

The many faces of globalization

- Perspectives for a humane world order -

*Study of the Group of Experts "World Economy
and Social Ethics" and the church agencies Adveniat,
Caritas international, Misereor, missio Aachen, missio
München and Renovabis*

*Published by the
German Bishops' Conference
Research Group on the
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Brief notes on the publisher and the authors of the study

The publisher of the study

The **Research Group on the Universal Tasks of the Church** is appointed by the Commission for the Universal Tasks of the Church of the German Bishops' Conference. It consists of scholars from various disciplines who study problems related to the global responsibilities of the Church in Germany.

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The Group of Experts on "World Economy and Social Ethics" is a specialised section of the Research Group on the Universal Tasks of the Church of the German Bishops' Conference. It was formed in 1989 to consult institutions of the Catholic Church on aspects of global economic development. The members and aims were chosen with a view to securing an appropriate blend of economic and social ethical expertise.

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PREFACE

Christians are preparing to celebrate the Holy Year 2000. They are recalling Redemption by Jesus Christ. "Jesus Christ is the same today as he was yesterday and as he will be for ever". This is the motto for this Jubilee Year.

Turning points in history invite us to pause and reflect. What has been achieved? What new challenges do we face? The 21st Century is approaching, and it brings tremendous challenges. Globalization is by no means the least of these. The word alone gives rise to a whole series of questions. What precisely does it mean? Are the worries and fears which it provokes justified? What effects does the process of globalization have on the poorest of the poor?

At the request of the German bishops, the church agencies, together with the Group of Experts "World Economy and Social Ethics", established under the aegis of "Commission X for the Universal Tasks of the Church" of the German Bishops' Conference, have decided to write an academic study on the topic of "Globalization".

The study hereby presented is intended particularly to provide a forum for the questions and concerns of church partners in the One World, and to shed light on our concerns for world-wide social justice. It is not to be viewed as a final statement, but as a contribution to the discussion of this matter. It submits ideas and suggestions concerning methods of controlling the process of globalization through a suitable political structure in the service of humanity.

Franz Kamphaus - Bishop of Limburg
Chairman of Commission X
for the Universal Tasks of the Church
of the German Bishops' Conference

1. Introduction

1.1 *Ambivalent perception of globalization*

Globalization is currently the talk of the town, and gives rise to a wide variety of reactions. On the one hand, this fashionable word invokes quite euphoric expectations as far as world-wide co-operation and solidarity, global prosperity, and world peace are concerned. The process of globalization is said to be the greatest opportunity of recent years, carrying the progress of humanity to the remotest corners of the Earth and to the benefit of all. On the other hand, it also gives rise to many fears, in particular concerns about world-wide social Darwinism and a uniform world culture. For many people in the industrialized nations, this term stands for unemployment, a lowering of social standards and environmental destruction. The increasing integration of the Third World countries and countries with economies in transition in Eastern Europe into the global economy, and the increased competition which it causes, are considered by many to be a threat. In the developing nations especially, the term globalization has replaced that of "dependency", so familiar in the seventies: It is frequently used as a scapegoat for all worries and problems. Additionally, many regions of the world fear that Western cultural imperialism is spreading with no concern for other cultures and values.

All these opinions on globalization, born of differing experiences, which cover the entire spectrum between glorification and demonisation, are characterised estimations which, in general, are only to a very limited extent covered by the real facts. Not least, this is a consequence of the fact that the term "globalization" is seldom clearly defined, so it can be used to explain a wide variety of developments. It is not possible to trace back to globalization all those economic developments which can rightly be judged to be negative from the point of view of those affected. The main cause is frequently internal factors such as unfavourable production structures, shortcomings in the political and administrative system, poor governance or unsuitable economic and social policy measures, the negative effects of which may often be considerably amplified by globalization.

Even greater importance must be attached to a sober analysis, demonstrating cause and effect, and defining both the opportunities and the risks of globalization precisely. Only then is there a hope of structuring this

multilayered, dynamic process as humanely as possible. Since it is not only the effects, but also the significance and the range of the process we call globalization which are the subject of contention, it is necessary first to define this phenomenon.

1.2 Definition of the term and its content

So far, we have mainly referred to cross-border economic, political and social activities using terms such as internationalisation and transnationalisation. This is distinct from the phenomenon of globalization, although these terms are frequently used in the public debate as if they had the same meaning. The differences concern both concepts and central players, as well as the consequences for the societies concerned. Whilst *internationalisation* in general describes those relationships which increase free interchange over national borders without placing the nation-state itself in question, *transnationalisation* refers to processes through which institutions arise which span the borders of nation-states, such as the United Nations or the European Union and transnational enterprises.

In sharp contradistinction, *globalization* describes an intensification and acceleration of cross-border interaction which actually or potentially links all individuals, institutions and states into a complex structure of mutual but frequently imbalanced dependencies. The primary point of reference for this development is no longer the nation-state, whose scope of action is becoming limited, but the world as a whole, or at least larger regions with, in some cases, all-embracing institutions. Globalization is a complex process with a wide range of aspects which seem to unstoppably penetrate all areas of life and to have become an everyday reality. It has economic, ecological, socio-cultural and political characteristics which can be observed in their interactions. It will therefore only be possible to understand the dynamics of the globalization processes if we are constantly aware that we are really dealing with something multifaceted. For one thing, developments in the individual countries take place at different speeds, and the range and depth of their effects varies, and for another they are accompanied by a variety of frequently contradictory processes.

Globalization is considered to be primarily an economic phenomenon. The economy, the financial markets and technology increasingly operate beyond regulations imposed by nation-states. The world economy is therefore

increasingly determined by transnational enterprises which are global entities. Added to this is the liberalization of almost all areas of world trade. All this gives rise to the expectation that greater prosperity might be created for all by using finite resources efficiently, not least through cheaper commodities, which could also benefit the poor.

A process of disseminating Western values and models is closely associated with globalization, which has reduced the cultural gap between the regions of the world in many ways. Modern media and communications, as well as exports consisting of reified ideas, as well as the expansion of tourism, spread the Western way of life across the world daily and awaken expectations everywhere that it might be possible to catch up with this development. This includes ideas such as human rights, democracy and the market economy, as well as production methods, consumption patterns and leisure habits. This comes about, firstly, because of the considerable attraction exercised by the Western form of civilization, and also because this trend is consciously promoted by the industrialized nations, and, for commercial reasons, by the transnational enterprises in particular.

The process of globalization is by no means as comprehensive as it is claimed by some of its supporters. For instance, the increasing liberalization of trade runs counter to a migration policy which is highly restrictive in most cases, and only permits the poor to look for work where it would be beneficial to them under certain conditions. We should not allow the hopes and promises linked to globalization to cloud our view of the other side of the coin, where these developments have a vast social and ecological cost or have amplified existing trends. Globalization has winners and losers. This phenomenon deserves particular attention from the standpoint of social ethics. The main beneficiaries appear to be highly-qualified workers, and the owners of assets and funds. In contrast, many indications show this development leading to the exclusion of those people, population groups and entire regions whose performance is lower, and who will thus become increasingly impoverished. It is especially the partners of the churches from the South and East who repeatedly point this out to us. Furthermore, we still have the worry that the expansion of world trade and our growing mobility will exact a price from the environment, and therefore from posterity.

1.3 Aims and approach of the study

This study is intended to assess the process of globalization critically, as a step on the path towards a world society, from the point of view of Christian responsibility and from a standpoint of social ethics. Since there are winners and losers in this development, the church is obliged by its priority option for the poor to consider globalization, especially from the point of view of those who are thereby excluded from the prosperity gains which it brings. It must take the worries and needs of these people seriously, give them a voice and stand up for their interests. All this aims to make the process of globalization as humane as possible, in adherence to the message of the Gospel and the tradition of Christian social ethics.

One and a half billion people are currently affected by absolute poverty in the countries of the South and East. They are unable to meet their basic physical needs, or unable to meet them fully: They suffer from hunger, undernourishment and illness, live in poverty-stricken neighbourhoods with completely inadequate hygiene, have hardly any access to educational facilities and can find no work or only work which is badly paid. The Church, as a world Church, and in particular its agencies, relate the option for the poor especially to people in the developing countries and countries with economies in transition, who are living in these poverty-stricken circumstances. Experience, which is based in some cases on decades of work with the partners in these countries, can be an inestimable aid in taking this perspective without overlooking the ethical responsibility growing out of poverty amidst the riches of the Western industrialized nations.

As an initial step, the study describes structures and mechanisms of globalization from an economic and socio-cultural point of view (Section 2), after which it analyses the effects of this development as factually as possible (Section 3). There is an attempt to stress in particular those phenomena which are indeed caused by globalization and to separate them from developments which are caused primarily by other factors, especially internal ones. Globalization entails a two-fold challenge for all religions, especially for the Church and its agencies. The first is a responsibility to help shape this process to the service of humanity, and the other is the question, significant also in theological terms, as to how they understand and portray themselves as both universal players and, at the same time, locally rooted communities (Section 4). The results will then be subjected to a social ethical reflection (Section 5). Since this study addresses a society which is increasingly secularised and pluralised,

an attempt will be made to name social ethical criteria and to provide reasons which are accessible to common sense, at the same time as being open and linked to specifically theological considerations. Finally, on the basis of the analysis of globalization and its social ethical evaluation, it will present "options for action" to structure the processes connected therewith, and these will be subdivided according to political fields of action and players, the Church and its agencies receiving particular attention (Section 6).

Although this study will attempt to encompass the perspective of the countries in the South and East, and especially to include the church partners in its analysis, this is a statement by institutions of the Church in Germany concerned with world church tasks. It is therefore primarily directed at its own public, be it within or outside the Church. At the same time, however, it must be seen as the first stage of a long-term dialogue with local churches and partner organizations in the countries of the South and East. The aim is to begin a joint learning process and to support one another in structuring the process of globalization in such a way that, wherever possible, it is to the benefit of all.

2. Manifestations and causes of globalization

2.1 Globalization of the economy

The networking of the world economy is not really anything new, since the exchange of goods and services has always been a major element of the relations between states and peoples. In the past two decades, however, international exchange has grown in a particularly dynamic manner. This is thanks to the technological progress which has been made in the transport and telecommunication sectors, which has facilitated the redistribution of complex production processes, and consequently a new form of international division of labour (including within individual enterprises). For another, this is caused by the politically favoured liberalization of world trade, and especially the financial markets, which has created new incentive structures for all economic players. These changes have expressed themselves especially in rapid growth in direct investment and joint ventures, as well as in a higher than average increase in the rates of international capital movements, so that world economic integration has reached a new dimension. This development is by no means uniform, however, and should not hide from view the regional and structural imbalances which are in some cases considerable. Only a part of humanity has so far been able to

benefit from economic globalization.

2.1.1 Increase in world-wide production capacities

A major manifestation of economic globalization lies in the continuing industrialisation of large parts of the Earth. Several developing countries have ceased being providers of raw materials and producers of simple finished goods since the end of the Second World War, and have achieved the status of industrialized nations (newly industrialized countries). Thus, the economically comparatively successful economies of East and South East Asia, in particular, have significantly increased their share of industrial production in the past 20 years, and hence of the global gross national product. This process has considerably increased the number of countries offering products on world markets. On many markets, the rise in global production capacities has led to a more intensive, and now world-wide competition. The process will accelerate further if China, India and Eastern Europe, where roughly half of the world's population lives, become more integrated into global competition.

