





The Reform for Peace

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Leaders for Peace

The Reform for Peace

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From the Washington Consensus to the Paris Consensus : a new path to Peace ?

Leaders for Peace, like everyone, has suffered from the pandemic.

Diplomacy, mediation, pedagogy and negotiation—without making direct contact, without travelling to the field and without non-verbal communication—has clearly been difficult.

Nevertheless, we have taken multiple initiatives to support our two fundamental missions: to make proposals and to take action.

As in previous years, our proposals in 2021 have been outlined in this report.

I would sincerely like to thank the Ambassador of France, Pierre VIMONT, for having kindly been our general rapporteur for the past three years. We have conveyed our vision of a renewed multilateralism to many heads of state and government, as well as to key leaders of multilateral organisations.

In terms of action, we have focused our efforts on the creation of the “Itinerant Peace School” whose purpose is to promote a pedagogy of peace in around fifteen countries. A pilot project is being carried out in Côte d’Ivoire. The project has now been finalised under the active leadership of our Executive Director, DONIA KAOUACH.

In addition, we are pursuing other actions such as the “Smart Peace Prize” to highlight initiatives that promote a culture of peace in early childhood facilities.

In this report, we have set out some of the conclusions drawn from our many discussions and work over the past year.

A global epidemic with rare examples of multilateralism

The coronavirus has led to a decline in multilateralism. It chose its camp - that of competition rather than cooperation.

Initially, as it crossed borders one by one, the virus was more of an agent of globalisation. But as responses gradually emerged, it became the point of contact between nations.

Whereas, during the previous crisis of 2008/2010, multilateralism was strengthened by the mobilisation of the G20 at the level of heads of state, in this pandemic, tensions between nations appeared to be more numerous and more aggressive. Masks, tests, and vaccines have all been the subject of multiple guerrilla tactics.

We are forced to admit that President TRUMP put a great deal of effort into making the situation more tense. His successor, Joe BIDEN, and his secretary of state, our friend Antony BLINKEN, are working hard to regain lost ground.

A new cold war

The pandemic broke out just as the rivalry between America and China had begun to take on the appearance of a new cold war.

Tensions began to heighten. The “Thucydides trap” had been sprung and the rivalry between the world leaders and its runner up, owing to its systemic nature, set in for the long term.

The strength of this rivalry, and the propaganda that comes with it, results in various negative effects such as the weakening of world growth, the pressures exerted on those who are attached to their independence like Europe or Africa, and the blockages of the multilateral system.

The radicalisation of this tension would be dangerous for world peace.

To cope with this new global situation, we are counting in particular on the exceptional energy of the new Director General of the World Trade Organization, our friend Ngozi OKONJO-IWEALA, also founding member of *Leaders for Peace*.

Planetisation, a new world order

Fortunately, in the midst of multiple tensions, an area of consensus is emerging at the heart of international relations. This area is still narrow, but in order to work towards a renewal of multilateralism, we will need to rely on these partial consensuses, which we hope to gradually expand.

This consensus for the future of the planet is based on a widely shared condition: the protection of the planet is an emergency for the protection of humanity. Joe BIDEN's words, when he joined the Paris Agreement, are not so different from those of XI Jinping, when he signed the agreement.

The American initiative of 22 and 23 April 2021, allowing forty heads of state to speak out on the subject during this difficult period, however, bodes well.

Indeed, the competition for the leadership of the process appears to have begun; Europe and many others do not want to abandon their leading position, but this jostling for position only strengthens the credibility of the project.

It is rare that we fight for a cause that has no future.

The opening of diplomacy to civil societies

Can the Paris Agreement take over from the Washington Consensus? We can hope so, for the sake of the progress of multilateralism.

The prospect of peace can only exist when nations accept goals that go beyond their own interests. These higher goals should apply to all countries.

This is the case today with the planetisation of our consciousness. Of course, this new field of common concerns can also become a new battleground for the great powers. The number of “summits” is increasing on all continents.

Faced with this risk of dispersion, we can count on civil society, and in particular young people from all over the world, who have understood that their future and the planet are directly united.

This report expresses our confidence in the extension of the necessary innovations in diplomacy to civil society.

Jean-Pierre RAFFARIN

*Former French Prime Minister
President of Leaders for Peace*





Speech of the French President,
Emmanuel MACRON,
for the annual conference of Leaders for Peace, 2021

Mr President, dear Jean-Pierre RAFFARIN,
Madam Director-General,
Ladies and gentlemen,

I am very pleased to be speaking at the annual “Leaders for Peace” conference. I remember our discussions, a few years ago now. You have invited me to share my thoughts on multilateralism and peace in 2021. This subject is particularly topical this year, marked both by the prospect of an end to the epidemic – meaning we must conceive the “world after” – and the return of the influence of the United States in an effective multilateralism forums, which is an encouragement to rediscover the path of an effective multilateralism, suited to the power relations of the 21st century.

Your 2019 report on the subject clearly set out the picture of an undermined, challenged and weakened multilateral order. Ultimately, we have three questions to address on this point:

Firstly, should we seek to return to the “world of before”, going into reverse, if you will? Or should we choose to start the transition, by nature more uncertain, perhaps more dangerous, to a new multilateralism, redesigned for these new power relations and the lessons learned from the crisis?

Some seems to think that the current crisis is merely an interlude, that the vaccine will take things back to how they were. That is, I believe, a historical mistake. I deeply believe

we are at the end of a cycle. We now know how much our growth trajectories at the turn of the millennium were a dead end: they generated highly inflammable inequalities within our very societies, while consuming the planet's natural capital and, in a way, they exacerbated pre-existing geopolitical tensions. From California to the Sahel and to the Pacific, all of us are now suffering the consequences, and these consequences are particularly damaging for the most vulnerable States and the most fragile societies, for the countries that are already the poorest.

We therefore need to conceive and shape the next cycle. Our response, in France, and collectively in Europe, means seizing the opportunity of this last warning shot to determinedly shift our development trajectory. I am convinced that what we have long called the "Washington Consensus" is now dead and buried. On november 11 th of last year, we sought to bring about a "Paris Consensus", a new universal consensus, at the Paris Peace Forum, to bring a transition towards new economic, social and democratic models. We need to continue shaping and consolidating this consensus, and your thoughts on the subject will help us progress.

The second major question is, in my eyes, what we are to do with "commons" such as the climate, health, biodiversity and the Internet. At the end of the last century, we defined a shared agenda and conceived these common goods of humankind. Of course, the achievements were tentative, often uncertain; our awareness was only a few years old. I particularly have in mind the fight against terrorism and against hate content online and on social media. But these common goods are a now an essential aspect of the new multilateralism. Should we preserve

them for the benefit of all, or resign ourselves to seeing them eroded by exploitation, overconsumption and predation?

Since the beginning of the pandemic, I have promoted the vision of the fight against Covid-19 being a “global public good”. This vision, which was not evident, has given rise to the creation of the Access to Covid-19 Tools Accelerator (ACT-A), helping provide the poorest countries with diagnostics, therapeutics and vaccines, and to strengthen their health systems for the fight against the pandemic. We can be proud of what has been accomplished, but we know that we must go much further: when it shared, last month, the first vaccine doses with Africa to vaccinate healthcare workers, France sparked what I am absolutely convinced will be a vast movement of solidarity in the fight against Covid-19. I have called on my G7 partners to join it as soon as possible. And we know what we have to do, at the G7 and the G20: a profound public health response to learn all the lessons of the crisis and overcome this pandemic, which can only be achieved if we fight this battle cooperatively and universally.

Beyond this short-term response, where confidence in multilateralism is at stake, we need to reform the international health architecture to strengthen our collective security in the face of pandemics. Success will depend on our ability to bring “public health peace” – meaning to preserve international health cooperation from rising geopolitical rivalries. And that is possible. Some 40 years ago, at the height of the Cold War, humankind overcame smallpox thanks to cooperation between scientists and doctors from around the world, including Russians, Chinese and Americans. It is this public health agenda that we must address today.

The same goes for the environment: if the fight against climate change or against the collapse of biodiversity were to become hostages to rising rivalries between great powers, we would be certain to be building our own dead ends, our own failures for today and for tomorrow. The path ahead is narrow and perilous, because we failed to act earlier, it must be said. But there is cause to be reasonably optimistic: with our European, African and also Chinese partners, we preserved climate multilateralism and the Paris Agreement for four years, despite the exit of the United States that could have caused its collapse. The coalitions of actors formed at the One Planet summits, bringing together national and local governments, companies, philanthropic foundations and civil society organizations have enabled us to make progress in overhauling our economies, bringing tangible results.

Joe BIDEN's climate summit last month, attended by all the G20 leaders, showed that preserving the environment can be a shared fight, and above all marked the return of the United States of America and their catching-up. It is now urgent to speed up the transition and increase the level of ambition: COP26 in Glasgow in November must, if you will, be the Bretton Woods of the 21st century, defining the organization of productive systems in the "world after" with our new gold standard: climate neutrality.

The European Union is a leader on this subject. We have made the strongest, most radical commitments, we have brought in profound innovations, and the French EU Presidency will commit to it fully, with the carbon border adjustment mechanism. We have nothing to blush about. On the contrary, we need to continue driving international climate and biodiversity geopolitics, and engaging with China and the United States of America.

Lastly, cyber space is also a common good, which should facilitate communication between individuals, cultures, peoples and nations. It needs to be accessible to all and governed by the principles of democratic sovereignty. That means it must be governed and regulated, not captured, pirated and instrumentalized. The time has come to set down together the fundamental principles of the global information and communication space in order to preserve a single, open and trusted Internet. At the G7 and G20, I will submit tangible proposals to ensure “digital public order”. And here too, we have done a lot in this area since my election in 2017. In summer 2017, firstly, with Theresa MAY, to fight terrorism online. Then with the Christchurch Call to Action, here in Paris in May 2019, which brought tangible results. And a few weeks ago, progress was made in Europe, adopted in parliament, and more will be achieved at the summit on the 14 th and on the 15 th of May.

Thirdly, this agenda to protect global public goods is essential for peace, but there is a question of method. In this race against the clock, we cannot wait for perfect unanimity to act. We should never exclude anyone in principle, But the approach must be the one that guided us in Europe and now should guide us even further: no Member State can be forced to go further than it can go and wishes to go, but those who do not wish to continue moving forward must not be able to stop others of doing so. If you will, an ambitious avant-garde must always be allowed to act.

Believing in multilateralism does not mean defending the status quo. Nor does it mean waiting for unanimity before moving forward. It means taking action to implement the principles that are the foundations of the multilateral order.

It means working on the reform and modernization of international organizations to make them more effective in bringing tangible results for citizens, and especially the most vulnerable. It means promoting innovative initiatives in sectors where international governance remains insufficient, such as digital technology. It means involving civil society partners in seeking solutions. Really, I would like to replace the “multilateralism of words” by the “multilateralism of actions”. I am deeply convinced of this method. And that means we must allow their ambitious avant-garde action, and re-synchronize our agendas, ensure they are coherent. This ambitious avant-garde action is possible on the climate and on social issues, but will not stand up if we continue with a trade agenda that ignores social and environmental dimensions. How can we ask the Europeans to move forward on climate ambition, when the next day they are to conclude trade agreements with regions that do not? Multilateralism must also be the child of coherence, if it is to be accepted by our people. And so trade, the economy, finance and social and environmental issues must go hand in hand in the re-synchronization of our agendas, with renewed coherence.

Mr President, ladies and gentlemen, like all major crises, that caused by the Covid-19 pandemic brings an opportunity. It requires us to update the very logic of international collective action, in all fields where it is required to address global challenges. That will be the focus of the work at this year’s Paris Peace Forum, which will hold its fourth session in November. It has been designed as a laboratory to bring innovative, tangible solutions concerning the major subjects of global governance. At the forum, I will be pleased to see all those open to what you call “planetization”, my dear Jean-Pierre RAFFARIN, giving priority to the protection

of the planet, which is an essential condition for preserving global peace.

