

Dialogue on
Globalization

OCCASIONAL PAPERS

NEW YORK

N° 21 / October 2005

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**Global Democracy in the Nexus of
Governments, Parliaments, Parties
and Civil Society**

Dialogue on Globalization

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Dialogue on Globalization is co-ordinated by the head office of the Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung in Berlin and by the FES offices in New York and Geneva. The programme intensively draws on the international network of the Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung – a German non-profit institution committed to the principles of social democracy – with offices, programmes and partners in more than 100 countries.

This Occasional Paper is published by the New York office of the Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung.

October 2005

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ISSN 1614-0079

ISBN 3-89892-410-6

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Foreword

“Democracy needs reinventing for the globalised era” is a widespread sentiment in debate about the future of globalisation. It is founded on a recognition that, as internationalisation spreads into more and more fields of policy, it is not only governments who are confronted with a loss of sovereignty. National democratic institutions – parliaments, political parties and agents of civil society – are also facing a major challenge. While this challenge initially needs tackling at national level, a growing number of voices in recent years have been calling for “global democracy”. Its levers might be a greater involvement of parliamentarians in the processes of international organisations, a stronger role for the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) and co-operation between political parties in the international arena.

Although the significance of this issue is only too obvious, it has been confined to a niche in the day-to-day business of global politics. At the United Nations the Cardoso Commission, which submitted its report in June 2004, might be seen as the latest attempt to inject some extra momentum into the debate about global democracy. However, if we observe the current reform debate on New York’s East River we are obliged to conclude that the attempt has been relatively unsuccessful so far. Admittedly, the final document from the 2005 World Summit does contain one paragraph each on reinforcing national democracy, the newly created Democracy Fund (also geared to the national context) and co-operation between the United Nations and parliaments. However, we will discern no serious exploration of the problems of global democracy. Quite the reverse: it is evident from the schematic language and lack of any concrete proposals for reform that the issue has vanished for the time being from the political radar screens of both member governments and the United Nations Secretariat.

Against this backdrop, the present discussion paper by Christoph Zöpel can be seen as providing impetus and counterpoint. The author draws on the history of ideas, on political analysis and on his own personal observations to cast light on the various aspects of global democracy. Some of the thoughts he submits are motivated directly by political practice, while others reach primarily into the future. Christoph Zöpel has given here from his many years of political experience, during which he has come to know the different facets of his subject first hand: from the government perspective as a former Foreign Office minister, through parliamentary spectacles as a member of the German Bundestag and Chair of its United Nations Sub-Committee, from the standpoint of international alliances between political parties as chairman of the Economic Committee of the Socialist International and from the angle of a committed citizen having presided over Germany’s United Nations Association. The result is an impassioned plea for more democracy.

Jürgen Stetten

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1 Preliminary remarks

In October 2003 the 22nd Congress of the Socialist International in São Paulo adopted a programme paper on global governance from the social democratic perspective entitled: “Governance in a Global Society – The Social Democratic Approach. Equal Opportunities and Participation for Women and Men, Poor and Rich, Developing, Transitional and Developed Countries”. It was published in early 2005 in book form¹, as was a German edition called “Politik in der Weltgesellschaft”². The paper’s 3rd chapter addresses questions of democracy at the global level and the specific aspects of good governance, transparency and participation. The participation aspect deals with the responsibilities of and interaction between citizens and civil society, parties and parliamentarians.

The following deliberations seek to apply the SI paper’s positions to the broader context of political science and practical policy. They are intended to encourage deeper reflection and provide recommendations for practical steps to be undertaken by parties and parliaments on the road to democratising global governance.

Though parliaments and parties rarely dominate global politics in media and academic literature, their role must be examined when exploring opportunities for democracy in the globalisation process.

Governments and civil society – these are the actors who dominate global politics in both the media and the academic literature, whereas parliaments and parties rarely do so. Be it the government of the United States or of China, be it ATTAC on the one hand or DaimlerChrysler and Bechtel on the other, they all influence global politics. Parties and parliaments are side-lined. Neither the meetings of the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) nor those of the Socialist International (SI) or the International Democratic Union (IDU) attract any attention. Party representatives and parliamentarians are left waiting for an audience with significant international institutions like the UN, the IFIs and the WTO. These are run by the governments of powerful states, woo the multinational corporations and may have their conferences disrupted by civil society protests.

However, the role and opportunities of parliaments and parties must be part of any analysis of global events and practice-oriented political assessment as we explore opportunities for democracy in the historical globalisation process of the 21st century

1 Socialist International: Governance in a Global Society – The Social Democratic Approach, Document adopted at the XXII Congress of the Socialist International in Sao Paulo October 2003. Berlin 2005.
2 Zöpel, Christoph (ed.): Politik in der Weltgesellschaft – Der Sozialdemokratische Weg. Berlin 2005.

2. The return of politics in the face of globalisation

The 22nd Congress of the Socialist International (SI) in São Paulo in October 2003 carried the motto: „The Return of Politics. For just and responsible global governance. For globalisation governed by the people.“ This motto draws on the conclusion formed by the globally united parties of the democratic left that global societal processes are dominated by technological opportunity and economic interest, with environmental damage and social disadvantage arising without politics bringing any influence to bear. Obviously it is a particular – and thus in no way historically or globally universal – understanding of politics which underlies this conclusion. This regards politics as a subsystem of modern society – alongside other subsystems, primarily that of the economy – and it understands politics as being democratic. It is precisely because democracy is a goal of politics, and all the more if democracy is to be a structural principle for societies and hence also for global society, that this understanding of politics must be extended by triangulating it within the historical and geopolitical context of globalisation.

Globalisation, which the SI defines in accordance with accepted definitions⁴ as the “integration on a global scale of flows of goods and finance, cultural contacts and information”⁵, is not merely a term for diagnosing our own times, a particular phase of transition from the 20th to the 21st century, but rather a process which began with the colonisation of the world by European powers in the early 16th century.

The geopolitical prerequisite for globalisation was physical knowledge of the planet Earth in its entirety. This called for the Copernican revolution and the discoveries by Portuguese and Spanish navigators. The relevance of these factors has been demonstrated by Immanuel Wallerstein⁶, Hans-Heinrich Nolte⁷ and Jürgen Osterhammel/Niels P. Petersson⁸. That they were politically significant is undeniable, and the close links between the political power and vested economic interests of the rulers involved are evident. So, too, is the connection between economic interests and acts of war. The latter led to the disastrous Thirty Year War, which ended with the Peace of Westphalia. The Peace of Westphalia gave rise to territorial states, international law, foreign policy and diplomacy in a modern sense. This gave rise to territorial states, international law, foreign policy and diplomacy in a modern sense, i.e. a political system of states represented by their governments. The link between the territorial state and the nation lent state policy an underlying dimension of societal ideology. It focused politics on the national interest, and as a result there was a tendency for globalisation to slow down.

Globalisation is defined as the integration on a global scale of flows of goods and finances, cultural contacts and information.

3 Socialist International: XXII Congress of the Socialist International, Sao Paulo, 27-29 October 2003.

4 Cf. Osterhammel, Jürgen P./ Petersson, Niels P.: *Geschichte der Globalisierung*. München 2003, pp. 7-15.

5 Socialist International: *Governance in a Global Society*, op. cit., p. 15.

6 Wallerstein, Immanuel: *Das moderne Weltsystem. Kapitalistische Landwirtschaft und die Entstehung der europäischen Weltwirtschaft im 16. Jahrhundert*. Frankfurt a.M. 1986.

