

Une nouvelle gouvernance mondiale pour le développement durable

Taking the Initiative on Global Governance and Sustainable Development

Paris, 13-14 avril 2003

Perspectives on Global Governance: Why the Security Framework Matters

Mary Kaldor

London School of Economics, United Kingdom

Draft, April 2003

The current crisis in global institutions goes much deeper than a disagreement about the war in Iraq. It represents the breakdown of the consensus that held together what was known as the international community. This consensus was based on American hegemony; that is to say, American dominance based on the consent of other countries.¹ In the economic field, it was American hegemony that underlay the set of institutions often known as the Bretton Woods system. In the political field, the effective functioning of the United Nations system was blocked during the Cold War years but, after the end of the Cold War, there were great hopes that, at last, the United Nations could become the effective core of a framework of global governance, with the backing of American military power.

The current crisis in global institutions, in my view, is about a mismatch between the militarised unilateralist character of American power and the global socio-economic reality. The international crisis (the depression and the two world wars) in the first half of the twentieth century has been explained in terms of the mismatch between international institutions, dominated at that time by the European imperial powers, especially Britain, and the spread of a mass production industrial economy based predominantly in the United States.² To day, it can be argued, there is a mismatch between the international institutions shaped by the experience of World War II and the overwhelming economic and military might of the

¹ I am using the word hegemony in a Gramscian sense to mean dominance based on consent as opposed to imperialism, which means dominance based on coercion.

² See Charles Kindleberger *The world in depression 1929-1939* Penguin, London, 1987.

United States in the immediate aftermath of that war, and the far-reaching changes in the world economy and society based on the spread of information and communications technology as well as air travel, often known as globalisation.³

This global mismatch is reproduced at domestic levels. In most of the world, growing apathy and distrust of formal politics can be explained by a widespread sense that governments are more responsive to decisions made at global levels than to domestic public opinion. This applies to economic policy where ‘structural adjustment’, ‘convergence criteria’ or ‘transition reforms’ limit public choice. It also applies in the security field where collective arrangements involving military forces and weapons of mass destruction seem to bear little relation to individual security.

A crisis is both a danger and an opportunity. On the one hand, we face the risk that America unilateralism, the sidelining of the United Nations, the divisions in NATO and the European Union, could exacerbate global anarchy and insecurity. On the other hand, the dramatic development of a global anti-war movement offers the possibility of harnessing global public opinion in favour of far-reaching restructuring of global institutions. Those multilateralist states that came out against the war in Iraq can make use of the good will they generated to take some significant initiatives. In particular, the Evian Summit represents a moment when France could put some new and dramatic ideas on to the global agenda.

This paper focuses on the security agenda. I will start with some general remarks about how globalisation has affected security and then set out some suggestions about how to enhance the legitimacy of global institutions in the current context.

Globalisation and Security

Historically, the legitimacy of political institutions has been bound up with security. Central to the nation-state was the monopoly of legitimate violence. The state guaranteed domestic peace, the rule of law, and protected external borders from enemies. The International Relations literature draws attention to what is known as the Great Divide – norms, values and deliberation at home based on a rule of law, and the pursuit of national interest through whatever means available in the anarchic international arena.⁴ During the Cold War, legitimacy was extended to collective institutions. The Great Divide, at least in the West, was extended across the transatlantic bloc and consent for the American role in Europe was based on the belief that the United States was protecting the external borders of the West.

Already, the legitimacy of the American role in Europe was called into question during the Vietnam War and, later, during the debates around the

³ See Carlota Perez-Perez *Technological Revolutions and Financial Capital: The Dynamics of Bubbles and Golden Ages* Edward Elgar, 2002.

⁴ See Ian Clark *Globalisation and International Relations Theory* Oxford University Press, 1999

deployment of theatre nuclear weapons. When the Cold War ended, we discovered that the world had changed. In particular, what is known as globalisation, based on the spread of new technologies, has eroded the very nature of the Great Divide.

First of all, the sources of insecurity have changed. Few worry about external threats from enemy states. Instead insecurity arises from the 'new wars' (fought networks of state and non-state actors where violence is directed against civilians)⁵, global terrorism, organised crime networks, and the new 'viruses' of nationalist and religious extremism. And these threats breed in what are known as collapsed or failed states –generally formerly closed authoritarian states who have been unable to adapt to the pressures of globalisation, of political and economic opening up to the rest of the world.

Secondly, the utility of conventional military forces in dealing with these new sources of insecurity is very limited, especially in a war-fighting mode. As we have seen in Afghanistan and Iraq, even with the use of precision targeting, wars are very destructive and can be effective against weak and unpopular regimes but, in our complex globalised world, constructive nation-building turns out to be very difficult. Hence wars, far from reducing insecurity, may contribute to state collapse and may exacerbate the sources of insecurity.