So I would like to thank you for your work, your efforts, and I look forward to seeing you again in person and being able to welcome you to the Élysée.

Emmanuel MACRON

President of the French Republic



Speech of the U.S. Secretary of State,
Antony BLINKEN,

represented by the Deputy Assistant Secretary
in the Bureau of European and Eurasian Affairs
Madame **Molly MONTGOMERY**
for the annual conference of Leaders for Peace, 2021

It's an honor to speak with you on behalf of Secretary **BLINKEN** on a theme that is of particular importance to him, to President **BIDEN**, and to this administration: The United States' commitment to the multilateral system and its foundational values.

From day one of his administration, President **BIDEN** sent a clear message to the world: The United States will recommit to our alliances and partnerships and revitalize them to meet the challenges of our time.

And he followed those words with action: by rejoining the Paris Climate Accord, re-engaging the World Health Organization, joining the Human Rights Council, and reengaging with our NATO Allies and European partners, especially the EU.

We recognize that the biggest challenges facing the United States and the world are transnational in nature and must be tackled collectively through global partnerships and through international organizations such as the United Nations, NATO, the World Health Organization, and others.

We also recognize that our rules-based order is increasingly threatened by strategic challengers like China and Russia. It is essential that we continue working with our European partners to uphold a multilateral system that reflects our shared values and remains faithful to these international institutions' original missions.

China, in particular, has been taking steps that undermine core precepts and norms within UN bodies, such as respect for human rights, transparency, and good governance.

On the 3rd of May 2021, ministers of the foreign affairs have met in London. At this occasion, the US secretary of state has addressed the importance of multilateralism as the ideal vehicle to address worldwide challenges. He also reiterated his deep concerns regarding China's human rights abuses in Xinjiang, destabilizing activities in the East and South China Seas, and its undermining of Hong Kong democracy.

There he also met with the minister of Foreign Affairs, Jean-Yves LE DRIAN to discuss their joint support for peace, security, and democracy in Africa, the Middle East, and Ukraine.

In June 2021, the President BIDEN will attend the G7 Summit in Cornwall where he will also reinforce our commitment to multilateralism, work to advance key U.S. policy priorities on global health, economic recovery, and climate change, and demonstrate solidarity and shared values among major democracies.

The President will then go to Brussels to participate in this year's NATO Summit, as well as the first U.S.-EU Summit since 2014.

Engagements like these – whether with the EU, our NATO Allies, our G7 partners, or others – are a testament to our commitment to stand shoulder-to-shoulder with our Allies and partners once again.

On the 7th of May 2021, the Secretary of State Anthony BLINKEN addressed the UN Security Council and spoke about the importance of multilateral cooperation.

There he stressed that the international order, built and upheld through multilateral institutions such as the UN and NATO, is responsible for the greatest period of peace, progress, and prosperity in modern history.

Our administration is committed to lead with diplomacy to advance the interests of the United States and to strengthen that rules-based international order.

That system is not an abstraction. It helps countries resolve differences peacefully, coordinate multilateral efforts effectively, and participate in global commerce with the assurance that everyone is following the same rules.

There has to be a system that regulates how countries interact and how nations relate to one another. And that rules-based order is the one that, over the last 75 years, has created an environment that has prevented wars between the great powers, and it has created an open, predictable system in which other countries could emerge and millions could be lifted out of poverty.

We engage via multilateral institutions not because we think these institutions are perfect, but rather because we know that when America doesn't engage, one of two things is likely to happen. Either others will step up to fill the void, including those who may not share our interests or values, or no one steps up, leaving only chaos.

We saw this in the early days of the Covid-19 pandemic, when an absence of U.S. leadership led to our adversaries trying to assert themselves, to the detriment of the Transatlantic relationship.

The entire world has a stake in that multilateral system, and we must protect against those who seek to undermine its foundations or question the values upon which it is based.

That means insisting that member states in international bodies uphold and abide by their commitments. Whether those commitments are to nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament, protection of the environment, free and fair global commerce, or protection of human rights, we must live up to them.

That is the definition of a rules-based order. These are the rules that nations have voluntarily and collectively agreed upon and they should be upheld.

We must also acknowledge that this system, at its core, is premised on human rights and human dignity for every individual. Self-determination, equal rights, and ensuring respect for the fundamental freedoms of every person are essential to realise the peaceful and friendly relations between states.

A challenge to those values cannot go unchecked lest it harm the foundation for peace and prosperity we have built together.

On the 7th of May 2021, the Secretary of State re-committed the United States to upholding the rules-based order of our international system and pledged to work multilaterally to tackle new challenges.

When we think about virtually all of the problems and challenges that are affecting the lives of our citizens, whether it's Covid-19, whether it's climate, whether it is the disruption of emerging technologies, not a single one can be dealt with by any one country acting alone, even the United States.

It is for this reason that we have a profound stake in the success of the multilateral system and why the United States,

working in close partnership with allies and partners—both traditional and non-traditional—is intensifying our efforts to respond to and deter behaviors that represent an assault on the values, norms, and principles that underpin the system we founded together.

We are committed to the international rules-based order that is at the heart of our peace and prosperity.

I know this organization shares that commitment. The work you are doing is profoundly important and I thank you again for welcoming me here today.

Anthony BLINKEN

Secretary of State

Represented by

Mrs Molly MONTGOMERY

Deputy Assistant Secretary
in the Bureau of European and Eurasian Affairs



2021 REPORT FOR THE LEADERS FOR PEACE

By means of an introduction...

“ Each generation doubtless feels called upon to reform the world. Mine knows that it will not reform it, but its task is perhaps even greater. It consists in preventing the world from destroying itself. ”

Albert Camus

(Speech in Stockholm, 10 December 1957).

The report presented this year within the framework of Leaders for Peace is inspired by Albert Camus. Not out of pedantry, but because the words of the winner of the Nobel Prize for Literature on that day in December 1957 remain more relevant than ever. The circumstances were undoubtedly different from today, but the feeling of living at a pivotal moment in history finds an echo in the present context. A changing world (decolonisation then, globalisation now), confrontation at a global level (the Cold War then, the rivalry between America and China now) are so many parallels which give Camus’ thought all its relevance.

Multilateralism is at a crossroads. For over thirty years it has suffered repeated assaults that have deeply shaken its authority to the point of questioning whether it will be able to bounce back and regain its effectiveness. In this moment of doubt, Albert Camus’s observation offers a direction that can serve as a welcome compass.

Like the previous reports, the 2021 edition sets out to take stock of multilateralism in the time of the pandemic and America's return. It discusses the impact of these recent developments and seeks to better measure whether they irreversibly accentuate the current decline of multilateralism or can give hope for a recovery. But the concern throughout this analysis is to keep Albert Camus' lesson in mind and to make sure that multilateral order does not come undone any further.

REPORT FOR THE LEADERS FOR PEACE.

Executive summary

► For more than a year, **multilateralism has been put to the test of the Covid-19 pandemic** which has accentuated its weaknesses and divisions. Far from creating a movement of solidarity, the virus has heightened the vulnerabilities of the world. At the same time, the arrival of a new administration in the United States has raised hopes to restore multilateral order shaken by four years of confrontation from former President Trump. But while his successor in the White House has initiated America's return to the multilateral system, the consequences of the change of course are still uncertain.

► **The contradictions that undermine world order from within have not disappeared:** the diplomacy of great powers—global or regional—is more prevalent; the global economy is in shock from the pandemic; the new common good is more threatened than ever, such as Covid vaccines whose production and distribution are at the centre of an unprecedented battle for influence.

► Nonetheless, the pandemic does not explain everything. In particular, its fallout cannot conceal the **underlying trends** at the root of the current upheavals in multilateralism. It is facing a major transformation which is shaking its foundations and destabilising the Western influence that has accompanied it for three-quarters of a century. More radically

still, the world of networks brings a change of paradigm which requires different methods and a new role for States.

▸ It is against this necessary adaptation to new realities that we must measure the ability of multilateral order to regain its effectiveness. **The challenge is to avoid further fragmentation** and prevent global order from being summed up as a logic of blocs; in short, multilateralism that brings new ideas in step with the changes of our century.

▸ In this perspective, this report puts forward several proposals:

- **Revisit the main challenges** posed to multilateralism, particularly in terms of democracy and the environment, to seek possible political convergences;
- **Review the way in which international meetings are organised** (Security Council, G7/G8 meetings) to oblige the great powers to assume their responsibilities and promote collective reflection among the actors of the international community;
- **Consolidate the functioning of multilateral diplomacy** by adapting peace negotiations to the realities of modern conflict.

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The Reform for Peace

As 2021 begins, multilateralism is in bad shape. Weakened, contested or simply ignored, the multilateral system is struggling to find its feet in a world that seems to have grown used to moving forward without it. The last report of the Foundation of Leaders for Peace, published in spring 2020, had already noted that the worrying evolution of multilateral order could be further aggravated by the pandemic, rather than it serving as a salutary awakening.

The remainder of the year for the multilateral landscape saw continued clashes between great powers and limited progress in terms of solidarity. Whereas it was hoped that the virus would bring cohesion and unity, **it was rather fragmentation and a beggar-thy-neighbour approach that prevailed.**

A finding that remains pessimistic ...

In terms of preserving peace, 2020 did little to reverse the past trend. During the last twelve months, ongoing conflicts have experienced little respite, apart from some rare exceptions, where fragile ceasefires (Libya, Ukraine, etc.) or political agreements (South Sudan) have been put in place. On the other hand, the period saw hostilities rekindle in several regions of the world, such as Upper Karabach or the Central African Republic, while new conflicts appeared in the Tigray region, in Ethiopia.

The questioning of multilateral order—open or insidious—has continued, and even worsened for the same reasons already analysed in previous reports: a growing number of nations anxious to assert their place and influence on the international stage, the increasingly uninhibited use of force, the ever more aggressive questioning of the rule of law. At the same time, the in-depth transformations of the contemporary world linked to the new challenges of globalisation have continued to shake up multilateral order, both in terms of new digital technology, the degradation of our environment, international trade whose rules are no longer followed, and economic growth that creates growing inequalities.

...reinforced by recent events with uncertain consequences

Faced with this fragility, the developments that appeared at the turn of 2020 have not changed the situation, whether it be the Covid-19 crisis or the political changes that have taken place in the United States.

► As we expected, the protracted pandemic acted as an aggravating factor of multilateral incompetence, over the months shaping a political and economic landscape that is still worrying.

In terms of health, the discovery of vaccines capable of combating COVID has opened up promising horizons. But, at the same time, it has led to new competition between states in the form of aggressive nationalistic vaccine diplomacy.

On the economic landscape, the crisis has worsened poverty in most countries and widened the gap between rich nations and the rest. It has strengthened the grip of digital technologies and

has led politicians to question how to control this expansion. Uncomfortable with the management of the crisis which took them by surprise, Western countries have lost part of their influence to the benefit of other nations, in particular in Asia where China, as well as South Korea, Australia and New Zealand have shown a better ability to overcome the ordeal of the virus.

Where there were hopes for a vast outpouring of solidarity to stem Covid-19, the pandemic has instead accentuated its contradictions. To give an initial and therefore provisional assessment, we could describe the virus crisis, at that stage, as ‘more inequality’, ‘more digital’ and ‘more Asia’.¹

► Conversely, **the end of the Trump administration** and the change of team at the head of the United States offer multilateralism a more positive outlook. The new American President has indeed affirmed throughout his electoral campaign his desire to return to the multilateral bodies abandoned by the Trump administration. This openness was further confirmed by President Biden’s first announcements: a return to the Paris climate agreement, reinstatement of the World Health Organization and the Human Rights Council, support for the new Director-General of the WTO, financial support for the global vaccine distribution mechanism, and an extension of the New Start treaty on strategic weapons. Since then, statements by the US President have made it clear that America is back in the international system and wishes to reaffirm its leadership in a form that remains to be defined.² The first months of

1 Observation made by Josep Borrell at an interview given to the Robert Schuman Foundation (2 February 2021).

2 Speech given by Joe Biden to the agents of the State Department (4 February 2021): “let me send a clear message to the world: America is back... We are going to reengage the world.”

