

PATHWAYS TO PEACE
(Building Pathways to Peace for a Culture of Peace)

**6607 LANDING WAY
NEW CARROLLTON
MARYLAND 20784**

Tel: 301-773-1186

E-mail: adefin49@verizon.net

HIGH LEVEL SUMMIT OF HEADS OF STATE
& GOVERNMENTS

14 – 16 SEPTEMBER 2005

by

Joseph W. O. Findlay, Jr. Ph.D.
International Adviser & Africa Representative
PATHWAYS TO PEACE

HIGH LEVEL SUMMIT OF HEADS OF STATE
& GOVERNMENTS
14 – 16 SEPTEMBER 2005

A landmark event has just played itself out in New York, the seat of the United Nations. 175 of the World's Leaders – Kings, Emperors, Potentates, Presidents, Prime Ministers – one after the other took to the podium of the General Assembly to address the 191 members of the World body on their nations' views on TWO (2) Agenda issues – VIZ:

1. Reform of the World Body;
2. The Millennium Development Goals – MDGs

As the leaders of the World articulated their country's views on the issues at stake there was a unifying path as reflected throughout the session. On both Agenda items the membership was firmly united. However, accomplishing them reflected varying perspectives.

On Agenda item (1), the point was repeatedly stressed that when the United Nations was created in 1945, there were TWO (2) fundamental ideas in the minds of the framers of the Charter.

The first was the concept of a Board of Directors which would be able, through consultations among themselves, ensure that another "Global Conflagration" would not take place. That restricted Board of Directors is what is today known as the FIVE Permanent Members of the Security Council having the right of VETO. The second basic idea is that of the Right of MULTILATERALISM as opposed to UNILATERALISM; meaning that it was always better to sit around a table and talk

rather than make unilateral decisions without discussions. The first concept of a Board of Directors would, it seems, have succeeded perfectly had it not been for the fact that around 1946, the members of this “Board” began to have disagreements among themselves. This was the beginning of the COLD WAR, when the first concept of the “Board” encountered blockages, that automatically shifted emphasis and importance to the second concept of MULTILATERALISM, from 1948 onwards. Two or Three Extraordinary events were generated by this shift. One, was the movement towards DECOLONIZATION, which culminated in the 60’s. Second, was the emergence and growth of the NON-ALIGNED MOVEMENT – essentially, a block of countries which did not want to side with one or other of the competing members of the Board of Directors. (1)

Unfortunately, by the 1990’s, the “Board” had degenerated because its inner balance disappeared as the Cold War thawed leading to the emergence of only ONE Super-Power. As a result, what had appeared to be a ‘leveller’ in the system, no longer knew who to be non-aligned with or against. (2)

It was against this backdrop that nations, one after the other, articulated their views on the **Reform** issue. It came out clearly, that there was a need for identification of a new CONSENSUS on which the United Nations can be “re-founded” for the next 50 years, or more.

Summit Co-Chair, Sweden’s Ambassador to the UN, Jan Eliasson, summed up the debate on “Reform of the United Nations” in a statement that reads – “The United Nations cannot deliver on expectations without mobilizing the support of other actors on the World scene.” “The UN”, he said, “is structured on the participation of member

states, principles of sovereignty and non-interference in internal affairs. This is a given; because we live in a globalized time when borders are porous. Catalytic methods must therefore be found involving other actors in the work of the UN, as much as possible, and involving civil society and NGOs. This is the key to the strengthening and maintaining the public support of the UN. This is also where Public Opinion is formed, where pressure is exercised on Parliaments, Legislatures, and governments. Also, the Media – triggering editorials. UN Reform must also reach beyond New York. It requires the mobilization of people, organizations and authorities, Internationally.” (3)

Some of the World leaders at the Summit were critical and in a few cases caustic in their remarks. Heading the list was the President of Venezuela, Hugo Chavez. He called for the complete abolition of the concept of permanent members and the VETO in any Security Council reform. This, he said, would expose those who exercised the VETO in both the perpetuation and condonement of TERRORISM with impunity.

President Mugabe of Zimbabwe, in his address, warned the Summit against a haunting coalition of evil in defiance of International Law.

The Chinese President called for an honest cultivation of a new security concept among members of the World body based on TRUST and RESPECT. He added, that Reform of the UN must be seen as multifaceted.

The South African President, Tabo Mbeke, lamented lack of progress in bringing about the much needed Reform of the UN. He urged the Summit to show seriousness and commitment in making this task realizable for the good of the Organization.

