

Civil Society: The Naïve Devil's Advocate

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Power play, poor (global) governance, mismanagement, exploitation, corruption, oppression, and impunity have led to the failure of the United Nations (UN) system. Last August, the 67th UN DPI NGO Conference was held with the goals of achieving a peaceful, just, and sustainable global order by transforming the current international order through people-centered multilateralism and repositioning the UN system. In the outcome document, civil society calls upon the UN, their member states, and multinational corporations to tackle the symptoms of their wrongdoings. These organizations themselves are violators of human rights. This approach by civil society is naïve and resembles the role of the devil's advocate. Two-thirds of member states are engaged in corruption and two-thirds of the world's largest economies are corporations, while one in four people around the world are multi-dimensionally poor and 10 percent suffer from hunger. This article identifies real and basic global challenges to realize the UN Charter's intent and the aforementioned objectives.

Introduction

On 22–23 August 2018, the 67th UN DPI NGO Conference (*People-Centered Multilateralism: A Call to Action "We the Peoples . . . Together Finding Global Solutions for Global Problems"*) was convened to stimulate people-centered multilateralism to address global challenges, help those whose human rights are being violated, protect our planet, and have all stakeholders share responsibility and accountability. All of this requires expanding the role of civil society partnerships, including youth, in order to advance the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The outcome document of this conference affirms that international norm violations by those in power increases inequality and that representatives of civil society are in physical danger and often murdered with impunity. Nevertheless, civil society calls upon UN member states to fulfill their legal obligations, adhere to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, promote rights of civil society, and create policies to eliminate extreme inequality. They also call upon multinational corporations to utilize business models that include social and environmental responsibility in line with the SDGs. Lastly, they call upon the UN secretary-general and the UN to insist on ceasing tax avoidance, corruption, and rights violations by corporations. The outcome document resolution expressed the need and desire to transform the international order and engender a peaceful, just, and sustainable world order through people-centered multilateralism in a spirit of global citizenship and to assist in repositioning the UN system fruitfully in collaboration with civil society (UN 2018a and 2018b).

UN Charter

As the forerunner to the UN, the League of Nations was established in 1919 with the intent of formulating a peaceful global order. After the official start of the UN in 1945, more power was bestowed upon the traditional great powers through their Security Council. Furthermore, the

1. This essay was not peer reviewed at the request of the author but appears as back matter of this journal issue as an expression of his opinion and based on his experience.

UN became involved in global governance and assumed responsibility for preserving global peace and security, protecting fundamental human rights and freedoms, promoting human development, economic wellbeing, and social progress, and the resolution of territorial conflicts, among others (UN 1945). However, global security, which is supposed to produce political stability, failed. When risks in peace operations were necessary, Security Council members regularly preferred national interests and undermined UN peacekeeping missions, compromising the force commanders managing their units. Today, many labeled terrorists view themselves as fighters against oppression (*The Guardian* 2015; Townshend 2011).

Which perspective (terrorist or fighter against oppression) is correct in light of the following? In some cases, the UN placed international peacekeepers in danger as they had no intention of actually allowing them to keep the peace (Greenberg 2015). Moreover, in other cases, those in power violate international norms with impunity. Apart from this, one in four people have to live in world regions that are wrought with criminal and urban violence (International Alert 2013), partly because of the aftermath of globalization, which caused transnational organized criminal groups, such as those implicated in cybercrime and human trafficking, to grow and affect all states (UN Office on Drugs and Crime 2018).