See also his speech at the Munich Security Conference on 18 February.

the American President confirm, moreover, Washington's desire to return all its strength to the coalition of Western allies, in line with what was called the free world during the Cold War.

We must not be mistaken about the meaning of this new American diplomacy. The return of the United States to the multilateral game remains centred on the defence of America's own interests with a particular emphasis on the defence of the American middle classes who perceive themselves to be left behind by globalisation³. America's re-engagement in multilateralism will therefore, in all likelihood, result in a very strong defence of American interests. It will also be less interventionist in terms of security by seeking to avoid new external commitments from the United States.

From this contrasting picture, one can only draw nuanced conclusions for the multilateral system.

First of all, between a virus accelerating nationalist tensions, and a new American President who wants to re-engage his country in multilateralism, **the risk of tension** is clear. The American ambition to regain multilateral leadership will indeed find many obstacles in its path: the rivals of the United States do not intend to let it go and the risks of further divisions are at least as strong as hope of reconstruction. Such antagonisms are not new, but they occur within a weakened multilateral system which has come to doubt itself.

At the same time, this mixed picture confirms **the urgency of regaining control of multilateral order**. There is a great risk that the deconstruction of multilateralism will continue and intensify. However, the pandemic and an ever more unstable geopolitical situation can only reinforce this lowering of the multilateral system.

³ Idem Joe Biden: "There is no longer a bright line between foreign and domestic policy." (4 February 2021)

It is in this uncertain context that this new report is published. Its purpose is three-fold: (I) **examine current developments** to assess the chances of a recovery in the multilateral system. (II) **take into account the challenges of the long term** to better understand the underlying trends that have disrupted multilateral order for nearly forty years. (III) **propose initial responses** to the challenges facing the multilateral system.

I. Multilateralism faced with the challenges of the present

In his recent report to the United Nations General Assembly, the Secretary-General of the Organization made a blunt assessment of the current state of the multilateral system by speaking of an *annus horribilis*. Far from feeling sorry for this record, Antonio Guterres, on the contrary, wanted to be proactive in calling for a reset of the United Nations and of world order. The Secretary General sees this resetting of multilateralism as based on a strengthening and reinvention of the governance of critical common goods. Taking his point further, Mr. Guterres evokes the need for a New Global Deal capable of tackling the new challenges of our time, notably through «a more inclusive and interconnected multilateralism»⁴.

This call to bounce back and get out of the gloom is meritorious as the current decline may cast doubt on the future of multilateralism. But are the objective conditions for such a revival met? To answer this question, we must endeavour to seek out the threads of a possible re-knitting of multilateral

4 Antonio Guterres: Report of the Secretary General to the General Assembly dated 28 January 2021

order in the three areas mentioned by the Secretary-General: peace, prosperity and the common goods of mankind.

A. An increasingly complex geopolitical situation.

As noted above, the arrival of a new team to power in Washington has given the reassuring feeling of a US administration keen to put multilateralism back at the centre of diplomatic action. However, and regardless of the fallout from the current Covid-19 pandemic, it would be wrong to think that this change of course marks an outright return to the «world before».

The complexity of the international scene has indeed increased in recent years based on three structural trends: multipolarity, multidimensional power and the perception of Western decline.

1. Multipolarity is evident today. The rise of China is the most decisive factor, leading to a confrontation between the country and the United States in which many observers see as an avatar of the Cold War. But the geopolitical landscape is not reduced to this exclusive face to face. It also introduces a new deal with many countries which also intend to take their place at a regional and even global level, from Turkey to the confluents of Europe and the Middle East to India, Japan and Australia in Asia, without forgetting Brazil and Mexico in Latin America, or even Egypt, South Africa and Nigeria in Africa.

A much more diversified geopolitical landscape is being set up, on the one hand, based on powers with a universal vocation—the United States, China, Russia—and on the other hand, countries with a more regional vocation, but who aspire to make their voices heard in international forums. This worldwide

dispersion of power, superimposing both a direct confrontation between three great powers and the presence of multiple actors determined to take their place, is an unprecedented situation for international order. The fact that this new configuration of the world stage is struggling to find its translation into the organisation and functioning of the multilateral order largely explains the international instability we see today.

2. This multipolarity of power is also part of a **multi-dimensional** expression of power, sometimes military, sometimes economic, sometimes combining the two and, in any case, always political. Under the effect of the pandemic, it has also become a health issue (the diplomacy of vaccines) and technological (the digital offensive). The nations capable of simultaneously combining all of these new attributes of power are, therefore, those with the best chance of playing a leading role.

3. This multiplicity of power comes with the evolution of the multilateral system **which calls into question the preponderance of Western countries**. This challenge to Western influence is not just about the issue of representation in multilateral bodies. It also attacks the basic principles of the Bretton Woods system established by Western allies and challenges the values that inspired them.⁵ Expressed in sometimes simplistic terms («the Rest against the West»), this “**de-westernisation**” has gradually taken hold of the international stage. We can trace the most significant stages: the financial crisis of 2008 started in America before spreading to the rest of the world, the chaotic management of immigration

⁵ The Munich Security Conference, when it met last year, invented the term, “Westlessness” to describe this phenomenon.

in Europe, the withdrawal of the United Kingdom from the European Union, the weakening of Western democracies with the demand in certain European countries for a new illiberal model, the uncertain management by Western countries of the pandemic, accentuated by the faster economic recovery observed in many Asian nations. Added to this list is the worldwide echo of former President Trump's attacks on the US electoral system, followed by the assault on the Capitol in Washington.

Faced with the multiplication of these signs of weakness, the anti-Western protest remains very largely led by the great powers most opposed to American leadership. But the perception in many parts of the world that the Western world is in decline only reinforces the weakening of a multilateral system too long dominated by the influence of Western countries.

B. Prosperity undermined

It is not just the geopolitical balance that has suffered from the virus crisis. The current transformations are also shaking the global economy.

Growth in almost all countries was hit hard by the shock of the pandemic in 2020. Hopes of a rapid recovery are lowered for 2021 as vaccination campaigns turn out to be slower than expected. Given the most recent mutations of Covid-19, a difficult exit from the pandemic can no longer be excluded, and perhaps even the need to live in the future with the presence of new variants of the virus activated by the disturbances of our natural environment. This prospect reinforces the uncertainty over what form the resumption of global economic growth may take.

In the immediate term and despite the economic aid provided by states to their businesses and individuals, **inequalities** are taking over. Extreme poverty, which was until now on the decline in the world, is on the rise again with more than 120 million people now in this category. At the same time, inequalities between social classes are widening and parity between men and women is deteriorating. In the United States, the life expectancy of the most disadvantaged communities is falling dramatically.⁶ Internationally, similar tensions are emerging: the gap between rich and poor countries is widening and the growth differentials for the current year will reflect the varying degree of success of nations in their management of the pandemic.

In general, the multilateral system has appeared disoriented in the face of this economic shock and, more often than not, left States in the front line to manage the economic crisis. It is indeed national governments, with the active support of central banks, that have sought to mitigate the consequences of the fall in economic activity. According to United Nations' figures, the 39 most advanced countries have, since March 2020, recorded public expenditure of over \$5 trillion compared to \$1.5 trillion for the other 155 countries of the world. This inequality hits developing countries on all fronts: increased debt, lower financial resources, lower growth, and reduced access to vaccines.⁷ Faced with these injustices, the member States of the G20 have resolved to put in place moratoriums for the debt of the poorest countries.

In addition, discussions are continuing for the allocation of special drawing rights to the tune of \$650 billion primarily to

⁶ In 2020 alone, life expectancy of the black community diminished by 2.7 years, and by 1.9 years for the Hispanic community compared to 2019. It is the strongest annual decline in this index since World War II.

⁷ To date (end of February 2021), low- and middle-income countries have received 675 million doses compared to 4.2 billion doses obtained by high-income countries.

help middle- and low-income countries. Beyond these efforts, the multilateral system and its main agencies competent in the economic field maintain an attitude of caution because they cannot accurately measure at this stage when and how the end of the pandemic will take place.

This economic crisis also raises the question of the future of development policies. There is a risk that the devastation of the virus will undermine some of the progress observed in recent years in developing countries, particularly in Africa.

Not without surprise, African countries have so far managed the health crisis by avoiding the worst. Having learned from the experience of the Ebola pandemic, they showed more effective collective governance capacities than expected. This has been seen, in particular, in the mechanisms of social assistance and economic support as well as in the provision of medical equipment through efficient continental platforms. African countries, especially those with diversified economies and resilient private sectors, can hope to be in a good position to take advantage of the economic rebound emerging from the pandemic.

This encouraging prospect nonetheless depends on the capacity of the multilateral system to pursue the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals and support the in-depth transformations of African economies. Across the African continent, a new development model is being put in place which favours, notably through the efficient fabric of small and medium-sized enterprises, an African economy that creates more jobs, and which is less dependent on its raw materials and more focused on the industrial and service sectors.

At the end of the health crisis, the multilateral system will therefore have to organise itself to ensure the political, financial

and legal framework essential to the achievement of the objectives linked to this new development model: to encourage the establishment of an effective State apparatus, promote a political and social climate conducive to investment, involve large multinational companies in a more balanced and ethical management of the local economy, and promote sustainable growth in line with environmental protection.

C. Common goods put to the test by the virus crisis

In the context of the pandemic, three essential sectors have emerged as the most problematic for the common goods: **health** of course, the **environment**, as well as **digital technologies**.

1. Multilateral health action naturally found itself on the front line from the onset of Covid-19.

At the outset, the fight against the virus gave rise to individual initiatives by States, acting in dispersed order to acquire medical equipment. There followed particularly active diplomatic action on the part of countries capable of providing such equipment. Amid this activism, the World Health Organization (WHO) initially struggled to assert its authority. Challenged by the former Trump administration for having reacted too late to the appearance of the virus and for showing, according to the former US President, signs of indulgence towards the Chinese authorities, the WHO had to struggle to preserve its authority and its credibility. To this end, it has set the main principles of the fight against the pandemic, and strengthened its coordination with the regional epidemic control centres. At the risk of creating controversy, it has led an active policy of transparency and, after sending a mission to China to shed light on the origins of the pandemic, does not hesitate to ask for more information.

Behind this mobilisation, the objective has been to avoid the “politicisation” of the virus germinated by the diplomatic activism deployed by many states. But the diplomacy of influence remains fierce and could escalate even further in the current phase of vaccine development. Two issues, in particular, remain sensitive and engage the attention of multilateral bodies.

a) First, the **facilitation and acceleration of vaccine production.**

In this time of pandemic, the vaccine represents an indispensable good for the health of all mankind. Given the extent of the needs, an unprecedented decentralised production system carefully articulated between laboratories, medical agencies and manufacturing plants must be established to enable the rapid delivery of vaccines.

This observation raises the question of **the dissemination of intellectual property and know-how** attached to these vaccines and, more precisely, that of the sharing of their patents. Various mechanisms exist to ensure such sharing: implementation by governments of an ex officio license; temporary suspension of patents; finally, a procedure that is undoubtedly the best suited to current constraints, direct negotiations between laboratories, biotechnology companies and pharmaceutical industries for the transfer of know-how induced by the manufacture of the most innovative vaccines.

It is against this backdrop that several developing countries (South Africa, India) are now pushing the World Trade Organization (WTO) to obtain an exemption from intellectual property agreements.⁸ Their request has so far been met with opposition from the countries of origin of these vaccines, who argue that the lifting of these rights risks calling into question

8 Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights, or TRIPS

the trust between the public authorities, researchers and pharmaceutical industries that enabled the cooperation behind the discovery of vaccines. The recent change in attitude of the United States on this issue may give hope for a solution. But the final answer to this dispute will be an important test for the credibility of the multilateral system.

b) The sensitive problem of patents is linked to the issue of instituting **mechanisms of international solidarity for the dissemination of vaccines.**

Access to vaccines for all is the other manifestation of solidarity that multilateral order must imperatively achieve in order to preserve its authority.

