



UBUNTU
WORLD FORUM OF
CIVIL SOCIETY NETWORKS



PROPOSALS TO REFORM THE SYSTEM OF INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTIONS. FUTURE SCENARIOS¹

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UBUNTU is an age-old African term for humaneness - for caring, sharing and being in harmony with all of creation. As an ideal, it promotes co-operation between individuals, cultures and nations.

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1. INTRODUCTION

This paper presents a collection of proposals to reform international institutions, ranging from piecemeal changes at the system to improve its functioning and enhance participation of all actors at the world scene, to deeper reforms which would path the way towards a truly democratic system of international institutions which is able to deliver policies and resources conducive to a genuine human sustainable development.

The debate on reform is nor recent, neither unique. However, the debate has recently intensified due to the growing mismatch between these institutions and the world where they have to perform. In this ever more globalising context, world citizens are increasingly affected by decisions taken at the global level, which need to be more transparent, accountable and democratic. Moreover, world problems and challenges - poverty, inequality, violence, injustice, environmental deterioration, and cultural homogenisation - are to be dealt with global policies; and the current multilateral system - designed for a fairly different world than ours - is not well-equipped to face such an interconnected world.

A number of initiatives have been set up in most recent - and not so recent - years to deal with the challenges currently facing the multilateral system. Whether coming from governments, international organisations or civil society, these initiatives tend to share a concern on the efficiency, legitimacy and democratic credentials of the system. From the Commission on Global Governance² to the still ongoing High-Level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change set up by the UN Secretary General, there are several initiatives devoted to democratise and enhance the functioning of the international institutions, such as those of the UN SGs' Butros Ghali and Kofi Annan, the Panel of Eminent Persons on United Nations-Civil Society Relations established by Kofi Annan, ad hoc groups such as the Independent Working Group on the Future of the UN, proposals by groupings of developing countries, academics and civil society organisations and movements. The International Forum of Montreal, the Club of Madrid, the International Facilitating Group on Financing for Development, the Helsinki Process on , the World Political Forum, the International Council of the

World Social Forum and the Global Progressive Forum³ are some of those particularly active at the moment.

This collection of proposals is not exhaustive, but tries to gather some of the most representative and long-standing proposals which have been advocated in most recent times. It is structured around three scenarios - gathering what we have called elementary, substantive and in-depth reforms, which present proposals for reform diverse in scope and depth. Aware that the politics of change are rather complex, we wish to state that there is no time-line assumption behind the succession of scenarios. Sometimes changes which seemed unfeasible can happen earlier than expected. Although the authors and experts who participate in the making of this paper may not subscribe its entirety, in general terms, the proposals for reform included are these which are taken to be desirable to attain and more or less politically feasible by wide sectors of civil society.

Aimed at putting on the table a sample of proposals which open up debate on a series of questions - *what do we mean when we talk about reform?* What are to be its guiding principles? And its purposes? What are the reforms put forward by the diverse reform advocates? And what are the diverse steps that could be taken to achieve these goals? This process will - hopefully - engage diverse actors and sectors in a fruitful dialogue to unveil what are the divergences and common points in our respective approaches to the reform of the system of international institutions. Acknowledgement of these eventual commonalities and promotion of complementarities of the diverse processes and initiatives may help moving forward to the common goal of democratising and enhancing the functioning of the current multilateral system.

Thus, the paper should contribute to sketch out a range of scenarios and proposals to stimulate debate and help find consensus about contents, strategies and the scope of reform, as well as its contribution to designing a new international system for the 21st century.

² The Commission on Global Governance issued its report "Our Global Neighbourhood" in 1995.

³ For more information on initiatives on democratisation of global governance, please see Helsinki Process: "Survey of Global Commissions and Processes", Helsinki, 2003, http://www.helsinki.fi/netcomm/ImglLib/24/89/HC_komissio.pdf; and visit the bank of resources set up by the Ad Hoc Secretariat of the World Campaign for In-depth Reform of the System of International Institutions www.reformwatch.net.

2. FRAMEWORK

This paper was drafted to serve as the working paper for the "Seminar on Future Scenarios for Reform of the System of International Institutions", which took place in Barcelona on 12 and 13 March 2004 under the framework of the World Campaign for In-depth Reform of the System of International Institutions and the "World Governance" Programme at Miguel Servet College of Higher European Studies (Sorbonne, Paris). The seminar was organised by the UBUNTU Forum Ad Hoc Secretariat at the Technical University of Catalonia (UPC) and the Pompeu Fabra University (UPF).

The UBUNTU Forum - established in Barcelona in 2001 in response to an appeal launched by Federico Mayor - co-organised this seminar as part of its "World Campaign for In-Depth Reform of the System of International Institutions" (<http://www.reform-campaign.net>).

Launched in 2002, the campaign is intended to promote such reform in order to equip the system of international institutions to help resolve the grave problems that face our world and it is supported by many organisations and individuals from world civil society. Since its inception, a series of presentations and consultations have taken place (Johannesburg 2002; Porto Alegre 2003; WSIS Geneva 2003; Mumbai 2004, British Parliament April 2004), as well as meetings of its Organising Committee (Barcelona 2002, Perugia 2003).

The debate on contents is crucial to the development of the World Campaign and indispensable if its objectives are to be achieved. The World Campaign Organising Committee agreed to base the debate on a working paper, the first draft of which you have in your hands. The campaign has a number of prior papers (Jorge Nieto, John Foster, Núria Molina) and a resource bank on these issues, available from the website <http://www.reformwatch.net> where we can find a compilation of the work carried out on reform of the international institutions. The site is constantly updated and will inform on future progress made by other forums such as those mentioned above.

Since the campaign first came into being, a number of other important initiatives have also been launched with the aim of building a new system of international institutions that responds to the requirements of a framework so different from the situation in which the current system was born, though similar in terms of the difficulties inherent to it. The UBUNTU Forum has sought to strengthen cooperation with some of these movements and co-organised this seminar together with one such initiative: the "World Governance Programme" at the Miguel Servet College of Higher European Studies, based in La Sorbonne, Paris.

3. SUMMARY

This paper contains the following points and scenarios:

1. The current system of international institutions: the legacy of the 20th century. This section seeks to facilitate analysis of the current system of international institutions and, highlighting certain serious problems facing the world today, determine the issues reform proposals should cover.

2. The main objectives of reform of the international institutions. A general introduction to the scenarios presented, reflecting the reasons and main objectives behind the proposals for reform of the international institutions that follow below.

3. Elementary reform scenario: steps towards reform of the system of international institutions. A first scenario for reform of the international institutions that includes proposals best suited to achieving as things stand today the greatest political agreement amongst government actors, who have the power to put reforms into effect, and other actors forming part of the system. Detailing certain steps towards immediate improvement in the function of the existing system of institutions, this is known as the *Elementary Reform Scenario*.

