



# The Federalist Debate

Papers on Federalism  
in Europe and the World

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# The War Against Ukraine and the Advancement of Federalism

Lucio Levi

In his opening address pronounced at the UN General Assembly last 20 September, the Secretary General António Guterres asserted that “the world is in peril and paralyzed ... The international community is not ready or willing to tackle the big dramatic challenges of our age”, and added: “No cooperation. No dialogue. No collective problem solving”. This is the grim assessment of current and future harms of a world which is close to an irreversible tipping point and concluded that the time has come to revive the fundamental values on which the UN is based. The invasion of Ukraine is the latest example of the disorder that rages in the world.

And yet the war is continuing. To hide the difficulties Russia is facing on the ground, Putin decided to hold referendums in four occupied regions of Ukraine (Kherson, Donetsk, Luhansk and Zaporizhzhia) in order to achieve their annexation. This move would allow Russia to denounce the Ukrainian advance and declare it a violation of Russian sovereignty, to trigger off military mobilization and wave the ghost of the use of nuclear weapons. The escalation towards nuclear war would be the desperate act of a man who is on the edge of the abyss. Let us remind what Gorbachev wrote in his *Perestrojka*: “Nuclear war is senseless. ... There would be neither winners nor losers. ... World civilization would inevitably perish”.

Also the war against Ukraine cannot end with a winner and a loser. Russia’s status as a great nuclear power makes defeat, in a traditional military sense, impossible. It will be necessary

to find a compromise solution. This is the meaning of Macron’s warning that Russia must not be humiliated. The first step to take on the way towards the construction of world peace is to reach a ceasefire with immediate effect, taking into account that the supply of arms to Ukraine and sanctions to Russia have been so far insufficient to stop the war. Europe’s dependence on Russia for gas supply has been a colossal strategic mistake, which has tied the hands of most European countries, notably Germany and Italy. The EU strategy to pursue energy independence aims at reducing energy consumption, accelerating the transition towards renewable energy and diversifying supply sources through the increase of gas import from Norway, Egypt, Israel, Azerbaijan and Algeria.

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The war is not simply a conflict between Russia and Ukraine. It is a war waged by Russia against the EU and what it represents for the world: i.e.

- a model of international democracy which extends its range of action beyond national borders without resorting to weapons and shows its capability to unite the European peoples under the flag of the great political values of freedom, democracy and human rights;
- an international order based on the rule of law and defence of human rights instead of strength relations among sovereign states;
- the engine of the formation process of a multipolar world order replacing the violent clash between hostile forces through international cooperation and multilateralism.

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The future features of the EU architecture will depend on the outcome of the war, that is to say whether the EU will succeed in building a common defence and an Energy Union, which are the great missing links in the process leading to the European Federation.

Ukraine's current counteroffensive has been favored by the military, economic and humanitarian assistance of the Western alliance. Among the goals which are still to be pursued there are a common energy network linking regions and Member States through a modern and efficient infrastructure, a centralized gas purchase to obtain a better price and to guarantee supply to all countries, a common gas storage system to cope with temporary supply reduction and the gas price cap to reduce the final price of the electricity bills.

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The big issue the war has brought to the forefront is EU's dependence on Russia's fossil fuels and the need for Europe to get rid of it. The total embargo by the EU on oil and gas imports from Russia, in line with the position taken by the United States and suggested by the European Parliament, would have deprived Russia of the resources to finance the war. Of course, there is to take into account the different strategic position of the EU in comparison with the US, whose security benefits from its distance from the frontline. But the embargo in the early days of the war would have bent quickly Russian resistance. Unfortunately, the EU wasted this unique opportunity. Now the initiative is in the hands of Russia and we have to expect that

sooner or later Russia will close the gas tap. It is to be reminded that Russian winter defeated Napoleon and Hitler. Therefore, Putin hopes that frost will push the European countries to remove sanctions. After the sabotage of the Nord Stream pipelines in the Baltic sea, Russia has become a totally unreliable gas supplier. It is reasonable to think that negotiations will start when the balance of forces in the field will have persuaded Russia that it cannot prevail.

At the same time, the EU should accelerate the transition towards the production of renewable energy, i.e. the replacement of fossil fuels with carbon-free energy sources, that is the only way to ensure energy independence. To win this challenge, the EU should create an Energy Union, that would represent the greatest transfer of sovereignty at the European level after the monetary union. There is no doubt that the promotion of the energy transition is the greatest contribution Europe can give to shape the world of tomorrow, the main way to fight against the deadly threat humankind is facing, represented by climate change.

As long as the war continues, there will be no chance for an advancement of world federalism. This is the reason why now the top priority of federalist strategy is the ceasefire. But we should be aware that, under current circumstances, conditions favorable to the spread of federalism manifest themselves in the great regions of the world. First of all in the EU, that is the laboratory of international democracy, but also in the African Union and in Central and Southern America.

# “Brazil Must Be Present Again in Major International Debates”\*

*Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva*

Sunday, October 30, Brazilian men and women vote for their future, after four years of hatred, lies, scientific denial and the death of an unbearable number of our fellow citizens during the Covid-19 pandemic. Brazilian men and women must now choose a government that will defend democracy, peace, the unity of our society and respect for the rights of each other, thus putting an end to the experience of a power that has never stopped to isolate and shame us around the world.

After this long presidential campaign where I had the privilege of meeting millions of Brazilian men and women and after having obtained nearly 57 million votes in the first round, on October 2, I am convinced that from the 1<sup>st</sup> January 2023 Brazil will again become the country of everyone, and that it will appear on the international scene to contribute to the construction of a better world.

## **“Credibility, predictability, stability”**

Today, the climate emergency, rising inequalities and geopolitical tensions reveal the gravity of the crisis affecting our planet. Unfortunately, Jair Bolsonaro has continued to aggravate this situation by practicing climate revisionism, undermining the institutions of our democracy and promoting intolerance. These characteristics of his government have made Brazil a new pariah on the international scene. This cannot go on.

Brazil, under my presidency, will once again benefit from public policies aimed at improving the lives of our people and inspiring strong initiatives in favor of the protection of the environment, especially the Amazon, and the fight against poverty in the world.

My government will also reposition our country at the heart of international investment, so that we can create jobs and thus make the economy work again for the benefit of all the Brazilian people and not just a few.

“Credibility, predictability, stability” will be the motto of my government. I know that Brazil’s situation in 2022 is worse than in 2002. But I have the experience of governing in a crisis situation: in 2003, I took office with 10% inflation, 12% unemployment. Brazil then owed \$30 billion to the International Monetary Fund (IMF) [more than 28 billion euros at the time]. At the end of my mandate, we had reserves estimated at more than 200 billion dollars and we lent 15 billion dollars to the IMF.

## **A stronger Mercosur**

My goal now is to do more and better. For this, it is necessary that Brazil be present again in the great international debates.

We will develop a sovereign and active foreign policy. We will work for peace, dialogue and international cooperation. We believe in a multipolar world, and unlike some members of the Bolsonaro government, we do not believe that the Earth is flat and that climate change does not exist. My government will work, with other countries, to rebuild the Amazon Fund and thus take care of the Amazon rainforest and biodiversity.

In Latin America, we will strengthen Mercosur [Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay, Uruguay] and relaunch regional integration. We no longer want Latin America to limit itself to the sole export of raw materials. In this sense, we will work so that our countries can once again

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industrialize and progress technologically. Faced with the growing rivalries between China and the United States, we want to dialogue with everyone, and build a strategic partnership with the European Union (EU). Improving the terms of the Mercosur-EU agreement will allow us to increase our trade, deepen our bonds of trust and strengthen the defense of our common values. On the other hand, the priority of my government will be to restore the relationship with the African continent. Brazil will be present to help and expand political, economic

and social cooperation with its countries. We believe – and, by winning, we will work – in a multipolar world united around values such as solidarity, cooperation, humanism and social justice. Faced with the civilizations challenges that we are experiencing, we believe in a new global governance which must begin with the enlargement of the UN Security Council and the establishment of new forms of cooperation between countries. We believe that another Brazil is possible, and another world is possible, because, in the not so distant past, we had begun to build it.

\* This article was published in *Le Monde* on Saturday, October 29, 2022, before the second round of the presidential election that Lula da Silva (former President of Brazil from 2003 to 2011) won on October 30, 2022, defeating by a narrow margin the incumbent President Jair Bolsonaro.

# Gorbachev, the Tragic Hero of Federalism

*Ira Straus*

Gorbachev applied incredible skill in guiding his country peacefully out of a totalitarian system into a democratizing one. He had to navigate between harsh opposite factions: those who didn't trust anything short of abandonment of the system all at once, and those who wanted to maintain repression with minimal change lest the system fall apart.

In Hegel's language, he had to step down from positions of absolute master-slave relations, and four such positions at that: personal dictatorship, party dictatorship, command economy, and empire. He used a kind of Hegelian dialectical method for guiding transformation through a series of many changes, mediations, and shifts in perspective. But he also refuted Hegel, by showing that it was possible to do this peacefully and rather quickly, without the slaves slaying the master. But his noble method took a personal toll on him. After enough iterations of his process and shifts from side to side and from one reform to another, not many people on either side, hardliner or democrat, trusted him. He opened the door to public criticism of himself, and the people jumped on the chance, happy to breathe freely for the first time. His popularity in the opinion polls – real polls started getting taken and published thanks to him – plummeted. Even as he moved the country faster and faster, from the first openings of glasnost into real elections, his chances of winning a free election were dissipating.

## **Delaying central elections and the failure of federal reform**

This fed into his greatest single mistake: that of delaying free multiparty elections for the

central Union government, leaving it in a state of rapid decay. He said this was because the hardliner power ministries put a gun to his head and forbade it. The Democrats said it was because he knew he'd lose any such election. It was occasionally let out from the Center that he had to stay in power for the time being, since only he was capable of guiding the process from stage to stage without breakdown.

Probably all these explanations were part of his motivation. But when he did finally agree to new, free central elections, it was too late; the country split apart before the elections could be held.

For, in the meanwhile, the member Republics had held multiparty elections already in 1990, gaining governments with a dramatic new infusion of legitimacy. The Union state, by contrast, remained basically Party-chosen. It suffered a severe decline in its legitimacy vis-a-vis the Republics.

The Union-wide Congress of People's Deputies had, to be sure, been elected not too much earlier in elections that were for the first time pretty free, but were not fair; reserved seats had ensured the Communist Party a majority. It was a tremendous step forward for glasnost, creating a parliamentary faction headed by Sakharov that could speak freely, with immunity, and get cited in the media freely, without censorship. A new public opinion emerged, more authentic and mature, no longer confined to rumors and whispers and an atmosphere of conspiracy.

But once the Republics governments were, in the next iteration of the process, more

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freely elected in this emerging public mood, it exposed all the more glaringly the need for a truly elected Union parliament that could act on its views. They were not scheduled – not for a long time. The authorities said they should stick to the schedule, not fall into the Revolutionary trap of cashiering institutions and holding new elections when the mood shifted. That conservative-sounding wisdom proved a cause of actual revolutionary collapse. The Republics proceeded to demand and claim sovereignty, arguing their laws were now legitimate and those of the unelected Center not. This “war of laws” gravely weakened the Center.

In these difficult conditions, Gorbachev was resourceful in trying to save the Union. He got a referendum on whether to have a new, free, democratic Union. It won with a 76% supermajority, although its wording was vague; it was criticized for promising all things to all sides of the question and not making clear what it would mean in practice, and it was boycotted in six Republics that wanted independence.

He pressed on for a new *federal* Union treaty with considerable *confederal* decentralization. The contradictions were significant here, but not unusual in federalism: all confederations have some elements of federation and vice versa. Federalism always denies absolute, consistent sovereignty, yet uses the term for both levels of government. This fills it with apparent contradictions and sometimes real ones. It leads to perpetual struggle and perpetual negotiation, seeing this as less onerous than either consistent or absolute would be; it's the price of wanting both to be together and be separate. But people approaching the matter as passionate purists for the Union or for the Republics will think of the admixture as a scandal, unviable, and a betrayal of their side. And so some hardliners denounced it as a sell-

out of the Union, while some Republics called it a betrayal of their sovereignty, demanding a weaker, more consistently confederal union instead. Reality was very different from this rhetoric, as so often happens in debates over federalism. (Years later, Shushkevich of Belarus came to Washington and was still denouncing Gorbachev as a typical “Communist”, scheming and cheating with his drafts, because he was promising a confederation but was instead trying to slip a federation through because there was still something of a federal state with Union sovereignty in it. He proudly recalled how he himself stood up for full Belarusian sovereignty and freedom and the eventual CIS. The sovereign Belarus had meanwhile replaced him with Lukashenka and become a full-fledged dictatorship again; Russia was still semi-democratic.) Nevertheless, the treaty was signed by eight Republics. Gorbachev was ready to sign as well in August 1991 – only to be preempted by the August coup of the hardliners, who considered the treaty just a step down the road to the collapse of the Union. The coup proved in fact the decisive blow that brought on the collapse of the Union state.

Gorbachev had himself elevated the power of the hardliners not too many months earlier, shifting the balance toward their side and siding with them in conducting repressions against the Baltic states, in a kind of pre-coup; Yakovlev and Shevardnadze left him, warning that a dictatorship was being prepared. Gorbachev relaxed the repressions in the spring and moved again toward reform and toward such Union treaty as could still be salvaged. A price was paid for the back and forth, but he perhaps believed that it was necessary given the pressures he was facing and the need to maneuver between them. The price went up astronomically when the hardliners killed the Union treaty with their August coup attempt. In the process, they removed themselves from the rank of actors within the Gorbachev system.

When the coup failed, the remaining political spectrum consisted entirely of reformers.

The spectrum now ranged from moderate to radical within reform. Gorbachev was no longer in its center, but on its moderate fringe. He got his golden opportunity to carry through his reforms without a crippling resistance, but his political position became untenable: most reformers wanted to go farther and faster, and distrusted him.

He finally agreed to new elections for the Center, at a deliberate pace; he did not try calling the snap elections that might have salvaged some part of the power of the Union Center. The three core Republics declared a new “commonwealth of independent states”, dissolving the former Union and with it the central government, long before the new elections were slated to be held.

It was the end. Gorbachev chose to resign and leave peacefully. He figured, probably correctly, that repression was not a viable option; it might have found enough support to start a civil war, but not enough to win it, much less win it quickly or without massive bloodshed. And it would make permanent enemies for Russia all around it – something one might think no Russian nationalist would want, yet some did.

He spared Russia that outcome – the Milosevic outcome. But his foreswearing of repression enabled many nationalists to fantasize ever thereafter about the repression, thinking or daydreaming that it could easily have been carried out, and that their country was quite unnecessarily destroyed by a stab in the back by Gorbachev and the traitor-democrats. It was a myth that replicated in detail the stab in the back myth of the Nazis in Weimar Germany. Decades later, in a tragic way that was to come near the end of his life, Gorbachev saw the

consequences of this myth playing themselves out. He witnessed Putin moving Russia back into the Milosevic outcome, putting forward not only the doubtful fantasy that the empire could have been saved, but the even more farfetched fantasy that it could be restored.

### **The fate of his other geographical goal: a “Common Home” for the “Greater Europe”**

We have seen that Gorbachev proved unable to accomplish his two positive goals that concerned geographic space: preserving the unity of the inner empire, reformed into a federation that would be politically self-sustainable; and creating a Common European Home for the greater Europe of the Helsinki area, understood as what was needed to consolidate the end to the Cold War and establish an enduring peace for the leading area of the world. It is fair to say that he did not have clear ideas on how to achieve either goal; he could only use the method of putting forth the goal as an attractive slogan, building support for it, and navigating the process of discussing it and negotiating it. That proved insufficient. Perhaps, given indefinitely lengthy time, he would have worked to develop the clarity of the goal and the way to the goal. But the time was not given; could not be given. It would have required a higher genius to come up in advance with clear and adequate ideas on these goals: there was simply no serious public and scholarly discussion available about them for him to build on, outside of the small discussion spaces of the international federalist culture. Even with clear ideas, it would have required not only Gorbachev’s statesmanship and motivation to implement them, but help from all sides and parties, at home and abroad; something that was in fact lacking on nearly all sides. And he would have needed a huge load of luck.

He had the *virtus*. But not the *fortuna*.

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It is an almost transcendent fact that, despite this, he succeeded in ending the Cold War, in a way that eliminated great power conflict for more than two decades. That is no small achievement in the checkered history of international relations.

And he succeeded in peacefully dissolving the empire into freely associated states. That too was a great, and rare, historical achievement. His still greater goals, if achieved, would have been truly spectacular on the scale of history. Turning an empire into a federation is so good an idea, and so hard! So many attempts have been made, only to fail.

Even in the British Empire, where the settler colonies were hardly seriously oppressed, it proved impossible to turn Empire into Federation. Franklin tried it in 1754, getting the Albany Congress of the colonies to adopt the proposal, to no avail; and proposed another form of it in 1765. Instead the empire split up by way of civil war in 1776. Britain's Imperial Federation movement had a similar lack of success in its decades of attempts starting in the 1870s, but did help set up the Commonwealth into which the empire was able to dissolve peacefully.

The attempts in Yugoslavia at reforming the federation not only failed but issued in civil war instead of a peaceful break-up. In Yugoslavia as in the Soviet Union, the Center refused to face new elections while the Republics held theirs, undermining the legitimacy of the Center. The hard nationalist policy of Serbia under Milosevic finished it off.

In Czechoslovakia, the Center submitted wisely to new democratic elections in good time. Still the Union broke up anyway! But it had the good fortune of a prospect, soon realized, of coming back together economically and militarily under the umbrellas of the EU and NATO.

Could such a prospect have helped with the Soviet case? It could have greatly helped it. But it was not available.

The Soviet space was far too big for the EU. The NATO space could have fit it, but Russians were not enabled to believe in such a prospect. Why not? NATO did say at times that Russia was not excluded from joining, but in an unconvincing manner. NATO did not make the effort – it would have required a non-trivial effort, but not unreasonably difficult given the size of the stakes – to find a way to make Russian membership work without destroying NATO in the process; and Russians were not making the effort to figure it out for the West. From 1991 to 2002 Russians at the highest level proposed joining NATO, as the solution to the problem of the break-up. For a time Yeltsin was able to establish this as the strategic goal of the democratic regime. Gorbachev himself had raised the idea with James Baker in 1990; Baker in 2001 published an article advocating it, and regretting that he had pooh-poohed it at the time. It was a rare admission of a mistake from a diplomat of his skill and vision. Far worse was the repeated Western failure during the Yeltsin years.

