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## UNRISD News [Autumn / Winter 2002]

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# UNRISD NEWS

The United Nations Research Institute for Social Development Bulletin

## Racism, Citizenship and Social Justice

Yusuf Bangura

Two important public policy issues have influenced debates on racism and xenophobia. The first is the complex way racial cleavages have shaped the evolution of citizenship, especially in countries with deep ethnoracial divisions. Much of the history of efforts to construct a responsive and accountable public sphere can be considered as struggles to demolish racial barriers and incorporate previously excluded groups into the system of rights and obligations that define citizenship. Struggles for universal citizenship have underscored the need to respect cultural diversity and its underlying values of tolerance, accommodation and solidarity. The sec-

ond issue is the promotion of social justice and equitable systems of governance, which are seen as a fundamental requirement for achieving stability and consolidating the values of citizenship. Yet reforms based on social justice are often fraught with difficulties because they deal with redistributive issues. They may be seen in zero-sum terms by some citizens. Those who stand to lose may resist or undermine the reforms, while those who stand to gain may not be strong enough to defend them. Concerns for fiscal prudence under conditions of liberal competitive markets may also act as a constraint to the bridging of inequalities. ▶ page 2

After a year-long hiatus, UNRISD News is back—and readers will discover that the Institute has not been on vacation! This 44-page issue provides a wealth of information about our work over the past 12 months, which has included 23 publications, nine events and one fully redesigned Web site.

UNRISD is also pleased to bring readers an impressive set of contributions that look at issues of racism, citizenship and social justice. In this issue, eight prominent scholars—Hans-Georg Betz, Robert D. Bullard, George M. Fredrickson, Ray Jureidini, Khoo Boo Teik, Glenn C. Loury, Tracey McIntosh and Rodolfo Stavenhagen—write on the social construction of race and citizenship, the social dynamics of racism and inequality, responses to cultural diversity, and how public policies affect race relations.

### Inside . . .

**ESSENTIAL MATTER** — Race and Citizenship in the United States • Race, Gender and Public Policy in Aotearoa/New Zealand

- Temporary Contract Labour and Xenophobic Practices in the Middle East • Exclusionary Populism and Differentialist Ideology in Western Europe • The Superficial Morality of Colour-Blindness in the United States • Ethnic Conflict in Post-Crisis Indonesia • Confronting Global Environmental Racism in the Twenty-First Century

**REQUIRED READING**  
**INSIDE COVERAGE** — UNRISD Redevelops Web Site • Environmental Conflict, Participation and Movements

- Improving Knowledge on Social Development in International Organizations • Ethnic Structure, Inequality and Governance of the Public Sector • Ageing, Development and Social Protection • UNRISD at the World Social Forum • The Global Compact and Civil Society • Agrarian Change, Gender and Land Rights • The Need to Rethink Development Economics • Corporate Social and Environmental Responsibility in Peru • Information and Communication Technology in Senegal • Donald McGranahan, 1917–2001

**GLOBAL RESOURCES**  
**THE LAST WORD** — Reflections on Racism and Public Policy, by Rodolfo Stavenhagen

The UNRISD conference on Racism and Public Policy (3–5 September 2001, Durban)—held to coincide with the World Conference against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance—addressed four broad issues relating to those above: the social construction of race and citizenship; the social dynamics of racism and inequality; organized responses to cultural diversity; and the impact of public policies on race relations.

More than 40 prominent scholars from various regions of the world responded to UNRISD’s invitation to write papers and lead discussions at the meeting. This issue of UNRISD News brings together excerpts from the papers of eight of these scholars: George M. Fredrickson, Tracey McIntosh, Ray Jureidini and Hans-Georg Betz, who consider issues related to citizenship; Glenn C. Loury, Khoo Boo Teik and Robert D. Bullard, who address governance and social justice issues; and Rodolfo Stavenhagen, who traces changes in ideas about race, citizenship and justice since the establishment of the United Nations.

#### Citizenship issues

Genetic research has discredited the practice of classifying humans according to distinct races. However, a gulf

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still exists between scientific knowledge and popular beliefs about race. Physical differences may appear trivial, but they structure perceptions and constitute a significant source of prejudice in social

relations. *George M. Fredrickson* discusses the competing traditions of thought in the evolution of citizenship in the United States. There, commitment to universal human rights coexisted with a strong historical tendency to exclude non-white groups from citizenship. The Civil War and use of black troops to defend the Union represented the first major effort to extend citizenship to African-Americans. However, this gain was undermined in the South during the almost century-long Jim Crow era, when blacks suffered discrimination, disfranchisement and violence. Struggles for racial equality intensified between the 1930s and 1960s, culminating in the Civil Rights Acts of 1964 and 1965, which made citizenship rights more enforceable. However, as Fredrickson notes, formal equality in the United States has not led to social citizenship: a substantially higher proportion of blacks than whites are likely to be imprisoned, unemployed, socially isolated or destitute.

Racial discrimination impacts men and women differently, underscoring the need for a gendered understanding of citizenship in racially segmented societies. *Tracey McIntosh* develops this theme in light of Maori women’s experiences in New Zealand. Race, gender and class interlock—and there are dangers in imagining a universal “female”, or homogenous ethnoracial groups. Maori women, for example, share with Maori men the scars and disadvantages associated with colonization: poor education and health status, low income and employment, inadequate housing, and overrepresentation in crime. However, Maori women are disadvantaged vis-à-vis both Maori men and white New Zealanders. McIntosh argues that policies must focus on improving the participation of Maori women in male-dominated Maori institutions, as well as in national institutions that regulate the lives of all New Zealanders.

Gender discrimination is an issue also addressed by *Ray Jureidini* in his discussion of labour migration and xenophobia in the Middle East, an area that has experienced massive waves of immigrants engaged in short-term work.

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*The effects of race-blind or race-indifferent policies should be evaluated asymmetrically by reordering moral concerns. This would involve placing racial justice before race-blindness or race-indifference.*

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The migration of cheap Asian and African workers has produced a racialized secondary labour market in that region. These workers are associated with the dirty, dangerous and difficult jobs, which nationals refuse to do despite widespread poverty and unemployment. A central feature of the contract that underpins labour recruitment for these jobs is its bondage character: workers are not free to access local labour markets without state approval, and are attached to a sponsor for the duration of the contract. Jureidini reports that conditions of slavery pertain to many female live-in domestic workers: threats of violence, restriction of movement, exploitative working conditions and widespread abuse. He calls for the introduction and enforcement of local labour laws and international conventions that will protect such workers.

Racism often needs mobilizers, organizations and a discourse to activate or sustain it. According to *Hans-Georg Betz*, a new form of exclusionary populism, exemplified by right-wing political parties, poses a threat to Europe’s liberal order. These parties advocate a restrictive notion of citizenship: only co-ethnics or long-standing citizens

should enjoy full citizenship rights. The transformation of left-wing parties into centrist organizations, in which the average worker feels abandoned, has allowed the populist right to fill the vacuum. Betz is confident, however, that the institutions of Western democracy will be strong enough to meet the challenge.

#### Governance and social justice

In his contribution, *Glenn C. Loury* challenges the dominant ideology—liberal individualism—that drives opposition to affirmative action in the United States. This ideology espouses a policy of colour-blindness: the practice of not using race when carrying out a policy. He distinguishes colour-blindness from race-indifference: the practice of not considering how a chosen rule might impact various racial groups. Both can ameliorate or exacerbate the social disadvantage of minorities. However, Loury contends that given the history of racism in the United States, the effects of race-blind or race-indifferent policies should be evaluated asymmetrically by reordering moral concerns. This would involve placing racial justice before race-blindness or race-indifference. He concludes that when top universities use affirmative action to ration admissions, they reinforce in powerful ways this reordering of moral priorities—the need to build an American leadership cadre that includes African-Americans and other minorities.

*Khoo Boo Teik* discusses the effects of affirmative action policies in Malaysia and their implications for Indonesia. Economic instability since the 1997 financial crisis has provoked racial and ethnic riots in Indonesia whereas Malaysia, which has a history of racial violence, seems to have avoided ethnoracial implosion. Instead, the pressure for change in Malaysia has attracted a coalition of organizations drawn from diverse groups, religious affiliations and ideologies. Analysts attribute Malaysia's relative success in managing ethnoracial relations to its pre-crisis affirmative

action programme—the New Economic Policy (NEP). This redistributive programme has favoured the Malays vis-à-vis the Chinese. Khoo argues that NEP incorporated other objectives related to high capacities for policy making, state intervention in the economy and other modes of governance associated with East Asia's developmental state. It seems the strategy has had

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the overall effect of radically recomposing Malaysia's class structure, altering the balance of power between different groups and empowering the state to deliver economic and political outcomes. Khoo contends, however, that wholesale application of Malaysia-type affirmative action policies in Indonesia may be difficult in a global environment that discourages economic nationalism.

*Robert D. Bullard's* article is on environmental racism, which is defined as a practice that provides benefits to corporations that pollute the environment and shifts liabilities to people of colour. Bullard reports that environmental racism influences local land use,

encourages lax enforcement of environmental regulations, and legitimizes human exposure to harmful chemicals and risky technologies. Combating environmental racism would require the acceptance of environmental protection as a basic human right; the non-discriminatory enforcement of existing environmental, health, housing and civil rights laws; the closing of corporate tax loopholes that encourage corporations to pollute the environments of poor and disadvantaged people; and the development of effective international regulations and agreements.

#### Changes since 1948

In *The Last Word*, *Rodolfo Stavenhagen* traces changes in ideas about race, citizenship and justice since the establishment of the United Nations. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights of 1948 upheld the principle of universal rights and freedoms, and barred discrimination on the basis of race and other human cleavages. The anti-colonial struggles of the 1950s and 1960s led to the incorporation of the right to self-determination in the 1960 Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples. This represented a distinct shift from racist attitudes and ideologies to people's rights and the construction of an equitable world order. Southern migration to the industrial societies of the North produced new forms of racism in the 1970s and 1980s, affecting the fortunes of racial minorities, migrant labourers and refugees. However, migration also gave rise to the concept of multiculturalism, or the right to be different, and more recently to the notion of interculturality. The latter seeks to strengthen diversity through flexible modes of governance that are not restricted to any one model of the "nation-state".

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## The Historical Construction of Race and Citizenship in the United States

George M. Fredrickson

Many nations have based their identities on descent from a common set of remote ancestors, who allegedly bequeathed to their descendants a distinctive language and culture. But the United States—as befits “a nation of immigrants”—has usually defined itself more in terms of the political ideas and values associated with its revolutionary origins than with the ethnic derivation and character of its population. But its “civic nationalism” did not prevent the use of physical “race”, especially as represented by perceived differences in pigmentation, in determining social and political status during most of its history.

Although the American Revolution appealed to universalistic conceptions of human rights deriving from the Enlightenment, the Constitution of 1789 authorized exclusions from citizenship resulting from the enslavement of people of African descent and the consignment of conquered indigenous peoples to a dependent status. The

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immigration law of 1790 made a colour bar explicit when it limited the right of naturalization to “free white person[s]”. In the 1820s and 1830s, suffrage was extended to all white males, but was taken away from most

free blacks. As the controversy over slavery heated up in the 1830s, 1840s and 1850s, defenders of black servitude relied increasingly on pseudoscientific racist ideologies. The Supreme Court’s Dred Scott decision of 1857 declared all African-Americans—free or enslaved—ineligible for citizenship.

Racism was a national phenomenon on the eve of the Civil War. “Free Negroes” in the Northern states were often segregated and denied legal and political rights. Some states and territories even prohibited their entry. But the Civil War made emancipation and the use of black troops essential to preservation of the Union and gave African-Americans a claim to equal citizenship that was realized with the passage of the 14th Amendment to the Constitution, in 1868. National citizenship was thus made available to anyone born in the United States, regardless of race, except Indians living in tribal communities. In 1870, the 15th Amendment outlawed denial of the right to vote on the grounds of “race, color, or previous condition of servitude”. Henceforth, racial difference could not be the explicit basis for a denial of legal and political equality.

Egalitarian constitutional reform did not, however, lead to substantive equality for African-Americans. True citizenship means more than pro forma legal equality. It also entails equality of respect and the willingness of an ethnoracial majority to acknowledge in word and deed that members of a minority belong to the nation. Blacks in the South during the Jim Crow era, beginning in 1880s and lasting until the 1960s, were discriminated against, disfranchised and terrorized. Ideological racism—

aimed not only at blacks, but at anyone who was not definitively white—peaked in the United States in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Beginning in 1882, most Chinese immigration was prohibited.

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The fitness of immigrants from Eastern and Southern Europe was also questioned on racial grounds, and immigration laws passed in the 1920s established a quota system based in part on beliefs about the innate characteristics of various peoples. “Ascriptive Americanism” had seemingly triumphed over the universalistic liberalism that had inspired the abolitionist movement and the post-Civil War constitutional amendments.

The extension and intensification of racism between the 1880s and the 1920s resulted from an interaction between racial stereotypes already embedded in the culture, and the tensions associated with class and status formation in a rapidly industrializing capitalist society. Working or lower-class whites could conclude that racially different, lower-paid workers threatened their economic status; or, alternatively, they could be compen-

sated for their own poverty and lack of opportunity by the “psychological wage” of racial or ethnic status. Established elites could inhibit class conflict by encouraging ethnoracial divisions among the disadvantaged, or they could buttress their status and authority as charter Americans by opposing the immigration of those deemed racially inferior.

Between the 1930s and the 1970s, members of racial minorities and their sympathizers struggled to establish a broader and more enforceable conception of citizenship—one that would realize the egalitarian promise of the country’s Declaration of Independence in 1776. The New Deal promulgated a new conception of social citizenship in 1933—“freedom from want” in Roosevelt’s idiom—but most black people were initially denied coverage by the new social insurance policies. The massive migration of Southern blacks to the North, however, restored their right to vote and enhanced their political leverage. At the same time, scientific racism was coming under attack from social and natural scientists. But it was the Second World War and the revulsion against Nazi racism that provided much of the impetus to the racial reformism of the postwar era. The partially successful civil rights movement of the 1950s and 1960s also acquired legitimacy from the strategic need of the United States to compete with the Soviet Union for “the hearts and minds” of recently decolonized people of colour in Africa and Asia. The Civil Rights Acts of 1964 and 1965, and the simultaneous elimination of racially justified immigration quotas, can be attributed to the activation of previously dormant egalitarian ideals at a time when altered circumstances made it appear that the application of those ideals would serve the national interest, as well as the interests of influential groups within the society.

The Civil Rights Acts made the legal and political rights of citizenship more enforceable, but did not establish the right to equal respect for those who were still regarded as “other” by a majority of white Americans. Furthermore, in the 1980s the social citizenship adumbrated by the New Deal began to be dismantled with particularly detrimental effects on minorities. Contemporary statistics showing that a substantially higher proportion of blacks than whites are likely to be imprisoned, unemployed, socially isolated or destitute, reveal that structural inequality associated with race remains a central problem of American society. Although no longer sanctioned by law, discrimination persists—not only against African-Americans,

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but also against poor Latinos. Asians still suffer discrimination as well, though it takes more subtle forms. The growth of ethnic consciousness among blacks and the desire of Latino and Asian immigrants to preserve aspects of their culture have made “multiculturalism”, rather than simple integrationism or assimilationism, the dominant anti-racist ideology in the United States today.

What has made the historical construction of race and citizenship in the United States unique among Western nations is the coexistence of a universalistic human rights tradition and a strong historical tendency toward exclusion on racial grounds. Useful comparisons can be made with France, which also has a universalistic human rights tradition but has based its exclusions more on culture or religion than on race in the physical sense, and with the German tradition of straightforward ethnic nationalism that came to hideous realization in the Nazi era. German identity before 1945 involved a categorical rejection of Enlightenment conceptions of individual liberty and democratic government, to which most white Americans professed adherence—but which did not prevent them from discriminating against those deemed biologically incapable of self-rule.

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The paper from which this article is excerpted is available at [www.unrisd.org](http://www.unrisd.org).

## Contested Realities: Race, Gender and Public Policy in Aotearoa/New Zealand

Tracey McIntosh

Identity, both personal and collective, is formed in the material reality in which we live. Our gendered identities determine to a large degree the way that we see ourselves and are seen. Similarly, our class location is important to these same perceptions. Ethnicity is yet another layer, and some ethnic identities produce a far greater and more pronounced reaction than others. The Maori experience of colonization, and the contemporary reality of marginalization and deprivation in everyday life, mean that ethnic identity in Aotearoa/New Zealand<sup>1</sup> is an issue of struggle and resistance. As *tangata whenua* (people of the land, indigenous people), Maori find their location in New Zealand society highly contested. There is no single Maori experience; not all suffer the same burdens or enjoy the same privileges. Though there is a strong sense of connectedness—of belonging to each other by descent, by the land, and by a shared history—the experience of being Maori has myriad inflections.

If we understand social policy to be about directives and actions that affect the well-being of societal members by influencing the way that goods and resources are distributed in society, then we also need to acknowledge that by this process some groups and individuals will be advantaged and others disadvantaged. The achievement of *tino rangitiratanga* (self-determination, sovereignty) is primary to most Maori, but its interpretation and the means of achieving it are areas of some dispute. There is also considerable non-Maori opposition to programmes or policies that set out to remove social and economic disparities. Though the current government of New Zealand has articulated its intention to uphold

the Treaty of Waitangi (signed in 1840 between representatives of the British crown and Maori chiefs)—and to “close the gaps” between Maori and non-Maori in the areas of education, labour force, housing and health—these goals have been met with a certain cynicism by many Maori and with strident opposition from other sectors of New Zealand society. During the last 30 years, social policy in New Zealand

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has been informed by these debates and by the meeting of obligations under the Treaty of Waitangi. Yet many Maori doubt that there is sufficient political consciousness and will to address the causes of ongoing social and economic disparities, and some non-Maori strongly resent policies and pro-

grammes perceived to privilege Maori over other, “ordinary” New Zealanders. Against this backdrop we find that all things Maori are political.

Extensive research on the Maori condition shows that they suffer disadvantage from birth. A Maori infant is more likely to die than a non-Maori infant. A Maori child is less likely to participate in early childhood education. Although there is little significant data on primary school performance, we know that young Maori are leaving secondary school with much lower levels of qualification than non-Maori. Maori are much more likely to be suspended or expelled from school, which increases the likelihood of their lower educational achievement and more significant involvement in youth crimes. Maori unemployment rates are considerably higher than for non-Maori, and Maori income is considerably lower. Maori are more likely to require government assistance or be totally dependent on government benefits. Many Maori have inadequate housing and suffer from poorer mental and physical health status than non-Maori. Disadvantage and difference are marked in Maori presence in the criminal justice system; they are overrepresented as both victims and offenders.<sup>2</sup> For too many people, unemployment, poor health, psychiatric conditions, poverty or prison life is what being Maori amounts to.