7 Nolte, Hans-Heinrich: *Die eine Welt. Abriß der Geschichte des internationalen Systems*. Hannover 1982.

8 Osterhammel/Petersson, op. cit.

Colonisation was the conquest of other parts of the world by Europeans. Native populations were variously marginalised or subjugated. Influenced by the formation of national states in Europe, those colonies dominated by European immigrants emancipated themselves from their European homelands. Here, the spread of European culture – religion, science, interpretations of the world – was a matter of course. In other regions Europeans remained the colonial overlords and their civilisation was simply super-imposed.

The World Wars of the 20th century involved former European colonies, most notably the United States, and in part it is this participation which made them World Wars. Following in their wake came the creation of international institutions, decolonisation and, for a period of time, the ideological division of the world, the East-West conflict. This division caused the political ideologies of communism and market democracy or the democratic market economy to overlay national references.

Since the end of this East-West conflict the international system has consisted of interacting territorial states – often still called nation states – and international institutions, i.e. the UN system in a broader sense.⁹ The political actors within this system are governments and the leading executives of the international institutions they elect. The traditional academic understanding and customary diplomatic approach to international relations are based on these circumstances: that relations between states and political decisions within international institutions are the outcome of power-oriented negotiations between governments or those who represent them.

⁹ Hüfner, Klaus: UN-System, in: Volger, Helmut (ed.): Lexikon der Vereinten Nationen. München – Wien 2000, pp. 592-596.

3. Global Governance – Nation State – Democracy

There is broad agreement among scientific analyses of globalisation that it calls the significance of the nation state into question and shifts the balance of power between states and markets in favour of the latter. The argument runs that the functions of the nation state should be replaced by a system of global governance. Global governance is generally defined as the idea of tackling global issues by means of a complex network of states, international organisations and regions and including non-state actors.¹⁰ Global governance can now be qualified as good global governance, and this good governance is needed at all levels. The SI defines good governance as effective, transparent and democratic.¹¹ However, transparency and democracy do not correspond to the way the international system sees itself, nor the way it is perceived in academic literature; this applies to the actions of international institutions – political as they may be – it applies to governments, and even to the political systems of certain member states.

Globalisation calls the significance of the nation state into question and shifts the balance of power between states and markets in favour of the latter.

After the Peace of Westphalia of 1648 democracy acquired significance in the international system as states became democratic. The events that shaped the epoch were the French Revolution and the US Declaration of Independence. In a normative sense, Kant's assumption that democracies do not wage war on each other is fundamental.

Democracy's history, its forms and analyses, are fields simply too large to grasp. Manfred G. Schmidt's „minimal definition“ of constitutional democracy is very useful. According to this, democracy is „a form of legal rule institutionally characterised by universal, free and equal suffrage, competition between parties, authentic freedom of information, opinion, opposition and association for all citizens, the regular election of political rulers (and the chance to de-elect them) by eligible voters and embedded within the structures of the constitutional state.“¹²

This definition applies to the constitutional state. The decisive question for global democracy is whether it can only be applied to a single state system or extended to encompass the system of global governance. The thesis of the end of the nation state is often associated with the simultaneous decline of democracy as understood according to Schmidt's definition. Claus Leggewie and Richard Münch formulate that „[...] politics, which more than ever takes place beyond its established form within nation states and between local, subnational, national and transnational levels, i.e. in a multi-level system [...] will not let itself be confined to the conventional forms of representative democracy within the nation state“.¹³

¹⁰ For a more detailed account of UNDP see: United Nations Development Programm: Bericht über die Menschliche Entwicklung 1999. Bonn 1999. For critical discussion cf. Brand, Ulrich u.a.: Global Governance – Alternative zur neoliberalen Globalisierung? Münster 2000.

¹¹ Socialist International: Governance in a Global Society, op.cit., p. 33, p. 97 ff.

¹² Schmidt, Manfred G.: Demokratietheorien. Opladen 2000. p. 26.

¹³ Leggewie, Claus/Münch, Richard: Einleitung: Politik in entgrenzten Räumen, in: Leggewie, C./Münch, R. (ed.): Politik im 21. Jahrhundert. Frankfurt a.M. 2001. pp. 9-12.

Arrangements between the governments of nation states are made outside parliament.

Arthur Benz predicts post-parliamentary forms of democracy in which the legislative process is no longer the task of parliament but increasingly the object of cooperation and negotiation. “A form of co-operative legislation for problems that cross the frontiers of the nation state is indispensable.” Arrangements between the governments of nation states are made outside parliament. Representative and thus parliamentary democracy in a global state – which is the alternative suggested, for instance, by David Held¹⁴ – would not be able to handle the “interdependence between public and private, territorial and functional, global, national and local” challenges.¹⁵

An empirical look beyond the confines of Germany, indeed Europe, at the dawn of the 21st century casts doubt upon this claim. In early May 2004, a new government was democratically elected in India. Social injustices were regarded as the essential reasons why the right democratic Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) lost its majority to the fairly left democratic All India Congress Committee. Criticism of neo-liberal economic policies also took its toll. India has a population of 1,065 million, more than the EU (population of 445 million since 1 May 2004) and the United States (population of 294 million) combined. But representative parliamentary democracy functions in that state. The plethora of literature about whether the EU could ever be a constitutional state that fulfils Schmidt’s criteria of democracy looks Euro-centric when contrasted with India. Also Euro-centric, even Germany-centric, are notions of the regional, national, subnational – or from a global, and thus SI perspective, subregional – and local levels. To what degree these levels are relevant to a sovereign state clearly depends on its size, and surely also on cultural, including linguistic, factors.

The formation of a Committee of the Regions in the EU Treaty as a committee of the subnational level has forced this realisation on European discourse, because the regionalisation of Luxemburg is artificial, while the regionalisation of the Federal Republic of Germany corresponds to its history and its federal structures. Here, federal actors are endowed by the constitution with statehood and state governments, and in the case of Bavaria and North Rhine-Westphalia have populations larger than most EU member states. India has a subnational structure, and it has local units. The federal Republic of India consists of 28 States and seven Union Territories; the largest state, Uttar Pradesh, has a population of 166 million. Quite clearly, compared to the EU or North America – the United States, Mexico and Canada have a combined population of 428 million – India needs no regional integration, it is clearly a region of its own. To what extent significantly smaller neighbours are regionally oriented towards India is another matter.

On the basis of measurable statistics, this populous democratic federal Republic of India reveals the Euro-centricity of the critique of global democracy; the debate revolves around functioning states with parliamentary democracies and a population of two, four or 80 million and thus, from a global perspective, it is provincial. This rapidly leads us to the problem of a Euro-centric theory of democracy. Schmidt’s exemplary historical representation of the precursors of modern theo-

¹⁴ Held, David: *Democracy and the Global Order*. Cambridge 1995.