Article's Aim

The aim of this article is to show that power play, poor (global) governance, mismanagement, exploitation, corruption, oppression, and impunity by UN member states, UN agencies, and other affiliated organizations and international organizations (apart from some exceptions) have hindered the achievement of the UN Charter's intent. These institutions and organizations are fully responsible for what has gone wrong over the past hundred years, which cannot be solved by an outcome document that addresses only the symptoms of their wrongdoings. It is naïve to expect these corrupt institutions, organizations, and their (political) leaders (who are accustomed to acting and living above the law, respectively) to relinquish their personal power, lose their corrupt income, and give up their ability to do as they please. These attitudes and the approaches of civil society are therefore akin to calling upon the devil to confess, in which they play the role of the naïve devil's advocate. This article seeks to demonstrate that these corrupt (political) leaders are the real culprits. They created, constitute, operate, maintain, and unjustly profit from the global, international or world order at the expense of the vast majority. Just calling upon them will prove to fall on deaf ears. From the UN Charter's perspective, this article investigates which real, basic global challenges need to be tackled to succeed in transforming our world order according to the outcome document resolution.

Procedure

The next section pinpoints how our world order is driven by power play, poor (global) governance, mismanagement, corruption, and impunity, as well as their effects on people's paradigms. The subsequent section explores how the resulting economic growth accommodates corporate abuse, limits basic human and growth needs, and afflicts the continued existence of humanity. The section thereafter takes a look at the responsibility of (international) governing authorities with reference to good governance and broken and conflicting pledges. Then, the following section discusses the forgoing information to infer possible solutions. The last section concludes the article.

Poor (Global) Governance: Corruption and Impunity

No one questions that the UN system urgently needs to be repositioned (preferably sooner rather than later) into one that is living proof of the UN Charter's intent. This will enable transforming our world order to agree with the objectives in the outcome document resolution. From this angle, the outcome document clearly discloses the shortcomings of the UN system and those of its member states and other affiliated organizations. After all, political leaders

from member states constitute the UN and are represented in the other affiliated and international organizations, such as the European Union (EU) and the African, Caribbean, and Pacific Group of States (ACP). On 28 September, the EU and seventy-nine countries in the ACP group began negotiations on the future of their cooperation after 2020 (European Commission 2018). These institutions and organizations of global governance shape our world order.

The world order is the arrangement of power and authority associated with the realization of such values as peace, economic growth and equity, human rights, and environmental quality and sustainability, which are all addressed as needs and desires in the outcome document. Thus, the world order is a reflection of world politics on a global scale (Falk 1999). International agencies, such as the International Labour Organization (ILO), the World Bank, and the World Trade Organization (WTO), act as supervisors of transnational rule systems and take our world order many steps backward. Not only do they diminish the oversight power of governments, but they also force their police operations to serve the interests of major corporations (Hart 2017).

History shows that wealthy countries are prospering, owing to slavery, corruption, and theft of the natural resources of poor countries. Multinational corporations access poor countries for land and resources, because these countries are corrupt and discriminatorily enforce the law. In addition, divide and rule politics are deployed to stay in power or help corrupt leaders stay in power for commercial purposes. On top of that, worldwide, about four environmental defenders are killed weekly, whereby corporations and corrupt governments appear to collaborate. UN Special Rapporteur on Human Rights and the Environment John Knox has said the emergence of a culture of impunity enables human rights to be violated (Hilary 2004; Tharoor 2017; *The Guardian* 2017). This erosion of democracy is still ongoing even in the U.S., where corporate rights have been systematically favored over workers' rights, women's rights, gay rights, minority rights, and consumer and environmental protection. The vast majority must stand up against big corrupt money and a lawless right-wing majority of the Supreme Court (Jackson 2018).

Unfortunately, poor governance, lack of separation of powers and other checks and balances, and the trampling of law by politicians in power to directly or indirectly favor themselves and related business leaders are not far removed from my own personal life. For decades, this situation has been growing into a culture in Suriname, which has led to two military coups d'états (1980, 1990) while worsening inequality, poverty, unemployment, and dependency. The economically dependent majority, in turn, is kept in control by the political party in power through food packages and other forms of compensation to receive their vote at the next free, fair, and secret political elections. This is how corruption, impunity, and human rights violations are obscured from the view of the masses: *whosoever bread one eats, his language one speaks*.

