France.

Mariano Plotkin – Director of New York University in Buenos Aires, Argentina.

Tomáš Pojar – Director of the People In Need Foundation based, Czech Republic.

John Polanyi – Professor of Chemistry at Toronto University, Canada.

Martin Porubjak – Slovak theatre director and politician.

Martin C. Putna – Professor of Comparative Literature at Charles University in Prague.

Zafir T. Qasrawi – Students' Forum 2000 delegate, Palestine.

Divvya S. Rajagopalan – Students' Forum 2000 delegate, India.

José Ramos Horta – Nobel Peace Prize laureate (1996), East Timor.

Kelly Cristine Ribeiro – Students' Forum 2000 delegate, Brazil.

Christina Rougheri – Delegate of the Students' Forum, Greece.

Jacques Rupnik – Political scientist, France.

Jeffrey D. Sachs – American economist, Director of the Harvard Institute for International Development.

Elizardo Sánchez Santa Cruz – Cuban dissident.

Yohei Sasakawa – Philanthropist and President of the Nippon Foundation.

Seizaburo Sato – Professor Emeritus at the University of Tokyo.

Helmut Schmidt – Former German Chancellor (1974–1982).

Peter Scott – Vice Chancellor at Kingston University, Great Britain.

Leila Shahid – Former journalist, Palestinian diplomat.

John Shattuck – Former U.S. Ambassador to the Czech Republic.

Takashi Shiraishi – Professor of Kyoto University, Japan.

Vandana Shiva – Writer, internationally renowned environmentalist and feminist from India.

Haris Silajdžič – Co-Prime Minister of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

John Silber – Chancellor of Boston University, USA.

Karan Singh – Former Indian government minister and ambassador.

René Samuel Sirat – Grand Rabbi of French Consistory and President of the Council Conference of European Rabbis.

Sulak Sivaraksa – Buddhist thinker, Thailand.

Mohammed Amine Smaili – Professor of Islamic Dogmatic and Compared Religions at the University of Rabat.

Mário Soares – Socialist politician and lawyer, former President of Portugal.

George Soros – Financier and philanthropist; founder of Soros Foundations.

Wole Soyinka – Nigerian author. First African to receive the Nobel Prize for Literature (1986).

Martin Jan Stránský – Czech neurologist and publisher.

Hanna Suchocka – Minister of Justice, Polish Prime Minister from 1992 to 1993.

Miklós Sükösd – Hungarian sociologist.

Anne Summers – Board Chair of Greenpeace International.

Han Sung-Joo – Former Foreign Minister of the Republic of Korea.

Osvaldo Sunkel – Chilean economist.

Veton Surroi – Albanian writer; editor in chief of the *Koha Ditore,* the major newspaper in Kosovo.

Gavan Titley – Students' Forum 2000 delegate, Ireland.

Weiming Tu – Historian, philosopher, and writer of Chinese origin.

Dubravka Ugrešić – Croatian writer.

Reizo Utagawa – Japanese economist and journalist, Managing Director of the Nippon Foundation.

Silje Marie Berntsen Vallestad – Students' Forum 2000 delegate, Norway.

Magda Vášáryová – Former Czechoslovak Ambassador to Vienna, President of Slovak Association for International Affairs.

Ivan Vejvoda – Yugoslavian political and social scientist.

Antje Vollmer – German theologist; Deputy Speaker of the German Federal Assembly.

Vintsuk Vyachorka – Leading opposition politician in Belarus.

Lukáš Výlupek – Students' Forum 2000 delegate, Czech Republic.

Abdurrahman Wahid – Indonesian intellectual. Supporter of democratic reforms.

Immanuel Wallerstein – President of the International Sociological Association.

Lord Arthur George Weidenfeld – Journalist and publisher, England.

Richard von Weizsäcker – Former German President (1984–1994).

Cornel West – African-American writer and Professor at Harvard University, USA.

Elie Wiesel – Philosopher and writer. Nobel Peace Prize laureate (1986).

Marion Wiesel – Editor and translator.
Masakazu Yamazaki – Japanese playwright and critic.
Grigorij Yavlinsky – Russian economist and politician, Member of the State Duma.
Tun Daim Zainuddin – Malaysian economist and former economic advisor to the Malaysian government.
Zhelyu Zhelev – President of Bulgaria from 1990 to 1997.
Min Zin – Burmese pro-democracy student activist.