The failure to follow through on Russia's aspiration for joining NATO was arguably the one true betrayal of Russia by NATO. It contrasts with the allegation that NATO betrayed a promise to Gorbachev to not expand at all, an allegation for which evidence is lacking, even though it is frequently repeated, often with footnotes and citations that are said – mistakenly, but perhaps somehow sincerely believed – to show it as historical fact. Gorbachev himself clearly denied the allegation as a matter of historical fact, even while vaguely affirming the spirit of it as a political complaint against NATO expansion. And in spirit, NATO's expansion elsewhere did indeed, in the absence of

a serious path for Russian entry, have the consequence of re-alienating Russia. It was the inevitable result of the failure to think through and provide a path for Russian entry: NATO was bound to endure, survive, and expand; the only question was whether it would try to include Russia, or do it against Russia.

The failure meant that no umbrella was to be thrown over the dissolution of the inner Soviet empire, as had been done for the dissolving Czechoslovakia; and that the greater umbrella for the dissolution of the outer Warsaw Pact empire – Gorbachev’s aspiration to a “Common European Home” as an umbrella to maintain a common security space – would also be lacking, despite the creation of pro forma institutions for the Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE). Real security unions are not formed in a day, on paper. NATO was the real security union, formed cumulatively by the labors of many generations in two world wars and a cold war. CSCE was a thin supplement to such real union as existed through other means.

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### **The miracles he was unable to achieve; the mistakes he made**

It would have been a true miracle if Gorbachev had succeeded not only in those spheres where he did succeed, near-miraculously, but in those geographical spheres where so many others had failed. He did not succeed in them. Is it his fault?

He made mistakes along the way; in that sense, yes, he has fault. But mistakes are inevitable in real political life.

As one who spent years studying federalism, the mistakes perhaps strike me harder than most people. They are worth reviewing.

There was his failure to accept new elections for the Soviet central government in good time. There was the problem that, in his promotion of reform from below, he did not at first let multiple parties form and run for office, but used a variant of the old Soviet method of encouraging Popular Fronts to be set up in each Republic, this time for reform not for repression. They evolved quickly into National Fronts, seeking independence. There was his inattention to federalism until late in the process.

There were serious reasons for these steps, but they proved serious mistakes.

It is far from clear that the Union could have been salvaged, even had these mistakes all been avoided. The mistakes were indeed avoided in Czechoslovakia; the union failed anyway. The underlying reality is that it is a near impossibility to turn an empire, with its ingrained structures of mutual distrust and resentment between center and periphery, into a federation. It seems so simple, to use the instruments of central power to negotiate, noblesse oblige, a transfer of power downwards to a more equal federation; yet it so rarely proves feasible.

Perhaps if Gorbachev had been free of the other economic and political problems, if he had faced a blank slate, and been able to concentrate on the federal problem from the start, he could have done it? Perhaps. We can never know. There was never a blank slate before him. It was the other problems that stared at him as a crisis from the start, commandeering his attention until it was quite late to get to the Union problem. Ingrained Soviet mentalities persisted. The underlying reality of life is that we have to build our future out of the ingrained structures and mentalities that exist, not the ones we would have needed to do best.

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Marx had taught the Soviets as much: "Men make their own history," he wrote, "but they do not make it just as they please; they do not make it under circumstances chosen by themselves, but under circumstances directly encountered, given and transmitted from the past. The tradition of all the dead generations weighs like a nightmare on the brain of the living." We cannot help but make mistakes in these conditions.

There is no life without mistakes.

Gorbachev chose the path of life for himself and his country. His mistakes were small compared to the scope of the problems he faced and steered his country through. He skillfully avoided the far greater mistakes that were placed temptingly in his path.

The market economy toward which he guided the country was established under his successors, albeit in ways that he criticized sharply. The criticism was not in all respects fair. The massive corruption of buying off the nomenklatura was begun under his rule; it was carried further under his successors. It badly tainted the outcome, but it kept the transformation peaceful, a not small accomplishment.

The democracy he built was incomplete as long as the Center was not freely elected. It was completed instead by the dissolution of the Center. This sudden "completion" was from the start a tainted democracy in most of the Republics. The cost was paid by Democracy itself.

The democracy grew more sound with time in many of successor states. It disappeared in others, whose provincial elites were far less democratic than those of the former Center.

The break-up took the greatest toll on democracy in Russia itself, the core Republic.

The Russian public rejected the Democrats. It blamed them for the break-up of the country. The majority of seats in its legislative elections after 1991 went to extremist parties of Left and Right: Soviet nationalists and Russian nationalists. The regime was later consolidated under Putin, but as a "managed democracy", using "administrative means" to get electoral outcomes acceptable to the powers that be, and using nationalistic appeals to regain popularity.

"Managed democracy" became "sovereign democracy" as Putin himself became more nationalistic. He spoke of a "dictatorship of the law". For a brief time, this seemed to mean reconsolidation of central authority and the uniformity of federal law (too much authority had dissipated to the provinces in face of the ruble crisis of 1998, just as too much had in the "parade of sovereignties" of 1991; and while in both cases central authority quickly recovered in most respects, fears were raised – unfounded fears, it must be said – of a repetition of the Soviet break-up), but soon it came to mean something very different: a dictatorship, plain and simple, hiding behind the guise of the law to conduct its repressions. With time it grew cumulatively more authoritarian. The major free media were squeezed out of existence one after another over a period of many years, leaving only marginalized outlets free, and they were also mostly crushed in 2022.

The controlled elections were increasingly dishonest in their methods and even in the counting. The political repressions grew more severe. Political opponents were assassinated, with the regime forming a standard habit of passing the killings off as "provocations" committed by its enemies to make the regime look bad. To be sure, this kind of projection of blame was not a new invention; it was an old KGB meme.

Regime doctrine moved from moderate consolidationism or conservative liberalism to counter-revolutionism, placing it only a step short of fascism on the political science spectrum. New laws, announced upon the full-scale invasion of Ukraine in 2022, moved the country close again to totalitarianism.

It is a sad time for Gorbachev to be passing. His legacy is again in doubt. For some, his death is like a punctuation point for the collapse of his legacy. But they are mistaken. His achievements are far from all undone. And his promise remains, waiting for people to find their way back to its realization.

Gorbachev was the true Tsar-Liberator. His liberations paralleled but exceeded those of the one known to historians as the “Tsar-Liberator”, Alexander II.

Alexander stepped down from only one of his master positions, not three as did Gorbachev. He successfully liberated the serfs, by the wave of his autocratic wand, not by persuasion and changing the political culture to a new consensus. The liberation ended up incomplete, rather like the liberation of the slaves in America turned out to be after Reconstruction was ended. He held onto his power, while slowly making limited institutional reforms. In 1881

he was assassinated en route to announcing a reform of the judiciary. He was succeeded by a counter-revolutionary, Alexander III, who is admired today by Mr. Putin.

Gorbachev was the greater of the two. He ended a full-fledged totalitarian system of government and society, not just an authoritarian one, and not just one social part of it. He brought to a peaceful close not one but four systems of extraordinarily sharp master-slave relations.

Gorbachev cannot reasonably be blamed for his successors’ failure – and the world’s failure – to consolidate the achievement. He can instead be remembered for the great things he achieved, and for the still greater possibilities he opened up. Some of the achievements remain; the others can be renewed, even if it requires again great effort and wise leaders.

The immediate situation of today is defined by Putin, but not the era. His ideas are too weak and unrealistic for that. They are ephemeral. It is Gorbachev whose ideas and legacies persist, with special longevity; for they meet the scope of our time.

Gorbachev has passed. The Gorbachev era remains.

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# Mikhail Sergeyevich Gorbachev, 1931-2022: New Thinking

Joseph Preston Baratta

If Vladimir Putin aims to restore the old Soviet Union, one of his difficulties will be the lingering influence of *New Thinking* on foreign policy from the Gorbachev period. The history of the formation of the U.S.S.R. in 1922 sheds light on what a new process of union might require. According to historian D.F. Flemming, the Communist party had advanced cautiously in an exhausted Russia after the decrees of the Revolution until Britain, France, the United States, and Japan intervened on the side of the White forces of Admiral Kolchak.

The Red Army was hastily organized and in five great campaigns grew rapidly to 5,500,000 soldiers (some equipped with arms saved from the Great War). Trotsky, the Commissar of War, “drove the heterogeneous mass of the Red Army to final victory by a combination of ruthless fanaticism, abounding energy, and never-failing resourcefulness.” Lenin established the federal state to secure the gains of War Communism during the Civil War and Allied Intervention of 1918-20.

The U.S.S.R., then, was established as a federal state under the “leading influence” of the Communist party. State and party, Supreme Soviet and Politburo, thereafter formed the notorious dual government that lasted until 1991. To make the union more palatable to eleven new socialist republics (later 15), including Ukraine, and the roughly 100 nationalities in the old Russian Empire (Stalin was Commissar of Nationalities), the right of secession was provided in the union treaties. In Stalin’s federal constitution of 1936 (seemingly

modeled on that of the U.S.A.), that right was repeated. The Communists never imagined that the right of secession would ever be exercised, but that was the political mechanism for the dissolution of the union in 1991.

Putin himself, in his article<sup>2</sup> “*On the Historical Unity of the Russians and Ukrainians*” of July 2021, confirms this account of the formation of the U.S.S.R. “Modern Ukraine”, he writes, “is entirely the product of the Soviet era.”

If the current war in Ukraine is a harbinger of an effort to restore the union of the former Soviet republics, Putin will be handicapped by the lack of Communist ideology (Russia now is technically a multiparty state) and by the adoption of free market capitalism in place of central planning (Gosplan). Moreover, he has launched a civil war rather than a plain war of defense of the Motherland. Everywhere but in Russia, his action is condemned as aggression against his neighbors. This is no way to form a federal union.

Gorbachev, in his last book, *The New Russia* [Putin’s Russia] (2017), sided with Putin on the retaking of Crimea, for it was a defensive act against NATO expansion and was popular as shown in the plebiscite, but he had no inkling of coming war in Ukraine. He regarded Ukraine as at most a “frontier” of Russia. His own wife, Raisa Maksimovna, was Ukrainian. His maternal grandmother was Ukrainian. His father, in the Great Patriotic War, fought in Ukraine and finally was severely wounded in Czechoslovakia.

It is true that Russian history exhibits the historical necessity for the centralization of power. Russia lies on a vast Eurasian plain, without natural defenses like seas and mountains. Ever since the Tartars, who occupied old Russia for three centuries, the Russians have raised up powerful autocrats to drive out invaders: Ivan IV, Catherine II, Lenin, Stalin, Brezhnev, Gorbachev, Putin. This centralizing trend is recurring before our eyes under the impact of NATO expansion. Plainly, the West must learn to respect Russia's need for security. The great danger is of a war – seemingly already begun in Ukraine with American and Western arms to fight Russia – between the democracies against the autocracies.

Gorbachev in his *Memoirs* traces the diplomacy to win agreements on elimination of medium range SS-20 and Pershing nuclear missiles (INF, 1988), withdrawal of Red Army and NATO troops in Europe (CFE, 1990), and reduction of strategic ICBMs, SLBMs, and bombers (START I, 1992). These were the disarmament treaties that ended the Cold War. The new Soviet policies of *glasnost* (openness), *perestroika* (restructuring, reform), and *demokratizatsia* (democratization) led to tremendous changes in Europe, including opening the Berlin Wall, allowing Germany to reunite, and even – unintended – the dissolution of the U.S.S.R. When it was all over in 1992, Gorbachev traveled to offer his reflections on the end of the Cold War to the very college in Fulton, Missouri, where Winston Churchill had given his "Iron Curtain" address in 1946, inaugurating the Cold War. "In the major centers of world politics," Gorbachev stated, "the choice, it would seem, has been made in favor of peace, cooperation, interaction, and overall security."

*And in pushing forward to a new civilization we should under no circumstance again make the intellectual, and consequently political,*

*error of interpreting victory in the 'Cold War' narrowly as a victory for oneself, one's own way of life, for one's own values and merits. This was a victory over a scheme for the development of humanity which was becoming slowly congealed and leading us to destruction. It was a shattering of the vicious circle into which we had driven ourselves. This was altogether a victory for common sense, reason, democracy, and common human values.*

This historic speech<sup>3</sup> is little noticed in the United States, compared to Churchill's, but it was a stunning vision of the new kind of world politics implied by progress in turning away from the cycles of the arms race. Gorbachev even used the taboo words "world government":

*What is emerging is a more complex global structure of international relations. An awareness of the need for some kind of global government is gaining ground, one in which all members of the world community would take part.*

Those words were chosen deliberately. In Gorbachev's circle of New Thinkers, Georgi Shakhnazarov wrote on the "governability of the world" in *Pravda* and *International Affairs*<sup>4</sup>.

*New Thinking* was Gorbachev's term for the deliberate effort of Soviet policy makers – following his selection as General Secretary and full review by the 27<sup>th</sup> Party Congress in 1985 – to discard habits of strategic thinking in terms of threats and use of force, of conventional arms and potentially nuclear war, and to embrace the methods and realities of a more interdependent and economically developed world. A philosophical account of *New Thinking* was published in Gorbachev's popular book, *Perestroika: New Thinking for Our Country and the World* (1987). Nuclear war

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threatens the annihilation of mankind. Neither superpower, in the imperial pattern, can force its will on others. International cooperation is a necessity. Policies of preparing for war must give way to those that assure man's future. The foundation of policy is recognition of the interconnected, interdependent, integral world. International politics must be based on moral and ethical norms. The interests of humanity preempt class interests. The United Nations remains the appropriate forum for balancing the interests of states. Security, like peace, is indivisible. Europe is a factor for equilibrium and stability. Europe is our common home, from the Atlantic to the Urals. Russia cannot be excluded. Confrontation of blocs must be abandoned for coexistence. The whole world needs perestroika. Nuclear war can never be won and must never be fought. The objective of Soviet policy is to promote a stable and lasting peace built on mutual trust and cooperation among others.

Does anything of a wiser Soviet foreign policy, or even the project of "restructuring the world," survive today? Does perestroika have a bearing on Putin's war in Ukraine? Gorbachev thought he was releasing "socialism's potential." He liked to claim he was "learning from Lenin." That's gone. The breakup of the Soviet Union was a setback for socialism everywhere, if I haven't missed something from recent world history. I think that Gorbachev's creative statecraft to lift up world politics from what international lawyers call basic relations of war, with brief intervals of peace, to something more like domestic politics based on morals, government, and the rule of law, has been resisted by traditional practitioners of diplomacy – the Americans first of all, but also the NATO allies that follow U.S. hegemony. To call that politics is to call rape, love. Politics is the completion of ethics, designed to bring the good life to all.

We do not know what is really happening in Ukraine. At time of writing, we do not have

objective measures of casualties in Putin's "special military operation." All our sources are Western estimates. But it seems fair to say that he will not be aided or resisted by any transformed world politics left behind by Mikhail Gorbachev's passage through this vale of tears. Putin cannot appeal to the interests of humanity to stop NATO expansion. Europe cannot be a common home if it continues to be the site of economic warfare. The U.N is useful to him only because of the Russian veto.

In 1992, in his state of the union address, U.S. President George H.W. Bush said the words, "We won the Cold War." That set off a long period of American triumphalism: the reunification of Germany, the war on terror and occupation of Afghanistan, the invasion of Iraq, the seizure of Kosovo, the expansion of NATO to include the Baltic republics and all the members of the former Warsaw Pact. Moreover, if one notices, the very treaties that ended the Cold War have been abandoned: INF, CFE, and ABM. START III is scheduled for renewal in 2026, but if it, too, is abandoned, the nuclear arms race will be back. Everyone has heard Putin's veiled threats of use of nuclear weapons. The United States has established a new Space Force to complement the Army, Navy, and Air Force. We are militarizing space, in defiance of the Outer Space Treaty of 1967.

To end the Cold War, Gorbachev did something inconceivable in foreign relations – he made unilateral cuts in armaments to start a process of disarmament. He announced that only "political means" would be used to keep the Warsaw Pact together, meaning that the Brezhnev Doctrine of threatened military force was out of date. In his great Speech at the United Nations (1988)<sup>5</sup> he offered to cut the Red Army in Europe by 500,000 troops, to withdraw six tank divisions from Czechoslovakia and Hungary, to stop the Afghan war. It is true that these cuts did not endanger the defense of the

Soviet Union, for they were far in excess of what he called “defense sufficiency”, but they were in the right direction to provoke others to match them, which in time they did. That is the way to achieve peace.

It is worth recalling in that U.N. speech his bold defense of perestroika, restructuring international relations. “Today, we have entered an era when progress will be shaped by universal human interests,” he declared. “Awareness of that dictates that world politics, too, should be guided by the primacy of universal human values.” Again, he said, “In the light of existing realities, no genuine progress is possible at the expense of the rights and freedoms of individuals and nations or at the expense of nature.”

*The use or threat of force can no longer, and must no longer, be an instrument of foreign policy.... One-sided reliance on military power ultimately weakens other components of national security.... The principle of freedom of choice [by socialist and capitalist systems] is mandatory.... We were driven to [that principle] by an unbiased analysis*

*of the objective trends of today.... What we are talking about, therefore, is unity in diversity.... The understanding of the need for a period of peace is gaining ground and beginning to prevail. This has made it possible to take the first real steps towards creating a healthier international environment and towards disarmament.... Everyone should join in the movement towards greater world unity.... For our [Soviet] society to participate in efforts to implement the plans of perestroika, it had to democratize in practice. Under the sign of democratization, perestroika has now spread to politics, the economy, intellectual life, and ideology.... Being in favor of demilitarizing international relations, we want political and legal methods to prevail in solving whatever problems may arise. Our ideal is a world community of states which is based on the rule of law and which subordinate their foreign relations to law.*

I know that Russians blame Gorbachev for their troubles in adjusting to globalization. That's like blaming George Washington for not leading the new United States to the immediate abolition of slavery.

<sup>1</sup>D.F. Fleming, *The Cold War and Its Origins, 1917-1960* (New York: Doubleday, 1961), 29-30; W.H. Chamberlin, *The Russian Revolution, 1917-1921*, Vol. II (New York: Macmillan, 1935), 37.

<sup>2</sup><http://en.kremlin.ru/events/president/news/66181>

<sup>3</sup><https://www.nationalchurchillmuseum.org/the-river-of-time-and-the-imperative.html>

<sup>4</sup>Shakhnazarov, Georgi, “The World Community Is Amenable to Government,” *Pravda*, 15 January 1988; “Governability of the World,” *International Affairs* (Moscow), 34, 3, (March 1988): 16-24.

<sup>5</sup><https://digitalarchive.wilsoncenter.org/document/%20116224%20.pdf>

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# Lula's Victory in Brazil's Presidential Election: a Potential New Start for International Democracy and Climate Change

Nicola Vallinoto

On the last weekend of October 2022, Brazil elected a new president: Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva, who defeated Jair Bolsonaro in a closely-fought second-round vote. Lula secured 50.8 percent of the vote compared to Bolsonaro, who garnered 49.2 percent.