The President of BELARUS called for implicit honesty in the examination of the problems faced by today’s World. He lamented the absence of bi-polarism which has

resulted in today's machinations being played out in the Globalized Theater of the UNI-Polar World. He stressed that the UN Reform process must truly reflect MULTILATERALISM. (4)

As the Summit progressed, one question which kept repeating itself was – **UN Reform: One more time?** Answers to this question appear to surface in proposals and commitments by several Heads of State and Governments.

Taking the lead was US President, George Bush, who urged world leaders at the Summit to strengthen the World Body so that it can live up to the ideals on which it was founded. Towards this end he supported the intended creation of a UN DEMOCRACY FUND for the nurturing of Freedom's progress. He also told the Summit that the US was establishing a MILLENNIUM CHALLENGE ACCOUNT which would increase AID to countries that "govern justly, invest in their people, and promote economic freedom."

Sweden's Prime Minister, Goran Pearson, said the Summit provided an opportunity to take decisions that may shape International Cooperation for years to come. "We cannot afford to fail," he said. "Collective solutions," he stressed, "would only be possible with a stronger United Nations." Continuing, he said – "Today we must rise above short-term interests, and invest in the future of generations to come." "It is a matter of solidarity – not just between peoples nations and continents – but with our children and grandchildren." (5)

Gabon's President, Omar Bongo, echoed Sweden's call – by calling on the Summit to "act together to give our future generations a better world." Referring to the Reform process, President Omar Bongo gave his country's support for proposals for improving the UN, such as – replacing the outmoded Human Rights Commission with a

Human Rights Council; the establishment of a **Peace Building Commission**; and creation of new instruments for the strengthening of oversight and accountability within the UN itself. (6)

Very few organizations in the World were created and designed to behave as collectively owned and collectively managed. The United Nations is certainly one of a few. Remember, that its Charter begins with the words – “we the peoples.” However, is the UN living up to its intended purpose to represent the people as a whole? Within this context, two questions remain relevant VIZ:

1. Is the UN today capable of eliminating Human fear and its sources?
2. Is the UN today an effective instrument to address the fears of Humanity as a whole?

Now that the UN is under scrutiny and pressure to reform, it is important to debate these questions.

Personally, I think REFORM is a good process. The word Reform means to change: an elimination of dogmatism. For this we owe much to the philosopher / theologian – Martin Luther. Reform is an important component in Human transformation. However, the new cycle of REFORM at the UN must be a healthy one. For that to be the case, we must ask whether we are simply reforming the reform of the previous reform. Are we, in fact, just continuously reforming failed reforms? If so, we need to ask ourselves why this is happening. One possibility is because reform tends to come externally to the soul of the UN. It is generally a response to an issue that comes somewhere else. This kind of REFORM tends to be piecemeal in the end, rather than holistic, organic, and broadly effective. The UN needs strong, inner mechanisms for

transformation that make outgoing change and transformation coherent with the nature and purpose of the UN. Change and growth need to be a way of life rather than a mutation, as past reforms have often been.

The UN does not currently possess the inner mechanisms for continuous transformation. Thus, REFORM is always executed when the Organization is really ill. No preventive actions are taken so that change occurs at a time of strength. Most often, transformation takes place at an ineffective time, after the critical moment has passed. Every institution, every organization, should have the means for transformation built into its structures and processes. Contemporary styles of REFORM are justified only because organizations do not have the mechanisms for ongoing organic transformation.

How can we create such a mechanism at the UN? The first fundamental step is to restate that the UN is about people. It must be the place where people think about people; where people think about nations; and where Nations think about people.

Who are we selecting as Secretary-General? Who are we selecting as staff members? What is the role of these staff members? How do they serve the people?

In my experience, I have encountered tremendously dedicated people at the UN, who truly embody the values that can eliminate Human fear everywhere. I have seen UN employees who exert tremendous effort to maintain vigilance over the welfare of the collective. This is a source of hope.

The UN's 60th anniversary should not just be a time for celebration. It should, also, be a time of contemplation that deeply explores the new inwardly empowered reality that is emerging in today's world. Only in this way can the UN recognize the entirely new direction and kinds of change that the world now demands and the ways to

meet those demands. This 60th anniversary celebration of the UN must include a strong reflective component that facilitates institutional self-realization of the World in which we currently live.

With this, the UN can become stronger in terms of its own consciousness; its own awareness of its nature and mission; and its ability to support and strengthen the consciousness and self-realization of all people.

In the words of the late Pope John Paul II, when he addressed the UN at its 50th Anniversary in 1955: The Potentate reminded the International Community – VIZ:

“We have within us the capacity for wisdom and virtue to create a true culture of freedom.”