*Participants of the Forum 2000 Conferences (2002–2005)*

Nasr Hamid Abu-zayd – Islamic scholar, Egypt/the Netherlands.
Patricia Adams – Economist and executive director of Probe International, organization monitoring Canadian international aid.
Akyaaba Addai-Sebo – Independent Consultant on Preventive Diplomacy and Conflict Transformation, Ghana.
Yilmaz Akyüz – Turkish economist and scholar.
Madeleine Albright – Chair of the National Democratic Institute for International Affairs, the PEW Global Attitudes Project and president of the Truman Scholarship Foundation.
Sabah Al-Rayes – PACE, Kuwait.
Eduardo Aninat – Chilean economist, politician and scholar. Former Minister of Finance.
Ken Ash – Deputy director for food, agriculture and fisheries at the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development.
Catherine Barber – Economic policy adviser for Oxfam Great Britain and lecturer in economics at the University of Oxford.
Debi Barker – Executive director of International Forum On Globalization.
Alexandre Chambrier Barro – Gabonese economist.
Sylvia Borren – Director of Dutch non-governmental organization Novib, one of the member agencies of Oxfam International.
William Bourdon – Paris attorney, former secretary-general of the International Federation of Human Rights Leagues.
Martin Bútora – Sociologist and writer, President of the Institute for Public Affairs, Slovakia.

Mario Cafiero – Argentinean politician.

Kim Campbell – Former Prime Minister of Canada.

Jorge G. Castañeda – Former Minister of Foreign Affairs, Mexico.

Chi Steve Chan – Taiwanese politician.

The Rt. H. Lord Holme of Cheltenham – Chairman of the Steering Committee of the International Chamber of Commerce Environment Commission.

Shih-meng Chen – Taiwanese politician and economist, and president of the Ketagalan Institute.

Mamadou Cissokho – Honorary president of the Conseil National de Concertation et de Coopération Ruraux.

Robert Cooper – Director-General for External and Politico-Military Affairs, UK/Belgium.

Pál Csáky – Deputy Prime Minister, Slovakia.

Stephen M. Davis – Specialist on international corporate governance. President of Davis Global Advisors.

Thomas C. Dawson – American economist. Director of the External Relations Department of the International Monetary Fund.

Frederik Willem de Klerk – Former president of South Africa.

Guido De Marco – President Emeritus, Malta.

James Deane – Founding member and Executive Director of Panos Institute.

Lord Desai of St Clement Danes – Professor of Economics at the London School of Economics.

Jiří Dienstbier – Czech politician, scholar and author. Minister of Foreign Affairs of Czechoslovakia from 1989 to 1992.

Deborah Doane – Chair of the CORE (Corporate Responsibility) coalition of over 40 NGOs.

Gareth Evans – President of International Crisis Group, Australia/Belgium.

Franz Fischler – Member of the European Commission responsible for Agriculture, Rural Development and Fisheries, and former Austrian federal minister of agriculture and forestry.

Rian Fokker – Spokesperson of Novib Oxfam, Dutch organization fighting poverty in developing countries.

Rosendo Fraga – Argentinean journalist, political analyst and historian.

Susan George – French political scientist, born in the United States. Vice president of ATTAC France.

Bronisław Geremek – Historian, former Minister of Foreign Affairs of Poland.

Anthony C. Giffard – American scholar specializing in mass media. Member of the Board of the Inter Press Service.

André Glucksmann – French philosopher and writer.

Edward Goldsmith – British scientist, ecologist and scholar, an eminent representative of the world environmental movement and founder of The Ecologist magazine.

H. R. H. el Hassan bin Talal – Prince of the Jordan Hashemite Royal Dynasty.

Václav Havel – President of the Czech Republic from 1993 to 2003.

Hazel Henderson – Futurologist, USA.

Phil Henderson – Vice-President of the German Marshall Fund, USA.

Eveline Herfkens – UN Secretary-General's executive coordinator for the Millennium Development Goals Campaign.

Colin Hines – Author of *Localisation*, Great Britain.

Jeremy Hobbs – Executive director of Oxfam International.

Michael Hsiao Hsin-Huang – Historian and political scientist, Taiwan.

Ellen Hume – Former White House Correspondent for the *Wall Street Journal,* USA.

Anwar Ibrahim – Former Deputy Prime Minister of Indonesia.

Akira Iriyama – Vice-President of the Sasakawa Africa Association and professor at Rikkyo University's Graduate School of Social Design Studies.

Hiroyuku Ishi – Professor at Hokkaido University, Japan.

Josef Jařab – Professor of English studies, Rector of the Central European University in Budapest (1997–1999).

Erik Jonnaert – Director of corporate external relations at Procter & Gamble, member of the general assembly of Corporate Social Responsibility – Europe (CSR–Europe).

Wahu Kaara – Kenyan activist. Member of the Women's Environment and Development Organisation.