The discussion of how to ensure a fair distribution of future vaccines among all nations—initiated at the start of the pandemic by the WHO itself and supported by many political leaders⁹—responds primarily to reasons of equity. But it is also based on a logic of collective interest and efficiency: in a totally interconnected world, the fight against the pandemic requires universal vaccination coverage. This awareness also gave rise to the establishment of a support system (ACT-A),¹⁰ provided with a financial facility -COVAX- intended to provide doses of vaccine to low- or middle-income countries in need. The first commitments made by the States were quickly put in place.¹¹ They are aiming for an initial target of 2 billion doses of vaccine that will be provided by the end of 2021 to 20% of the population in target countries.

9 Call made by Ms von der Leyen, Ms Angela Merkel, Mr Emmanuel Macron and Mr Charles Michel on 3 February 2021 and published in several media outlets, including Le Monde newspaper.

10 ACT-A = Access to Covid-19 Tools Accelerator

11 COVAX has already collected \$2 billion as of spring 2021 but the objective remains to reach \$4.6 billion (for the purchase of doses), \$1.4 billion (for distribution) and \$0.8 billion (for research and development).

Yet this multilateral solidarity is now undermined by a struggle for influence between the main vaccine-producing nations. Faced with difficult trade-offs between domestic priorities and international commitments, Europe is forced to conduct its international immunisation support program with discernment. At the same time, other nations like China, India and Russia are leading a particularly active campaign to distribute their own vaccines to countries in need. Faced with this vaccine diplomacy, the members of the G7 are now aware that, in this battle for influence, the gap between promises and reality could damage their own credibility.

With this concern in mind, last March we saw the United States join forces with its partners in the Indo-Pacific Quad (India, Japan, Australia) to announce the production in India of one billion doses of vaccine in destination of countries in the region.

Far from creating more solidarity, the confrontation around the vaccine actually reinforces nationalist tensions within the international community. It remains to be seen whether the multilateral system will be able to convince those involved in this vaccine diplomacy to return to a more cooperative attitude.

2. New digital technologies and their applications are at the centre of another form of influence struggle.

The main beneficiary of the pandemic is the Internet through its multiple uses (working from home, videoconferencing, purchasing and remote consultations) and has enabled public services as well as private companies and individuals to continue their activities during the crisis. As a result, data flowing over digital networks has become the central resource in the global economy. In its own way, the digital product appears, under the

influence of the health crisis, as a new common good which, for the moment however, remains in the hands of the private sector. As such, it is becoming more and more obvious that it will have to come under some form of public supervision.

A regulatory movement has begun to take shape. The European Union, in particular, legislated in 2016 on the protection of personal data through the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)¹². Today, Europe continues in the same direction by offering its members a new legislative framework to better control the content of social networks and guarantee fair competition in the digital services market. All of these initiatives could therefore form the beginnings of multilateral consultation to define global standards inspired by European standards.

For multilateral order, it is now a matter of resolutely engaging in the search for a consensus rather than allowing digital competition to continue, including in its most aggressive applications against the security of States and their economic interests or the protection of the individual freedoms of their citizens.

3. The environment is another privileged ground for ambitious multilateral action in the area of common goods.

The pandemic indeed reinforces the acuteness of the environmental threat when the origins of Covid-19 show a possible causal link between damage to biodiversity and the appearance of the virus. Whereas public opinion may have seemed in the past more sensitive to the risks arising from climate change, by highlighting the dangers linked to the destruction of biodiversity, Covid-19 reinforces the need

¹² EU Regulation of 27 April 2016 on the protection of individuals with regard to the processing of personal data and the free movement of such data.

to move forward in the same way on the two pillars of the environmental priority.

A growing number of States now seem convinced of the reality of the dangers that weigh on the environment. A global consensus is emerging on the need to act collectively against the current disruptions that threaten our entire planet. The growing number of climate imbalances observed on our planet are generating growing awareness among government officials. Moreover, the mobilisation of youth all over the world contributes greatly to this universal movement of opinion. If this observation were to be further substantiated, the multiplication of commitments made by national leaders in favour of the energy transition is an unequivocal illustration. The number of countries, starting with China, which have ambitious objectives for a carbon-free economy by 2050/2060 continues to grow and now gives the environmental cause a new status - that of a combat which is essential to all humanity.

The most difficult thing however is to translate these intentions into national programs and to give them a practical application in the daily life of the population. The principled commitments phase culminated in 2015 with the Paris Agreement when the international community recognised the urgency of the ecological threat and the need to act. But the ecological moment that the world is now experiencing imposes difficult choices on all countries for their leaders as well as for their populations (changes in individual behaviour, choices of public investments, industrial conversions, new financial resources, etc.). It also requires international organisations to show themselves capable of verifying the fulfilment of the commitments made by each of the States because it is essential that the

additional environmental cost be equitably distributed among all the players of this vast international mobilisation. For multilateralism, the pandemic crisis therefore reinforces the need to consolidate this emerging consensus by giving it decisive impetus.

All in all, multilateral order today faces a situation characterised by: :

- An even stronger geopolitics of power,
- An uncertain outcome for the economic crisis,
- A pandemic grappling with aggressive health diplomacy,
- An over-powerful and unavoidable digital industry,
- An environmental cause in search of a mobilising consensus.

In the midst of the virus crisis, the multilateral agenda is therefore faced with multidimensional, numerous and contradictory challenges.

II. The challenges of long time: a change of paradigm

In addition to this picture, there are the underlying trends which have gradually eroded the effectiveness of international organisations. Ignoring the part played by these profound changes in the current disturbances of multilateralism runs the risk of missing the causes of this powerlessness and proposing reforms which will prove to be ineffective.

After its creation in 1945, multilateralism made significant progress: the decolonisation movement in Africa and Asia, the detente policy in Europe, control of strategic armaments, nuclear non-proliferation, consolidation of international law. But, at the turn of our century and after the end of the East-

West conflict, multilateral order had to contend with historical developments which led to a dual underlying movement:

- on the one hand, the establishment of a **globalised economy** which has led to an unprecedented boom in international trade and an exit from poverty for many countries, particularly in Asia;
- on the other hand, the **transformation of the geopolitical landscape** with the emergence of a multipolar world dominated by a growing number of global and regional powers.

The conjunction of these two developments has been an indisputable factor for progress in fostering economic prosperity and enabling a significant number of countries to acquire responsibilities which were previously denied to them. But this in-depth transformation has turned the multilateral situation upside down. It has, in particular, released new forces in two directions, one bottom-up and the other top-down which, together, have given birth to a political and economic reality in the face of which multilateral order has been unable to reinvent itself.

A. The geopolitics of power (top down)

The evidence is there: **the geopolitics of power** is imposing itself inexorably on the world stage and manifests itself in two ways: the number of countries determined to take their full part in world affairs continues to grow and this extension of multipolarity is accompanied by a much more uninhibited use of force than in the past. States wishing to assert their influence exercise it through all channels of international action (military, commercial, technological, etc.) and take advantage of all loopholes in the multilateral system.

The consequences of this state of affairs are of several kinds:

First of all, the **rule of law**, which is the basis of international order, is considerably weakened. The efforts led on the basis of the United Nations Charter to limit the use of force are increasingly ignored. In many crises, we are witnessing a phenomenon of *deregulation of force* in the words of the former Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General in Libya, Ghassan Salamé. Not only are general international conventions flouted, as we see too often in armed conflicts (bombing of civilian populations and hospitals, attacks on aid convoys, etc.) but ceasefire agreements, laboriously wrenched from stakeholders, often suffer from a lack of follow-up and support in their implementation, due to a lack of strong commitment from the international community.

The growing involvement of third countries in civil wars, the non-respect of arms embargoes decided by the United Nations, and the systematic violation of human rights are all manifestations of generalised behaviour of mistrust Towards international law. In doing so, the very foundations of multilateralism are called into question and this drift is aggravated by the fact that most of these violations go unpunished. This feeling of impunity, which is spreading insidiously throughout the multilateral system, represents the other side of the questioning of the rule of law. The absence of sanctions against the perpetrators of these transgressions encourages their repetition and favours the law of the strongest.

The **negotiation forums**, traditionally established within the framework of international organisations, are progressively bypassed by ad hoc mechanisms intended to serve the interests of the parties involved.

As such, many of the discussions underway in the conflicts in the Middle East (Syria, Yemen), Africa (Libya, CAR) and Asia are coordinated by countries that came to support the various camps present and motivated opposing interests. However, such discussion formats feed chronic instability in the absence of multilateral mechanisms guaranteeing a certain impartiality.

It will be argued that the blockage of the work of the Security Council encourages the search for other formats of the peace process. But, when mediations, overcoming the blockages observed in New York, were entrusted to regional organisations like the African Union in preference to alliances of circumstances, these organisations were able to demonstrate their capacity for negotiation. However, the multiplication of these diplomatic channels outside multilateral frameworks could indeed result in undoing the work of multilateral order in its attempt, through construction, to take into account the interests of all. This risk is not limited to peace processes alone. It also threatens, for example, the project of the reform of international trade where bilateral or regional free trade agreements tend more and more to replace WTO discussions.

Ultimately, the most worrying consequence of this slow slide towards dominance of power lies in the questioning of the principles that inspired the very basis of multilateralism. The foundation of multilateral order is indeed based on the idea of equality between nations as enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations. This cardinal principle is then reflected in the capacity of the multilateral system to protect States against the abuse of power and build a legal framework intended to impose fair rules for all. By its very nature, the diplomacy of power presents a fundamental contradiction

for multilateralism. It is progressively blocking the cogs as in the Security Council; it also challenges the principles which inspire the entire architecture of the international system. The current abuses therefore carry the risk of undoing all the work undertaken since 1945 to build a protective and impartial international order.

B. The new reality on the field (bottom up).

Multilateralism in its traditional form is not only challenged by top-down geopolitics; it is also heckled by a more widespread phenomenon, coming from the field, which introduces new players and new challenges on the international scene.

Built on the logic born of the Treaty of Westphalia, world order was long defined as a system where sovereign states, assured of their national identity and ready to engage in common governance, established rules of cooperation agreed to by all. This exclusivity of public power is now outdated, not to say overwhelmed, by the **new reality of transnational networks**. These belong to all areas, whether legal (trade, finance, environment, technologies, etc.) or illegal (terrorism, organised crime, trafficking of all kinds, etc.). They involve actors who are no longer states but representatives of the business world, associations, cities, universities and research centres. The governance of the globalised world can therefore no longer be reduced to the sole action of States. It must henceforth integrate the actors of the networks, in particular women and young people, and invent a system in which these two levels of power must learn to collaborate. In the words of an American scholar, the chessboard of Westphalian diplomacy must now reconcile with the web of connected networks.¹³

¹³ The chessboard and the web: The concept was popularised by Anne Marie Slaughter in her book of the same title published in 2017 as part of numerous academic works devoted to the same theme.

This cooperation is already underway. In the fight against the pandemic, the Alliance for Vaccines (GAVI) is based on collaboration between states, major foundations and pharmaceutical industries. It can be found in official meetings devoted to the fight against climate imbalances (the Conference of the Parties) where participants from the scientific world and associations now sit alongside representatives of States or large cities. It is also observed in a growing number of international meetings (such as the Paris Forum for example) which bring together governments, innovative companies, research institutes and non-governmental organisations.

This new reality also applies in **the implementation of decisions taken by the public authorities**. Through compliance systems, companies are now entrusted with the responsibility of implementing general measures decreed by states. The same goes for **business practices**: in the face of distortions of competition with increasingly sophisticated mechanisms, countermeasures can no longer be transcribed into state-to-state agreements alone; they must now be managed in close cooperation between public authorities and businesses.