The return to office for Lula, who led the country from 2003 to 2010, would mark an extraordinary political change from a nationalist government to a government better inclined towards international democracy.

*"Today the only winner is the Brazilian people,"* Lula da Silva told the crowds gathered at a Sao Paulo hotel. *"This isn't a victory of mine or the Workers' Party, nor the parties that supported me in campaign. It's the victory of a democratic movement that formed above political parties, personal interests and ideologies so that democracy came out victorious."*

We can say that in addition to the Brazilian people, the world has also gained from da Silva's victory because the proposals of the new president concern us all. Indeed, point of views of Lula and Bolsonaro deeply differ on various issues. The two politicians diverging views on these issues are subsequently outlined.

## **On the Amazon and climate change**

Speaking during the annual debate in the UN General Assembly on Sept. 24 2019,

Mr. Bolsonaro, who denies climate change, stressed that *"the Amazon is not now destroyed by the flames, as the media would like to believe."* Bolsonaro underlined that: *"It is a fallacy to say that the Amazon is the heritage of humankind, and a misconception, as confirmed by scientists, to say that our Amazonian forests are the lungs of world. Using these fallacies, certain countries instead of helping, embarked on the media lies and behaved in a disrespectful manner and with a colonialist spirit. They even called into question that which we hold as the most sacred value: our own sovereignty."*<sup>1</sup> He also thanked Donald Trump who shares his approach to national sovereignty.

But reality says than since Bolsonaro took office since January 2019, deforestation has almost doubled compared to the previous year. During 2020 and 2021, Brazil's greenhouse gas emissions increased by 9.5%. Of all emissions, 46% were due to deforestation, mainly driven by illegal mining and livestock expansion.

Preliminary reports indicate that in 2022, deforestation will reach record levels in the Amazon region. Izabella Teixeira, Brazil's former environment minister from 2010 to 2016, promised to update the country's nationally determined contribution (NDC) to the Paris Agreement, which outlines its plans to cut emissions. Brazil proposed its first NDC in September 2015 and has since updated it twice, the first time being in 2020 and the second in 2022. In both updates, made under

Bolsonaro's term as president, the country used accounting tricks to weaken its climate goals. Conversely, according to Teixeira, Lula's priority is to curb deforestation, the country's main source of emissions, which has surged to a decade high under Bolsonaro<sup>2</sup>.

In an article published by *Le Monde*<sup>3</sup> Lula da Silva affirmed that *"today, the climate emergency, rising inequality and geopolitical tensions reveal the seriousness of the crisis affecting our planet. Unfortunately, Jair Bolsonaro has continued to make this situation worse by practicing climate revisionism, undermining the institutions of our democracy and promoting intolerance. Brazil, under my presidency, will again benefit from public policies aimed at improving the lives of our people and inspiring strong initiatives in favor of the protection of the environment, in particular the Amazon, and the fight against poverty in the world."*

### **On a Multipolar world**

Lula da Silva explained his view on international affairs in the Tribune of *Le Monde* asserting that: *"my goal now is to do more and better. For this, it is necessary for Brazil to be present at major international debates. We will develop a sovereign and active foreign policy. We will work for peace, dialogue and international cooperation. We believe in a multipolar world, and unlike some members of the Bolsonaro government, we do not believe that the Earth is flat and that the climate change does not exist. My Government will work with other countries to rebuild the Amazon Fund and thus take care of the Amazon rainforest and biodiversity."*

*In Latin America, we will strengthen Mercosur [Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay, Uruguay] and relaunch regional integration. We no longer want Latin America to limit itself to the sole export of raw materials. In this sense, we will work so that our countries can once again industrialize and technologically progress.*

*Faced with the growing rivalries between China and the United States, we want to dialogue with*

*everyone, and build a strategic partnership with the European Union (EU). Improving the terms of the agreement Mercosur-EU will allow us to increase our trade, deepen our bonds of trust and strengthen the defense of our common values.*

*On the other hand, the priority of my government will be to restore the relationship with the African continent. Brasil will be present to help and expand political, economic and social cooperation with its countries. We believe – and, in winning, we will work – for a multipolar world united around values such as solidarity, cooperation, humanism and social justice. Faced with the challenges of civilizations that we live, we believe in a new global governance that must begin with the expansion of the UN Security Council and the establishment of new forms of cooperation between countries. We believe that another Brazil is possible, and that another world is possible because, in a past not so far away, we had started building it."*

In 2020, Lula published<sup>4</sup> a call "For a Multipolar World." The call's goal is *"the creation of a multipolar world, free from unilateral hegemony and from sterile bipolar confrontation,"* that *"would permit a true re-founding of the multilateral order, based on principles of real multilateralism, in which international cooperation can truly flourish."* The call continues affirming that: *"There seems to be an almost universal consensus that the world system will have to be rebuilt in a very fundamental way. It is not impossible, indeed it is imperative, that a certain number of states or supranational entities – such as a reborn European Union and the institutions dedicated to the integration of developing countries in Latin America, Africa and Asia (which will have to be reinforced or recreated) – shall look for alliances and partnerships, in a way that contributes to the creation of a multipolar world, free from unilateral hegemony and from sterile bipolar confrontation."*

### **On Latin American integration and Sur**

In a speech at a rally on May 2<sup>nd</sup> 2022 Lula said, *"We are going to create a currency in Latin America,*

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*because we can't keep depending on the dollar".* He revealed that the currency would be called the Sur, which means "South" in Spanish. Lula explained that countries in Latin America could still keep their sovereign domestic currency, but they could use the Sur to do bilateral trade with each other, instead of having to exchange for US dollars. The Sur could also help to contain inflation in the region, Lula argued. He said the goal of the currency would be to deepen Latin American integration and strengthen the region's economic sovereignty, weakening its dependence on the United States. Under Brazil's current government, led by far-right leader Jair Bolsonaro, the South American giant has subordinated itself to Washington<sup>5</sup>.

### **On the UN Security Council**

Concerning global governance, Lula da Silva defends a new world governance, which would include the enlargement of the UN Security Council, and the creation of new institutions that "act differently from the IMF." At a press conference with foreign media in Sao Paulo on August 22<sup>nd</sup>, Lula said that more countries need to become permanent members of the U.N. Security Council, so that the United Nations can better deal with Russia's invasion of Ukraine, and growing tensions between China and Taiwan. Noting that the geopolitical landscape is changing, Lula said that the

Security Council needs more and more nations and that the right to veto, held by its current five permanent members must be abolished. He asked why Brazil and countries such as Mexico, Egypt, Germany, South Africa and Japan cannot become permanent members, calling for Security Council reform based on geopolitics of the 21<sup>st</sup> century<sup>6</sup>.

Contrary to what Lula proposed for the UN reform, the enlargement of the Security Council should follow a different and more representative composition. The federalists think that a regional representation (European Union, African Union, Mercosur, etc.) is more inclusive than a national one as proposed by new Brazilian President. Instead the proposal to abolish the anachronistic veto right of the five permanent members of Security Council is fully shareable. Even still, da Silva's proposals point us in the right direction towards much needed reform in the international global governance system, and the hope here is that this will build some momentum and discourse around this issue.

Lula da Silva's victory in Brazil's recent presidential election in could represent a new start for international democracy. Let's continue to watch the new government's first steps on foreign policy, and see whether Lula's electoral commitments will become reality.

<sup>1</sup> <https://news.un.org/en/story/2019/09/1047192>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.climatechangenews.com/2022/10/07/lula-campaign-update-brazil-climate-plan-ndc-new/>

<sup>3</sup> [https://www.lemonde.fr/en/opinion/article/2022/10/29/luiz-inacio-lula-da-silva-another-brazil-is-possible\\_6002211\\_23.html](https://www.lemonde.fr/en/opinion/article/2022/10/29/luiz-inacio-lula-da-silva-another-brazil-is-possible_6002211_23.html)

<sup>4</sup> <https://progressive.international/blueprint/8c4c685c-7ac6-4bbb-8b0b-5fc91fcc68f0-lula-da-silva-celso-amorim-for-a-multipolar-world/en>

<sup>5</sup> <https://multipolarista.com/2022/05/04/brazil-lula-latin-america-currency-us-dollar/>

<sup>6</sup> <https://www.nippon.com/en/news/yjj2022082300559/>

# The Decline of Pluri-National States Policy in Latin America

Raul Zibechi

The proposal of pluri-nationality, which promotes the construction of a pluri-national State, enjoyed broad support to resolve the asymmetries between the Nation-State and the original nationalities and peoples. However, this current is in sharp decline, while the other current that crosses the peoples calling for change, the autonomist, continues its slow but steady growth.

The proposal was born in the 1980s at the hands of peasant-indigenous organizations from Bolivia and Ecuador, in the midst of the struggles that showed how the State violently contained the demands and mobilizations of the original peoples. The formula "Pluri-national State" was considered sufficient to resolve these problems and was adopted in the constitutions of Ecuador (2008) and Bolivia (2009).

However, until now it has not been adopted by most of the peoples who are claiming territory and organize themselves to recover those living spaces. The decline of this policy stems from two processes: the growing weakness of the States in the face of capital, and the concrete experience in the two countries mentioned above, where there was no sign of the slightest "re-foundation" of the State, showing in the facts that they are colonial and patriarchal constructions.

The central problem is that pluri-nationality implies that it is the State that recognizes that there are different indigenous nationalities and cultures that inhabit the same territory. The

proposals to walk towards an administration of justice according to the ways of the original peoples never worked and it is not possible that they will in the future, since the logic of the Nation-State continues to be dominant.

Not to mention the armed and police forces, the hard core of the state apparatus, where the logic of the peoples has never had the slightest root. For 13 years in Bolivia and 10 in Ecuador, when Evo Morales and Rafael Correa governed, no substantial progress was made in what was promised to be the "re-foundation" of the State. That is why the question arises: is it possible to re-found a colonial and patriarchal institution?

The Bolivians María Galindo and Silvia Rivera Cusicanqui agreed a year ago that "if the armed forces are not dissolved, there will be no pluri-national State" (<https://bit.ly/3qjnzGy>). It was just a name change, they say, without any change in the structures of political, economic and symbolic power.

Right now, the issue of pluri-nationality is being debated by sectors of the Mapuche peoples in Chile and the Aymara peoples in Bolivia.

The first Meeting of Intellectuals of the Aymara Nation, held at the Public University of El Alto last July, concluded that the Political Constitution of the State, which has been in force since 2009, "is an instrument of the colonial State, which does not precisely

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respond to reality and the interests of the Aymaras" (<https://bit.ly/3RtGavB>).

The declaration of the meeting assures that the objective is the reconstruction of the Aymara nation and of the original nations, under the principle of federalism and their own political system, based on the communities (*ayllus*) and the regions (*markas* and *suyos*), "without the intervention of the precepts of the institutionalized democracy of the State".

Felipe Quispe militated in this current, and was at the forefront of the peasant-indigenous mobilization during the coup-established regime of Jeannine Áñez, which made possible the calling of elections won by the Movement for Socialism. He also has the sympathy of the Bolivian Vice-President David Choquehuanca, who supported the meeting of the Aymara intellectuals.

In Chile, the spokesman for the Arauco Malleco Coordination (CAM), Héctor Llaitul, a prisoner of the Chilean State, pointed out during the inauguration at a community center in Peñalolén (Santiago), on June 10, that "in the last 30 year I have never seen even a single

Mapuche banner calling for pluri-nationality", and reaffirmed that the demands are always based on territory (<https://bit.ly/3D6IhRS>).

In an open letter from the CAM, dated August 8, it is stated that "pluri-nationality, as a proposal for the Mapuche cause, turns out to be a measure empty of territorial force and with no prospect of change, since it is rather an academic invention of an elite that seeks spaces and quotas of power without taking into consideration the reality of injustices or the real needs of our people" (<https://bit.ly/3D0UCqr>).

One of the reasons that leads to reject the creation of a pluri-national State, and insist on territorial recovery, is that "the conditions of big capital and colonialism that have operated to dispossess us of our territory, have deepened in recent decades". A reality that operates throughout the Latin American region.

I think we are at the twilight of the project of pluri-national states. Experience has shown that they are more of the same, just a way of patching up delegitimized institutions, but always without touching their hard core.

# Religious Support for Democratic World Federation. Part I

*David C. Oughton*

The first time that many religious representatives met with each other was at the World Parliament of Religions in Chicago in 1893. Three of the goals of this gathering were to show “what and how many important truths the various Religions hold and teach in common;” to discover “what light Religion has to throw on the great problems of the present age;” and “to bring the nations of the earth into a more friendly fellowship, in the hope of securing permanent international peace.”<sup>1</sup> The president of this Parliament proclaimed, “Henceforth the religions of the world will make war, not on each other, but on the giant evils that afflict humanity.”<sup>2</sup> But after two world wars, the Cold War with massive nuclear proliferation, and over eighty wars since the end of the Second World War, many people representing many different religions realized the need for modern Parliaments in order to address our current global problems.

At the 1993 Parliament of the World’s Religions in Chicago, Professor Hans Küng emphasized the principles of the Declaration toward a Global Ethic: “no peace among the nations without peace among the religions”; “no peace among the religions without dialogue among the religions;” and “no new global order without a global ethic.”<sup>3</sup> The Parliament of the World’s Religions has since met in Cape Town, South Africa (1999), Barcelona, Spain (2004), Melbourne, Australia (2009), Salt Lake City, USA (2015), and Toronto, Canada (2018).

Many representatives of different religions at the latest Parliament in Toronto spoke

about humanity’s most pressing problems: violence, human rights atrocities, poverty, racism, gender inequality, war, nuclear weapons, and environment degradation due to global warming. (This Parliament added a fifth section “Commitment to a Culture of Sustainability and Care for the Earth” to the Declaration toward a Global Ethic.) Many representatives of different religions called for all religions to condemn the causes of these global problems and seek cooperation among the religions and nations of the world in order to solve them. But very few speakers addressed the main reason why these major problems are not being adequately solved: global anarchy, an international system of sovereign nation-states that lacks world law and world order.<sup>4</sup>

At my presentation at the Parliament in Toronto, I explained how some religions, especially the Baha’i Faith and the Roman Catholic Church, have developed teachings about world peace in order to counteract the systemic problem of global anarchy. I argued that if these teachings were instituted by creating a just and democratic world federation, then humanity would be much better able to actually solve our major global problems.

## **Baha’i Teachings on World Peace**

Baha’is believe that Mirza Husayn-Ali (1817-1892), a Shia Muslim from Persia<sup>5</sup> and known by the title Baha’u’llah (the Glory of God), was the most recent but not the last manifestation or prophet of God. Baha’is believe that revelation from God is progressive and never finished.

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They recognize Krishna, Buddha, Confucius, Moses, Zarathustra, Jesus, Muhammad, and others as previous messengers of God who taught people in various cultures in a pre-scientific age. Baha'u'llah's mission was to bring God's message to the global community in a scientific age. Baha'u'llah and the Baha'is emphasize the harmony between religion and science.

The three main principles of the Baha'i Faith are the oneness of God, the oneness of religion, and the oneness of humanity. Baha'is do not believe that there should be only one religion but that the religions of the world should work together in order to achieve universal peace and justice. They do not believe that all people should be the same or have identical beliefs. But Baha'u'llah and the Baha'is do believe in the equality of all people. They therefore condemn all forms of prejudice. They stress that men and women should have equal opportunities and rights. They call for the independent search for truth and universal education for all. They define worship as work or actions that benefit others.

Realizing that much violent conflict has occurred because of unjust economic systems, Baha'is teach that extreme wealth and extreme poverty should be abolished so that everyone is fed, housed, and educated. Baha'is envision a time when every nation will follow a universal system of weights and measures as well as an equitable global system of fair trade.

Along with these social, economic, and political principles, Baha'is call for the spiritual unification of our planet. They believe that the unity of the human family is the will of God. There is only one race, the human race. World unity means that people around the world view themselves as members of the human family and as world citizens. It means everyone sharing a responsibility for protecting and taking care of our common planet. According

to Baha'u'llah, "it is not for him to pride himself who loves his own country, but rather for him who loves the whole world. The earth is but one country, and mankind its citizens."<sup>6</sup> These Baha'i teachings are the ways and means for building the necessary foundations for a world peace system.

An important aspect of the Baha'i teachings is the creation of a global parliament, a world executive, and a supreme tribunal. Abdu'l-Baha (1844-1921), the eldest son of Baha'u'llah and official interpreter of the Baha'i Faith between 1892 and 1921, said that the leaders of the national governments of the world "must make the Cause of Peace the object of general consultation, and seek by every means in their power to establish a Union of the nations of the world. They must conclude a binding treaty and establish a covenant, the provisions of which shall be sound, inviolable, and definite."<sup>7</sup> A global legislature composed of representatives of every country would create laws that would make war and the weapons of war obsolete. A world executive would have the authority to enforce the laws enacted by a democratic world parliament against individuals who violate them. A world tribunal would be able to adjudicate conflicts between nations through compulsory rulings and binding arbitration.

In order to promote the sense of a world community and to facilitate a world democratic legal system, Baha'u'llah and many of his followers have emphasized the need for a universal secondary language such as Esperanto as an essential tool for a world democracy. Abdu'l-Baha realized that "a universal language would make intercourse possible with every nation. Thus, it would be needful to know two languages only, the mother tongue and the universal speech. The latter would enable a man to communicate with any and every man in the world! ... Esperanto has been drawn up with this end in

view... Therefore appreciate Esperanto, for it is the beginning of the carrying out of one of the most important of the Laws of Baha'u'llah, and it must continue to be improved and perfected."<sup>8</sup>

Shoghi Effendi (1897-1957), the grandson of Abdu'l-Baha and guardian of the Baha'i Faith between 1921 and 1957, wrote this in *The World Order of Baha'u'llah* as a summary of the Baha'i teachings on peace: "A world federal system, ruling the whole earth and exercising unchallengeable authority over its unimaginably vast resources, blending and embodying the ideals of both the East and the West, liberated from the curse of war and its miseries, and bent on the exploitation of all the available sources of energy on the surface of the planet, a system in which Force is made the servant of Justice, whose life is sustained by its universal recognition of one God and by its allegiance to one common Revelation – such is the goal towards which humanity, impelled by the unifying forces of life, is moving."<sup>9</sup>

After the deaths of Abdu'l-Baha and Shoghi Effendi, Baha'u'llah's teachings have been promoted by the Universal House of Justice which is composed of Baha'is who are elected every five years. Baha'is believe that justice should be the main principle of a new world order that was envisioned by Baha'u'llah. After meeting at the Baha'i world center in Haifa, Israel, the members of the Universal House of Justice in 1985 issued "The Promise of World Peace." They emphasized that "world order can be founded only on an unshakable consciousness of the oneness of mankind, a spiritual truth which all the human sciences confirm. Anthropology, physiology, psychology, recognize only one human species, albeit infinitely varied in the secondary aspects of life. Recognition of this truth requires abandonment – race, class, color, creed, nation, sex, degree of

material civilization, everything which enables people to consider themselves superior to others."<sup>10</sup>

Creating a world parliament is a necessary but not a sufficient condition for lasting world peace. Baha'is refer to the creation of a democratic world federation as the Lesser Peace. When the religions and nations of the world unite to form a human family on Earth, then the promise of Baha'u'llah will be fulfilled: "These fruitless strifes, these ruinous wars shall pass away, and the Most Great Peace shall come."<sup>11</sup>

### **Catholic Christian Teaching about a World Public Authority**

The messianic mission of Jesus of Nazareth was to begin the kingdom or reign of God on earth as it is in heaven.<sup>12</sup> The fulfillment of this ultimate goal would be the time of peace and justice for all. Because Jesus taught "blessed are the peacemakers", "turn the other cheek if someone strikes you", "love your enemies," and "whoever lives by the sword will die by the sword"<sup>13</sup>, early Christians were pacifists. They refused to join the Roman army because that would have meant affirming "Caesar is Lord" instead of "Jesus is Lord."