Twelve years ago, in 2006, the late UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan warned that the UN had failed in tackling the unfair world economy and improving human rights and safety. Many governments themselves were denounced as gross violators of human rights (UN 2006). One year later, the former ILO Director-General Juan Somavia asserted that decent work is essential for sustainable development and peace, is a principal factor in eradicating poverty, and serves the interest of the international community. Somavia emphasized that every challenge related to decent work is within UNESCO's responsibility (UNESCO 2007). Still, it did not happen despite each UN member state stating within its constitution that it places people first. In stark contrast, lack of decent work, which causes job stress, (mental) health complaints, productivity loss, and inequality is rising worldwide (European Agency for Safety and Health at Work 2012; Regus 2012; *The Huffington Post* 2013).

Failure of the UN System

Consequently, the model to reposition the UN Development System will complicate delivering on the 2030 agenda for SDGs as, globally and regionally, good governance has left much

to be desired. Lack of coordination and integration of activities from common objectives (i.e., mismanagement) has impeded coherence and worsened fragmentation. Further, the mechanism underlying institutional global governance, such as the UN, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund (IMF), and the WTO, are outdated, unproductive, and corrupt (Campos 2017; Council on Foreign Relations 2008; Hilary 2004; Mathiason 2017). Corruptive practices, such as false bills, bribery, including sexual favors, and poor accountability have lessened the funding of UN agencies and their programs. Poor countries are most susceptible to these regular corruptive practices, creating another type of elite, the so-called UN elite. Large amounts of taxpayer money are wasted this way (Ahmed 2018). More than two-thirds of countries must deal with corruption, while the media is associated with higher levels of corruption, and repression of NGOs continues (Transparency International 2017). In other words, power play, poor governance, mismanagement, corruption, and impunity have prevented the UN system, including other institutions of global governance, from achieving their purpose.

Global, national, and regional governing authorities, as well as their corrupt and greedy leaders, surrender their oversight power in return for bribes, allowing corporate abuse, such as lack of decent work, to continue, creating an unfair distribution of essential resources. Useful institutions degenerate into unscrupulous market instruments that destroy livelihoods, displace people, and stimulate an insatiable quest for money—all negative frames of reference that create unsound paradigms. These disguised market instruments seduce individuals into self-destructive acts that harm their families and communities (Jones 2005; Korten 2001; Lodge and Wilson 2006). Many CEOs and (world) leaders might fall into the category of psychopaths in the sense that they lack the ability to empathize (Dodgson 2017), creating an exhibition of unsound paradigms, as our world order clearly demonstrates.

Unsound Paradigms

By advocating nonessential values as a frame of reference, the insatiable quest for (corrupt) money can entice people into confusing means with ends. For example, judging others by their wealth and thinking that money should be made for its own sake instead of using it to promote happiness. Without giving meaning to life, happiness will stay beyond reach (Blackman 2014; Fromm 1955, 1956; Korten 2001). Frames of reference reside within paradigms, incorporate personality components, and other schema-like structures, such as frames and scripts, which are organizing structures for knowledge acquisition. Paradigms are mental models that filter information to partially define how the brain works, and these filters are continually conditioned by life experiences. In this manner, paradigms function as perceptions or perspectives (mental views) that influence both attitudes and behaviors (Allport 1961; Geller 2005; Honolulu Community College 1998; Kautilya Society, n.d.; Ramirez 1997). Research supports the idea that frames of reference affect paradigms, and the dynamic coalitions of brain-area networks, which produce cognitive-emotional behaviors, cannot be conceptualized as specifically cognitive or affective. Therefore, the cognition-affect distinction is considered to be more of a phenomenological issue than an ontological question (Duncan and Barrett 2007; Pessoa 2008).

This is why wrong or conflicting moral standards and negative life experiences facilitate unsound paradigms. The marketing industry, for example, uses psychology to manipulate people and influence their consumption behavior by tempting them to choose pleasure beyond basic functionality. Often then, when people are unhappy, they seek self-fulfillment outside of themselves—frequently through consumption patterns—and prefer material things as an escape from their real problems (Blackman 2014; Kemp 1998; Lindstrom 2011; van der Veen 2003). Or they are “keeping up with the Joneses,” because they think they need these things to be happy. These examples indicate how the insatiable quest for money can be disguised in different forms to stimulate unsound paradigms.