Policies that target Maori are problematic. Those that attempt to tackle racial discrimination may benefit some sectors of Maori more than others, and in some cases may perpetuate class and gender oppression. Maori women, for example, are at the forefront of the struggle to better the social position of their communities, yet they continue to

bear the greatest burden of social, political and economic oppression. Nineteenth century representations of Maori women have left a legacy of marginalization *within* and *outside* Maori society. For example, many modern Maori organizations that are perceived as traditional indigenous structures are in fact constructs of colonial rule and administration. These organizations often privilege certain groups or individuals, in many cases also making positions of power and decision making an exclusively male domain.

The devaluation of Maori women has had a negative impact on all aspects of Maori life—children, relationships, families and communities have suffered, to the detriment of the life experiences of both Maori men and women. However, it has also allowed Maori men to broaden their areas of power and dominance in respect to Maori women. Maori women scholars have noted that Maori men have largely come to be perceived as the legitimate keepers, promoters and interpreters of Maori knowledge. This has given rise to a situation in which male Maori interests are perceived as sim-

ply Maori interests. While the Treaty of Waitangi recognizes and promises to protect group rights, historic and current government policy toward Maori has sought to extinguish these rights and to replace them with individual rights as understood in Western/non-Maori legal and social policy terms. The individuals benefiting from this approach have been overwhelmingly male. Maori women continue to want to be linked with and to stand by Maori men, based on the recognition that solidarity is essential to achieve aims and maintain values in their culture. However, these women also continue to strive for positions of equal power and responsibility. Social policy, legislation and action, if they are to improve well-being, must enhance the mechanism for power sharing and inclusive participation rather than replicate and legitimize unequal power relations.

Despite the impressive renaissance of Maori culture during the last 30 years, there has been little success in addressing other social inequities faced by Maori in their daily lives. While culture is vitally important to physical and spiritual well-being, these can be fully

realized only when day-to-day struggles and their solutions are met with the same determination that is given to cultural considerations. There is the need not only to fight for the preservation and vitality of culture, but also to assure equity in economic and political standing, and access to resources, power and knowledge.

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<sup>1</sup> Aotearoa (“land of the long white cloud”) is the name given to the country by early Polynesian settlers.

<sup>2</sup> Te Puni Kokiri (Ministry of Maori Development), **Progress Towards Closing Social and Economic Gaps Between Maori and Non-Maori**, Te Puni Kokiri, Wellington, New Zealand, May 2000.

The paper from which this article is excerpted is available at [www.unrisd.org](http://www.unrisd.org).

## Temporary Contract Labour and Xenophobic Practices in the Middle East

**Ray Jureidini**

The massive influx of migrant workers to the Arab Middle Eastern states following the oil price boom in the mid-1970s, the subsequent (from the mid-1980s) displacement of large numbers of Arab workers by people from East and Southeast Asia, and the constant ebb and flow in the 1990s, constituted one of the great migration sagas of the second half of the twentieth century.

As in most countries around the world, the rules that apply to temporary for-

ign workers in the Arab Middle Eastern states prevent non-nationals from entering local labour markets. In the countries in question, these workers enter under the formal responsibility of a prearranged employer who acts as their sponsor, and with an employment contract of limited duration. The sponsor is required to arrange the work and residency permits that allow the foreigner to be employed. The worker is not permitted to leave the employer or to seek employment elsewhere in the country—at least not without the ex-

press permission of governmental authorities. When a contract expires, the worker is required to leave the country, unless the contract and appropriate government permits are renewed. Temporary foreign workers generally have no citizenship rights or rights of association to join or form unions. Thus these workers, whatever their level of skill, may be categorized as formally “unfree” labour in the host country.

In the decade leading up to 1985, some 4 million skilled and unskilled

workers entered the Gulf Co-operation Council (GCC) countries (Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates). The majority of these workers hailed from other Arab countries—Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Yemen—but labour was also recruited from Sudan, the Palestinian territories, Pakistan and India. In Saudi Arabia and Kuwait, for example, the effect was a near doubling of the population. By the mid-1980s, the share of Asian workers was growing steadily in the GCC countries. These workers came mainly from Bangladesh, Indonesia, the Philippines, South Korea and Sri Lanka (by 1990, migrant labour from Bangladesh and Sri Lanka made up more than 20 per cent of the Asian workforce in the region). The recruitment of Asians increased partly because their labour was cheaper than that of

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workers from other Arab states, but there was also the idea that a diversification of nationalities would deflect the potential political encroachment of other Arabs (particularly Yemenis, Palestinians and Egyptians) on the host countries. Thus, the increasing

inclusion of Asians in the migrant workforce was both politically and economically expedient.

As oil prices began to fall in the mid-1980s, the ambitious programmes of infrastructure development in which many foreign workers were employed were scaled back in the GCC countries. But this change in economic prospects rarely affected the demand for migrant labour in the service sectors, and the demand for unskilled workers in particular. As “cheap” foreign workers from Asian and African countries fulfilled this demand, so the jobs in the secondary labour markets became increasingly racialized. That is, the dirty, dangerous and difficult jobs became associated with foreign workers, and nationals would refuse to undertake them, even when they found themselves unemployed. Those nationals that were employed tended to be concentrated in public service jobs and in more skilled positions. The demand for domestic workers also showed no sign of decline—there were in fact increasing numbers of these workers, mainly women from Bangladesh, Indonesia, the Philippines and Sri Lanka.

Xenophobic sentiment against migrant (particularly domestic) workers in the Middle East has three aspects. First, it is evidenced by the preference for temporary contract labour, which makes such workers easily expendable and excludes them from possibilities of citizenship.

Second, preferential treatment is usually given to nationals, although particular kinds of menial work are “allocated” to foreigners. A number of Gulf states have introduced policies to reduce their “dependency” on foreign labour, a result of which is that billions of dollars flow out of their economies each year in the form of remittances to the labour-sending countries. Disincentives include increased taxation on work and residency permits, the

elimination of access to free health and education services (Kuwait, United Arab Emirates), and bans on certain highly skilled workers—with the aim of promoting “indigenization” in particular sectors (Saudi Arabia).

The third aspect of xenophobic (and racist) sentiment is the attitude of disdain and abuse toward those who are visibly “different” (particularly Sri Lankans, Filipinos, and Ethiopians

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and other Africans), which is manifest in the way they are treated by nationals, particularly employers. This is best exemplified by the treatment of domestic maids, partly because of their “alien” presence in the private domestic sphere. Indeed, “the servants” are complained about on a daily basis—in the household, as well as at family and social gatherings.

Studies in Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon and the United Arab Emirates reveal that the employment relations and conditions of female migrant domestic workers are a form of contemporary slavery. In addition to numerous reports of severe physical, sexual, mental and emotional abuse, the threat of violence is ever-present if these women “escape” (the wide use of this term is telling) from their employers. There are severe restrictions of freedom, with many employees unable to leave the household without permission or unaccompanied, or prevented from communicating freely with the outside world. Because employers

usually withhold the passports of their domestic workers, “escape” usually results in arrest, detention and deportation (unless the employee is retrieved by the employer), with all the inherent dangers. Finally, economic exploitation is pervasive: employees are expected to work 14 to 18 hours per day, and are provided with inadequate sleeping conditions that give them little or no privacy.

While there are local criminal laws that may be used in cases of serious abuse, migrant domestic workers are generally covered by neither local labour laws nor conventions of the United Nations or

International Labour Organization. It is generally accepted that the international convention most applicable to temporary foreign workers, and foreign female domestic employees in particular, is the 1990 United Nations International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrants, Workers and Members of their Families. However, this convention has not received ratification from 20 countries and has therefore not yet come into force.

It cannot be suggested that all migrant domestic and other workers are treated poorly. Yet legal, administrative and

contractual arrangements can create an environment in which these workers are vulnerable to slave-like practices, racism and xenophobia. Local labour laws and international conventions must not only be introduced to protect such workers, they must also be locally and internationally enforced.

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The paper from which this article is excerpted is available at [www.unrisd.org](http://www.unrisd.org).

## Exclusionary Populism and Differentialist Ideology in Western Europe: A Threat to Liberal Democracy and Civil Rights?

**Hans-Georg Betz**

**R**adical right-wing populist parties represent one of the most significant new political actors in contemporary Western European democracies. True. In recent years, the electoral fortunes of the populist right have been less impressive than they were in the 1980s and early 1990s. In France, the split of the Front National dealt a blow to Jean-Marie Le Pen’s prospects for the presidential elections. In Austria, disenchanted voters defected en masse from the Freiheitliche Partei after it entered a centre-right coalition government with the Volkspartei. In Italy, Umberto Bossi’s Lega Nord has been reduced to a core of support based in the hinterlands of Lombardy and Veneto. In Denmark and Norway, support for the populist right has all but stagnated. Even in Belgium, where the Vlaams Blok progresses, the pace has slowed. Only in Switzerland has the populist right made advances, since the Schweizerische Volkspartei recreated itself in a populist guise.

Yet it would be a mistake to become complacent about the populist right’s

challenge to liberal democracy. The inclusion of right-wing populist parties in national governments in Austria and Italy is a case in point. An even more serious challenge comes from the populist right’s exclusionary ideas and programmes, which have proved to have considerable appeal beyond the populist right’s core support. The main elements of this political doctrine are (i) a restrictive notion of citizenship, which holds that genuine democracy is based on a culturally, if not ethnically, homogeneous community, (ii) the notion that only long-standing citizens are full members of civil society, and (iii) the belief that society’s benefits should be restricted to those who have made substantial contribution to it. The doctrine’s spirit is most poignantly expressed in the notion of “own people first” and in the call for “national preference”. In the extreme, exclusionary populism resembles a new form of cultural nativism, which, rather than promoting ideas of ethnic and cultural superiority, aims to protect the “own” society, way of life and values against alien intrusion and contamination.

Exclusionary populism and cultural nativism derive their logic and justification from a differentialist ideology, which the populist right has recently adopted from the French *nouvelle droite*. This was an intellectual movement that gained considerable notoriety for a brief span in the 1970s, without, however, having much impact on the political discourse within or beyond France’s borders. The central tenets of differentialist ideology are that human beings are equal but different; that diversity enriches the world; and that everything must be done to preserve cultural identity. In recent years, the populist right has increasingly focused on “the right of all peoples to be themselves”, both to legitimize its fundamental rejection of immigration and multiculturalism and to justify its attacks against the political and intellectual classes—which are charged with promoting universalism, deracination and, above all, globalization. At a time when most traditional left-wing parties have largely abandoned the average worker to deal alone with the vicissitudes of globalized capitalism, the

populist right has been quick to fill the ideological lacuna. Today's defenders of the proletariat are more likely found in the ranks of the Front National and its European imitators than among socialists and social democrats.

In recent years—and not just since the events of 11 September 2001—the populist right has increasingly tried to position itself as a guardian and defender of Western civilization and values and, most curiously, Christianity. At the same time, the populist right has gradually modified its position on immigration. Although still opposed to immigration in general, the populist right has argued that not all immigrants are the same. Rather, the degree to which immigrants are acceptable depends above all on their ability and willingness to assimilate. This line of reasoning holds that assimilation is easier for immigrants sharing the values of the host country than it is for those from fundamentally different cultures. It also holds that some groups are fundamentally unassimilable, most prominent among them Muslims. Thus the current “invasion” of immigrants from Muslim countries poses the most fundamental threat to Western culture and values, and this emigration nothing less than an attempt by a fundamentally intolerant and totalitarian religion to colonize and conquer the West as a decisive step toward world domination.

In the process of formulating its stance, the populist right rediscovered Christianity and traditional values. This is ironic, given the strong bias right-wing populist parties have traditionally held against the Church. With the discovery of Islam as a major enemy, the populist right has begun to reassess its relationship with the Church and Christianity. For example, the Austrian *Freiheitliche Partei* stresses in its most recent programme that Christianity, together with the world of antiquity, is the “spiritual foundation of Europe”. To protect this foundation and defend its values, the

party now calls for a militant Christianity. In Italy, the Lega Nord recently founded a Catholic association intended to revive and strengthen the commitment to traditional Christian values. At the same time, after 11 September leading members of the party—which after all is a member of the current centre-right coalition government—called for a complete closing of Italy's borders to Muslims seeking entry and for giving preference to immigrants from Catholic countries.

The populist right's anti-Islamic views should not be taken as a substitute for anti-Semitism when the latter is no longer an acceptable political position in Europe. In the populist right's discourse, anti-Islamism has replaced anti-communism, which on the radical right was always only half of the story, the other being anti-Americanism. Both anti-communism and anti-Americanism were motivated by a fundamental fear of what the radical right considered the subversive nature of “VodkaCola culture”, which would inevitably lead to the destruction of national identity and autonomous culture. In the populist right's current discourse, the greatest threat comes from globalization as a process and as an ideology, what the Front National has called “*mondialisme*”. The populist right is among the most pronounced and vocal opponents to globalization—it brings traditional left-wing terms and concepts together with right-wing xenophobic rhetoric to form a new populist ideology that is designed to appeal to a range of anxieties and resentments prevalent in Western Europe today.

It is too early to say whether or not this new ideology will help the populist right regain lost electoral support and appeal to new constituencies. In recent years, the populist right has seen significant proletarianization of its electoral base. This is hardly surprising, given the movement's conscious efforts to appeal to those groups in Western European

society that feel fundamentally threatened by the “great transformation” set in motion with the collapse of the Cold War system. These are largely blue-collar workers, who feel marginalized because they lack the necessary skills to compete for the jobs created by the “new economy”; but also skilled workers, who see their skills and experience devalued as a result of the relentless drive toward automation and digitalization. What they and all the other groups that vote for the populist right have in common is a pronounced distrust of the established political elite and the democratic process in general, which often appears opaque, removed and self-serving. At the same time, they share deep-seated resentments against foreigners living in their midst, whom they see as competitors for increasingly scarce resources and social benefits.

Given the current confluence of increasing competitive pressures stemming from globalization, growing demographic pressures stemming from the rapid greying of European societies, and a persistently high level of political disaffection, it is not unlikely that differentialist exclusionary populism will continue to be a serious challenge to liberal democracy in Western Europe. While the stability and strength of political institutions and political culture in Western Europe is likely to prevent the populist right from posing a threat to democracy, it needs to be carefully monitored. At the same time, it should be engaged—and its positions challenged in an unemotional, measured way—if only to strengthen trust in and support for liberal democracy.

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The paper from which this article is excerpted is available at [www.unrisd.org](http://www.unrisd.org).

## Racial Justice and Affirmative Action Policies: The Superficial Morality of Colour-Blindness in the United States

Glenn C. Loury

This article questions the adequacy of liberal individualism as a philosophical paradigm for addressing questions of racial justice in the United States. My concerns are normative (seeking to evaluate the public morality of alternative policy responses to the scourge of racial inequality) and conceptual (seeking to clarify our understanding of the subtle processes that create and sustain durable racial inequality).

My main argument is that the philosophical resources of liberal individualism are strained to the breaking point by the intractable problem of racial injustice. That is, the animating ideals of US liberalism prove inadequate as a guide to achieving moral public action in the face of large and durable differences in life chances across racial groups in the United States. One implication of liberal individualism with which I take particular issue is that the appropriate response to a history of racism and oppression is to establish a contemporary policy of colour-blindness—that is, inattention to the racial identity of citizens.

Succinctly stated, the problem with liberal individualism is that it fails to comprehend how stigma-influenced dynamics in the spheres of social interaction and self-image production can induce objective racial inequality (decoupled from the discriminatory acts of individuals), which carries over across generations, shapes political and social-cognitive sensibilities in the citizenry, makes racial disparity appear natural and non-dissonant, stymies reform and locks in inequality.

The core point is that the “selves” enshrined as subjects of liberal theory—the autonomous, dignity-bearing individuals whose infinite value (ends

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in themselves, never means to an end) has been placed by Immanuel Kant at the centre of the liberal project—are not given, a priori. Instead they

are products of social relations, and of economic and political institutions—they are creatures of the very systems of laws, social intercourse and economic relations that a normative theory is meant to assess. Neither their ideas about the good life nor (crucial for my purposes) their self-understandings as “raced” subjects come into being outside the flow of history and the web of culture. And so, I cannot abide the imposition of abstract strictures of neutrality on a game in which systematically non-neutral practices have left so many raced and stigmatized outsiders with so few good cards to play.

I adopt the term “race-blind” to identify the practice of not using race when carrying out a policy, whereas I use the term “race-indifferent” to identify the practice of not thinking about race when determining the goals and objectives on behalf of which some policy is taken up. For example, if a selection rule for university admissions can be applied without knowing the racial identity of applicants, that rule can be called “race-blind”. However, if a selection rule is chosen with no concern as to how it might impact the various racial groups, then that rule can be called “race-indifferent”. The key moral question in matters of race is about indifference, not blindness. (This is not to deny, of course, that “blindness questions” can sometimes matter a great deal.)

The power of this distinction between “indifference” and “blindness” becomes clear when considering that race-blind policies can either ameliorate or exacerbate the social disadvan-

tage of blacks. Yet, whereas a race-blind policy explicitly intended to harm blacks could never be morally acceptable, such policies adopted for the purpose of reducing racial inequality are commonplace, and uncontroversial. That is, given the facts of US history, departures from race-indifference are, and should be, evaluated asymmetrically: those that harm blacks are universally suspect, whereas non-indifferent undertakings that assist blacks are widely recognized as necessary to achieve just social policy.

To illustrate, a recent federal court ruling forbade the practice of affirmative action in college admissions in Texas. The state legislature responded by guaranteeing a place at any public university to the top 10 per cent of every high school class in the state. This so-called “10 per cent rule” benefits mainly students from less-competitive high schools—disproportionately blacks and Hispanics—and certainly this was the intent. While this rule is race-blind, it is most decidedly *not* race-indifferent. Thus, we have a situation in Texas where the explicit use of race in college admissions is forbidden, while the intentional, publicly adopted use of a proxy for race so as to reach a similar result is allowed. Yet can there be any doubt that had a different race-blind proxy been adopted in order to exclude black and Hispanic students from public institutions in Texas, it would be morally unacceptable? This example shows why choosing to be race-indifferent is often of greater ethical moment than choosing to be race-blind.

