



**Rheinische Friedrich-Wilhelms-Universität Bonn**  
**Seminar für Politische Wissenschaft**  
**Professor Dr. Uwe Holtz**

Am Hofgarten 15  
D - 53113 Bonn  
E-Mail:UHoltz@aol.com  
Internet:  
www.uni-bonn.de/~uholtz

**Globalisation with a Human Face**  
**Challenges for a knowledge-based society**

**Globalisierung mit menschlichem Antlitz**  
**Herausforderungen für die Wissensgesellschaft**

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<http://www.ayf.de/documents/Holtz.doc>

1. Globalisation is going on - driven forward by the information and communication technologies (ICT), by science and knowledge. Which globalisation? A globalisation which marginalises many developing countries? A shareholder globalisation? No - globalisation should serve all the peoples. Globalisation with a human face should be people-centred and based on the following objectives and values: sustainable development enabling a life in dignity for all; global responsibility and solidarity; social justice and inclusion, human rights.<sup>1</sup> The Council of Europe rightly chose as main message of its last year campaign “Globalisation without poverty”. So let’s put away the poverty curtain diving the world as the iron curtain was put away! Globalisation must contribute to poverty eradication, job creation, enhancement of economic productivity and human security. The welfare gap between Europe and in particular Africa, home of 70 per cent of the 49 so-called least developed countries in the world, is not only harmful to Africa, it also jeopardises Europe’s well-understood own interests.

2. The emergence of new information and communications technologies could be seen as an exceptional opportunity which must be put to the best use, taking care not to widen the gap between those people and countries with access to new knowledge and those excluded from it. Looking at the OECD countries on the one hand and Africa on the other, there is - so far - a huge science and technological gap between them; there is a technological and scientific apartheid. A sign of hope: The Heads of State and Government, gathered at United Nations Millennium Summit in New York from 6 to 8 September 2000, declared their political will to ensure that the benefits of new technologies, especially information and communication technologies, are available to all. Chancellor Gerhard Schröder underlined in N. Y. the importance of these IC-technologies for development opportunities, and added: in particular the poorer countries must get more support in this field.

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. Uwe Holtz, Globalisation - Making it Work for Everyone, in: TerraViva, Dec. 1998, Nr. 24, p. 8; Holtz, Globalisation with human face - Some elements for deliberation, in: Brigitte Fahrenhorst/Stefan A. Musto (ed.), grenzenlos (SID-Berlin-Berichte, Nr. 13, Berlin 2000, p. 41ff.

3. As Prof. Ahwireng-Obeng from the Witwatersrand University in South Africa put it, Africa is a technological desert, peripheral to the global knowledge revolution.<sup>2</sup> Maybe this harsh judgement should be softened a little bit for ICT has penetrated several economic and educational sectors in Africa. However, the realities of today's Africa are not to be found in urban Johannesburg or Abidjan, but in the villages where more than 90 % of the people live.

4. The adequate and effective application of ICT could empower Africa to accelerate socio-economic development - a continent beset by conflicts and economic problems. Africa has the highest illiteracy rate in the world, the highest teacher-pupil ratio, the fewest schools and libraries and the greatest lack of basic educational materials. "At the dawn of the new millennium, Africans find themselves at a critical juncture. Conflicts continue in almost all regions - - conflicts which have swelled the ranks of refugees and internally displaced persons and in which combatants show total disregard for the welfare of civilians. .. The truth is, Africa is suffering from multiple crises - ecological, economic, social and political."<sup>3</sup> In Germany, six Africa research experts concluded in a Memorandum that the ability of African societies to cope with the challenges of today and tomorrow has declined rather than improved. For one of them, Robert Kappel from the University of Leipzig, it is likely that many African countries will have to be regarded as structurally non-developable and obviously without development perspectives.<sup>4</sup>

I am not very optimistic vis-à-vis Africa's short future, but I do not share a determinist view which excludes the freedom of choice and the freedom of change in the long run. The future is open, definitive predictions over 30 or 50 years make little sense. Decades ago it was fashionable to write off Latin America, parts of Asia or even Europe (the word of "euro-sclerosis" made the round).<sup>5</sup> I agree with Heidemarie Wiczorek-Zeul, the German federal minister for Economic Cooperation and Development, who said on May 3: "Nobody will deny that there are considerable obstacles that block - and will continue to block - Africa's path to sustainable development." But there is "no reason for a destructive Africa pessimism." She said this on a conference entitled "Who is afraid of an African Way?" - here in Bonn, the emerging Center for International Cooperation.<sup>6</sup>