2.1.2 Growth in world trade

International trade has been transformed time and again over the centuries, and in particular has undergone repeated growth periods, since the beginning of colonial expansion. Cross-border trade in commodities experienced the highest growth rates in the first globalization boom, which took place during the Industrial Revolution, lasting from the mid-19th Century until the outbreak of the First World War. After the Second World War, the renewed increase in world trade was promoted by the political sphere, in particular through the reduction of trade barriers. Whilst the tariffs rates applied to industrial products had risen considerably in the protectionist climax following the world economic crisis and the Second World War, the burden placed on the goods trade through tariffs between the major industrialized nations has continually fallen since the adoption of the GATT Agreement in 1947. Additionally, several regional integration areas have come into being since the mid-eighties, and this process is continuing, for example, with the European Union, the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) or the ASEAN Free Trade Area (AFTA). This has contributed to a further expansion of cross-border trade in goods.

The advance of deregulation and liberalization which was agreed in the 1994 new world trade order, has created the prerequisites for further expansion of

world trade. In this document, various agreements on the international trade in services (GATS) and the protection of intellectual property (TRIPS) were concluded, in addition to the reintegration of agricultural and textile trade. This is significant because trade in services accounts for an ever growing share in world trade and continues to show above average growth rates.

However, the dynamic growth of cross-border trade should not persuade one to take an undifferentiated view. In the mid-nineties, the share of exports as against the world national product was only about 20 per cent. There are only a few commodity markets which are global in the sense that the same providers are competing for customers everywhere in the world, or at least in Europe, North America and the Pacific area. These include, for instance, the markets for raw materials, software, or aircraft. With other goods and services, in contrast, it can be observed that trade relations are concentrated within the domestic territory of the relevant world economic region. In addition, protectionism still exists, for instance in the form of subsidies. In this way, the industrialized nations reduce not only the export opportunities of the developing nations and countries with economies in transition, but they also enable their own enterprises to export products which are in fact no longer competitive to less well developed countries, causing considerable damage to economic development there. The European Union's agricultural policy is a particularly obvious example of this.

2.1.3 Growth in direct investment and joint ventures

Foreign direct investment (FDI) has been seen as a crucial motor of economic globalization since the mid-eighties. Its average yearly growth rate between 1985 and 1995, at 17 per cent, was almost twice as high as that of world trade, and almost three times as much as that of world production. Until then, commodities trade and FDI had developed almost together. This parallel development makes it clear that FDI at that time largely concerned export-related international activities, such as services and repairs.

Now, however, FDI has become a separate element in the international division of labour. The high growth rates show that more and more enterprises are making the most of cost advantages, high skill levels and good infrastructure in other countries. In contrast to the traditional world-wide division of labour, therefore, it is not only sales, but production too which is being internationalised. The increasing significance of FDI was taken into account in

restructuring GATT in 1994 by means of rules to reduce trade-distorting conditions for such investments (TRIMs).

Together with the increase in FDI , the number of internationally active companies increased dramatically, and economic concentration processes were accelerated. It is estimated that there were roughly 44,000 transnational enterprises with almost 280,000 foreign branches at the start of 1998. World-wide, 275 billion US Dollars (USD) were spent on mergers and take-overs in 1996 - twice as much as ten years before. These transnational enterprises moved globalization forward by means which include little or no foreign ownership of shares. Examples of this are the grant of licences, and strategic alliances between enterprises. As a result of this, a growing proportion of world trade is accounted for by intra-enterprise trade which gives the firms greater scope for action and is much less influenced in economic policy terms than market-controlled trade between countries.

2.1.4 Integration of the international capital movements

The world economic intertwining in the financial area is shown even more clearly than in the growth of foreign trade and FDI. The rapid development of the financial markets is due primarily to the liberalization of capital transactions, the increased use of modern communication technologies and the increasing significance of institutional investors. The latter phenomenon was favoured by growing private assets, as well as by a state debt which was growing the world over and the need to service it. Cross-border loan and share transactions - measured as a percentage of gross domestic product - were not more than 10 per cent in any major industrialized nation in 1980. By 1995, they had increased to 65 per cent of domestic economic production in, for instance, Japan, this figure reaching as much as 250 per cent in Italy. This trend can be observed in all OECD countries. Trade in financial derivatives has really taken off, as have swaps, options and futures, which derive their value from the securities on which they are based. Whilst, in 1986, world-wide trade in quoted derivatives had a volume of about USD 600 billion, this value had risen to more than USD 9,000 billion in 1996.

Standard prices on the monetary and currency markets of the industrialized nations signal their integration towards global markets. Because of the increasing degree to which values increase and rates fall simultaneously at international level, it can also be presumed that the share and bond markets in these countries will grow together in the long term. Globalization of the

financial markets has so far largely covered the industrialized nations, however (which continue to finance the lion's share of their investments from their own savings) as well as such developing countries and countries with economies in transition which are economically relatively high performers.

2.1.5 Regional imbalances of globalization

The discussion to date has been concerned with the manifestations and causes of economic globalization. The results which have been put forward point, rather, to general trends without providing a detailed quantitative, and in particular regional, analysis. In its totality, the group of developing nations and countries with economies in transition undoubtedly benefits from the increasing interconnection of the world economic markets. Together, they have been able to increase their share of the world-wide export of industrial products between 1985 and 1993 by almost 100 per cent. Their share of world-wide direct investment in 1995 was about 40 per cent, which means that the values have almost doubled compared with the average values between 1980 and 1990. The central characteristics of globalization which have been described are also supported by the data available. Thus, exports from the developing nations and countries with economies in transition have increased more quickly in the past decade (1985 to 1995) than their gross national product, and the expansion in FDI into these countries exceeds export growth by far. These results are not surprising because of the increased inclusion of these regions in the large groups' globalization strategies.

The advantages which the developing nations and countries with economies in transition have from economic globalization are distributed most unequally, however. This is shown in almost all world economic contexts, starting with the share in world trade, through to participation in the international financial markets. The regional distribution of FDI between 1980 and 1994 is a particular source of information. It increased for all these countries from a value lower than USD 10 billion in 1980 to almost USD 110 billion in 1995. A large portion of FDI in the developing countries, however, is concentrated on a relatively small number of recipients.

The share of *East and South East Asia* has almost quadrupled since 1980, largely influenced by China's demand for international capital. The *countries with economies in transition* are the second, highly heterogeneous, group with a

growing share in FDI. It is therefore largely only the relatively high growth countries in Central and Eastern Europe, with price stability, which benefit from the inflow of foreign capital, whilst the majority of the former Soviet Republics remain relatively unattractive because of political instability and poor macroeconomic framework data. Since the share of FDI in developing countries taken up by *Latin America* fell in the years from 1980 to 1995, the economic balance of this continent as against the rest of the world seems to have fallen as a result of globalization. These data however hide two important developments: first, the influx has once more grown considerably in absolute figures since the end of the eighties, and further, specific countries, such as Argentina, Chile and Mexico are among those developing countries which had the highest increase in FDI between 1984 and 1993. Africa, on the other hand, the continent with the largest population after Asia, only attracted about 3 per cent of world-wide FDI in 1995, as against 6 per cent in 1988. This is an example of the fact that this region is almost entirely excluded from the trend towards greater integration of the world's economy. However, this regional view should not hide the fact that, even if a country as a whole benefits from globalization, individual regions or sectors in that country may still find this development disadvantageous.

2.2 *The socio-cultural dimension of globalization*

2.2.1 The model of Western civilization

Globalization is certainly not solely an economic phenomenon; it is also a socio-cultural one because it is rooted in specific ideas, values, and models, and transmits these, virtually imperceptibly in many cases, into other societies. Globalization in its present shape is largely, if not quite exclusively, determined by the model of Western civilization. Scientific research, and taking responsibility for the development of world events, as well as the associated demythologisation of nature and society, (neither of which are regarded any more as sacred and immutable), were major preconditions permitting technological progress and its application in the economy and in industry. The prime importance of the values of self-realisation and material prosperity related to this has, on the one hand, led to a loss of meaning for traditional social forms and religious symbols and has, on the other, promoted people's autonomy (human rights, democracy, pluralism). This model was and is highly successful and radiates a great attraction all over the world, especially because it seems to increase prosperity – even more so after the failure of the communist model.

Western civilization is frequently accused of being subject to the dictates of economic values and purely individual interests. This is said to be demonstrated, for instance, in consumerism and in the commercialisation of an increasing number of areas of life. Here, the drawbacks of this development are indicated; for example, lack of consideration, consumption at the expense of the environment or a frequently very narrowly understood expedient rationality. The consequences are said to be psycho-social damage (lack of orientation, etc.) and social problems (prosperity-related crime, extremism, etc.). Some developing countries see mistakes here which they would like to avoid, and therefore regard the dissemination of this model through the modern media with many reservations, especially since they feel that its negative aspects are usually suppressed.

This assessment is not entirely groundless. However, it is frequently also used as an excuse to reject human rights, democracy and pluralism by reference to one's own cultural and religious traditions, such as "Asian values". Furthermore, it overlooks the fact that individualisation cannot simply be placed in the same category as destabilisation of society by fragmentation, but can also lead to other forms of solidarity. The thesis of individualism in solidarity, according to which new ways of acting in solidarity are frequently integrated into the concept of self-realisation, is at least partly supported by a series of empirical surveys.

2.2.2 Communication as a major element of globalization

Technical progress in communications facilitates an exchange of information with an intensity and quality previously unknown, which must affect contact between the cultures. The fields of *telecommunications* and the electronic *online networks* have gained tremendous significance in recent years and also promise massive expansion in the near future. In light of these advantages, it is certainly too easy to overlook the hazards of global networking. Thus, for instance, the world-wide flow of information via the Internet is extremely unbalanced in its distribution (the USA alone accounts for 85 per cent). A similar picture is revealed in the density of telephone ownership. The vast majority of the population in the Third World is excluded from the new communication technologies by a lack of media infrastructure and by still-high costs. The fact that almost one billion people are illiterate and, thus, from the outset are at best third class citizens of the Global Village has even greater consequences. If a large share of humanity continues to be denied access to these new media, the

development in this sector will lead to greater disintegration. In that case, the gap between those who have access to information and those who are excluded from it will tend to grow in future.

Added to this is the fact that the content transmitted through these new technologies is highly equivocal. Thus, for instance, the Internet offers new opportunities, such as the easy transfer of knowledge, the opportunity to learn by using the World Wide Web or fast world-wide communication by e-mail. Furthermore, the fact that authoritarian regimes are virtually unable to regulate the content which is distributed over the Internet itself certainly has advantages, as is shown in the frequently successful cooperation in cases of human rights violations. On the other hand, it is also possible for criminal contents to be disseminated via the Internet, such as child pornography, racism, or glorification of violence, to a degree previously unheard-of.

The world-wide *mass media*, whose economic significance is becoming ever greater, have now been largely privatised, and hence subject to the laws of a market which is almost unregulated by formal statutes. All information areas, such as politics, culture and sport, are becoming increasingly commercialised, so that reporting largely depends on viewing figures, which in turn determine the amount of advertising revenue. Additionally, the formation of monopolies is well advanced, together with the associated concentration of power through increased predatory price cutting. The whole media market is controlled by a few large groups, almost all of which have their headquarters in the USA, Europe, Australia and Japan. The developing countries are increasing in significance primarily as advertising markets for Western consumer goods. Because of this external control, access to the media is of limited benefit for most people in the less well developed countries. The modern market offering is, in any case, scarcely orientated towards the urgent needs of the poor in this area.