It should now be easier to see the relevance of the affirmative action controversy to my larger argument about the inadequacies of liberalism. The deeper question here is: When should we explicitly undertake to reduce racial disparities, and what are the most appropriate means to this end? I as-

sert an ordering of moral concerns: racial justice before race-blindness—meaning that departures from “blindness” undertaken to promote racial equality ought not be barred as a matter of principle. The broad acceptance of this view in US society would have profound consequences.

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When prestigious institutions use affirmative action to ration access to their ranks, they confirm this ordering of moral priorities in a salient and powerful way. Because they are not “indifferent” to the racial effects of their actions, they opt not to be “blind” to the racial identities of their applicants. If forced to be race-blind, they will pursue their race-egalitarian goals by other means. Ought they do so? *This* is the key question, on which liberal individualism provides little useful guidance.

In taking up this question, there are three domains of public action in which the “blindness” intuitions of liberal neutrality might be applied:

- First is the domain of *policy implementation*—deciding on the instruments of public action. Here, for example, we are admitting students to college, hiring public employees or distributing social benefits. The mechanisms employed for these decisions might, or might not, take cognizance of a subject’s race. In this domain, “blindness” means structuring public conduct so that people from different racial groups, who are otherwise alike, can expect similar treatment. This is what most people have in mind when they insist that a policy should be “colour-blind”.
- Second is the domain of *policy evaluation*—assessing the consequences of public action. Here we are deciding whether to build a school, for example, and whether it should serve the general population or only the most accomplished students. As a general matter, prior to choosing a course of public action the relative costs and benefits of the alternatives need to be assessed. The impact of an alternative on particular racial groups might, or might not, be explicitly reckoned in this assessment. “Blindness” here means not seeing a policy as more or less desirable on account of the race of those affected.
- Third is the domain of *civic construction*—developing a nation’s sense of shared purpose and common fate. Here we are building monuments, constructing public narratives, enacting rituals

and, generally, pursuing policies that have inescapably expressive as well as directly instrumental effects. “Blindness” to race in this domain means deploying the instruments of civic pedagogy so as to promote a sense of national community that transcends racial divisions.

These three domains—policy implementation, policy evaluation and civic construction—give rise to three classes of public questions. How should we treat individuals? How should we choose the goals to be pursued through policies? And how much awareness ought we have of the ways in which the conduct of public business can perpetuate into yet another generation the stigma of race?

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It seems that liberal individualism militates strongly in favour of race-blindness as a moral position in the first and second domains. The burden of my argument, however, is to

reject that position as ahistorical and sociologically naïve. Race-blind proceduralism is not adequate as a moral rule because (among other reasons) it cannot adequately accommodate the consequences of its own violation. And a principled stand of race-indifference is unacceptable as well because it rules out policies (such as the 10 per cent rule in Texas) that are almost universally credited as being necessary and proper.

It is only in the third domain, where the paramount concern is the construction of national community, that some notion of race-blindness should be elevated to the level of fundamental principle. The operative moral idea would be that no race-conditioned civic boundary should be erected and, where any such boundary exists, it is our imperative to rub it out.

Thus, when universities practise race-preferential admissions they are, in effect, endeavouring to—among other things—construct an elite leadership cadre of African-Americans. According to one study, the average admissions rate for whites is about 25 per cent; and getting rid of all affirmative action is calculated to raise that rate to about 27 per cent.<sup>1</sup> That is, for every 75 whites rejected under the regime of race-preferential admissions currently practised, 73 would still be rejected if affirmative action were ended. Why, then, all the angst, why all the hand-wringing, why all the concern that our standards are being trashed? Why such resistance when, as the data show, the boundary of racial hierarchy in the United States is being erased just a little bit?

I hold that there is nothing in political liberalism that should lead us to reject that public goal. There is nothing wrong with a liberal, concerned about social justice, undertaking to fight racial stigma. There is nothing wrong with constructing a racially

integrated elite in America. Indeed, I am led to wonder how any thoughtful person aware of the history and the contemporary structure of US society could conclude otherwise.

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<sup>1</sup> William G. Bowen and Derek Bok, *The Shape of the River: Long-Term Consequences of Considering Race in College and University Admissions*, Princeton University Press, Princeton, 1999.

The paper from which this article is excerpted is available at [www.unrisd.org](http://www.unrisd.org).

## Ethnic Conflict in Post-Crisis Indonesia: Lessons from Malaysia's New Economic Policy?

**Khoo Boo Teik**

The July 1997 financial crisis sparked a precipitous economic collapse in Indonesia that eventually ended Suharto's New Order regime. In its wake came ethnic violence—against the Chinese population in Jakarta and parts of rural Java, between Christian and Muslim communities in Maluku, and by Dayaks against Madurese in Kalimantan. Indonesia's post-crisis ethnic violence surpassed previous outbreaks in that the scale was much greater, the character more shocking, and the causes, flash points and antagonists more varied. Telescoped into a short, tumultuous period and left to fester while post-Suharto regimes offered few solutions, the violence (considered together with the ethno-nationalist battles in Aceh and Papua) suggested that Indonesia's ethnic relations were bound for chaos.

Neighbouring Malaysia showed a contrasting picture of ethnic relations. Likewise adversely affected by the financial crisis, Malaysia experienced

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only two relatively minor incidents of ethnic confrontation (at Kampung Rawa, Penang in April 1998, and Kampung Medan, Kuala Lumpur in March 2001). These produced few casualties, were quickly brought un-

der control and, most importantly, were free of the Malay-Chinese tension that is Malaysia's potentially most destabilizing source of ethnic conflict. Remarkably, in the Reformasi movement that emerged after former deputy prime minister Anwar Ibrahim was sacked in September 1998 and subsequently prosecuted, an Alternative Front (opposing the ruling National Front) was formed from a multiethnic coalition of parties having diverse ethnic partnerships, religious affiliations and ideological commitments.

In short, it is ironic that Indonesia, not usually regarded as having intractable ethnic problems, should have suffered terrible ethnic violence, whereas Malaysia, typically portrayed as "a deeply divided multiethnic society", experienced stable, not to say improving, ethnic relations. This contrast led politicians and analysts in Indonesia and Malaysia to argue that post-crisis Malaysia was saved from ethnic conflict by its affirmative action New Economic Policy (NEP), implemented in 1970. Extrapolating from that, some observers have shown interest in NEP as an instrument for managing ethnic tensions in Indonesia, and elsewhere.

The idea of NEP's replicability as public policy is itself intriguing. But a proper evaluation of NEP to assess its utility as a model for adoption must not abstract NEP from the historical context in which it was conceived, implemented and once suspended. There is good reason for this caution. NEP was promulgated after ethnic violence erupted in Kuala Lumpur on 13 May 1969. At its core, however, NEP was a visionary statement of objectives—namely "eradicating poverty irrespective of race" and "restructuring to

abolish the identification of race with economic function" in order to achieve "national unity". Affirmative action programmes later adopted in NEP's name were frequently matters of political contention, state intervention

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and bureaucratic invention. Ethnicity ruled its rhetoric, but NEP was ultimately a massive social engineering project that recomposed Malay society and Malaysia's class structure, sometimes with unintended consequences. In fact, NEP became synonymous with a state-led project that redefined nationhood, altered the balance of economic and political power, constructed technocratic capacities for economic intervention, changed modes of governance, and promoted an ideology of developmentalism.

However, one should not exaggerate the extent of NEP's success. From 1970 to 1990, Malaysian society was captive to the "politics of NEP", which heightened rather than diminished interethnic re-creation. Only in the mid-1990s, when Malaysia had gained an unprec-

edented level of prosperity not directly attributable to affirmative action, did a stronger sense of national purpose temper interethnic rivalry. But inasmuch as NEP addressed the “economic essence” of ethnic grievances in Malaysia, perhaps the following lessons from NEP can generally repay consideration:

- First, NEP’s socioeconomic reforms required a high degree of economic intervention. Successive post-1969 regimes “governed the market” and provided opportunities for the Malay community, regulated businesses and invested in key sectors.
- Second, NEP’s architects sought to tackle simultaneously the intersecting ethnic and class lines that divided Malaysian society. NEP prescribed ethnic solutions to ethnic problems, but its class dynamics were no less important. “Restructuring” to sponsor Malay capitalist, professional and middle classes; opening land resettlement schemes to alleviate rural poverty; and attracting multinational corporations to generate industrial employment combined to transform Malay society and the Malaysian class structure.
- Third, the parameters of nationhood and nationality were redefined to consolidate Malay political dominance vis-à-vis non-Malays, and to formulate a Malay-Muslim-based national culture. These consigned expressions of non-Malay identities and cultures to “benign neglect”, but they did not suppress the economic and social infrastructure of non-Malay communities.
- Fourth, NEP’s economic nationalism wore different guises and was

practised to different degrees. While NEP reduced an older form of foreign ownership—to the benefit of domestic capital—it favoured foreign direct investment in the manufacturing sector that would support export-oriented industrialization. Corporate restructuring expressed Malay economic nationalism vis-à-vis non-Malay capital, but left small and medium Chinese businesses alone. In time, Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad’s “Malaysia Inc.” stance reinterpreted NEP to express a vision of multiethnic “national capital” capable of leading a unified nation.

- Fifth, the ruling National Front maintained institutionalized forms of interethnic power sharing. Its non-Malay component parties were real, if limited, representatives of “their” communities. Power sharing was practicable because Malaysia’s ethnic divisiveness was mostly limited to Malay-Chinese differences.
- Sixth, successive regimes upheld NEP’s premise of promoting high growth to facilitate redistribution without placing undue stress on ethnic relations. During a mid-1980s recession, Mahathir’s regime temporarily suspended restructuring in favour of growth.
- Seventh, changing conditions variously affected NEP’s performance, but the state learned to manage the destabilizing effects of economic crises and take advantage of favourable conditions. The oil price and commodity booms of the 1970s gave restructuring its impetus. Their slumps led to NEP’s suspension in 1986. Changes in the global industrial system

brought manufacturing foreign direct investment in the 1970s, and again in the late 1980s.

To view Indonesia, or any other society wracked by ethnic tension, through the lens of NEP demands a realistic balancing of “contrasts and obstacles” with “similarities and opportunities”. NEP’s socioeconomic transformation is not the stuff of do-it-yourself mending for ethnic disrepair—especially when global circumstances make it difficult for most states to practise the degree of economic nationalism that Malaysia did in intervening in the economy, imposing a reformist agenda on foreign and local capital, using the emerging “new international division of labour” to break the ethnic division of labour, and nurturing state-owned enterprises. To the extent that ethnic relations are embedded in the political economy, society and culture, the critical question is not whether post-crisis Indonesia needs a Malaysian-style NEP to solve its severe and complex ethnic problems. The question, truly, is whether Reformasi will “restructure” the Indonesian political economy so that there is genuine poverty eradication for the vast majority.

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The paper from which this article is excerpted is available at [www.unrisd.org](http://www.unrisd.org).

## Confronting Global Environmental Racism in the Twenty-First Century

Robert D. Bullard

In just two decades, the environmental justice movement, which has its roots in the United States, has spread across the globe: the call for environmental justice can be heard from South Central Los Angeles to South Durban. This grassroots movement is largely a response to environmental racism—any policy, practice or directive that differentially affects or disadvantages (whether intentionally or unintentionally) individuals, groups or communities based on race or colour. For example, lead poisoning is a (preventable) disease that disproportionately affects African-American children. Over 28.4 per cent of all low-income African-American children suffer from lead poisoning, compared to 9.8 per cent of low-income white children.

### The impact of globalization

Increased globalization of the world's economy has placed special strains on the ecosystems of many poor communities and poor nations inhabited largely by people of colour and indigenous peoples. There are abundant examples of how this is happening.

Globalization makes it easier for transnational corporations and capital to flee to areas with the weakest environmental regulations, best tax incentives, highest profit opportunities and cheapest labour. Resource extraction industries, such as oil, timber and minerals, are particularly relevant in this context.

The transboundary trade in hazardous waste can be cited as another example of environmental racism. This is because such trade flows tend to go from the industrialized, rich North to the developing South. Yet the last dec-

ade has seen numerous developing nations challenge the “unwritten policy” of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) countries to export their hazardous wastes to countries poorly equipped to deal with them. In response to the growing transboundary waste trade, the Organization of African Unity and the G-77 have passed the Bamako Convention and amended the Basel Convention. Nevertheless, loopholes still allow some transboundary shipment, export and trading of banned pesticides, hazardous wastes, questionable recyclables, toxic products and “risky” technologies.

More than 2,000 *maquiladoras* (assembly plants) operated by American, Japanese and other foreign-based firms are located along the Lower Rio Grande River Valley on the border between Mexico and the United States.

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*Environmental racism is any policy, practice or directive that differentially affects or disadvantages (whether intentionally or unintentionally) individuals, groups or communities based on race or colour.*

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These factories use cheap Mexican labour to assemble imported components and process raw materials, then ship finished products back to the United States. They dump their toxic wastes into the Rio Grande, from which 95 per cent of the region's resi-

dents get their drinking water. The factories' disregard for the environment and public safety has placed border residents' health and the physical environment at risk.

Workers of colour are especially vulnerable to economic blackmail because of the threat of unemployment and their concentration in low-paying, unskilled, hazardous, non-unionized occupations. In the United States, over 80 per cent of migrant farmworkers are Latinos—3 to 5 million of whom toil in the fields for low wages and in conditions that are unsafe, unsanitary and unjust. Farmworkers suffer from the highest rate of chemical injuries of any workers in the United States, and the most vulnerable migrants are children. Over half of all migrant children have worked in fields still wet with pesticides, and more than a third have been sprayed directly. An estimated 250,000 children of farmworkers in the United States migrate each year, and 90,000 migrate across an international border. Nearly 73 per cent of migrant children are completely without health insurance.

### Subsidizing corporate polluters in the United States

By default, the southern United States became a “sacrifice zone”, a sump for the nation's toxic waste. And the Deep South is stuck with a unique legacy of slavery, racial segregation and white resistance to equal justice for all. One lasting effect of this is that it is the most environmentally befouled region of the United States.<sup>1</sup> Dozens of African-American communities (many founded by former slaves) along Louisiana's Mississippi River chemical corridor suffer the brunt of industrial pollution.

The chemical corridor has over 125 companies that manufacture a range of products including fertilizers, gasoline, paints and plastics. Environmentalists and local residents have dubbed this corridor “Cancer Alley”.

Corporations routinely pollute the air, ground and drinking water while being subsidized by tax breaks from states. Louisiana citizens subsidize corporate welfare with their health and the environment. Yet tax breaks given to polluting industries have created few jobs at high cost. In the 1990s, Louisiana wiped off the books \$3.1 billion in property taxes to polluting companies. The state’s five worst polluters received \$111 million over the past decade.

#### **Radioactive colonialism and military toxins**

Radioactive colonialism operates in energy production (mining of uranium) and disposal of wastes on the lands of native and indigenous peoples. The US military has left a trail of nuclear weapons garbage on such lands from Nevada to the Pacific Islands. For example, the 1,000 atomic bombs exploded on Western Shoshone lands in Nevada makes it the “most bombed nation on earth”. The US government has proposed building a nuclear dump in Yucca Mountain, sacred to the Shoshone. Native Alaskan villages and their traditional hunting and fishing grounds are also placed in jeopardy by pollution from military bases. Residents in Vieques, Puerto Rico—the tiny US commonwealth island inhabited by 9,000 people—are engaged in a heated battle to remove the US Navy, which has used the island as a bombing range since 1941. And Marshall Islands residents live with the sad legacy of radioactive contamination from the testing of weapons by the US military.

#### **The global grassroots movement**

As a result of the environmental dangers that they face, people of colour

in the industrialized countries have much in common with populations in the developing countries of the South. Global climate change typifies this environmental dilemma. Rising seas may force Marshall Islands residents to flee their home. Thawing glaciers, changing wildlife populations and thinning ice are destabilizing traditional ways of life for people who inhabit the Arctic. Global alliances are

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forming between the victims of this type of environmental racism, and they are demanding “climate justice”.<sup>2</sup> Similarly, grassroots groups from Louisiana, the Niger Delta, Ecuador and Columbia have identified big oil companies as a common environmental threat. These groups have organized, educated and empowered themselves to challenge governmental and industrial polluters who would turn their communities into toxic wastelands. They have also elevated their message and struggles to the international arena, including the United Nations Human Rights Commission, the World Bank, the World Trade Organization and the United Nations World Conference against Racism.

Hazardous wastes and “dirty” industries have followed the path of least resistance. Poor people and poor communities have been presented with a false choice: “no jobs and no development” versus “risky, low-paying

jobs and pollution”. The environmental protection apparatus is clearly broken and needs to be fixed. The environmental justice movement has clear-cut goals to eliminate unequal enforcement of environmental, civil rights and public health laws. The movement has made a difference in the lives of people and the physical environment by assisting public decision makers in the identification of “at risk” populations, toxic “hot spots” and gaps in the research, as well as in the development of action models that aim to correct existing imbalances and prevent future threats. The twenty-first century offers both old and new challenges, all of which must be addressed if a just and sustainable global society is to be achieved for all.

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For more information on environmental racism, visit the Environmental Justice Resource Center at [www.ejrc.cau.edu](http://www.ejrc.cau.edu).

<sup>1</sup> See **Dumping in Dixie: Race, Class and Environmental Quality**, by Robert D. Bullard, Westview Press, Boulder, Colorado, 2000.

<sup>2</sup> See **People of Color Environmental Groups Directory**, by Robert D. Bullard, Charles Stewart Mott Foundation, Flint, Michigan, 2000.

The paper from which this article is excerpted is available at [www.unrisd.org](http://www.unrisd.org).

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## REQUIRED READING: BOOKS

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### Whose Land? Civil Society Perspectives on Land Reform and Rural Poverty Reduction: Regional Experiences from Africa, Asia and Latin America

edited by Krishna B. Ghimire, with contributing editor Bruce H. Moore

**Contents:** Foreword • Introduction: Empowering the Rural Poor through Land Reform and Improved Access to Productive Assets • Regional Perspectives on Land Reform: Considering the Role of Civil Society Organizations • Agrarian Reforms in Southeast Asia: The Role of NGOs and Other Actors • South Asia's Experience in Land Reform: NGOs, the State and Donors • Prospects for Land Reform and Civil Society Movements in the Near East and North Africa • The Fate of Land Reform in Southern Africa: The Role of the State, the Market and Civil Society • Tenurial Reforms in West and Central Africa: Legislation, Conflicts and Social Movements • An Overview of Agrarian Reforms and Peasant Organizations in Central America • Agrarian Reform Issues and Initiatives in Three Andean Countries in South America

**Krishna B. Ghimire** is a Research Co-ordinator at UNRISD; **Bruce H. Moore** is the Co-ordinator of the Popular Coalition to Eradicate Hunger and Poverty.