¹⁵ Benz, Arthur: *Postparlamentarische Demokratie und kooperativer Staat*, in: Leggewie, C./ Münch, R. (eds.): *Politik im 21. Jahrhundert*. Frankfurt a.M. 2001. pp. 263-280.

ries of democracy begins with Aristotle, mentions Hobbes, Locke and Montesquieu, Rousseau, the United States' Federalist Papers, Toqueville, Mill and Marx. This furthers the notion that democracy is a European or, to express a combination of Europe and the United States, a "Western" achievement. It is clearly no coincidence that the Indian Nobel Prize Laureate for Economics, Amartya Sen concludes that there is "a tendency in America and Europe to assume, if only implicitly, that the primacy of political freedom and democracy is a fundamental and classic aspect of Western civilisation". The world is invited to join the club of "Western democracies" and applaud their traditionally "Western" values. Sen counters: "What we find in the writings of certain classical Western authors, such as Aristotle, is support for selected elements of the complex concept that forms our modern idea of political freedom. But support for these elements can also be found in many writings in the Asian traditions."¹⁶

Sen describes the potentially universal cultural foundation of democracy and liberties. This presumably also forms the basis for the waves of democratisation which have swept the world since WWI. But this examination of democratisation is limited to the nation state. We must ask if this concept is not itself the creature of a Euro-centric perspective. Hans-Ulrich Wehler observed that nationalism and nation were "entirely a political phenomenon of the European world and its colonial offshoots in America".¹⁷ In the latter half of the 19th century the nation was adapted, e.g. in Asia, to facilitate anti-colonialist emancipation. Here, just as in Africa, the nation served as an "ideological vehicle" of state formation, and this vehicle was soon to be fused in many instances with communist ideology. Since WWI many nations have thus been created within frontiers delineated more or less arbitrarily by the victorious or colonial powers. This created "artificial" boundaries, which could lead to aggression against neighbours. Within states, cultural conflicts occurred based on ethnic, religious, social or territorial differences.

Cultural identities only rarely coincide with the nation state. National identity, insofar as it occurs, may conflict with other identities. No doubt the only identity that can sustainably integrate a person's various different identities is that of the citizen of a constitutional state who is able to participate in societal and political developments. This is proven by populous democratic federal states such as India, the United States and the European Union, with the Federal Republic of Germany as its largest member. India, the United States and Germany each have party systems characterised by two major parties in competition with each other. These large parties contribute considerably to the political integration of various different identities and interests within their states.

A comprehensive perspective of the historical process of globalisation shows that it is undeniably always a political one, determined by the expansive political demands of rulers and governments. But it also shows that the current perspective on global governance as an interaction between nation states and international organisations has a very strong European flavour. The conception of a democratic global society must and can shake off that Euro-centrism.

Basic ideas of the modern idea of political freedom can not only be found in writings of Ancient Europe.

The conception of a democratic global society must and can shake off Euro-centrism.

¹⁶ Sen, Amartya: *Ökonomie für den Menschen*. München 2002.

¹⁷ Wehler, Hans-Ulrich: *Nationalismus*. München 2001. p. 16.

4. Democratic Globalisation

Unlike earlier, the current wave of globalisation is characterized by democracy and democratization.

In a diagnosis of contemporary times, Klaus Müller states that „unlike earlier waves of globalisation [...] the current one is characterised by democracy and democratisation [...] We can understand this firstly as the spread of democracy to a growing number of countries, secondly as the problem of regaining political control over a global economy no longer subject to any frontiers, and thirdly as the attempt at democratising societal relationships above the level of existing states.“¹⁸

The first context of global democratisation is best characterised by Samuel Huntington's cycle of democratisation in three waves.¹⁹ These began with the American Declaration of Independence and the French Revolution, the first long wave extending all the way to the formation of the first democratic states in Central and Eastern Europe after WWI. Huntington sets the date for the second wave between 1943 and 1962, with the democratisation of formerly fascist states and democratic decolonisation, particularly that of India – which need not necessarily be founded on Huntington's „Western“ interpretation. The third wave began with the collapse of the dictatorships in Spain, Portugal and Greece in the mid-sixties, embracing Latin America and individual states in Africa and Asia and the communist states in 1989/1990.

Today there are 193 states worldwide, 121 of which are considered democratic.

The waves of democratisation described above concern states, as the Western perspective implies. They combine two processes of political emancipation and participation: states escaping dependency brought on by military conquest or colonisation and citizens overcoming political paternalism or even repression by authoritarian and totalitarian state regimes. These processes are associated with a proliferation of sovereign states. Before WWI there were only 55 states, 25 of which were considered democratic. In 1950 the number of states had risen to 80, but the number of democratic ones had remained constant. Today there are 193 states worldwide, 121 of which are considered democratic.

¹⁸ Müller, Klaus: Globalisierung. Frankfurt a.M. 2002. p. 21.

¹⁹ Huntington, Samuel: The Third Wave. Democratization in the Late 20th Century. Norman 1991.

5 The UN system – a system of unequal governments of sovereign states under international law

At the time of its formation, the United Nations was an organisation of states most of whom did not have a democratic constitution. Leaving relations between member states to their governments was therefore not only a logical effect of the system of international relations, it was also a result of this reality. Nor was the United Nations structure based on equal rights for all member states, but rather on the prerogative and veto rights of the most powerful, the permanent members of the Security Council, known as the P5. The additional election of non-permanent members to the Security Council later encouraged a tendency towards globally balanced regionalisation at the United Nations. This development is set to continue following the recommendations of the Report of the High-Level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change “A more secure world: our shared responsibility”.²⁰

During the East-West Conflict the political capacity of the United Nations system was dominated by tension between the United States, superpower of the democratic and market-oriented West, and the Soviet Union, superpower of the totalitarian communist East. The system’s focus on power, which benefited the two superpowers, was countered by the growth of the Non-Aligned Movement. However, democracy was not a criterion for membership in this growing group of states.

International treaties agreed within the framework of the United Nations system are ratified by parliaments in democratic states – with parliament’s influence effectively being limited to the option of refusal. Their actual elaboration, like mutual relations among member states, are left to the agents of diplomacy. In democratic market-oriented states their activities were subject to politico-ideological restrictions when political relations depended on attitudes towards the communist states, but scant attention was paid to the democratic or non-democratic character of other states, especially when the functionalisation of those states within the East-West Conflict was at stake. Sen describes the practical relationship as follows: „Western dealings with non-Western societies are often characterised by excessive respect for authority: the ruler, the minister, the military junta, the religious leader. This ‘authoritarian tendency disposition’ is enhanced because Western governments themselves are represented at international meetings by government representatives, who seek to negotiate with their respective foreign counterparts.“²¹

At the time of its formation, the United Nations was an organisation of states most of whom did not have a democratic constitution. Likewise, the UN structure was not based on equal rights for all member states.

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²⁰ United Nations, Doc. A/59/565, 29. November 2004

²¹ Sen, op.cit. p. 295.

With the rise in the number of democracies since 1989, the relevance of government dominance in international relations was reduced granting greater leeway to parliamentary participation in determining international policy.

With the rise in the number of democracies since 1989, this “foreign policy” lenience towards non-democratic states has lessened. This has had various effects, reducing the relevance of government dominance in international relations and granting greater leeway to parliamentary participation in determining international policy. On fundamental issues, governments had sought parliamentary support before. Now parliamentary participation is even conceivable when preparing treaties and government positions at international conferences. This would be one level of the democratisation of global governance with proper separation of powers: the level of the sovereign state, hitherto the agent under international law. However, this involvement of parliaments would also require the development of policy alternatives. In the conventional understanding of international politics there is a normative hypothesis that in matters of foreign affairs, a non-partisan, „national“ consensus is necessary and an immanent fact of any functioning democracy. This normative hypothesis is neither empirically correct, nor even desirable from a democratic perspective.