This need for collaboration between «the chessboard and the network», between State diplomacy and the activity of actors in the field, is just as relevant in the **search for peace** which today requires integrated approaches. In open conflicts which tend to be protracted (Afghanistan, Sahel), the return to stability can no longer be achieved through force alone. It must be accompanied by action involving all the public and private resources in all fields: support for the establishment of State capacities, aid for education, food, transport, the fight against climate change, deforestation or lack of water, the establishment of a legal framework conducive to investment. It is at the cost

of mobilising all these contributions that multilateral actors can create the conditions necessary for the establishment of lasting peace.

It has been argued that this new reality, where the bosses of large corporations have become as powerful as governments, is shaping a new world order: a “polylateralism” in place of the current multilateralism.¹⁴ The finding is relevant in that it calls for a revolution in mentalities. But it should not be forgotten that the other side of the reality facing the multilateral system, that of sovereign states and geopolitical multipolarity, remains a source of power which does not intend to be side-lined. It is therefore from the ability to reconcile these two antagonistic movements that a truly effective multilateralism can emerge.

III. The path towards a new multilateral movement

These are the new geopolitical and economic trends in this changing world that must be taken into account to get multilateralism back on track.

We all sense that **this paradigm shift calls for a profound transformation of multilateralism**. However, the nature of this transformation and its magnitude continue to generate debate.

Stressing that the root cause of the crisis in multilateralism lies in the conflict between the great powers, some observers believe that nothing significant can be undertaken without a prior agreement between these nations to end their confrontation. The argument is not without relevance, but it condemns a form of stagnation while waiting for this

14 Pascal Lamy in «Le Grand Continent» (11 November 2020)

precondition to be effective. Should we resign ourselves to doing nothing and let the multilateral system continue to decline?

Conversely, other commentators argue that the chronic weakening of multilateral institutions can no longer do without a revolution of the current system. In other words, they argue in favour of wiping out the Bretton Woods organisations and inventing a completely original system. In this vein, certain researchers propose to establish a world concert of nations, imitated from that of European nations resulting from the Congress of Vienna, by arguing that multilateral order must adapt to the new reality of power. In their view, a new geopolitics must be based on a multilateral order in step with the time.

Embarking on the path of a complete overhaul of the multilateral system may appear to be an attractive undertaking. But any upheaval of this kind carries with it the risk of losing the gains of the past with no guarantee of rapid improvement. In addition, the promoters of such an approach tend to downplay contemporary geopolitical realities in a world where the logic of the balance of power leaves little room for consensus on far-reaching reforms. More fundamentally still, to consecrate the current world hierarchy between great powers to make it the cornerstone of a new multilateral order carries with it the risk of leaving aside the interests of a large part of the international community and of establishing a system in which few States recognise themselves.

In this context, a possible solution to move this debate forward could be to take up the idea put forward recently by several experienced personalities to set up a **committee of elders** to reflect on a possible long-term reform of the

multilateral system. Such a committee could be endorsed by the Security Council to give its work all the necessary authority. It could be formed of representatives of States, former United Nations officials, academics and other personalities and give itself all the time necessary to make its recommendations. It would be part of a consensus process to find common ground that could overcome the classic opposition between those who advocate radical change and those who favour less drastic reform.

However, it would be a mistake to do nothing in the meantime at the risk of allowing multilateral order to weaken further. Changes can be initiated without delay and, while this path may not be the easiest, it could nevertheless make it possible, pending further reforms, to advance the work of multilateralism. In any case, it is this pragmatic path that this report proposes to follow with the objective of taking advantage of all opportunities.

With this perspective in mind, an approach combining different approaches (conceptual, organisational, functional) can offer a fruitful path forward by proposing three lines of action:

- public commitments on clear political priorities
- organisational methods adapted to new geopolitical realities,
- overhauled working methods

A. Public commitments on clear political priorities

For this first line of work, the objective would be to take into consideration the new contemporary challenges and suggest that the leaders of our planet make strong political commitments likely to bring out possible lines of consensus.

1. Revision of the Charter: a difficult path. In this vein, updating the United Nations Charter to incorporate these new themes was presented as a possible venue. However, the difficulty of the task should not be underestimated. The Charter dates from 1945 and has since been revised only on relatively technical points. According to the provisions of the Charter itself, any revision presupposes convening a general conference of the members of the Organization on the basis of a double vote of the General Assembly by a two-thirds majority and the Security Council by nine of its members. Consequently, it implies a broad prior agreement between the member states, at the risk of overbidding and protracted negotiations. In this regard, the risk of spiralling out of control can constitute a serious obstacle to embarking on this path. This uncertain route therefore calls for caution.

On the other hand, other means exist to complement or simply strengthen the objectives of international action. In particular, they could take the form of **political commitments** adopted by the governing bodies of the United Nations (Security Council or General Assembly) or their specialized agencies. These acts are those which have been most commonly used in the past, including for often controversial decisions such as the resolution on the Responsibility to Protect (R2P) or the creation of the International Criminal Court. In contrast, other commitments, such as the Sustainable Development Goals, received unanimous support. It is this type of document that could be used here to identify possible agreements.

By taking this route, the international community could initiate a discussion on the priorities for multilateral action for the coming years. This multilateral emergency agenda would thus make it possible to re-engage multilateralism

in a positive approach and draw the outline of a consensus acceptable to all.

As such, given their importance in relation between States and the strong demand for multilateral initiatives in their regard, two themes can be identified as requiring special attention: democracy, the environment, the pandemic, trade, digital technology and immigration. Other issues such as health policy, trade, digital technology or immigration, could also receive attention in a second order of priorities.

2. Renew the debate on democracy. The question of democratic models is today at the heart of the dispute between Western countries and their allies, on one hand, and other players involved in multilateral order, on the other. Each of the two sides defends its conception of democracy and accuses the other party of interfering in its internal affairs when it seeks to promote its values or when it engages in disinformation, even in acts of cyber attacks. The progression of populist movements in certain Western nations and the internal contestation that they encounter in the face of new forms of illiberal democracies only reinforce the feeling of a confrontation now displayed between two versions - liberal and authoritarian - of democratic rule.

Faced with this rivalry, the promotion of democratic values dear to Western countries is one of the themes on which the new American administration intends to lead a vigorous diplomatic offensive. President Biden committed to this even before he was elected by offering to hold a summit of democracy. It is clear that this project carries the risk of further multilateral fragmentation by consolidating the conflict between two blocs. In addition, these divisions will be aggravated by new issues that will emerge in the debate through the intrusion of new digital technologies in democratic societies (content of social

media, protection of personal data as well as disinformation and cyber attacks, etc.).

Is it possible to avoid the risk of a further deterioration of international cohesion? Could we, on the contrary, try to open a dialogue, however fragile and uncertain, to get out of the conflict between the supporters of these two opposing visions? To avoid this dialogue between parties who are deaf to the other's arguments, and to redirect the debate towards more concrete concerns, two avenues of reflection could be proposed: the first would aim to make the **democratic practices** in force in the world better known and to listen to what each country say about its own experience; the other approach could propose an attempt at a consensual approach, centred on the development of **a common fund of principles and objectives** («**global compact**») in the field of democracy, independently of the type of political regime defended by other parties.

A dialogue of democracies would constitute a new type of conversation between nations likely to emerge from the current blockages. The current clash between democratic models is more often than not the repetition, in the field of values, of the political and military confrontation between great powers. Replacing it with exchanges involving other countries in Asia, Africa or Latin America which have been able to invent their own democratic models and could explain their practices in this area would make it possible to demonstrate that there are other ways of implementing democracy. Such a discussion could therefore go beyond the opposition between the Western liberal model and the authoritarian version of China or Russia by bringing in other actors of democracy to illustrate the diversity of experiences in this area. This would be a way of

initiating a more open discussion on democracy, making it possible to go beyond the sole framework of Western reference which too often serves as an exclusive matrix for all exchanges on the subject and tends to pre-empt the debates.

It would also be an opportunity to revisit the democratic issue to bring it closer to the youth of emerging or developing countries. A dialogue could thus be established with this category of population which in the past suffered from Western ambiguities when their interests could have led certain governments to ignore their own democratic principles.

Another possible course of action, **a common fund (global compact) of democracies** would represent a more ambitious and probably more difficult approach. In this case, it would be a question of seeking principles in the various democratic models which could form a possible basis of agreement. By emphasising themes such as respect for human dignity, the independence of the judicial system, humanitarian law, transparency and accountability or the fight against corruption, this **new angle** given to the debate on democracy would allow the enhancement of the concept of an **open society**. It would offer less ideological ground and allow exploration of the overlapping areas between diametrically opposed conceptions of democracy. Could we go so far as to consider a charter of rights and duties that would attempt to bring together the basic principles of open societies? It is obviously an unrealistic objective in the current state of the oppositions on this subject between nations but to initiate such work, possibly at a technical level initially between legal specialists, would be a way of overcoming misunderstandings.

There is little doubt that this will not end the antagonism between authoritarian and liberal regimes, but the emphasis

on the idea of open and rule-of-law society could spark a more fruitful discussion. A discussion, refocused on the promotion of the law in its most practical variations, could help to overcome the gulf between developing countries and their Western partners, often locked in the defence of disembodied principles.

3. Define a consensus on the environment. Along similar lines, the **environment** can be a theme that, more than any other, can bring people together and recreate cohesion among members of the international community.

The fight against climate change has now become a theme that unites countries after the change of President in the United States and the announcements made by international partners within the framework of the energy transition. This year will see important new gatherings in this field (Kunming in China on biodiversity and Glasgow in the United Kingdom on climate change). But it is less a continuation of the ongoing process than a new political impetus that the international community needs. Indeed, multilateral partners must now show their commitments more proactively in the fight against all the disturbances in our environment and convince their populations that this cause is shared at all levels. In particular, the idea is to adapt the mobilisation of political leaders to save the planet to their national framework and in all areas of public action. As can already be seen in the current reflections, ecological concern now affects all sectors of economic activity, from housing to bank loans, and is gradually becoming a determining factor in the arbitration of public policies at a national level.

The time therefore seems ripe to develop **a new international consensus on the environment** which could take the form of a solemn declaration to symbolise this mobilisation. The

appropriate framework for the adoption of such a text remains to be determined: United Nations General Assembly? Conference of the Parties? Special climate summits? In any case, the content of such a consensus should define the main principles of collective commitment in favour of the preservation of the environment and mark the awareness of this priority. It should tackle without complacency the most difficult aspects of decisions to be taken in the environmental policies of States, including on issues such as the future carbon tax which still divide the main economic powers today.

Even more significantly, this consensus could decide to see the serious damage to the environment as a **threat to peace**. We cannot ignore the implications of such a commitment and, consequently, the opposition caused by the proposal. But initiating a discussion from this angle in international forums would force all nations to become more aware of the impact of ecological disorders on geopolitical balances and strategic stability. A debate of this kind, far from the usual controversies over the distribution of the costs of climate promotion, could help to place security considerations at the heart of the ecological problem. This would be the way to heighten the importance of climate diplomacy and put it at the top of the agenda of multilateral order.

4. Take action on the other challenges of multilateralism.

As we have seen previously, the virus crisis has revived the vulnerabilities of public actions, first of all in terms of public health of course but also in other sectors of activity such as international trade, digital industries and immigration. By taking the same mobilisation approach, efforts could be made to restore the credibility of the multilateral approach in these different areas.

a. Recreate a real spirit of solidarity against the pandemic

In the current fight against the pandemic, health nationalism, the signs of which have already been described above, threatens the effectiveness of a coherent global response. The current blockages on the diffusion of patents or the dispersed distribution of vaccines according to geopolitical preferences are all signs of a lack of solidarity. Collective awareness of the gravity of the situation and of the need to reweave the threads of multilateral cooperation is therefore urgently needed. It will naturally have to be done with the various United Nations agencies (WHO, WTO) and the competent regional organisations.