When the Roman Empire was attacked after Christianity became the official religion of the Roman Empire in the late fourth century, St. Augustine of Hippo began the development of the Christian just war tradition. This teaching said that Christians could fight only in cases of self-defense that is declared by legitimate authority and as a last resort. If such a war is declared to be just, then it must be fought by moral means: weapons and tactics must produce more good than evil and civilians must never be directly targeted. These conditions for limited warfare were developed when war involved hand-to-hand combat between

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soldiers while civilians were usually mere spectators. Most Christians throughout the history of Christianity accepted the teaching that if fighting a war is the only way to defend and protect people and their rights, then war must be rare and limited. Christians who have accepted the just war teaching believe that justice is a precondition for peace.

Because the limitations of the just war teaching were not always followed and because of the destructiveness of modern conventional weapons and weapons of mass destruction which cannot discriminate between combatants and noncombatants, many Christian scholars have questioned the practicality and morality of the just war tradition in modern times. Because so many national leaders have justified their wars in terms of national interest and because more civilians are killed or suffer in modern wars than combatants, many modern Catholic leaders and theologians have been developing teachings about eliminating the war system by means of a system of global law and order.

Pope John XXIII wrote his 1963 encyclical "Pacem in Terris" in light of the proliferation of nuclear weapons during the Cold War and in response to the Cuban Missile Crisis. He taught that "today the universal common good poses problems of worldwide dimensions, which cannot be adequately tackled or solved except by the efforts of public authority endowed with a wideness of powers, structure and means of the same proportions: that is, of public authority which is in a position to operate in an effective manner on a worldwide basis. The moral order itself, therefore, demands that such a form of public authority be established." (#137)

The Catholic bishops of the world emphasized this teaching at the Second Vatican Council. They taught that everyone should "work for the

time when all war can be completely outlawed by international consent." They realized that such a goal requires "the establishment of some universal public authority acknowledged as such by all, and endowed with effective power to safeguard, on the behalf of all, security, regard for justice, and respect for rights."<sup>14</sup>

In their response to the nuclear arms race in the 1980s, the American Catholic bishops issued the pastoral letter *The Challenge of Peace* in 1983 as a contribution to the debate about the Reagan Administration's policies on nuclear weapons. The American bishops wrote that the world must go beyond the nation-state system because "we are now entering an era of new global interdependencies requiring global systems of governance to manage the resulting conflicts and ensure our common security." (#242) They argued that "mutual security and survival require a new vision of the world as one interdependent planet." (#244)

In his 2009 encyclical "*Caritas in Veritate*," Pope Benedict XVI called for a reform of the United Nations Organization and for "a true world public authority." (#67) He emphasized that such a global authority should be based on the principles of subsidiarity and solidarity. The principle of subsidiarity in Catholic social teaching means that problems should be dealt with at the lowest level possible. Local problems need to be solved by local governments and officials. National governments must solve problems within each of their borders. But global problems need to be solved by the world community acting together. The principle of solidarity recognizes the growth of global interdependence. The decisions of any one country can affect the well-being of the rest of the world. According to Catholic social teaching, each local and national government must base its policies and laws on the common good. According to Pope Benedict, what is needed to manage globalization, solve global

problems, and promote the common good of all humanity is a global authority that is universally recognized.

In their response to global economic tensions, the Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace wrote in 2011 that a supranational authority “should have a realistic structure and be set up gradually.” It should support sustainable development and social progress for all. The Pontifical Council argues that globalization is unifying people around the world and will eventually lead to the rule of law on the global level. A future global legal authority must promote global social justice. It must focus on “financial and monetary policies that will not damage the weakest countries, and policies aimed at achieving free and stable markets and a fair distribution of world wealth, which may also derive from unprecedented forms of global fiscal solidarity.” In order for a world public

authority to be moral and just, “humanity needs to be committed to the transition from a situation of archaic struggles between national entities, to a new model of a more cohesive, polyarchic international society that respects every people’s identity within the multifaceted riches of a single humanity.” Such a global authority can serve the human family and the common good. (15)

In order to solve our major global problems, especially the negative effects of global climate change, Pope Francis wrote in his 2015 encyclical “*Laudato Si’*” that in order to create systems of renewable energy, sustainable agriculture, better management of marine and land resources, and universal access to clean drinking water, “enforceable international agreements are urgently needed.” (#173) In order to achieve this goal, he concluded that “there is urgent need of a true world political authority.” (#175)

<sup>1</sup>Rev. John Henry Barrows, Chairman of the 1893 Parliament, *The World’s Parliament of Religions*, Volume I (Chicago: The Parliament Publishing Company, 1893), p. 18.

<sup>2</sup>Charles Carroll Bonney, President of the 1893 Parliament, *ibid.*, p. 186

<sup>3</sup>Professor Hans Küng is the main author of the Declaration of a Global Ethic that was accepted by the Parliament of the World’s Religions in Chicago on September 4, 1993. He argues that globalization requires a global ethic. A global ethic is a minimal basic consensus relating to binding values, irrevocable standards, and moral attitudes which can be affirmed by all religions despite their theological differences. See his *Global Responsibility: In Search of a New World Ethic* (New York: Continuum, 1991) and *A Global Ethic for Global Politics and Economics* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998).

<sup>4</sup>Swami Agnivesh was an exception. At one of the plenary sessions of the Parliament in Toronto, he said, “Is it not ironic that while we are raising our voices for peace, 1,700 billion U.S. dollars are being spent annually on armaments and the war machine? We, the people of the World, need to unite and demand a world government and a world parliament based on the Earth Constitution.” In a conversation with me after his speech, Swami said, “Without a world government, we can’t solve our major world problems.”

<sup>5</sup>Baha’u’llah was born on November 12, 1817 in Tehran, Persia. He was a disciple of Siyyid Ali- Muhammad, known as the Bab (the Gate). After the Bab was publicly executed in 1850, Baha’u’llah was imprisoned in the Black Pit in Tehran. He was then exiled to Baghdad. In 1863 he was banished to Constantinople and Adrianople. In 1868 he was sent to the prison in Akka. He died while under house arrest in “Baha’u’llah,” *Gleanings from the Writings of Baha’u’llah, CXVII* in *Writings of Baha’u’llah* (New Delhi: Baha’i Publishing Trust, 1994), p. 590.

<sup>6</sup>Abdu’l-Baha, “The Secret of Divine Civilization” in *Writings and Utterances of Abdu’l-Baha* (New Delhi: Baha’i Publishing Trust, 2000), p. 34.

<sup>7</sup>Abdu’l-Baha, “The Eighth Principle—Universal Peace” in *Writings and Utterances of Abdu’l-Baha*, pp. 777-778. World community, world citizenship, and world democracy could be enhanced by the Baha’i proposal to have everyone learn a universal auxiliary language in addition to their native language. A universal language should not be a native language such as English because that would mean one group of people would only need to learn one language. An artificial language such as Esperanto would be the best choice for a universal auxiliary language because it is grammar-coded with basic rules and no exception to those rules. See Ronald J. Glossop, “Language Policy and a Just World Order,” *Alternatives*, Vol. XIII, #3, July, 1988, p. 396, and John Roberts, “World Language for One World,” *Esperanto/USA*, 1994 (2).

<sup>8</sup>Shoghi Effendi, *The World Order of Baha’u’llah* (Wilmette, IL: Baha’i Publishing Trust, 1965), p. 204.

<sup>9</sup>Section Three of “The Promise of World Peace,” a Baha’i Statement on Peace by the Universal House of Justice, 1985. In January, 2019, the Universal House of Justice wrote a letter about world peace to the Baha’is of the world. In this document they said, “Fostering unity, by harmonizing disparate elements and nurturing in every heart a selfless love for humankind, is the task of religion.” They also stressed that “the establishment of peace is a duty to which the entire human race is called.”

<sup>10</sup>Baha’u’llah said this in an interview in 1890 to Professor Edward Granville Browne of Cambridge University. This saying is quoted in Section Four of “The Promise of World Peace.”

<sup>11</sup>Matthew 6: 9-10.

<sup>12</sup>Matthew 5: 9; Matthew 5: 38-39; Matthew 5: 43-44; Matthew 26: 52.

<sup>13</sup>Second Vatican Council, *The Church Today*, Part II, Chapter 5, #82.

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# The Great Emergency Is Famine: 320 Million People Are at Risk

*Mario Platero*

David Beasley is the director of the United Nations World Food Program. The mission: to bring food aid to the most desperate populations in these years of exponential growth of a crisis that began well before Russia's attack on Ukraine. Beasley was Republican governor of South Carolina until 1999. But he is far from the thoughts that characterize Trump's and the new Republicans' detachment in America from international aid or climate issues. He is a pragmatic man, even in dealing with dramatic issues. But when I met him at the Council on Foreign Relations last week, his voice at one point broke down: "A reporter asked me how gratified I was by the children we save with our mission. I replied that at night, in my thoughts, there are not the children we save, but the ones we cannot save. The children who die from lack of resources. The hardest part of my job is knowing that a choice to save someone is also an automatic sentence for someone else. We need greater awareness of the seriousness of the problem, otherwise we will have to face the worst ahead of us".

The worst? A vision of the worst was given to me in 2005 by Jim Wolfensohn, a successful former financier, president of the World Bank at the end of his term. In an interview I asked him what worried him the most looking ahead: "Today in Europe we are worried about migration flows of a few hundred thousand people. But what will happen if there is a great drought? And a real food crisis? What will happen? What will happen if a biblical exodus to Europe of 30 million people in search of salvation were to be set in motion

from Africa?". Wolfensohn was prophetic. Beasley's statistics are apocalyptic. Arid in their categorization among the hundreds of millions of hungry people in the world, but very clear in their implications.

## **Food insecurity increases**

Beasley explains that there are 49 million people in the world today facing "acute food insecurity". But the number is going up. Not that the food crisis has exploded today. We have known for years that this is a loose cannon for our consciences - and for the stability of our countries. In 2017, when Beasley agreed to lead the UN agency, based in Rome, there were 80 million people at food risk in the world. Before the pandemic, by 2020 the number had already risen to 135 million. At the end of the pandemic, but before the Russian attack, the statistics had soared to 276 million. Now "the number has risen again, to 323 million people". But the definition that disturbs his sleep is "acute food insecurity": 49 million people are close to starvation. "And this is unacceptable in a world that cumulatively has an estimated \$ 432 trillion in wealth."

But the food crisis of our time is at the center of a confluence of factors: the cost of fertilizers has increased by 300% due to a shortage of supply, made worse after Russia's war on Ukraine. Sanctions and increased energy costs do the rest. And the agreement reached at the end of last week that unblocks the export of Ukrainian wheat departing from the Black Sea ports is a glimmer of hope, a small sigh of relief, certainly not the solution to the problem. This year, there have been unprecedented increases

in drought and heat waves with consequent images of crops being destroyed: Beasley calculates that one degree more in the Earth's average temperature translates into 15% less corn crops.

There is also another distorting element in the trend in food commodity prices: financial speculation. Rupert Russell, author of the book "War Prices", analyzed a 15-year period and concluded that even in situations where there was no drop in the production chain, there have been significant price increases due to speculative interventions since 2008 and up to the present day, with some regularity. Here, in the most sober way possible, it should be reminded that food is not a joke, because we are not talking about giving up a trip to the seaside by car due to the cost of petrol. The "acute insecurity" in Beasley's definition means that there is nothing left for those 49 million people to do: they are about to die.

### **Countries at risk**

Some big countries at risk have been ahead of the curve. India has put aside 95 million tons of wheat and flour; China has reserves equal to 150% of the national requirement. But remaining in Asia, in Sri Lanka, where a new president, Ranil Wickremesinghe, was elected last week, and where there are about 16 million people, the crisis is acute. The country has

collapsed on an economic and food-availability level, and powers such as China, which in the past has given subsidized loans, today wants to be repaid, thus worsening the crisis, or asks for a greater political dependence. The new president will work out a plan with the IMF, but the prognosis remains critical. In Africa, out of 1.2 billion people, there are about 80 million people at risk. This means destabilization both internally, with attacks on stable governments, and externally, with the risk of massive exoduses. As Wolfensohn's prophecy suggested.

Alarms are sounding from many quarters. Larry Fink, founder of Blackrock, the largest management fund in the world and one of the most listened to voices on *Environment, Social, Governance* (ESG), has launched an alarm in the Financial Times in recent weeks: "More than the cost of energy, we should be concerned about the humanitarian and geopolitical consequences of rising cost of food" he said. Janet Yellen, US Treasury Secretary, at a G20 meeting said: "It is a very difficult time for global food security". Bill Gates noted that the war in Ukraine "is raising food prices, leading to malnutrition and instability in low-income countries". A joint effort to coagulate global attention is certainly effective, but incomplete. The big entrepreneurs do not mention the next step: what shall we do?

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# Climate Crisis Calls for Concrete Political Answers

*Gabriele Casano*

In a world forced to face a potentially catastrophic climate crisis, individuals do not know where to turn. The myth of the nation-state is crumbling day by day, and with it the presumption that globalisation is the illusory bearer, always and everywhere, of opportunities for economic growth. The ability of politics to define the priorities of societal life and to ensure that they are realised is increasingly weakened.

It seems obvious to perceive climate change as one of today's greatest challenges; however, the inability to adequately address it does not seem to be of equal relevance. While climate change has undoubtedly entered the political and cultural debate in almost every country in the world, the instruments adopted to remedy it do not seem to be sufficient locally, and even less globally. There is no doubt that politicians and economic elites have not yet been able to define and outline a concrete change in the government of the climate crisis. The reasons for this are multiple and have deep roots in the broader phenomenon of ungoverned globalisation. In some respects, we could describe climate crisis as just another perverse expression of the lack of government of globalisation; or even define it as the conjunctural and apical expression of the negative externalities of a consumerist world-system. Externalities that are hidden behind privileges that people are not really willing to renounce, or only to a small extent. Externalities that turn out to be lower for some than for others. Indeed, the consequences of climate crisis are significantly more pronounced in the poorest and most vulnerable regions and strata of the population across the globe.

Their calls for help and support often clash with indifference, but even more often with the inability to provide remedies and concrete solutions. For years, the research community has been arguing the need to invest more in the fight against climate change, especially in those contexts where resources and capacities are scarcer. Yet, little has been done in this direction. Of particular relevance, is the condition of the African continent, considered by the most reliable experts as one of the places most sensitive to climate change. Africa has a population of 1.4 billion and is undergoing strong demographic expansion; nevertheless, the African continent is responsible for less than 3% of the world's total greenhouse-gas emissions. Having ascertained the correlation between greenhouse gas emissions and climate change, it is clear that we are facing a paradox. A paradox that the international community has not wanted to, and has not been able to overcome. Because it is exhausted by the contingencies of the recent pandemic crisis, the weakening of the multilateral system, the direct and indirect effects of the war in Ukraine, and the persistence of limited political farsightedness, particularly on the part of the political class and economic elites, etcetera. In addition to new ideas and new approaches to tackling climate crisis, we need a new awareness of politics' role in governing today's society and an affirmation of an international solidarity that supports, first and foremost, the needs of the most vulnerable. Today's situation calls for political action at the global level based primarily on the principles of climate justice, having regard to fundamental concepts such as vulnerability, risk and resilience.

The ineffectiveness of climate change regimes so far established at the international level does not need to be here further discussed, although the reasons for this ineffectiveness can be summarised in few words. At first, there is a congenital inability of the international system to define coherent, binding and decisive long-term strategies; moreover, law still remains a weak instrument on the international scene, and it is even weaker when implemented in an intergovernmental approach. These elements are only apparently distant from reality; they constantly manifest themselves in the clash between human political action and the materiality of the historical process in which we are immersed and which we contribute to defining. Responsibility must be assumed; drastic decisions must be taken.

Despite an undeniable inability to govern globalisation, a glimmer of hope is represented by the 'global minimum tax', an agreement between 136 OCSE countries for a 15% minimum taxation on the profits of multinationals to prevent them from relocating to countries with more favourable tax treatments and consequently reducing the redistribution capacity of states. This is a not insignificant sign of an international willingness to act, through a courageous regulatory attempt of the global market, against growing inequalities and to reduce the neo-liberalism that has characterised international economic policy over the past 30 years. This instrument would be ineffective if implemented at the national level; indeed, it would risk undermining the state itself. Here is yet another paradox. If the holder of political power (the state) decides to act alone, it finds itself incapable of intervening effectively in governing the mechanisms of globalisation; on the contrary, if it is allied with a majority of its counterparts, it may be able to govern those same mechanisms. In the short term, federalists must encourage such a mechanism and operate for the adoption of the proposal at the individual signatory countries' level. Furthermore, it is

crucial to guarantee the implementation of an international body capable of resolving related disputes.

Despite the virtuous case presented above, which raises hopes for a global-scale return of politics in the management of globalisation, in practice there are no 'international champions' on the horizon who are prepared to take on these onerous tasks. The European Union is still far from being able to take on this role due to a number of weaknesses, mainly due to its unachieved political integration process. Individual states are even more incapable of playing such a role: internal and external economic challenges dictate the political agenda almost unopposed; and there are no emerging credible solution-oriented policy scenarios. Nevertheless, despite nationalist resurgences, there is a hidden popular awareness of the impotence of the public entity in ensuring public goods for all. This last one calls for a restoration of confidence in politics at every level, from local to global. This is almost as complex a challenge as climate change itself and, in both cases, time is not on our side.

In view of the above, radical paradigm shifts are needed in economic and social practices as well as in political ones. The latter have a far greater responsibility than the previous ones: the responsibility of collective representation. In a world dominated by globalisation, the possibility of encounter and exchange is available as never before, which entails an expansion of action and thought, but also an explosion of the variables at stake and the responsibilities associated with them. Economic globalisation and, to a lesser extent, social globalisation, have outpaced politics, creating a short circuit that makes the human condition more uncertain and vulnerable than ever before. We need to be aware of this and require politicians worldwide to make the change of pace that is now more necessary than ever.