4. Substantive reform scenario: substantial reform of the system of international institutions. A second scenario containing proposals for reform of the international institutions that imply greater changes, and even slight modification to the founding charters of certain organisations, particularly the Bretton Woods institutions and the WTO. It entails substantive steps towards achieving the great objectives set out in Section 2 of this paper. This scenario would make it possible, in principle, for the international institutions to function considerably more democratically and for the policies necessary to reverse current more negative trends to be implemented to some extent. This is known as the *Substantive Reform Scenario*.

5. In-depth reform scenario: the system of international institutions after in-depth reform. A final scenario would enable the objectives of democratising the system and carrying out in-depth reform of the bodies and institutions that form part of it to be achieved, enabling them to confront and resolve

conflicts threatening peace and security and implementing policies to promote true, sustainable human development and greater justice in the world. Without forcing complete rupture with the present system, this scenario seeks to sketch out the desired future. This is known as the *In-depth Reform Scenario*.

The possibilities for reform are without number and, although this paper does not explicitly develop on them, these possibilities include those that would worsen the current situation as regards the international institutions and the multilateral system. For example, certain proposals for UN reform might, in practice, mean a weakening allegedly seeking greater effectiveness of the organisation's resources and mandate, turning the UN into merely a humanitarian agency.

4. THE CURRENT SYSTEM OF INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTIONS: THE LEGACY OF THE 20TH CENTURY

The framework at the birth of the present system of international institutions

The origins of today's system of international institutions go back more than 50 years, their original design responding to the desire to prevent another great war like those which took place in the first half of the 20th century. To a large extent, they reflect the situation at that time: as regards peace and security, the victors of the Second World War obtained a privileged position within the institutional design of the United Nations (UN). And in the economic sphere, memories of the Great Depression convinced the founders of the Bretton Woods institutions (BWIs) that sometimes the market does not work well, and requires government intervention.

The first decades after this system came into being coincided with the process of decolonisation, in which the UN played a key role through the Fiduciary Administration Council (Trusteeship Council). The new states' aspiration to be treated as equals served to reinforce the primacy of the idea of the absolute sovereignty of the state within the system of international institutions, a concept largely enshrined in the UN Charter. In line with these ideas, the "consensus on development" which prevailed at this time was a conscious attempt to limit world economic opening up and integration in order to achieve more independent development, in which the state plays a strategic role. The relations promoted amongst the states are characterised by functionalism, encouraging supranational cooperation in specific areas (food, health, education, etc.).

Virtues and shortcomings of the original design of the present system of international institutions

Created to safeguard world peace, the establishment of the UN and, soon after, the adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights are crucial events in 20th century history. They are a great success in human history. The General Assembly (GA) is probably one of the most democratic of international institutions and has, over the course of its history, developed international legislation that is

fundamental for peaceful co-existence and respect for and promotion of human rights and international cooperation. Nonetheless, the original design of today's international institutions revealed certain shortcomings. The restricted permanent membership of the Security Council, the UN body with binding authority, weakens the chances for the UN - and particularly the UN role in maintaining world peace and security - to achieve a greater legitimacy and capacity of enforcement.

The Bretton Woods Institutions (BWIs) also suffer from the same problem: the unbalanced decision-making system undermines the possibility for a wider legitimacy and democratic credentials and has allowed for a number of policies which lacked consensus and support by all member states and other stakeholders. Despite agreements formally converting the WB and the IMF into specialised UN agencies, and despite the establishment of the Chief Executives Board to coordinate international agencies, programmes and organisations, the BWIs have almost always acted independently, with practically no coordination with the UN. This has resulted in a lack of coherence between policies decided at these institutions and other international policies and standards under UN competence.

Evolution of the system in the second half of the 20th century

Over time, some the democratic deficit and imbalances of the system were highlighted by the erosion of the original mandates governing certain organisations. The GA, which was very active in the 1960s and 70s, when the Security Council (SC) was paralysed due to rivalry between the superpowers, began to play an ever less important role after the late 1980s when, with the end of the Cold War, the SC became reactivated. However, whilst the UN maintains the central role accorded to it by the Charter in peace and security issues, it plays a minor role in economic affairs. Despite having established programmes for development (UNDP), the environment (UNEP), etc., the UN has been hamstrung by mandate restrictions and lack of budgetary recourses when it has come to implementation to achieve the goals it has set.

Moreover, when the demands of the developing countries finally achieved a majority in the GA in the 1960s, the Northern countries tended to shift the decision-making locus toward the BWIs, whose decision-making was more favourable to their interests. Parallel to the collapse of the Eastern Bloc, the neo-liberal policies enshrined in the Washington Consensus began to gain ground. The BWIs became the institutions supervising global economic governance and ECOSOC, the UN agency designed to play a role in world economic coordination, was clearly sidelined. To the BWIs must also be added the WTO, established in 1994 as a new multilateral organisation, but one outside the United Nations system. These institutions have helped spreading the neo-liberal economic policies applied in many parts of the world in recent years. In contrast, the declarations and plans of action resulting from UN summits in the 1990s and the new Millennium have not been implemented due to a lack of political will and the failure to deliver the necessary resources to put them into effect.

The crisis of multilateralism in today's world

In the second half of the last decade, the rise of social movements and mass mobilisations on the occasion of intergovernmental summits and gatherings brought to the fore the discontent of the world population vis-à-vis the politics operating at the global level, the de-legitimisation of global institutions and distrust with political leadership. At the same time, they evidenced the raise of a sense of common interests and global citizenship amongst the world's peoples. Worrying recent developments in the world scene, such as the War in Iraq, have shown the divorce between certain decisions in world politics and the opinion of the world citizenry, as well as the inability of the world states to find peaceful, collective and enduring solutions to the world grave problems. The collapse of the trade negotiations at the Cancun WTO Ministerial meeting show, once again, the deep crisis which is currently suffering the system of multilateral institutions.

In this context, the need for reform of the system of international institutions is even more urgent: to deal efficiently with the grave world problems, and to do it in a legitimate and democratic manner.

