

Africa and Global Governance Post 9/11: Challenges and Prospects – by Abdalla Bujra

Some Notes

1. [On the Concept of Global Governance](#)
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1. Concept of Global Governance :

There are three basic approaches to Global Governance.

Conventional definition:

Post World War Two - the creation of the UN and its various Agencies some of which are;

WB – Development

IMF – Finance

WTO – Trade

UNESCO – Culture

WHO – Health

ILO – Labour

FAO – Agriculture

UNICEF

The growth of Multilateralism

The growing interventionist powers of the Security Council

The growing role of the Humanitarian sector

The role of the International Court of Justice

These global Institutions now dominate and regulate international relations and the role of the national state in the global system. In their totality they constitute the main Institutions of global governance. Needless to say that some nations/states have more power and influence in these institutions than others. The Security Council in particular is considered to be undemocratic.

There has been considerable critique at the shortcomings and failures of this system – at the core of which is the UN.

A Commission was set up to look into the possibilities of Reforming the UN.

It has just submitted its reports. There is a long way ahead of struggle between the powerful nations and the less powerful before any reforms can take place.

The second approach to global governance is based on looking at the real power outside the UN System. And this would consist of the following

- 1. The US**
- 2. The EU**
- 3. NATO as the Military arm of the two blocks**

Differences between the US and the EU are generally settled through the G8, NATO Council and through informal contacts.

Led by the US, this is where real political, economic and military power lies and that the world is governed by this group. This group sets the rules – and is judge and jury of global governance;

The third approach to Global Governance is that of Samir Amin. He looks at global governance in terms of the growth capitalism, globalisation and which countries dominate the capitalist system.

Amin divides the World into the Centre and Periphery

The Centre is made up of the US and EU while the periphery is made up of the Third and Fourth World – Africa and the Arab World are in the Fourth World.

The Centre – the US and EU – is at the epic of the capital system and consequently has developed and possesses five critical monopolies. These are:-

- 1. Technological Monopoly**
- 2. Financial control of worldwide financial markets**
- 3. Monopolistic access to the planet's natural resources**
- 4. Media and communication monopolies**
- 5. Monopoly of weapons of mass destruction**

The five monopolies taken as a whole define the framework within which the law of globalized value operates.

These monopolies give the centre – the US and EU – controlling power of

- (a) all the global institutions – the UN itself and all other institutions – and**
- (b) real political, economic and military power, outside the UN system, over the rest of the world. The UN and its affiliated institutions are simply instruments for the Centre to use.**

And within the Centre the US is dominant and by far the most dominant state/country.

According to Samir Amin, the centre uses its power from these monopolies not only to advance its interest but to affect adversely any possibilities of countries in the Third and Fourth Worlds trying to achieve industrialisations to reach the level of that of the Centre.

Samir Amin argues that the Reform of the existing Global System cannot be done through reforming the UN – this will be ineffective. What needs to be done are the following:

- 1. Organisation of global disarmament at all levels;**
- 2. Organisation of equitable access to the planet's resources**
- 3. Negotiation of open, flexible economic relationship between the world's major regions which are unequally developed**
- 4. Negotiations to have the correct management of the global/national relationship in the areas of communication, culture, and political policies**

But according to Amin, the present trends are in the direction which makes such reforms unlikely to be considered or achieved.

And according to Amin the most likely scenario of the future is the development of Asia as the main region which will be reinforced by the globalisation of capitalism. And within Asia China will be the leading power. The future development of China will threaten the present position of the centre – US and EU domination – and that the US in particular will consider China as its main threat. Here lies the arena of future conflicts – between the US and China.

2. Africa and Global Governance

And where is Africa's position in all this?

Already it is clear that intervention by the US and EU in Africa's political, economic, military and cultural affairs has been accelerating since the collapse of the Soviet Union and the intensification of globalisation throughout the 1990s to the present. 9/11 has simply accelerated this intervention and provided new political and military justifications for more intensive interventions.

Can Africa counteract this situation? Can NEPAD and the African Union extricate Africa from this situation? Indeed can any African country – such as Nigeria or South Africa - face the challenges of this intensified and monopolised global governance by developing to a point of being able to challenge the existing rules of global governance?