5. African leaders see three major development goals for the continent (Economic Commission for Africa, 1996): improvement in the quality of life of every African; economic integration of the region; wider and stronger linkages with the global community. Full utilisation of the continent's ICT potential can enhance the achievement of the three goals. To implement this vision, African countries will need to support initiatives to improve and create new low-cost information and communication services, and to network nationally, continentally and globally to foster a new Generation of ICT users.<sup>7</sup>

In this context, it is right to remember Kofi Annan's conviction: "The Internet is no substitute for vaccines, of course, and basic literacy comes before computer literacy. But the new information technologies have enormous potential to improve the lot of ordinary Africans -

<sup>2</sup> Fred Ahwireng-Obeng, The knowledge revolution and African development, in: Africa Insight 30 (3-4/2001), 3-9, 3.

<sup>3</sup> Kofi Annan, The Commonwealth Lecture: "Africa - Maintaining the Momentum", London, 14 March 2000.

<sup>4</sup> Robert Kappel, The End of the Great Illusion, in: Development and Cooperation 2/2001, p. 23f., 24.

<sup>5</sup> Cf. Dirk Hansohm/Wolfgang Thomas, Development: An Illusion for Africa? A Response from the South, in: Development and Cooperation 3/2001, p. 13-15.

<sup>6</sup> Cf. IPS Kommunikation Global/Communicating Globally, Nr. 17 (Mai/May 2001), p. 4f.

<sup>7</sup> Cf. Fred Ahwireng-Obeng, The knowledge revolution and African development, in: Africa Insight 30 (3-4/2001), 3-9, passim.

through long-distance learning and medical care, by helping more women join the work-force, and by making public administration more transparent, to name just a few areas. They could enable African societies to leapfrog some long and painful stages in the development process.”<sup>8</sup>

Perhaps the most sensitive issue facing the implementation of an African Renaissance is the task of persuading Africans to think not only nationally and regionally but also at a continental and global level - of persuading Africans to stay in their countries and to work for the benefit of their own countries. The promotion of historical, social, cultural, political and economic affinities for a continental rebirth requires a political will that originates from an informed population. However, the achievement of these three goals depends a lot of the international environment. That is why it is so important to work for a more human and solidaristic globalisation.

6. Rapid and excessive globalisation must be curbed. The EU Treaty rightly speaks of harmonious, gradual integration of developing countries into the global economy. Such integration should be encouraged, with due regard to the particular constraints and difficulties faced by each country in connection with that process. Regionalisation (of which the European Union is one example), local development and - in countries of the South - the popular or informal economy are complements to globalisation. My advice would be: As much globalisation as necessary - as much local, regional and national self-reliance as possible. One relevant side of integration is the opening of the markets by the OECD countries. In March 2001, the EU realised a great jump forward by implementing the EBA-initiative. This “everything but arms”-initiative provides duty-free and quota-free market access for all products of the least developed countries. The UN LDC-Conference in Brussels (May 14-20, 2001) asked the USA, Canada, Japan etc. to follow this example.

7. Economic globalisation must be supplemented by the globalisation of democracy, good governance, human rights, the rule of law and civil society, in which NGOs are playing a growing role. Two events may be seen as positive signs: In 1997 the Inter-Parliamentary Union, made up of parliamentarians from over 130 countries throughout the world and with the European Parliament as associate member, adopted the Universal Declaration on Democracy<sup>9</sup>; in 1999 an agreement was reached to create a permanent International Criminal Court. The anti-corruption measures initiated by the OECD and the Council of Europe will also help to strengthen democracy.

Powerful, influential institutions like the World Bank, IMF or WTO should be provided with a parliamentary dimension and be monitored by parliamentary fora following the example of

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<sup>8</sup> Kofi Annan, The Commonwealth Lecture: "Africa - Maintaining the Momentum", London, 14 March 2000.