4.1 CURRENT SYSTEM OF INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTIONS

CURRENT SYSTEM OF INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTIONS (1/2)		
	Structure and composition	Evolution
UNITED NATIONS ORGANISATION, 1945		
GENERAL ASSEMBLY (GA)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Member states: 191 - Voting system: one state, one vote. Two-thirds majority for peace and security questions, election to bodies, entry of new members, budgetary questions ... - Recommendatory authority: non-binding resolutions - Mandate: international peace and security, international cooperation in resolving international economic, social, cultural and humanitarian problems, promotion of human rights - Functioning processes: high-level dialogue on Financing for Development implementation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Great activity in the 1960s and 70s, eclipsed in the 1980s
SECURITY COUNCIL (SC)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Member states: 15 (5 permanent members with veto: US, Russia, China, France and United Kingdom, 10 elected by the General Assembly for two-year periods) Majority of 9 votes - Binding resolutions - Mandate: International peace and security: military operations, economic and military sanctions, arms inspections, electoral and human rights supervision. Elects ICJ judges jointly with the GA. Establishes UN peacekeeping forces (function later taken on by the GA) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Paralysed during the Cold War, has increased activities considerably since the 1990s
ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL (ECOSOC)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Member states: 54 (with three-year mandates) - Studies and reports on international economic, social, etc., questions and recommendations; coordination of the activities of specialised organisations, consulting with them and passing on recommendations to them - Functioning commissions: human rights, sustainable development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - ECOSOC does not play the crucial role in international economic affairs conferred on it by the UN mandate. This role is played by the Bretton Woods institutions and the World Trade Organisation
PROGRAMMES, FUNDS AND OTHER BODIES DIRECTLY LINKED TO THE MAIN ORGANISATIONS (UNDP, UNEP, UNIFEM...)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Provide technical assistance and other forms of practical support in practically all economic and social areas - Independent executive bodies and budgets. Accountable to the GA through ECOSOC - Establish their own lines of action 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Activities limited by UN financial crisis - Pressure to limit expenditure, some run the risk of closure
SPECIALISED AGENCIES OR ORGANISATIONS (ILO, UNESCO, WHO, FAO...)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Some older than the UN - Provide technical assistance and other forms of practical support in practically all economic and social areas - Independent executive bodies and budgets - Assemblies of states independent of the GA - Own executive bodies and budgets - Establish their own lines of action 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Activities limited by UN financial crisis - Pressure to adopt neoliberal policies - Agreements with WB since 1995
INTERNATIONAL COURT OF JUSTICE (ICJ)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Member states: all UN member states - Arbitrates between states. No individual person can appeal to the Court - Jurisdiction: all disputes that the states refer to it and all affairs provided for by the UN Charter or standing treaties and conventions - Magistrates appointed by the GA and the SC - If sentences are not complied with, the parties can appeal to the SC 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - In practice, and in accordance with recent jurisprudence, the court has no power of legal review over SC actions

CURRENT SYSTEM OF INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTIONS (2/2)		
	Structure and composition	Evolution
INTERNATIONAL CRIMINAL COURT, 2002		
ICC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Member states: 92 - Jurisdiction: brings individuals, not states, to justice, accused of committing the most serious violations of human rights and international humanitarian law, such as genocide, war crimes and crimes against humanity - Complementary to national justice systems 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The Statute of Rome entered into force in July 2002
BRETTON WOODS INSTITUTIONS, 1944		
International Monetary Fund (IMF)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Member states: 184 - Voting system: basic votes (2.1%) and voting quotas (39.72% of which accounted for by US, 17.16%, Japan, 6.16%, Germany, 6.02%, France, 4.97%, and United Kingdom, 4.97%,...) - Main objectives: to promote international monetary cooperation, economic growth, balanced expansion of international trade, stable exchange rates, establishment of a multilateral system of payments, promote resources to correct imbalances in balances of payments, reduce imbalances in members' balances of payments - Relation with UN: independent specialised organisation which coordinates formally with the UN through the Chief Executives Board for Coordination (CEB); mutual representation, consultations, high-level dialogue with ECOSOC, BWIs and WTO; etc. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Main policy since the 1980s: loans to countries with balance of payment problems, conditioned on macroeconomic adjustment policies and structural reforms
World Bank (WB)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Member states: 184 - Voting system: basic votes (2.1%) and voting quotas (39.72% of which accounted for by US, 17.16%, Japan, 6.16%, Germany, 6.02%, France, 4.97%, and United Kingdom, 4.97%,...) - Main objectives: to fight poverty and improve standards of living in the developing countries - Relation with UN: independent specialised organisation which coordinates formally with the UN through the Chief Executives Board for Coordination (CEB); mutual representation and consultations, high-level dialogue with ECOSOC, BWIs and WTO; etc. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Main policy since the 1980s: loans to countries, conditioned on macroeconomic adjustment policies and structural reforms, own or partnership projects, promoting IED
WORLD TRADE ORGANISATION, 1995		
WTO	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Member states: 148 - Decision-taking: consensus - Main objectives: deals with rules governing trade between countries; main purpose to ensure that trade (agricultural, goods and services, investment, intellectual property etc.) flows circulate with maximum possible ease, reliability and freedom - Independent of the UN. Informal coordination with other institutions through high-level dialogue with ECOSOC, BWIs and WTO. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Precedents: GATT, 1947 - instead of the ITO, contemplated by the UN at the Havana Conference, 1948 - UNCTAD, 1964, founded as a result of the South's pressure - Neoliberal raise gave strength to GATT and paved the way for WTO - WTO: The most powerful countries are trying to extend its powers to include the following in its mandate: competition policy, investment, environmental regulations and public procurement

PARTICIPATION OF OTHER ACTORS IN THE INTERNATIONAL SYSTEM		
CIVIL SOCIETY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Consultative status in ECOSOC - Affiliation to the DPI - Ad hoc participation at UN summits 	Rio/Johannesburg Summits gave birth to the category of "major groups"
BUSINESS ASSOCIATIONS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ad hoc participation at UN summits - Global Compact - Consultative status in ECOSOC 	
LOCAL AUTHORITIES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ad hoc participation at UN summits 	
REGIONAL ORGANISATIONS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Attempt to coordinate the positions of member states by certain regional organisations within the UN 	

PRESENT GRAVE PROBLEMS	
GLOBAL DEMOCRACY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Democratic deficit of international institutions - Delegation of international institutions
PEACE AND SECURITY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Worsening endemic conflicts - Outbreak of new international and domestic conflicts and fresh threats to international security - UN incapacity for action due to lack of mandate and/or resources
SUSTAINABLE HUMAN DEVELOPMENT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Poverty, stagnation of development, exclusion and humanitarian crises in general - Growing social inequalities - External debt - ODA: the goal of 0.7% of GDP for development aid - established by the GA - is not met - Speculative financial movements - Unregulated transnational corporation activities - Global and local environmental problems
WORLD JUSTICE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Impunity in the international sphere

5. THE MAIN OBJECTIVES OF REFORM OF THE SYSTEM OF INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTIONS

More than 50 years after the creation of the system of international institutions, the world has changed, as have its needs for governance. The globalisation process has led to the ever-greater integration of national economies. Thorny new problems have emerged at national level, showing up the present system's deficiencies when it comes to facing the new challenges. To the shortcomings of the original design and subsequent practice highlighted in the previous section then, we must also add the inefficiency of an institution to start a reform process in order to achieve the capacity to meet these new challenges. And it should do so in a legitimate and democratic way that includes all actors, interests and needs so as to adopt policies leading to the solution of the world's problems.

