Peace in Our Global Neighbourhood

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The world as a global neighbourhood -- where neighbourly values and the recognition of a set of common rights and responsibilities will prevail -- is the model envisaged by the twentyeight members of the Commission for Global Governance. Their report, issued at the beginning of 1995, and entitled "Our Global Neighborhoods", dealt with the need to develop a just, peaceful, secure and democratic future for all the inhabitants of the world.

After the momentous shames which took place during the 1980's, there was a new fervour for democracy and liberal trade and economic policies. Released from the tensions of the East/West conflict, the world looked to a "peace dividend" to provide new resources for development and collective security.

But this optimism was shortlived. There has been a loss of confidence in the idea of the "peace dividend", and questions about world order, and about the capacity of global systems currently in place to sustain human existence on a basis tolerable to all people, began to trouble many people.

The basic problem was how to develop a new global ethic to guide action in a world where it was fast becoming clear that there was no alternative to people and governments working together, based on a set of common rights and responsibilities. The 50th anniversary year of the United Nations was looming, and it seemed appropriate that efforts should be made to address these issues in the context of global security and governance.

The Commission on Global Governance was constituted in 1992, and its mandate was to ask questions about world order, to examine the systems in place for world governance and to weigh up the prospects for future generations. The report *Our Global Neighbourhood'* is the result of the Commission's work. Its title is its message: the changes of the last half century have brought a global neighbourhood nearer to reality -- a neighbourhood, like all others, that must be good for all if it is to be good for any. These transformations, particularly those on resent years, have placed mankind on the threshold of a new time. We need nothing less than a new order in world affairs, a new style of managing human relations on the Planet, a new way of relating to the Planet.

Today, the world's people and their government have no credible option but to live by neighbourhood values, to work in partnership in order to maintain peace and order, expand economic activity, tackle pollution, check greenhouse warming, combat pandemic diseases, curb the spread of weapons, prevent deserts growing, preserve genetic diversity, deter terrorists, ward off famine, save species, defeat economic recession, share scarce resources, beat drug traders. And matters calling for global neighborhood action are constantly increasing. What were once considered far away places are no longer distant. Their hopes, their fears, their achievements,

bear on our own. Their insecurities are ours. Their crises are the crises of our global neighbourhood.

Survival and Security

That is why the report urges, as a matter of priority, that in this new world, 'security' should be allowed the breadth of meaning reality now demands. It should accommodate the full range of insecurities that so grievously afflict human society as to compel the attention of all. Specifically, the Commission believes the time has come to establish arrangements of global governance that respond to threats to the security of people and threats to the security of the planet -- in short, to human security.

The Commission sees the emergence of a global civil society, with many movements worldwide reinforcing the sense of human solidarity, as one of the most positive features of our time. It reflects a large increase in the capacity and will of people to take control of their own lives and to influence the conduct of their governments. In the emerging global neighbourhood, while states and governments remain primarily actors in global governance, they are not the only players; while the United Nations must continue to exercise vital functions, it cannot do all the work. Global governance is the governance of diversity, not uniformity; it is governance through democracy, not dominion; it is governance that is multi-layered, not from the mountaintop. It is necessarily governance as an uncentralised system.

The UN's founders saw dangers to peace and security arising essentially from conflict between nation states. The conflict in the Gulf gave a recent warning that wars between states have not become extinct. But the higher probability now is that threats to the security of people will arise from situations within countries. Our concern cannot be limited to the security of states and the sanctity of territory. The security of people may be endangered by civil war, by humanitarian emergencies both natural or Man-made, by despotic rulers, and even, in extreme cases, by the collapse of civil order. Sometimes two or more factors may be present in vicious combination.

In these circumstances, when the security of people is extensively imperilled, the principle of sovereignty and the norms that derive from it must be adapted to balance the rights of states with the rights of people, and the interests of nations with the interests of the global neighbourhood.