**Whose Land?** is co-published with the Popular Coalition to Eradicate Hunger and Poverty and the International Fund for Agricultural Development; paperback, ISBN 92-9072-012-3, 253 pages, 2001, \$25. **Order from:** Popular Coalition to Eradicate Hunger and Poverty, c/o IFAD, via del Serafico 107, 00142 Rome, Italy; phone +39 06 5459 2445, fax +39 06 504 3463, coalition@ifad.org, www.ifad.org.

### Shifting Burdens: Gender and Agrarian Change under Neoliberalism

edited by Shahra Razavi

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**Shahra Razavi** is a Research Co-ordinator at UNRISD.

**Shifting Burdens** is co-published with Kumarian Press; paperback, ISBN 1-56549-143-2, 288 pages, 2002, \$29.95. **Order from:** Kumarian Press, 1294 Blue Hills Avenue, Bloomfield, Connecticut 06002, United States; phone +1 860-243-2098, fax +1 860 243 2867, kpbooks@aol.com, www.kpbooks.com.

### Ghana's Adjustment Experience: The Paradox of Reform

Eboe Hutchful

**Contents:** Introduction **Part I—Economic Crisis and Background to Adjustment** • The Making of the Crisis: From Nkrumah to Limann • The Social and Political Dimensions of the Crisis • The Origins of the Programme **Part II—Adjustment Policies and Performance** • Macroeconomic Policy and Performance • Sector Policy • Reforming the Public Sector • Social Dimensions of Adjustment **Part III—The Politics of Adjustment** • Institutional and Political Dimensions • Social Forces **Part IV—From Adjustment to Democracy** • The Challenge of Political Liberalization: Reconfiguring the Landscape • The Fourth Republic: Adjustment Aborted?

**Eboe Hutchful** is a Professor of Political Science in the Department of Africana Studies, Wayne State University, Detroit, Michigan.

**Ghana's Adjustment Experience** is co-published with James Currey, Heinemann and Woeli; paperback, ISBN 0-85255-166-5, 268 pages, 2002, £16.95; hardback, ISBN 0-85255-167-3, 268 pages, 2002, £40. **Order from:** James Currey, 73 Botley Road, Oxford OX2 0BS, United Kingdom, www.jamescurrey.co.uk; Heinemann, 361 Hanover Street, Portsmouth, New Hampshire 03801-3912, United States, www.heinemann.com; Woeli Publishing Services, P.O. Box NT 601, Accra New Town, Ghana, www.africanbookscollective.com.

### Voluntary Approaches to Corporate Responsibility: Readings and a Resource Guide

NGLS and UNRISD

**Contents:** Preface • Introduction • Corporate Codes of Conduct: Self-Regulation in a Global Economy—*Rhys Jenkins* • Regulating Business via Multistakeholder Initiatives: A Preliminary Assessment—*Peter Utting* • Corporate Social and Environmental Responsibility, Selected Sources of Information: Bibliography and Websites—*Renato Alva Pino*

**Rhys Jenkins** is a Reader of Development Studies at the University of East Anglia, United Kingdom; **Peter Utting** is a Research Co-ordinator, and **Renato Alva Pino** was a Research Assistant, at UNRISD.

**Voluntary Approaches to Corporate Responsibility** is co-published with NGLS in their Development Dossier series; paperback, 211 pages, 2002, free of charge. **Order from:** UN-NGLS, Le Bocage, Palais des Nations, 1211 Geneva 10, Switzerland, or consult www.unsystem.org/ngls.

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## REQUIRED READING: BOOKS

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### The Greening of Business in Developing Countries: Rhetoric, Reality and Prospects

edited by Peter Utting

**Contents:** Introduction—Towards Corporate Environmental Responsibility? **Part I—The Environmental Record of the Private Sector** • Large Corporations and Domestic Firms: The Greening of Business in Mexico • Environmental Management as an Indicator of Business Responsibility in Central America • Bioprospecting in Costa Rica: Facing New Dimensions of Social and Environmental Responsibility • The Environmental and Social Effects of Corporate Environmentalism in the Brazilian Pulp Industry • Corporate Environmental Responsibility in Singapore and Malaysia: The Potential and Limits of Voluntary Initiatives **Part II—Promoting Corporate Environmental Responsibility: Mechanisms and Strategies** • Disturbing Development: Conflicts between Corporate Environmentalism, the International Economic Order and Sustainability • Environmental Regulation of Transnational Corporations: Needs and Prospects • Promoting Corporate Environmental Responsibility: What Role for “Self-regulatory” and “Co-regulatory” Policy Instruments in South Africa? • New Partnerships for Sustainable Development: The Changing Nature of Business-NGO Relations • Towards Civil Regulation: NGOs and the Politics of Corporate Environmentalism • Corporate Environmentalism in the South: Assessing the Limits and Prospects

Peter Utting is a Research Co-ordinator at UNRISD.

**The Greening of Business in Developing Countries** is co-published with Zed Books; paperback, ISBN 1-84277-089-6, 312 pages, 2002, \$27.50; hardback, ISBN 1-84277-088-8, 312 pages, 2002, \$69.95. **Order from:** Zed Books, 7 Cynthia Street, London N1 9JF, United Kingdom; phone +44 (0)20 7837 4014, fax +44 (0)20 7833 3960, sales@zedbooks.demon.co.uk.

### Global Media Governance: A Beginner's Guide

Seán Ó Siochrú and Bruce Girard with Amy Mahan

**Contents:** Preface • Introduction **Part I** • Introduction to National Media Regulation • Global Governance Institutions • Trends in Media **Part II** • The International Telecommunication Union • The World Trade Organization and Trade in Media Products • The UN Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization • The World Intellectual Property Organization and Intellectual Property Rights • The Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers and Internet Governance **Part III** • Global Media Regulation • Actors and Trends in Global Governance • Scenarios for Media Governance • Selected References for Further Reading • Selected URLs

Seán Ó Siochrú is the Director of Nexus Research in Dublin, Ireland; Bruce Girard is a media worker and researcher; and Amy Mahan is a researcher at Delft University of Technology in the Netherlands.

**Global Media Governance** is co-published with Rowman and Littlefield in their series on Concepts in Critical Media Studies. Paperback, ISBN 0-7425-1566-4, 202 pages, 2002, \$19.95; hardback, ISBN 0-7425-1565-6, 202 pages, 2002, \$65. **Order from:** Rowman and Littlefield Publishers Inc., 4720 Boston Way, Lanham, Maryland 20706, United States; www.rowmanlittlefield.com.

### Popular Development and Democracy: Case Studies with Rural Dimensions in the Philippines, Indonesia, and Kerala

Olle Törnquist

**Contents:** **Part I—The Discourse** • Development and Democracy • The Mainstream Arguments • Alternative Propositions • Analytical Framework **Part II—Philippine, Indonesian, and Kerala Cases in Comparative and Theoretical Framework** • Cases, Design and Sources • Operationalisations or Expected Contextual Outcomes • Fresh Ideas but Uphill Tasks in Muddy Philippine Waters • New but Poorly Anchored Democratic Options in Indonesia • Pioneering Attempts to Renew the Kerala Model **Part III—Conclusions: The Missing Link** • Elitist Democratisation and New Popular Efforts • Problems of Popular Politics of Democratisation

Olle Törnquist is a Professor of Political Science and Development Research at the University of Oslo, Norway.

**Popular Development and Democracy** is co-published with the Centre for Development and the Environment at the University of Oslo; paperback, ISSN 0807 1195, ISBN 82-90391-43-9, 150 pages, 2002, \$25. **Order from:** UNRISD or the Centre for Development and the Environment, University of Oslo; P.O. Box 1116 Blindern, N-0317 Oslo, Norway; www.sum.uio.no.

### Resistiendo al olvido: Tendencias recientes del movimiento social y de las organizaciones campesinas en Colombia

Stephan Suhner

**Contents:** Introduction • Social and Peasant Movements, 1980–1996 • Peasant, Afro-Colombian and Indigenous Peoples Movements Since 1996 • Unity and Alliances in Popular Movements • Illegal Crops, the War against Drugs and Coca Production • Agrarian Reform: Between Peace and Globalization • Case Studies: Cacarica, the CIMA and the ACVC • Conclusions

Stephan Suhner is an activist and independent researcher.

**Resistiendo al olvido** is co-published with Taurus; paperback, ISBN 958-704-011-2, 199 pages, 2002, contact publisher for price. **Order from:** Distribuidora y Editora Aguilar, Altea, Taurus, Alfaguara, S.A., Calle 80, No. 10–23, Bogota, Colombia; phone +57 653 12 00.

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### Women's Employment in the Textile Manufacturing Sectors of Bangladesh and Morocco

edited by Carol Miller and Jessica Vivian

**Contents:** Introduction • Wage Discrimination by Gender in Morocco's Urban Labour Force: Evidence and Implications for Industrial and Labour Policy • Gender and Employment in Moroccan Textile Industries • Gender Dimensions of Labour Migration in Dhaka City's Formal Manufacturing Sector • Becoming a Garment Worker: The Mobilization of Women into the Garment Factories of Bangladesh • Trade Unions, Gender Issues and the Ready-Made Garment Industry of Bangladesh • Female Employment under Export-Propelled Industrialization: Prospects for Internalizing the Global Opportunities in the Apparel Sector in Bangladesh

**Carol Miller** is a policy analyst on gender issues at ActionAid in the United Kingdom. She worked for several years as a Research Associate at UNRISD. **Jessica Vivian** spent several years as a Research Co-ordinator at UNRISD, and is currently an independent consultant based in the United States.

**Order from:** UNRISD; paperback, ISBN 92-9085-039-6, 264 pages, 2002, \$25.

### La mano visible: Asumir la responsabilidad por el desarrollo social

Spanish translation of **Visible Hands: Taking Responsibility for Social Development**, UNRISD, 2000.

**Contents:** Globalization with a Human Mask • Who Pays? Financing Social Development • Fragile Democracies • A New Mission for the Public Sector • Calling Corporations to Account • Civil Societies • Getting Development Right for Women • Sustaining Development

**Editorial team:** This UNRISD report was prepared by Peter Utting (project co-ordinator); Cynthia Hewitt de Alcántara, Yusuf Bangura, Thandika Mkandawire, Shahra Razavi, Peter Utting and David Westendorff (chapter co-ordinators); and Peter Stalker and Cynthia Hewitt de Alcántara (principal editors). The Spanish edition was translated from the English original by Sergio Alcántara Ferrer.

**Order from:** UNRISD; paperback, ISBN 92-9085-037-X, 188 pages, 2001, \$25.

**Visible Hands** was also published in French and Russian (see below) in 2001; the Executive Summary was published in Portuguese in 2002; Arabic, Chinese and Persian editions are forthcoming.

### Vidimye Ruki: Otvetstvennost za sotsialnoye razvitiye

Russian translation of **Visible Hands: Taking Responsibility for Social Development**, UNRISD, 2000.

**Contents:** Globalization with a Human Mask • Who Pays? Financing Social Development • Fragile Democracies • A New Mission for the Public Sector • Calling Corporations to Account • Civil Societies • Getting Development Right for Women • Sustaining Development

**Editorial Team:** This UNRISD report was prepared by Peter Utting (project co-ordinator); Cynthia Hewitt de Alcántara, Yusuf Bangura, Thandika Mkandawire, Shahra Razavi, Peter Utting and David Westendorff (chapter co-ordinators); and Peter Stalker and Cynthia Hewitt de Alcántara (principal editors). The Russian edition was translated from the English original by Natalja Kulakova, with a foreword by Valery Tishkov.

**Vidimye Ruki** is co-published with the Russian Academy of Sciences; paperback, ISBN 5-201-13755-5, 192 pages, 2001, contact publisher for price. **Order from:** Institute of Ethnology and Anthropology, Russian Academy of Sciences, Leninskii Prospect 32-A, Moscow 117334, Russian Federation.

**Visible Hands** was also published in French and Spanish (see above) in 2001; the Executive Summary was published in Portuguese in 2002; Arabic, Chinese and Persian editions are forthcoming.

### People, Power and the Environment: 15 Years of UNRISD Research

A synthesis and annotated bibliography prepared for the 2002 World Summit on Sustainable Development compiled by Catherine Agg and Peter Utting

**Contents:** Foreword • Introduction **Part I—Research Findings** • Theoretical Issues and Debates • Social and Environmental Connections • Mainstream Interventions to Protect the Environment • Applying "New" Concepts • Some Implications for Policy and Analysis **Part II—Annotated Bibliography** • People's Participation in Conservation and Sustainable Development • Population, Gender and the Environment • Social Dynamics of Deforestation • Social and Environmental Dimensions of Protected Areas and Tourism • Business Responsibility for Sustainable Development • Other Publications **Annex 1**—UNRISD Projects on the Environment and Sustainable Development **Annex 2**—Principal Country Case Studies **Annex 3**—Authors and Editors **Annex 4**—Contributors to Edited Volumes

**Peter Utting** is a Research Co-ordinator, and **Catherine Agg** a Research Assistant, at UNRISD.

**Order from:** UNRISD; paperback, ISBN 92-9085-042-6, 60 pages, 2002, free of charge.

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## REQUIRED READING: PAPERS

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### \* Programme Paper on Civil Society and Social Movements

- PP CSSM 5 **The Women's Movement in Egypt, with Selected References to Turkey**, *Nadje S. Al-Ali*, April 2002

### \* Programme Papers on Democracy, Governance and Human Rights

- PP DGHR 5 **Human Rights and Social Development: Toward Democratization and Social Justice**, *Yash Ghai*, October 2001
- PP DGHR 6 **Gender of Democracy: The Encounter between Feminism and Reformism in Contemporary Iran**, *Parvin Paidar*, October 2001
- PP DGHR 7 **Multiculturalism, Universalism and the Claims of Democracy**, *Anne Phillips*, December 2001

### \* Programme Papers on Social Policy and Development

- PP SPD 9 **Gender and Education: A Review of Directions for Social Policy**, *Ramya Subrahmanian*, April 2002
- PP SPD 10 **Agrarian Change, Gender and Land Reform: A South African Case Study**, *Cherryl Walker*, April 2002
- PP SPD 11 **Agrarian Reform, Gender and Land Rights in Uzbekistan**, *Deniz Kandiyoti*, June 2002

- PP SPD 12 **Women's Employment and Welfare Regimes: Globalization, Export Orientation and Social Policy in Europe and North America**, *Ann Shola Orloff*, June 2002

### \* Programme Papers on Technology, Business and Society

- PP TBS 5 **Regulating Large International Firms**, *E.V.K. FitzGerald*, November 2001
- PP TBS 6 **Corporate Social Responsibility in Indonesia: Quixotic Dream or Confident Expectation?**, *Melody Kemp*, December 2001

### ■ UNRISD Conference News

- CN 7 **Promoting Socially Responsible Business in Developing Countries: The Potential and Limits of Voluntary Initiatives**, Report of the UNRISD Workshop, Geneva, Switzerland, 23–24 October 2000
- CN 8 **Les technologies de l'information et de la communication et le développement social au Sénégal**, Rapport de la réunion organisée par l'UNRISD, Dakar, Sénégal, 16–17 juillet 2001
- CN 9 **Racism and Public Policy**, Report of the UNRISD International Conference, Durban, South Africa, 3–4 September 2001

\* \$8 each for readers in the North; \$4 each for readers in the South.  
■ Free of charge.

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**To order in-house publications:** Please contact the UNRISD Reference Centre, Palais des Nations, 1211 Geneva 10, Switzerland; phone +41(0)22 9173020; fax +41(0)22 9170650; [info@unrisd.org](mailto:info@unrisd.org); [www.unrisd.org](http://www.unrisd.org).

**Methods of payment for in-house publications:** By US dollar cheque drawn on a US bank, or by bank transfer in US dollars or the equivalent in Swiss francs.

**We cannot accept credit card payments.**

## New and Improved! UNRISD Redevelops Web Site

On 24 June 2002, following more than a year of work, the all-new UNRISD Web site ([www.unrisd.org](http://www.unrisd.org)) was launched. The redevelopment was taken on to improve visitors' experience of the site and to better fulfil their need for high-quality information on key issues of social development.

### Serving a range of audiences

The new site provides accurate, up-to-date information about UNRISD projects, events, publications and news. We have aimed to create a site that will reduce the amount of time visitors spend looking for the information that interests them, while encouraging them to browse the site and discover unknown aspects of UNRISD's work. All of the information on the new site is cross-referenced, which expands research possibilities by offering numerous interlinkages among related areas of the Institute's work, both past and present.

The new site also supports UNRISD's efforts to fulfil its mandate, which requires that we provide the academic community; policy makers at international, regional, national and local levels; civil society and the non-governmental sector; and the media, with research findings and analysis that will aid their understanding of how development policies and processes of economic, social and environmental change affect different social groups.

### More user-friendly

In redeveloping the site, we sought to improve usability dramatically. The new structure presents the breadth and depth of UNRISD's work, while enabling straightforward and intuitive navigation. Because many of our visitors do not have access via top-of-the-line computers or reliable telecommunication connections, the site's design

has been made streamlined and direct. With hierarchically organized information and consistent navigation throughout, users can find their way around the new site easily.

### Content

The new site's primary sections are:

- About UNRISD
- Research
- Publications
- News & Views
- Events
- Links

In order to ensure timely dissemination of UNRISD research results, numerous unpublished (or yet-to-be published) papers are posted on the site. These can be accessed via the relevant project, in the Research section of the site.

In addition to the main areas of content, the following facilities are available:

- Site Search
- Email Alerts
- Feedback and Discussion Forum
- Help and FAQs
- English/Français/Español (language selector)

### Choices on accessing long documents

An important aspect of usability is the accessibility of content—especially on a site containing a wealth of full-text documents and targeting users around the world. The new UNRISD site offers three options for accessing most of the full-text documents, whether formal publications issued by the Institute or draft research documents. Users may choose the option that is most convenient for them: viewing a document on screen, downloading and opening a PDF version, or receiving a PDF as an email attachment.

### Email Alerts

The new site offers a sophisticated email subscription service, allowing users to create or modify their profile according to the frequency and content of the update alerts they wish to receive. Users may elect to be notified on a daily, weekly or monthly basis, and may specify their area(s) of interest—for example, "Research", "Events", "Publications"—or request to be informed of updates to all sections of the site.

### Inviting feedback and discussion

Users are encouraged to visit the Feedback section, and to fill in the short on-line survey to let UNRISD know what they think of the new site. A moderated Discussion Forum facility will soon be available. This is a space for UNRISD Research Co-ordinators to engage in dialogue with site users on aspects of the Institute's work.