2.2.3 Individual Mobility

Modern transport technologies have considerably reduced travel costs, and have therefore made possible fast, flexible exchange of goods and services, as well as making massive improvements in individual mobility. The liberalization of international air transport has provided considerable impetus to mass tourism, and to long-haul tourism in particular. Thus, for instance, the number of annual arrivals by German tourists abroad increased between 1985 and 1994 from 44.9

to 73.3 million, and the number of long-distance trips has increased disproportionately.

However, the expansion of transport and communication systems promotes not only mass tourism and world-wide goods and capital transactions, but also crime. This is demonstrated for instance by the increase in the drugs trade, in trafficking in children and women, in sex tourism and in other illegal transactions.

Finally, mobility in the form of migration within the framework of globalization has increased. According to assessments by the International Labour Organization, the search for work and for suitable sources of income is the major motivation for migrants. Their total number was estimated in the mid-nineties to be at least 125 million world-wide. Whilst, however, the exchange of goods, services and capital, as well as mass tourism, are usually desired by the political decision-makers, the mobility of human labour is frequently made difficult. Growing world-wide migration, frequently illegal, which is usually a consequence of overwhelming poverty, creates considerable problems in the prosperous societies.

Women are especially affected by this development, which has a significant impact on their families, and on their children in particular. More and more women from Asia, Africa, Latin America and Eastern Europe are not only the victims of sex tourism and trafficking in women, but are also forced to leave their homes and look for work elsewhere, possibly even abroad, to achieve a sufficient income. The feminisation of poverty has therefore led in turn to a feminisation of migration, which many see as a consequence of the globalization of the economy. Women do badly paid or unpaid work almost everywhere, largely as a result of discrimination in their education. Frequently, in addition, they suffer from particularly poor working conditions. The possibility of rapid changes in production locations and international pressure on wage costs, which is further strengthened through globalization, thus lays a weighty burden on women world-wide.

3. The effects of globalization

3.1 *The economic effects of globalization*

3.1.1 The effects of globalization on the commodity markets

It is necessary to distinguish between short-term allocation effects (if the countries concerned have the resources required) and long-term growth effects set in motion by structural change in the effects of globalization on the growth of commodity markets. The prevailing opinion among economists is that the trend towards free trade observable in the course of globalization leads to an increase in the prosperity of the participating economies, provided that the mobility of the factors of production is secure and no negative disturbances of another type occur. The use of resources becomes more efficient, and the opportunities for economic growth increase. However, there are also patterns which can cause reductions in prosperity, at least for parts of the population. Thus, free trade can also lead to losses for individual countries if certain production areas are moved, leading to a reduction in the number of jobs available. If individual countries and their economic players restrict themselves in international trade to exporting fewer commodities (primarily raw materials or the simplest of preliminary products), broad, diversified economic development is prevented. Some economies, however, have few alternatives because of very disadvantageous starting conditions.

It is a historical experience that export-orientated economies among the developing countries have been able to achieve much higher growth rates in their gross national product than countries which concentrate on their domestic economies. If one regards globalization largely as a process of increasing openness towards foreign trade, one can conclude from this that globalization tends to promote growth. There are various approaches towards explaining the positive effect that a country's degree of openness may have on its growth rate. For one thing, the reduction of trade barriers enlarges the market, especially if these are small countries, and facilitates bulk production. Domestic enterprises can expand by selling abroad. These reasons refute the strategy of long-term import substitution. Furthermore, economies which are orientated towards foreign trade have more intensive contact with foreign enterprises, and therefore learn more and faster about technological improvements and innovative products from abroad than do relatively closed economies. This is an important source of increases in productivity, which themselves accelerate economic

growth.

If, therefore, considerable real capital flows into the developing nations and countries with economies in transition in the course of globalization, and if technology transfers take place, this can have positive growth effects and lead to growth in the national income. The creation of real and human capital, as well as the use of new knowledge, are central growth factors. Foreign direct investment offers a considerable opportunity for many countries, therefore. This may also lead to a reduction in the income gap between rich and poorer countries, as shown by developments within the European Union. For the majority of the mostly poorer developing nations and countries with economies in transition, however, this is not yet the case because the corresponding framework conditions and sufficient market size, which would support the inflow of foreign capital and expertise and its productive use, are missing. Added to this is the fact that their lack of human capital sets clear limits on their ability to achieve economic growth solely by their own efforts in the short term. However, there are also barriers created by the industrialized nations and their enterprises, if for instance they make access to technologies, patents and licences more difficult.

3.1.2 Effects of globalization on the financial markets

One should presume on the financial markets that a continuing liberalization of capital movements improves the efficiency of the market. If the regulation from the financial institutions which aims at ensuring suitable provisions against risks over the past few years is developed on consistently, a proportionate reduction in capital movement controls can contribute towards savings being used at their most productive world-wide. This could accelerate a growth process making it possible to reduce the differences in per capita income between relatively rich and poor nations. At the same time, the opening of the capital markets and the increased competition on them leads both to improved investment opportunities for savers and to lower costs for borrowers. This creates positive saving incentives for households and falling capital costs for enterprises, which may contribute towards further growth. From this point of view, it is no doubt positive that large net capital flows have for several years been flooding into several capital-poor developing countries.

Nevertheless, integrating the developing countries into the international financial markets also entails considerable risks. Because of the financial crises

of the past few years, especially in East Asia, many economists are therefore now calling for a more cautious opening of the developing nations (and countries with economies in transition) towards international flows of funding under which the development level of the economy as a whole, and of the domestic financial system in particular, should be taken into account. There is a particular need for efficient bank supervision which observes the assumption of risks and can enforce their restriction. Furthermore, private banks must conscientiously meet their obligation to check their borrowers.

Amongst the risks concerning integration into the international financial system is, firstly, the fact that high net capital imports in developing nations or countries with economies in transition may amplify the trend towards increasing the value of their currencies in real terms. This reduces their ability to export and adversely affects the opportunities open to domestic enterprises to win when they are in competition on domestic markets against imported products.

Secondly, the increasing foreign debt can reduce the stability of the bank systems, and thus reduce the room for manoeuvre open to the central banks. If the payment demands of foreign lenders are quoted in foreign currencies, any devaluation of the currency of a recipient country leads to an increase in the debt service (expressed in domestic currency) and to an increase in the value of the debts. If they are quoted in domestic currency, the central bank of the debtor country can (in theory) attempt to keep the imported capital in the country through a policy of high interest rates, where devaluation is expected to take place on the currency markets. However, because maturity transformation, i.e. short-term debt with long-term own payment demands, is essential for the business of the private banks, a serious policy of high interest rates also threatens the stability of the domestic bank system, and consequently has little plausibility. This makes likely a monetary crisis which may destroy the success of years of development effort very rapidly. Added to this is the risk of fiscal policy difficulties: In the event of a monetary crisis, the government of the country concerned has to service its own debt in foreign currency, and to pay the obligations of those domestic private debtors (mostly enterprises) which it guarantees in the event of their inability to pay. This certainly means a decrease in the social policy flexibility of the governments concerned.

Thirdly, if the inflowing capital largely consists of portfolio investments which can be cancelled at short notice, the currencies of economically weaker countries

are particularly sensitive to speculative attacks, and therefore to exaggerated devaluation. This may lead to a dangerously rapid increase in capital outflows, which may also apply if foreign investors take up large loans in such countries and exchange the money acquired in these countries for hard currency. These investors are hoping that, when their loans become due, they will have to pay less money in hard currency than previously acquired by exchanging the loans which they took out if the expected devaluation actually takes place. Many central banks are ultimately powerless against this kind of speculation because they can only make available some of the money desired by the investors in hard currency, namely to the extent of their hard currency reserves, plus balance of payments credits which they receive.

Fourthly, the risks posed by high net capital imports may, in the end, clearly exceed the opportunities created, if purchases of existing real estate or previously issued financial securities are financed with the inflowing capital instead of real investment. The foreign capital can then accelerate the growth of a speculative price bubble on the property markets, which goes hand in hand with increasing debt on the part of domestic investors. In this case, as soon as the speculative bubble bursts, overindebted players remain in the domestic territory. Because this also leads to the disappearance of confidence in the domestic bank system, as happened in South East Asia, a sudden fall on overheated property markets leads to or amplifies a massive removal of capital, and finally results in a currency crisis.

3.1.3 Effects of globalization on the labour markets

With an exclusively production-orientated view, the distribution effects within the economy observed are neglected. However, these are vital to an assessment of the current processes of globalization because not everyone benefits from them to the same degree. Instead, there are population groups both in the industrialized and in the developing nations and countries with economies in transition who are among the losers in globalization. In analysing this fact, however, one should always distinguish between the true causes, and those factors which simply amplify the trend.

According to the information available on the long-term development processes at present, the formation of capital and the progress of knowledge are the vital preconditions for growth. It is especially the formation of human capital, and as

a result the standard of training for the workers, which is essential to favourable economic development. The ever more important role played by human capital does, however, reduce the significance of unskilled labour to the same extent. This shift from unskilled to skilled work certainly affects people differently in the different regions of the world.

In the *industrialized nations*, the dynamics of economic growth lead to an ever-diminishing need for unskilled labour, whilst the demand for skilled, well-trained workers (i.e. human capital) continually grows, and with it the income of such people. This process is amplified through globalization. In the long term, it will also transfer to the developing nations and countries with economies in transition because it provides easier access for all countries to the new technologies which have this distribution effect. At the same time, the demand structure shifts more towards commodities produced capital-intensively. The result of this is a trend towards splitting the labour markets which is likely to further widen the existing income gap between skilled and unskilled workers.

Understandably, in the industrialized nations it is primarily unskilled workers who see as a threat the entry of what were once less well developed countries into the global labour market. There is a real danger that these population groups will not receive any advantage from the prosperity increases caused by globalization, or that they may even be forced to accept a worsening of their position.

One result of the loss of significance of less highly skilled work is a wider wage gap. If this development is not accompanied by transfer income to workers in the low-wage area, the income gap will widen considerably. If, however, one attempts to retain the income from employment of the less highly skilled in comparison to that of well-trained workers, the trend that moves labour-intensive production to countries with lower wage costs will be increased. If the supplementary transfer income for those employed in the low-wage sector is financed through taxes and duties on income, the danger of an increase in illicit work will become greater. This, together with the opportunities open to transnational enterprises to avoid paying taxes, would undermine the previous fiscal base of the state. If it is not possible to exploit other sources of tax, the financing available for social compensatory measures would be considerably reduced.

In the *developing nations and countries with economies in transition*, the structural change towards a modern, internationally competitive economy is being accelerated by globalization. In the period of adaptation which is needed for this, many traditionally operated businesses will not be able to stand the competition pressure. This will lead to closures, and consequently to an increase in unemployment. It is only when the economy has adjusted to the global conditions in the longer term that there is a good chance of achieving more employment and higher incomes than would have been possible without globalization. The chance to benefit from this positive development increases with growing education and vocational skills. Individuals who are less well trained will therefore tend to lose out from globalization in these countries, or at least will only benefit from it to a limited extent.