As well as having declining utility, war has become increasingly illegitimate as a tool of policy. The Second World War was the last great devastating clash of military forces killing an unimaginable number of people. The illegitimacy of war was inscribed in the founding of the United Nations and the European Union, as well as the Nuremberg and Tokyo trials. Some scholars argue that globalisation is really about the emergence of a shared sense of humanity that is based on shared memories of a global war; in this sense both Hiroshima and the Holocaust helped to define the basis for the post-war emphasis on human rights.⁶ Kant's remark that the world has shrunk to the point that a right violated in one part of the world is felt everywhere only really came true in the second half of the twentieth century. The scale of the global anti-war movement is testimony to this growing rejection of war.

Globalisation has blurred the distinction between war and human rights and has given rise to a profound disjuncture in our perceptions of war. Or to put it another way, the distinction between legitimate killing and murder is being eroded. For the Americans and the British, for example, loss of life in war is to be expected. They regret so-called collateral damage and try to avoid it; indeed they claim it is 'low' by historical standards. They do not even bother to count enemy military casualties. But in a world where the equality of human beings has become increasingly accepted, it is hard to sustain the difference between killing in war and other types of killing. What is low when defined as collateral damage is high in terms of human rights violations. It is difficult to argue that killing large numbers of

⁵ See Mary Kaldor *New and Old Wars: Organised Violence in a Global Era* Polity, Cambridge, 1999

⁶ See Martin Shaw *The Global State* Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2000

conscripts from the air is somehow more morally acceptable than a massacre. For terrorists who claim that their acts of terror are undertaken in self-defence, this 'pre-emptive' behaviour can be exploited to bolster their claims. In other words, the perception of war as illegitimate (as well as illegal) is used to justify recruitment to the terrorist cause. Thus war and terrorism feed off each other.

But if new sources of insecurity and the use of military power threatens to bring the world of anarchy and insecurity 'inside', there is also a third development, which counters these trends and this is the extension of domestic norms and deliberation, as well as the rule of law across borders. In the post Cold War period, we also witnessed the emergence of global politics, the involvement of individuals, self-organised groups, i.e. civil society, as well as institutions in a debate about global issues. In particular, there was increased pressure 'from below' for new treaties like the Land Mines Convention or the International Criminal Court as well as for humanitarian intervention to protect civilians in 'new wars'.

The Bush Administration's behaviour, especially in the aftermath of September 11, can be viewed as an attempt to restore the Great Divide – to protect America domestically from external threats using the tool of military power. This reaction to the terrible attacks on New York and Washington has to be understood in terms of the culture and institutional biases of the American government, particularly the legacy of the military-industrial complex. It is a reaction that may succeed in terms of American domestic politics, in reassuring the American public at least for a while that something is being done. But in global politics, this behaviour is profoundly polarising, contributing to an increased sense of insecurity in the rest of the world.

What can be done to develop an alternative security strategy to bring the 'inside' out, to extend domestic peace globally? How can we tackle more directly the sources of insecurity in a way that could potentially underpin the legitimacy of global institutions, allowing us to extend the range of global public goods?

Some Proposals for the Global Security Agenda

At Evian, the activists of the so-called anti-globalisation movement will be gathering in large numbers. Despite the anti-war position of France and Germany they are preparing for a confrontation. What has to be done to harness these energies in a constructive rather than polarising direction? How can this outburst of public sentiment and commitment shore up a renewed legitimacy of our institutions?

My proposals are divided into two: immediate and longer-term.

The immediate proposals have to do with aftermath of the Iraq war. There are two key issues. One is about the role of the United Nations in the reconstruction of Iraq. The French government is right to insist that the United Nations should not be just a fig leaf for an American occupation of

Iraq. But the issue is not so much about who leads or directs the reconstruction effort. Rather it is about transparency, accountability, and broad participation. The risks are that the Americans will end up choosing a puppet government and extending contracts for reconstruction only to American companies. The role of the United Nations has to be to ensure a level playing field; in particular to ensure broad Iraqi involvement in the choice of any future government and to make sure that decisions about reconstruction are fair and public.

The second issue is the Israel/Palestine conflict. Until this is seriously addressed, there can be no legitimacy in the Middle East. The double standards as concerns UN resolutions or weapons of mass destruction undermine claims to uphold international norms. The roadmap has to be taken seriously and implemented; the European Union has a key role to play.

The longer-term issues are about the construction of a global security system, which makes people feel secure. The following are some broad-brush suggestions.

First of all, international humanitarian and human rights law needs to be strengthened; of special importance is the International Criminal Court. Moreover international law needs to be applied impartially. It cannot apply to Afghanistan, Iraq and Serbia and not to Israel, Russia or China. And the United States cannot exempt itself from the rules. This law includes the prohibition on starting wars. This prohibition needs to be upheld and the notion of 'preemptive defence' clearly rejected.