Even a non-representative glance at the Federal Republic of Germany shows that major foreign policy decisions have been taken despite party political controversy, such as the *Ostverträge* – which the SPD supported, and CDU/CSU opposed – or the first operations of the Bundeswehr on foreign soil after 1989 – CDU/CSU in favour, SPD opposed. One indicator of global democratisation in the competition between parties are the divergent positions adopted over the Iraq War. The Republican United States administration and German opposition were advocates of military intervention, while the German government and key representatives of the US Democrats were opposed to it.

The other level, the global one, could also be a platform for democratising global governance through the separation of powers. Its successful implementation should consist in the transferral of experience with stable democratic functions from states to global governance. However, it should not be forgotten that interpreting democratic politics as a subsystem of modern societies implies rivalry with other subsystems. In the context of the globalisation process this primarily means an economic subsystem founded on the market and private property. The end of the East-West Conflict also heralded the end of the communist ideology and the spread of market-oriented and democratic doctrines. The tension between these two aspects of social theory, both of which can be traced back to the Enlightenment, is one implication of democratising globalisation.

6 The functions of parties in stabilising democracy

Let us first turn to the experience of stable democratic functions at state level. This brings us to the function of competition between parties in stabilising democracy, and it also implies a further question: how relevant is this function to the global level? Competition between parties is one of the essential hallmarks of Schmidt's definition of constitutional democracy, and yet – both in his own case and more generally – modest space is devoted to analysing the function of parties in democratic systems. There may be several, more or less understandable reasons for this. The fact that there are parties in both democratic and authoritarian or totalitarian systems has serious implications here. It is the *competition* between them which is actually required for a democratic system. Furthermore, it is above all parties that provide a context for power struggles and tussles around positions, which are so hard to formalise, which can then be voted on within the constitutional system in a democratic parliament. The English language differentiates between politics, policy and polity, and offers perhaps a clearer explanation than German of why political scientists are much happier investigating noble *polity*, i.e. the democratic constitution in essence, than the dirty *politics* that take place within and between parties. Schmidt dedicates a brief section of his theory of democracy to an “international comparison of democracy in party states”, which is characterised by a critical perspective on parties. „The winners of democracy no doubt include... the political parties foremost.“²² This claim is hard to accept. The state party in a totalitarian system is obviously more influential than the parties in a competitive democracy, under a system which may deprive them of power.

Empirical historical examination of long-term stable democracies leads us, on the other hand, to the insight that this stability depends on the stability of competing parties which the voter is free to choose between and which compete for votes with democratic alternatives. With an appropriate electoral system, i.e. majority voting or a high minimum threshold of votes under a system of proportional representation, they sustainably integrate both party members and potential functionaries in the democratic system and also voters. Fundamental changes in the party system are usually crisis symptoms, such as during the transition from the Fourth to the Fifth Republic in France, or the collapse of the Italian party system which lacked alternatives after the Communist Party was excluded from government in 1989, or the party political upheaval in Turkey in 2002.

By contrast, the stability of the large democracies in the United States, India, Germany and the United Kingdom is determined by the stability of large parties.

The competition between parties is a main pillar of the democratic system.

²² Schmidt, op.cit. p. 375ff.

7 Democratic Left versus democratic Right²³

Competition between parties requires recognisable alternatives that go beyond mere personalities. Contrary to the diagnosis of a Third Way, from the United States to Europe to India there is an difference between left and right. The least suspect formulation of this – normative – hypothesis is by Anthony Giddens: „Does the distinction between left and right still retain its core meaning if we prise it away from the prosaic environment of orthodox politics? Yes, the distinction remains, but only on a very general level. On the whole, the right is more likely than the left to come to terms with the existence of injustices, and it moreover supports the powerful rather than the powerless.“²⁴

A stable democratic course is most likely to succeed if there is both a right-democratic and a left-democratic party, each of which is able to govern for a full parliamentary term but also able to survive in opposition.

In the course of the third wave of democratisation in the former communist states of Central and Eastern Europe it has become evident that a stable democratic course, with successful integration into the EU and the transformation of the centrally planned economy, is most likely to succeed if there is both a right-democratic and a left-democratic party, each of which is able to govern for a full parliamentary term but also able to survive in opposition. In the post-communist EU member states, it was initially only Hungary that represented this ideal type. Croatia is now proving to be a second case.

²³ Cf. Zöpel, Christoph: Links und Rechts als demokratische Alternativen globaler Politik, in: Perspektivtrends, 21. Jg. (2004).

²⁴ Giddens, Anthony: Jenseits von Links und Rechts. Frankfurt a.M. 1997. p. 338.

8 Globally: Market versus Politics

The simple criteria for distinguishing right and left, issues of equality and the distribution of power, bear a direct relation to Klaus Müller's second aspect of global democratisation, that of regaining political control over a global economy no longer subject to any frontiers.²⁵ Simultaneously they link into the relationship between the societal subsystems of democratic politics and the private economy.

Academic and political debate alike are characterised by a dichotomous picture which sets the champions of globalisation against its opponents. If globalisation is also portrayed as an inevitable process, its critics are easily accused of denying reality. That this is not the case, at least not on the whole, becomes clearer if we are aware of the varying degrees to which the winners and losers of globalisation are affected by it. This poses problems of valuation and concrete questions about political and socio-economic distribution. Winners and losers may be world regions or states. There may be shifts in power, income or wealth within individual societies constituted as states. Societal subsystems may gain or lose influence. Free market-oriented advocates of globalisation link their arguments to descriptions of how globalisation can benefit private economic activity and stem state or trade union influence in the economic order and business process. Critics of their position argue against such changes to economic systems, defending the trade unions' influence over redistribution and calling for globalisation that enhances development and is equitable in distribution.

To sum up the quintessence of what is now a political debate, we face either the transformation of the principles of the modern welfare and constitutional state to encompass the global level or its dissolution at the level of individual states in favour of private global actors, presumably to the detriment of the overwhelming majority of the world's population. A myriad of scientific economic justifications have been presented in favour of the latter alternative, identifying themselves as neo-liberalism or theories of public choice. Essentially they equate consumer sovereignty with democracy, which is nothing new as an idea.

The real political consequences for today's constitutional welfare states can be summarised, according to Klaus Müller, in four points

- loss of monetary monopoly,
- erosion of tax sovereignty,
- limitation of potential state borrowing,
- changes in the self-defined role of Western welfare states.²⁶

These impacts on developed "Western" states are no doubt intended, but this does not automatically make them direct outcomes of the policy of global institutions. This acquires its relevance once the problems and challenges arising from globalisation need to be addressed with the aid of these institutions, especially financial

²⁵ Müller, *op.cit.* p. 21, p. 43ff.

²⁶ Cf. Müller, *op.cit.*

crises via the IMF. This policy, along with the compatible policies of the big Western states, notably the United States, was formulated in 1989 as the Washington Consensus.²⁷ It essentially consists of ten policy recommendations:

Macro-policy is supposed to follow fiscal discipline, with liberalisation of interest rates and exchange rates determined by the market; structural policy is to consist of privatisation, deregulation, import liberalisation, liberalisation of foreign direct investments, tax reform geared toward reducing progressive rates and broadening the tax base, legal security for property rights, redirection of public spending towards education and health.

The problematic effects of the ten policy recommendations of the Washington Consensus of 1989 have become increasingly clear when contrasted with the development goals of developing countries and emerging economies.