### From the ground up

The redevelopment project started in early 2001, with an investigation of how UNRISD could restructure and redesign its Web site to reflect contemporary trends in usability and to improve user-friendliness. This information-gathering exercise was carried out between January and May 2001 by Jenifer Freedman (UNRISD Editor and co-ordinator of the Web site redevelopment project) and Tony Formoso (then UNRISD's Information Technology Consultant), in close consultation with users, UNRISD staff and outside professionals. Detailed suggestions were collected with a view to comprehensively overhauling the look and feel of the site, as well as its structure and maintenance.

In June 2001, UNRISD submitted detailed specifications to the United Nations Procurement Section, which in

turn sent a formal Request for Proposal to 15 companies. In July and August, Freedman and Formoso carried out a technical evaluation of the seven proposals and tender documents that had been received, and in September the contract was awarded to London-based Blue Sky Communications Limited. Another company, Blue Ice Web Technology in Cheltenham, United

Kingdom, collaborated on one aspect of the site redevelopment. Actual construction of the site started in October 2001, and the all-new [www.unrisd.org](http://www.unrisd.org) went live in June 2002.

UNRISD is pleased to announce the launch of its new site, a showcase for the Institute's intellectual output, activities and publications. **UNRISD**

News readers are invited to consult [www.unrisd.org](http://www.unrisd.org) for full and timely information about all of the Institute's activities. We hope that the new site will respond to users' expectations, and thus continue to develop as a valued information source for the social development community.

## The Political Economy of Sustainable Development: Environmental Conflict, Participation and Movements

30 August 2002, Johannesburg, South Africa

UNRISD and the University of the Witwatersrand co-hosted a conference on environmental conflicts and movements in the North and South, which was held in conjunction with the World Summit on Sustainable Development.

In the opening presentation, Juan Martinez-Alier, of the Autonomous University of Barcelona, considered "the environmentalism of the poor"—an environmentalism of justice and livelihoods concerned not only with economic security in the market sphere, but also with non-market access to environmental resources and services. He described a multitude of individual groups that are active in campaigns for environmental justice in a range of local settings, and suggested that these are gradually being linked into a global movement through issue-oriented international networks. Many conflicts between corporations and local stakeholders in the fossil fuel and mining sector, or regarding tree plantations, for example, have given rise to networks that call for corporate accountability. Similarly, because of perceptions that the rules of the international trade regime are inequitable, there is a social movement for "fair trade". A new agrarian world agenda is being pushed by Via

Campešina ([www.viacampesina.org](http://www.viacampesina.org)). And OilWatch ([www.oilwatch.org.ec](http://www.oilwatch.org.ec)), which opposes oil extraction in fragile areas, is forming links with initiatives fighting the injustice of current climate change policies.

In his comments to the conference, Krishna Ghimire, a Research Co-ordinator at UNRISD, raised concerns about what "grassroots mobilization" really entails, and how it can be supported in concrete contexts. The role of grassroots mobilization in reducing rural poverty, bringing about tenurial reforms and improving land management systems has been recognized at the international level, he argued. However, in most cases, altering prevailing power structures in order to provide gainful livelihoods and increased political power to poorer and weaker rural social groups has proved extremely complex. According to Ghimire, increased emphasis on market mechanisms and an unwillingness to alienate powerful business interests often means that policy measures tend to evolve around politically non-contentious rural and agricultural development programmes and projects.

The mainstream conservation and development discourse has adopted progressive—if not radical—overtones in

recent years with the incorporation of such terms as "empowerment", "accountability" and "people-centred" strategies. This applies not only to development agencies and international non-governmental organizations (NGOs), but also to transnational corporations. Increasingly, big business is identifying itself with social and environmental causes and promoting the idea of "corporate citizenship", which implies a certain balance of rights and responsibilities. In his presentation, Peter Utting, a Research Co-ordinator at UNRISD, examined movements that are being constituted around issues of corporate social and environmental responsibility. He suggested that two broad trends are at play: in one, big business is being moved by social pressure, or what has been called a "corporate accountability movement"; and in the other, big business itself is constituting a movement to influence and control the agenda of change. Utting argued that both activist and business "movements" need to be more sensitive to the concerns and realities of developing countries. He also claimed that governments and the UN system should take seriously the calls from some sectors of civil society that the issue of corporate regulation be firmly (re)placed on the international development agenda.

In her presentation, María Pilar García-Guadilla, of Simón Bolívar University, evaluated why there had been relatively little interest in and support of Agenda 21 by Latin American governments, NGOs and social movements. One reason she found was that the consolidation of democracy in almost all the countries in the region had been expected to serve as a mechanism for achieving consensus on the distribution of wealth and scarce resources. She also emphasized the critique, by governments and social movements alike, of the “official discourse” of Agenda 21 as adopted by industrialized countries. In line with much of the developing world, the main concerns of the region since 1992 had been economic and social development, political stability and democratic governance, not sustainable development.

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*The role of grassroots mobilization in reducing rural poverty; bringing about tenurial reforms and improving land management systems has been recognized at the international level. In most cases, altering prevailing power structures in order to provide gainful livelihoods and increased political power to poorer and weaker rural social groups has proved extremely complex.*

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García-Guadilla argued that the considerable divergence in perspectives that currently exists implies the need for greatly increased and effective participation of civil society in policy-

making processes, which can only occur if social movements are able to increase their bargaining power.

Cyril Obi, of the Nigerian Institute of International Affairs, provided a critical examination of environmental movements in sub-Saharan Africa, arguing that struggles there for power over environmental resources have connected with broader social struggles for popular empowerment and democracy. He showed how two prominent movements—the Movement for the Survival of the Ogoni People of Nigeria’s Niger Delta, and the Green Belt Movement of Kenya—have combined effective local mobilization and sustained international support. They have been partly successful in resisting the further expropriation of their environmental space, while raising their local cause to the central level in the struggle for democracy. Indeed, there is a groundswell of social mobilization in sub-Saharan Africa that is challenging dominant power relations over the ecosystem, particularly the monopoly of environmental resources by the state and extractive external/multinational interests, as well as modes of global accumulation that dispossess the people and degrade the environment. According to Obi, grassroots movements that are confronted daily by the might of the state and global capital will ultimately give rise to alternative social and democratic agendas—environmentally sustainable ones that guarantee people the right to exercise power over Africa’s ecosystems.

Finally, David Fig, of the University of the Witwatersrand, examined the making of environmental policy in democratic South Africa. Fig explained that the end of apartheid had provided an opportunity to set in place a new environmental policy that would redress the environmental injustices of the past, regulate industry more seriously in an effort to improve environmental management, and bring about a hu-

man rights culture that included citizens’ environmental rights both in law and in practice. Fig described in particular the multistakeholder approach to policy making that culminated in the National Environmental Management Act of 1997. He then discussed why fairly little had been achieved in terms

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*Big business itself is constituting a movement to influence and control the agenda of change ... but business “movements” need to be more sensitive to developing country concerns and realities.*

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of concrete implementation. First, the state has come to reflect a pro-corporate ethos, emphasizing “modernization”, large industrial and high-technology projects, and high-input agriculture. This flies in the face of the real need to set in place a new value system linked to the goals of equitable and sustainable development, based on building prosperity from below. Second, there has been a weakening of civil-society-based environmental movements. And third, the corporate sector has regained the hegemonic position it held during apartheid, consolidated its ideological position on environmental matters, and come to exercise strong influence on policy making.

The papers on which conference presentations were based will be published as UNRISD Programme Papers.

## Improving Knowledge on Social Development in International Organizations: Second Annual Retreat

29–30 May 2002, Prangins, Switzerland

One way to improve the flow of information among United Nations officials with an interest in social development research is to bring them together from time to time in an informal setting, where substantive questions of world development can be discussed outside the context of formal interagency meetings. Twelve relevant organizations were represented at UNRISD's second annual retreat organized toward this goal. Over the longer term, these retreats should contribute to improving the coherence of the position of the United Nations on social development, and to reinforcing the collective capacity of the UN system to influence the global economic and social agenda.

The theme of this year's meeting was globalization and inequality, with a seminar format employed for discussions. Four experts from outside the UN system presented papers commissioned by UNRISD on this theme. The first analysed changing patterns of resource distribution within the global system, the second explored the sources of neoliberal globalization, and the other two reviewed different approaches to the analysis of globalization, liberalization and inequality within and outside the United Nations system.

### **Analysing inequality: Changing patterns of resource distribution**

John Quiggin, of the Australian National University, opened the first session with an examination of globalization from a historical perspective. He compared the neoliberal account of globalization with (i) the "sceptical view", which not only questions the significance of globalization, but also contends that financial liberalization has been destabilizing, (ii) anti-globali-

zation theory, which holds that globalization is harmful, and (iii) the internationalist perspective, which builds on the neoliberal position that international flows of goods, services and capital are beneficial, arguing that they should be supplemented with movement of labour, and collaboration between government bodies, trade unions and NGOs, in the direction of conscious international co-operation.

In his presentation, Quiggin also questioned the hypothesis that the technological advances of the late twentieth century had driven the process of globalization. This position was debated by other participants, who disputed whether the link between technology and increasing global inequality over the past 20 years is different from what had taken place in previous times of rapid change. Participants did agree, however, that advances in technology do not make *neoliberal* globalization inevitable. Indeed, the public-good nature of the information embodied in many technological advances would appear to support more internationalist, co-operative development and allow for a more progressive economic and social agenda.

### **The sources of neoliberal globalization**

This discussion was based on a paper and presentation by Jan Aart Scholte, of the University of Warwick, who holds that contemporary globalization has been dominated by a neoliberal agenda—and that it is important to examine *why* this has been the case. He identified four interrelated areas of causation: governance, production, knowledge and community. In the first area, he suggested that the emergence of decentralized governance has been

a source of neoliberal globalization, in part through deregulation, which has weakened the role of the state in the economic sphere and led to a growth in multilateral mechanisms that are insulated from democratic processes. Second, on the production side, investors and corporations pursuing higher returns and greater profit margins have gained from and exerted pressure for privatization, liberalization and deregulation. Third, the domination of a rationalist construction of knowledge has led to the separation of economics from other social sciences—and given it supremacy over them. And fourth, a global managerial class has emerged, creating ties among business interests, knowledge producers and regulators, and building consensus among them in favour of neoliberal policies. Those who have lost as a result of neoliberal globalization have lacked the resources and political imagination to mount an effective opposition to it.

Scholte's presentation led many participants to emphasize the importance of the role of the state. There was agreement about the necessity to clarify the responsibilities of national governments, in order to hold them accountable for the policies they adopt in relation to globalization and inequality, and also to enable the organization of strong opposition movements.

### **Globalization, liberalization and inequality: UN and other analyses**

In his presentation and paper, Roy Culpeper, of the North-South Institute, focused on *intranational* inequality; whereas Albert Berry, of the Center for International Studies at the University of Toronto, emphasized that the lack of understanding of the effects of neoliberal globalization on income in-

equality and poverty is a result of the dearth of quantitative data.

Culpeper asserted that globalization might not be solely responsible for the trend toward increasing inequality within countries. Domestic factors could be the principal causes, and thus national-level policy interventions to redistribute resources may hold the key to redressing imbalances. Therefore, he suggested, a key question is the extent to which such policies are feasible in the context of liberalization and globalization. He proposed a range of policy prescriptions that, although not beyond contention, could be formulated in such a way as to minimize opposition and achieve favourable outcomes, decreasing inequality while supporting economic growth.

In the discussion that followed Culpeper's comments, participants debated the relative importance of intranational versus international inequality. While

there was general agreement that the existence of more concrete policy instruments favours addressing inequality within countries over global inequality, many participants raised cogent arguments for the necessity of strengthening redistributive mechanisms at regional and global levels. The least developed countries, in particular, require a redistribution of global resources if they are to get out of poverty.

In his presentation, Berry maintained that while there is a serious weakness in the analysis of causation linking neoliberal globalization to inequality and poverty, it is important to likewise consider their other determinants—including land concentration, urban bias and unequal access to education. He also reminded participants of the view that globalization might have a mitigating effect on inequality between countries: some poor countries that pursued policies to exploit the process had indeed achieved impressive rates of economic growth.

#### **Future directions**

Participants outlined three topics for discussion at the next UNRISD retreat for UN officials: global governance, the United Nations and neoliberal globalization; global action against national and global polarization; and national responses to globalization. There was consensus that there should be a focus on empirical evidence and specific policy prescriptions in these three areas.

A full report of the meeting will be published in a forthcoming issue of *UNRISD Conference News*. The four papers commissioned for the meeting will appear in a forthcoming volume edited by UNRISD.

Funding for the retreat and its forthcoming publications was provided by the Rockefeller Foundation, in addition to UNRISD core funds.

## **Ethnic Structure, Inequality and Governance of the Public Sector**

### **27–28 May 2002, Geneva**

This workshop brought together researchers from Africa, Asia and Europe to discuss country proposals and methodologies for a new UNRISD project on Ethnic Structure, Inequality and Governance of the Public Sector. Since the 1990s, most countries have pursued reforms to change the incentive, managerial and governance structures of their public sectors. However, there has been little research on how ethnic cleavages and inequalities affect public sector reform. Efficiency and good governance may be difficult goals to attain if the public sector is conflict ridden, or if elites are dissatisfied with the rules that determine selection to public institutions or they hold or express fears about exclusion. The UNRISD project thus focuses on

issues of diversity, representation and cohesion in the constitution and management of the public sector.

Three assumptions guiding the research provided a backdrop for the workshop discussions. First, contrary to what many analysts believe, ethnic fragmentation does not necessarily lead to pathological outcomes. Ethnic cleavages are configured differently in different social structures, and are less conflictual in some countries than in others. Second, even in cases where ethnicity is a problem, institutions can be designed to help contain instability and promote cohesion or accommodation. Third, an inclusive public sector can be developed under democratic rule.

Discussions were organized around a typology that distinguishes countries according to their levels of ethnic polarization. Five types of structures were highlighted. The first, referred to as *unipolar*, represents cases in which one ethnicity is overwhelmingly dominant. Botswana and Lithuania were discussed. In Botswana, the Tswana constitute, by some estimates, about 70 per cent of the population. A multiethnic elite pact at independence granted the Tswana language official status (along with English) in exchange for equal distribution of resources among all groups. Sustained economic growth helped to consolidate the pact and depoliticize ethnicity. In Lithuania, the indigenous group constitutes about 80 per cent of the population. Governments there

have been able to dispense with the strict citizenship laws that define participation in state institutions on deeply divided Latvia and Estonia.

One hypothesis that received attention during the workshop is that competition for representation in the public sector is likely to be less ethnically polarized in unipolar settings. Electoral politics may open up conflicts within the dominant ethnicity, allowing individuals from minority groups to play an active role in parties formed by individuals from the dominant ethnic group. Even though most Tswana vote for the ruling party, for example, a sizeable percentage also supports opposition parties. Minorities have not formed separate parties from those led by Tswana, preferring to exert influence from within. The ethnic Lithuanian vote is also fragmented into multiple parties. Although some minorities have formed their own political parties, fragmentation has allowed them to form coalitions with Lithuanian parties.

Fiji and Latvia were discussed as examples of the second type of structure, referred to as *bipolar*, representing cases in which there are only two ethnic groups, or in which two roughly equal groups predominate in a multiethnic setting. In Fiji, ethnic Fijians constitute about half the population and Indians about 45 per cent. In Latvia, ethnic Latvians account for about 58 per cent of the population and Russians 30 per cent. However—and whereas policies of Russification had disadvantaged ethnic Latvians—citizenship rules introduced at independence make more than 76 per cent of the country's citizens Latvian, and only 17 per cent Russian.

The third, or *tripolar*, structure deals with cases in which there are only three groups, or three large groups in a multiethnic setting. Bosnia and Nigeria were discussed. In Bosnia, Muslims, Serbs and Croats are 44, 31 and 17 per cent, respectively, of the popula-

tion. War and foreign intervention have produced an elaborate set of governance institutions there: international administration, a loose confederation, two distinct political entities, and cantonal and communal rule. Nigeria is a federation of 36 states, comprised of more than 370 ethnic groups. Despite this diversity, three groups, which account for about 55 per cent of the population, have historically had a strong influence on politics. Complex governance institutions at federal, state and local levels have been devised to manage diversity and tripolarity.

A major hypothesis guiding research on bipolar and tripolar cases is that if ethnicity is politicized, elites are likely to pursue policies of hegemony, leading to high levels of instability and disproportionality in state institutions. This may be related to a limited scope for bargaining, and the construction of multiple and shifting alliances. In such contexts, governance institutions that are ethnicity-blind and are based on majority rule may be unsustainable.

The last two types of structures address cases of ethnic fragmentation: *fragmented multipolarity*—high levels of fragmentation; and *concentrated multipolarity*—fragmentation that gives a few large groups the potential to organize selective coalitions. India, Papua New Guinea and Tanzania were discussed under the first type, and Ghana and Kenya under the second. Tanzania has more than 130 ethnic groups, with the three largest constituting only about 23 per cent of the population. (Bi)polarization has occurred only on the small island of Zanzibar. Papua New Guinea comprises more than 800 language groups and numerous clans, with the largest group accounting for only about 4 per cent of the population. India's fragmented multipolarity is attributed to language, religious and caste differentiation—although religious conflicts threaten a shift to bi- or tripolarity.

Ethnicity is more salient in Ghana and Kenya than in Tanzania and Papua New Guinea, and less virulent in Ghana than in Kenya. Five ethnic groups account for about 70 per cent of Kenya's population. Four of the groups are relatively equal in size (11 to 14 per cent), and the largest group accounts for only 21 per cent of the population. This suggests that ethnicity may assume potent forms in countries with fairly large, relatively equal groups. In Kenya, for example, politicians from each of the five major groups may believe they stand an equal chance of governing by constructing selective ethnic coalitions. In Ghana, the Akan comprise 44 per cent of the population, but internal fragmentation of the group seems to mitigate its domination: ethnic conflict is more pronounced between a subset of the Akan—the Asante—and the second largest group, the Ewe. Ethnicity-based political behaviour is likely to be less prevalent in fragmented than in concentrated multipolar cases. Where political parties have to appeal to a large cross-section of ethnic groups in order to win elections, national ethnic coalition parties are likely to take shape.