Hence, a sort of vicious circle is created for those affected which they can only escape by considerably improving their level of training. There are however limits to these efforts. The phenomenon of extensive unemployment may therefore become a long-term problem of globalized economies. To put it bluntly, the unskilled who are already worst affected by poverty may be even more so in the future.

3.2 *The ecological impact of globalization*

3.2.1 Ecological gains and losses

In addition to the social effects, it is the ecological impact of global economic integration and of the increasing networking of societies which are of especially broad significance. Ongoing globalization means a considerable increase in the flows of goods and traffic, which tangibly increases the burden on the natural environment. The main reason for the ongoing growth in the transportation of goods and people is the fact that transport costs are determined mainly by energy prices. These, however, do not fully reflect the cost to the environment of burning fossil fuels. The economic transport charge to companies which influence trade and location decisions are therefore too low in comparison to the costs actually caused. The result of this is "too much" globalization. The presumed prosperity effects are thus exaggerated as long as the environmental costs of producing energy are not included in the cost of transportation. These distorted prices therefore constitute a major proportion of the statistically calculated efficiency gains.

There is also a danger of pollutant-intensive production sites being transferred from industrialized nations where strict environmental requirements apply to developing nations or countries with economies in transition which are less rigorous in this respect. This may apply in some cases, but there is no empirical proof of a general trend towards this kind of industrial migration. It is possible that the costs involved in protecting the environment in the industrialized nations are frequently not so high as to compensate for foregoing highly skilled workers and a good infrastructure, and hence not so high as to justify moving locations. Furthermore, for some enterprises a high environmental quality is a positive criterion in choosing a location because it makes it easier to recruit skilled workers and has a direct impact on the product quality. The international trade in waste, and the disposal of toxic waste in developing nations and countries with economies in transition in particular, burdens the environment. However, such transfers are now illegal as a rule because of international agreements, which is why it is difficult to assess the extent to which they occur.

Conversely, globalization also has a positive impact on the environment. This includes the fact that the increased internationalisation of trade promotes the spread of products and technologies which conserve the environment. Quite apart from the direct positive impact on the environment, this is primarily advantageous to countries whose industries are among the world's market leaders for environmental protection technology, not least because of strict statutory regulations. An economic policy which is sensitive to ecological goals, therefore, does not necessarily entail disadvantages and production losses. Rather, environmental policy can improve the competitive position of the country in question if it creates incentives for innovation which accelerate the development of new products and production processes. Furthermore, it must also be mentioned that the process of globalization is directed at the world as a unit. It is therefore possible for it to contribute towards heightening awareness of global ecological challenges and threats. If this increases the political pressure in favour of environmental policy measures, globalization can have a positive environmental impact.

Finally, the indirect influence of globalization on the environment through the growth in global national product should also be taken into account. According to a widely-held opinion, economic growth has inevitable negative ecological effects because the contribution made by globalization towards growth also

increases the burden on the environment in any case. It is claimed that the reasons for this lie primarily in negative external effects in the environmental area which lead to a waste of finite natural resources. In the ecological assessment of growth, it should be remembered, however, that as a rule the demand for higher environmental quality increases with a growing per capita income. Additionally, there is not only growth- but also poverty-related environmental damage. Thus, for instance, deforestation in the Third World is to a considerable extent a consequence of the desperate situation in which poor and landless farmers find themselves, wishing to gain a piece of land to support themselves through slash-and-burn, but it is also a consequence of the debt pressure, which the countries concerned hope to reduce by exporting wood, which brings in currency.

In summary, it can be assumed that economic growth contributes towards the destruction of the environment as long as it is linked with higher emissions of pollutants and greater use of resources. On the other hand, however, it can at the same time increase the ability and willingness of an economy to ensure higher environmental quality. Furthermore, even consistent, socially justifiable ecological change in direction of the economy is possible only in connection with economic growth because it calls for a change in the production apparatus.

In this sense, the burdens or advantages the environment ultimately incurs as a consequence of globalization will, in this interpretation, be dependent on the type of growth experienced and on the environmental policy of the individual countries across the world.

3.2.2 Dissemination of Western production and consumption models

The media, imports, tourism and commercial advertising awaken a world-wide desire for a prosperous life like that taken for granted now by the vast majority of people in the Western industrialized nations. The current production and consumption models in these countries are connected, however, with a manifestly considerable per capita consumption of energy, mineral raw materials and other natural resources in comparison with most developing nations and countries with economies in transition. In the same way, they make a disproportionate contribution to global warming through the emission of greenhouse gases. In the poorer countries, it has only been possible, so far, for a small minority to assume this lifestyle with its high consumption of resources.

However, the vast majority of the populations of these countries desire a higher level of prosperity and material living conditions, comparable with those in the industrialized nations. It is virtually impossible to find good reasons to reject this claim as long as the rich countries consider such a lifestyle to be legitimate. A fast "catching-up" development in a larger number of developing nations and countries with economies in transition would set in motion world-wide a noticeable increase in the use of natural resources. As well as posing a burden on the environment, this would lead to ecological problems which it might prove impossible to overcome, at least if the production and consumption models presently prevalent in the Western industrialized nations were simply taken as a whole.

The consequence of this kind of development would be a great increase in the demand for raw materials. The associated price increases would have varying economic effects. In industrialized and newly industrialized countries, competition would presumably give rise to innovation, as did the increases in oil prices in the seventies, which led to changes in individual conduct (energy saving), to higher energy efficiency, to the use of alternative energy sources, to the exploitation of new storage and extensive conversion of production structures. In particular, very poor developing countries, which rely on natural oil as a cheap, versatile energy source, could end up in an almost insoluble situation. For one thing, they would presumably have too little currency income to pay the higher prices demanded for the indispensable oil imports, and for another they would also be unable to exploit alternative sources of energy. In this case, they might be forced for instance to step up deforestation, even if this led them to ecological ruin in the long term, while at the same time worsening the global greenhouse effect.

A broad growth process in the (at present) less well developed countries will thus lead to fiercer global distribution conflicts for finite resources and limited capacities for the absorption of pollutants and waste under the current production and consumption conditions. Without fundamental world-wide structural reforms aimed at using the dynamics of the market to create a model of civilization which suits the environment, the dissemination of Western production and consumption models therefore has disastrous consequences. The industrialized nations bear particular responsibility for such reforms.

3.3 *The socio-cultural effects of globalization*

3.3.1 Pluralisation as a consequence of globalization

The model of the individualistic, consumption-orientated model of civilization in the West conflicts in some areas with the world-views and values of other cultures, which in most cases have deep religious roots. Because of its dominance, many people consider it to be a threat: a form of cultural imperialism. From disappointment because the blessings of global culture promised through advertising prove to be false, or because of resistance to a commercially-defined, uniform world culture nourished from various sources, a variety of more or less contradictory movements emerge in the shape of religious, cultural, national or ethnic particularities. With indigenous peoples, for instance, these can lead to historical self-reflection which can help to prevent a blind acceptance of the process of globalization. They can, however, also turn to fundamentalism, and in some cases even indiscriminate violence.

In spite of all trends towards standardisation and universalisation, there will therefore not be a uniform world culture in the near future. Rather, there will be a pluralisation of values and standards which no society now is able to escape. Since, however, plurality always questions traditional identities which have so far been taken for granted, it unavoidably contains significant potential for conflict. The variety of convictions and values and their concrete development is now not only a characteristic of modern societies, but because of growing world-wide interdependencies it also concerns relations between societies and peoples.

The problem of world-wide migration, already touched upon, is symptomatic of these developments. Particularly in the prosperous industrialized nations, it allows fear of outside cultural domination and of a menace to the internal and external security to grow, by importing political extremism and the most serious crime. The political reaction to this more and more frequently ends with defensive measures, such as restricting the right of asylum and making residence conditions more difficult through tightened visa conditions and border controls. The trend towards exclusion is frequently justified by reference to protection of cultural identity.

3.3.2 Particularisation as a counter movement to globalization

In many regions of the world, but at least in certain areas of life, globalization has permitted the weight of regional units, ethnic groups, cultures and religions to grow, a phenomenon generally described with the term particularisation. This retreat into the understandable, into one's own world, has led to a division into a variety of identities. This has led to a considerable conflict potential. It is, however, often the case that socio-cultural traditions and tensions are also used as a tool for entirely different goals, for example, the acquisition of political and economic power.

This is an explanation for the domestic conflicts, linked to serious human rights violations, which have considerably increased in number since 1993, whilst the number of armed international conflicts has fallen. Indeed, they have taken on dangerous dimensions in some regions, in particular in Africa, South Asia, the Balkans and parts of the former Soviet Union. The main causes of these conflicts, which in some cases have led to the collapse of nation-states, are ethnic-religious or nationalist tensions and fundamentalist movements, in other words particularism currents frequently based on conflicts which are actually social in nature.

Using culture as a tool to satisfy political interests is also an accusation which may be levelled against those scenarios drafted after the end of the East-West conflict which centre on the rivalry between the cultures. The theory of the Clash of Civilizations attracted particular public interest, according to which future (violent) conflicts, and hence global politics as a whole, would no longer be determined by nation-states, but by the clash of clearly cultural blocs.

Such scenarios are the subject of much contention because of their content-related compression. Furthermore, the one-sided emphasis placed on the cultural differences disregards the fact that there are many examples of peaceful co-existence of differing cultures based on a mutual acceptance of the differences. Ethnic, cultural and religious differentiation is an undeniable characteristic of human communities which one should neither make taboo nor idealise. However, the meeting and exchange of different cultures not only entails risks, it also offers the opportunity to enrich one another and to act together to combat global problems. Peacefully overcoming such socio-cultural and hence also normative conflicts therefore primarily demands a sober analysis of the

respective separating lines and interests in order to find constructive solutions characterised by mutual tolerance.

3.3.3 Religious communities as global players

Globalization is by no means a phenomenon which affects the religions only from outside. It is, rather, a constituting characteristic of all world religions which view themselves as world-wide communities with a universal mandate, even if with differing accents. This applies in particular to the Catholic church, which from its inception and in terms of its mission has always regarded itself as a world church and which as such is a much older global player than all transnational enterprises. This is particularly clearly expressed in the history of the mission, with its positive and negative sides.

Today's process of globalization creates a new context for the religious communities because it makes world-wide presence and activities easier. This has certainly led also to a global market of religions springing up and expanding in a manner which is hard to follow, enabling a wide variety of groups, movements and organizations to offer their faiths, philosophies and products as new religions or with similar names. The traditional religious communities are now, therefore, in a new competitive situation which is unfamiliar in many ways. Conversely, this almost unavoidably implies for all philosophies and religions that many basic problems of globalization, especially pluralisation and particularisation, are also problems concerned with internal structures. Relations between the religions will also become more and more important for this reason.

In contrast to the main players in globalization, whose main reference point is the industrialized nations, the non-Christian religions largely have their members and followers in the Third World. The focus of the Catholic church has also (at least statistically) moved towards the South, more so than other Christian churches. The fact that all these religions have their origins not in Western culture, but in Asia, may perhaps contribute towards the religions being in less danger of adjusting to the fashion trends of globalization with their primarily Western models, but playing a critical, creative role using other forms of global thinking.