# Could the Mahsa Amini Protests Be a Turning Point for Iran?

*Mariasophia Falcone*

The death of Mahsa Amini, a 22-year-old Kurdish-Iranian woman, on September 16<sup>th</sup> has led to protests all over Iran. Amini was visiting Tehran with her family when she was arrested by the moral police for not wearing her hijab correctly. After her arrest, Amini died in a hospital in Tehran, and later leaked evidence revealed that she had died as a consequence of police brutality.

The protests that followed Amini's death have now been going on for weeks and have spread throughout the whole country. Analysts and international observers already claim that the rise in protests, and the spontaneous movement resulting from it, are unprecedented for Iran, and even more widespread than the protests of 2017 and 2019.

Initially, it was mainly women participating in the protests by removing publicly their *hijabs* and cutting their hair. As the days went by, young people and other opponents of the regime also joined the manifestations. As of now, Amnesty International reports that over 1,000 people are being detained, and at least 185 people were killed in the protests, including 17-year-old Nika Shakarami and 16-year-old Sarina Esmailzadeh, whose shocking deaths have been reported by international media outlets just like Amini's.

Meanwhile, Supreme Leader Khamenei blames foreign powers, namely the US and Israel, for fuelling the unrest. However, this time protests have managed to transcend the ethnic and social divisions of the country,

reaching the Kurds regions in the north and northwest and the Baloch in the southeast, as well as the holy cities of Mashhad and Qom. Despite the intimidations of the regime, the protests continue to gather momentum, suggesting that these protests might be a turning point for the regime.

A first factor to consider is the composition of the protests, which seem to transcend the nations' differences. This aspect is probably a result of Amini's identity itself as a young girl, and from a rural area, making her a strong unifying symbol and favouring the identification by many outside the capital. Furthermore, it has been mostly the youth leading the protest, triggering a chain reaction of solidarity by other generations. This time, the young protesters have shown a never-before-seen lack of faith in the Islamic Republic, and they believe there is no possibility for reform from within. Interestingly, in this request for a radical change it is easy to draw a parallel to the youth that has protested in other areas of the world for other causes, namely climate change, but clearly with the same sense of justice and values, signalling how a globalised youth is taking up space everywhere. In addition, over the last few days, members of the military have deserted and joined the protests, feeling that the ideals of the regime have failed them as well. This last factor is, apparently, frightening the regime more than anything, and it is being reported that Arab mercenaries have joined the Iranian military to compensate for the internal divisions.

Another key aspect to consider is the incredible

power social media is having in spreading the word globally and among young people. Right after the start of the protests, not only were the violent images of the repression viewed by millions worldwide, but the act of cutting one's hair, as an act of solidarity with Iranian women, was replicated by many all over the world. The social media response was so powerful that it spilled over to real life and real-life politics until, on October 4<sup>th</sup>, Swedish MEP Abir Al-Sahlani cut a string of her hair in the European Parliament. In a way, the replicability of such a gesture has made it a viral support tool that has kept the attention of international media and public opinion focused on Iran, something vital for the morale of the protesters. Further confirmation of how the internet is being key during this time of political turmoil, has been the recent hacking of Iranian state television on October 8<sup>th</sup> by a dissident group inviting the viewers to take the streets and join the protests.

The aspects highlighted so far, call for reflections on whether the international community, particularly the EU, should have a role in the matter and what it could mean for human rights and democracy everywhere.

Currently, the fight for women's rights as human rights and the feminist movement have seen an important rise, particularly after the #MeToo movement shed light on the endemic sexism and the systemic discrimination of women in society. While this has led to positive improvements in women's conditions and the spread of gender mainstreaming practices, the positive effects have stayed mainly in the West, contributing to the failure of the feminist movement to really adopt an intersectional perspective. Consequently, the movement has failed to incorporate the fight for women's rights in other areas of the world, in particular when those battles have taken up different forms compared to western ones. In reality, the safeguarding of human rights and, particularly,

women's rights, should be considered as a part of a global agenda, just like climate change and democracy, that only further integration on a global level could defend, especially in a time in which the ultra-conservatives are actively limiting women's freedom in multiple areas of the world.

As for the role of the international community in a possible development of democracy in Iran, it has to be recognised that, over the last few years, the international community has had ambivalent relations with the Iranian government, from Donald Trump's withdrawal from the Nuclear Deal, to the EU being Iran's second trade partner. The action of the EU towards Iran has clearly been aimed at avoiding complete closure and isolation, while hopefully creating fertile ground for democracy and supporting Iranian civil society. However, the current events might put the international community at a crossroads, as what is happening now in Iran might turn to the point of choosing between supporting the rise of democracy and maintaining economic interests. This choice could be particularly difficult for the European Union, whose member states have had key economic interests with Iran since the Iranian Deal, while the European Parliament seems to have taken a clear stance, as previously mentioned. Therefore, the question remains whether the EU will follow its value-based approach to foreign policy, or if it will surrender to the different priorities of the member states.

While it could be too soon to think about what the European Union could possibly do, it is important to highlight how, even in this matter, this should be the EU's duty and role on a global level. Above all, to be faithful to its values the EU should find a way of supporting the fight for human rights and democracy everywhere. This includes also

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being first in line in promoting integration structures on a global level, the only possible path to grant human rights globally, and possibly stop the receding of democracy in the world.

Eventually, significant uncertainties regarding the possible outcomes of the protests remain. In fact, the lack of political leadership is preventing the development at this stage of a political perspective for the protest movement.

This is a necessary step to reach any change or reform in the long run but, most importantly, to bring the international community to take a role in the path towards democracy for Iran. On the other hand, there seem to be some favourable factors that could suggest that this movement could be the final nail to the coffin of the regime. However, no matter how favourable contextual factors might be, the politicisation of any protest is the key factor to reaching real change.

## **Sandro Gozi MEP Appointed as President of the Spinelli Group**

The Spinelli Group, an intergroup of the European Parliament gathering Members of the European Parliament of all the major European political families, appointed Sandro Gozi as its new President.

This nomination is a clear sign that the Board of the Spinelli Group is seeking greater collaboration with the Union of European Federalists (UEF), of which Sandro Gozi is President. Both structures will need to collaborate tightly to promote their call for a Convention that would draft new European Treaties.

The revision of the European Treaty has been a long-standing demand of the UEF. In June this year, the European Parliament voted on a resolution to call for the establishment of a Convention to draft new treaties, at the initiative of the Spinelli Group.

As Sandro Gozi takes over the rotating presidency of the Spinelli Group from Daniel Freund MEP, the UEF stands beside his leadership and ensures him the support of all federalists. The UEF warmly thanks Daniel Freund for his chairmanship.

Sandro Gozi, President of the UEF and the Spinelli Group said: "Our priorities are simple: to push for treaty revision, to raise awareness on the need for treaty revision, to support the new electoral law, and to guarantee that the European institutions ensure a proper followup of the Conference on the Future of Europe."

*Brussels, 04/10/2022*

# Giuseppe Garibaldi: Godfather of Transnational Democratic Politics

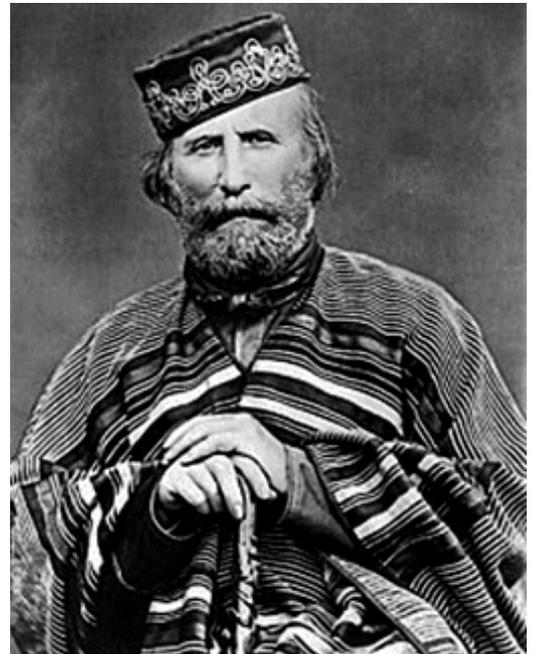
Rene Wadlow

Giuseppe Garibaldi, born on the 4<sup>th</sup> of July 1807 in Nice, now France, often called the hero of two worlds because of his efforts for independence in Latin America and then Europe, is in many ways an inventor of transnational democratic politics. He was brought up in a religious Catholic family; his mother hoped that he would become a priest. However, the Church of Pope Leo XII had fallen asleep in its dreams of past glories. Garibaldi saw the need for change, and for a mystic motor to produce that change. Thus at 26 he joined the *Young Italy* movement of Giuseppe Mazzini. *Young Italy* was the public face of the *Carbonari*, with its overlapping membership with that of Freemasonry, both outlawed throughout Italy, except in the Piedmont.

The factor uniting the *Carbonari* and Freemasonry was a militant opposition to the Roman Catholic domination of Italy. Both the *Carbonari* and Freemasonry shared the idea that politics should be based on the growth of individual development through stages of initiation. As Mazzini wrote in his *Faith and the Future*, "How many stars, unravelled concepts of each epoch, must be raised in the sky of intelligence that Man, complete embodiment of the earthly Word, may say to himself: I have faith in myself; my destiny is accomplished"<sup>1</sup> Although, by definition, it is difficult to trace the influence of secret societies, the *Carbonari* are credited with winning constitutions in Spain and some states in Italy in 1820-21. They were also involved in the struggle for Greek independence and with the 1825 Decembrist rising in Russia. The *Carbonari* had a

transnational view of politics and were willing to work wherever democratic ideals could be advanced, at times by armed revolt.

In 1834, Garibaldi participated in a failed military coup against the Duc of Savoie and was forced into exile in Latin America from 1836 to 1848. It was in Uruguay and Argentina that with Italian volunteers he organized a guerrilla force, the *Red Shirts* – modelled on the shirts worn in slaughter houses so as not to show the stains of blood. The militias of colored shirts were taken up by Mussolini and Hitler – a symbol of civilian unity outside the uniforms of military forces.



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He returned to Italy in 1848 – the year of failed democratic revolutions. The Italian political movements could not decide on what type of Italy they wanted – federal or centralized, republican or monarchist. But the foundations of autocratic rule would never be the same again. By 1860-61, the power of Victor Emmanuel as King of Italy was established, though the real unity of Italy would take longer. The Papal states, an area going from Rome to the port of Ancona on the Adriatic and north as far as Bologna, were not yet integrated. It was in large measure Garibaldi who was able to unite the self-aggrandizement of the Piedmontese Government of Victor Emmanuel under the skilled leadership of Camillo Cavour with the progressive republicanism of Mazzini. After the unification of Italy, his last military battles were with what he hoped would become Republican France against Prussia in 1870-71. The last 10 years of his life (he died on 2 June 1882) are those which made him the godfather of transnational democratic politics. From his island home of Caprera, off Sardinia, as president of the League of Democracy, he

advocated a united democratic Europe, the emancipation of women, free education for all, the abolition of the death penalty, the end of the Papacy, and the independence of mind. His program followed closely that of his early *Carbonari* days, and he re-established his *Carbonari*-Freemasonry ties with the democratic forces of Europe.

Many major Italian movements, Fascism and Communism included, claimed Garibaldi as their ancestor. Only Planned Parenthood could not use him for their cause. The Italian state has used Garibaldi as a figure of Italian patriotism. However, as Max Gallo underlines in his biography *Garibaldi, La force d'un destin*, it is as a European with a policy of transnational politics, that Garibaldi stands out. From secret society, to ideological advocacy in the League for Democracy, Garibaldi experimented with many forces of transnational politics. While the use of force must be ruled out today, his other avenues may serve as inspiration as we develop new forces of democracy and justice.

<sup>1</sup>Quoted in E.E.Y. Hales, *Mazzini and the Secret Societies*, New York, P.J. Kennedy & Sons, 1954.

# European Federalism: a Health Check-up after 2,5 Years of Crises

*Yannis Karamitsios*

It is advisable nowadays to undergo regular health check-ups to make sure that our bodies and minds remain on the right track – and also see what should be corrected. By this text we will attempt to carry out a similar check with the European federalist cause. How healthy is it, where does it stand, what are its successes and failures after 2,5 years of crises? And how should we move on?

We will shortly examine its advancements and setbacks, against the background of several unprecedented crises in the 21<sup>st</sup> century: the pandemic, the Russian aggression against Ukraine, the spiraling food and energy crises, the high inflation, and also the ascent of an undemocratic axis at global level.

## 1. The Conference on the Future of Europe

The Conference on the Future of Europe involved European citizens, civil society, and institutions, who debated for one year as equal partners. It ended on 9 May 2022 with the presentation of the final report to the Presidents of the European Parliament, the Council and the European Commission. It included 49 proposals consisting of 325 concrete measures proposed by the participating citizens. The European Parliament adopted a Resolution in June 2022 proposing amendments to the Treaties. It stressed the abolition of the Member States' veto powers in most areas, and more European integration in health, energy, defence, and social and economic policies.

The Council reacted slower and less enthusiastically. It merely started general

discussions on the basis of a 'comprehensive preliminary technical assessment' of the proposals. The European Council noted on 23-24 June 2022 that the EU institutions should ensure that there is 'an effective follow-up' to the final report.

The European Commission, on its part, has been more specific. On 14 September 2022 its President Von der Leyen sent a letter of intent to the President of the European Parliament Metsola, with a list of legislative initiatives largely inspired by the outcome of the Conference on the Future of Europe. The list includes "proposals stemming directly from the citizens' recommendations, such as an initiative on mental health". The Commission will include "Citizens' Panels in its policy-making toolbox, so that they can make recommendations before certain key policy proposals, starting with the upcoming work on food waste".<sup>1</sup>

We could call the Conference a good starting point and partial success, because it really committed the EU institutions to follow-up and deliver results on its original ideas. The Citizens' Panels, that were central to the Conference, will become a regular feature of our democratic life. However, as the Council remains a rather conservative player, we should not expect any spectacular federalist gains. It is not even certain yet whether it will abolish the national veto on foreign affairs, despite the support to that proposal by President Macron and Chancellor Scholz. After a meeting of EU affairs ministers in Brussels on 20 September 2022, Mikuláš Bek, the minister of European affairs of the Czech Republic, which currently

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holds the EU's rotating presidency, said he only foresaw "limited progress" and that "he is not too optimistic."<sup>2</sup> On the other hand, we should definitely remain optimistic concerning further European integration in areas such as green energy, health, or sustainable development.

## 2. A federalist German coalition

In November 2021, the coalition government in Germany of Social Democrats, Greens and the liberal FDP announced that it would push for the development of a sovereign European federation. Their coalition agreement document sees the Conference on the Future of Europe as a starting point to reform the EU. It sets out a very ambitious objective, namely that the conference should lead to a constitutional process and ultimately to the "development of a federal European state".

This idea was put in limbo during the months that followed the Russian aggression and the ensuing energy and inflation crises. However, some of its elements revived again in a speech of Chancellor Scholz in Prague on 29 August 2022, where he supported the amendment of the EU treaties to abolish the unanimity rule, and also introduced the idea of a geopolitical union and the reform of the institutions. He also supported the EU enlargement to the Western Balkans and Ukraine and Moldova.

## 3. The first Eurobonds and the pandemic recovery package

Another taboo that was broken thanks to the extraordinary needs of the pandemic, was the common borrowing of all EU member states under a joint scheme and with the same terms and interest rates. On 21 July 2020, EU leaders agreed on a comprehensive package which included an extraordinary €750 billion recovery effort, the "Next Generation EU". Its main objective is to tackle the socio-

economic consequences of the pandemic and to transform the EU through its major policies, particularly the European Green Deal, the digital revolution and resilience.

Indeed, in October of that year, the European Commission issued a €17 billion inaugural social bond under the 'EU SURE' instrument to help protect jobs. The issuing consisted of two bonds, with €10 billion due for repayment in October 2030 and €7 billion due for repayment in 2040. There was very strong investor interest and the bonds were more than 13 times oversubscribed. President of the European Commission Ursula von der Leyen highlighted in her statement the historic character of that moment: *"This unprecedented step matches the extraordinary times we are living in."*

## 4. A European health union

While health used to be exclusive national competence, the situation has changed thanks to the pandemic. The European Commission is now building a European Health Union, that aims to 'better protect the health of our citizens; equip the EU and its Member States to better prevent and address future pandemics; and improve resilience of Europe's health systems'<sup>3</sup>. It includes key-initiatives to develop, produce and procure medical countermeasures before and during a health crisis, a European Health Data Space, a pharmaceutical strategy to support research and technologies that reach patients, and a plan to beat cancer.

Moreover, in June 2020 the European Council mandated the Commission to organise the joint procurement of Covid-19 vaccines, and negotiate price, quantities and other conditions with the suppliers. In this way, another national competence was practically abolished and the EU became the sole negotiator and handler of those vaccines for all EU citizens.

Thanks to the pandemic, health is now addressed as a cross-border issue with international implications. For the first time in history, health policies have been placed on the centre of the deliberations about our common European future. That unprecedented situation has equipped the federalist movement with one more argument in favour of abolishing national approaches and seeking supra-national solutions.

### **5. The Russian aggression against Ukraine: the toughest test and greatest opportunity**

The Russian aggression against Ukraine has put to test European unity and resilience. It was a reminder of EU's weak geopolitical character, lack of joint military forces and institutional non-flexibility. However, the EU managed to react in a decisive manner, despite the setbacks.

Since February 2022, and in co-ordination with the USA, UK and other western partners, it adopted six sanction packages and one 'maintenance and alignment' package imposing tough measures on Russian economy and society. These included import and export bans of many key-commodities, blockage of Russian banks from the SWIFT system, closure of European airspace to Russian aircraft, suspension of key investments in Russian economy, individual sanctions on hundreds of oligarchs and affiliates of the Putin regime, and also abolition of visa facilitations. Nord Stream 2, the big project of pipeline-gas transfer from Russia to Germany, is dead. Imports of crude oil and petroleum products will be fully banned by early 2023. Imports of Russian natural gas have been reduced drastically, from approximately 40% of total EU natural gas imports down to less than 11% as of early September 2022.

However, those measures were not always easy to adopt. Some Member States with

high exposure to Russian fossil fuels or other commodities raised objections – some of them were reasonable, while other were rather political. Orban's Hungary continues to act as Putin's Trojan horse in the EU. Germany and France remain hesitant to offer decisive military support to Ukraine, contrary to the USA and the UK, which have demonstrated a much different 'body language'. Moreover, as of September 2022, the EU member states are still divided over the European Commission's plan to confront the spiking energy prices and cap them to a certain degree.