These recommendations are founded on neo-liberal economic doctrines. Measured against their outcomes they may be regarded as romantic theories, but they may also be seen as interest-bound ideologies favouring private financiers and investors from the developed countries. In any case their problematic effects have become increasingly clear when contrasted with the development goals of developing countries and emerging economies. It is also notable that questions of distribution remain unaddressed, so that hardly any measures are taken to address poverty, and that institutional aspects are given scant attention. Even a policy which facilitates private economic activity requires institution; in simple terms, there can be no politics without governance. Governance must be effective – and democratic governance favours efficiency more than the authoritarian kind. Finally, good governance on the state level and good governance on the global level are mutually dependent. It is on the global level that the necessary debate about global public goods is taking place, launched primarily by the UNDP.

Creating a Post-Washington Consensus is one of the main strategies of the Socialist International's global economic policy.

As a result, efforts at creating a Post-Washington Consensus have begun.²⁸ The SI places such a strategy at the conceptual heart of its global economic policy.

Development deficits for poorer states and a global shortage of public goods on the one hand, and shrinking fiscal leeway for developed states on the other, combine to generate a need for a set of global policy instruments. For the SI, in accordance with its principles, this involves regulation, redistribution and public goods on both the state and global levels. Regulation calls for global agreements, redistribution and public goods call for fiscal resources. The fiscal capabilities of the world's richer states are already overstretched, especially where they follow the recommendations of public choice theory. Promises of transfers to developing countries are running into difficulties. This, too, implies a need for global taxation. It could be targeted at global economic processes that have hitherto escaped the fiscal sovereignty of states, whether this was politically intended or not.

An “apolitical” analysis of globalisation swiftly evokes political evaluation, and this must inevitably be controversial. Evaluations are clustered into alternatives, and alternatives are the prerequisites for a functioning democracy. The dichotomy between market and politics turns out to be inadequately formulated. In fact it brings us back, in the global framework and at the dawn of the 21st century, to democratic right or democratic left politics. Only by globally accepting this alternative can we have the debate about the opportunities for global democracy, followed by its eventual institutionalisation with the participation of parliaments and parties.

27 Cf. Williamson, John: What Washington Means by Policy Reform, in the book he edited: Latin America Adjustment: How Much Has Happened? Washington D.C. 1990.

28 Cf. including many bibliographical and source references: Bundesministerium für Wirtschaftliche Zusammenarbeit und Entwicklung: Post-Washington Consensus. Einige Überlegungen. Berlin 2004.

9 Human rights and transparency: keys to global political participation

Human rights are a prerequisite of democracy. When it comes to global declarations and treaties, global politics has progressed a long way on this issue. The human rights abuses that occur in many states of the world do not undermine this claim any more than they negate the human rights enshrined within the very constitutions of these states.

However, the specific formulation of human rights collides with fundamental political and societal conditions. The constitutional state began to guarantee personal liberties after it had secured the safety of its citizens inwardly and outwardly. The constitutional state, certainly if it had a large population, was able to resolve internal conflicts on an enduring basis by accepting and guaranteeing cultural differences as human rights alongside equality between citizens. By developing the education system, the constitutional state began to create the fundamental social prerequisites needed to actually enjoy human rights, i.e. the opportunity to understand and make use of them. This historical development in the constitutional state must be replicated at the global level. The SI accordingly formulates three aspects of global human rights policy: the rights to individual security, cultural identity and social integration, fleshed out by education.

The participation of individual citizens in global politics – participation, that is, which consists not only in passive, but also in active communication – assumes the successful implementation of these concrete human rights policies. Of course, human rights politics themselves, whether at state level or worldwide, require active participation. Human rights groups, amnesty international, war resisters and peace movements are also globally successful cases of civil society groups that possess the necessary education and are aware of their cultural identity.

Participation in global political events and, following this, global governance has been founded on successful human rights politics. The first challenge in enabling participatory and grass-roots democratic communication is the issue of transparency in global political events. These communicative achievements by groups in civil society face competition from a quarter which may be anything from a simple contender to an antithesis: the media.

Press freedom is another human right and thus a prerequisite for democracy. Transparency beyond a very narrow social circle requires dissemination by the media. It is quite natural that civil society groups in the realm of global politics must participate and communicate via the media in order to spread their insights and views. One problem at the heart of democratic global politics is whether the media actually fulfil this role, and to what extent. The reasons for inadequacies in this respect may ascribed to either economics or power politics. Freedom of the press and freedom of the economy are contradictory when the dissemination of

Global politics have come a long way in addressing human rights.

The SI formulates three aspects of global human rights policy: the rights to individual security, cultural identity and social integration, fleshed out by education

Global information rights and global standards for the political functioning of the media are essentials championed by the SI.

information is determined by expectations of profit. Bringing influence to bear on media with a broad following is a temptation in power politics. The combination of these two potential risks in one institution or even one person is genuinely harmful to the scope for transparency, participation and democratic decision-making.

Global information rights and therefore also global standards for the political functioning of the media are essentials championed by the SI. The lack of these places a check on civil society participation in global politics.

10. Checks on civil society participation, transnational referenda, parties as mediators

Communication and the concomitant negotiation of values, behaviour and action are fundamental factors in the formation and stabilisation of societies. It is through civil society communication over global questions and aims in many countries and regions that something like a global (civil) society has emerged. Knowledge has been built and actions have been planned.

Both of these gained influence on the negotiations taking place between government representatives about global policy rules and procedures. The unprecedented complexity and diversity of global issues initially rules out any clear-cut clustering of this knowledge and activity. Their impacts are geared to specific projects and this is how they are applied. In this manner, civil society commitment has gradually become structured and institutionalised. Funding may play a significant role here as the boundaries between strictly private donations, charitable donations from private enterprise and state funding are fluid. The pooling of expertise and socially relevant experience in foundations or research institutes is a further step. The registration of NGOs with the United Nations pursued a different thrust. It may facilitate the work of NGOs and provide rules for transparency. However, the executives of global governance thus began to select their own „constituencies“ – which may make sense functionally when expertise and practice can be channelled into decisions and their implementation, but it is of dubious value from the perspective of democratic participation.

This raises the issue of the legitimacy of participation when it is organised by civil society, indicating a fundamental problem conceptually rooted in global governance via open but diffuse structures. The vested interests of those who provide the expertise and practical experience are part of the picture. The relationship between academics and globally active governments or administrations begins to reveal dependencies related to funding. The economic interests are easily visible when private enterprises play an active role in civil society or are even mentioned remarkably in the same breath, as in the well-established bullet point: participation of civil society and the private sector.

In societies with democratic constitutions there is a principle of separating public and private tasks and interests, with strict supervision of the interfaces; anything else would apparently lead sooner or later to corruption. Global public private partnerships and the Global Compact are as vital as they are legitimate, as long as they follow transparent and monitored rules.

This principle conflicts with the philosophy of global politics that calls itself public choice theory and prefers systems of governance based on weak public institutions, private companies and scientific research funded by market-oriented interests; at least this is where political and economic theories of governance systems seem to draw their inspiration.

Global (civil) society has emerged through civil society communication over global questions.

In order to prevent corruption, societies with democratic constitutions have a principle of separating public and private tasks and interests.

ATTAC demands the application of the politics of the social and ecological constitutional state to the global level.