3.4 *The impact of globalization on the political sphere*

Ultimately, globalization is also a highly ambivalent phenomenon from a political point of view. The dissolution and collapse of the communist power bloc and the end of the Cold War in 1989 nourished the hope in many places that the Western model of society would spread world-wide through the process of globalization and that its central achievements, such as human rights and democracy, would become universal. One also hoped that, with the increase and intensification of interrelations, the awareness of and responsibility for global challenges, such as environmental problems or the growth of the world's population, would increase. Some of these hopes have been confirmed, whilst reality has rapidly caught up with others.

3.4.1 Reduction and change in the influence of nation-state policy

The process of globalization which is orientated towards the world as a unit reduces the importance and political scope of the nation-states, which in the past formed the basis of social and political development. Individual areas of society, in particular the economy, are becoming increasingly independent of the policies of nation-states and are forming new, international links. This also has positive consequences where it imposes limitations on blind nationalism and intensifies political competition. On the other hand, this also promotes a process of deterritorialisation. If nothing is done to counter this, it may lead to increasing neglect by governments of the important tasks (such as competition and social policy) which they once undertook. The consequence of the growing power of transnational enterprises is that the nation-states are played off against one another and become vulnerable to blackmail. Political activity thus plays second fiddle to the global integration process of the economy.

Since the influence of the nation-states on solving global and globally caused problems is waning, the concept of the sovereignty of nation-states, on which global politics were previously based, is also called into question. However, there is, as yet, a lack of internationally binding institutions and measures which can replace nation-state politics. Additionally, we should avoid prematurely tolling the knell of the nation-states since they will have a major role to play in the structure of international relations for quite some time to come. Although the scope available to the individual states has been reduced by globalization, and in consequence national politics have also changed, they will nevertheless continue to be a central point of reference, at least for local and regional problems.

3.4.2 Reduction in national democracy and the weakness of international politics

One of the major achievements of the modern period in the Western world is the democratic state. Democracies have however until now been linked to nation-states whose scope to act is tending to decrease because they are handing over major competences to supranational institutions in the course of globalization. The latter have however so far frequently not been democratically legitimised, or only to a limited degree.

The danger of undermining democracy is amplified by the fact that the readiness to take on public responsibility, on which every democracy is built, appears to be waning in Western societies. This is also caused by the fact that the political sphere is increasingly defined by the economic system, so that political values and aims play a subordinate role.

Because of the competitive pressure which is increasing by virtue of global interdependencies, the danger also arises that nation-state politics could escape its responsibility by referring to the need for international co-ordination, even if it actually does have sufficient room to manoeuvre, such as in the discussion on taxing energy. These trends are increased through the enormous influence of the media which also report on politics primarily taking account of viewing figures. This reduces political plausibility and contributes towards the population having "had enough" of politics and the state.

Whilst the trend towards liberalization, deregulation and privatisation continues unabated world-wide, at the same time considerable shortcomings in supranational politics can be found which are especially tangible and of consequence in those areas where the political sphere of the nation-states is losing importance and ability to act. Even if supranational institutions, such as the United Nations, are gaining significance, they are however unable in their present form to steer global competition through framework conditions and rules in a direction which is socially and ecologically acceptable.

3.4.3 The creation of an international civil society

Encouraged by mistakes which have been made in the state and in the political sphere, civil society movements have formed in almost all parts of the world. On the basis of a democratic self-image, many of them make an increasingly important contribution towards political culture and control, especially through new, constructive forms of political commitment. They are a major element in strengthening political participation. Civil society players can relieve the burden on the state or act in areas, in addition to state activities, of which the state has so far not taken account, or not to an effective degree. As a critical check on state institutions, however, they also offer an important correction mechanism for society. Cross-border networking and co-operation between NGOs plays a major role in light of the fading influence of nation-state politics at international level. The international civil society, which arose not least out of the awareness that world-wide challenges can only be countered by international co-operation, therefore has increasing importance for the shaping of international politics.

In this context, we should mention the religious communities with their multifarious organizations and institutions, which are probably the civil society players with the greatest influence, at least in many societies. In many political systems, especially if there is a state religion and they themselves only constitute a minority, they can in fact only act at the level of a civil society. This has led to an increasing awareness that, as a rule, civil society players can only achieve their goals in co-operation with other religions, and with non-religious civil society players. This necessity is also a major motivation for dialogue between the religions.

Conversely, the growing role of the international civil society for hierarchically structured institutions such as the Catholic Church also shoulder a major responsibility. Parish councils, church associations or "grassroots" parishes are basically structured along civil society lines and frequently work well in practice. Without them, the church would find it difficult to play such a large role in the NGO area. However, these structures mostly - not always - have a weak institutional and in particular legal foundation.

In spite of this positive assessment, one should beware of an idealistic overestimation of the civil society players. The civil society offers new opportunities, but it also has unmistakable limits. A precise, sober analysis and

stock-take, which does not ignore the specific shortcomings and weakness of these players can, rather, help to make it more effective. Thus, the variety of the NGOs, and in some cases the conflicts between them, frequently makes it more difficult to pursue a co-ordinated approach. With their growing influence, the danger of misuse has increased, as has their dependence on state interests. Furthermore, many of them are not democratically organised, or only to a limited degree. In some cases, they also belong to the social forces which intensify particular conflicts. The greatest consequence is, presumably, that not all social groups are equally able to organise themselves and have their interests heard. The poor, in particular, frequently have to overcome particularly high barriers in order to create representations of their interests which are able to defend them.

4. Globalization - Challenges for the religions and the church

These manifestations, consequences and effects of globalization now belong to that basic area within which the major religions and the church define their social role, but which must also reflect their self-understanding. This presents a two-fold challenge: It is a matter, firstly, of the responsibility in helping to form globalization in the service of humanity, and secondly, of the question of how the religions see themselves as world-wide communities and global players. They are linked to very different cultures, and which model of globalization they themselves constitute is a question which also has a theological relevance.

One may expect to learn from the long experience of the religions in this difficult area. This applies both to their striving to find useable solutions, as well as to their almost unavoidable errors. The religious communities even have to ask in a spirit of self-criticism to what extent they can be a model of humane globalization in their present form. This is important not least for their plausibility in striving towards humane globalization because they will only be able to participate convincingly in the public discussion of these questions if they also try to live by the principles which they favour in their own communities.

4.1 Joint responsibility in shaping globalization

An original, central task of the religions still is, as it has always been, to reflect in ethical terms on social developments, something which is irreplaceable in light of the political control of globalization. The necessary international framework can scarcely be created without a minimum global ethical standard. It is in particular the religions, with their rich spiritual and moral traditions, which can contribute to a critical assessment of the prevailing ideas in the global economy and can suggest creative alternatives. All religions have starting points (some speak of religious resources) which promote a global responsibility for all, and hence world-wide, "family" solidarity. Conversely, there are social ethical criteria which can be linked to the theological reflections of the religions, and can largely be shared and carried by them. The changes needed in the light of comprehensive solidarity, especially also in people's personal conduct, would hardly be possible without the motivational force provided by the religions.

Because they are present in virtually every culture in the world, the religions should be in a particularly positive position to strive towards cultural unity in diversity. However, this advantage is countered by the fact that almost all major religions have inner divisions, which already makes it very difficult in many cases to deal with one another. This applies not least to Christianity. For this reason, the ecumenical movement is also a movement hoping for a world church which truly includes all regions and confessions. It is a learning process geared to living together in a plural world. An important test in this respect is the treatment of minorities or diverging opinions within one's own community of faith. If we are unable to be tolerant and keep to fair rules when internal conflicts do arise, we will find it hard to appear genuine when we fight for minority rights and tolerance on the global scale. In spite of some progress which has been made in ecumenism, these efforts suffer repeated setbacks, as is shown by the difficult relations between the Catholic Church and the Ecumenical Council of Churches with the Orthodox Churches in the countries with economies in transition.

All major religions regard themselves (at least today) not only as particular, but also as universal offerings. Therefore they claim to possess answers and truths applying to all humankind, but which are at least not less valid than those of other religions. If this is to lead, not to serious conflicts, but to beneficial plurality, this requires a true ecumenical effort which includes as a major element dialogue between the religions and cooperation between people of

different faiths. From a Catholic point of view, the Second Vatican Council has undoubtedly opened up new paths in this respect, contributed towards a changed view of Mission, and has also, therefore, at least indirectly, had an effect on the self-understanding of other religions. However, the Council did not find a satisfactory solution to the tension between "dialogue" and "Mission", so that continued conflict areas arose from it which make worse the identity of the young churches, their relations with Rome and the dialogue between the religions itself.

Another somewhat controversial topic is the universal validity of human rights, at least as soon as they are also called upon for the interreligious areas and structures. Reflecting on one's own traditions and their values, which one can observe world-wide today, does not necessarily lead to fundamentalism, but it may nourish this kind of trend. Thus, all religions may, in some way, claim areas in which certain human rights only apply to a restricted degree, as when they deny rights to women, at least in their internal structures, which are regarded in civil society as being universally valid.

4.2 *The world church as a community of learning*

The reflections above have shown that all world religions have to deal with the multilayered problem of finding a balance between universalism and particularism. The Catholic Church, in particular, is in a state of tension between, on the one hand, a universal claim which exercises a major attraction for many people world-wide, and on the other, the trend towards Western, Roman-orientated centralism which is incompatible with this claim. It wishes at once to be a world church and not to "talk down" to the local churches. This is certainly at the same time a theological and ecclesiological, but in practice primarily a cultural problem, especially because the message of the Gospel itself comes from a sub-culture and has largely been communicated via Western culture.

At least in theory, and in principle, this problem appears to have been solved by recognising the principle of enculturation, that is, the need to integrate into the relevant culture. The Second Vatican Council, and some local churches, have given important incentives for this, which have also been seized on by other religions. It is ultimately always a matter of finding the right link from the universal message of the Gospel to particular forms and figures. However, this

of necessity gives rise to a question of the extent to which, in what sense and in which way Christian belief regards itself as a universal culture and to what cultural form of the world church the local churches should refer. As to specific answers to these questions, the Council certainly left more questions unanswered than answered, and thereby created a broad field for conflict within the Church from which many local churches now suffer. There is primarily a lack here of clear, testable rules governing unavoidable disputes which are needed in factual terms in the fight for contextual theologies and forms of evangelisation.

Institutionally, the Church is fighting with the tension between centralism and local church independence, where the situation is frequently quite varied from the point of view of the various continents and countries. Thus, for instance, people in Asia appreciate, on the one hand, hierarchical structures with clear authority, as embodied by the Pope and the Roman Curia - even if only for its symbolism. Other religions envy the Church for its global voice from Rome. In politically controversial situations, this has some advantages for the local churches in that the Holy See can also act in diplomatic channels thanks to its international status. On the other hand, these and similar advantages are also disadvantages because they exaggerate the impression of a religion which is not rooted in Asia, is controlled from elsewhere, and frequently slows efforts at enculturation.

4.3 Mandate and mission of church agencies

The form of globalization which shares out the world-wide increase in prosperity in such a way as to place the poorer population groups in the industrialized and developing nations and countries with economies in transition at a disadvantage, and which increasingly excludes or alienates people and regions, is by no means acceptable for the Church. This kind of process is diametrically opposed to the Christian option for the poor because the actions of the Church must always be "aimed at overcoming exclusion and involving everyone in the life of society"¹. For this reason, it is particularly important for the churches to repeatedly call this mistake to mind and to take up positions

¹ Cf. on this: For a future founded on solidarity and justice. A statement of the Evangelical Church in Germany and the German Bishops' Conference on the Economic and Social Situation in Germany, Hanover/Bonn 1997.

against it.