Jürgen Kaiser – coordinator of the German Jubilee 2000 campaign since 1997.

Mary Kaldor – Department of Economics, LSE, Great Britain.

Ahmad Kamel – Bureau Chief of Al-Jazeera's North and Central Europe, Belgium.

Joshua Karliner – Founder, former executive director (1996–2002) and presently senior fellow of CorpWatch.

Mats Karlsson – Swedish economist, Vice-President of the World Bank.

Inge Kaul – Director of the Office of Development Studies at the United Nations Development Programme.

Yousif al-Khoei – Al-Khoei Foundation, Great Britain.

Michael U. Klein – Vice-President of the World Bank Group's Private Sector Advisory Services, chief economist of the International Finance Corporation.

David C. Korten – American economist, writer, founder and President of The People Centred Development Forum.

Sergei Kovalyov – Deputy of Russia's State Duma. Human rights activist.

Sir Frank Lampl – Bovis Lend Lease (ret.), Great Britain.

Francis Lemoine – Senior policy analyst with European Network on Debt and Development.

Beryl Levinger – Education Development Center, USA.

Chan Lien – Taiwanese politician, from 1996 to 2000 the country's Vice-President.

Björn Lomborg – Associate professor of statistics at the department of political science at the University of Aarhus and director of Denmark's Environmental Assessment Institute.

Jana Matesová – Czech economist, senior advisor to executive director of the World Bank.

Rabbi Michael Melchior – Deputy Minister for the Israeli Society and World Jewish Community, Israel.

Adam Michnik – Former Polish dissident, currently the Editor-in-Chief of the *Gazeta Wyborcza* daily.

Aleksandr Milinkievich – Opposition candidate for President of Belarus.

Anuradha Mittal – Journalist, a native of India. Co-Director of Food First / The Institute for Food and Development Policy.

Dominique Moïsi – French political scientist.

Mike Moore – Former Director General of the WTO, New Zealand.

Frederic Mousseau – Independent expert, relief programs, France.

Jan Mühlfeit – Vice-President for Europe, Middle East and Africa at the Microsoft Corporation. One of the leading Czech managers in the field of global economy.

Davison Mulela – Deputy minister of foreign affairs of Zambia.

Simonetta Nardin – Civil Society Liaison, IMF.

Ricardo Navarro – Ecologist and activist from El Salvador. Chairman of Friends of the Earth International.

Boris Nemtsov – Russian politician.

Njoki Njoroge Njehu – Kenyan activist. Director of 50 Years Is Enough Network.

Wiktor Osiatynski – Helsinki Foundation for Human Rights, Poland.

John O'sullivan – Journalist, UK.

Šimon Pánek – People in Need Foundation, Czech Republic.

Rémi Parmentier – Special Advisor to Greenpeace International.

Chris Patten – British politician, former Governor of Hong Kong, Great Britain.

Jiří Pehe – Director of the New York University in Prague.

Marco Quinones – Sasakawa Africa Association program director, director of Sasakawa Global 2000 for Ethiopia and Tanzania.

T. Rajamoorthy – Malaysian lawyer. Editor of *Third World Resurgence*, the monthly produced by the Third World Network.

Robert B. Reich – American politician and scholar.

Federico Reyes Heroles – Transparency International, Mexico.

Jean-François Rischard – Luxembourgeois economist, World Bank, France.

Hilton L. Root – American scholar. His research focuses on the global economy, with expertise in Southeast Asia in particular.

Heinz Rothermund – Former managing director of Shell EP International BV, responsible for exploration and production in Latin America and Sub-Saharan Africa.

Jacques Rupnik – Political scientist, France.

Radomír Sabela – Vice-President and Regional Director of Philips Medical Systems.

Najma Sadeque – Pakistani writer, journalist and researcher on socio-economic issues. Founding member of Women's Action Forum of Pakistan.

Jeffrey D. Sachs – American economist, Director of the Harvard Institute for International Development.

Ghassan Salamé – Former Minister of Culture of Lebanon.

Marc D. Sarkady – American economist.

Yohei Sasakawa – Philanthropist and President of the Nippon Foundation.

Karel Schwarzenberg – Senator, Czech Republic.

John Shattuck – Former U.S. Ambassador to the Czech Republic.

Wayne Silby – American economist and lawyer.

Tom Spencer – Executive director of the European Centre for Public Affairs and visiting professor of Global Governance at the University of Surrey.

Jiřina Šiklová – Sociologist, Charles University, Czech Republic.

Francisco Thompson-Flőres – Deputy Director-General of the World Trade Organization.