Economic Insecurity

The security of people has other dimensions too. If the concept of a global neighbourhood is valid, neighbourhood values must guide us. The duty of care for our neighbour is the foremost of these values. In a neighbourhood, all are neighbours; in the global neighbourhood, our duty of care is owed to all who share the planet. This duty is the more compelling, the more a neighbour needs care. High among those who stand in need of care are the world's poor, the one in five of its people that economic progress has bypassed.

The continuing growth of poverty has been obscured by the dazzling performance of the Asian tigers and the vigour exhibited by the second wave of candidates for NIC status -- countries such as China, Indonesia, Thailand and now India in Asia and others such as Brazil, Chile and Mexico in Latin America. But the unchecked expansion in the number of the absolute poor from around 600 million, when Robert MacNamara first made that term part of our vocabulary in the late 1970s, to 1.3 billion in 1993 points shamefully, and dangerously, to the scale of the problem of economy insecurity.

Yet, the utter deprivation that is absolute poverty is not the only form of economic insecurity. I still recall, with shock, my sight, on the night of President Clinton's Inauguration, of what I thought was the longest bus queue ever, only to discover that it was a queue of the homeless waiting for a mobile soup kitchen, in the capital city of the world's superpower. The exceptionally high increase in unemployment in industrial countries over the past few years, which recovery from recession has not reversed, has made life insecure for many millions of people. Their situation may not be so abject as the plight of the absolute poor, but it spells insecurity all the same. A sophisticated, globalised, increasingly affluent world currently coexists with a marginalised under--class, global and within countries -- all countries.

Threats to the Global Environment

We have also belatedly become aware of how much the way we live has been damaging our planetary habitat, in some ways irreparably. It has been driven home to us that our life--styles must be guided by greater care for the earth. Not only population growth in poor countries, but consumption in rich countries also has to be reduced if global sustainability is to be achieved. We know in our minds that we need to act with greater concern for our children and to treat the earth and its resources as assets we hold in custody for the generations that will follow us. Most will accept that just as we hold equity to be a desirable value in relations among nations and peoples, so we must respect the case for equity between generations.

We must now develop a new concept of 'planetary security' -- including new arrangements for the practical exercise of genuine trusteeship in relation to the environment generally and the global commons specifically. The Commission has put forward proposals to this end.

Call to Action

The Commission's Report is a call to action, based on our assessment of what should be done to make the way we manage its affairs -- its systems of governance more suited to the world's needs. Our proposals emerge as ten clusters of **reform --** nine clusters around a central vision of the world as a neighbourhood with people, not states at the centre; with systems of governance that invoke civil society, not governments alone; and with shared values as the basis for shaping the system and realising the goals of global governance . The nine other clusters then encompass the following:

1. - Protecting the security of people within states through international humanitarian action clearly authorised -- and circumscribed --under the UN Charter: namely, in cases where in the judgement of a reformed Security Council there is violation of the security of people so gross and extreme that it requires an international response on humanitarian grounds;

> -- An independent Council for Petitions established in the UN system with the right of recourse to the Security Council;

> -- A new Right of Petition for non-state actors to -bring before the Council for Petitions matters justifying humanitarian intervention;

2. - Enhancing the role of international civil society in global governance, including the establishment within the UN system of more effective deliberative machinery offering strengthened influence in global decision-making.
> -- Creating specifically a Forum of Civil Society for representatives of civil society organisations to meet in annual sessions prior to meetings of the UN General Assembly.

3. - Acceptance and evolution of the concept of planetary security, including mandates for custodianship of the global commons;

> -- Creating a system for custodianship of the security of the Planet through a reconstituted Trusteeship Council given a new mandate under the UN Charter for this purpose and with recourse to all organs of the UN system.