What one generally would not expect is that, in particular, the entertainment industry can violate and twist the good moral standards and ethics inculcated by upbringing and formal education. Video games, films, and song lyrics can give rise to drug use, violence, revenge, and vigilantism. In this way, external authorities and market demands define the standards of values or ethics—so-called authoritarian ethics. They engender unsound paradigms and color people’s conscience, aspirations, and social relationships, including their capacity to empathize. The authoritarian conscience consists of internalized authority, and it hinders inner growth or authentic self-worth, rendering one insensitive to the needs of others (Fromm 1947, 1955). Several studies have demonstrated that both real-life models (such as parents, teachers, and enforcement authorities) and symbolic models (such as television and books) influence the emotional responses, cognition, and behavior of observers (Bandura and Walters 1963; Bandura and Rosenthal 1966; Murray 1973). All of these cases lead to imprisonment by unsound paradigms with an authoritarian conscience, which disable people’s capacity to fully enjoy basic human rights, limits their freedom to make choices and develop abilities, and self-destructively affects human experience. Such unsound paradigms are also responsible for condoning political sanctioning of human rights violations with impunity by the UN system.

Affecting Human Experience

The banking system is a prototypical example of how marketing and market demands can trick people’s paradigms into condoning and masking the role of the global elite. Still, almost everyone makes grateful use of it without realizing the ultimate consequences. Central banks control the creation and flow of money worldwide and thus control the international economy. The Bank for International Settlements (BIS) is the central bank of central banks and represents the countries that together make up about 95 percent of the world’s gross domestic product (GDP). The global elite founded the BIS in 1930 with its head office in Basel, Switzerland, and the BIS transfers the wealth of the world into the hands of its founders. Most people are unaware that this is happening because the global elite controls a core group of financial institutions and mega-corporations, including all of the big media companies. Through these big media companies, the global elite can affect the human experience as they please, imposing their own standards of ethics, influencing people’s paradigms, and deranging their psychological roadmap. Corruption plays a key role in these operations and enables the global elite to dominate and exploit our planet (Bank for International Settlements, n.d.; Hart 2017; Snyder 2013; Vitali, Glattfelder, and Battiston 2011), which is called economic growth.

It is noteworthy that corruption itself is a structural obstacle to the enjoyment of inalienable human rights (obviously, by creating unsound paradigms) and can comprise human rights violations (Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, n.d.). How can corruption thwart the enjoyment of basic human rights and simultaneously not always be a violation of the same human rights, bearing in mind the derangement of people’s psychological roadmap?

Economic Growth: Exploitation and Oppression

Corporate abuse, which is facilitated by poor (global) governance and corruption, robs people of their basic human rights of freedom, equality, autonomy, and growth—and thus their dignity—and induces distrust and injustice in the workplace (Werhane 1999). Such neglect generates fear and dependency in workers, leading to job stress, physical and mental health problems, and encourages destructive beliefs, feelings, and maladaptive responses (Ellis 2001; National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health 1999; Witte 1992; Wright and Smye 1996). Studies also show that the absence of job satisfaction, as in cases of corporate abuse, often leads to lethargy and less organizational commitment, thus negatively affecting productivity (Moser 1997; Werhane 1999). The underlying lack of decent work is the main cause of productivity loss and inequality, resulting in countries missing out on sustainable development.

A global survey revealed that half of working professionals worldwide are more stressed today than they were a year ago and that the main cause of their stress is their jobs. For example, in countries belonging to the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), 30 to 50 percent of new disability benefit claims are due to poor mental health (Regus 2012). Later studies also discovered that work stress is on the rise, as well as the seriousness of mental health problems, such as depression and anxiety, prevalent in a growing number of workers (Debnam 2017; Racco 2018). From the above, it follows that not only human deficit or basic needs (i.e., physiological needs, safety, love, belonging, and esteem needs) are crucial in this respect, but growth needs are important as well. Deprivation of the fulfillment of human growth needs (self-actualization or meta-needs) produces a meta-pathology with symptoms such as a lack of social feeling, considerateness, or empathy (Maslow 1967, 1971).