Secondly, there needs to be a serious effort to eliminate weapons of mass destruction. Any use of weapons of mass destruction would be a massive violation both of international humanitarian law and of human rights. The Bush strategy of counter-proliferation can only lead to more proliferation. Already, the North Korean government has, alas rightly, pointed out that weapons inspections do not work and the best way to prevent American pre-emptive war is through deterrence. There cannot be one rule for those countries who already possess weapons of mass destruction and another for everyone else. The manufacture, possession and use of weapons of mass destruction should be outlawed and treated as a war crime or a crime against humanity.

Thirdly, a substantial multilateral capacity for international law enforcement needs to be constructed. What is needed is professional service, which would include both civilian and military personnel, ranging from robust peace-keeping troops, through police and gendarmerie, administrators, accountants, human rights monitors and aid workers. The aim of such a service is to protect civilians before, during and after conflicts. Europeans would probably have to bear the brunt of such a capacity, which should be conceived on an ambitious scale – a transformation in the structure, training, equipment and deployment of existing military forces – and a massive increased commitment of resources as well as a readiness to risk lives in the service of humanity. The kind of commitment shown in Bosnia Herzegovina or Kosovo needs to be able to be reproduced globally.

This international law enforcement has to be viewed as something quite distinct from war fighting.

Fourthly, there must be intensified efforts to resolve local 'wars on terror' (Middle East, Kashmir, or Chechnya) through:

- The impartial application of international law. Human rights violations and violations of humanitarian law should be condemned on all sides; neither in Israel nor in Russia nor for that matter Iraq, does terror justify the kind of tactics adopted by regular forces.
- Support for democrats and moderates who offer an alternative to the extremist ideologies, which characterise both network war and neo-modern militarism. Even if there are only individuals, they need moral and material support. Talks between the 'sides' may be necessary to obtain cease-fires and even agreements but they must be complemented by support for democrats on the ground.
- Readiness to guarantee security and law enforcement, through a sufficient commitment of resources.

Fifthly, in cases where leaders are illegitimate or criminal, which is often the case in conflict zones, as for Saddam Hussein or the Taliban, it is important to find ways to bring about change through support for local political constituencies and, in particular through international presence. External pressure, such as sanctions, especially selective sanctions like freezing bank accounts and refusing visas for the ruling circles, or diplomatic isolation, must pass the test of whether they are thought useful by the local political constituencies. International presence through NGOs or weapons inspectors or human rights monitors may help to open up closed regimes or to defend people in situations of lawlessness. A regional approach is also important. The support of Pakistan, and indeed Iran, was critical to change the situation in Afghanistan. In retrospect, American military power seems to have been very effective in toppling the Taliban. But given the speed with which the Taliban fell, it could be argued that the same result might have been achieved, albeit more slowly, through ratcheting up external pressure, especially from neighbours; such a result would not have had the same negative long-term consequences as the 'spectacle war'. Likewise, it might have been possible to topple Saddam Hussein without a war, had there been more substantial external pressure not just on the question of weapons of mass destruction but on human rights and related concerns, especially from Iraq's neighbours. In particular a solution to the Palestinian question would have been the most effective way to undermine the political support Saddam Hussein was able to mobilise throughout the Middle East.

Finally, there has to be a commitment to global social justice. Poverty and inequality, environmental irresponsibility, or the spread of diseases like AIDs/HIV, are not the cause of violence. The Middle East, the Balkans, and the Caucasus, for example, exhibit relatively high human development indicators –health and education– compared with low-income countries in

Africa or Central America. But the continued existence of high levels of poverty and inequality in our globalised world are an argument and an incentive to violence. The criminalised informal global economies, in which the various extremist networks are often embedded, thrive on unemployment and homelessness. Such a commitment requires resources; there has to be a readiness to pay global taxes, to raise global aid levels, or to give up rich country protectionism like the Common Agricultural Policy. Whether for international law enforcement or for global social justice, not to mention other sorts of global public goods, the budgets of global institutions have to be increased.

Essentially, these issues could represent the possible content of a global social contract or bargain in which global security is provided through upholding human rights and humanitarian law, in exchange for readiness to commit resources through global taxation or other forms of financial transfers and a readiness to risk lives, although not in an unlimited way, in the service of humanity. At present, the divisions and distortions of global governance restrain the possibilities for spreading the benefits of the 'new economy' more widely. I am convinced that some such new set of global arrangements could usher in a new 'golden age', just as the post-World War II settlement allowed for the spread of the benefits of mass production manufacturing. I am also convinced that greater responsiveness to global public opinion could help to reinvigorate democracies at domestic levels.

But how would the United States be brought in to the process? After all, the current position of the United States represents a brake on even modest multilateralist measures. If the multilateralist states were to engage in a productive dialogue with global civil society and demonstrate what is possible, then this could have a knock-on effect on America. Despite all that has happened over the last two years, the United States is still a land of freedom and innovation, where new ideas and movements always have a chance of success.