The need for global democratic governance

The globalisation process has led to the ever-greater integration of national economies. The rapid growth in international trade, financial flows, direct investment, migratory processes and information and communication flows has drastically increased global interdependence. Although this has created new opportunities for some, most people and most countries in the world have been excluded from the process. The neoliberal policies the rich countries have promoted over the last 20 years have only helped to aggravate some of humanity's endemic problems and have increased inequality in the world. The old problems persist and have even become intensified, whilst new ones have also emerged: poverty and feminized poverty, inequality, ethnic conflicts and civil wars, displacement, humanitarian crises, global pandemics - HIV/AIDS, environmental problems...

The neoliberal policies that have dominated over the last several decades have clearly shown the market's grave limitations and that mechanisms are required to correct conflicts and inequality. However, in an ever more interconnected world, many problems cannot be solved at the national level, and the state's capacity for intervention has been greatly eroded. As a result, the need for global governance has increased considerably. Unfortunately, however, the present international system is clearly not capable of solving problems and meeting the challenges of a new framework,

vastly different from the circumstances in which it was first set up. Moreover, any increase in the system's responsibilities with regard to global governance merely serves to show up the democratic deficit inherent in it, undermining it in the eyes of the world after years of practices which have made it shackle to the interests of the leading rich and powerful nations - while certain global policies and regimes have rapidly transcended the state and acquired the status of a supra-constitution, we lack an effective "global constitution" ensuring the primacy of human rights and providing the right balance to global economic, finance and trade regimes.

The system of international institutions needs reform enabling it to address current problems and to contribute to building a fairer and more equitable, diverse, sustainable and peaceful world.

The reforms described in this paper form a response to the need to establish international institutions based on a system of values (What ethical framework?), provided with the necessary mechanisms (What institutional reforms? Involving which actors?) to implement new policies enable us to achieve the great objectives of: a) global democracy with respect for and promotion of an ethical framework based on human rights; b) peace and security based on justice and freedom throughout the world; c) sustainable human development that takes diversity into account; d) global justice to ensure that these objectives are achieved.

Global democracy and human rights

The **democratisation** of the international institutions is a priority within the reform process. The international institutions should act in accordance with the different interests and needs of the world's citizens, and this necessarily implies a fairer redistribution of power between the countries of the north and south, as well as increasing the possibilities of citizens to be represented and participate in the international institutions. The nation-state is not the only actor in the world arena and it is clearly no longer possible to persist with the idea of the state as the depository of absolute sovereignty, allowing it to act without interference within its own territory and giving it exclusive participation in the international institutions. World civil society, transnational

corporations and different governmental levels have increased their importance in the political sphere and must be taken into account in designing international forums. However, democratisation does not depend merely on procedural questions, but requires respect for and promotion of the fundamental provisions enshrined in the **Universal Declaration of Human Rights**. Reforms, then, should lead to the creation of a new system whose main pillars are respect for and promotion of a universal ethical framework based on human rights.

Peace and security, based on justice and freedom

The international institutions must substantially improve their capacity to prevent conflicts and keep the peace. For this, the organisations responsible for **peace and security** questions should take all positions into account in a balanced way, should be universally accepted as legitimate and should have the capacity to enforce their decisions.

Sustainable human development

The international institutions' capacity for global macroeconomic management should also be increased through financial, economic, trade, social and environmental policies that take into account all interests, and most significantly of those most vulnerable and marginalized in society. To resolve the world's grave problems of poverty and inequality, the priority of human rights (including gender, environmental protection and worker protection) should be recognized in international legislation and jurisprudence. Special priority to the provision of decent work and protection of labour and social rights is essential to economic and social well-being. Economic policy should be brought into coherence with **social and environmental priorities and human rights**, in an integral way with effective and democratic structures of coordination and accountability.

Global justice

Global justice should be empowered to eradicate international impunity, not only as regards criminal law, but also in the civil, economic, social and envi-

ronmental spheres. To make all this possible, the international institutions must be provided with resources and **independent financing**, enabling them to implement their programmes without being hostage to the vested interests of certain actors within the system.

6. ELEMENTARY REFORM SCENARIO: STEPS TOWARDS THE REFORM OF THE SYSTEM OF INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTIONS

6.1 STEPS TOWARDS THE REFORM OF THE SYSTEM OF INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTIONS

The first scenario for reform of the system of international institutions contains the proposals most likely to achieve at present the greatest political agreement amongst governmental players, those with the power to put such reforms into effect, as well as other actors within the system. They constitute steps towards immediately improving the existing system of institutions.

Most of the proposed reforms do not require amendment of organisations' founding charters. In most cases, they improve the way the institutions work by reviving existing mechanisms that have fallen into disuse or were never implemented, restoring the original spirit the founders brought to certain organisations and which has, in practice, been lost. Non-state actors would play a merely consultative role in international organisations, and in many cases the new policies emphasise compliance with agreements and commitments many states have already ratified.

Generally speaking, most of these proposals for reform enjoy the more or less explicit support of many actors in the system, including states, and they often reformulate old demands still pending solution.