“The tears of this century can water a new springtime for the Human spirit.” (7)

The second Agenda topic addressed by World Leaders at the Summit was the MILLINIUM DEVELOPMENT GOALS – MDGs adopted by member states in year 2000 with the agreement to review progress on their attainment in the year 2005 during the Summit coinciding with the 60th Anniversary of the Organization.

In the Secretary-General’s Report – **In Larger Freedom: Towards Development, Security and Human Rights for ALL** – an appeal was made to the World’s Leaders assembled for the Summit to demonstrate the necessary ‘political will’ that will make the MDGs realizable and sustainable.

According to the Secretary-General, the year 2005 provides a Historic opportunity to member–States to demonstrate a revival of consensus on the key challenges and priorities of the MDGs; and for firm and irrevocable commitments towards their

successful achievement by the year 2015. The guiding light for this process must be the needs and hopes of people everywhere. The World must advance the causes of Security, Development and Human Rights together; otherwise, none will succeed. Humanity will not enjoy security without development; it will not enjoy development without security; and it will not enjoy either without respect for Human Rights. (8)

Leaders from Developing Countries reported efforts being made at achieving the MDGs. They, however, highlighted problems, some of them insurmountable, which make it very difficult in making any appreciable progress. These difficulties and problems lay in the areas of – VIZ:

- Debt servicing
- Difficulties in securing financial assistance
- Trade barriers being imposed
- Scarcity or absence of ODA
- Human migration

Developed Countries, on the other hand, stressed their willingness to support the attainment of the MDGs, but called for responsible partnerships in resource transfers in the form of ODA. Strong emphasis was placed on responsible governance. Governance that was transparent and committed to accountability. Indeed, references were made to the outcome of the recent G-8 meeting in Gleneagles which set a road map for Debt-forgiveness.

The 3–day Summit heard the Representative of the European Union (EU), Dermot Ahern, T.D of Ireland, announce the EU’s decision reached at their May 24, 2005 meeting in Brussels to boost Official Development AID (ODA) and to accelerate progress towards achieving the MDGs. (9)

Another point underscored by each leader which took to the podium at the General Assembly was the fact that Peace and Security was unattainable in the absence of Sustainable Development. In this regard, a definition of Sustainable Development seems relevant. Peter Kydd, the Environmentalist, defines Sustainable Development as that which provides solid foundations from which we work to develop projects that balance environmental, societal and economic concerns; and results in an improved state for generations to come. (10)

The Flower can be a good illustrative element of Sustainable Development principles. Each flower is suited to its local environment, uses only local materials, uses renewable energy source, creates no waste, and provides other organisms with shelter, food, and beauty.

When we design and build a project that acts as a flower, we will know success. In the meantime many older projects provide us with the opportunity to bring them to a state in which they replicate the activity of the flower. This process is restoration. Through it, we attempt to rectify Land that needs remediation; air that needs filtering; and water that needs purification. All this can only take place where there is Peace and Security – and this is what Sustainable Development is all about.

It is, therefore, time for the World community to decide whether this moment of uncertainty presages wider conflict, deepening inequality and erosion of the rule of Law; or is used to renew institutions for Peace, Prosperity and Human Rights.

Now is the time to act.

- (1) Kamal. Ambassador Ahmad; Centerpoint Now: “Interview – Reform of the UN,” pp 14-15; Pyramid Printing, USA 2005
- (2) ————— DITTO —————
- (3) Eliasson. H.E.Jan; Centerpoint Now: “The Challenge of Multilateralism,” pp 12-13; Pyramid Printing, USA 2005
- (4) H.E. the President of Belarus; UN News Seervice, 15795 – 9/14/2005
- (5) Prime Minister Goran Pearson, Sweden; UN News Service, 15795 – 9/14/2005
- (6) President Omar Bongo, Gabon; UN News Service, 15795 – 9/14/2005
- (7) Paul II: Pope John; Centerpoint Now: “Strengthening the UN,” page 32, Pyramid Printing, USA, 2005
- (8) Secretary-General Kofi Annan; “In Larger Freedom – etc,” DPI/2385 – 24314, New York, April 2005
- (9) Ahern. Dermot T.D.; Statement – 60th Session of General Assembly of UN, New York, USA, 09/19/2005
- (10) Kydd. Peter; Sustainable Development: “Sustainable Development in Changing Times,” p13 – Network – Issue No.59, Volume XIX, No.3, New York, USA, November 2004