Paul Trân Van Thinh – French economist and lawyer, born in Vietnam.

Ing-Wen Tsai – National Policy Advisor, Taiwan.

Jakob Von Uexkull – Founder of the Right Livelihood Award, Great Britain.

Ida Van Veldhuizen-Rothenbücher – Ambassador to the Czech Republic, the Netherlands.

Alberto Villareal – Founding member of REDES (Social Ecology Network) – Friends of the Earth, Uruguay.

Martin Walker – Editor-in-Chief of UPI, UK/USA.

Joseph Warungu – Kenyan journalist, teacher, playwright and writer. He joined the BBC in 1992.

Francisco Whitaker – Brazilian Justice and Peace Commission, Brazil.

R. James Woolsey – Former Director of the CIA, USA.

Matti Wuori – Member of the European Parliament, member of the Finnish Green Party.

Mai Yamani – Scholar, Saudi Arabia/UK.

Grigory Yavlinsky – International Crisis Group, Russia.

Rufus H. Yerxa – American diplomat and lawyer.

James J. Zogby – President of the Arab American Institute, USA.


*Oscar Arias Sánchez – Former President of Costa Rica, Recipient of the Nobel Peace Prize in 1987*

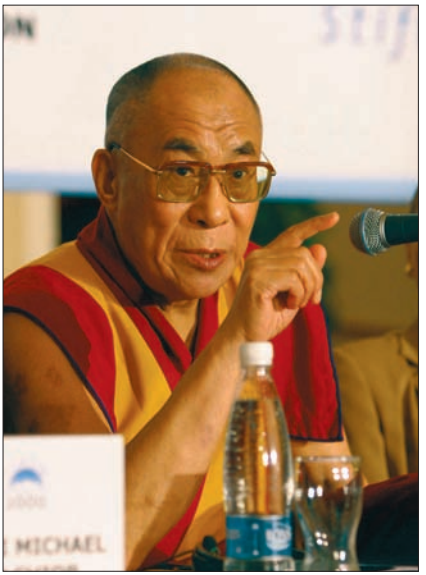

*Timothy Garton Ash – Political scientist and writer, United Kingdom*


*Carlos Filipe Ximenes Belo – Recipient of the 1996 Nobel Peace Prize, East Timor*


*Fritjof Capra – Physicist and systems theorist, USA*


*Hillary R. Clinton – Senator, USA*


*William J. Clinton – Former President of the United States*




*H. H. The Dalai Lama – Supreme spiritual representative of Tibet*


*Lord Ralf Gustav Dahrendorf – Sociologist and political scientist, United Kingdom*


*Frederik Willem de Klerk – Former President of South Africa, Recipient of the Nobel Peace Prize 1993*

*Gareth Evans – Former Minister of Foreign Affairs of Australia*

*Bronisław Geremek – Historian and member of the European Parliament, Poland*

*Anthony Giddens – Sociologist, Director of the London School of Economics, United Kingdom*

*André Glucksman – Philosopher and writer, France*

*Árpád Göncz – Former President of Hungary*

*H. R. H. el Hassan bin Talal – Writer, philosopher and economist, Crown Prince of the Jordanian Hashemite Royal Dynasty*

*Václav Havel – Writer, leading Czech dissident, President of the Czech Republic from 1993 to 2003*


*Hazel Henderson – Futurologist, USA*

*Thor Heyerdahl – Ocean traveller and writer, Norway*

*Henry A. Kissinger – Political scientist, former Secretary of State, Nobel Prize Laureate 1973, USA*

*Sergei Kovalyov – Human rights activist, Deputy of Russia's State Duma, Russia*


*Adam Michnik – Editor-in-Chief of* Gazeta Wyborcza *daily, former leading dissident, Poland*


*Ashis Nandy – Philosopher and political scientist, India*

*Shimon Peres – Leading Israeli politician, Nobel Prize Laureate 1995*

*Jeffey D. Sachs – Economist, USA*

*Helmut Schmidt – Former German Chancellor, Germany*

*Yohei Sasakawa – Philanthropist and President of the Nippon Foundation, Japan*

*Karan Singh – Philosopher, former Indian government minister, India*


*George Soros – Financier, philanthropist and author, USA*


*Wole Soyinka – Writer, Nobel Prize Laureate 1986, Nigeria*


*Immanuel Wallerstein – Sociologist, President of the International Sociological Association 1994–1998*


*Richard von Weizsäcker – Former German President*


*Elie Wiesel – Philosopher and writer, Nobel Prize Laureate 1986*

*Spanish Hall*

*Vladislav Hall*

*Žofín Palace*