6.2 BASIC REFORM SCENARIO

FIRST STEPS TOWARDS REFORM OF THE SYSTEM OF INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTIONS	
UN	
GENERAL ASSEMBLY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Improving working of the General Assembly: <li style="padding-left: 20px;">*Establishment of a GA general committee and specific working parties - Increase supervision capacity of UN organisations and programmes <li style="padding-left: 20px;">*Joint GA and SC working party to institutionalise consultations and reports - Create a forum to resolve disputes over jurisdictional limits between international organisations and to establish a hierarchy amongst rules, standards and international legislation
SECURITY COUNCIL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Guarantee consistent, effective regional representation: maintain or increase number of members? Maintain or increase the number of members with the right to vote? Create regional seats? - Guarantee transparency in decision-making procedures - Discourage the use of the veto in all cases except Chapter VII of the UN Charter
ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Improve mechanisms for coordination with agencies and with BWIs and the WTO: <li style="padding-left: 20px;">*Establish a regionally representative executive committee - Improve working methods - Improve infrastructure and financing
PROGRAMMES	-Improve coordination between UN agencies and programmes and with, basically, the BWIs and the WTO
AGENCIES	- Improve coordination between UN agencies and programmes and with, basically, the BWIs and the WTO
INTERNATIONAL COURT OF JUSTICE	- Enable greater recourse to the ICJ for constitutionally doubtful SC actions
INTERNATIONAL CRIMINAL COURT	- Work toward universal ratification of the Rome Treaty
IMF	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Review and reduce powers <li style="padding-left: 20px;">*Restrict policies to original mandate - Reform voting system to ensure balanced representation of all members: increase basic votes to original levels - Increase transparency in procedures and decisions - Improve coordination and political coherence with other economic, financial and trade organisations and with human rights declarations <li style="padding-left: 20px;">*Renegotiate agreements on relations with the UN to clarify responsibilities vis-à-vis the UN to improve UN capacity to guarantee full respect for international legislation, economic, social, labour and environmental norms and standards, and the full family of human rights
WB	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Review powers in accordance with original mandate - Review practices and procedures - Reform voting system to ensure balanced representation of all members: increase basic votes to original levels - Improve coordination and political coherence with other economic, financial and trade organisations and with human rights declarations <li style="padding-left: 20px;">*Renegotiate agreements on relations with the UN to clarify responsibilities vis-à-vis the UN to improve UN capacity to guarantee full respect for international legislation, including non-economic legislation
WTO	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Review practices and procedures to guarantee the democratic participation of all members - Increase transparency in all processes -Improve coordination and political coherence with other economic, financial and trade organisations and with human rights declarations <li style="padding-left: 20px;">*The UN should develop processes to ensure the legal primacy of human rights, and the coherence of trade and investment agreements with them

PARTICIPATION OF OTHER ACTORS IN THE INTERNATIONAL SYSTEM	
CIVIL SOCIETY	- Achieve a truly consultative role within the UNGA, the IMF, the WB and the WTO
LOCAL AUTHORITIES	- Achieve a truly consultative role within the UNGA, the IMF, the WB and the WTO
PARLIAMENTARIANS	<i>See section on Global Democracy</i>
REGIONAL ORGANISATIONS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Promote balance between trade integration and regional political integration - Set up GA study groups and regional and subregional organisation working parties to study the measures necessary to strengthen their capacity to foresee and intervene in emergency situations - Improve their capacity for political representation within international institutions
BUSINESS ASSOCIATIONS	- Achieve a truly consultative role within the UNGA, the IMF, the WB and the WTO

NEW POLICIES	
GLOBAL DEMOCRACY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Creation of an Inter-Parliamentary Assembly (a body for coordinating national parliaments composed by national MPs) - Strengthen and provide expanded resources to the Commission on Human Rights. Define, ratify and implement the optional protocol to the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Relations to provide for an individual complaints mechanism
PEACE AND SECURITY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Improve conflict prevention and peacekeeping mechanisms - Implementation of SC resolution 1325, calling for women's participation and concerns in peace processes and conflict resolution
SUSTAINABLE HUMAN DEVELOPMENT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Cancel the least-developed nations' foreign debt - Establish framework for impartial arbitration over debt payments. Bankruptcy court - Establish a tax on financial transactions - Devote 0.7% of GDP to development aid - Mechanisms for ongoing monitoring for transnational corporations - Make Kyoto agreements universal - Universal ratification and full enforcement of Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) and the Optional Protocol - Work effectively towards meeting Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and implementing global commitments from UN conferences
WORLD JUSTICE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Work towards making the ICC universally-recognised - First steps towards creating international courts with specific jurisdictions

7. SUBSTANTIVE REFORM SCENARIO: SUBSTANTIVE REFORMS OF THE SYSTEM OF INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTIONS

7.1 SUBSTANTIVE REFORM OF THE SYSTEM OF INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTIONS

The second scenario includes proposals for reform of the international institutions that imply greater changes and even slight modification to the founding charters of some organisations, particularly the Bretton Woods institutions and the WTO. They entail substantive steps towards achieving the great objectives laid out in Section 2 of this paper and, in some cases, would pave the way for the new institutions and more ambitious proposals described in the third and final scenario. This scenario would, in principle, enable the international institutions to function in a considerably more democratic way and progress towards implementation of the policies necessary to reverse the most negative of present trends.

Generally speaking, the UN's role and capacity to control other multilateral organisations is strengthened, whilst mechanisms are also proposed to improve coordination and guarantee that policies governing the system respect and promote human rights. Crucial changes are proposed to further the process of democratising these institutions, and the establishment of new organisations to promote the development of global democracy is also proposed. Nonetheless, the basic structure of the system of international institutions as it stands at present is maintained. This scenario would provide greater possibility for non-state actors to participate in the system, whilst the new policies proposed include the creation of new institutions to remedy the shortcomings of the present system of global governance. Some proposals would require new international agreements that, similar to the process by which the International Criminal Court was established, could be launched at first by a smaller group of states in cooperation with other actors in the system, later extending to embrace a larger group and, finally, achieve universal status.

In practice, this scenario also includes and builds on all the reforms put forward in the elementary reform scenario.

7.2 SUBSTANTIVE REFORM SCENARIO

SUBSTANTIVE REFORM OF THE SYSTEM OF INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTIONS	
UN	
GENERAL ASSEMBLY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Continue improving the function of the General Assembly (annual work calendar) - Increase supervision capacity of UN organisations and programmes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Capacity to query the ICJ over constitutionally doubtful SC actions * Increased role in decisions over intervention and establishment of rapid reaction forces in conflict prevention and peacekeeping - Effective control of UN agencies and all multilateral institutions
SECURITY COUNCIL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Restrict right to veto to certain specific questions (UN Charter Chapter VII) and requirement of two simultaneous vetoes in order to exercise said right - Establishment of permanent, transparent procedural rules - Subjection to ICJ review of resolutions
ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Effective control and real coordination of UN agencies and programmes and all multilateral institutions with mandates in relevant areas - Increase the Executive Committee's prerogatives and capacities
PROGRAMMES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Adequate infrastructure and financing
AGENCIES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Effective responsibility before the UNGA through ECOSOC - Adequate infrastructure and financing
INTERNATIONAL COURT OF JUSTICE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Creation of a chamber with capacity to pass down opinions on the constitutionality of action by UN bodies, including the SC
INTERNATIONAL CRIMINAL COURT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Universal status
IMF	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Review governing bodies' decision-taking and selection mechanisms to balance weight of all members (equal weight of debtor and creditor countries) - Increase transparency - Responsible to UNGA through ECOSOC
WB	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Review governing bodies' decision-taking and selection mechanisms to balance weight of all members (equal weight of debtor and creditor countries) - Increase transparency - Responsible to UNGA through ECOSOC
WTO	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Review decision-taking mechanisms and democratise negotiating practices <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Provide financing to ensure permanent presence and participation in Geneva of delegations from countries with less resources - Responsible to UNGA through ECOSOC <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Establishment of an agreement linking WTO to UN, obliging WTO to present regular reports to ECOSOC