But people and societies live their different lives, and it is from them, the people, that all power flows – and not only in democratic theory, as the communist state parties learned in 1989. Both the role and image of civil society changed when opponents of globalisation entered the stage. The WTO meeting in Seattle and the G8 Summit in Genoa were extravagant highlights, the World Social Forums in Porto Alegre and Mumbai were global forums that did not reflect neo-liberal ideas of global politics. With the foundation of ATTAC – Association pour la Taxe Tobin pour l'Aide aux Citoyens²⁹ – in 1998, a non-government organisation was born that caused headaches for governments, the parties that support them and the executives of international organisations. Even the noble World Economic Forum in Davos was surprised by the advent of ATTAC.

ATTAC's demands essentially amount to applying the politics of the social and ecological constitutional state to the global level. The organisation soon forged personal links with members, parliamentarians and even government representatives of left-democratic parties. Democratic alternatives within global politics are beginning to take shape in parties and parliaments.

The general discussion about global governance among journalists and political scientists now faces new questions concerning the legitimacy of public participation in global politics. Civil society's right of participation can no longer simply be confined to recognised NGOs registered with the UN. Not even the globally active executives would be served by this. NGOs such as ATTAC are now demanding these rights, but their aims do not match those that have hitherto dominated philosophies of global governance.

To escape this legitimacy trap, which confronts both theory and practice, there are two options: global referenda or representative, i.e. party, democracy at the global level.

It is hardly necessary to list the numerous arguments against referenda, even at the level of individual states. There are understandable historical reasons, experience gained in the period between the two World Wars, why the German constitution rules these out almost entirely. This applies even more at the global level: the mere prospect of a billion Chinese voters inexperienced in democracy authorising developments in global politics might easily raise insurmountable hurdles. But this is not even necessary at this point – although major military interventions following long-drawn-out preparations could be preceded by a global referendum – because in larger states representative parliamentary and federal structures provide a functioning democratic escape route. Within these structures, parties fulfil the function of mediators between public communication processes and parliamentary decisions about laws and financial redistribution by means of taxes. They focus alternatives, offer them up for vote and are penalised for lack of credibility by defeat at the polls.

²⁹ Cf. Grefe, Christiane /Greffrath, Mathias /Schumann, Harald: *attac. Was wollen die Globalisierungskritiker?* Reinbek b. Hamburg 2003.

11. The Inter-Parliamentary Union and global associations of parties

The most successful stability factor for democracy to date, especially with regard to large – and therefore federally structured – states has been a parliamentary system with a well functioning system of alternative parties. It seems reasonable, therefore, to take this over at global level. The basis was laid even before the UN system, including the League of Nations, was born. The League of Nations was created in 1920, but the Inter-Parliamentary Union dates back to an initiative of the British M.P. William Randell Cremer and his French colleague Frédéric Passy in 1889. Its members currently come from 145 countries. By comparison, 181 countries have joined the UN.³⁰

Prior to UN and The League of Nations, the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) has been created in 1889.

Its founding fathers envisaged the IPU as an international association of parliamentarians who would contribute to securing world peace. Now that the IPU has established an international reputation as a forum for parliamentary dialogue, it still sees its task as working for peace and co-operation between the nations. Meanwhile, it has also subscribed to the aim of promoting representative institutions across the world that strengthen democracy based on the rule of law. The IPU, therefore, considers its main objectives to be:

- contacts and exchanges of experience between parliamentarians of all countries,
- debating questions of international interest to prompt parliaments in individual states to adopt concrete measures in these fields,
- contributing to the defence and observation of human rights,
- promoting a better understanding of how representative institutions function.

The IPU is an important forum for global parliamentary policy dialogue expressed in a variety of position papers, recommendations and decisions on pressing political issues. By means of these recommendations and decisions, designed to be transposed by the parliaments and governments of individual states, the IPU provides stimulus for political work. The recommendations are addressed towards the international organisations within the United Nations system. By gradually stepping up co-operation of this kind the IPU hopes to instil a parliamentary dimension into the work of the United Nations. The collaboration between the IPU and the UN was substantially reinforced in November 2002 when the UN granted the IPU observer status at its General Assembly.

In November 2002, the IPU was granted observer status at the UN General Assembly.

The IPU Assembly meets twice a year to discuss political, economic and social questions of international interest. The broad range of topics addressed by the Assembly in recent years includes the contribution of parliaments to the respect and promotion of international humanitarian law to mark the 50th anniversary of the Geneva Convention, the need to revise the present global financial and economic system, fighting AIDS and the impact of terrorism.

³⁰ See Müller, *op.cit.*, p. 137.

The Governing Council, which consists of three parliamentarians from each member country, guides and manages the work of the Union under a President elected for three years. It is supported in this work by the Executive Committee, consisting of the President, the Chair of the Co-ordinating Committee of Women Parliamentarians and fifteen further members.

Today the IPU has three Standing Committees: one on Peace and International Security, one on Sustainable development, Finance and Trade and one on Democracy and Human Rights.

Since reform in April 2003 there have been three Standing Committees: one on Peace and International Security, one on Sustainable development, Finance and Trade and one on Democracy and Human Rights. Reflecting the procedure in other inter-parliamentary structures, the reform introduced a system whereby each theme is accompanied by two rapporteurs who present their committee with a report and a draft resolution. These drafts are discussed by the committee as a whole.

The Secretary General and the Secretariat based in Geneva are responsible for all the administrative work. The IPU is exclusively self-financed from funds contributed by member parliaments.

The German *Bundestag* dispatches a delegation of eight to the Parliamentary Assemblies. These are named by the parliamentary parties at the beginning of each new legislature.

Apart from its annual conferences, the IPU also holds special meetings devoted to questions of international security, trade, development and the environment. Examples which deserve a particular mention here are the parliamentary forums which took place to prepare for and comment on the WTO conferences, the Parliamentary Forum during the World Summit on Sustainable Development in Johannesburg in 2002 and the parliamentary conference in December 2003 in conjunction with the World Summit on the Information Society.

Given the procedures and the time they require, a greater involvement of the IPU in UN-related security policy decisions, especially by the Security Council, would probably be simpler in organisational terms than most governments and experts tend to assume. In a report on the role of parliaments in assisting multilateral organisations in ensuring peace and security and in building an international coalition for peace, submitted to the 109th IPU Assembly in Geneva on 1-3 October 2003, the rapporteurs S. Masri (Jordan) and C. Zöpel (Germany) propose, for example, that:

- the IPU set up an ad-hoc committee on armed internal conflicts to review imminent risks in conjunction with the UN Security Council;
- the IPU create a network of parliamentarians to monitor the anti-terror laws adopted by national parliaments;
- the IPU create a Special Committee on Crisis Prevention which would convene whenever the UN Security Council is considering military measures.

The third proposal in particular would contribute substantially to enhancing the transparency of decisions of this kind taken by the Security Council.

Just as the IPU has been in existence since the late 19th century, other associations of parties were created around the same period, notably between democratic left-wing parties. Like the IPU, they suffer from a lack of in-depth attention in political studies. This was observed by Reinhold Roth in his essay on political parties and international politics for the political lexicon published by Dieter Nohlen. The direct influence of parties “on the actual shape” of international politics is “assumed to be weak – evidently due in part to the serious gaps in systematic research in this field.”³¹

There is a link between developing the IPU into a UN parliament and developing global associations of parties into globally active, representative organisations that can formulate democratic alternatives.