Workshop participants also discussed the two methodological approaches that will guide project research. The first will focus on data collection and analysis of ethnic cleavages and inequalities. Researchers will map out ethnic cleavages, including variations within each group; they will also address, to the extent possible, how other types of divisions, such as class and gender, affect ethnic cleavages; and they will seek to identify patterns or structures to the cleavages, and how they have changed over time. They will also study the rules that determine appointment to public institutions, and their outcomes, by focusing on four main institutions: civil service, party system, cabinet and parliament. They will analyse whether the distribution

of offices is ethnically representative or uneven, as well as perceptions of such distribution and the rules governing it. Researchers will also examine the extent to which socioeconomic inequalities are reflected in job allocation in public sector institutions. And because the rules for representation in cabinet, parliament and party systems depend in part on citizen's choices, they will study voter preference in constituting these institutions.

The second approach will deal with institutions for managing diversity, inequality and competition. Institutions to be examined range from electoral

rules to governance arrangements for power sharing, decentralization, federalism and protection of minority rights. Affirmative action policies and rules that seek to correct disproportionality will also receive attention. Researchers will adopt a historical perspective in seeking answers to the following questions: How effective are existing institutions in managing cleavage and inequality? Do these institutions promote majoritarian or consensual outcomes? Are minority ethnic groups necessarily excluded from majoritarian outcomes? If institutions seek to promote majoritarian outcomes, do they also contain safeguards

that can yield consensual outcomes? What alternatives can be suggested on the basis of evidence derived from the study of ethnic structures, inequalities and electoral behaviour?

A full report on the workshop will be published in a forthcoming issue of *UNRISD Conference News*. Funding for the workshop and the project is provided by the Ford Foundation, in addition to UNRISD core funds. The project's draft research reports are expected by September 2003.

## Ageing, Development and Social Protection

8–9 April 2002, Madrid, Spain

This UNRISD conference, a contribution to the United Nations Second World Assembly on Ageing, brought together international experts and leading gerontologists to present their work. Three interrelated themes were the subject of the UNRISD event: development trajectories, social change and well-being in later life; formal social protection for older people; and the care economy.

In his introductory address, Peter Lloyd-Sherlock emphasized the diversity of ageing experiences and advised against the portrayal of older people as a special interest group whose concerns are separate from and possibly in conflict with those of other age groups. He pointed out that current debates on population ageing and public policy are mainly derived from Northern gerontology and neoliberal political economy, yet these frameworks may be of little relevance to many people in the South, where the majority of older people now live.

### Development trajectories, social change and well-being in later life

The growing number of older people affects current patterns of development

in all countries, in both the North and the South. It is often claimed that processes of population ageing increase the burden on productive sectors of the economy—a claim that tends to be based on overgeneralized notions of consumption and dependency in later life. Yet development affects the capacity of societies to provide for all groups, including older people. Presentations in this session analysed how the well-being of older people has been influenced by socioeconomic changes in different regional settings.

In Great Britain, the socioeconomic status of older people changed considerably in the last century. In his presentation, Paul Johnson explored from a historical perspective how improved access to pension benefits, health care and political voice significantly altered people's expectation of old age over time.

Improvements to social programmes for older people are generally based on political choice. In her study of Brazil, Ana Amélia Camarano examined how, in a context of modest economic performance, the socioeconomic status of elders

and their families improved following the political decision to develop a range of social programmes—especially pension benefits—for older members of the population. Yet she noted that there are significant regional disparities in Brazil, and also that progress for the elderly contrasts with the deteriorating economic situation of other age groups. As a result of the chronic instability of the economy and the labour market, for example, younger generations are increasingly dependent on older members of the population.

By contrast, the 1990s saw a degradation of the welfare systems of many Eastern European countries, deeply affecting the well-being of the older population. According to Vladislav Bezrukov, between 1986 and 1998 the basic pension in Ukraine fell from 40 to 28 per cent of the average worker's salary. Older people were thus forced to seek a supplementary, market-based source of income, and/or to rely on younger family members for support. However, in a context of high unemployment rates and discrimination against older job applicants, the situation could be characterized as one of mutual hardship.

The long-term viability of intergenerational welfare support was put into question in Du Peng's presentation on China, where traditional family support mechanisms are becoming less able to cope with the growing number of older people. He emphasized that with demographic and socioeconomic changes occurring at unprecedented speed and scale in China, and where the state pension scheme has limited coverage, further legislation will be required to guarantee the rights and benefits of older people.

#### **Formal social protection and older people**

A key relationship between development and the well-being of older people relates to the creation of formal social protection programmes. The second session of the conference considered different public policy approaches to pension benefits, long-term care and health provision.

Governments in the South have taken diverse approaches to pension provision. In his presentation, Armando Barrientos compared pension schemes in Chile, Singapore, South Africa and Brazil. With the support of the World Bank, Chile and Singapore radically transformed their pension schemes into privately provided individual retirement plans. This has been portrayed in some quarters as highly successful, with a positive impact on economic development due to increased rates of private saving and improved capital and labour markets. Yet, according to Barrientos, the costs of these private schemes have been significantly higher than those of the universal pension schemes found in South Africa and Brazil—which, he argued, also have a measurable impact on poverty, the well-being of elders, and economic development.

Concern is mounting in industrialized countries about the provision of long-term care for older people. A compulsory social care insurance scheme was introduced in 2000 in Japan, where the

greatest proportion of the population is over the age of 60. Tetsuo Ogawa evaluated the success of this scheme and noted that it may provide an example for other industrialized countries.

Health care provision has not received as much attention as pension reform. Yet older people account for a growing share of health service consumption in many countries. The lack of attention to elder health care is no more apparent than in sub-Saharan Africa. In her presentation, Di McIntyre expressed concern about the heavy bias toward maternal and child care to the detriment of older people's health care in many African countries. She also noted that the introduction of user fees and costly health insurance schemes have had adverse consequences or been inadequate for many elderly people.

Private individual health insurance schemes—which are being introduced in an increasing number of countries—are likely to discriminate against the aged and the disabled unless specific funds are created. Such funds exist in the United States and Argentina. In comparing these funds, Nélica Redondo found that neither has been successful in containing the expenditures made on health care. She thus argued that this should be considered an important intrinsic cost of shifting away from universal public programmes.

#### **Older people and the care economy**

The role of family members, mainly women, in providing care for older people is still prominent in many developing countries. The last session of the conference looked at how changes in family structures, traditional values, employment patterns and the economy are affecting the provision of informal care for the elderly.

Nana Apt considered processes of modernization and changes in informal support in sub-Saharan Africa. She argued that urbanization, the migration of younger generations in search

of employment, and the collapse of extended household structures have increased the isolation and economic vulnerability of elders, particularly in rural areas.

It is often stated that “traditional” extended households are being superseded by “nuclear” structures in developing countries. Yet the opposite is the case in Mexico, as argued by Cristina Gomes da Conceição and Verónica Montes de Oca Zavala. With older people living longer, and economic barriers deterring younger people from buying their own home, there has been an increase in the proportion of three-generation households. In many cases, the burden of care for younger household members may fall to older women who, according to this research, would often prefer to live alone.

Thus, in some situations, older people also play a significant role as caregivers. In Thailand, the HIV/AIDS epidemic has had important implications for older people, as they often provide care to their sick children through both living and caregiving arrangements. In their presentation, John Knodel and Chanpen Saengtienchai showed that this role imposes a heavy burden on the parents of many people with HIV/AIDS. Not only are there physical strains associated with caregiving, but there are also serious economic implications of caring for HIV/AIDS sufferers. Moreover, families may experience economic hardship if the household's main income earner dies from HIV/AIDS.

Support for this UNRISD event was provided by the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA), the government of Spain, and the Institute's core funders.

## UNRISD at the World Social Forum: Regulating Global Institutions

3–4 February 2002, Porto Alegre, Brazil

At this year's World Social Forum, UNRISD and the Brazilian Institute of Social and Economic Analyses (IBASE) co-hosted a seminar on Regulating Global Institutions. The event brought together scholars and activists concerned with issues of global governance and development. Six speakers discussed and debated the types of reform that are needed in relation to international finance organizations, transnational corporations (TNCs) and large, development non-governmental organizations (NGOs).

The seminar began with a discussion on the role of the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF). UNRISD Director Thandika Mkandawire noted the ways in which the Bretton Woods institutions have adjusted their policies in recent years to address issues of poverty alleviation and "good governance". He pointed out, however, four limitations of this shift in policy: such issues tend to be dealt with in a technocratic way; these organizations continue to ignore important aspects of income distribution and social equity; their focus on targeting has created a dual structure of social services that works poorly in many countries; and their increasing recognition of the role of the state is undermined by the fact that neoliberal policies have greatly weakened state capacity in many countries. Mkandawire called on these institutions to recognize the importance of redistributive justice and social policy, which must become an integral part of the debate on development and not simply add-ons to a policy approach that remains fundamentally unchanged.

In addressing the seminar, Peter Evans, a Professor of Sociology at the University of California, Berkeley, recognized that the World Bank and the

IMF have a role to play in promoting development, but emphasized that countries of the South need to have a much greater say in the governance structures of these organizations. Referring in particular to the IMF, Evans argued that the dominant views of Southern governments as either passive victims of IMF policies or passive clients being saved by the organization were misleading. According to him, improvements in South-IMF relations need to be grounded on the more active, organized and collective efforts of Southern countries to reshape the Fund's policies. Despite the undemocratic structure of governance in the IMF, some spaces exist for the South to increase its power and influence in the organization.

Reinaldo Gonçalves, a Professor of Economics at the Federal University of Rio de Janeiro, argued in his presentation that both the IMF and the World Bank are powerful instruments of foreign policy used by developed countries, notably the United States, and that these institutions have created more problems than they have solved. In identifying key problems that need to be addressed, he cited the lack of transparency in the institutions and organizations that make up the international financial and monetary systems; the lack of regulation of certain areas of international financial operations, such as offshore centres; and the negative conditionality and "moral hazard" associated with IMF loans. He called for a reversal of the process of financial liberalization, with greater capital controls and certain restrictions on both outflows and inflows of currency, goods and services. Gonçalves also called for the replacement of the World Bank and the IMF with an International Development Fund to finance social, economic and environ-

mental projects in developing countries. In his view, the governments of neither developed nor developing countries should participate in this fund's decision making. Rather, a board should be composed of representatives of international civil society, chosen democratically on a world scale.

The seminar went on to address issues related to the reform and developmental impact of TNCs and large development NGOs. Peter Utting, a Research Co-ordinator at UNRISD, assessed the effectiveness of recent attempts to improve the social and environmental performance of TNCs via "multistakeholder" standard-setting, monitoring and certification schemes, which involve non-governmental and multilateral organizations. He found that some of these schemes are an improvement on certain voluntary initiatives associated with "corporate self-regulation" (such as company codes of conduct), which are generally weak in terms of design, implementation and impact. Nevertheless, he noted certain weaknesses of multistakeholder initiatives and limits to the extent to which such schemes can be scaled up. Not only are relatively few firms currently involved, but the monitoring, reporting and certification processes they promote tend to be complex and costly. Utting argued that such an approach is unlikely to evolve into an effective global system of TNC regulation, and that more attention needs to be given to the creation or expansion of "complaints procedures", through which specific breaches of standards by TNCs can be identified and addressed. Complaints-based systems of regulation would involve various types of actors and processes, including UN organizations, national legislative frameworks, watchdog NGOs, trade unions, the

media, ombudsman-type institutions, and shareholder and consumer activism.

In his contribution to the debates, David Korten, President of the People-Centered Development Forum, called for more far-reaching reform of the global governance and accountability of TNCs. He argued that because the publicly traded, limited-liability corporation was established as a legal institutional form to exploit the people, markets and resources of colonial territories and to shield economically powerful interests from accountability, it should have no role in setting or shaping public policy and priorities in democratic societies. In his opinion, neither voluntary initiatives nor piecemeal public regulation would be able to address the negative environmental and social impacts of TNC activities. He argued for several alternative requirements to address these problems: the elimination of institutional forms

that concentrate economic power and are immune to public accountability; the break-up of monopolies; the equitable redistribution of ownership rights; the strengthening and democratization of the United Nations, and the dismantling of the World Bank, IMF and World Trade Organization.

Turning to the issue of large development NGOs, Deborah Eade, Editor of the journal *Development in Practice*, identified recent trends in their approaches and role. These included the growing recognition of both the limitations of project-based anti-poverty work and the increasing need for advocacy to change the policy environment; the increasing emphasis on democratization and good governance; the pressures on NGOs to become involved in service delivery; and the increasing competition among NGOs for access to the media and public limelight to gain influence and resources.

These trends raise important questions about how agendas are set; the legitimacy of NGOs to advocate on behalf of others and their accountability to a diverse range of stakeholders; and the division of labour between Northern NGOs involved in high-profile advocacy and Southern NGOs that are left implementing projects and supplying information. Eade called for a decisive move away from “paternalistic advocacy” and toward “participatory advocacy”, a shift that would involve broad coalitions of civil society and grassroots voices: “people-centred advocacy”, whereby people negotiate rights on their own behalf; and—rather than setting agendas and disbursing resources correspondingly—international NGOs acting in solidarity.

Summaries of the seminar presentations are available at [www.unrisd.org](http://www.unrisd.org).

## The Global Compact and Civil Society: Averting a Collision Course

Peter Utting

Anyone from the United Nations who attended the 2002 World Social Forum (WSF) in Porto Alegre, Brazil, would have been struck by the fact that while many activists are critical of the UN, they still believe in the organization. In sharp contrast to the demands for a radical downsizing or abolition of organizations such as the World Trade Organization, the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund, many civil society organizations are calling for a reformed but strengthened United Nations. Concern, however, is building, notably about UN relations with transnational corporations (TNCs). The recent formation of “partnerships” between UN organizations and TNCs indicates the increasingly close nature of this relationship. The most high-profile of these

partnerships is the Global Compact, which by the end of 2001 had enlisted the support of approximately 400 companies in 30 countries. These companies have agreed to adhere to nine principles related to human rights, labour standards and environmental protection. At the WSF, the Global Compact came in for some heavy criticism.

In the article “UN-Business partnerships: Whose agenda counts?” (*UNRISD News*, No. 23, Autumn/Winter 2000), this author suggested that one of the risks associated with the warming of relations between the United Nations and TNCs was that of heightened tensions between the UN and certain civil society actors. During the past two years such tensions have indeed es-

calated. This is most evident in communications between the Global Compact office and the US-based NGO Corpwatch. Disagreements between a UN office and a particular NGO should not come as a surprise. Of concern in this case, however, is the fact that Corpwatch acts as the Secretariat for the Alliance for a Corporate-Free UN, which is composed of several well-known and respected Northern- and Southern-based research and advocacy groups such as Third World Network, the Institute for Policy Studies, Focus on the Global South, and the Brazilian Institute for Social and Economic Analyses (IBASE). At the WSF, it was evident that these members of the Alliance have assumed a leading role in the global “movement” to construct an alternative to

the contemporary model of economic globalization. Among the 5,000 organizations present at the WSF, and many others that could not make it to Porto Alegre, these organizations have considerable legitimacy.

Given that part of the Global Compact's raison d'être is the promotion of new forms of "good governance" based on multistakeholder dialogue and collaboration, it is unfortunate that such an initiative is providing a basis for confrontation with some sectors of civil society. Why the tensions? Several concerns have been raised:

- Few effective mechanisms are in place to ensure that companies comply with the Global Compact principles.
- Rather than being held to address and internalize all nine principles consistently, companies may pick and choose the principles and corporate activities they wish to deal with.
- The Global Compact does more to enhance the image and legitimacy of big business than to improve social and environmental standards.
- The "social learning" theory and "best practice" approach that underpin the Global Compact are flawed, as they tend to ignore key pressures and institutional contexts that encourage companies to raise standards, divert attention from "bad practice", and ignore fundamental structural and other factors that abet corporate irresponsibility.

Research being carried out under the UNRISD project on Business Responsibility and Sustainable Development—looking at UN-business partnerships and corporate social responsibility—has raised similar concerns and suggests that another approach is needed. How might things evolve? Three scenarios can be envisaged.

First, the United Nations can pursue the current course of engaging TNCs via fairly weak voluntary initiatives. Leaving aside the question of whether this kind of engagement is effective in promoting corporate social responsibility, taking such a path may put

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the UN on a collision course with a vociferous sector of civil society. This kind of tension would seem to contradict the spirit of what the UN has been trying to achieve for over a decade in terms of global governance arrangements involving improved relations with civil society.

Second, the UN can heed the calls of not only the Alliance for a Corporate-Free UN, but also the former United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and other Global Compact stakeholders, who have suggested that the Compact be modified or redesigned to ensure that corporations comply with the nine principles. Some of the ideas or proposals for reform involve screening potential corporate participants; greater transparency about which companies are involved in the Compact; obliging companies to report on all nine principles; greater attention to and public disclosure of feedback and commentary from non-corporate stakeholders; independent monitoring of compliance; stricter controls on how

companies "use" their association with the UN; and other safeguards against companies using the Compact essentially for purposes of public relations.

Modified in such ways, the Compact could serve the dual purpose of improving UN-civil society relations and more effectively promoting corporate responsibility and accountability. An unintended consequence might be, of course, that business would sign off. (One of the main backers of the Compact, the International Chamber of Commerce, has made it clear that it would "look askance" at any such changes.) Some would argue that this may not be a bad thing: many large TNCs are already involved in voluntary corporate responsibility initiatives and "best practice" reporting, and from the perspective of social and sustainable development, there may be little value added by their involvement in the Compact. But corporate disengagement could undermine various potential benefits of the Compact. In some developing and transitional countries the Compact could serve to raise awareness of corporate responsibility issues. Another advantage of the Compact is that it serves to bring TNCs under the remit of international law—albeit certain types of "soft" law. It is often incorrectly assumed, for example, that the Universal Declaration of Human Rights targets states and not corporations. The Global Compact could help to redress this misperception by making the connection between corporations and international human rights law more explicit.

The third scenario entails continuing the Global Compact experiment, with or without major reforms, and pursuing an alternative approach elsewhere in the UN system. The Compact states that it is not meant to be a substitute for other "regulatory" approaches at the international level that rely on monitoring and enforcement. In practice, however, it is just about

the only game in town that involves a significant number of corporations. A basic concern about UN-TNC partnerships in general is that they reflect a shift in approach whereby lukewarm voluntary initiatives have crowded out important mechanisms and institutional arrangements. These involve new forms of international law; oversight or monitoring of TNCs' activities; mediation or arbitration of disputes; and critical research into regulatory alternatives and the social,

environmental and developmental impacts of TNCs.

Several ideas and proposals involving the UN system have emerged that could serve to correct this imbalance (see box), although movement on most of these has been extremely slow or non-existent. If the United Nations is committed to promoting corporate social responsibility, as well as good governance and multistakeholder participation, the time has surely

come to consider such alternatives more seriously.