PARTICIPATION OF OTHER ACTORS IN THE INTERNATIONAL SYSTEM	
CIVIL SOCIETY	- Possibility of requesting ICJ for opinions on a consultative basis
LOCAL AUTHORITIES	<i>See previous scenario</i>
SECOND-TIER AUTHORITIES	- Achieve real consultative status within UNGA, the IMF, the WB and the WTO
PARLIAMENTARIANS	<i>See section on Global Democracy</i>
REGIONAL ORGANISATIONS	- Formalise capacity to be represented on international institutions
BUSINESS ASSOCIATIONS	<i>See previous scenario</i>

NEW POLICIES	
GLOBAL DEMOCRACY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - An independent Assembly of Representatives (World Parliament), with consultative functions within the UN system - World referendums with consultative status
PEACE AND SECURITY	<i>See previous scenario</i>
SUSTAINABLE HUMAN DEVELOPMENT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Gradual cancellation of developing countries' debt - Develop and ratify an international agreement on tax cooperation, and establish an International Tax Organization under the United Nations - Establish and universalise different global taxes - Abolition of tax havens - Devote 2.8% of GDP for development aid - Mandatory codes of conduct for transnational corporations - Establish new, more demanding goals for Kyoto agreements - Advance towards meeting MDGs. Establish new, more demanding goals building on MDGs as well as commitments of from UN conferences
WORLD JUSTICE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Council of World Justice - Establishment of a new international court of human rights - Establishment of a new international court for economic and financial crimes - Establishment of a new international court for environmental crimes

8. IN-DEPTH REFORM SCENARIO: THE SYSTEM OF INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTIONS AFTER IN-DEPTH REFORM

8.1 THE SYSTEM OF INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTIONS AFTER IN-DEPTH REFORM

The third and final scenario would enable the objectives of democratising the system and completing in-depth reform of the organisations and institutions that form part of it to be reached, enabling conflicts affecting peace and security to be tackled and resolved and policies developed to promote true, sustainable human development and greater social justice in the world. Without forcing complete rupture with the present system, this scenario seeks to sketch out the desired future.

What is proposed is the reorganisation of the system's main organisations and institutions to ensure that it achieves the objectives for which it was designed. In a world where not only geographic zones but also problems are becoming ever more interconnected, it is necessary to redefine the functional division that characterised the original design of these institutions to give them greater coordination and a more integral vision of the different problems that face the world. This implies inserting certain amendments to the international institutions' founding charters. Regarding the UN Charter, the changes would affect only procedures and in no case the principles, which continue to be valid and to constitute a basic text in the international architecture. The biggest, most profound changes those concerning their integration into the UN system would affect the founding charter of the Bretton Woods institutions and the World Trade Organisation.

The proposal for this scenario represents a clear commitment to strengthen the UN and give it and, in particular, its more democratic bodies a more central role. Effectively bringing multilateral organisations together under the UN umbrella appears to be the best way of guaranteeing that their policies promote all interests and needs, and not those of a minority with greater capacity to influence the system. In turn, the scenario would also ensure greater respect for and promotion of human rights in all policies enacted and actions undertaken by the system of international institutions.

This scenario presents an integral view of the system of international institutions, including all the actors in the system, providing political and budgetary capacity to develop suitable policies to resolve the great problems facing the world and to promote sustainable human development.

8.2 IN-DEPTH REFORM SCENARIO

SYSTEM OF INSTITUTIONS AFTER IN-DEPTH REFORM	
Global democracy: representation and participation	
GENERAL ASSEMBLY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Two-chamber system representing the states and the world's citizens (see Assembly of Representatives - World Parliament- below) - Unification of general assemblies and conferences into a single institution with a central role in the system: UNGA* - Binding authority: capacity to adopt binding resolutions
ASSEMBLY OF REPRESENTATIVES (WORLD PARLIAMENT)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Direct representation of the world population by universal suffrage - Participation in the international legislative process - Capacity to make recommendations to other organisations in the system - Capacity to exercise parliamentary control over other organisations in the system
WORLD REFERENDUMS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Binding world referendums
Peace and security	
PEACE AND SECURITY COUNCIL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Supervision by the UNGA - Representative composition by regions - Review/abolition of the permanent member status - Abolition of the veto - Straight majority voting, with 2/3 majority voting for very important issues (to ensure regional balance and prevent less powerful states and regions from being marginalised)
Economic, social and environmental institutions	
ECONOMIC, SOCIAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL SECURITY COUNCIL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Economic, Social and Environmental Security Council with effective control over BWIs (IMF, WB), the WTO and relevant agencies and programmes that, suitably reformed, would become specialised technical agencies fully integrated into the system - All organisations, agencies and programmes accountable to the GA and the World Parliament through the Council
UN PROGRAMMES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Dissolution of general assemblies and conferences of states other than the UNGA (*) - Creation of specific assemblies (**) similar to the system adopted by the ILO, with the presence of actors from all the relevant sectors in each case
UN AGENCIES	
BW INSTITUTIONS	
WTO	
World justice	
Interconnected world legal system embracing both civil and criminal law, with executive mechanisms from local to world level	
INTERNATIONAL COURT OF JUSTICE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Capacity to pass sentence on the constitutionality of decisions adopted by organisations forming part of the system
INTERNATIONAL CRIMINAL COURT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Full integration into the UN system
SPECIFIC COURTS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Establishment and entry into service of specific international courts within the UN system

PARTICIPATION OF OTHER ACTORS IN THE INTERNATIONAL SYSTEM	
CIVIL SOCIETY	- Effective participation, along with the other actors, in the specific assemblies (**)
LOCAL AUTHORITIES	- Effective participation, along with the other actors, in the specific assemblies (**)
SECOND-TIER AUTHORITIES	- Effective participation, along with the other actors, in the specific assemblies (**)
PARLIAMENTARIANS	<i>See proposals in the section on Global democracy for this scenario</i>
REGIONAL ORGANISATIONS	- Participation in different organisations through mechanisms for regional representation
BUSINESS ASSOCIATIONS	- Effective participation, along with the other actors, in the specific assemblies (**)