However, most impressive was Europe's realisation that it needs to advance as a true defence union. The time of naivety is over. Finland and Sweden rushed to apply for NATO membership. Germany abolished its post-World War II pacifist self-limitation and established a special €100 billion fund to upgrade its under-equipped armed forces. President Macron used the French Presidency of the European Council in the first half of 2022 to push forward on European defence policy, despite the reluctance of some EU governments. On 11 March 2022, EU leaders agreed to "resolutely bolster investment" in defence capabilities and "substantially increase" defence spending across the bloc. That summit marked an unprecedented geopolitical situation that has led the EU to activate a real defence policy, according to a diplomat involved in that meeting. The EU is now not only committed to spend more on defence, but also to spend better<sup>4</sup>.

### **6. A moderate health status – Time for a constitutional assembly**

The check-up that we mentioned in our introduction would rather confirm a moderate health status for European federalism. If it were a human being, we could describe it as a middle-aged man, overweight and in bad

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physical condition, but who has finally started exercising and following a healthier diet after a long period of inaction.

There has been good progress in the desire to improve the institutions, to vote for the first truly European lists, to borrow, procure, share, negotiate and spend money and resources together, and also to defend our common values and interests as a union. Coronavirus and Putin worked as our wake-up calls. On the other hand, we are still short of taking a truly federalist turn. The European ship is still very heavy – it cannot change course swiftly. The reactionary governments of Hungary and Poland keep blocking progress. Italy replaced Mario Draghi’s government with a eurosceptic right-wing coalition. Germany and France are not yet ready to lead a truly European defence policy. Member states still have very different ideas about how to tackle the energy crisis, the Russian aggression or the Chinese assertiveness. The Conference on the Future of Europe is going to deliver rather modest results – and certainly not a federal geopolitical Europe.

We, federalists, must keep pushing for the creation of a European federal and sovereign state. This is not a luxury or utopic vision anymore, it is a necessity. Global powers emerge with completely different values and interests than ours – and we are not only talking about Russia and China anymore, but

also India, Indonesia, Pakistan, and one or more African unions in the near future. We will have to compete and also co-operate with them as a big power. In the book that I published in December 2021, entitled *‘Time for a European Federation’*, I argue that our continent is facing several existential challenges, namely: our comparative economic decline, food security, energy security, demographic stagnation, and losing the global race of the fourth industrial revolution. We can best address them only as a federal union.

We must thus turn the Conference on the Future of Europe into a Constitutional Conference for the evolution of the European Union into a European Federation. That conference would consist of members of the European Parliament, members of national parliaments, European governments, representatives of civil society and professional organisations. It would produce the first European constitution. Every interested EU member and other European democratic states would hold referenda to join that new state. If more than ten of them would vote yes, then that new state would be born. Germany and France would definitely need to be part of its core. The others who would prefer to stay out, could continue as a European Union together with the new federal state.

The time is ripe for our geopolitical breakthrough. History is accelerating and cannot wait for us.

<sup>1</sup>[https://state-of-the-union.ec.europa.eu/system/files/2022-09/SOTEU\\_2022\\_Letter\\_of\\_Intent\\_EN\\_0.pdf](https://state-of-the-union.ec.europa.eu/system/files/2022-09/SOTEU_2022_Letter_of_Intent_EN_0.pdf)

<sup>2</sup>[https://www.politico.eu/article/eu-unanimity-rules-are-here-for-now-despite-chatter/?utm\\_source=Twitter&utm\\_medium=social&fbclid=IwAR0Xtv6PnENo-EHz\\_b\\_aRfC1DsrVTASA1SaT-cWA8-ooGH55B3udE\\_JwQ8ak](https://www.politico.eu/article/eu-unanimity-rules-are-here-for-now-despite-chatter/?utm_source=Twitter&utm_medium=social&fbclid=IwAR0Xtv6PnENo-EHz_b_aRfC1DsrVTASA1SaT-cWA8-ooGH55B3udE_JwQ8ak)

<sup>3</sup>[https://ec.europa.eu/info/strategy/priorities-2019-2024/promoting-our-european-way-life/european-health-union\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/info/strategy/priorities-2019-2024/promoting-our-european-way-life/european-health-union_en)

<sup>4</sup>[https://www.euractiv.com/section/politics/short\\_news/ukraine-war-eu-presidency-boosts-french-defence-plans/](https://www.euractiv.com/section/politics/short_news/ukraine-war-eu-presidency-boosts-french-defence-plans/)

# Towards the Start of a Treaty Reform Procedure?

*Roberto Castaldi*

1. In June, the Parliament for the first time formally tabled 2 amendments – to Art. 29 and 48 (7) TEU – ex art. 48 TEU (see <https://www.euractiv.com/section/eu-priorities-2020/news/https-www-euractiv-com-section-eu-priorities-2020-news-experts-criticise-shady-delay-of-eu-parliaments-treaty-reform-request/>). Its position is strengthened by the results of the Conference on the Future of Europe. And now the Commission too has come out in favour of convening a Convention with Ursula von der Leyen's State of the Union address. Informally, the Council has informed Parliament that there will now be a first informal discussion and the item will be put on the agenda at the December European Council (see <https://www.euractiv.com/section/eu-priorities-2020/news/verhofstadt-after-ukraine-warning-politician-has-the-guts-to-back-exit-from-eu/>). We can debate whether or not now is a favourable conjuncture for such a decision, or whether it would be better to focus on giving the Parliament a constituent mandate in the 2024 elections, as Virgilio Dastoli, President of the European Movement in Italy, proposes. But this would be of little use. The real fact is that this Parliament is the first with the courage to try to start a Treaty reform. If we want the 2024 European elections to be relevant, we have to back this Parliament up. If the reform process will get off the ground, that would be a political success for the Parliament, and will strengthen it, and open up a constituent battle in some form. If the Parliament loses the current struggle, it will be weakened. As difficult as its battle is, the Commission has finally sided with Parliament. And federalists must support the request of the supranational institutions, which

are taking up the citizens's requests during the Conference. Federalists cannot stand by and watch, because perhaps the Council will refuse to convene the Convention. The governments have no desire to reform the treaties. But it is objectively difficult even for them to refuse it and say that they don't care about the CoFoE, the Parliament and the Commission. If they do, the federalists should radically denounce it, and exploit the European elections to put forward the reform proposals of the European Parliament against the national governments that have disregarded the demands of the citizens in the CoFoE. But FIRST we must fight for the Convention as the outcome of the CoFoE and on the basis of the Parliament's initiative. In this respect, the position of the Italian MFE seems to me to be well-calibrated and its action should be intensified as far as possible.

2. It is not possible to predict the timing of the European Council decision and eventually of the Convention. It cannot be ruled out that the European Council will throw the ball back into the Parliament's court by inviting it to also prepare further amendments in the light of its June resolution in order to enable the European Council to make a more adequate assessment. Or that it decides that for two amendments alone there is no need for a Convention, but that an Intergovernmental Conference will suffice. In the meantime, the Parliament is preparing a Report that will express its position on every aspect of the Treaties and on all CoFoE proposals. It should serve to legitimise its representatives in the Convention to submit further amendments in the indicated

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direction, negotiating them together with the other components of the Convention. The Parliament proposed two formal amendments in order to legally oblige the national governments to put the start of the reform procedure on the agenda. And it has indicated a number of other reforms, in addition to those that emerged from CoFoE, to which the June Resolution also refers. Whether it succeeds in presenting a detailed amendments package before the start of the Convention, or does so within the Convention, it is clear that these proposals will be considered. If the Convention is underway, no one will want to reconvene, and all proposals will be addressed, including others that may come from member states. The states do not want to reform, but if the process starts they will prefer to deal with everything, rather than risk the Parliament tabling other amendments in a short time and starting again ... Depending on how this process develops, the eventual new Convention could have Parliament's proposals as the basic text, or the final outcome could be influenced by the European elections, or perhaps it could be subject to an advisory referendum at the time of the European elections.

3. Our best ally is the geopolitical and energy impact of the Russian invasion of Ukraine. The need to realise the energy Union is self-evident. In this sector, the cost of non-Europe is becoming simply unsustainable, and risks leading to a process of deindustrialisation in Europe. In August, we paid almost 9 times more for energy than the USA! A federal government would have already decoupled the cost of energy from the cost of gas; it would have identified a benchmark for gas different from the speculative market in Amsterdam; it would make joint purchases, as with vaccines, which would avoid competition between EU countries in dealing with the same suppliers; they cannot replace the EU as a whole as a destination, and would therefore be forced to

negotiate long-term contracts at a reasonable price, if they had the EU as a counterpart. The market power of the EU, linked to its size, would act just like a legal cap on gas prices, lowering them. The federal government would finance the completion of the EU energy network, which according to a study by University College Dublin would reduce energy prices by 32%. It would initiate the creation of a common strategic reserve, to better cope with future and potentially asymmetric shocks. European citizens continue to pay the price of unanimity, that applies to measures that have an impact on the national energy mix or supply structure, and that are fiscal in nature (Art. 192 and 194 TFEU). This is one of the contradictions that can lead us to the Convention.

4. On defence, the 27 Member states spend about three times as much as Russia. Still, they have no deterrence capacity to prevent Russia from invading its neighbours. And spending 2% domestically would change nothing. It would only increase the waste. It is another immense cost of non-Europe. Many countries are betting on NATO (think of Sweden and Finland's application for membership), even though the American umbrella is as solid as a Democratic presidency. With a Republican one it would probably be gone. Germany puts 100 billion into defence. This changes the picture. Either we proceed now on European defence, and the leadership will be French. Or an industrial-military apparatus will be consolidated in Germany, which will make it much more difficult to proceed. And eventually the leadership may have to be German. For now, some in Germany are proposing (Schauble's interview in July) to put some of its 100 billion on European defence and French nuclear power, as part of a process of Europeanising the nuclear deterrent. This goes back to what Merkel advocated throughout the Trump presidency, asking France for a plan for political union. In renewing the Franco-

German friendship treaty, Germany demanded the Europeanisation of the French UN seat, and France responded by backing a semi-permanent seat for Germany – which has no chance of seeing the light of day anyway. Scholz has relaunched the overcoming of unanimity in foreign policy, but France seems against it.

5. We are witnessing a choice between Europe and nationalism, and the governments' answers do not match their words or ideologies. France for now does not seem willing to share sovereignty on foreign policy and defence. But neither on energy, relying on its nuclear power and wanting to export energy (despite the fact that the recent drought has led to the closure of many nuclear power plants for lack of water to be used for cooling; a phenomenon that with climate change is likely to be repeated); it opposes the Midcat gas pipeline that should unite the Iberian peninsula (rich in regasifiers)

with Germany and the rest of Europe (see <https://www.euractiv.com/section/energy/news/midcat-pipeline-stand-off-puts-eus-energy-solidarity-to-the-test/>). Germany responds by taking the national route and putting up 200 billion over 3 years to lower the bill for households and businesses (as much as Italy's Recovery Plan PNRR over 5 years), which would completely blow up the single market as a level playing field. Yet both countries' policies will have to change, because they are unsustainable. One cannot continue to spend three times as much as Russia without having an adequate military capacity, or pay 9 times as much for energy as the US without having an economic meltdown. The contradiction is very strong. Without creating European policies – that require competences and powers – all governing parties are bound to lose the next elections because of the energy crisis and its consequences.

# Ukraine: a Turning Point for the European Union?

*Michel Dévoluy*

Admitting Ukraine as a priority candidate to join the EU seemed self-evident. The suffering of the Ukrainians has moved public opinion and led Western politicians to react strongly and promptly. Beyond legitimate emotions, this choice of the EU marks a turning point which is not without consequences for its future.

So far, the European Union (EU) has embodied peace. For the first time, it validates the candidacy of a country, Ukraine, because this country is at war. Russia, the aggressor state, is at the same time designated as an adversary of the EU. The acceptance of the candidacy of Moldova, a potential future target of Russia, is based on the same logic.

This choice places the EU on the side of international law and morality. Beautiful and vast ambition, unfortunately not always respected in the practice of *realpolitik*. With this decision, the EU is taking a turn that affects its place and its image in the world. But that's not all. The full and complete admission of Ukraine, admittedly still a long way off, will affect the political balance of the Union and its institutional functioning. These questions, which are essential for the future of European construction, deserve to be raised. They in no way obscure the atrocities of this war.

Despite all of its remarkable achievements, Europe remains unfinished. Only a sovereign and democratic Union will be fully capable of standing at the service of its Member States and its citizens. This is therefore the goal to be achieved, as soon as possible. European sovereignty is built on three pillars: unreserved sharing of the Union's values and objectives, genuine strategic

autonomy, and strong, democratic common institutions. None of this has really been taken into account for Ukraine. We had to go fast and make an impression.

From a geo-strategic point of view, the reactions of the EU in the Ukrainian crisis have blurred its image. Rather than demonstrating its independence, the EU has mainly participated in bringing NATO back to the center stage. The fact that the member countries of the G7, meeting at the end of June 2022 in Bavaria, insisted on strongly welcoming the choice of the EU in favor of Ukraine, testifies to the state of the balance of power in the world. While Westerners rejoice at the EU's decision on Ukraine, most of the 193 UN member states remain neutral, or, for a few, sympathetic to Russia. Finally, the choice to hastily begin the admission procedure for Ukraine makes the Union appear as a subsidiary of NATO. This alignment with the Transatlantic Organization undermines the capital of confidence that the EU has accumulated with States that are not attracted to the Western sphere of influence. In doing so, Europe is damaging the image of peace and universalism that it wanted to convey across the planet for more than seventy years.

With regard to the proper internal functioning of the Union, the enlargement to new members slows down the process of deepening. More countries implies automatically an increase in the heterogeneity of the whole. Joint decision-making becomes more complex and compromises more difficult. In short, an enlargement delays the prospects of forming a political Europe. Actually, a good way to slow down the deepening is to welcome new members.

By quickly agreeing to Ukraine's request, Europe has made itself the spokesperson of the public opinions shocked by the images of the war. The widely publicized pressures by President Zelensky have of course played their part. But above all, this choice allowed NATO – and therefore the United States – to regain control without having to officially welcome Ukraine as a new member. An open war with Russia has thus been ruled out, while Cold War tensions between East and West have come to the fore again.

Another delicate problem: validating the candidacy of Ukraine amounts to disavowing the pro-Russian separatists. This choice of the EU disqualifies part of the population currently living on Ukrainian soil. How will they react if one day they find themselves belonging to the EU?

Finally, this decision upsets the principles supported by the EU. While the Union fights bad practices, it is committed here to support a State recognized as corrupt. Similarly, the EU, which wishes to promote human values, remains very sober in its reactions when the Ukrainian leaders decide to banish all traces of Russian culture. And what to say in the face of the indignation of other candidate states that the EU has forced to wait for years?

Finally, it must be repeated, the admission of new members will not facilitate the functioning of the EU. The cumbersomeness of decision-making procedures, in particular considering the rule of unanimity, will be accentuated. Here we see again the tensions between widening and deepening.

The Heads of State and Government of Germany, France and Italy probably sensed, at the start of the war, all the equivocal effects of this promptness to formalize Ukraine's candidacy. At first they were procrastinating, then they joined the majority in favor of a return of NATO to the forefront, and resumed the old reflexes of the Cold War.

This bifurcation of the EU can still be modified. But on two conditions.

First, the EU should reaffirm its geo-strategic uniqueness and its aspirations to an acknowledged sovereignty. Namely, the Union could abandon its policy of semi-/co-belligerence in favor of Ukraine and openly defend in the face of the two warring parties concerned the immense benefits of a rapid compromise: to stop the human and material disasters, to avoid an expansion of the conflict with its nuclear risks, to eliminate the root-causes of an energy, economic and food global crisis, to alleviate the climatic, environmental and financial costs linked to war and to the inevitable reconstruction. This role of enlightened arbiter would reduce the misfortunes of the populations under the bombs and would give the EU the means to regain an image dissociated from NATO and the indirect tutelage of the United States. Its aspiration for peace would once again come to the fore. In short, the EU would thus affirm its strategic autonomy and its unique place within the international community.

Secondly, the enlargement towards Ukraine, pending other States, must not hinder the essential deepening of European construction. How can a more heterogeneous Europe be made compatible with a Europe that wishes to move rapidly towards a political Europe? There is a solution: a multi-speed Europe. This theme was underlying President Macron's proposal to create a "European Political Community" to welcome future members of the EU. Despite its ambiguous wording, the idea was promising. But for lack of support, it was quickly dismissed. Too bad. The establishment of a Europe at several speeds – or with concentric circles – is decisive for the future of the EU. Without the motor of a hard core, the Union will remain in the middle of the ford, and barely audible on the international level. It is not too late, especially since many Europeans no longer stiffen up at the prospect of a revision of the Treaties that would go in this direction. And time is running out.

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# Energy War, Interdependence and Russian Economic Offensive

*Adriana Castagnoli*

Since the beginning of his presidency, Vladimir Putin has recognized the importance of energy as an instrument of political power<sup>1</sup>. In a report by the Russian Federation, published in 2003, the energy sector is listed as a priority for domestic and foreign policy. The role of Russia in world energy markets determines, to a large extent, its geopolitical influence. Russia is a petro-state that had a moment of maximum wealth and power in 2011-12 when gas prices reached a peak. At the time of the first major gas confrontation between Ukraine and Russia, in 2005-06, the EU had taken a position of neutrality toward the two contenders, albeit it was clear that the crisis had direct effects on the Community's energy security.

According to the Eu-Russia Centre, the Kremlin interpreted this attitude as a political position of conciliation and tacit consent, which contributed to the process of forming a more serious conflict in early 2009. The lack of a unified European position in its relations with Moscow showed the multiple vulnerabilities of the EU. Starting with its inability to stand up to a supplier that used commercial means to achieve political goals, or to cope with the fragmentation at the national level of its energy market, the different and conflicting interests in the energy sector of the EU states, to the levels of cooperation between European and Russian national companies: very high in the German, Italian and French cases, looser in others. Although it signed the European Energy Charter with the EU in 1991, Russia never ratified it and officially confirmed its intention in April 2018.<sup>2</sup>

At the time, the Kremlin had also insisted on the exclusion of gas and oil from an eventual agreement on free trade with Brussels. In practice, the lack of a single market for gas in Europe ended up fostering the divide and the rule of Moscow. In the 2010s, the Russian Federation became the EU's most important energy sector partner, which imported, in addition to hydrocarbons, coal and uranium from Russia. The EU became the Kremlin's most significant trading and financial partner, providing 75 percent of Moscow's inbound foreign direct investment.