**Peter Utting**, a Research Co-ordinator at UNRISD, heads the Institute's work on corporate social and environmental responsibility. Research assistance by **Désirée Abrahams** is gratefully acknowledged.

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### **Rethinking UN-Business Relations**

- Friends of the Earth International proposed that the World Summit on Sustainable Development consider a Corporate Accountability Convention that would establish and enforce minimum environmental and social standards, encourage effective reporting and provide incentives for TNCs taking steps to avoid negative impacts.
- The International Forum on Globalization has advocated the creation of a United Nations Organization for Corporate Accountability that would provide information on corporate practices as a basis for legal actions and consumer boycotts. Christian Aid has put forth the idea of a Global Regulation Authority that would establish norms for TNC conduct, monitor compliance and deal with breaches. Others have called for reactivation of the defunct United Nations Centre on Transnational Corporations, some of whose activities were transferred to UNCTAD a decade ago.
- The Sub-Commission on the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights has set up a Working Group on TNCs, which is considering a Code of Conduct for TNCs and has drafted a set of Human Rights Principles and Responsibilities for TNCs and Other Business Enterprises. The Working Group has also proposed the creation of entities to assist with the implementation of the Principles and to monitor compliance.
- There have been calls for a Special Rapporteur on TNCs to be established by the Human Rights Commission and for some existing Special Rapporteurs to deal with problems involving TNCs. The need to extend international legal obligations to TNCs in the field of human rights and to bring corporations under the jurisdiction of the International Criminal Court has also been suggested.
- In conducting business with companies, United Nations agencies could impose or broaden procurement standards relating to social and environmental norms.
- Trade unions and others have for many years urged the ILO to strengthen its follow-up activities and procedures for examining disputes related to the Tripartite Declaration of Principles concerning Multinational Enterprises and Social Policy, which have remained extremely weak.
- UN agencies such as UNCTAD, UNDP, UNEP and WHO, as well as the ILO, should not shy away from critical research and policy analysis on TNCs and their social, environmental and developmental impacts in developing countries, and on regulatory initiatives.

## Agrarian Change, Gender and Land Rights

6–7 November 2001, Geneva

This conference brought together members of the UNRISD team who have been carrying out field research during the past two years in several sub-Saharan African countries, Brazil and Uzbekistan in the framework of the UNRISD project on Agrarian Change, Gender and Land Rights. A number of specialists working on issues of agrarian change in other regional contexts also participated. It was a timely occasion for the research team to present their findings and obtain feedback, and to identify comparative issues emerging from the country case studies, before their papers are finalized and published. The presentations and discussions were wide-ranging, but three overarching themes emerged.

The first theme relates to the politics and institutions of land tenure, and the extent to which these can encompass women's interests and facilitate their representation and voice in land management decisions. One of the in-depth studies traces the emergence of apparent consensus, among policy actors from different ideological and political positions, on the land question in sub-Saharan Africa. This research found that following a process of rethinking, the World Bank's Land Policy Division now essentially rejects land tenure reform based on statutory interventions (such as land titling)—which represent a complete rupture with traditional systems—and instead highlights the importance of “building on the customary”. This, it is presumed, will be less costly and more likely to reduce land conflicts. At the same time, the emphasis on an expanded role for local-level land management is seen by many progressive forces, including several international non-governmental organizations such as Oxfam UK, as a

buttress against processes of land alienation and “land grabbing”.

However, questions were raised about the role of local-level institutions in land tenure management, administration and arbitration—particularly pertinent when the current trend toward decentralization is reorganizing the roles and powers of local actors in the name of their greater participation in

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*Policies of external liberalization; falling prices for many of the commodities exported by developing countries ... and cutbacks in public expenditure on rural development are important factors contributing to the present crisis of livelihoods.*

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governance questions. Are these local-level management systems going to be any more amenable to women's interests than the statutory interventions made at the national level? This is not certain, as women may have too little political voice at all the decision-making levels relevant to land issues, *including local-level management systems*. Moreover, while some participants questioned the limitations of law and of legal reform as vehicles for delivering gender justice, it was also argued that the dualism maintained by some gender rights advocates and policy makers, juxtaposing the “statutory” with the “customary”, is misleading. First, there is ample evidence that the two domains are mutually constituted and, in practice, women draw on both

sets of principles in claiming their rights to landed resources. And second, it was feared that as states abdicate responsibilities in the domains of economic and social policy, the discourse of the “customary” could strengthen a new politics of “traditionalism”—the re-emergence of chieftaincy, for example—which might conflict with democratic principles and the agenda of women's rights.

The second theme of conference discussion has to do with the *contingent* nature of the land question and the extent to which its significance varies across contexts. More specifically, how can the issue of gender and land be framed to allow for the range of variables that intervene and determine where, and in what situations, land becomes a critical resource and a genuine part of people's, and women's, struggles for survival and economic and social betterment, and where it becomes a liability? Whether in the context of national debates on land tenure reform or the political dynamics associated with decentralization, women's interests in land have become a contested issue. In some country contexts, tensions and divisions have emerged in civil society ranks: while some policy advocates have been pushing for women's unambiguous rights to land as a “good” policy intervention (because it is presumed to enhance their intrahousehold bargaining power, irrespective of broader contextual forces), others have opposed women's land rights categorically because they are seen as the thin edge of the wedge used by pro-liberalization lobbies to open up “customary” systems of land management to market forces and foreign commercial interests. This is a dangerous dichotomy: it precludes the kind of nuanced analysis needed to identify situations in which inadequate access

to land constitutes a serious constraint on women's agricultural enterprises. Nor can it facilitate appropriate policy suggestions to enhance greater justice with respect to resource allocation for rural women—both as wives/daughters in male-dominated households *and* as members of vulnerable social classes and communities that face the risk of land alienation and entitlement failure in the context of liberalization.

Finally, the effect of the twin pillars of neoliberal orthodoxy—deflationary macroeconomic policies and external

liberalization—on agrarian livelihoods in developing countries emerged as an important area of concern. One of the conference participants set out in detail the mechanisms that have shifted the global economic slowdown into the agrarian realm, creating a crisis of significant proportion in many parts of the developing world. Policies of external liberalization: falling prices for many of the commodities exported by developing countries; the threat to developing-country farmers created by exceptionally low-priced grain imports; the consequent shifts in cropping patterns;

and cutbacks in public expenditure on rural development were all seen as important factors contributing to the present crisis of livelihoods.

This conference was a joint activity of UNRISD and the Forum for Social Studies in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. The findings of the UNRISD project on Agrarian Change, Gender and Land Rights will be published in January 2003 in a special issue of the *Journal of Agrarian Change*.

## The Need to Rethink Development Economics

7–8 September 2001, Cape Town, South Africa

This conference, a joint undertaking of UNRISD and the Ford Foundation, brought together 29 social scientists from developing and industrialized countries to exchange ideas on an alternative to the neoliberal approach to development issues. Participants shared views on how economics can serve to empower the South and on how to revive development economics—not as a deviant branch of mainstream economics, but as a discipline whose role is to address the vital problems that developing countries typically face.

Five main areas structured the discussions during the two-day meeting: the decline of development economics, current intellectual trends, new challenges, regional perspectives, and strategies and future activities.

In their exchanges in the first area, conference participants advanced a variety of explanations for the decline of development economics during the late 1970s and the 1980s. Up until the 1970s, problems of welfare and unemployment in developed countries, and those of poverty and under-

development in developing ones, were interpreted through the lenses of Keynesian economics and “development economics”, respectively. Participants agreed that the oil crisis, “stagflation” and the subsequent indebtedness of developing countries severely tested the models and theories that had underpinned both welfare and development policies. The neoclassical counterrevolution and the ascendance of monetarism in the advanced industrial countries, it was argued, also contributed to the decline of development economics in the South. Development economics, some suggested, was also deemed guilty by association with authoritarian governance structures, making it unattractive to many emerging social movements associated with the trend toward democratization.

In addition to attributing the decline of development economics to the economic crises of the 1970s and 1980s—and the ideological ascendance of neoliberalism in the international financial institutions and the countries of the Organization for Economic Co-

operation and Development—participants noted that the demise of the discipline had a lot to do with interpretation of the postwar development experience. Up until 1993, the spectacular economic performance of the East Asian countries was evoked as evidence of the wisdom of relying on market forces. In contrast, the “lost decades” of much of Africa and Latin America were blamed on “development planning”, which distorted prices and led to slower growth. The experiences of the quintessential development states were thus evoked as evidence against development economics.

Debates in the second area took the form of diverging responses to the question “What should be the relationship between a new development economics and mainstream economics?”. One group proposed a clean break from mainstream economics, which persists in applying political or social “patches” to explain why economic outcomes differ from those predicted by neoclassical theory. The revival of development economics should thus take place outside the

paradigms and methodologies set by mainstream economics: it should be set in specific historical contexts, and take into consideration institutions, sociocultural values and practices, and governance structures. Another group of participants felt, however, that there were a number of important critiques in mainstream economics that could be used to both denounce neoliberal policies and contribute to the new thinking on development. Such rigorous critiques could and should be put to use in non-orthodox approaches. In the view of these participants, methodology per se should be less important than a sincere effort to get at the essence of development in different historical and institutional settings.

A word of caution came from activists who argued that although “wrong” economic theories have played a central role in all this, the adoption of particular economic models by policy makers is essentially a political choice. In recent years, various conservative regimes in developed countries have been compelled, against their stated ideological predispositions, to adopt Keynesian solutions in response to political pressures.

Participants moved on to discussing new challenges. The call for a new development economics is not informed by nostalgia for the “Golden Era” of developmentalism. Rather, it is motivated by the immediacy of the agenda that development economics sought to address—eradication of poverty through economic development and equitable distribution. However, in light of changed circumstances and accumulated experiences, participants agreed, the new paradigm will have to take on a whole range of new issues in a vastly changed global environment. These include the changed international context, changes in economics, new views of the state, and the new social agenda.

A major point of agreement to emerge from the discussions of these new parameters was the need for a more integrated approach to economics. Yet there was lively debate on the best way to achieve this. Where some participants suggested that energy should be devoted to practical integration, rather than the search for a “grand theory” to counter the neoclassical paradigm, others felt that a new economic theory would be valuable.

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*Development research taking place inside developing countries suffers from low visibility, and ... there is a pressing need to produce a new generation of development economists combining professional competence with critical perspectives.*

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Strong intellectual foundations would be required to stand against the prevailing orthodoxy, they argued. Participants also emphasized the need for a strong link between research and policy—particularly for research that would assist decision makers in formulating good developmental policies.

The fourth area of discussion centred on regional experiences. The comments of some participants from Latin America centred on international capital flows, foreign direct investment and the role of international financial institutions in national development processes. Discussions on Kerala, India highlighted how the process of decentralization there has given rise to a successful experience of democratic transition from below. And in Canada, what began as a provincial movement to challenge budgetary allocations has been scaled up to the national level,

where the alternative federal budget is designed via a process of engagement with people throughout the country. This could provide a model of how to make economic policy more democratic. A participatory policy-making approach in some Southern African countries was also described, yet a number of constraints—including limited government capacity and ill-adapted institutional structures—have prevented all of its aims from being achieved. Finally, it was argued that one of the lessons from the experiences of the transition economies is that the speed of reforms matters less than the strength of institutions. Indeed, in many of these countries, democratic reform where the rule of law is weak may have a negative impact on both institutional capacity and economic growth.

The last area addressed during the conference concerned future strategies and activities. Much of this discussion was based on agreement that development research taking place inside developing countries suffers from low visibility, and that there is a pressing need to produce a new generation of development economists combining professional competence with critical perspectives. One concrete outcome of the conference was the establishment by some of the participants of International Development Economics Associates (IDEAs). An international research undertaking independent of UNRISD, IDEAs will aim to build a pluralist network of heterodox economists engaged in the teaching, research and application of critical analyses of economic development. More information about this initiative is available at [www.networkideas.org](http://www.networkideas.org).

A full report on the conference will be published in a forthcoming issue of UNRISD Conference News.

## Corporate Social and Environmental Responsibility in Peru

4–5 September 2001, Lima, Peru

This workshop brought together more than 30 people from Peru-based non-governmental organizations (NGOs), private sector companies, academia and international organizations. Their discussions during the course of the two-day meeting, which was organized in collaboration with the Social Science Faculty of the Pontificia Universidad Católica del Perú, served to enrich the preliminary findings of UNRISD research on corporate social and environmental responsibility (CSER) in Peru.

UNRISD Research Co-ordinator Peter Utting opened the meeting with an assessment of the strengths and weaknesses of the current international CSER agenda. His presentation was followed by a discussion of the effectiveness of different types of voluntary and regulatory approaches in developing country contexts. Participants emphasized that in such contexts, both the state and national companies often lack the resources and political will to improve social and environmental standards, and civil society organizations and networks may be weak or have other pressing concerns.

The workshop continued with a presentation by UNRISD Research Assistant Renato Alva Pino that outlined the Institute's preliminary findings on CSER in Peru. Several transnational corporations, notably in the mining sector, have adopted the corporate responsibility discourse in recent years, and a number of national corporations and business associations are also promoting it. Interest in the concept emerged in the early 1990s, in a context of economic, social and political crisis, when some national business leaders attempted to play a more important role in national development by addressing not only economic but

also social and political issues. However, the voluntary measures that have been adopted tend to be restricted to a limited range of initiatives associated with education, health care, community development projects and humanitarian assistance. Some of the companies adopting CSER initiatives are responding primarily to external pressures—such as concerns being expressed by Northern consumers and activists. Alva Pino concluded that the CSER agenda in Peru does not necessarily prioritize national issues and concerns such as corruption and discrimination. In relation to environmental responsibility, however, government regulation has played a significant role.

There is a considerable gap between the discourse on and the practice of CSER. The difficult economic situation of most national industries and the absence of concerted civil society pressure are two key constraints on progress in relation to CSER. Several participants noted important structural and cultural impediments to CSER related, for example, to the specific characteristics of national capitalism in Peru and social relations in the workplace. They also pointed out how neoliberal economic policies and the autocratic political system of the 1990s had created an unfavourable context for CSER.

On the second day of the workshop, two leading firms talked about their strategies for promoting CSER. Barrick, a large transnational mining corporation, presented its social programme for communities in mining areas. While the company had adopted a range of initiatives, it was constrained in its ability to have a major impact given the extent of poverty, the lack of state support and services in mining areas, and problems of community mistrust. The

second company, Corporation Backus, a Peruvian firm, described the initiatives it had adopted in the areas of education, culture, art and health care. In the discussions that followed, some workshop participants expressed concerns about the lack of social and environmental responsibility indicators in these programmes, and the sustainability of CSER projects and their relationships with such stakeholders as worker organizations and consumers.

In the final session, the business association Perú 2021 presented its project Cadena, which aims to adopt environmental management systems through ISO 14000. However, in the current context of economic recession, the financing and time needed to set up environmental management systems are proving significant impediments to successful implementation. The labour NGO Centro de Asesoría Laboral del Perú (CEDAL) then presented a set of indicators based on the conventions of the International Labour Organization that it is using to measure businesses' social responsibility for their employees. These indicators—used in four foreign corporations in the telecommunication, banking and energy sectors—have revealed various problems with the respect of workers' rights.

In conclusion, the participants agreed on the need to integrate small and medium companies in the CSER agenda, and to build a corporate responsibility culture and movement more consistent with the specificities of the Peruvian context.

Funding for this workshop was provided by the MacArthur Foundation.

## Information and Communication Technology in Senegal

16–17 July 2001, Dakar, Senegal

This conference marked the official completion of one year of extensive research carried out by an UNRISD project team on the role of information and communication technology (ICT) in various sectors of the Senegalese economy and society. The economic, political and cultural stakes of ICT in Senegal—and the implications for social development and the fight against social exclusion in the country—were overarching concerns that shaped the project's 10 studies.

The conference was structured around three themes: ICT and economic development; the integration of new technology in the media and in education; and ICT, development and democratization. In his opening remarks, Abdoulaye Baldé, General Secretary of the Office of the President, emphasized the Senegalese government's interest

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in and support of the work that had been undertaken by the researchers, and expressed hope that it would pave the way for a more equitable use of technology in the development of African countries.

### ICT and economic development

Three studies were presented in the first session of the conference, two of which looked at how information technology is being incorporated in formal private sector enterprises in Senegal. One of these focused on the opportunities and threats posed by the Internet for small and medium enterprises in Dakar, and on how 79 of these businesses are responding to changing times (for example by using Web sites and email, developing new marketing strategies, changing personnel policies, and creating new forms of work). The other asked similar questions for a sample of 50 medium and large industrial enterprises (including those in the fishing, food processing, textiles and machine parts sectors), and traced changes in management, in relations with suppliers and clients, and in the making of new international contacts. The study also assessed the perceived benefits and costs of adapting to the new business environment.

The third presentation reviewed findings of research on the implications of information technology for growth and patterns of economic development in Senegal. It included an empirical component that looked at how this technology is being introduced in various sectors of the Senegalese economy, which has faced crisis and suffered from the effects of various structural adjustment programmes. Changes in social and economic relations that stem from the incorporation of ICT in existing industries and service sectors were analysed, as were attempts to energize the local economy through occupying new niches in the growing international market for Internet-based services. The study also highlighted some of the principal difficulties that a country such as Senegal may encounter when it sets out to ben-

efit from, and participate in, the “new international division of labour”.

### ICT in the media and in education

Two of the four studies presented in the second session of the conference were concerned with ICT and the media in Senegal. One looked at the role of computer-mediated systems in the

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modernization of journalism. The future of African journalism will depend to a great extent on its capacity to use information technology in ways that respond to local needs. This research found that journalists' access to and use of some technology—the Internet in particular—remains limited, whereas their use of cellular telephones, for example, is widespread. This is due mainly to economic constraints in the sector. The second media-related study looked at the development of radio, which—especially following the creation of FM stations in 1990—has become a vital source of information in local languages for the majority of Senegal's people. The relation of local to global concerns is becoming increasingly complex in this medium, as satellite radio and television begin to offer new sources of information and entertainment.

The other two studies discussed in this session looked at the promotion and use of ICT in Senegal's educational system, at the secondary and university levels. The introduction of computers in secondary schools remains uneven and has been almost exclusively the result of pilot projects that have received external funding. Financial and human resource constraints have prevented extensive use throughout the country. Yet 80 per cent of the people surveyed in the study considered computers and connectivity indispensable, as having them can mitigate some types of structural and organizational problems encountered in secondary education; can provide access to documentation and sources of information that would be otherwise be unavailable; and can contribute to the adoption of distance learning and other approaches that empower teachers and students alike.