This task is particularly taken up by the "agencies for the universal tasks of the Church", which play a major role in Germany. They have arisen over the past decades from a long Missionary history, and in particular from the experience of poverty in many parts of the world. Meetings and exchanges with the partner churches in the South and East have sharpened our understanding of their interests and needs. Here, these church agencies themselves have undergone a learning process: Initially, the focus was on charitable emergency assistance; over the years, however, the structural dimension of poverty took up the foreground, first in the countries concerned themselves, but then also at a global scale.

Specific criteria emerge from all this for the work of these agencies. They are always concerned with extensive, holistic development, in other words, both the material and social, as well as people's cultural and spiritual well-being. They see their efforts as an indispensable element of the Church's mission, as a mission which is ultimately founded in the Gospel. At the same time, they are convinced that they have a rich spiritual, humane tradition which they wish to share with others. In this sense, their work is always also missionary in nature, which is not related to a naïve wish to convert people or to regard the sole criteria for success as lying in the number of baptisms. For this very reason, assistance benefits not only Catholics or Christians, but on principle all persons living in poverty and needing help.

Another major characteristic is as close co-operation as possible with the local churches in a spirit of partnership. These agencies regard these contacts not as a one way street, but as a joint process of learning - a mutual "give and take". Within Germany, the Church and its agencies want to be in a sense the voice of the partners whose interests they wish to further, as an advocate, which does not mean that they share or uncritically accept all their partners' points of view. Rather, they attempt to find optimal solutions in a joint dialogue with them.

5. Basis for social ethical reflection

The facts and experiences which are repeatedly submitted to the Churches in Germany by the partner churches in the developing nations and countries with economies in transition make it clear that globalization, with its varying, closely

interwoven sub-aspects, is a highly ambivalent process. It is neither a quasi-natural law, as some try to suggest, nor everything global is inevitably useful and superior to the local per se. Hence, a fatalistic attitude which considers itself to be entirely at the mercy of the global market and its rules is by no means justified. Equally dubious is fundamental opposition which views globalization as the root of all evil and claims that leaving this development or returning to local economic circuits is the solution to all social and ecological problems.

In light of these circumstances, the agencies of the Catholic Church, which have together assumed world-wide responsibility in various areas, face many challenges. It is not only their practical reaction which is called for here; this must, rather, be led by fundamental social ethical grounds and a world church perspective. All solutions and political decisions for which they opt have to correspond to it. It is a matter of countering mistakes which could have major consequences. This can only be correctly achieved if suitable normative criteria are developed, which are orientated towards the actual developments. This study follows the time-proven tradition of church argumentation in the area of social ethics, namely seeking a debate on the basis of philosophical arguments in order to remain understandable to non-Christians as well. They remain open to more profound Biblical and theological considerations, especially from the partner churches, which are particularly in the hearts of the authors of this study in view of the religious and cultural developments taking place in these regions.

5.1 *Social ethical standards*

People must be central to every development, and hence also to the economy and its political structure. This premise must not be sacrificed to other aims or ideological interests. It is founded in the *human dignity* due to all humans without prejudice and in the same manner, and it forms the basis of human rights, which must include not only civil and political rights (civil pact), but also economic, social and cultural rights (social pact). The logic of this approach lies in an option for those who are excluded from these rights. Priority attention must therefore be given to those who are unable even to meet their elementary needs and are suffering from special need. All politics at national and international level must therefore be poverty-orientated or, more precisely, orientated towards the poor.

This has economic, socio-cultural and environmental consequences. The

responsible structuring of a humane order must prove itself in all these areas in order to enable all people to have a dignified, secure existence. The economy, the market, technological progress and globalization are, consequently, not an end in themselves, but are instrumental to this aim. It is incompatible with an economic theory which uses as its sole benchmark the rules of economic rationality and of the market. This also applies to an attitude towards work and consumption which is orientated solely towards steadily growing personal prosperity, forgetting that personal property also entails social responsibility. Economic activity is, rather, always an activity with a cultural character. As such, it requires personal and social investments in people, their abilities and their environment. The human and social capital thereby created is not only of ever increasing economic significance, but is at the same time a precondition of old and new social virtues such as creativity, participation, initiative and solidarity, without which the global problems cannot be solved.

Humane global development must be orientated towards the common good of all humanity and life chances of future generations. This requires a *graduated responsibility* if the individual is not to be hopelessly overburdened. A clear distinction is to be made here between an individual ethical and social ethical orientation, even though they are interrelated. The activities of the church agencies are related to both.

The church agencies call for people's *individual responsibility* in Germany, and encourage them to share with those who have many fewer opportunities in life. This also requires changes in one's own lifestyle, for example in the use of non-renewable resources, which must also be measured against the needs of future generations. The work of the church agencies is aimed in this respect at developing a fundamental value orientation of solidarity with the poor in the world who are unable to defend their fundamental rights because of their poverty. A grasp of the fundamental needs allows the development of criteria, and the possibility of contributing towards the satisfaction of those needs through specific assistance. Many initiatives by individuals show that opportunities in life can be opened up through them. Nevertheless, personal commitment and individual assistance are not sufficient alone to achieve the aim of greater justice, especially since they can be quickly ruined by global developments, or even through political changes in one country. They retain their indispensable significance because they are also an important incentive to take on social responsibility within society.

Aid in individual cases must therefore be supplemented by a *political responsibility* which, firstly, covers the effectiveness of aid organizations and, secondly, is orientated towards structuring political and statutory framework conditions. In the age of globalization, these tasks cannot longer be dealt with by individual nations. Solving international social and ecological problems, rather, requires a willingness on the part of the countries in question to accept responsibility for others at international level in cooperation and solidarity. An international regulatory policy with institutional rules is needed to implement these goals in concrete terms, but forms of democratic supervision still need to be found to supervise the bodies entrusted with enforcing that policy. Otherwise, the poor in the developing nations and countries with economies in transition, as well as the prosperous countries, will be left behind. When it comes to distributing the burdens linked to this kind of reform, it is primarily those who are able to restrict their material needs without making major cuts in their quality of life who are called upon. This includes most people in the rich countries, as well as the rich in the poor countries.

In light of a highly unequal global distribution situation, which is threatening to worsen further, decisive measures are needed to give the principle of (inter-generational) *social justice* greater impetus once more in the political sphere. At least, the difference principle of the justice theory, which states that economic and social injustices are only justifiable insofar as they entail as great an advantage to the poorest and the excluded as possible, should be taken into account. In this sense, the standards of global opportunities, and, in particular, justice based on needs, gain ever increasing significance against justice based purely on ownership and benefits.

Special attention should be attached to the principle of *inter-generational justice*, which fundamentally states that the economic and social problems of the present may not be solved in isolation from the question of retaining and safeguarding the natural basis of life for future generations. The recognition that economic, social and ecological development is only a series of social sub-aims which may not be played off against one another without facing the consequences forms the basis of the concept of sustainable development, recognised as a binding guideline by the international community of states since the Conference of the United Nations for Environment and Development (UNCED) held in 1992 in Rio de Janeiro. The environmental, ethical principle

on which this approach is based is the 'network' of humankind within its natural environment. It expresses the fact that humankind can only face up to its responsibility if it adapts the dynamics of its civilisatory activity to the limits of the natural resources and the ability of the surrounding environment to cope.

If humankind is the starting point and the aim of all development, this requires a development from below. This is the point of the principle of *subsidiarity*, which protects individuals and lower social levels (families, local authorities, civil society players, etc.) from the all-pervasive power of the state and bureaucratic centralism. Conversely, this principle also requires action at the lower levels where it needs their assistance. This also applies in forming the global society. Hence, initially, solidarity among those concerned is always called for, that is to say their own initiative and co-operation to overcome their disadvantages. Equally important are political measures which facilitate, support and supplement this kind of individual and community initiative from below. As much as it is a matter of the individual him/herself, their own efforts are doomed to failure in most cases, or will not stand the test of time without a supportive framework (e.g. legal security). If there is insufficient solidarity among those concerned, the solidarity of those better off and the privileged with and for these disadvantaged persons must be added, where necessary, i.e. from individuals and small groups through to the (global) society.

In a plural world, each ethical reflection moves within the *interplay between universality and particularity*. The dilemma consists in the fact that a particular reason is integrated into the respective cultural contexts, on the one hand, and therefore is easy to understand for people living there, but on the other hand it cannot be understood by people from other cultures, and in this sense can only to a limited degree form the basis of anything akin to a global ethic. This tension, which worsens as a result of globalization, can only be reduced, and in an ideal scenario perhaps even overcome, through as broad an inter-cultural dialogue as possible. This kind of dialogue is only feasible if all participants regard it as a fair exchange aimed at reaching an understanding, without patronisation or manipulation. Ethical arguments are always aimed at the well-founded agreement of all concerned by the activity which is to be assessed.

The participants in this inter-cultural dialogue can attempt in various ways to find universal norms. The easiest way to build a bridge between the various ethical traditions is probably by starting with joint human suffering, such as

hunger, poverty, injustice or discrimination. All particular moral ideas are based on such cases. In light of these experiences, the partners to the dialogue explain their cultural interpretations to one another, as well as their values and the norms rooted therein. They will discover both common ground and differences during this process. On the basis of the joint understanding of human dignity which arises from this, they attempt to gain at least some fundamental ethical foundations which, on the one hand, have a universal significance, but on the other are expressed in specific ways in a variety of cultures. The aim of such efforts is to achieve ethics in which unity and difference are interlinked. This entails, firstly, shared standards, the interpretations and grounds for which do not have to be entirely identical in the different cultures. Secondly, it leaves scope to each culture for ethical and moral convictions which are rooted in specific contexts if these do not conflict with the universal standards.

5.2 *Ethically responsible shaping of globalization*

Whilst the effect of the process of globalization is a world-wide increase in the level of prosperity, the trend is also towards shifting distribution in a way that puts at a disadvantage unskilled workers in the industrialized nations, and poorer population groups in the developing nations and the countries with economies in transition. Furthermore, the growth effects are based to some extent on insufficient inclusion of the ecological costs, which creates an inter-generational distribution problem. From the perspective of the social and ethical criteria named, such effects of globalization are highly dubious, and are unacceptable in the long term. If it were to be confirmed that whole regions and population groups will remain increasingly excluded from the prosperity gains of globalization and that the basis for existence of future generations is placed at risk, the benefits of globalization could not compensate for its mistakes.

If overcoming exclusion is the primary ethical standard of universal responsibility, the primary aim of political control must be to use regulatory policy frameworks as far as possible to prevent the process of globalization dividing people and generations into winners and losers. As in the age of national economies it was (and remains) the task of the state to create framework conditions which control the market with its indisputable strengths so that it can effectively benefit all, it is now necessary for world-wide agreements and institutions to incorporate this aim of the social market economy into the global economy. It is therefore a matter of creating, from the outset,

starting conditions which are as fair and as just as possible. In areas where injustice nevertheless occurs, since we must not expect to succeed in preventing it in every case, this is to be corrected by subsequent, appropriate intervention. This will presumably remain mostly a matter for the individual nation-states.