Corporations neglect their obligation to live up to human rights standards for workers and adhere to international and national law, as stated by the UN in “Norms on the Responsibilities of Transnational Corporations and Other Business Enterprises with Regard to Human Rights.” Many employers violate these standards and the U.S. is no exception. That is why an all-inclusive body of international laws, in this respect, did not pave the road for the global peace that the ILO has strived for since it was established in 1919 (Compa 2006; Weissbrodt and Kruger 2003). In fact, these violations have enabled 737 corporations to control 80 percent of the global economy (Upbin 2011). The balance of power between governments and corporations continues to shift in favor of the latter, causing two-thirds of the world’s largest economies to exist as corporations (Hart 2017). How could civil society expect that an appeal to multinational corporations to help realize the SDGs would inspire them to change their own attitudes and behaviors by 180 degrees?

Inequality, Poverty, and Hunger

The new SDGs are as follows: 1) No poverty, 2) Zero hunger, 3) Good health and well-being, 4) Quality education, 5) Gender equality, 6) Clean water and sanitation, 7) Affordable and clean energy, 8) Decent work and economic growth, 9) Industry, innovation, and infrastructure, 10) Reduced inequalities, 11) Sustainable cities and communities, 12) Responsible consumption and production, 13) Climate action, 14) Life below water, 15) Life on land, 16) Peace, justice, and strong institutions, and 17) Partnerships for goals (Iyer 2015; UN 2018c). On the other hand, the political and financial systems of most, if not all, countries allow approximately 85 percent of the wealth to flow to the privileged 10 percent global elite, while the remaining 15 percent of wealth is shared by the 90 percent majority of people (Davies, Sandström, Shorrocks, and Wolff 2008). If this trend continues, the richest 1 percent of the world’s population will soon own more wealth than the remaining 99 percent (Oxfam International 2015). In January 2017, eight men were reported to possess the same wealth as the 3.6 billion people who make up the poorest half of humanity (Oxfam International 2017).

Another study showed that economic stratification and ecological strain can both independently lead to the collapse of modern civilization, suggesting that a global collapse will be difficult to avoid in the coming decades (Motesharrei, Kalnay, and Rivas 2014). Unequal ownership of capital fosters economic inequality, which has widened across nearly all world regions in recent decades (Global Policy Forum 2013; The World Inequality Lab 2018). As a result, our world order has led to a situation in which more than 10 percent of people suffer from hunger while undernourishment is growing (Hunger Notes 2018). One in four people are multi-dimensionally poor and half of them are children aged 0–17 (Oxford Poverty and Human Development Initiative 2018). Two hundred eighteen million children are exploited as cheap labor, of which more than half are slaves and prostitutes (UN 2018d). More than 40 million adults live as slaves, of which 71 percent are females and 29 percent are males (The Global Slavery Index 2018). A recent example of slavery is the state of Qatar, which has not kept its promises to improve its shocking conditions for workers ahead of the 2022 FIFA World Cup. Qatar has been described

as a modern-day slave state, where pittance wages often go unpaid and passports are regularly confiscated to keep workers trapped in inhumane and sometimes deadly living and working conditions (International Trade Union Confederation 2017). With this, poverty is not limited to undemocratic and developing countries. Six years ago, 46 million Americans of all ethnicities and backgrounds were living at or below the poverty line, and 23 percent of the EU population was poor or socially deprived (Longhi 2012). Nowadays, poverty rates are rising in developed and developing countries as is the number of children in poverty (Bulman 2018; Hartogs 2016; Nadasen 2017). The claims that poverty rates are declining and that extreme poverty will soon be eradicated are untrue and have come from biased sources, such as the World Bank, wealthy national governments, and most importantly, the UN Millennium Campaign (Hickel 2014). Apparently, there is no comparison between pursuing the SDGs and the current system of income and wealth distribution.