Until the energy diversification policy pursued by Brussels began to annoy the Kremlin. In December 2010, Minister for Energy Sergey Ivanovich Shmatko declared that "unfortunately" there remained an air of distrust and mistrust between Russian and European authorities. Gas remained the mainstay of cooperation with the Europeans, but the Kremlin believed that a way had to be found to expand cooperation to renewables as well. According to Moscow, the policy of diversification ended up creating additional costs.

The global energy system was under stress even before President Putin decided to invade Ukraine. In February 2015, the document that indicated the Energy Union as a strategic goal and a key priority of the EU was published by the Juncker Commission (2014-2019). A few months later, in an interview with the *"Corriere Della Sera,"* Putin clearly expressed how the energy issue was crucial for Moscow.

He criticized the *Third Energy Package* and, with ill-concealed animosity, the Baltic states. While they were still part of the energy system of the former USSR and, therefore, of Russia, they were now supposed to connect to the European electricity grids due to their accession to the EU.<sup>3</sup>

After the annexation of Crimea perpetrated by Moscow in May 2014, the European Energy Security Strategy pointed to the synchronization of the Baltic countries as a crucial step for the security of Europe's electricity networks. The first *Memorandum of Understanding* (MoU) on the Baltic energy market interconnection plan (Bemip) was signed in 2009. Other declarations followed until the *Policy Roadmap*, signed in June 2018, set the goal of completing the technical agreement of de-synchronization with the operators of Russia and Belarus. Meanwhile, it prearranged the adoption of some measures to ensure the necessary services to the Russian enclave of Kaliningrad, in a scenario that put an end to the possibility of cross-border energy flows.

In July 2021, the European Commission adopted a package of proposals to cut greenhouse gas emissions by 55 percent by 2030, a crucial reduction with a view for the EU to become the first climate-neutral continent by 2050 by turning the Green Deal into reality. Now, as a consequence of the war in Ukraine, energy security has returned to the forefront, along with climate change and other global challenges, among policymakers' concerns.

Russia's economy remains heavily dependent on energy production. Since the beginning of the war in Ukraine, Russian oil production has been declining. At the end of April, Moscow produced about one million barrels per day less, which could increase depending both on the EU's ban on Russian fossil fuels and the OPEC+ group's decision to slash oil production.

For now, demand for minerals and energy from emerging economies, such as China and India, seems to have offset Russian losses in the European market. The Russian-Chinese trade grew 29 percent from January to July. However, in the opinion of several oil experts, there are limits to the amount of Russian crude oil that refineries can store.

Meanwhile, obsolescence looms over its machinery and plants. Sanctions banning the import of Western technology are clouding the prospects for Russian economy. The stability of the Russian economy becomes increasingly dependent on liquidity and asset injections from Beijing, a dynamics that puts strategic financial leverage in the hands of the Chinese Politburo.

As substantiated by the difficulty of finding a EU agreement to address the problem, energy has become one of the most critical issues on the political agenda of the EU. Further efforts are underway to complete the synchronization of the Baltics with EU networks by 2025, getting the most out of the efficiency and potential of both onshore and offshore renewable energy. In March, the electricity networks of Ukraine and Moldova were synchronized with that of the European mainland. In this compartment, Ukraine has become part of Europe. Any Russian hopes that it would join the Eurasian Economic Union have vanished. Nevertheless, the mix of imperial ambitions and economic vulnerabilities makes Moscow an opaque and dangerous partner.

Many believed that Russia's reliance on western-European markets for its energy exports would encourage cooperation, and that economic interdependence would protect against threats to the world order. In the case of EU-Russia relations, the economic interdependence was more of a constraint on countries that had allowed themselves to grow

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reliant on Russia (for instance, Germany, Italy, and Hungary) than on Russia itself.

During the Cold War, the expansion of Moscow's oil exports was crucial for the so-called "Soviet economic offensive" strategy, that was directed mainly toward the less developed countries. From the American point of view, it was a plan whose implications for the West could be just as dangerous as military aggression. Not only could the Soviets quickly take advantage of this dependence, but they could also destroy the international markets by *dumping* raw materials and manufactured products, gaining market shares, and taking control of some sources of raw materials, thus manipulating markets to destroy Western economies and global supply.

As we know, the main instrument for stopping the spread of Communism by non-military means was the construction of an international economic system that spread affluence and economic growth through developing foreign trade.

The US pursued this goal in three ways: aid to allies and Third-World countries to strengthen their economies; prohibitions, restrictions, and controls (extending to sanctions and embargoes) to weaken the development of Communist economies and to prevent the Sino-Soviet bloc from benefiting from the most advanced Western technology, particularly in the military sector; promotion of a robust US economy, that was a model for allies and third countries, and the construction of a technologically advanced military and defense system. To achieve these goals, the US must work in concert with its European allies.

However, during the Cold War, economic competition characterized transatlantic relations far more than East-West relations. The main economic competitors of the United States were its closest allies Western Europe and Japan, not the USSR and the Communist countries. The picture, however, is not as simple as it looks. Under certain circumstances, in practice, trade relationships may serve as an inducement rather than a deterrent to war. For those who assume that commerce can always help prevent great-powers conflict, it is crucial to assess the complex ways that economic forces have actually shaped strategic thinking in Beijing and Moscow.

Strategic trade also increases a great power's vulnerability to commercial sanctions and embargoes after having become dependent on the import of resources and the export of goods for sale abroad. Economic ties are now seen as a tool for advancing geopolitical goals through "weaponized" interdependence.

Before February, the European Union relied on Moscow for approximately 40 percent of the natural gas it needed for its industries and to heat its homes. Putin had reason to fear that Russia's economic leverage over Ukraine and Europe would decline in the future. In 2010, substantial natural gas deposits were discovered in South-Eastern Ukraine. East of the Dnieper River there is over 90 percent of Ukraine's natural gas reserves. There are also strategic atomic energy plants like Zaporizhzhya, the biggest one in Europe. All this portended a significant loss in Russia's ability to use the energy as an "economic offensive" in the future, and perhaps increased Putin's fear that liberal democracy might spread into Russia.

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<sup>1</sup>Nicholas Mulder, author of *The Economic Weapon. The Rise of Sanctions as a Tool of Modern War*, Yale University Press, 2022, does not mention Vladimir Putin in his book. Notwithstanding, he writes about Western sanctions and some US Presidents and States inconsistent with the interwar period he mainly covers. Nevertheless, in his Conclusion, Mulder suggests: “Economic sanctions do not project only material force; they also project political, social, and cultural values. Sanctions would no doubt work better in a world of perfectly rational, consistently self-interested subjects, but this is not the world that we actually inhabit. Most people in most places at most times make collective choices on the basis of a wider set of considerations. The economic weapon may be a form of politics by other means. But ultimately, stitching animosity into the fabric of international affairs and human exchange is of limited use in changing the world”.

<sup>2</sup>The Russian Federation officially confirmed its intention not to be considered a signatory to the Energy Charter Treaty and the Protocol on Energy Efficiency and Related Environmental Aspects.

<sup>3</sup>The package entered into force in September 2009. Since then, some regulations were revised as part of the *Clean Energy for all Europeans Package* in 2019.

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# Are We Doomed to Fail? Is Global Democratic Governance a Chimaera?

*Keith Best*

Many will have read the recent fascinating analysis of global popular opinion (not nearly enough surveys such as this are done) about global governance issues. Published in *International Studies Quarterly* (2022) by Farsan G Hassim (University of Oxford, UK, and Lund University, Sweden) Mathias Koenig-Archibugi (London School of Economics and Political Science, UK) and Luis Cabrera (Griffith University, Australia). It is 19 pages long and I shall not attempt to summarise it here. Among the conclusions are “that the general public in several countries prefers certain designs to others, and often the most popular option is not the one represented by the current UN. On the whole, we find public opinion to lean toward the positions of those reformers who have sought to see the UN and related global institutions moving closer to supranationalist and cosmopolitan ideals. In contrast, the positions of policymakers and commentators who advocate weaker international authority and fewer constraints on state sovereignty resonate less with aggregate public preferences. This is perhaps especially notable given that our six-country sample includes four of the most powerful countries in the world.” Their analysis reveals that reform proposals that would make the UN more authoritative and reduce global inequalities in representation are most preferred by citizens across the six survey countries (Argentina, China, India, Russia, Spain, United States) on average.

Interestingly but perhaps unsurprisingly, maintaining the status quo of veto rights for the current five permanent members (P5) increases

favourability of UN models among respondents in P5 countries and decreases it among respondents in non-P5 countries. The option of eliminating all veto rights decreases support for UN models among P5 respondents, while it does not significantly affect the choices of non-P5 respondents. Among those who prioritize environmental protection, but not among those who prioritize economic growth and jobs, the proposal to make UN decisions binding on a range of important security, environmental and economic matters increase the favourability of UN models. Somewhat disturbingly, it is clear that nationalism influences opinions in these matters as the authors note the potential obstacles to UN institutional reform: when reforms involve a redistribution of power among countries, individuals in the sample tend to favour the options that increase or at least preserve the influence of their own state. While the views of respondents in Argentina and Spain may be more typical of people in most countries of the world, the four powerful states whose citizens were surveyed would be able to obstruct UN reforms even if they were endorsed by most other governments.

I am not suggesting that WFM-IGP should formulate its policies based on perceived global public opinion – especially as it is clear that this differs greatly from state to state, region to region and in the socio-cultural economic situation of the people. Moreover, public opinion is mercurial and to base policies on its perception at any one given time would be foolhardy. Nevertheless, I have long advocated

that among our preferred policies we should go for the “low-hanging fruit” or those that may be easier to achieve rather than banging our heads against a brick wall for worthy objectives but for which, outside our own bubble, there is little support. We need to consider, therefore, in making policy choices where the emphasis of governments (which provide potential funding) may lie and, as in this study, where public opinion is supportive so that we pursue those objectives which may have a realistic chance of realisation.

With this wind in our sails (as our late President Sir Peter Ustinov used to remark) why is it that I entitle this piece *Are We Doomed to Fail?* So much of world federalist thought has been based on the belief that what we espouse is self-evident. How could anyone disagree the desirability of seeking greater accountability for global institutions, further mechanisms for the voice of the people to be heard and vehicles for permanent peace and legal responsibility for abuse of human rights? Surely, these are axiomatic. Yet we need to be careful not to be blinded by our own rhetoric or to assume that our beliefs are so unchallengeable that we do not fall into complacency. Not everyone thinks like us. Apart from the obvious point of disagreement within our own communities on such issues, there is the cultural divide between the East and West and North and South. Europe (and the world) is facing a major crisis caused by the war in Ukraine. In Europe we speak of horror of a major war on our continent – yet for those in parts of Africa and Asia war and its appalling consequences has been a continuing occurrence throughout the last several decades.

These divides and a failure to appreciate or anticipate others’ geopolitical aims and objectives mean that there remains the capacity for misunderstanding highlighted recently by the UK’s National Security Adviser Sir Stephen Lovegrove, who gave a speech at the end of July in the United States where he said the situation

was more dangerous than in the Cold War in terms of dialogue with rival countries that have nuclear capabilities. He said that with the Soviet Union the lines of communication meant that it was unlikely for the world to stumble into a nuclear war and he focused on the threat from China as being particularly worrying. He warned of the “pace and scale with which China is expanding its nuclear and conventional arsenals”, while adding that the world is entering a “dangerous new age of proliferation”. He added “During the Cold War, we benefited from a series of negotiations and dialogues that improved our understanding of Soviet doctrine and capabilities – and vice versa. This gave us both a higher level of confidence that we would not miscalculate our way into nuclear war. Today, we do not have the same foundations with others who may threaten us in the future – particularly with China.”

These issues are relevant as the Tenth Review Conference of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty runs 1-26 August this year. As UN Secretary-General António Guterres said on the Fiftieth Anniversary of the NPT’s opening for signature, 24 May 2018, in Geneva: “The Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty is an essential pillar of international peace and security, and the heart of the nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation regime. Its unique status is based on its near universal membership, legally-binding obligations on disarmament, verifiable non-proliferation safeguards regime, and commitment to the peaceful use of nuclear energy.” Yet we are now a long way not just in history but in attitudes from the McCloy-Zorin accord of 1961 which set out a pathway for complete disarmament. Indeed, it established a foundation or “roadmap” for all future negotiations and international treaties with regard to nuclear and general and complete disarmament under effective international control and effectively aimed at abolishing war as an institution: it was passed unanimously by the *UN General Assembly* on 20 December

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1961. Nevertheless, *191 states parties have joined the NPT*, including the five nuclear-weapon states, making it the most widely adhered to multilateral disarmament agreement.

There is a belief in China that the USA is in terminal decline and that China will be the dominant world power before the end of the hundred years' anniversary of the Communist Revolution. That creates a dangerous mindset. Major democracies like USA and UK have endured or are experiencing crises of democratic control with populist leaders emerging demonstrating what little checks and balances exist – the essential constraints on preventing a democracy from creeping into an autocracy. With the recent defenestration of the British Prime Minister for sound and irrefutable reasons, it is disturbing that thousands of his backers are demanding that his name should be on the ballot paper for the new leader, and a Government Minister has intimated that we have moved subliminally from a Parliamentary democracy (in which the Prime Minister is *primus inter pares* in the Cabinet and does not have the powers of a President) into a quasi-Presidential system: the contention being that at the last general election the people not only voted for a Party to form the Government but also for the leader to be the Prime Minister – an argument that if you change the leader (ie the Prime Minister) that can be done only by plebiscite (in the British system, a general election). It is, of course, constitutional nonsense but is superficially persuasive and has gained adherents.

To many of the current global security issues and abuses of human rights the Western response has often been one of paralysis, of the rabbit in the headlights. The exception has been the arming of Ukraine and the draconian sanctions (although still not yet on oil and gas) against Russia. As the winter approaches, however, and the lights go out over Germany and other parts of Europe and its economy is hogtied by

consequent factory closures, we must ask the inevitable question – for how long will that resolve last? In ten years' time will we have seen a complete withdrawal of Russian forces and the return of Ukrainian national integrity with the proof that the response really did work, or will either the war be dragging on with a kind of guerrilla insurgency against the invader or, the worst case, Ukraine forced to cede territory in exchange for Europe being heated and lit? The last will condemn us to ongoing aggression as the price is seen to be worth paying – and Taiwan as well as other peripheral European NATO nations may well be in the firing line. Surely, we cannot dismiss so easily the recent history of Nazi territorial aggrandisement.

What is needed now and at that time in the future is international statesmanship – which does not seem to be that obvious right now. At an early stage there must be a roadmap for rapprochement with Russia under new leadership in which mutual trust can be achieved both culturally and militarily through joint operations and observation.

What of the other issues that confront our planet both environmentally and socially? At the same time as we see a merciful reduction in child and other mortality and an extended life expectancy as well as an ever-increasing global population it seems that even a pandemic with a new virus will not have the same winnowing effect as the Black Death or The Plague which in some cases accounted for the demise of half the population. Science seems ahead of the game. It seems, also, that the scourge of war is unlikely to make serious inroads into population numbers. There has been a decrease in inter-state wars but an increase in civil wars, as Steven Pinker pointed out in WFM's policy conference on 24 October 2020; we have seen the end of WWII but not, thankfully, as yet, the beginning of WWIII (even an invasion of Ukraine is unlikely to lead to bellicose action from NATO and would be

met by sanctions rather than direct military intervention). There are only a few states that see a military answer to their issues by way of seeking to annexe whole countries or parts. How is the world going to cope in governance terms, let alone the provision of food, water and essential care with this increasing population?

A further nail in the coffin of the Von Clausewitz concept of war being an extension of foreign policy by other means is that recent military intervention in other states has not had a happy history since the Second World War – America’s Vietnam, both Russia’s and America’s experience in Afghanistan and, of course, prior to these salutary lessons the failure to quell the fight for freedom in the East European states by military intervention from the Soviet Union. Pinker maintains that war is no longer a legitimate option. He referred to Immanuel Kant’s 1795 essay entitled “Perpetual Peace: A Philosophical Sketch,” which concludes that citizens of a democratic republic are less likely to support their government in a war because “this would mean calling down on themselves all the miseries of war.” One of his three Definitive Articles that would provide not merely a cessation of hostilities but a foundation on which to build a peace has particular relevance for world federalists, namely “The law of nations shall be founded on a federation of free states.”

The pillars of democracy, trade and the international community, where present, buttress this concept. Of course, it can be said that these were present immediately prior to WWI but, as many esteemed academics have shown in their examination of the causes of the First World War there were other factors and alliances as well as the terrifying misappreciation of others’ intentions which led almost to the accident of war that none of the combatants really wanted. Maybe, as Saskia Sassen has pointed out, the liberal democratic system is reaching its limits and in some countries is in

decay. The concept of transversality, of a system in one country being copied in another, will be partial: good for some but not for others.

Are we in a period of fundamental change in the way in which we manage international affairs? If so, other than with the benefit of hindsight, how do we know? How can we recognise such change until after it has happened? Sassen argues that we need a more philosophical understanding of where we are and what we need to change. Maybe Marie Antoinette was correct when she stated that nothing is new other than that which has been forgotten.

As we seemingly retreat into a national and regional polarised world, see a regression from globalisation and multilateralism, enter a new arms race with ever more sophisticated hypersonic means of lethal delivery, see Russia before our eyes tearing up the constraints on brutal warfare which have been curtailed painstakingly over a couple of centuries in international human rights norms in the light of previous atrocities, what hope can we have for the future?

The first is that history cannot be undone. Those international norms, treaty obligations and institutions still remain even if breached – the genie cannot be put back in the bottle. Secondly, as mentioned, public global opinion is with us as are most states that realise that unilateralism is no longer an option – states must work in concert. Finally, there is civil society exemplified by WFM-IGP and a myriad of other organisations that will continue to spread the common-sense of disarmament, collective security and strengthening of the international order and rule of law. We may have to face a mini dark age before we emerge once again into the dawn of a new realisation but that in itself will act as an imperative and stimulus to taking forward the cause of common humanity and our planet. After all, the truth, uncomfortable though it may be, is there for all to see.

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# The Invasion of Ukraine and the Need for Enforceable World Law

Jane Shevtsov

On February 24, 2022, one part of the country I was born in attacked another part of the country I was born in, with potentially devastating consequences for the world.

I was born in the Soviet Union, in what was then the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic. My family emigrated in 1989 and settled in Los Angeles. Two years later, the country we had come from dissolved itself. In its place were 15 sovereign states, including Russia and Ukraine. Fast forward 30 years and I, along with the rest of the world, am watching the previously unimaginable – a full on attack by Russia on Ukraine.

My Twitter feed is full of well-intentioned people asking why the world didn't stop Putin from invading Ukraine. There was even an agreement, the Budapest Memorandum, that, after Ukraine gave up the nuclear weapons it inherited from the Soviet Union, Russia would respect its sovereignty and independence. The U.S. and U.K. were supposed to assure Ukraine's security. They didn't.