However, to launch such a movement, the leaders of the major powers could come together behind a **public commitment**, capable of setting the priorities of the global fight against Covid-19. Such political mobilisation should focus on concrete objectives: international mobilisation of research on the study of the virus and, in particular, its mutations, recognition of the different categories of tests, acceleration of vaccine approval procedures, temporary suspension of licenses, sharing of know-how linked to the manufacture of vaccines, solidarity and coordinated organisation of their distribution. Such an initiative should be accompanied by financial commitments commensurate with the challenge, like the recent decisions made for the COVAX program.

Through this public manifestation of international solidarity, the international community would agree on the principle that the way out of this crisis will be effective only on the condition of having eradicated the virus throughout the world. It would also observe that the policy of beggar-thy-neighbour cannot be a substitute for truly collective action¹⁵.

¹⁵ The President of the European Council, Charles Michel, has promoted a draft international treaty setting out the objectives of international action to combat Covid-19.

b. Renovate the rules of international trade

More than other sectors of the economy, international trade has suffered from an increasingly fragmented multilateral order. The WTO is struggling to maintain its authority over its members who increasingly choose bilateralism. The multilateral rules established to guarantee fair and equitable trade are today bypassed, while the competitive advantages of emerging countries make them both formidable competitors and obligatory partners in value chains. In the game of winners and losers, it is increasingly the middle classes in high income countries who are showing their opposition to free trade agreements by accusing them of having impoverished them. This increasingly discredits international trade which feeds the populist wave in Western countries. The current virus crisis only exacerbates this climate by underlining the dependencies of developed economies on their suppliers of basic goods, including pharmaceuticals and medicine.

Faced with the risk of withdrawal, which would be detrimental for all countries, is multilateral order capable of regaining control in this area? The same approach based on a political commitment on the part of major trading powers could help put international trade back on track. This commitment would relate to **certain basic principles**:

- The reminder of the virtues of free trade to improve the general standard of living,
- The importance of more equitable distribution of fruits in the world trade,
- The need to avoid a return to protectionism in future reorganisations of value chains,
- The taking into account of the environmental dimension in the future development of international trade,

- The importance of reforming the WTO to combat distortions of competition and restore the dispute settlement mechanism.

The reminder of these principles would constitute the political framework within which the member countries of the WTO could then conduct their technical work from a truly multilateral perspective.

c. Address the challenges of the digital world

The digital industry, as we have seen, is the big winner from the virus crisis. Having become powers in open rivalry with states, companies in the digital sector pose a major challenge to governments, who must decide whether they intend to respond in a dispersed order or collectively to the problem posed by digital technology.

Multilateral governance has an opportunity to come back into the game if it is able to take the lead in an international initiative intended to lay down the principles of collaboration between public authorities and companies in the digital sphere. Here again, it is a document of a political nature that should be negotiated, covering the main points of divergence that have emerged in recent years:

- personal data protection,
- a code of conduct on social media content,
- remuneration of bodies providing information,
- taxation of digital income on places of business,
- fair competition between digital platforms.

The text would set the acceptable principles for all digital players and the multilateral approach would find its full

justification there, being the only one capable of taking into account the universal dimension of the digital challenge.

d. Revisit the issue of migration during the pandemic

The same political concern should drive the discussion on **migration**. By increasing the risk of poverty in developing countries, the pandemic can only reinforce migratory pressure under the effect of the reduction in financial transfers from the diasporas (remittances) and the worsening of the factors at the origin of these transfers (insecurity, unemployment, insalubrity, etc.). The decrease in migratory movements recorded for the moment should not be misleading. The sources of immigration have not disappeared; they will produce their effects with the same intensity as before the pandemic as soon as the end of the virus crisis emerges.

This is why the affirmation of a clear political will at an international level to consider the issue of migration as a **multilateral priority** would again be a way of demonstrating the determination of international partners. The objective in this area would not aim to reaffirm the objectives already enshrined in the «global compacts», adopted in 2018 by the United Nations. The idea would be to take a step back and recognise the major challenge constituted by the migratory phenomenon in order to deal with it according to an approach of complementarity between countries of origin, transit and host. This reorientation would give priority to integrated actions of training, the organised opening of labour markets, the fight against all forms of trafficking and coordinated border surveillance. Migration policies would thus be put in place based on a vision of immigration considered to be mutually beneficial for both rich and poor countries.

B. New methods of organisation

Multilateralism does not just need political revival. It also needs to revitalise its organisation, which suffers from no longer being in step with the reality of the power.

1. The impossible reform of the Security Council. This observation has long been made with regard to the composition of the **United Nations Security Council**. But we know that any attempts made so far to change this situation have not been successful. Vested interests, the fear that an increased number of members would complicate the work of the Council, the difficult choice of countries called to sit permanently according to a statute to be defined are all considerations that have resulted in an insurmountable blockage. The unsuccessful attempts made over the past year to organise a summit meeting between the five permanent members of the Security Council are a perfect illustration of this intransigence.

How can we get out of this impasse? One of the possible initiatives could consist in resuming the spirit of inclusiveness which, during the financial crisis of 2008, inspired the reform of the international economic forums and widened the circle of the decision makers within the framework of the G20. The risk facing the multilateral system today is not only that of a deadlock linked to antagonisms between powers. The risk is also a fragmentation of international order, following the multiplication of forums formatted to serve particular geopolitical interests and resulting in a multiplication of separate dialogues. What is needed, therefore, is the establishment of an eminently political forum where the main world leaders can exchange frankly. Such a body should not be limited to global powers alone; it should also incorporate the regional powers

and, in particular, those which claim to be inspired by non-alignment in order to obtain a more balanced representation at the top of multilateral order. This would be a way of reconnecting with the very spirit of multilateralism which carries within it the very idea of pluralism and the exchange of ideas.

2. Relaunch the P5 summit project... With that in mind, the proposed P5 summit meeting could be put back on the agenda by capitalising on Joe Biden's arrival at the White House. The new American President does indeed seem to want to return to a diplomatic practice more in line with custom than that of its predecessor. This openness therefore deserves to be tested.

Such a summit meeting should make the revival of multilateralism a priority objective. The members of the G7 have already expressed their intention, at their meeting on 19 February, to make 2021 «the turning point for multilateralism». This P5 summit should provide the chance to convince the other two permanent members to embark on the same path. It will thus mark the common will of the permanent members of the Security Council to launch the work of reforming the multilateral system.

3. ... and extend it to the entire Security Council. Following the summit, a reflection within the Security Council as a whole could be set in motion to define the means of such a reform. This initiative could be accompanied by work carried out in parallel within the General Assembly to make these exchanges as collective as possible.

At regular intervals, the Security Council could bring together heads of state and government to take stock of the work in progress

and provide the necessary impetus. If a committee of elders were established and were to produce proposals (as suggested above), Council members would be responsible for acting on those recommendations. Thus, a reform process would be put in place in which the responsibility of all members of the United Nations, starting with that of the great powers, would be engaged. This project should not be afraid, in particular, to tackle the most contested issues such as the enlargement of the composition of the Security Council. The subject of the right of veto, currently vested in the permanent members of the Council, could also be placed on the agenda, by considering ways of overcoming the blockages it too frequently causes. The idea of a temporary suspension of the veto, presented as a temporary test to concretely measure its effects on crisis management, could thus be proposed in order to better assess the scope of the prerogative which is too often misused.

4. Reshape the scope of the G7. Another possible sticking point could be the revision of the **G7/G8** format. Beyond the question linked to the suspension of Russia, the current composition of the body is no longer in phase with the geopolitical situation. It aims to bring together the main liberal economic powers, but over time its representativeness has diminished in the face of the globalised economy and its agenda has broadly extended beyond economic issues. This difference with reality has so far been remedied by ad hoc formulas left to the discretion of each annual presidency. But this practice has proven to be generally unsatisfactory.

As the G7/G8 is intended to reflect the major political and economic balances of the world, an adaptation of its format to geopolitical realities by broadening the composition of its members could help give the current multilateral system a more representative base. This cannot guarantee that the discussions

in this forum will be more fruitful, but it would at the very least ensure the presence around the table of the main leaders representing world and regional powers. Above all, this renewed participation should make it possible to hear at the highest level of responsibility the diversity of the positions present and thus initiate a dialogue which can only be beneficial for international stability.

C. Renewed working methods

There remains the functional dimension, that is to say the search for working methods in phase with the world order which is changing before our eyes. In today's world, how can we introduce practices into multilateralism that can put it back in the saddle?

1. Widen the circle of actors. We must first take note of the presence of new public and private players, which have become essential in the globalised world, and integrate this reality into **multilateral governance**. This adaptation work has already started, but the effort must extend beyond the areas already explored. Examples of successful collaboration between the public and private sectors, such as GAVI in the pharmaceutical sector, must be extended to other sectors such as the environment, health and digital. Moreover, such public-private partnerships have become standard practice in many countries and take an increasingly natural turn when the private sector becomes an essential player. Multilateralism must therefore follow this trend.

The same spirit of change should inspire **peace negotiation** efforts in the face of current conflicts. The hybrid nature of these conflicts poses problems for states that they have never faced in the past. From cyberattacks and disinformation to

the presence on the ground of private mercenaries or terrorist groups, the configuration of hostilities develops a complexity that is increasingly difficult to control. In short, States alone are no longer capable of making peace: too much external interference coexists; too many players in the field, linked to ethnic tribes, economic interests or religious communities, are multiplying while local populations, in particular women and young people, find themselves both victims and accomplices of the actors in these conflicts. This fragmentation at a local level requires an approach as close as possible to the field in order to build channels of dialogue that reflect this confused and unstable reality. No longer thinking only of the role of governments but basing the foundations of any peace process on the involvement of the many other parties to the conflicts, starting with representatives of civil society, is becoming essential. Efforts have already been made in Syria and Libya to involve women in particular in peace negotiations; these initiatives should be pursued and extended. It is by pushing the walls of diplomatic chancelleries and inventing new places of dialogue that we will advance the cause of peace.

2. Invent a new time management method. The relaunch of multilateral diplomacy must also involve **time management** in line with the new constraints of today's world.

For a long time, diplomacy thought that time was its best ally. The recipe has long been to procrastinate by establishing mechanisms for dialogue, which, failing to lead to peace, at least made it possible to avoid war. Today, this type of process is no longer sufficient, as we can see in many crises bogged down in negotiations at the end of their tether and permanently subject

to renewed violence (Palestinian Territories, Syria, Nagorno-Karabakh, Eastern Ukraine, etc.). In reality, the multiplicity of local players, the antagonism between global powers ready to exploit the slightest loophole, the presence of regional players just as quick to intervene, are all factors that exacerbate and amplify crises. Allowing this spiral to develop without reacting runs the risk of gradually losing control of the diplomatic processes in place.

Today, it is short time that must be favoured in facing the crisis to prevent it from setting in. From the lessons learned from the experience gained in past crises, several lines of conduct could be encouraged within multilateral diplomacy:

- anticipate potential crises by promoting upstream contacts likely to defuse tensions;
- take the initiative, at the first signs of violence, to initiate dialogue without delay and constantly adapt to the vagaries of negotiations;
- encourage the involvement of regional players, who are often better placed to lead mediations while promoting the participation of the greatest number of parties to the conflict as well as their external supporters.

* * *

We must hear the appeal of the United Nations Secretary-General when he uncompromisingly analyses the current multilateral impasse and pleads for a reset of global order. The best way to respond to this lies in the collective capacity of the international community is to take the measure of this weakening and to agree on a course of reform. This must set itself the objective of building consensus by seeking step by step, on each of the major challenges facing our planet, the possible lines of force of agreement. But this method must go beyond the current confrontation between the great powers to include in the circle of reflection and decision other countries capable of making their own visions of the world heard. Multilateralism is about diversity and pluralism. It is at the cost of this desire for inclusiveness that the multilateral system will be able to emerge from its powerlessness and find within it the resources of confidence and innovation to resume its forward march.