<sup>9</sup> The Universal Declaration on Democracy lays down the principles underlying democracy: universal recognition of democracy as an ideal and as a form of government. Democracy must aim to preserve and promote the dignity and fundamental rights of the individual. As well as stressing the need for genuine partnership between men and women in the management of public affairs. The Declaration affirms that democracy is based on the rule of law and the exercise of human rights. It stresses that the principle of democracy must also apply to international organisations and to international relations between states. This means, states must be represented equally and fairly, but also extends to their economic rights and duties. States must therefore ensure that their conduct complies with international law. States also have an obligation to show solidarity with democratic governments and state agencies, such as non-governmental organisations, that work for democracy and human rights, and to assist those whose fundamental rights are violated by undemocratic regimes. The Declaration may be found in: Inter-Parliamentary Union (ed.), Democracy - Its Principles and Achievement, Geneva 1998, p. iii-viii. Internet: [www.ipu.org](http://www.ipu.org) >main areas of activity>Representative Democracy >Universal Declaration on Democracy

the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development where the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe serves as monitoring body.

8. European countries should make every effort to replace unbridled capitalism by an international socially just and ecologically sound market economy. With this concept the EU could make a difference in addressing global issues. The EU has the power to influence the direction of globalisation.

There are two ways to conceive the political approach to globalisation:

- The ultra-liberal way, without social and environmental concerns, which will marginalise many developing countries and global poverty; the world market economy could degenerate into predatory capitalism. Much of the protest against the beginning of new WTO negotiations in Seattle was against a new round of deregulation and neo-liberalism. more deregulation and neo-liberalism.
- The responsible - the EU way, taking into consideration diverse regional realities, and the social cohesion of different societies, thereby contributing to the global improvement of economic and social well-being, preserving the environment and ensuring gender equity designing economic globalisation, regionalisation and localisation with a human face.<sup>10</sup>

Some elements of the second approach could be seen in the new Cotonou EU-ACP partnership agreement. Social market economy can be defined as an order that seeks to combine individual's free enterprise with social progress on the basis of the competitive economy. Where do we find guidance for an international social and ecological market economy? In the international standards laid down by the ILO and the EU and Council of Europe Social Charter, and the Agenda 21 adopted in Rio 1992 with its new paradigm of sustainable human development. Governments must not be slaves to economics, but facilitate development which should aim indeed at the ideal of sustainability, such that economic, social, ecological and political development form an inseparable whole.

9. The pursuit of greater influence for Europe's voice in the design, preparation and implementation of programmes requires special efforts to improve coordination between the Commission and the Member States and other donors, in particular the Bretton Woods institutions. The objective is to improve coordination and the influence of the Union as a whole, having regard to its financial weight. The EU and its member states with a slight different view from the anglo-american way how to organise societal and economic life should overcome the philosophy of the Washington consensus.

The EU members have to participate more actively as a political entity in the multilateral system. They have the political clout needed to influence the powerful international organisations, to back an equitable and sustainable development model, and to underpin the further liberalisation of trade with carefully designed structurally policies.

10. Development co-operation must help to minimise the adverse effects of globalisation and to accentuate its positive effects. It is one of the innovations of the new German red-green government to pursue a real Global Structural Policy aimed at helping shape fair international sets of rules and strategies, improve the situation in developing and transition countries and change - within the Federal Republic of Germany - awareness and habits within society and to

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<sup>10</sup> The report "Challenges for a Responsible European Union in a Global Society" submitted by the Society for International Development to the participants of the Global Dialogue Event at EXPO 2000 in Hanover on July 3 gives several examples for acting as a responsible EU.

achieve a coherent overall policy in terms of development policy goals. That the word of partnership is not just lip service proves a modest, but striking fact: German development co-operation helps strengthening the position of the least developed countries in the World Trade Organisation negotiations by providing them with the necessary financial means. It is in our own interest to increase the financial resources available for public development assistance, which must also be made more efficient and coherent.

Development co-operation must tackle the dynamics of exclusion rather than its symptoms. The elimination of poverty must therefore be addressed from every angle: more sustained economic growth, greater competitiveness, creation of productive jobs and better access to social services, particularly health, education and training. It's a good idea that the "Bundesministerium für wirtschaftliche Zusammenarbeit und Entwicklung" (BMZ) is looking for developmental partnerships with the private business sector as well as with NGOs to achieve these targets. One should not forget the trade unions in this matter.

There is still a great deal to be done in order to support conflict prevention, to sustain the democratisation process and promote institutional capacity-building, to realise human rights (conscious of the indivisibility of economic and social rights, and political and civil rights) and to ensure just and equal participation by women in political, economic and social life. In this respect cooperation with the German political foundations and with civil society organisations from the South and the North are "a *conditio sine qua non*".

With respect to information and communication technologies and information society the EU-ACP partnership agreement, signed in Cotonou in 2000, provides excellent guidelines:<sup>11</sup> "The Parties recognise the important role of information and communication technologies, as well as the active participation in the Information Society, as a pre-requisite for the successful integration of the ACP countries into the world economy.