Oppression

Could the forgoing information justify why many labeled terrorists see themselves as fighters against oppression, equally taking into account that more than half of the 815 million hungry people are residing in conflicted countries (Hunger Notes 2018)? Moreover, the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, Zeid Ra'ad Al Hussein, stated that the struggle against terrorism is exploited by different governments. They limit the freedoms of expression and association and annihilate dissent and democracy. Meanwhile, human rights form the basis of economic growth and peace (Zeid Ra'ad Al Hussein 2017). This observation is almost negligible when considering that in the last twelve-year period 113 countries suffered from a decline in political rights and civil liberties, whereby even the U.S. underwent a similar fate over the past year. Worldwide, the rule of law, freedom of the press, minorities' rights, and fair elections, among other elements, are in jeopardy (Freedom House 2018; The Guardian 2018). The true culprit is the UN system, which allowed economic growth to sacrifice the majority of the world population in service of the global elite.

Broken and Conflicting Pledges

Under the current model of global governance, economic growth has bred undemocratic and unlawful practices. This creates a world order that is faced with political instability, threatened by global collapse, declining political rights and civil liberties, growing territorial conflicts, collaborations of central institutions of global governance with corporations, power play, poor (global) governance, mismanagement, exploitation, corruption, impunity favoring corporations over communities, and rising poverty, hunger, inequality, lack of decent work, and health problems. The other side of the coin is good governance, which is impossible when bribery, corruption, and possibilities for impunity are embedded in the separation-of-powers system and other checks and balances. In good governance the authority and its institutions follow the rule of law and are transparent, responsive, equitable, inclusive, accountable, effective, efficient, and participatory (Municipal Association of Victoria, Victorian Local Governance Association, Local Government Victoria, and Local Government Professionals 2012). In this light, the UN Charter ensures equal treatment in social, economic, and commercial matters, as well as in administration of justice for all member states (e.g., chapter XII, article 76 sub d) and just treatment and protection against abuses (e.g., XI, article 73 sub a).

Taking into full account that our world order is nothing more than the product of world leaders' and peoples' choices, the conclusion imposes itself that its current status quo is a reflection of unsound paradigms. From this perspective, it should not be surprising that the current poverty indicator or international poverty line (IPL) does not even meet basic human needs, let alone other necessary dimensions of normal human existence. Poverty impedes human development, which is an approach for advancing human well-being. Instead of focusing on the economy, human development focuses on people and their opportunities

and choices, such as the freedom to develop abilities and the conditions in which to use them (UNDP 2018). In contrast, one in three people worldwide continue to live at a low level of human development, and in 100 countries, women are legally excluded from various jobs because of their gender (UNDP 2016). In line with the forgoing, a study at Princeton University showed that a person's cognitive functioning is diminished if he or she must constantly cope with the effects of poverty. People with limited income are also more prone to mistakes and poor decisions (Kelly 2013). How could civil society call upon multinational corporations to aid in reaching the SDGs without touching upon the IPL to include conditions for basic human and growth needs? How could civil society pledge in the outcome document to seek a peaceful, just, and sustainable world order and not attempt to redefine the IPL? It is unimaginable that on one hand the ILO concept of decent work is advocated, and on the other hand the current IPL implicitly maintains slavery. These are antagonistic perspectives and cannot be compromised. The current definition of the IPL must be sacrificed to fulfill the ILO promise of decent work.

Decent Work and Sound Paradigms

In 1919, the ILO was inspired by the notion that “the failure of any nation to adopt humane conditions of labor is an obstacle in the way of other nations, which desire to improve the conditions in their own countries,” as enshrined in its preamble (International Labour Organization, n.d.). At that time, the concept of globalization was unknown, but the effects of labor conditions on human development must have already been felt. Nineteen years ago, the umbrella term humane conditions of labor spawned the term “decent work,” in response to the prevailing inequalities and lack of collective social responsibility. The irony is that economic inequality was also the primary motive for creating the UN Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) in 1964, forty-five years after the ILO was established (UNCTAD 2014). Still, it did not happen despite the pledge of the ILO to promote decent work, which presupposes an attitude that enhances the dignity of men and women (International Labour Organization 1999).