NEW POLICIES	
GLOBAL DEMOCRACY	<i>See proposals in the section on Global democracy for this scenario consultative status</i>
PEACE AND SECURITY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Effective resolution of endemic conflicts at the root of much world tension - Real and effective development of mechanisms for conflict prevention with the participation of regional organisations - Autonomous peace force
SUSTAINABLE HUMAN DEVELOPMENT	<p>FINANCIAL, ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL POLICIES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Cancellation of external debt and adoption of mechanisms to prevent new unsustainable debt from being generated -Elimination of tax havens -Regulation of transnational corporations activities -World tax system and elimination of fiscal competition (one of its functions would be to co-finance the system of international institutions and world cohesion funds for development) -Enhanced capacity for protection of workers rights World cohesion funds for development -Economic and social policies to promote sustainable human development -Full achievement of Millennium Goals and partial compliance with new, more demanding objectives and goals set to resolve the world's problems <p>ENVIRONMENTAL POLICIES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Effective reversal of more unsustainable production and consumption trends -Transfer of sovereignty to system of international institutions over world environmental issues
WORLD JUSTICE	<p><i>See previous scenario</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - World Legal Police

9. THE POLITICS OF CHANGE

The recent crises suffered by the system of international institutions - the War on Iraq, the collapse of the negotiations at the WTO Cancun Ministerial, ... - have contributed to increase the risks and threats at the world scene but, on the other hand, as every crisis, they have provided new opportunities for change. Indeed, civil society in the latest years has stood up and raised its voice against an increasing mismatch between political decisions taken and the opinion of world citizens.

The actors nowadays concerned with the need to regain legitimacy, democratise and enhance the system of international institutions are increasing and, most important, raising voices not only from the world civil society but also from governmental and intergovernmental sectors. This is a key opportunity for improving cooperation and dialogue amongst these actors to further our common goals. These alliances are not new, they have taken place in recent years and some of them have ended up in relevant successes. This is the so-called "New Diplomacy", which is not constrained to traditional state-centric action but includes other actors who have come to be very relevant in the international scene. This has been the case of the Treaty of Rome and the ICC, the Treaty to Ban Landmines...

Acknowledging the need for wide alliances to advance the reform agenda, the UBUNTU Forum and the World Campaign are trying to create synergies with several civil society processes and organisations, but also governmental and intergovernmental actors.

10. CONCLUDING REMARKS

The aim of the Barcelona seminar and of this working paper was that of contributing to create a new system of international institutions to meet the new challenges and problems of the 21st century. This was just a starting point for a - hopefully - ongoing process to debate existing and new proposals to reform international institutions and to enhance coordination with actors devoted to democratisation of global governance.

As one of the sectorial seminars of the programme on World Governance, this seminar will have its continuation within the framework of activities of this programme.

Regarding the World Campaign for In-Depth Reform of the System of International Institutions, the first output resulting from the debates held around the paper was precisely the "London Declaration", released on the occasion of the presentation of the World Campaign for In-depth Reform of the System of International Institutions on 1 April in London. On 23 and 24 September 2004 the UBUNTU Forum organises in Barcelona a symposium on Reform of the United Nations and Other International Institutions which is the next opportunity for furthering the debate on reform issues and developing the proposals contained in the working paper discussed at the seminar. On the meantime, we hope to engage in a fruitful discussion with all those interested.

11. SUMMARY OF ACRONYMS

CEB	Chief Executives Board
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women
CSD	Commission on Sustainable Development
DPI	Department of Public Information
ECOSOC	Economic and Social Council
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
FDI	Foreign Direct Investment
GA	General Assembly
BWI	Bretton Woods Institutions
ICC	International Criminal Court
ICJ	International Court of Justice
ILO	International Labour Organization
IMF	International Monetary Fund
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
SC	Security Council
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
UNGA	United Nations General Assembly
WB	World Bank
WHO	World Health Organization
WTO	World Trade Organization

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APPENDIX 1

MANIFESTO IN SUPPORT OF THE WORLD CAMPAIGN FOR IN-DEPTH REFORM OF THE SYSTEM OF INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTIONS

We, citizens of the world, determined to safeguard future generations from war, poverty, injustice, cultural uniformisation and environmental degradation

DECLARE the particular seriousness of the problems and challenges facing humanity and, in particular, that:

-The globalisation process is increasing the interdependence and complexity of world problems and widening the gap between rich and poor people. Whilst markets become increasingly global, the influence of political institutions required for their democratic, equitable and effective functioning decreases every day. We witness the expansion of policies applied by world economic institutions which favour the market and the large corporations, to the detriment of those promoting sustainable human development, as set out in UN summits of the 1990s and the millennium;

-The weakening and marginalisation of the system of international institutions as regards peace and security issues has led to unilateral use of force in recent armed conflicts (Iraq...). This fact reinforces the use of military superiority to impose the interests of the world's leading power rather than promoting conflict resolution collectively and in accordance with processes and protocols established through the UN.

In this state of the affairs, we citizens proclaim that a fairer world is possible, and we reclaim our democratic entitlement to participate in global decisions that affect our lives every day. To this end, we

PROPOSE in-depth reform of the system of international institutions to guarantee:

-Democratic governance of globalisation to contribute to resolving the grave problems and challenges that face our world. This would mean placing human beings and the well-being of the planet instead than trade and economic interests at the centre of the priorities of international institutions. In other words, to give priority to human rights above all other international legislation;

-The eradication of poverty and the promotion of more equitable development and respect for cultural, natural and gender diversity. To achieve this, it is necessary to put into practise institutional mechanisms that would reduce social and environ-

mental imbalance worldwide and guarantee a more ethical functioning of the world's economy. Part of these mechanisms should include the establishment of taxes on international financial transactions and the regulation of transnational corporate activity;

-World peace and security, embracing human and environmental security, based on justice and freedom. This requires a system of international institutions based on democratic principles, which respects and promotes a culture of peace and collective interests and values, and which is provided with mechanisms and means to ensure respect for international rules and agreements. In this sense, a universal system of international justice is essential;

-The establishment of mechanisms to enable the world's citizens and civil society organisations to achieve direct representation and participation in global decision-making processes within the framework of the international system.

The pursuit of these goals requires a stronger, more democratic UN, placed at the centre of a consistent, democratic, responsible, effective system of international institutions. More specifically, we need to democratise the composition and decision-making procedures of UN bodies and agencies to ensure that they are effective and democratic. And we need to reform and integrate within the UN all other global multilateral organisations (IMF, WB, WTO, etc.). To achieve these objectives, we seek to

FOSTER a process of:

-Reflection and analysis by world civil society about ideas and proposals for the reform of international institutions;

-Mobilisation of world's citizenry to promote and participate actively in the reform process;

-Promotion of multi-stakeholder dialogue at world scale on the need for and nature of this reform;

-A "world citizen legislative initiative", based on the support for this manifesto pledged by citizens and organisations worldwide. The manifesto will then be submitted to the United Nations General Assembly, calling for the organisation, with the participation of all actors on the world scene, of a World Conference on Reform of the System of International Institutions.