At this global level we have witnessed the Socialist International since 1951 as an association of democratic left-wing parties, the Christian Democrat World Union since 1961 (renamed Christian Democrat International in 1982) and also (closely linked with this) the International Democrat Union since 1983, Liberal International since 1947 and the Global Green Network since 2001.³²

To achieve the goal of a UN Parliamentary Assembly, these associations of parties need to work together. This could take the form of joint statements on representative parliamentary democracy. The difficult part will be to invest some effort in forging links with parties who do not belong to any of these associations. This applies above all to parties in countries with big populations: China, India, Indonesia, the United States and Russia. Ultimately, after all, it would not be possible to represent global political and democratic alternatives in a future UN Parliamentary Assembly if the parliamentarians of these countries were not appropriately involved with their own voice.

Associations of parties suffer from a lack of in-depth attention in political studies leading to the popular assumption that their influence on shaping international politics would be weak.

31 Roth, Reinhold: Politische Parteien und internationale Politik, in: Nohlen, D. (ed.) Lexikon der Politik, vol. 6. München 1994, pp. 412-415. This assessment should be modified, however, if we consider the collaboration between parties within the EU. Cf. papers dating back to the late 1970s, Stirnemann, Alfred: Die Internationalen der politischen Mitte. Der Europawahlkampf und seine Auswirkungen, in: Österreichisches Jahrbuch für Politik 1978, pp. 245-311 – including theoretical argument – and Janitscheck, Hans: Zur Entwicklung und Tätigkeit der Sozialistischen Internationale, in: Österreichisches Jahrbuch für Politik 1978, pp. 199-243.

32 On the task of global associations of parties and in particular the Socialist International cf. my paper: Zöpel, Christoph: Die Sozialistische Internationale und globale Demokratie, Internationale Politikanalyse, Abteilung Internationaler Dialog der Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung, Bonn Juni 2005.

12. The Cardoso Report

The UN has meanwhile launched its own debate about structures of democratic global governance and the democratic participation of global society in global political processes. In February 2003 UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan appointed a Panel of Eminent Persons of United Nations Civil Society Relations, chaired by the former Brazilian President Fernando Henrique Cardoso. Its work is interlinked with the Secretary-General's own report: "The Strengthening of the United Nations: an agenda for further change". In a letter of 7 June 2004 Cardoso submitted his panel's report entitled "We the peoples: civil society, the United Nations and global governance".³³ Its perspective is poignantly summarised by the first few sentences of the Executive Summary: "Public opinion has become a key factor influencing intergovernmental and governmental policies and actions. The involvement of a diverse range of actors, including those from civil society and the private sector, as well as local authorities and parliamentarians, is not only essential for effective action on global priorities but is also a protection against further erosion of multilateralism." This perspective reflects a widespread view of global governance: the intrinsic interests of the UN system, the pressure of public opinion on government action and hence the participation of – in this sequence – organisations of civil society, the business sector, local government representatives and parliamentarians. This is a long way removed from a structured global democracy with its own inbuilt division of powers.

The four principles on which this report is founded are as follows:

- focus on problems, not institutions,
- embrace a diversity of constituencies,
- combine the local with the global,
- strengthen democracy in the 21st century.

Efforts to strengthen the democratic principle are linked to an ill-structured concept of democracy known in the field of global governance as participatory democracy. The report contains a section on the UN's involvement with elected representatives, which it subdivides into the "more systematic engagement" of parliamentarians in UN work and an incorporation of contributions by local representatives. The engagement of parliamentarians is quite rightly rooted both in the parliaments of member states and at UN level: all parliaments are called upon to address global issues in their own work and to this end they should be better informed; governments should include parliamentarians in their UN delegations, even granting them the option to speak in the General Assembly.

At UN level, the Secretary-General should seek co-operation, not only with the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU), but also with other associations of parliamen-

³³ United Nations General Assembly Doc. A/58/817 of 11 June 2004.

tarians. Finally, he should set up a small Elected Representatives Liaison Unit to assist the process of involving parliamentarians more closely in developments at the UN.

These proposals did not meet with the approval of the IPU. No doubt, however, they will provide an innovative trigger for addressing the UN structures, and above and beyond this structures of global governance, in the parliaments of UN member countries together with their governments. In Germany this process began with a letter from the Head of the IPU delegation from the German *Bundestag*, Vice-President Norbert Lammert, to Foreign Minister Joschka Fischer on 10 May 2004, before the Panel had completed its task. Although there was agreement about the objectives, the discussions between Panel representatives and the IPU threw up “substantial differences in some areas with regard to means. The ... proposals, for example that the United Nations should set up committees of parliamentarians, would duplicate or overlook existing structures. The IPU already offers parliamentarians of the world an institutionalised forum to debate current issues which are on the United Nations’ agenda. ... Rather than the United Nations creating new bodies, the existing institutions and their links with each other should be strengthened.” The IPU’s criticisms were taken up at UN level in the Secretary-General’s response to the Cardoso Report. On the relationship between the UN and parliamentarians he remarks: “The Inter-Parliamentary Union has played a particularly active role in fostering a more sustained interaction between the UN and parliamentarians, a role which was recognized by the General Assembly when it granted the IPU the status of Observer.”³⁴

On this point, the General Assembly adopted Resolution A/59/L5/Rev.2 of 1 Nov 2004 on Cooperation between the United Nations and the Inter-Parliamentary Union. Item 1 notes: “Welcomes the efforts made by the Inter-Parliamentary Union to provide for a greater parliamentary contribution and enhanced support to the United Nations.” Item 4 states: “Takes note of the efforts of the Inter-Parliamentary Union to consult parliaments on the recommendations made in the report of the Panel of eminent persons ... and looks forward to learning of the outcome of this process as a contribution to the deliberations of the Assembly prior to taking a final decision on the recommendations of the Panel in regard to parliamentarians.” The General Assembly will take another look at this question at its 61st session in 2006.

In Germany the *Bundestag* adopted a motion endorsed by all the parliamentary parties which was called “For a parliamentary dimension in the United Nations system” (Doc. 15/3711). This rejects the proposals on involving parliaments as formulated by the Cardoso commission on the grounds that the question of democratic legitimacy had not been dealt with adequately. The resolution stipulates that the German *Bundestag* will “contribute its own proposals for the desired parliamentary involvement in the UN system”.

³⁴ United Nations General Assembly, Fifty-ninth session, A/58/of 1 Sep 2004.

The Speaker of the German Parliament has now requested the Foreign Affairs Committee and its United Nations Subcommittee to draw up proposals of this kind. The intention was to submit them before the 2005 summer recess for a decision by the plenary chamber.

During the 14th and current 15th legislatures, the domestic powers of the Bundestag to participate in the global policy of the government have been extended by decisions taken in the plenary chamber and on the Foreign Affairs Committee. In line with a decision taken on 22 June 2001, the federal government draws up a report on co-operation with the United Nations every two years. Following a motion on 30 June 2004, it is now also called upon to submit a second report on co-operation with the various international organisations and institutions engaged in global activities within the UN system, notably the international financial institutions (IFIs) and the International Labour Organisation (ILO) as well as with the World Trade Organisation (WTO). Two UN Reports have so far been presented and the next is expected in late 2005.

A resolution by the Foreign Affairs Committee calls upon the government to provide regular written information before and after ministerial conferences by United Nations organisations and other global agencies and institutions. At the beginning of each year, the federal government reports on the ministerial conferences planned for the coming calendar year.