Globalization in its present form requires fundamental structural reforms if it is to become the model of sustainable development. Economic growth must be linked increasingly to social and ecological development. Economic performance is and remains a necessary, but not sufficient, condition for social justice, environmental protection and cultural variety. Strategies to strengthen economic initiative and competitiveness on the one hand, and to combat poverty and destruction of the environment on the other, are not in contradiction, but can complement one another. The existing scope to form economic policy in a socially and environmentally acceptable manner must be used, for instance by deliberately promoting human and social capital as an important factor in strengthening economic locations.

Economic policy on the one hand and social and environmental policy on the other, also act in a state of tension which sometimes and in specific areas can only be reduced by deliberate political intervention. This applies also to the relationship between social and ecological development. For this reason, the efforts to protect the environment, ultimately concerned with generations to come, must be an integrated element of global regulatory policy, just like economic and social development. In the long term, globalization only benefits all people and social groups if economic, social and environmental policies support one another.

6. Options for action

6.1 *Policy areas*

The economy, and the values and rules determining economic activity, have proved to be the driving force of globalization and have provoked major changes, the consequences of which are hard to foresee. In doing so, it becomes increasingly evident that the various processes of globalization, with their ambivalent knock-on effects, overload the confines of classical nation-state policy. The control principle of the free market, which prevails today, proves itself unable alone to link economic efficiency, social justice and ecological

security in a compatible manner. It is even less able to create or safeguard lasting peace, democratic participation and cultural variety if it is not borne by a consensus in fundamental value-related issues. For this, we need, on the one hand, regulatory policy measures which are able to steer market economy competition in the desired direction, and on the other, a guarantee of compensatory investment in order to ensure the equality of needs and opportunities of all people.

Globalization today requires a world-wide structural policy aimed at long-term social and sustainable development. It is therefore not primarily a matter of "handing over some prosperity" to the poorer countries and people, but of creating a global order which gives all concerned fair and to some extent equal opportunities. This necessitates a *Global Governance Policy* creating framework conditions which favour development, and takes account of the increasing differentiation of political levels at a global scale. In this context, a regulatory model based on a joint political process of split sovereignties between state and non-state players at various levels of activity (local, national, regional and international) is currently under discussion. Regulatory policy, as well as deliberate intervention at national and international levels, must refer primarily to the following areas.

6.1.1 International legal order and security policy

Global control in accordance with the principle of subsidiarity will only be successful if the community of states is able to agree on a fundamental international legal order with corresponding legal principles. The basis of this is for all countries to create the preconditions for legal security and respect for human rights in their own areas, and providing opportunities for political participation to the population. For this, it is also necessary to strengthen the global rule of law with clear statutory rules, mechanisms for resolving conflicts and sanctions. In this context, it is imperative to increase the status of institutions such as the International Court of Justice in The Hague and to guarantee binding recognition of their rulings. In addition to institutionalised, long-term forms of international co-operation in the form of preventive security policy, there is also a need for improved mechanisms for short-term mediation in and resolution of conflicts in order to prevent, at any cost, military escalations and open armed conflicts.

The acceptance of binding world-wide frameworks and the global rule of law, however, also requires a minimum of shared values, and in particular mediation procedures for normative conflicts. The inter-cultural dialogue on universal values as a basis for common actions will only be possible if we are able to recognise the 'otherness' of the others, and if the individual cultures are prepared to continue the dialogue. This is the only way to change from an unbalanced community of teaching to a community of learning based on equal opportunities. This kind of dialogue certainly constitutes a particularly challenging form of mediation in cases of conflict because it is a matter not only of reaching pragmatic compromise, but of being open to the values of other cultures.

6.1.2 Self-Responsibility for economic and social policy

The main responsibility for contributing towards overcoming poverty and underdevelopment through sound economic and social policy lies with the individual countries themselves. Only they are able, ultimately, to create the preconditions for successful participation in the global economy. This includes, in addition to democratic reforms and legal security, an economic framework which promotes initiative, as well as good governance. In addition to investment in assets and human capital, considerable significance is attached to fair ownership with effective protection and balanced distribution of ownership and property, as well as fair and growth-promoting tax legislation. Furthermore, a key role is played by the creation of internal economic stability through the independence of monetary instances, strict bank supervision, fighting against inflation and state budget discipline.

Constantly low inflation rates are a decisive indicator of a healthy macroeconomic environment.² Grave fluctuations in the general price level make it more difficult for producers and consumers to distinguish relative price changes from absolute ones. If the information content of the relative prices falls, there is a risk that resources could be misused, with detrimental consequences for growth and employment. Countries with high inflation rates and budget deficits are therefore hardly attractive as locations for international capital. A stability-orientated policy is also easily justified from a social and ethical point of view: Inflation is antisocial because its effects are felt primarily by the weaker and the poor. Those in a better economic position, on the other

² Cf. the study "Gutes Geld für alle [Good money for everyone]", presented by Franz Furger and Joachim Wiemeyer, commissioned by the Group of Experts "World Economy and Social Ethics", on the significance of monetary stability and its institutional preconditions, Bonn 1991.

hand, can more easily escape the negative effects of high inflation by fleeing into tangible assets or going abroad. As a consequence, inflation is never a suitable tool for solving economic and social problems.

In addition to macro-economic stability, high investment in real capital is a further precondition for successful participation in globalization. If, in an economy, investments grow faster than the work deployed, the capital stock per worker (capital intensity) increases and consequently the productivity of work tends to do so as well. Ultimately, this means that the national income increases. Countries which, for instance, promote the willingness to invest with fiscal policy measures are therefore more likely to benefit from the globalization process than those which discourage investors through lack of infrastructure, trade monopolies, an unclear legal situation, overblown administrations or excessive corruption. Not least, empirical studies have shown that a high degree of openness in an economy in the form of free movement of goods and cleverly liberalised capital markets makes a major contribution to the achievement of high growth rates. This facilitates the necessary importation of technology by bringing in capital, encouraging the inflow of foreign direct investment and through other forms of international joint ventures.

Investment in people (food, health, education), i.e. the formation of human capital, plays a central role. Empirical studies show a clearly positive correlation with economic growth. Thus, for instance, the world-wide gap in per capita income points towards a clear link with the differences in the duration of schooling. In a world in which simple skills are being increasingly overtaken by machines, and in which state-of-the-art communication and information technologies penetrate the work process, investing in human capital is at least as important as investing in real assets. Countries which neglect this task are to a certain extent destined to lose out in globalization.

Economic and social policy are linked to one another. Thus, the economic policy measures mentioned above, and a future-orientated, broad-impact technology policy which is tuned to the actual situation are suitable instruments to reduce poverty. Conversely, a social policy which increases occupational flexibility through social security and promotes human capital is the basis for economic performance and competitiveness, and therefore, for successful participation in globalization processes. The scope for a social form of economic policy, on the one hand, and to promote competitiveness through social capital, on the other,

should therefore be systematically analysed and used where possible for successful participation in the global economy. All these measures would largely make a structural adjustment policy imposed from outside (International Monetary Fund) with its problematic social consequences, superfluous.

Where these measures do not take hold, or where they reach their limits, it certainly remains a primary task of social policy to combat absolute poverty with all available means.³ Otherwise, the option for the poor and the excluded remains mere lip service. Compensatory measures should be developed to ensure that at least the basic needs of those population groups who lose out in the economic globalization process can be met. This also applies in cases of unavoidable structural adjustments in the framework of debt restructuring.

At international level, development aid from the rich countries can never replace the individual efforts of the developing nations and countries with economies in transition, but may usefully supplement them. As a type of global social compensation, it can provide an important impetus, and therefore remains indispensable. Development aid is all the more successful, however, the more it does not limit itself to transfers pure and simple, but makes a structural contribution towards the process of development.

6.1.3 Reform of the global economic order and of the international finance system

Even if the opportunities to benefit from globalization open to a country initially depend on the country itself, we should not overlook the fact that, today, the effectiveness of national policy measures is limited. For this reason, there is an additional need to structure global economic competition in order to give all involved fair and more or less equal opportunities. Such an order must contribute especially towards individual countries not using their power position in the international structure for one-sided economic advantages.

The present global trade order within the framework of the World Trade Organization has contributed towards considerable reductions in trade barriers, which also benefits a large number of developing nations and countries with economies in transition. Opening markets for products from these countries,

³ Cf. the study "Social Security Systems as Elements of Poverty Alleviation in Developing Countries" by the Group of Experts on "World Economy and Social Ethics", Bonn 1997.

their preferential treatment through preferential customs rates and similar arrangements, foregoing one's own trade-related subsidies and the willingness to invest in poorer regions, however, remain important demands which have not by any means been exhausted. How important appropriate reforms are is shown, for instance, by the negative consequences of the European Union's agricultural policy for poor developing countries in particular.

However, even the global trade order itself needs to be developed if it is to facilitate fair competition in the global economy. This includes, on the one hand, international competition law which prevents the development of a concentration of economic power by applying clear rules, reliable controls and effective sanctions. On the other hand, social and environmental standards need to be developed and enforced, for example, the labour standards of the International Labour Organization, to prevent expansion of global trade harming the poorest of the present, as well as of future generations. It should certainly be remembered here that new protectionism of the industrialized nations should not be promoted under a new name, as the countries of the South and East fear, not without justification.

No less need for action lies in light of a reform in the global financial order, as has been shown once again by the turbulence in the financial markets of Asia, Russia and Latin America. Governments need to increase the duties to report incumbent on national governments and to create functional bank supervision in all countries to ensure better reserves against risks with the banks (e.g. capital cover rules). Since the volatility of the international financial markets poses a particular risk to financial stability, and thus to the opportunities for growth open to the developing countries and the countries with economies in transition with barely-developed financial systems, the question arises as to whether a time-limited restriction of the inflow of short-term capital is not a suitable countermeasure. Also, the discussion on introducing a tax on foreign currency transactions, intended to reduce the attractiveness of short-term currency speculations, is by no means closed.

A special matter of concern for the churches and many other civil society groups on the threshold to the next century is a generous debt release, especially for the poorest countries which otherwise have virtually no future perspective. This kind of release is however only helpful and justifiable if it primarily benefits the poor and the main population (e.g. through counterpart funds). Making this a

condition of this aim is indispensable, not least in order to prevent loans being taken up recklessly in the future. The greater the willingness of the debtor countries to do so, and the more determined they are to introduce necessary economic and social reforms, the more generous the release should be.

Debt problems can certainly not be entirely ruled out in the future, since it is never possible to calculate all risk factors, even with good governance and considerable prudence (price falls with exports, exchange rate fluctuations, ruinous competition). We need international insolvency proceedings for such cases aimed at including the basic premise of bankruptcy law and the law on composition proceedings, as well as of exemption from attachment, in international legal relations. In this way, one could counter imprudent granting of loans, react more quickly and more effectively than previously in the event of payment problems occurring, and consequently reduce the likelihood of new, long-term debt crises.

6.1.4 Global environmental policy

Environmental damage occurring in the past at regional level has now taken on global dimensions (the greenhouse effect, the hole in the ozone layer) and nationally operating environmental policy has mostly reached its limits, particularly in climate protection. As a result, the need for an internationally co-ordinated approach towards internalising cross-border external effects has grown continually. Because of contradictory state interests, it has, however, proved difficult to implement effective international agreements, as shown by the sobering discussions on ecology at the Earth Summit held in Rio and at the conferences of the Parties to implement the Conventions concluded there.