Senegal faces a number of constraints in implementing ICT at the university level. Less than 5 per cent of the population is currently enrolled in the country's institutions of higher learning. Although university capacities are already saturated, demand continues to rise. Improvements in infrastructure, hardware and connectivity could provide a partial solution by opening opportunities for distance learning and research. Yet larger questions persist about the best ways to integrate ICT, and about its role in the generation and transmission of knowledge. Furthermore, university faculties must not only maintain mastery of their particular subject matter, but must also now become well versed in the "information technology environment".

**ICT, development and democratization**

Conference participants heard three presentations during this session. The first was based on a study that analyses changes in Senegal's official policy on information and freedom of expression. The gradual relaxation of

state control over the media was reviewed, as were recent attempts to improve communication with citizens through creating neighbourhood-level offices, where anyone can access public records and obtain official documents. The presentation also included an account of the role of ICT in the March 2000 presidential election, which transferred power to an opposition party for the first time since Independence in 1960. Private radio stations and cellular telephones contributed to ensuring the transparency and accuracy of electoral results, thus providing a concrete illustration of how social forces have been using ICT to exert pressure for democratic change in Senegal.

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The second presentation of this session looked at the role of ICT in urban transformation in Senegal. This research focused on how information technology is being used to strengthen the religious and business interests of the Mouride brotherhood in Touba, the second largest city in Senegal. The brotherhood's rapid growth is based above all on its ceremonial role in the traditional religious structures of Wolof society. The study shows how the interests of the Mouride are being

strengthened both locally and globally—through the growth of a transnational informal commercial sector, and through the creation of transnational religious ties. Research also shows that new opportunities are changing identities and social relations—between women and men, spiritual leaders and followers—in a once-traditional setting.

Finally, participants heard a presentation of the research on the role of ICT in facilitating financial and social "relations at distance", between Senegalese migrants and their country of origin. The rapid growth and diversification of telephone services and Internet options is changing the way migrants are able to participate in day-to-day decisions about family matters and manage businesses dependent on their investments. ICT is also stimulating new businesses in countries where migrants work, as the latter respond to the demands of their compatriots in Senegal for money transfer services, cheap international communication, and new forms of transnational barter.

A full report of the conference has been published (in French) as an issue of **UNRISD Conference News** (see page 21), and is also available at [www.unrisd.org](http://www.unrisd.org).

Some of the studies discussed at the conference are available at [www.unrisd.org](http://www.unrisd.org). All 10 are being co-published (in French) in a volume by UNRISD and Les Editions Karthala. Efforts are being made to translate the studies into English.

The Senegal study of the project on Information Technologies and Social Development, including this conference, was funded by the Netherlands Minister for Development Co-operation.

## Donald McGranahan 1917–2001

Don McGranahan, a founder of UNRISD and its Director from 1967 to 1977, died of cancer in late 2001 in a nursing home in the United States. After meritorious military service in Europe during the Second World War, he pursued the study of experimental psychology at Harvard. He subsequently joined what was then the Bureau of Social Affairs of the United Nations in New York, gaining renown through his work on the interrelations of economic and social development, described notably in the 1961 **Report on the World Social Situation**. As secretary of the Mahalanobis Expert Committee on the measurement of levels of living, and in interagency meetings that followed in the 1950s and early 1960s, he laid the foundations for UN work on social indicators. In **International Definition and Measurement of Levels of Living: An Interim Guide**, he identified indicators that have remained virtually unchanged to this day.

It was on the basis of research on development profiles and indicators, and with the goal of pursuing this work, that he obtained a grant from the government of the Netherlands to set up a social research institute in 1963 at the United Nations. He finalized the organizational arrangements for the United Nations Research Institute for Social Development, wrote its terms of reference and then joined it as Director in 1967.

The initial years of his directorship are generally associated with the glamour induced by having Nobel laureates Jan Tinbergen and Gunnar Myrdal on the Institute's Board. There were others, too, including Eleanor Sheldon, the guiding spirit of social monitoring in the United States; Phillip Hauser, the eminent demographer; and, briefly,

Jacques Delors before his turn to European politics. Less appreciated is the hard work it took to mould these powerful but heterogeneous personalities into an effective instrument for the guidance of the Institute, to reconcile for example Tinbergen's econometric interests with Myrdal's flair for the practical. The crucial factor ultimately was McGranahan's personality—his unswerving devotion to scientific principles and to the search for practical methods of promoting social, as a means to overall, development. Most divergences eventually vanished in the pursuit of knowledge. This was also the case in his management of the Institute's staff.

Prominent projects in the decade of McGranahan's directorship, and which he personally led jointly with staff, included research on the social implications of the Green Revolution; the role of co-operatives in development; the unified approach to economic and social development; and indicators at the local level (a project suggested by Myrdal to test the relevance in real conditions of employment and other statistics in common use).

McGranahan's own predilection was for the measurement of development and its application to social and economic analysis, work that he and his colleagues pursued mainly after normal working hours. They critically examined traditional concepts and data, rejecting what was clearly false (including some of the "manufactured" statistics derived from models) and querying the indiscriminate application of popular statistical techniques. The result of this was **Measurement and Analysis of Socio-Economic Development** (a volume published well after McGranahan's retirement), which featured development profiles—rather

than aggregate indicators—based on correspondence analysis and a new concept of best-fitting lines, all remarkable innovations.

Personal memories remain: of his kindness; of his refusal to accept per diem beyond what he actually used for lodging and meals (the balance went into the Institute's kitty for social use); of his squash games with long-suffering colleagues three times a week before breakfast; and of a contented family life—if sometimes abridged by professional pressures. Don McGranahan leaves three children who, in their scientific careers, are fully worthy of their illustrious father.

**Wolf Scott**, Senior Research Officer at UNRISD from 1965 to 1986,

has written in memory of his friend and colleague.

## UNRISD in Cyberspace

The UNRISD Web site ([www.unrisd.org](http://www.unrisd.org)) has been selected for inclusion in the Social Science Information Gateway (SOSIG)—“the acknowledged leading Internet authority on what’s worth looking at in the social sciences”. SOSIG aims to provide a trusted source of high-quality Internet information for researchers and practitioners in the social sciences, business and law. It is part of the UK Resource Discovery Network. [www.sosig.ac.uk](http://www.sosig.ac.uk)

## UNRISD in Translation

The Solagral publication *Courrier de la planète* (Nos. 64 and 68) has translated into French extracts from four UNRISD publications: **Business Responsibility for Sustainable Development** by Peter Utting (OPG 2) appears as “Un intérêt bien compris”; “UN-business partnerships: Whose agenda counts?” by Peter Utting (UNRISD News, No. 23) appears as “Les pièges du partenariat”; **Corporate Codes of Conduct: Self-Regulation in a Global Economy** by Rhys Jenkins (PP TBS 2) appears as “Conduite à risque”; and **Toward Integrated and Sustainable Development?** by Solon L. Barraclough (PP OC 1) appears as “A la mode de chez nous”. [www.solagral.org](http://www.solagral.org)

Background documents for the UNRISD conference on Racism and Public Policy have been translated into Portuguese and published on the Internet at Afirma Revista Negra Online by the Brazilian NGO Afirma Comunicação e Pesquisa. [www.afirma.inf.br](http://www.afirma.inf.br)

## UNRISD in the Media

An article in the French daily *Le Monde* (11 September 2001) hailed the UNRISD publication **Visible Hands: Taking Responsibility for Social Development** as a sign of the return of economic dissidence in the United Nations system. “The title ‘Visible Hands’ hardly reflects the violence of the attack against neoliberal deregulation contained in the report”, commented journalist Laurence Caramel. “This UNRISD offensive marks the return of radical discourse unheard of in the United Nations since the 1970s”, she wrote.

The UNRISD conference on Racism and Public Policy (September 2001, Durban) received wide coverage in South African and international media outlets. Articles inspired by contributions to the conference, and about the event itself, have appeared in **African Development Forum**, **allAfrica.com**, **Business Day**, **Conference News Daily/The Earth Times**, **Daily Mail & Guardian**, **Fletcher Forum of World Affairs**, **Le Monde**, **Social Development Review**, and **Xinhua News Agency**. **Guardian Unlimited**, **The Guardian’s** online edition, also featured a “Useful link” to the UNRISD conference Web site from its daily online coverage of the World Conference against Racism.

The Dakar dailies *Quotidien le Soleil* and *Sud Quotidien* ran articles following the UNRISD conference there on Information Technologies and Social Development in Senegal (July 2001). One area of the Institute’s research looked into the use of information and communication

technology by the Senegalese media, and this study received particular attention in the press coverage.

**India Abroad**, a weekly newspaper of the Indian-American community published in Chicago, Dallas, Los Angeles, New York and Toronto, has reprinted “Hindutva as a savarna *purana*” and “Violence and survival”, chapter four from **Creating a Nationality: The Ramjanabhumi Movement and Fear of the Self** by Ashis Nandy, Shikha Trivedy, Shail Mayaram and Achyut Yagnik (UNRISD and Oxford University Press, 1995).

## UNRISD and Training

Four of the papers prepared for the UNRISD conference-project on Racism and Public Policy are being used by Georgetown University in a Winter 2002 course on Critical Race Theory. The papers are: **Cataracts of Silence** by Vijay Prashad; **The Social Construction of Race and Citizenship in the United States** by George M. Fredrickson; **Immigration, Multiculturalism and the Nation-State in Western Europe** by Jeroen Doomernik; and **Contested Realities: Race, Gender and Public Policy in Aotearoa/New Zealand** by Tracey McIntosh.

The paper **Structural Racism and American Democracy: Historical and Theoretical Perspectives**, prepared by Manning Marable for the UNRISD conference-project on Racism and Public Policy, is being used for course work at the University of South Florida.

**Transition to What? Cambodia, UNTAC and the Peace Process** by Grant Curtis (DP 48); **The Social Impacts of Light Weapons Availability and Proliferation** by Christopher Louise (DP 59); and “The terrible toll of post-conflict ‘rebel movements’ in Africa” by UNRISD Director Thandika Mkandawire (*Journal of Modern African Studies*, Vol. 40, No. 2, 2002) are required reading for a Fall 2002 graduate and advanced undergraduate course on Conflict and Development at American University’s School of International Service (International Development Program).

**Business Responsibility for Sustainable Development** by Peter Utting (OPG 2) was used by Consumers International as a key source of information in the preparation of a “tool kit” distributed for use on World Consumer Rights Day 2001. The kit is a sampler of actions for use by individuals, community groups and consumer organizations in their work to promote corporate accountability through public awareness campaigns, research and evidence-gathering, campaigning with codes, and advocacy work with governments and companies.

**Visible Hands: Taking Responsibility for Social Development** (2000) has been used by a number of educational institutions since its publication. These include the International Training Centre of the International Labour Organization in Turin, Italy; the New York University School of Law; and the School of Planning at the University of Cincinnati, Ohio.

## UNRISD Info Gets Around

In 2001 and 2002, more than 16,500 copies of UNRISD Occasional Papers, Programme Papers and other publications have been disseminated at 40 events around the world—from Addis Ababa to Wellington, Beijing to Guadalajara, Istanbul to New Delhi. UNRISD gleans information about relevant conferences via Internet searches and announcements received from event organizers.

## UNRISD Staff Outreach

**Yusuf Bangura**  
 “Strategic policy failure and state fragmentation: Security, peacekeeping and democratization in Sierra Leone”, in R. Laremont (ed.), *The Causes of War and the Consequences of Peacekeeping in Africa*, Heinemann, Portsmouth, New Hampshire, 2002.

“Globalization and African development”, in R. Suttner (ed.), *Africa in the New Millennium*, Nordiska Afrikainstitutet, Uppsala, Sweden, 2001.

**Krishna Ghimire**  
 “Changing rural power structures through land tenure reforms: The current dismal role of international organizations”, *Canadian Journal of Development Studies*, Vol. XXIII, No. 2, 2002.

“Regional tourism and South-South economic cooperation”, *The Geographical Journal*, Vol. 167, No. 2, June 2001.

**Huck-ju Kwon**  
 “Welfare reforms and future challenges in the Republic of Korea: Beyond the developmental welfare states?”, *International Social Security Review*, Vol. 55, No. 4, 2002.

“Income transfers to the elderly in Korea and Taiwan”, *Journal of Social Policy*, Vol. 30, No. 1, 2001.

**Thandika Mkandawire**  
 “The terrible toll of post-conflict ‘rebel movements’ in Africa: Towards an explanation of the violence against the peasantry”, *Journal of Modern African Studies*, Vol. 40, No. 2, 2002.

“Thinking about developmental states in Africa”, *Cambridge Journal of Economics*, Special Issue on African Economic Development in a Comparative Perspective, Vol. 23, No. 3, May 2001.

**Shahra Razavi**  
 “Mondalisation, emploi et droits des femmes”, *Cahiers Genre et Développement*, No. 3, L’Harmattan, Paris and Institut universitaire d’études du développement, Geneva, 2002.

“Women in contemporary democratisation”, *International Journal of Politics, Culture and Society*, Vol. 14, No. 4, June 2001.

**Peter Utting**  
 “La responsabilité des entreprises dans la perspective d’un développement durable”, *Annuaire Suisse-Tiers Monde* 2001, No. 20, Institut universitaire d’études du développement, Geneva, 2001.

“Verantwortung der Unternehmen für die Nachhaltige Entwicklung”, *Jahrbuch Schweiz-Dritte Welt* 2001, No. 20, Institut universitaire d’études du développement, Geneva, 2001.

### Reflections on Racism and Public Policy

*continued from page 44*

*the right to be different.* States were expected to become less assimilationist and more pluralist. Cultural differences were not to be abolished, but respected and celebrated. The elusive melting pot was to be replaced by a spicy, multicultural salad bowl.

The polarizing mechanisms of globalization have racial, ethnic and cultural implications. Far from being random phenomena, inclusion and exclusion are linked to historically generated processes of ethnic and racial construction and differentiation. The globally excluded, the persistently poor, the hungry and the sick—over half the world’s population, by United Nations estimates—are also the victims of discrimination on ethnic, racial and cultural grounds. Is not the poverty in the South contrasted with the world of plenty in the North a form of racism? Is not the destruction of viable and vibrant local communities and ecosystems due to the needs of capitalist accumulation a particularly severe form of discrimination? Is not the creation of fortresses of prosperity surrounded by worlds of misery and despair an extreme instance of intolerance and exclusion? Indeed, *structural racism* is the overall framework on which other expressions of racist and ethnic discrimination now hang.

As economic and social transactions between distinct communities and groups continue to be “racialized” in so many societies, the concept of race becomes socially relevant and racism must be seen as part of a system of power relations between racialized actors, including not only individuals, but also institutions, the state and the global economy.

Blaming the “system” in the abstract, however, is not a constructive way of dealing with the issues; it leads to the old, rather ineffective, approach of saying “we cannot do anything unless the system changes”. But who will change the system, and how? While global approaches are necessary, national- and local-level policies continue to be essential.

Identity and identification, dignity and diversity, power and politics, rights and resources: these are some of the contested spaces in the struggle against discrimination and racism in our post-colonial, globalized world. How well we will be able to deal with them is one of the major challenges of this new century. Increasingly there is talk of *interculturality* rather than multiculturalism per se. This would not deny cultural diversity among groups, but rather strengthen it through flexible structures of governance that are not culturally bound to any particular model of the “nation-state”. How the idea of interculturality will play out in the fields of education, communication, social control, cultural creativity, administration of justice, political representation and so forth is still an open question. But the debate has begun.

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# Reflections on Racism and Public Policy

Rodolfo Stavenhagen

At the turn of the twentieth century, W.E.B. du Bois—the pre-eminent intellectual of the African-American people—foretold that it would be the century of the “colour line”. During the decades that followed, the world witnessed the rise and fall of Nazism and the Holocaust, the civil rights movement in the United States, the end of colonialism and apartheid, the emergence of indigenous peoples as political actors on the international scene, the renewal of racism in Europe, and the horrendous spectacle of ethnic cleansing and genocide in Bosnia and Rwanda. And yet 100 years later, the “colour line” is still with us, separating peoples and cultures, dividing the powerful from the downtrodden. Even as it binds some together in tight ethnic communities, it ties up many others in conceptual knots.

Thinking on racism has undergone some important changes since the founding of the United Nations. During the initial phase, *racism was identified*

*mainly with the legacy of Nazi ideology.* Nazi racism was based on a pseudoscientific ideology of racial purity and superiority, which had its roots in numerous strands of Western thought and found its way into the language of anthropology, biology, psychology and other disciplines. Today, scientific racism no longer commands any academic recognition whatsoever. The first activities of the United Nations in the struggle against racism related to eliminating this poisonous legacy from the postwar world, as expressed in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights of 1948: “Everyone is entitled to all the rights and freedoms set forth in this Declaration, without distinction of any kind, such as race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status” (Article 2).

The next phase stemmed from the *struggle against colonialism*, as well as the fight to end apartheid. The 1950s and 1960s saw many former colonies achieve independence and statehood, as well as the civil rights movement in the United States. The United Nations proclaimed the right to self-determination in the Declaration on the

Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples of 1960, later incorporated in the Human Rights Covenants adopted by the General Assembly in 1966: “All peoples have the right to self-determination, by virtue of that right they freely determine their political status and freely pursue their economic, social and cultural development” (Paragraph 2). Thus emphasis shifted from individual attitudes and structured racist ideologies to the rights of peoples and the building of a new, more equitable international order. Yet the rise to prominence of the

Third World shaped a new scenario of international inequities.

During the 1970s and 1980s, racism re-emerged in a new guise, this time in the industrial heartland of the North, involving mainly *migrant labourers* from the periphery, *refugees* and *former colonial subjects*. Incidents of racist violence increased in the urban neighbourhoods of Western Europe; and racial discrimination was reported in educa-

tion, housing, employment, health services and the criminal justice system. The youth of racial minorities have been particularly singled out through a process of “criminalization”: in the United States, for example, blacks and Latinos have been prominent victims of racial profiling and discrimination, and since the terrorist attacks of 11 September 2001, Arabs have become the newest targets of such practices.

A number of countries began to see racism not as a series of isolated incidents, but rather as a *patterned and structured social problem*. While few people openly advocated racial discrimination of the phenotypical variety, in the new global environment the very concepts of race and racial relations were changing. As immigrant communities mushroomed in the industrial states, perceived biological distinctions meshed with recognized cultural differences. In some countries, the term “race relations” became a code for relations between culturally differentiated communities. Human rights defenders were now no longer advocating just general equality (which seemed to many to be unattainable), but a new concept: ▶ *page 43*

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