Pierre VIMONT

*Rapporteur of the annual report
of the Leaders for Peace Foundation,
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The Itinerant Peace Schools

Leaders for Peace has decided to create an international network of *Itinerant Peace School*.

The creation of the *Itinerant Peace Schools* is based on an observation. Peace can no longer be considered as a utopia but on the contrary constitutes the condition and the optimal means of lasting prosperity. History teaches us that peace cannot be decreed but is built and that education is the driving force behind this process of permanent reinvention.

Currently, conflicts prevent an estimated 130 million children worldwide from going to school, and Covid-19 has deprived 290 million students of school while every year education in countries in crisis or conflict reduces the risk of conflict by about 20%.

Faced with the combined effects of crises and the increase of violence, it is our collective responsibility to arm future generations in the fight for Peace. Through this process, we want to show young people that there are other avenues of change and participation in public life than those of violence.

This is the founding vocation of the *Itinerant Peace School*: to ensure the transmission of the tools and methods of peace-building to make these young people producers of Peace in their own environments.

Humbly, because aware of the heaviness of the task, but driven by a strong conviction and will, we intend, through this initiative, to enrich and deepen a new global ecosystem of Peace that is at the same time agile, polycentric and anchored in reality.

Today, a new global consensus on the preservation of the planet is emerging. «Planetisation», the humanisation of globalisation, transforms the world created by exchanges and allows the emergence of a global resolution, supported by young people on all continents, whose objective is the protection of our environment.

Because we want to mobilise the vital forces of “Planetisation” and because we believe education is essential to change mentalities and make future generations more pacifist and concerned by the stability of the world, the *Leaders for Peace* has decided to initiate the *Itinerant Peace School*

Our students will have the unique opportunity to benefit from innovative didactic training delivered in the form of dialogue by our Leaders recognised worldwide for their commitment to more stable and just multilateral relations.

How is Peace built?

Our schools will be founded on the conviction that Peace is built by developing in our students the values of tolerance and non-violence, so that they can assimilate and promote them, in conflict prevention, during a conflict or in a period of reconstruction,

We propose a holistic approach that covers all the levers of Peace: culture, politics, international relations, media, institutions, sport and the environment, while promoting an intellectual and historical openness through an educational and practical approach.

How will our students be producers of Peace?

With the *Itinerant Peace School*, we want to make our students producers of Peace, by enabling them to understand the issues at stake for Peace through meetings with political

and institutional leaders, to act by implementing their achievements by becoming ambassadors for Peace themselves, and to prevent the use of violence as a method of settling disputes based on a new impactful methodology.

To ensure comprehensive learning, *the Itinerant Peace School* bases its curriculum on two interrelated methods.

First, teaching academic subjects essential to a commitment to public life in favour of peace and to understanding major current geopolitical issues such as the environment, conflict analysis and digital technology.

Second, putting these lessons into practice through participation in a Peace Lab on “Youth and Peace”, meetings with decision-makers and visits to the high authorities of multilateralism, in particular on the occasion of the Summer School which will bring together, in Geneva, the five best young people from each partner university.

The *Itinerant Peace School* will take the form of mobile schools with partners such as universities and international, governmental and regional organizations on all continents.

Present in Africa, Asia, Europe, North America and South America, our *Itinerant Peace School* network will educate and raise awareness among young people, also in areas of conflict or prey to tension.

We will offer each partner a one-week seminar which will include five course modules, three of which are compulsory, from the following: geopolitics, governance, mediation, conflicts, resources, and culture & sport.

In order to allow the new generation to continue to develop its openness to the world, its critical thinking and its commitment to Peace, the *Itinerant Peace School* will be supported by the

creation of a network “Young Leaders for Peace” and an online platform where young people who have benefited from learning from *Itinerant Peace School* will be able to communicate with each other and publish their work.

On the platform, which truly forms a toolbox for Peace, our students will have access to a media library containing numerous articles and books on Peace and multilateralism, podcasts and videos produced by the Leaders on current international topics and all the courses they attended as a free download.

Because connecting young people is important for professional success and dialogue, the “Young Leaders for Peace” network will bring together all the students of the *Itinerant Peace School* and allow them to stay in touch after the end of their training. The network will promote the sharing and openness of the new generation of leaders and will allow the *Itinerant Peace School* to continue its educational and unifying task.

Donia KAOUACH

Executive Director of the Leaders for Peace





Leaders for Peace Initiatives & Projects

“Peace does not simply fall from the sky”

Now more than ever, our world needs new approaches to promote Peace. Together, we want to redesign our diplomatic toolbox and mobilise decision-makers on increasingly numerous and dangerous emerging crises.

Leaders for Peace, both a think-tank and action-tank, develops operational initiatives to promote the Spirit of Peace and multilateralism.

THE ITINERANT PEACE SCHOOLS, a project run by the Leaders for Peace

The Itinerant Peace School program aims to ensure the transmission of tools and methods of peace-building for future generations by relying on an international network of partner universities and with the educational contribution of the council of Leaders.

The first editions of the *Itinerant Peace School* took place in Abidjan, Côte d’Ivoire, at Houphouët-Boigny University and the Amadou Gon Coulibaly Training Institute. At the time, more than 1,200 students benefitted from a free political leadership training seminar.

For the next editions of the *Itinerant Peace School*, *Leaders for Peace* has targeted fifteen universities around the world, including two in Europe, two in Asia, three in America, five in Africa and three in the Middle East and international, governmental and regional organizations on all continents.

AGORA FOR YOUTH, a platform for African youth

Because there is no peace without development, *Leaders for Peace* has created a platform for young African project leaders. The platform also offers a space to discuss issues such as multilateralism, governance models, economic development, digital peace and even environmental transition.

The objective is to allow new generations in Africa to present their projects and benefit from the support of experienced decision-makers.

This year, *Leaders for Peace* is supporting a group of young Burkinabe to implement an innovative project dedicated to sylvopasture.

PEACE LAB, strategic and innovative workshops,

See appendix for strategy notes

Based on an innovative method, the Peace Labs organise a discussion of the strategies taken on issues such as Women and Peace, climate, migration, etc. with the participation of *Leaders for Peace*, economic agents, experts and figures from civil society. The aim of the meetings is to come up with innovative responses to current challenges. These lines of thought are the

subject of publications promoted to political, economic and intellectual decision-makers..

- **Women and Peace - ABIDJAN, PARIS, TUNIS**

The international community has recognised that the participation of women is essential in order to establish and maintain peace. Women are proven agents of change and should be permitted to do more. We must think about Peace in the long term by considering the social and legal emancipation of women as a response to instability, extremism and poverty, while ensuring respect for the universality of fundamental rights and developing a renewed vision for development, governance and crisis management.

The first Peace Lab on “Women and Peace” was held in Abidjan, Côte d’Ivoire. Three sub-themes were discussed: strengthening the social and legal emancipation of women to prevent conflicts and promote peace, the necessary integration of women in conflict prevention and crisis management, the role of women in the reconstruction of countries at war.

One proposal particularly caught the attention of the participants, because of its innovative and impactful nature: the introduction of male/female alternation at the head of large international organisations. The proposal is based on the obvious observation that there are real differences between male and female management. This diversity is fundamental to cultivate in order to allow our organisations to nurture all skills, to open up to other decision-making methods and cultures and to lead to the emergence of new solutions.

A second Peace Lab on “Women and Peace” took place at the Ministry of Europe and Foreign Affairs, in Paris, France.

It was part of the annual *Leaders For Peace* conference, which brings together the entire Council of Leaders, focusing on three themes: the role of women before, during and after war.

In Tunis, Tunisia, the third Peace Lab on “Women, Democracy and Peace” was held. It is broken down into three sub-themes. How to improve the leadership and political participation of women and their central role in the democratic process. How to support their legal and economic independence to promote social and political stability. How to strengthen the role of women as an fundamental defence against the threats to Peace and Democracy.

Among the proposals of this Peace Lab, one in particular stood out. This was the creation of an international observatory of the Women of the World for Peace, the objective being to strengthen the capacities of women and to carry out effective advocacy based on objective data to protect them and assert their rights.

- **Investment and Peace - GENEVA,
World Economic Forum**

A Peace Lab on “Investments and Peace” was held at the World Economic Forum, in Geneva, Switzerland.

Investors play a fundamental role in building peace in conflict or high risk areas. Experience shows us the eminently pro-active role of economic actors in the construction of peace: building schools, improving health systems, electrifying black areas, conflict mediators, guarantors of decent living conditions, creators of frameworks normative etc. There are many examples and it is this search for standards that was the subject of our reflections during this Peace Lab. The sub-themes discussed were the role of investors before, during and after the war.

By looking at the role of companies and investors before the war, we are contemplating how to avoid fuelling tensions that would lead to conflict situations. In conflict, the way to preserve peace is to protect vital economic activities, avoid violations of international law and human rights, and promote peace. In a post-war situation, it is for an actor to understand the deep dynamics of a conflict which have violently shaken an area in order to avoid stirring up the first sources of tension.

- **Environment and Peace - HANOI,
Union of Vietnam Friendship Organisations**

A Peace Lab on «Environment and Peace» was held at the Union of Vietnam Friendship Organisations, Hanoi, Vietnam.

Because the environment and natural resources are clearly linked to conflict, the challenge is to obtain effective governance that puts the environment and natural resources at the service of peace. This challenge has been the main subject of discussions following sub-topics such as: resource management to prevent conflict, preparation for future environmental challenges, protection of the environment and natural resources during conflicts, collaborative resource management as a conflict prevention tool.

One of the proposals put forward aimed at the creation of regional governance for biodiversity, particularly among the countries located upstream of the Mekong-Lancang area.

**SMART PEACE PRIZE, peace education
in early childhood**

In order to support and promote innovative educational initiatives for peace and non-violence in early childhood

between 5 and 13 years old, *Leaders for Peace* created the Smart Peace Prize in 2019.

This international call for applications is launched each year to reward the best educational initiatives for the prevention of violent behaviour in early childhood infrastructure.

The 2019 Prize was presented to the organisation “Seeds of Peace”, based in Geneva.

The organisation promotes quality education, the prevention of violence and radicalisation as well as the establishment of a climate of peace in schools and society. Seeds of Peace has launched a program in Côte d’Ivoire, with the government, to restore schools as a safe place to learn. The program has already benefited 80,000 students in Switzerland, France, Côte d’Ivoire, and Senegal.

In 2020, the project “Education for Peace, Citizenship and Living Together” led by CapDH (the Human Rights Assistance and Promotion Centre) in Mali, in partnership with the Grenoble School of Peace, who was chosen as the winner. With the idea of promoting values of tolerance, culture of peace and living together, in schools for children aged 5 to 13, and allowing future generations to become artisans of peace, the initiative contributes to the transformation of the world by making it more peaceful by raising awareness among younger generations. Implemented in the Academies of Kati and Bamako - Left Bank, the project enabled 26,550 young people to benefit from sessions on the culture of peace, to train 22 agents of the Academies of ‘teaching and pedagogical advisers as well as 429 teachers, and to raise awareness among 506 parents of pupils on the culture of peace.

THE ANNUAL REPORT, an innovative plea for multilateralism

Adopted in plenary assembly by the Board of *Leaders for Peace*, the annual report offers innovative advocacy on multilateralism and particularly targets emerging conflicts.

The recommendations of the document are then presented to and defended among decision-makers: heads of state, representatives of international organisations, members of civil society, etc.

For three years, the French Ambassador Pierre VIMONT has been the rapporteur.

VIEWPOINTS exchanges with political decision-makers

In 2020, in order to adapt to the pandemic, *Leaders for Peace* held a cycle of videoconferences with political, economic and intellectual personalities in order to nourish our work for Peace in the light of the major issues of our time.