4. - Demilitarisation of the global neighbourhood through accelerated progress towards a nuclear-weapons-free world,

> -- Immediate agreement on a Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty;

> -- Indefinite extension of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty;

> -- Elimination of chemical and bacteriological weapons;

> -- Concerted action to diminish accumulation and dispersal of conventional arms through treaty agreement to restrict arms sales and to prohibit the manufacture of landmines;

> -- Creating a Demilitarisation Fund to assist countries in furtherance of demilitarisation of the global neighborhood.

5. - Urgent improvement of the UN's conflict-prevention capacities through more effective early warning systems, fact-finding missions and a ladder of conflict--resolution procedures, backed by the ability to rapidly deploy UN Forces.

6. - Strengthening the UN's peacekeeping and peace enforcement roles in ways that

> ensure responses that are consistent, principled, genuinely multilateral in character and effectively under UN control;

Creating a UN Volunteer Force with- a maximum of 1 0, 000 personnel with ability to backup preventive diplomacy through support for negotiations and peaceful settlement of disputes.

7. - Phased reform of the Security Council to eliminate permanent membership and the veto and enlarging it to make it more representative;
-- Charter amendment to give effect to a two-stage process of reform adding, in the first stage 5, new standing members and 3 further rotating members to the Security Council and increasing the number of votes required for a decision to 14;

-- Revitalisation of the General Assembly through theme sessions each year and strengthening the Assembly's authority in relation to the UN budget;

-- Winding down failed or spent UN institutions and further restructuring its bureaucracy with particular reference to ECOSOC, UNCTAD, UNIDO and the Regional Economic Commissions -- in the context of the creation of a new and representative apex economic body.

-- Establishing an Economic Security Council as an apex global economic body within the UN system constituted to reflect the new realities of the dispersed economic strength among countries and beyond countries with a capacity to coordinate global economic responses in response to the challenges of globalisation and economic dependence;

-- Democratisation of the Bretton Woods institutions with the distribution of votes taking account of purchasing power parity as a more realistic index of economic strength;

A start with raising global revenues for global purposes through international charges (such as charges for use of the global commons and to reflect the 'polluter pays principle') and taxes agreed and imposed by treaty (such as a tax on international currency transaction) -- a particular priority in the utilisation of global revenues to be assistance to the least developed countries through supplementation of concessional World Bank funds, and enlarged peacekeeping costs arising from collective neighbourhood action in promotion of the security of people and of the Planet.

9. - Strengthening the rule of law worldwide so as to make it globally the civilising influence it has been at the national level;
-- Enlarging the role and authority of the World Court, including its compulsory jurisdiction, and establishing an International Criminal Court with universal jurisdiction as a matter of urgency.

These are not the only proposals for reforming the international system. The UN Secretary-General himself, the Independent Working Group on the **future** at the United Nations or the Yale Group -- among others -- have produced proposals for change. There is a wide consensus that we need change, fundamental change in the global neighbourhood.

Faced with this reality, the strongest and most privileged under existing systems have adopted a minimalist approach -- to do as little as possible. Although ultimately all are involved, the impact

of disaster on their countries is more containable; they could be tempted to filibuster and avoid change. It is the weak and vulnerable and the enlightened and caring of all countries who most need a new order and must mobilise for it.

No country is so small that it cannot be heard; no concept so novel that it cannot be urged; no proposal so bold that it cannot prevail. It was a lone representative from the small island state of Malta speaking in 1967 in the First Committee of the General Assembly of the United Nations who proposed that the sea and the sea-bed beyond national jurisdiction should be accepted as the common heritage of mankind. To some, at the time, it seemed an impossible dream -- and many scoffed. It took 27 years for that vision to be realised but it was realised when the Headquarters of the new Regime opened in Jamaica two years ago.

On the issues the Commission on Global Governance has addressed, the global neighborhood may not have the possibility of 27 years of 'business as usual'. These end years of the century could yet be proven to be the worst of times. They need not be; but even if they were, from them could come, the best of change. It was the Commission's conviction that each and every one of us can help to make that happen.