APPENDIX 2

LONDON DECLARATION, 1 APRIL 2004

“MAKING A DIFFERENT WORLD POSSIBLE”

REFORM OF THE SYSTEM OF INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTIONS

On the occasion of the presentation in London¹ of the "World Campaign for In-Depth Reform of the System of International Institutions", we call on all the citizens of the world, all its peoples and, particularly, its political leaders, to give their full support to promoting a process of in-depth reform of the system of international institutions in order to establish a framework for fair, democratic global governance that can safeguard present and future generations from war, poverty, injustice, the tendency towards cultural uniformisation and environmental degradation.

Background

The globalisation process increases both the interdependent nature of the problems facing the world and the gap between rich and poor. Markets are more and more global, but the influence of the political institutions necessary to ensure that these operate in a democratic, equitable and efficient way diminishes day by day. Global economic institutions increasingly apply policies that favour the market and the large corporations to the detriment of policies promoting sustainable human development approved at the 1990s and the Millennium UN summits.

The weakening and marginalisation of the system of international institutions over peace and security issues has led to unilateral use of force in recent conflicts (Iraq...). Rather than promoting conflict resolution through processes and rules established by the UN, the interests of the main superpower are imposed through military superiority, sowing the seeds of further violence throughout the world.

The present system of international institutions, established over 50 years ago in what was an important step forward in the history of humanity, suffers from considerable shortcomings leaving it ill-equipped to resolve the grave problems that face the world today. For this reason, it is necessary to reform the international institutions so that they can, once more, help to build a fairer, more equitable, diverse, sustainable, free and peaceful world

and ensure that new policies are implemented to pursue the great objectives of global democracy and the promotion of human rights, peace and security throughout the world, sustainable human development and cultural diversity, as well as the consolidation of a the global rule of law.

Global democracy and human rights

Democratisation is a key priority in the reform process of international institutions. The international institutions should act in accordance with the different interests and needs and aspirations of all the world's citizens, and this requires a more equitable redistribution of power between the North and South countries, as well as providing increased possibilities for citizens, civil society, different levels of government, etc., to effectively be represented and participate in international institutions and forums. Transparency, public accountability, the decentralisation of power and the principle of subsidiarity should be basic characteristics of this democratisation process. But democratisation not only concerns procedural questions; it also requires respect for and defence of the fundamental rights of citizens as enshrined in the **Universal Declaration of Human Rights** and its development.

It is necessary for the world's citizens to be directly represented in the international institutions², and not only the states members of the United Nations General Assembly. The UN General Assembly should evolve, gradually unifying other general assemblies and conferences, to play a central role in the system with authority to adopt binding resolutions and to exercise effective control over the other bodies, agencies and programmes forming part of the system.

All actors on the world scene should be empowered to effectively participate in the international institutions³, and different forms of representation should be provided for each.

¹ Presentation in London with the attendance, amongst others, of former UN secretary generals Butros Butros Ghali and Javier Pérez de Cuellar, the former UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, Mary Robinson, and the former UNESCO director general, Federico Mayor.

² In line with a widely-supported proposal, work could move towards creating a parliamentary assembly, which could play a role in establishing international law, put forward recommendations and exercise control over the other institutions forming part of the system.

³ Following the example of the one of the oldest multilateral institutions the International Labour Organisation specific assemblies could be established to guarantee participation by different government levels and actors from civil society, in the broadest sense of the term, within the appropriate institutions.

Peace and security

The international institutions must substantially improve their capacity to prevent conflicts and keep the peace. To this end, it is essential to work towards a collective system for human security that can achieve gradual demilitarisation and use of legal and arbitration processes, etc., to resolve conflicts. Bodies engaged in peace and security issues should take into account the views of all in a balanced way, and should be empowered to enforce their decisions.

To this end, the present Security Council should be reformed and placed under effective UN General Assembly control, with a composition representative of all the world's regions. The right to use the veto must be restricted to certain issues whilst steps are taken towards its eventual abolition, and votes over the most important issues should be according to a system of qualified majorities.

Such reform should make it possible to effectively resolve all conflicts, to develop effective conflict prevention mechanisms with the participation of regional organisations and to establish an effective world peacekeeping force. All this should be accompanied by a global disarmament process focusing, particularly, on non-conventional weapons, whilst not forgetting all other types restoring a climate of confidence amongst all the world's countries.

Sustainable human development and cultural diversity

The international institutions' capacity for global macroeconomic management should also be enhanced through financial, economic, trade, social and environmental policies that take the interests of all into account, particularly those of the weakest. In order to resolve the world's grave problems of poverty and inequality, all these policies should be implemented in an integral and coordinated way, and should be subordinate to the primacy of human rights. It is essential to establish a hierarchy in international legislation to promote coherence between economic policies and social rights and environmental issues.

All this requires the implementation of mechanisms to coordinate global financial, economic, social and environmental policies. A proposal currently enjoying broad support from different sectors is that of reforming ECOSOC (the Economic and Social Council) to transform it into an Economic, Social and Environmental Security Council with effective authority over UN agencies, funds and programmes, the Bretton Woods Institutions and the World Trade Organisation. The International Monetary Fund and the World Bank should return to their original mandates (IMF: world monetary and macroeconomic balance, WB: reconstruction and development), establish democratic decision-making processes and become effectively integrated within the UN system. The World Trade Organisation should be refounded within the UN and, in cooperation with UNCTAD, draft world trade policies consistent with human rights and world social and environmental standards. At the same time, the UN should, furthermore, take urgent steps to establish a framework to regulate world financial flows.

Such reform should make it possible to finally resolve the problem of foreign debt, eradicate tax havens, establish world tax cooperation mechanisms and global taxes and promote increases in Official Development Aid provisions. All this should enable the operation of the international institutions to be co-financed, and world cohesion funds for development to be established. Only in this way can we ensure that the Millennium Development Goals are met, and promote true sustainable human development to conserve the planet's environmental and cultural heritage and diversity.

Global Rule of Law

All these reforms and policies should ineluctably be accompanied by **international strengthening of democratic rule** and measures to prevent impunity at the international level in criminal, civil, economic, social and environmental law. To this end, we should **advance towards ensuring global rule of law**, ensuring compliance with current international treaties, strengthening existing international legal

institutions and establishing those necessary in other areas, and providing all these tools with the appropriate and necessary executive mechanisms.

The system of international institutions must also urgently begin taking measures to establish a framework guaranteeing plurality of information in the world.

Finally, we should stress that only if gender equality impregnates all these proposals can we advance towards another possible world.

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