A global environmental policy aimed at resolving these shortcomings is a political cross-sectional task which must be coherent, and involve all policy areas. It must focus on creating an economy and lifestyle which are both socially and ecologically acceptable⁴. Here, priority must be given to preventive measures which avoid wasting resources and ecological overcropping, over subsequent compensatory measures, something also makes economic sense. Because of their high use of resources and their politically, economically, and socio-culturally dominant role, the rich industrialized nations and the rich in the

⁴ Cf. the study "Global and Ecological Aspects of Economic Activity", presented by Franz Furger and Joachim Wiemeyer, commissioned by the Group of Experts on "World Economy and Social Ethics", Bonn 1994.

South have a particular responsibility here. This kind of policy is in line with the long-term self-interest of the industrialized nations themselves, but is also an aspect of long-term development policy because it has a major impact on future development opportunities, in the South and East in particular. All this requires forward looking, courageous structural adjustment in the North in its strategy of sustainable development.⁵

6.2 *Players*

6.2. Nation-states and communities of states

The above considerations have shown that both forming qualified human and social capital, and the promotion of those institutions which are important for a corresponding legal, economic and social order, are vital to the creation of opportunities for a country to benefit from globalization. The main responsibility for structuring these location-related social sub-systems, and hence for the common good, remains with the nation-states in spite of losses of sovereignty.

Nevertheless, one should not overlook the fact that the effectiveness of national policy measures on social and economic development is now limited. For this reason, there is an additional need, as was stressed above, to control global economic competition at the various regulatory levels.

The intensification of mutual transnational relations requires a federal system of split sovereignties in which without losing the analogous degree of unity, competences are divided among the corresponding levels in accordance with the principle of subsidiarity. The nation-state as a territorial structure remains, in this case, the load-bearing pillar since it carries out an indispensable function as a hinge or link between the various levels of activity. However, its role undergoes fundamental changes, both internally and externally. In many problem areas, the state is no longer able to draft solutions independently, but relies on co-operation with social groups, such as transnational enterprises and the world-wide networked NGOs. It is responsible for balancing the interests between the various players and for implementing the agreements reached at

⁵ Cf. the study "Structural Adjustments in the North in order to Promote Development in the South", presented by Franz Furger, commissioned by the Group of Experts on "World Economy and Social Ethics", Bonn 1995.

international level.

In light of the increasing regionalisation and particularisation, which runs counter to globalization, local and regional policy takes on a major role in a federal order system. The gradual transfer of nation-state authority to international institutions can be prepared through regional integration projects. Stronger regional co-operation between the developing nations and the countries with economies in transition can increase their ability to use the opportunities for globalization, and by that means strengthen their position in the global economy, or so the experience of the European Union leads us to believe. In addition to the supranational institutions, at the centre of which stands the United Nations, international regimes such as the World Trade Organization, with its agreements and rules, or the Framework Convention on Climate Change with its contractual implementation, will become ever more important control instruments in the architecture of a global order.

6.2.2 Transnational enterprises

The cross-border activities of transnational enterprises, which are becoming increasingly independent of national arrangements, contribute to the increasing power and influence of these global players at global level, and therefore in the nation-states as well, especially if these countries are small or economically and geostrategically unimportant. With this increase in power, however, their responsibility for a humane structure of world trade also increases. At least in parts of the private economy, there is a growing awareness that market expansion can only be successful if it is accompanied by political and economic stability, and by social compensation.

Transnational enterprises must therefore accept this responsibility in the well-understood self-interest in order to secure the conditions for successful global trade in the long term. Their commitment should particularly cover those areas in which the private economy can make tangible changes. This includes clearly striving for a global economic regulatory policy which is able to guarantee forward-looking regulation of international financial markets in order to avoid financial crises such as those in East and South East Asia or Latin America in future. However, it also applies to acceptance of human rights, to creating humane working conditions and to implementing environmental protection rules, especially since there are generally valid standards and targets in these areas set out in international agreements, for example in the Universal

Declaration of Human Rights, in the Conventions and Recommendations of the International Labour Organization or in the Declarations and Programmes of Action of the Conferences of the United Nations (e.g. Agenda 21 of the Earth Summit held in Rio).

Transnational enterprises can support the implementation of such standards by, on the one hand, publicly fighting for them in the political arena, including at international level, and on the other, by ensuring that they are implemented in their own facilities and uncovering unfairness and irregularities instead of hiding them. They will only gain confidence and plausibility if they pursue suitable labour, social and environmental standards within their own jurisdiction. Since they are now major investors, important employers and leading producers in all parts of the world, they have sufficient influence to implement such standards directly, or at least indirectly. This includes such fundamental norms as the right to free trade unions, the prohibition of exploitative child labour and forced labour, and a recruitment policy which does not place anyone at a disadvantage because of their race, religion, gender or ethnic origin. They can also take the initiative to implement standards themselves without waiting until suitable laws are adopted in the country in question. This includes, for instance, undertaking to adhere to higher environmental standards, as well as a willingness to support voluntarily preventive environmental protection measures and to promote the development and spread of environmentally-friendly technologies.

6.2.3 International civil society

The international civil society has gained importance in recent years, as is demonstrated by the fact that it has taken an active part in the major world conferences and the subsequent negotiations to implement conventions. Because of its world-wide networks, it can make a major contribution to the process of globalization by pursuing it critically and by offering innovative suggestions. Many governments and international organizations work with NGOs in many areas now, taking advantage of their specific strengths. They are frequently well organised, work professionally and have extensive specialist knowledge. By virtue of close international co-operation, they have considerable knowledge of the local situation, as well as direct contact with the population, which is highly significant especially for development co-operation based on the option for the poor. This facilitates effective assistance for self-help orientated to the respective needs.

Civil society players are also becoming increasingly important for public relations and lobbying in order to involve as wide a spread of the population in their work as possible. Since they are largely independent of state politics and, in contradistinction to political parties, do not depend on majorities of voters among the population, they are able to follow new paths, take path-breaking initiatives and seize on important problems which might otherwise remain subject to political taboos. In the Western democracies in particular, where virtually every interest group has its political lobby, development policy NGOs are important because they are able to represent the interests of the poor and the victims of globalization who otherwise would be virtually unrepresented.

6.3 *Potential for activity of the Church and its agencies*

All those people, groups and organizations striving for human rights, and thus for those to whom these rights are denied, must work for the losers of globalization by publicising their worries and concerns, trying to find responsible solutions and necessary institutional reforms and calling for personal changes in conduct in the prosperous countries. This is largely a task for those civil society players which are not aiming to make a profit (Non-profit-organizations).

The Catholic Church and its agencies are influential players in the international civil society, and as such play a key role in the process of understanding and mediation between North and South, West and East. They are distinct from other NGOs in their basic criteria and in their motivation, but only to a certain degree in their concrete activities and campaigns, which is why the following potential actions are likely to apply also to the other civil societies.

The work of the church agencies also includes direct financial assistance for local pastoral and social projects, and therefore collection of donations. These are a visible sign of the willingness to share globally with other local churches and with the poor. Thanks to their size, and to a large number of partners in the South and East, the church agencies are also in a better position to distribute their funds to the most needy in a subsidiary manner. Their size also means that they are highly effective in comparison with individual partnerships or small church agencies, so that they also promote projects which would not otherwise receive foreign aid.

Even greater significance is attached to the construction of real partnerships in mutual give and take and in patiently learning from one another. This is a type of inter-cultural and intra-church dialogue intended to create a conscious counterweight to cultural superiority and paternalistic patronisation. Particularly in the case of pastoral care, long-term personal contacts with other parishes are vital to a world church which is striving towards unity in diversity. This type of meeting facilitates getting to know other local churches, which can enrich one's own pastoral activities. As dense a network as possible between the local churches all over the world, now feasible thanks to modern global communication, also opens up new activities because it facilitates an exchange of information and co-operation within the framework of very concrete aims. In this way, it is also possible to support co-operation within the local churches in the South and East, for instance at the level of Bishops' Conferences, Orders, Organizations of the lay apostolate or associations of theologians. There is particular significance here in the encouragement of an independent contribution by the laity.

Information and publicity work takes on an expanding role here, as a precondition for a change in awareness in the prosperous societies, without which long-term structural reforms would be virtually impossible to implement. The church agencies seize on the solidarity of many Christians with the people in developing nations and countries with economies in transition, and motivate them to strive for a more just world. In order to do so, a wide range of information, studies and public education work is needed. This includes starting and providing fresh pastoral approaches and theological thinking in the partner churches, not least because this can provide valuable incentives to the Churches in the rich countries.

Almost automatically, this kind of effort offers the insight that the poorer countries need political advocates for their interests, and above all for their poor. In the Western democracies, almost every major interest group has its political lobby to implement its interests and draw attention to them in a manner which attracts as much media attention as possible. The opportunities available to the less well developed countries, and to the poor world-wide in particular, therefore improve if social groups in the North defend their interests. In this sense, the Churches have a considerable potential because they still have a large number of members, and consequently exercise an influence on political decisions which

should not be underestimated.

For this reason, the church agencies participate in campaigns pursuing concrete sub-aims in view of greater world-wide justice, such as the global march against exploitative child labour or the campaign for debt relief. Since the effectiveness of such campaigns very much depends on the number of their members and as broad a civil society support as possible, it is important to form alliances of solidarity beyond traditional philosophical and political borders, even if there are some fears to be overcome in forming contacts. This is normally the only way in which joint aims can be aggressively and effectively defended using concerted media campaigns. A highly successful example is the campaign against land mines, which has shown the non-church groups that the Churches can be an important, influential alliance partner.

There is also a possible lever for the creation of economic structural reforms in deliberate consumption behaviour, e.g. specifically buying products from developing nations and countries with economies in transition since the market already reacts to slight changes. Since large enterprises in particular set great stock by a good image, consumption behaviour may also pursue political aims, for example with trademarks indicating those products for which the enterprises can prove that fundamental social and environmental standards have been adhered to, from carpets manufactured without child labour, through to sustainable wood use.

A similar approach is so-called "ethical investment". Since Christians and their Churches also have financial assets which they invest, they should set strict standards in order to do the most ethical thing with their money. In this way, they could specifically invest their money in enterprises and investment administrators which are at least not counter to the aims of the conciliatory process for justice, peace and maintenance of the Creation, even if this might mean foregoing higher returns.

In desiring to create a sustainable lifestyle and economy which is acceptable world-wide, we know that there is a great deal of information and motivational work which remains to be done. Reorientation which runs almost diametrically counter to the trend towards individualism and ever greater prosperity requires not only political structural reforms, but also changes in personal conduct, giving an incentive to the political sphere and indicating that there is a

willingness to change. There are many proposals worth consideration in this context, in the study commissioned jointly by Misereor and BUND entitled "Zukunftsfähiges Deutschland" (Sustainable Germany) especially in the eight models which it contains. The Churches and their agencies will only be able to credibly strive towards such aims, however, if they themselves also practice a lifestyle and economy which combines quality of life and modesty. Such a model is fundamentally transferable world-wide and facilitates global social compensation. Here, the Churches, as many other religions, can fall back on their own traditions of good living, such as on the teaching of the virtue of the "right balance", or on various forms of asceticism.

A world church which regards itself as a community of learning proclaims a programme which is intended to build bridges. It is only in learning together from one another, linked back to the message of the Gospel which has been given to them, that the local churches, in their diversity, can become a real world church. This programme, which the Church is still far from bringing to fruition, could be a model of humane globalization aimed at countering the "globalization of profit and misery with a globalization of solidarity" (John Paul II).

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