Decent work considers people's aspirations in their working lives. Decent work offers opportunities to access productive work, a fair income, security in the workplace, and social protection for families. It also indicates better prospects for personal development and social integration, implies freedom for people to express their concerns and organize and participate in the decisions that affect their lives, and entails equality of opportunity and treatment for all. These attributes refer to the following conditions: freedom, equity (fairness), security, and human dignity (Deseyn 2014; Ghai 2003; UNESCO 2007). The fact that human dignity is the basis for human rights, as enshrined in the preface to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UN 1948), did not negate corporate abuse continuously robbing workers of all these rights.

From the aforementioned, it is apparent that the implementation of decent work can positively affect workers' frames of reference to cultivate their capacity to create sound paradigms. It considers workers' aspirations (which are a combination of unconscious and conscious signals and processes) so that they can balance the demands of work and home life while having opportunities for growth and advancement. By stimulating a smooth unconscious-conscious relationship from an authentic self-perspective, decent work develops a psycho-synthesis (Assagioli 1975), fulfills growth needs, and capacitates people's ability for humanistic ethical practice. Humanistic ethics feature the freedom to develop one's full potential, and the humanistic conscience consists of self-imposed prescriptions that promote inner growth, freedom, and spontaneity, rendering one responsive to the needs of others (Fromm 1947, 1955). Sound paradigms with a humanistic conscience self-constructively affect human experience and offer positive possibilities and potentials that cannot be limited to seventeen SDGs. For example, because decent work involves attending to employees' authentic emotional and physical needs, it stimulates employee satisfaction, which appears to be a valid indicator of employees'

psychological health (Likert 1967; Rain, Lane, and Steiner 1991; Rode 2004). In addition, a meta-analysis found positive and substantive correlations between employee satisfaction and productivity in business (Harter, Schmidt, and Hayes 2002), and productivity is a win-win for employers, employees, and society (Bilderbeek, Brinkman, and de Leeuw 1998).

An integral part of humane labor conditions, or the concept of decent work, is vocational training, which facilitates the implementation of decent work. The right to vocational training is embodied in the text of many of the most prominent universal and regional declarations and agreements on human rights, such as the ILO Constitution (Preamble 1919, and Philadelphia Declaration 1944). According to the International Labour Convention (ILO 1975, entry into force 1977), vocational training, guidance policies, and programs should be aimed at advancing people's aptitudes for understanding their work and social environment, and effectively influence people individually and collectively. This notion indicates that, for labor, the right to vocational training aids is the shaping of decent work. Vocational training is, educationally speaking, a formative element in people's lives as well as an instrument for enrichment, self-fulfillment, and development of people and, through working people, the development of society (International Labour Organization 1975), thus stimulating sound paradigms. Still, this has not been the case.

Checks and Balances

Basically, the political sanctioning, with impunity, of wrongdoings by the systems of institutions and organizations in global governance, such as UN agencies, ILO, and WTO, upholds our world order. The UN's endeavor to tackle only the symptoms of these wrongdoings has worsened the world situation. Repositioning of the UN system is incompatible with these undesired phenomena and should address real basic causes, such as the implementation of the separation of powers and other checks and balances. Evidently, basic global changes should involve democratic procedures, which offer fair income distribution and freedom from corruption by public officials and private actors. As a result, norms of trustworthiness will develop, enhancing social trust (You 2005). Trust is closely related to empathy. It makes up the foundation for social order within and beyond organizations and is an integrative force in society, which is especially true in an increasingly complex and fast-paced global environment (Ickes, Stinson, Bissonnette, and Garcia 1990; Simmel 1908; Thoms, Dose, and Scott 2002).

