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Globalization, Development, and Peace

by Uwe Holtz

An estimated 1.3 billion of the developing world's population must survive on less than the equivalent of \$1 per day. The ongoing processes of economic globalization will affect the poorer countries. Willy Brandt taught us: "While hunger rules, peace cannot prevail. He who wants to ban war must also ban mass poverty." Indeed, it is a matter of humanity to eradicate hunger and to promote human, sustainable development for all into the next millennium.

To ensure that the prosperity generated by globalization does not benefit a privileged few, a world economy is needed which can function as a sound, social, and ecological world market place.

Otherwise, the world market economy could degenerate into predatory capitalism.

The ability to find non-aggressive global forms of economic co-operation and trade rests with those countries, which have until now profited the most from globalization. These are the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development states and a few ambitious developing countries.

The world-wide poverty, the destruction of natural resources, violation of human rights, the fast growing population, migration, and military conflicts must be understood as global problems and, therefore, as our own problems. A "One-World-Policy" is in contrast to a limited national approach to problems. It demands an active and *democratic approach to globalization* on the basis of solidarity and understanding between peoples and cultures. The economic globalization must be supplemented by the globalization of democracy, social justice, and the rule of law.

The Federal Republic of Germany should follow the example of Switzerland and create a 'Bretton Woods Committee' which is independent of government and Parliament. The International Monetary Fund and the World Bank have a special importance for the developing countries and should, therefore, in the

general process of globalization be monitored in their work.

UN organizations, as the most important forum of the global society, should be strengthened and hence made more effective. The big world conferences of the nineties have worked out political solutions and shown the way to overcome humanity's urgent economic, ecological, and social problems. These world conferences regarded the human being as the centerpiece of a long term development, which is ecologically sound, economically efficient and socially fair *as well as* marked by democratic participation and gender equality. *Partnership in development* should mean an equal relationship where both move hand in hand and all countries are responsible for their own development process supported by good governance.

One criterion for good governance is the efforts realized by countries to keep down their arms expenditures. In

"...Development policy should aim at preventing crises..."

this respect, the BICC Conversion, Disarmament, Demobilization, and Demilitarization (BIC3D) Index could serve as an assessment tool.

The UN action programs decided upon to solve global problems have two serious constraints. Firstly, they are not binding and do not set any time frames. The political will to implement such programs is often lacking and thereby renders them to be just declarations of intent. Secondly, the financial resources to achieve the aims of the action programs are lacking, especially in the developing countries. Both constraints have to be tackled offensively: To begin with, Germany and the EU have to set the tone and regard decisions made as binding. Furthermore, future conferences should set aims and time frames which are binding.

Apart from that, the OECD member states must augment their development aid budgets which have stagnated in real terms. The aim to contribute 0.7 % of GNP to aid and co-operation must be actively pursued. New suggestions to finance global development such as the Tobin Tax must also be vigorously followed up. The 20-20 approach put forward at the 1995 World Social Summit in Copenhagen envisaged that 20 percent of the development aid and 20 percent of the budget of the developing country should be used for basic social needs (housing, water, education, health,

etc.). I want this suggestion to become a reality. As was very clear at the world conferences, a sustainable future is not possible without democracy and participation. Therefore, NGOs have a special role to play in the framing of a globalization process.

Development policy alone cannot solve the problems of the developing world. Their own efforts and mentalities as well as trade matters are more important. The goals of development cooperation set up in the EU's 'Maastricht' treaty in 1992 are of high relevance for all donor countries. Policy in the sphere of *development co-operation* should foster:

- Democracy and the rule of law, the respect of human rights, and fundamental freedoms
- The campaign against poverty in the developing countries
- The sustainable, economic, and social development of the developing countries
- The gradual and smooth integration of the developing countries into the world economy

One lesson to be drawn from the nineties is the following: Development policy should aim at preventing crises, at reducing the dimensions of military conflicts. That is why BICC should expand its work in the field of preventive conversion research.

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The Bonn International Center for Conversion (BICC) is an independent non-profit organization dedicated to promoting and facilitating the processes whereby people, skills, technology, equipment, and financial and economic resources can be shifted away from the defense sector and applied to alternative civilian uses.

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