During the conferences, the *Leaders for Peace* exchanged views with leading personalities on the challenges and impacts of the health crisis on Peace as well as the pooling of the means and strategies needed to fight against the rise in violence. Among the participants in these conferences were the Secretary General of the United Nations (UN), Antonio GUTERRES, the Director General of the World Health Organization (WHO), Tedros ADHANOM GUEBREYESUS, Professor Seth BERKLEY, the Executive Director of GAVI - the Vaccine Alliance, and the President of the European Central Bank (ECB), Christine LAGARDE.

The conclusions of these discussions are freely available on the website of *Leaders for Peace*.

VIRTUAL WORKSHOPS for young people in partnership with the african development bank (AfDB)

A partnership with the African Development Bank (AfDB) has been initiated to hold online training workshops with young African leaders selected by the African Development Bank. The aim of the workshops, based on exchanges with decision-makers, is to provide expertise and knowledge relating to major subjects for the continent such as governance, ecological transition and the economic and demographic challenges.

The workshops focus on a theme divided into two parts: an educational presentation by a senior personality followed by a question-and-answer session with the young people.

THE ANNUAL MEETING with the secretary-general of the united nations

A champion of multilateralism, the United Nations is an essential partner in this path for peace. Every year, we meet with the UN Secretary-General in New York, to work together on our mission to alert public opinion and policymakers.

The Secretary General, highly committed to the fight for the prevention of violence among young people, supported the Smart Peace Prize, an initiative dedicated to the promotion of pedagogy to fight against violent behaviour in early childhood.

At the annual meeting held with the Secretary General of the United Nations, a delegation of *Leaders for Peace* goes to New York to present and defend the recommendations of our annual report and our initiatives for Peace.





APPENDIX

PEACE LAB – ENVIRONMENT AND PEACE

Strategic reflection on the role of the environment and natural resources in building sustainable peace

The destructive power of mankind towards the environment was perfectly illustrated during the Second World War. Based on the examples of the scorched earth strategy or the use of chemical weapons which were subsequently continued during the Vietnam War or the Chernobyl disaster, we understand that the environment is affected by wartime, human activity and often remains a silent victim of conflict.

In 1977, an awareness of the need to protect the environment during conflicts emerged; resulting in the inclusion of Articles 35 and 55 of Additional Protocol I (1977) to the Geneva Conventions, which consider as a war crime any action causing «widespread, long-term and severe» damage to the natural environment . Thus, conflicts have an influence on the environment. That is the reason why actors causing environmental damage are therefore liable before the International Court of Justice.

The environment includes natural resources, which are in fact distributed inequitably throughout our territories. In an increasingly interconnected world, the management, ownership and accountability of actors over resources are

sources of conflict. Resources in abundant quantity or, on the contrary, in a situation of shortage can be sources of conflict. The conflicts in Sudan (1983 - 2005) or in Sierra Leone (1991 - 2000) are examples of this: they are partly the result of the respective richness of the soil in oil or in diamonds, cocoa and coffee. Conflicts resulting from a lack of resources due to soil erosion, overfishing, deforestation or poor water management also exist, as demonstrated by the conflict in Darfur .

In 2007, the President of the United Nations Security Council recognized the role played by natural resources in conflict and post-conflict situations. More recently, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) issued an alarming report indicating that our natural resources are suffering from global warming and that our environment is deteriorating (sea level, acidification, melting ice) and calling on governments and international institutions to limit this effect that constitutes a major burden on populations : the environment has an influence on conflicts.

However, it is important to note that a direct positive correlation between the environment and conflict is not systematic: the existence of many other factors strongly influence the risk of conflict. Among these factors, the social, economic and political environment must be taken into consideration.

Although a direct positive correlation is not systematic, the role of the ecosystem and sustainable resource management was recognized by the United Nations Environment Assembly on 27 May 2016 as reducing the risk of armed conflict.

Before establishing this link between the environment and peace, it was first of all the relationship between the environment and development that was established in 1972 at the first Earth Summit in Stockholm. Since then, the international community

has shown a growing interest in the environment and is now emphasizes its major importance. The Rio Declaration (1992) explicitly recognizes the interdependence and indivisibility of peace, development and environmental protection. Therefore, if the environment has an influence on conflicts, it means that it also has a role to play in building sustainable peace.

By signing the Paris Agreement (2015), the international community highlighted the importance of collective and coordinated action to preserve the environment, in particular by achieving the 17 Sustainable Development Goals adopted by the UN General Assembly in the same year. In order to achieve these objectives, the importance of solidarity between nations was highlighted when, on the occasion of the Paris Agreement, the signatories agreed that, by 2020, \$100 billion per year should be released by developed countries to support developing countries in their transition.

In an attempt to regulate and make transparent the management of natural resources, many texts, charters, guides and laws exist today. To cite a few examples:

- ▶ The World Charter for Nature, 1982 (UNGA Res.37/7)
- ▶ The Rio Declaration on Environment and Development, 1992
- ▶ The ICRC (International Committee of the Red Cross) Guidelines for Military Manuals and Instructions on the Protection of the Environment in Times of Armed Conflict, 1994
- ▶ The adoption by the Permanent Court of Arbitration of the «Optional Rules for the Conciliation of Disputes Relating to the Environment and Natural Resources» (2002)

- ▶ The ICRC (International Committee of the Red Cross) multivolume explaining 161 rules considered by the authors to be common international humanitarian rights (2002). Rules 43, 44 and 45 deal with the subject of the environment
- ▶ The Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (EITI), 2002. Revised in 2019 to include questions related to environment and trade in raw materials
- ▶ The Kimberley Process (2003)
- ▶ The Forest Law Enforcement, Governance and Trade Initiative, 2003
- ▶ The decision of the Governing Council of the United Nations Environment Programme of 2005 (23/1/IV) recommending strengthening the capacity of institutions to manage post-conflict environmental issues
- ▶ The 2019 Report of the Stockholm International Water Institute (SIWI), Water for society: Including all
- ▶ The 2019 Report of the Global High-Level Panel on Water and Peace, A matter of Survival
- ▶ The 2019 Special Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), Global Warming of 1.5 °C

The environment and natural resources are thus clearly linked to conflicts. The challenge then lies in obtaining effective governance that puts the environment and natural resources at the service of peace.

It is this challenge that will be the subject of our reflection during this PeaceLab :

- ▶ How to better manage resources in order to optimize their use to prevent conflicts?

- ▶ How can we be better prepared to face the next challenges related to the environment, in particular that of water management?
- ▶ How can the environment and natural resources be better protected during conflicts?
- ▶ Will conflict prevention be achieved through collaborative resource management?



PEACE LAB - WOMEN & PEACE

Strategic Thinking on Women's Role in Peace, Development and Democracy Processes

The international community has recognized that women's participation was essential for peace-making and peace-keeping. Women are proven agents of change and should be able to do even more. In 2000, the United Nations Security Council made history by adopting resolution 1325 on women, peace and security. This resolution calls for women's involvement in peace-making, to better protect them from human rights violations and to provide them with access to justice and anti-discrimination services.

A number of Security Council resolutions on women, peace and security call on us to ensure gender equality.

The stakes of the century: water, food, demography, climate change, religion, major migrations are the direct responsibilities of women while they lack of the legal capacities to really control these challenges.

It is no longer about thinking of equality as a matter of social justice, but as a strategic issue.

Today, the development of a country is measured by various indicators. The main one, the Human Development Index (HDI), shows the best results in countries where women are best represented and protected.

Democratic advances throughout the world, a process that gives the population a voice through the choice of their representatives, are in the vast majority of cases due to the action of women. The role of women in democratic processes, in the development of their countries, or in the establishment and maintenance of peace is undeniable.

Thinking peace in the long term is :

- ▶ Protecting women and consider their social and legal emancipation as an answer to instability, extremism, poverty because research conducted shows us that gender equality contributes to conflict prevention and that high rates of violence against women coincide with the rise of conflicts.
- ▶ Involving women in prevention and alert.
- ▶ Elaborating a renewed vision of development, governance and crisis management.
- ▶ Promoting women's participation in the reconstruction of countries at war through children's education, their presence in transition organs and their active role as economical actors

However, much remains to be done to better integrate them into the public sphere of their country. How could women be better integrated and see their role in the public sphere of their country strengthened? In the perspective of a lasting peace, how can they be enhanced ?





PEACE LAB - INVESTMENTS & PEACE

Strategic thinking on the role of investments in the construction of a sustainable peace

If money is the sinews of war, it is certainly the spine of peace. In its strict definition, peace means the absence of war. War here, understood as international or non-international armed conflicts as it is defined by the Geneva conventions¹. In times of war, the strategic gap between two parties in conflict can widen as soon as one of the belligerent disposes of superior funds and resources. In the case of a total conflict, one can even talk about a war economy, entirely driven by military needs, as it was the case during both World Wars. The need in human and financial resources during a conflict can quickly escalate and weaken a whole population. The Sierra Leone conflict at the end of the 1990s and the sadly renown “blood diamonds conflict” is one of the most illustrative examples of the profound damages that one war economy can have over a population, at the mercy of war lords and state corruption.

Money and war is one of the subject that has - and still is today - been the subject of much writing. The arm market, the extractive firms (gas, oil, ores), the private military companies (PMC), each one of them have been under tight scrutiny. They have been violently denounced

1 1949, and the additional protocols of 1977 and 2005.

in their destabilisation role in certain parts of the world. Some examples, highly controversial, have fed the ongoing requisition against private companies in their ambiguous – and some might say predatory – role in conflicts or in violent situations. In the Kivu region, at the very east of the Democratic Republic of the Congo and more generally in the Great Lakes region, the economic activities of some local, national, or international companies have encouraged ethnic tensions and the great precarity in which vulnerable populations are stuck into.

The activity of certain firms in instable regions (in conflict or in high risk areas) can stimulate a conflict directly or indirectly, voluntarily or involuntarily. In some cases, a firm will be confronted – in an highly uncertain environment - with corruption, the absence of protection of its infrastructures and its employees or the incapacity to observe the same requirements than in time of peace. The challenge is to nuance their role, from predators to victims. What is important here, is thus to protect the economy in areas that present high risks but in which populations depend from the services provided.

The contrary statement is true, economic actors can act as guarantors of stability as they are source of employment, economic development, exchanges and even of institutionalization of practices and regulatory framework when the state fails to fill its basic functions. They also can be humanitarian actors when a firm and an investor decide - despite the financial losses of the operation – to stay in a war zone because their activity helps the local population to survive (water supplies, electricity...). The private sector can then be a strong force of appeasement in situations of violence (from simple tensions to generalized conflict).

Investors are fundamental actors for the construction of peace in conflict-afflicted zones or high-risk areas. It is from that very paradigm that in the 2000s, a number of initiatives, consortiums, legislative frameworks were launched in order to institutionalize this positive role. The international legal framework is often difficult to implement. Companies and investors have then started to cooperate with NGOs, international organizations and governments in a multipartite approach. The goal was to bring global and pertinent solutions to often opaque and complex problems. A wide range of texts, guides and initiatives exist today, global or specific to one industry. Here are some examples :

- ▶ For private military companies (PMC): The Montreux Document of 2008, the International Code of Conduct Association (ICoCA).
- ▶ United Nations Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights elaborated from the “Protect, Respect and Remedy” framework.
- ▶ The norms ISO 26000 et ISO 37001 of the International Organization for Standardization
- ▶ The International Finance Corporation performance standards
- ▶ OECD Due Diligence Guidance for Responsible Supply Chains of Minerals from Conflict-Affected and High-Risk Areas.
- ▶ The United Nations Convention against Corruption (UNCAC).
- ▶ Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (EITI)
- ▶ The Kimberley Process (KP)

- ▶ United Nations Global Compact and the Guidance on Responsible Business in Conflict-Affected and High -Risk Areas.

Experience today shows us the eminently pro-active role of economic actors in the construction of peace: school constructions, optimization of sanitary systems, electrification, conflict mediators, creators of normative frameworks etc... Plenty of example exist. This will be the object of our focus during this Peace Lab on Investments and Peace “**How to invest for Peace**”?

Three sub-themes will mobilize our reflection: the investors’ role before war, during war and after war.