13. A democratic constitution for the United Nations

It sounds like an illusionary utopia to leap from the debatable proposals of the Cardoso Report to a constitution for the United Nations. It would be if thinking in terms of global policy were to be atrophied by restrictions on space or time and confined to provincial concerns or matters of the moment. If we adopt a truly universal perspective, much of this unreal shroud vanishes. Universal thinking has been rampant for thousands of years in all major civilisations, from the Empire of Alexander the Great to the Imperium Romanum and the Chinese Middle Kingdom. Effective legal orders of universal scope are also no new invention, as Roman civil law demonstrates. The Roman Empire was also thoroughly equipped for interventions serving the external and internal security of its multi-ethnic and multi-cultural territories.

Democracy is rooted in the political philosophies of Europe and India. Political representation and elections are features of the common written expression of opinion in a wide diversity of cultures.

In the 20th century two “world” wars, a global bipolar conflict using military and ideological instruments, and also technological innovations with a global impact, permitted the emergence of a global society. This global society has already endowed itself with numerous components of a potentially constitutional order. What is primarily lacking are the components of a process-driven democratic structures with adequate checks and balances.

The United Nations Charter of 25 May 1945 provides a framework under international law for the broad interdependence of all the world’s states. Common executive organs indicate a two-tier structure of the kind witnessed in federal communities of states. The UN boasts an instrument for security policy interventions in Chapter VII of the Charter – in a global “federal” community the distinction between internal and external security becomes meaningless. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights of 10 December 1948 formulates a catalogue of basic rights of the kind usually found in constitutions. Fields of global policy – primarily the economy, i.e. trade and currency, but increasingly the environment – are being codified by “international” administrative law and institutionalised by means of the covenants which resulted in the IFIs, the WTO and the ILO or in the Kyoto Protocol, the Biodiversity Convention and the UN Convention to Combat Desertification. Both the UN Charter in its Chapter XIV and other global policy pacts envisage courts of justice and dispute settlement bodies. This introduces aspects of a division of power between the member countries as executives or “federated subjects” and the judiciary. To create a democratic constitutional order, all that lacks is the third pillar of this division: the legislative, which also supervises the work of the executive.

Since ancient times, all major civilisations have given birth to universal thinking and effective legal orders of universal scope.

Fields of global policy are being codified by “international” administrative law and institutionalised by means of the covenants.

Organs with these tasks are usually elected by the people. The argument that this is an illusionary utopia is based on a claim that global elections of this kind are not feasible, and by ignoring this issue the literature of political studies endorses the attitude of executives that parliamentary participation and monitoring are undesirable at the global level. Even after the French Revolution the division of power, which always entails a renunciation of power, especially by the executive, has failed to become an ethical standard in the deontology of government administration.

The SI is committed to the parliamentarisation of global governance, involving regional parliaments along the lines of the European Union.

As a long-term perspective, the SI is committed to the parliamentarisation of global governance, involving regional parliaments along the lines of the European Union. It also discerns cosmopolitan law on the horizon. There are proposals in political debate for representative federal structures of democracy at global level. A very concrete model has been developed by Otfried Höffe, who talks of a world republic. "Its supreme organ, the world legislative in the form of a world parliament ... must consist of two chambers, a world assembly, a chamber of citizens in which are represented transnational parties or, indeed, transnational co-operations between national parties, and possibly non-government organisations, too), and a world council as a chamber of states". "The world state, which is morally incumbent on humanity as a consequence of the universal imperatives of law and democracy, shall be established as a subsidiary, federal world republic. Within it we are citizens of the world, although not in an exclusive manner. Cosmopolitan law will not eradicate ... but complement national law. Moreover, it embraces the intermediate megaregional units. It will be up to the democracies of Europe ... to decide whether we should be German citizens first ... and European citizens after or not. Citizens of a state or of Europe, the other secondary, hence both in graded sequence, and thirdly citizens of the world: citizens of the subsidiary and federal world republic."³⁵

³⁵ Höffe, Otfried: Demokratische Perspektiven der Globalisierung, in: Die Neue Gesellschaft. Frankfurter Hefte 6/2001. p. 363; Höffe, Otfried: Demokratie im Zeitalter der Globalisierung. München 1999.

14. Regionalisation as a federal element in democratic global governance

Intermediate regional authorities make representative and federal democracy on the global tier a realistic proposition. The European Union with some 445 million inhabitants and a parliament of 732 members is an example Europeans can hardly ignore. The population of India is even greater and that of China exceeds it, although it is not a democracy with universal free suffrage and competing parties. The fact that there are regions constituted like states and that others are on this road suggests a reform of the UN in which these regions would be represented in a manner proportional to their population, possibly weighted for domestic product, size of territory and provisionally by military power. The Security Council could be formed by China, India, Latin America, North America – or, indeed, the United States alone, with Mexico and perhaps Canada, which is partially francophone, counting as Latin America –, the EU, the Commonwealth of Independent States, Western Asia or the Middle and Near East, South-East Asia, Africa and Australia-Oceania. They would be represented by their governments or by a rota arrangement within their federal regional structure. The proportionally representative composition of this world parliament can be calculated plausibly. If 600 parliamentarians represent 6 billion people, China would have 130 deputies, India 100, the EU 45 and the United States 29. Is that an appalling prospect? Yes, if the West thinks it has all the answers.

If 600 parliamentarians represent 6 billion people, China would have 130 deputies, India 100, the EU 45 and the United States 29.

15. Looking ahead: 11 September and its consequences

In terms of the political architecture of globalisation, 11 September has had several consequences, some fundamental: The first has been for nation states to relapse into overestimating themselves. The impact on the United States was understandable in human terms, but it turned into the arrogant response of a lone country. In home policy it led to a discriminatory seclusion of the territory from global traffic flows, which is gradually beginning to isolate the United States, quite apart from the domestic impact on human rights as the foundation of democracy. In foreign policy it culminated in the Iraq war, a military conflict which made it all too evident how little cutting-edge weapons technologies can do to wipe out global threats of terror; American efforts to achieve international security policy co-operation under the umbrella of UN security resolutions also demonstrate how the use of military power has been subjected to further de facto globalisation.

There have been efforts towards a world-wide system of mutually dependent states.

As a second consequence, there have been efforts towards a world-wide system of mutually dependent states. This has above all been served by the state-building in Afghanistan.

The third consequence, not without historical precedent, is reflected in the upheavals of unbridled economic activity. The uncontrolled potential for global financial transactions has become a tool in the hands of global terrorists, an almost inevitable playing field for mafia-like economic structures. The G7 Financial Action Task Force on Money Laundering was founded before 11 September 2001, but now it is becoming an instrument of global security policy, including of US security structures. A number of resolutions by the UN Security Council are now strengthening the mechanisms for monitoring global financial flows. It is taking time, but the constructs of liberal economists, so immune to human needs and the ways of the world, are proving to be just what they are, irrelevant models that are dangerous when implemented.

Global polar structures changed rapidly, revealing the illusion of the unipolar position of the United States.

A fourth consequence is the rapid change in global polar structures. The unipolar position of the United States soon turned out to be an illusion, not least in economic terms. China, India, Brazil and to some extent South Africa flexed their “polar” muscles at the WTO summit in Cancún. It is notable how bewildered this left the WTO system.

Finally, the fifth consequence relates to global democratisation. The United States’ efforts to democratise Iraq have been riddled with problems. It remains an open question whether they will succeed or fail. Evidently “western” imports of democracy are not meeting global requirements. As a shared universal value, however, democracy is on the universal agenda.

Translation from German: Katherine Vanovitch

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