

Part 1: Future Global Trends

THE GLOBAL AGENDA FOR THE COMING DECADES WILL BE DOMINATED BY:

- scarcities putting burden sharing instead of distribution of benefits on the agenda,
- how to shape an institutional framework to bring the post World War II system up to date, and
- guaranteeing the moral and ethical standard achieved over centuries against extremists and terrorists determined to roll the evolution back

Many political and academic works have dealt with the challenge of scarcities, but few have put a coherent analysis together: food, energy, commodities, water, and clean environment. Rising population combined with growing income per head makes it virtually impossible to fathom a world without major scarcities, some of which will be physical ones and others economic scarcities working through the price mechanism. Global power balance will be affected as political negotiations turn into burden sharing connoting political fights. Any doubts are removed by the global economic crisis emanating from the financial meltdown in the US and negotiation positions concerning climate change and global warming. Our civilization enters into a new phase replacing more than 200 years of industrialization where nature's resources looked and were priced as if they were inexhaustible. We should have known better, now when we feel it, we do.

The rise of Asia is accompanied by strong growth in other developed parts of the world, changing the economic balance and consequently political power between what used to be called the industrialized world and the developing countries. History has many examples of such shifts in wealth and power and rarely did it take place in a peaceful and orderly way. What gives a ray of hope is the existence of international institutions serving as channels for decision-making and negotiations. Since 1945 international global institutions have had a hand in policy making, but actually served as a framework for an American dominated world. It has worked quite well primarily because the large majority of the world felt attracted by the American economic model, the American way of life, and partly at least also the basic American political model albeit that is less certain than the two other 'virtues'; what was attractive is fundamental freedom rights ingrained in the model.

As the world grows more global and the American dominance wanes the question arises whether global institutions can function in an environment where they have to act on their own and not as an instrument for American leadership. Many observers focus upon the glaring discrepancy between economic clout and decision-making in these institutions with countries like China and India being underrepresented. The veto right invested in the five countries since World War II in the Security Council of the United Nations is another case in point. These distortions may be corrected, but a pertinent question is to define what the institutions are supposed to do. A well-known sentence says that formalities cannot twist realities so even the most precise readjustment of decision making will not help much unless a clear objective combined with instruments are agreed upon.

Globalization is often taken for granted, but this is a dangerous stand. The same mistake was committed prior to World War I. Actually globalization is fragile when confined to economics, logistics, and transport and not yet having penetrated the mindset of the large majorities of people around the globe. A dangerous dichotomy is emerging with the elite being more and more global

and the majority of people inside the countries being more and more skeptical. The growing inequality may be one of the main reasons. People acknowledge globalization as the best model to deliver growth and wealth, but see that it distributed inequitable, more and more making it legitimate for many people to ask whether the model benefits them.

The European Union has, for a couple of decades, been fairly successful in building a model based upon economic internationalization, cultural decentralization, and soft security policy. These three elements have combined to shape a unique European model framing development in Western Europe and cementing a peaceful Europe with a few admittedly acrimonious exception *inter alia* the former Yugoslavia. It paved the way and served as the foundation for integrating Central- and Eastern European countries into the European Union after the fall of the Soviet- and Russian empire in 1991. This model represents a political attempt to transfer many of the virtues of a national society based on the rule of the law onto the European and thus international level. It illustrates the conflict in the hearts and minds of many people between the logic of globalization with the feelings and emotions linking people to nationality.

Faced with the challenges and the likelihood of the transition of powers a fall back on the use of military power cannot be excluded. The threat can no longer be defined as aggression to conquer a slice of territory, but consists of attempts to jeopardize a country's ability to function thus removing the political system's legitimacy in the eyes of the citizens. The military in industrial countries has adapted to the new kind of warfare. This is good as long as the political objective is to protect advanced societies against attempts to disrupt social, economic, and political infrastructure. The war against terror is not predominantly a military war, far from it, but much more a struggle to lift people out of poverty, misery, and ignorance.

This raises the question of our mindset in a globalized world where cultural patterns criss-cross, interact and intercept each other. In such a world it becomes of paramount importance to show respect for others and their culture perceived as set of values. No one has the

right *per se* to use military power. It can only be done justified by moral arguments and as a last resort. There may never have been so much power around, but it has never been so difficult to use it.