They therefore reconfirm their respective commitments under existing multilateral agreements, in particular the protocol on Basic Telecommunications attached to the GATS, and invite those ACP countries, which are not yet members to these agreements, to accede to them.

They furthermore agree to participate fully and actively in any future international negotiation, which might be conducted in this area. The Parties will therefore take measures that will enable inhabitants of ACP countries easy access to information and communication technologies, through, amongst other, the following measures :

- The development and encouragement of the use of affordable renewable energy resources;
- The development and deployment of more extensive low-cost wireless networks.

The Parties also agree to step up co-operation between them in the area of information and communication technologies, and the Information Society. This co-operation shall, in particu-

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<sup>11</sup> See Art. 43, Partnership Agreement between the African Caribbean and Pacific States and the European Community and its Member States, Brussels 2000.

lar, be directed towards greater complementary and harmonisation of communication systems, at national, regional and international level and their adaptation to new technologies.”

Special attention should be given to those needy countries which are ready to carry out political, economic and social reforms, to reduce military expenditure, to protect the environment, and to take resolute measures against economic crime and corruption - shortly which are ready to replace bad governance by good governance. By the way, the best pill to stop demographic explosion is economic and social development.

Whilst welcoming that poverty eradication targets have been internationally agreed, we all are convinced that the attainment of these targets will depend on the political will and greater public support to translate these aspirations into action.

One should not overestimate the role of development cooperation in the field of poverty eradication - the own efforts of the countries concerned, the international framework of trade, investment and finance, debt alleviation etc. are more important. Nevertheless, last year, only 0.27 % of Germany's Gross National Product went for official development assistance (ODA) - in stark contrast to the internationally agreed and by Germany accepted goal of 0.7 %.

In April 2001, the German government - not only the BMZ - adopted an “Action program” as Germany's contribution to halve world-wide extreme poverty by 2015. This is an outstanding, courageous and ambitious testimony of political will. From this year on, the German ODA-budget must reflect this political will. In line with the IMF chief, Horst Köhler, I ask the German Parliament and Government to increase year by year the budget for development cooperation in such a way that the ODA 0.7 %-target will be reached within ten years. And I ask the German government to take the initiative for an international solidarity tax on speculative international short-term financial transactions.

11. Good global governance is needed. In the beginning of June 2000 the German chancellor, Gerhard Schröder, a social-democrat, met in Berlin with some 15 heads of states and prime-ministers from north and south. They adopted guidelines of "Progressive Governance for the 21st Century".<sup>12</sup>

Some - in our context - remarkable guidelines are:

Sustainable development is an important orientation for modern governance. This goal should be respected in all relevant areas of international policy.

Globalisation, trade and technological advances should enable us to tackle widespread poverty better than ever before. It is our responsibility to secure that poor people and the poorest nations are included in the present historic opportunities, especially because rapid technological advances can tend to widen the inequality gap.

We must turn the digital divide into international digital opportunities by training teachers and building strong partnerships with government, businesses, foundations, and civil organisations.

We see the need to improve the institutional framework in which financial markets operate, in terms of the adoption of efficient regulation, supervising and accounting, codes of conduct, principles of sound corporate governance, and a fair sharing of responsibility between the

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<sup>12</sup> Cf. Berlin Communiqué, "Progressive Governance for the 21st Century", Berlin 02./03.06.2000 ([www.bundesregierung.de](http://www.bundesregierung.de)).

public and the private sector. We agreed on the need for adequate regulation and supervision in order to strengthen financial stability and social justice.

The EU and its member states should take the lead in implementing these guidelines. The NGOs should lobby for that.

12. Taking up the verdict of Africa as a “technological desert”, it should be recommended that all must be done to fight technological desertification (as well as environmental desertification) in Africa. Knowledge-based societies, national research centres and participation in the internet world are a prerequisite for sustainable human development in Africa and for a rebirth of Africa. Globalisation with a human face and well designed development cooperation policies may support the own appropriate African efforts.

1999 in Bonn, a World Bank Conference on Global Development Networks enhanced the global initiative to strengthen research capacity and to empower research institutes and think tanks in developing countries. This initiative should lead here in the Center for International Cooperation Bonn to the creation of a digital European Center for distant development learning. The Centre for Development Research (Zentrum für Entwicklungsforschung/ZEF) at Bonn University is playing a crucial, catalyst role in it.