This is easier said than done. For example, lobbying in the U.S. has legalized corruption. Broadening the insight to change this status quo requires an appropriate paradigm shift. Lobbying implies that much time, a lot of money, and dishonesty are invested in negotiating with governments to receive unfair and illegal privileges and competitive advantages, which somehow are legally allowed. At the same time, other countries that perform similar acts are accused of corruption (Boaz 2018). These double standards strongly oppose the purpose and intent of decent work and vocational training and reflect the mechanism of our world order. This perspective is more human-centered than people-centered, because it focuses on human needs, requirements, and participation. Ergo, human-centered multilateralism would be more appropriate to shift the global paradigm.

Global Paradigm Shift

In this global paradigm shift, the assertion that decent work is essential for peace, eradicating poverty, and sustainable development is inherently linked to an appropriate redefinition of the IPL. The current IPL is abused by many countries to impose cheap labor and shamelessly used as bait to attract investments. Every so often, when employees dare to ask for a raise, they are linked with cost inflation. Thus, the accusation of contributing to cost inflation is used as an excuse to continue exploiting cheap labor (including women and children) in the so-called interest of competition. This is the prototype of an antithesis. How could the UN condone such conflicting interests, which oppose the ILO concept of decent work? No wonder roughly one-third of very poor people in developing countries do in fact have a job, as the ILO assessed (Hartogs 2016).

This makes it all the more important to identify these two concepts (i.e., IPL and decent work) as a primary challenge and bring them in line with one another. There is no shortage or undersupply of food or other resources to question this assertion. On the contrary, approximately one-third of all food is spoiled or wasted before consumption. Now, enough food is already grown on farms to feed the expected 10 billion people in 2050. Hunger seems to be the result of exploitation, poverty, and inequality (FAO, 2011; Holt-Giménez, Shattuc, Altieri, Herren, and Gliessman 2012).

Conclusion

The UN Charter's intent and our world order are drifting apart. The latter is being fabricated and embellished to influence the human experience in order to serve only the global elite. World politics has become a private moneymaking business instead of looking after, protecting, and promoting the public interest. It is infected and led by greed to exploit countries with natural resources, cheap labor, and corrupt leaders. Under the guise of humanity, the greed for money and power overrules (world) politics. The UN, ILO, UNESCO, UNCTAD, World Bank, WTO, IMF, and NATO, for example, as well as many national, regional, and local governing authorities, have not properly executed good governance. Political and world leaders have failed to practice what they preach. Judging from the results of reinforcing existing power structures, one might legitimately question the intentions of these governing authorities and their leaders. In other words, offering human-centered multilateralism as an antidote without taking full responsibility for exploiting our world order is deceptive. The world situation will remain in a vicious cycle—a continuation of tackling the symptoms of wrongdoings. Then, in different ways, mental and physical suffering will expand, all of which are a consequence of the failure and dependency equation.

A global paradigm shift is required to reconcile our world order to the UN Charter pledges. To that end, primarily addressing the wrongdoings of the systems and sanctioning the execution of good governance (including the creation of decent work, and defining a value-fixed IPL to include conditions for basic human and growth needs) are key elements of the success equation for our world order. Vision-oriented coordination and integration, complying with inter-institutional agreements, and adhering to common laws and regulations in a transparent, accountable, equitable, and inclusive manner are crucial to deliver on the promise of the UN Charter. There is no other way to correct the unjust, unfair, and unethical wealth and income distribution, as well as their effects, which steadily are dragging our world order into disaster. Only then will the repositioning of the UN system in relation to the expansion of the role of civil society partnerships result in a peaceful, just, and sustainable world order. After all, vocational training, decent work, a humane IPL, employee satisfaction, psychological health, productivity, and sound paradigms are inherently interconnected. If these recommendations are neglected, there will be no other choice for the world but to continue suffering from the same trend of choices made with impunity based on the same outdated, misleading, and rusted paradigms.

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