The truth is that the world didn't stop Putin from invading Ukraine for the same reason it didn't stop Bush from invading Iraq in 2003 (the similarities – war aimed at regime change in a nation that poses no immediate threat – are striking.) There is no mechanism, aside from sanctions and war, for doing so.

At the international level, the world is in an anarchy. There are international bodies like

the U.N., but if one country wants to invade another, there is little the U.N. can do about it. The General Assembly can pass resolutions that express world opinion but are completely unenforceable. Security Council resolutions have more teeth, but even they can only be enforced by economic sanctions (which are usually ineffective) or military action. On top of that, they can be vetoed by any of the permanent members: France, China, the U.K., the U.S., and Russia itself, the victors of a war that ended over 75 years ago.

The commentariat pontificates about Russia's actions violating international law, which they do. The problem is that international law is not law in the normal sense of the word. Rather, it is a collection of treaties voluntarily made by sovereign states. If you want to know how reliable treaties are, ask a Native American – or a Ukrainian.

Law as we know it in our everyday lives is made by governments and enforced by courts and police. Break the law and you might pay a fine or go to prison. On the other hand, the treaties that make up international law are unenforceable, or enforced only through military means.

This is not a new insight. Alexander Hamilton, in "*Federalist 15*", wrote that, while treaties were widespread, they were "subject to the usual vicissitudes of peace and war, of observance and nonobservance, as the interests or passions

of the contracting powers dictate”.

Hamilton continued: “It is essential to the idea of a law, that it be attended with a sanction; or, in other words, a penalty or punishment for disobedience. . . . This penalty, whatever it may be, can only be inflicted in two ways: by the agency of the courts and ministers of justice, or by military force; by the COERCION of the magistracy, or by the COERCION of arms. The first kind can evidently apply only to [individuals]; the last kind must, of necessity, be employed against bodies politic, or communities, or states. . . . Sentences may be denounced against [states] for violations of their duty; but these sentences can only be carried into execution by the sword.”

Why do the *Federalist Papers* discuss the difference between laws and treaties? Because they were written to advocate for the adoption of the newly written U.S. Constitution, which established a federal government in place of the Articles of Confederation, which was, in essence, a treaty between 13 sovereign states. This system has proven remarkably effective at preventing war between 50 distinct political entities. Texas and California may have their differences, but there is no chance of one attacking the other. And as a Californian, I spend zero dollars defending my state from Texas. I also don't worry about Nevada entering a Texas-led alliance and becoming a threat to the security of California – as Russia worried that Ukraine might join a hostile military alliance. Among the states making up the U.S., war as an institution does not exist.

Having a common government prevents war in

other places, too. Indeed, it was the dissolution of the Soviet Union into independent states that enabled the tragic events we are seeing today. Only a common government – a federation – can abolish war as an institution. This logic applies itself neatly to the world as a whole. If a democratic national federation, like the United States, can unite distinct political units while still allowing them to self-govern on domestic matters, why can't a democratic world federation do this at the global level? This idea goes back centuries but became popular in the U.S. after WWII, attracting intellectuals, celebrities, and ordinary people. Albert Einstein was a world federalist. So were Supreme Court Justice William O. Douglas and young future senators Alan Cranston and Harris Wofford.

What all these people supported was replacing unreliable treaties and undemocratic international bodies with a democratic system of law such as exists at every other level of government. At the local, state, and national levels, we have a legislature, an executive, and a system of courts and law enforcement – so why not have those things on the world level? It's an audacious idea, but compared to the repeated failures of the current system, it looks downright practical.

Ultimately, humanity has a choice. We can keep signing treaties and keep fighting wars when those treaties fail. Or we can work toward a democratic world federation based on proven principles. As we anxiously watch developments in Eastern Europe, let us envision a global democracy which brings us at last enduring world peace through enforceable world law.

# A Step Forward to a Federal, Sovereign and Democratic Europe

*The European Parliament confirms the conclusions of the Conference on the Future of Europe and calls for a Convention for the revision of the Treaties*

UEF European Secretariat      Brussels, 10/06/2022

In the light of the current crises, the European Union has shown not to be a fully democratic and sovereign power. It is one of the main conclusions of the Conference on the Future of Europe (CoFoE), which ended on 9 May 2022. On that day, which celebrated the Schuman Declaration of 1950, European citizens, through the CoFoE conclusions, called on European representatives and political leaders to reform the European Union to make it fit for the challenges of the modern world. The European federalists are convinced that the starting point of this process is the launch of a Convention that defines the new rules of the European project by revising the Treaties.

Yesterday's vote of the European Parliament endorses the results of the CoFoE and calls on the European Council to initiate the process of revising the EU Treaties, under Article 48 of the Treaty on the European Union, by convening a Convention. The resolution was adopted at the Strasbourg plenary with 355 votes in favor, 154 against, and 48 abstentions.

**This vote is a step forward for a more federal, sovereign and democratic Europe, and an important victory for the European federalists.** The resolution calls for a reform of Europe's institutional architecture, an issue that has been the main focus of federalist activity during the CoFoE, through the

mobilisation of citizens on the multilingual platform [futureu.europa.eu](https://futureu.europa.eu), and the work of its members in the CoFoE Plenary and the Democracy working group.

The resolution includes some of the most important demands for the reform of the European Union, as formulated in the CoFoE conclusions and supported by the European federalists. In particular:

- on the EU's budgetary power, the text calls for the recognition of the Parliament's "**full co-legislative rights on the EU budget**" as well as the recognition of the **European Parliament's direct right of initiative on legislative matters**, which is the right of every national parliament;
- on voting procedures within the Council, the resolution calls for improving Europe's capacity to act, thanks to a **shift from the unanimity rule to qualified majority voting** in areas such as sanctions, "passerelle" clauses, and emergencies;
- on the EU's competencies in the areas of health and cross-border health threats, the completion of the energy union – based on efficiency and renewables in line with international agreements on climate change –, in defense, and social and economic policies, **the resolution asks for a reinforcement of the powers of the Union.**

Sandro Gozi, President of the UEF said: “The conclusions of the Conference on the Future of Europe and the demands of European citizens are clear: Europe will either be democratic and powerful or it will not be. Today, citizens expect a good outcome from the Parliament: we wanted this open debate with them, and now we have to respect our commitments and reform the treaties. The world has changed, war has returned to our continent and has shown our weaknesses even more. We live in an age of empires

where we have to decide whether to exist or disappear: unanimity is the guarantee of our disappearance.”

The European Council will discuss the conclusions of the CoFoE on the agenda for its next meeting on the 23 and 24 June. The European federalists will continue to advocate in favor of the recommendations of the CoFoE and for the convening of a Convention on the Reform of the Treaties, at both national and European levels.

## **Appeal for a Global Governance of Oceans, a Heritage of Humanity**

The oceans, the lungs of the earth, produce half of the oxygen contained in the atmosphere.  
They are the origin of life on earth.

Today, the continuation of uncontrolled human activities leads to their irreversible degradation.

Many associations, non-governmental organizations, oceanographic institutes, biologists, climatologists, concur in reminding us of the extreme urgency to act.

Without result.

### **The Oceans have neither rights nor laws**

Indeed, everyone notes the disproportionate power of multinational corporations,  
which act behind the borders drawn by the States.

No governance is exercised, these human activities are transforming the seas  
in areas of lawlessness, looting, poaching, ecocides and barbarism.

A multitude of organizations, international agencies, commissions  
are in charge of World Oceans issues.

They agree to denounce the impact of these activities  
but do not communicate among themselves and are powerless to act.  
They do not benefit from any delegation of power from the States.

Since the oceans form a single ecosystem,  
a sector-by-sector approach, as it currently exists, is doomed to fail.

### **For a world authority of Oceans**

The Global Ocean is a common good of humanity.

It must be protected and placed above the Nation States,  
above the borders drawn by the States.

It is urgent to protect the World Ocean by a single Authority,  
democratically elected by the peoples of the world and endowed with real powers of enforcement.

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# The UEF Welcomes the Accession of Ukraine and Moldova to the EU Candidate List and Advocates the Deepening of Our Institutions

As European leaders met in Brussels on 23 and 24 July, 2022, to discuss the war in Ukraine, the Membership applications of Ukraine, Moldova, and Georgia, and the follow-up of the Conference on the Future of Europe (CoFoE), the Union of European Federalists (UEF) calls on the head of states and of governments for immediate action to empower Europe.

The UEF welcomes the candidacy of Ukraine and Moldova to the EU. The decision of European leaders to grant candidate status to these two Eastern-European countries is a historic decision that will shape the destiny of our European community.

Nevertheless, the federalists consider that enlargement should go hand in hand with deeper integration. It is now urgent to reform the functioning rules of the European Union. We ask that the recent decision from the European Parliament to open the revision of the treaties is followed by a similar decision from the European Council.

The revision of the treaty will allow for important reforms in our Union. In particular, the UEF advocates for:

- **Budgetary powers to the European Union** and the recognition of the Parliament's "full co-legislative rights on the EU budget"
- **A shift from the unanimity rule to qualified majority voting** in areas such as sanctions,

"passerelle" clauses, and emergencies;

- **A reinforcement of the powers of the Union, especially in health, defense, and social and economic policies.**

Sandro Gozi, President of the UEF said: *"On the 9th of May, the three institutions undertook a solemn engagement to translate the proposals made in the context of the Conference into concrete actions. While it is true that much can be done within the framework of the existing Treaties, a deeper reform of the EU is needed. The recent crisis highlights the need to create new competencies in the areas of health, energy, and foreign policy to avoid repeating our past mistakes. The European Parliament lived up to this promise by triggering the treaty revision procedure. Now, the Council needs to show the same degree of ambition as soon as possible, without taboos nor totem!"*

Two weeks ago, a vote of the European Parliament endorsed the results of the CoFoE and called on the Council to initiate the process of revising the EU Treaties.

We take note of today's position of the European leaders and hope that the results of the CoFoE will be discussed soon. The deepening of our institutions cannot wait. It is the only way for Europe to answer the present energy, economic, social, and geopolitical crisis. The European federalists will continue to advocate in favor of the recommendations of the CoFoE and for the convening of a Convention on the Reform of the Treaties, at both national and European levels.

# The Ultimate Barrier: Nationalism

Tyden Kortman

**Ghassim, F., Koenig-Archibugi, M., & Cabrera, L**

*Public opinion on institutional designs for the United Nations: An international survey experiment*

International Studies Quarterly, Volume 66, Issue 3, September 2022

The nations of the world all went through a process of nationalism throughout the twentieth century: such forces were responsible for some of the deadliest wars in history. The twenty-first century presented an opportunity to evolve past nationalism and adjust to globalization that occurred because of the end of the Cold War and the creation of the internet and other modern forms of mass communication. The issues the world faces today can be solved by world federalism, but nationalism remains a powerful force and continues to be the largest roadblock against UN federalization; therefore, it is important to analyze how nationalism continues to flourish in the modern age and block further progress in international relations.

Nationalism is a powerful word that has long been associated with authoritarianism and totalitarianism, but such views ignore how nationalism thrives in even the democracies of the western world. No doubt, the traditional examples of nationalism are found in the Russian Federation and the People's Republic

of China. Russia currently rages a war against Ukraine based on ethnic justification and a pursuit of historical Russian territory; China continues to threaten Taiwan and still holds that Taiwan is a part of China, despite decades of flourishing democracy in the island nation. It is nationalism and the pursuit by a united cultural group that primarily pushes those actions in both nations. It also makes reference to historical records to justify hostile action. Those historical justifications can never go away; history will always remain and always give a *casus belli* to invade or threaten independent nations. These are dangerous situations that must be addressed by international courts and treaties.

However, the silent nationalism in democracies across the world also threatens the world federalist cause (perhaps even more than the loud hostility of Russia and China). Brexit, a movement in the United Kingdom to leave the European Union due to perceived disadvantages for the national state and its economy, was enforced at the beginning of 2020. In 2016, Donald Trump was elected President of the United States while running on a campaign based on right-wing populism that utilized nationalistic arguments, such as unfair international trade deals, low military spending in other NATO members, and illegal immigration. Within both these developments lays the same movement: a movement away from international organizations and back towards a nationalistic policy. While these two examples are very notable, such stories are found across the western world; there is not a single nation on Earth that does not feel the pull of nationalism, that is not attracted towards doing what is best for the nation.

These developments are not isolated, they represent a trend that threatens decades of international growth and connections. It is easy to see a sudden rise in trade deals

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that are meant to specifically benefit certain nations and gain a world power's international influence; China's Belt and Road Initiative has been around since 2013 to persuade nations to rely more on the Chinese government: now the US, along with the rest of the G7, has adopted the Partnership for Global Infrastructure and Investment (PGII), which intends to do the same thing, but turn nations towards the West. These policies could be used in a way that benefits the world federalist movement; the funds from both initiatives could be used by a body such as the United Nations to help developing nations improve their quality of life and invest in technological innovations, but instead they are used as a way to sway those developing nations into another Iron Curtain that threatens to divide the world in half. Furthermore, nationalistic justifications are prone to develop into hostile actions against other sovereign nations. Of course, there are the examples of Ukraine and Taiwan, but there is even more that should be recognized: the US-Mexico border wall, the fence on the Spanish-Moroccan border, increased provocations on the China-India border, tensions on the Korean demilitarized zone, and much more. All of these hold within them some justification for either territorial expansion or keeping out illegal immigrants, some both. In a time of increased connectivity, there appears to be a slide back into nationalism which continues to threaten any hope for world federalization.

Farsan Ghassim, Mathias Koenig-Archibugi, and Luis Cabrera's study *"Public Opinion on Institutional Designs for the United Nations: An International Survey Experiment"* illustrates all this. Among all the important data they discovered, they also found that citizens of the world's most powerful nations (the ones with veto power within the UN) usually only supported further UN authority if their nation had their power "increased or at least

preserve[d]." A single one of these nations has enough authority to kill any attempt at federalization, and that becomes more likely as nationalism grows.

Nationalism is perhaps the ultimate barrier to world federalization, as it inherently blocks growth in international relations. As nationalism continues to find more ground across the planet, our chance for a radical change in global governance shrinks. World federalization is the most effective measure to addressing the issues that everyone struggles with today: climate change and wars immediately come to mind, but the potential is truly unimaginable. It is natural for people to fall back into what is comfortable; when one is confronted with a changing world that is becoming more globalized, he ironically emboldens the forces of nationalism and isolationism that have been the standard for all of history. However, humanity cannot afford to slide back into what was once normal. Everyone is faced with a world that is becoming more connected, one where the actions of one nation can indirectly and unknowingly cripple another; the longer society swims against the current, the more likely it is to drown. The forces of nationalism cannot be allowed to gain back their influence or else our potential for actual solutions will pass by and everyone will be forced to adapt to a world much worse than ever before. The next time a politician gets on stage and says that he will make the country powerful, ask yourself, "who will pay the cost of our power and when will it return to haunt us?" That is the challenge we must all confront now: overcome nationalism and realize that harming another nation in the modern age is to harm every nation. Once that is the majority opinion, the world will truly enter the modern age of unity and peace that was envisioned when the Cold War ended.

# An Advocacy for the World Parliament

Armando Torno

**Mario Capanna**

*Il risveglio del Mondo. Testimonianze sul  
Parlamento Mondiale*  
Mimesis, Milano, 2022

When Thomas More's book entitled *Utopia* appeared in 1596 in Louvain, a dispute arose among the humanists. Some argued that the initial "u" was the contraction of "ou" and, since "topos" in Greek means place, the word would have indicated a "place that does not exist".

Others disagreed. They noted that in the language of the great ancient philosophers the negative forms are given by prepending "ou" to verbal forms and "a" (the well-known alpha privative) in the case of a noun. So? In deference to More, who was cultured, ironic as well as illustrious, someone suggested that it was not an error but a gimmick: the "u" could be understood as a contraction of "eu" ("good" in Greek) and the word would have thus described a "happy place".

The debate of that early sixteenth century between various grammarians and scholars always comes to mind especially when Mario Capanna enters the field with his latest war horse: a World Parliament that can represent all the peoples of our planet. The idea, useless to deny it, is not easy to realize and even now it is placed among the ideas belonging to a utopia. But this is precisely the desire of Capanna, who

considers that happy place that does not exist as a laboratory of ideas and projects for the humanity of the future.

On the other hand, as the leader of the 1968 student-uprisings likes to say, communism appeared in Plato's *Republic* and it took over two millennia to see its first application. The Greek thinker proposed the abolition of private property in the upper classes and the introduction of the communion of goods; so that everyone shared their possessions in the interest of the community. To return to More's *Utopia*, let's not forget that the working day was 6 hours and the rest of the time had to be devoted to studies. And in Campanella's *The City of the Sun*, everyone was required to work no more than 4 hours a day. These are still utopian times for current rhythms, although not unattainable.

Now Capanna has collected a series of testimonies on the World Parliament, interviewing just under forty personalities ranging from the Nobel Prize winner Giorgio Parisi to a combative priest like Don Antonio Mazzi, from the film director (Academy Award winner) Gabriele Salvatores to the singer-songwriter Roberto Vecchioni, from the philosopher Giacomo Marramao to the historian Franco Cardini. There is no lack of criticism in the testimonies collected. For example, Luciano Canfora, a magnificent connoisseur of the Greek-Latin world, in the letter he addressed to Capanna, after recalling that he "always had respect for utopian proposals because they almost always contain elements that bear fruit in the future", is not in agreement with the project. He sees the World Parliament as "an old, powerless and discredited instrument". The editor adds a footnote, however from the debate emerges the ineffectiveness of the UN in the face of current conflicts, and the uselessness that the League of Nations (founded in 1920)

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demonstrated in preventing the Second World War.

Of course, the World Parliament is also something else and would have problems that are not easy to deal with in the future, now that the Earth has 8 billion inhabitants and it will only take a few years to reach 10. Looking for a solution to giving a voice to everyone through the World Parliament is judged by Marcello Veneziani – thus the title of his contribution – “an agreeable and coherent utopian idea”, while the monk and anthropologist Guidalberto Bormolini would even like “a cosmic meeting” which does not represent “only humans, who definitely caused plenty of trouble”.

It is not possible to report all the opinions expressing some criticism and many

encouragements; we will only say that the idea of such a parliament has passed its first test and is beginning to be shared beyond trends and opinions by illustrious international figures present in the book, such as Gustavo Zagrebelsky or Carlo Rovelli, the Afghan Malalai Joya or Nadia Urbinati. Among the texts there is also a poem by Roberto Piumini, a *Civil Song* written specifically for the collection, and a contribution by the photojournalist Uliano Lucas.

In the introduction, after recognizing the utopian nature of the World Parliament, Capanna recalls that it may have the imperfections typical of human constructions, but it should not be thought of with the “current obsolete categories”. In short, it is necessary to try. New urgencies are coming. This is not the time to give up.

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