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DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL AFFAIRS
Division for Social Policy and Development

The International Forum for Social Development

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DESA

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The designations of country groups in this publication are intended solely for statistical or analytical convenience and do not necessarily express a judgment about the stage reached by a particular country or area in the development process.

Additional information on the Forum can be accessed at: . /

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The International Forum for Social Development was a three-year project undertaken by the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs between November 2001 and November 2004 for the purpose of promoting international cooperation for social development and supporting developing countries and social groups not benefiting from the globalization process. "Open Societies, Open Economies: Challenges and Opportunities" represented the overall theme of the project, which was financed through extrabudgetary contributions and carried out within the framework of the implementation of the outcome of the World Summit for Social Development, held in Copenhagen in 1995, and of subsequent major international gatherings, including the Millennium Summit and the twenty-fourth special session of the General Assembly, held in New York and Geneva, respectively, in 2000.

Four meetings of the Forum were held at United Nations Headquarters in New York, as follows:

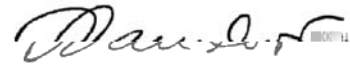
- Financing Global Social Development, 7-8 February 2002
- Cooperation for Social Development: The International Dimension, 16-17 October 2002
- International Migrants and Development, 7-8 October 2003
- Equity, Inequalities and Interdependence, 5-6 October 2004

These meetings brought together invitees from different regions and different walks of life for seminars followed by open and informal debate with representatives from United Nations Member States and non-governmental organizations. Findings were presented orally at the annual sessions of the Commission for Social Development, and reports or summaries were issued.

The present publication seeks to provide an overview and interpretation of the discussions and debates that occurred at these four meetings from the broad perspective of distributive justice. During the year this work was under preparation, the United Nations reviewed the commitments made ten years ago in Copenhagen to promote social development and in Beijing to pursue equality between men and women. In the light of the evolution of the Organization's mandates and priorities, however, considerably greater attention was given to the review of the United Na

the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. The 2005 World Summit, which produced the largest gathering of world leaders in history, was held by the General Assembly in New York from 14 to 16 September and focused on develop

by the Secretary-General.[1] It is hoped that the analyses and observations presented here will contribute to the continuing debate on these important issues.



Jacques Baudot
Coordinator, International Forum for Social Development

The rise in inequality in the distribution of income among people is well-documented and displays the characteristics of a trend, having affected large numbers of countries, from the poorest to the most affluent, during the past two decades. Up to the 1980s, at least since the Second World War and in some cases since the beginning of the twentieth century, there had been a general narrowing of differences in the income available to individuals and families.

Income-related inequalities, notably in the ownership of capital and other assets, in access to a variety of services and benefits, and in the personal security that money can buy, are growing. There is also greater inequality in the distribution of opportunities for remunerated employment, with worsening unemployment and underemployment in various parts of the world affecting a disproportionate number of people at the lower end of the socio-economic scale. The inequality gap between the richest and poorest countries, measured in terms of national per capita income, is growing as well.

The popular contention that the rich get richer and the poor get poorer appears to be largely based on fact, particularly within the present global context. Moreover, extreme or absolute poverty, experienced by those whose income is barely sufficient for survival, remains widespread. Indigence levels have risen in the most affluent countries, in countries once part of the Soviet bloc and in various parts of Africa, but have remained stable in Latin America and have declined in Asia. Extreme poverty and the suffering it entails affect a large proportion of humankind, and major efforts by Governments and international organizations to reduce or eradicate poverty have thus far failed to produce the desired results.

Do these facts and trends suggest a regression in social justice? The answer to this question, if considered within the framework of the Charter of the United Nations and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights,[2] is not unequivocal. The persistence, aggravation and very existence of extreme poverty constitute an injustice. Those experiencing dire poverty are deprived of a number of the fundamental rights invoked in the Charter and enumerated in the Universal Declaration. Individuals affected by internal conflicts and wars are also robbed of many of their basic freedoms and are thus victims of injustice as well. Hunger is but one face of poverty; discrimination, poor health, vulnerability, insecurity, and a lack of personal and professional development opportunities are among the many other challenges faced

abuse, represents sufficient evidence for a judgment of persistent, if not growing, injustice in the world.

Unlike justice in the broad sense, social justice is a relatively recent concept, born of the struggles surrounding the industrial revolution and the advent of socialist (and later, in some parts of the world, social democratic and Christian democratic) views on the organization of society. It is a concept rooted very tenuously in the Anglo-Saxon political culture. It does not appear in the Charter, or in the Universal Declaration or the two International Covenants on Human Rights. Frequently referred to in the Copenhagen Declaration and Programme of Action adopted by the World Summit for Social Development in 1995, social justice was scarcely mentioned five years later in the United Nations Millennium Declaration.[3]

Some proponents of social justice—though significantly fewer since the collapse of State communism—dream of total income equality. Most, however, hold the view that when people engage in economic activity for survival, personal and professional growth, and the collective welfare of society, inequality is inevitable but should remain within acceptable limits that may vary according to the particular circumstances. In the modern context, those concerned with social justice see the general increase in income inequality as unjust, deplorable and alarming. It is argued that poverty reduction and overall improvements in the standard of living are attainable goals that would bring the world closer to social justice. However, there is little indication of any real ongoing commitment to address existing inequalities. In today's world, the enormous gap in the distribution of wealth, income and public benefits is growing ever wider, reflecting a general trend that is morally unfair, politically unwise and economically unsound. Injustices at the international level have produced a parallel increase in inequality between affluent and poor countries.

These are political judgments deriving from the application of political concepts. Inequalities in income and in es.cimaccording tucl woro5(o)127ar27general incring increcl wo

tems collapsed and socialism and social democracy retreated, as did the notion that there should be public institutions at both the national and international levels that defined the common good, pursued social justice, and had the power to take effective action. The promotion of social justice through public institutions is a deeply rooted tradition. Throughout history, the advances made by humankind have been conceived by great individuals—including philosophers, scientists, political leaders, prophets, and even ordinary inspired and courageous citizens—and implemented by institutions. However, positive trends and advances are reversible. Individuals,

progress during the past century are the increased equality of men and women and the growing recognition that human beings are both guests and custodians of the planet earth. Unfortunately, little has been done to apply this enhanced environmental consciousness on the ground. Environmental concerns were largely ignored by communist regimes, and are not typically integrated into socialist approaches to the management of human affairs. Capitalist systems tend to "deify" production and consumption at the expense of balanced, long-term growth. Social justice will only flourish if environmental preservation and sustainable development constitute an integral part of growth strategies now and in the future.

When income and income-related inequalities reach a certain level, those at the bottom of the socio-economic ladder are no longer in a position to enjoy many of their basic rights. Inequalities tend to intensify and accumulate. The human suffering in such circumstances is sufficient reason for public action—even without taking into consideration the real danger of social breakdown. The parallel in terms of international justice relates to the likelihood that efforts to build a global community will break down as the gap separating the poorest from the most affluent countries widens.

The use of wealth is arguably more important than its distribution. For reasons that are understandable in the light of the blatant exploitation associated with the

too often been associated with an excessively benevolent perception of human nature and a naively optimistic belief in the capacity of good ideas and institutions to transform the world into a secure and agreeable place. The capacity to judge and sanction is an indispensable quality at all levels of society. However, exclusive reliance on simple, straightforward instincts will only lead to injustice and violence. It makes more sense to periodically revisit and "update" the concept of social justice than to act as if it is obsolete.

It is important to reflect more deeply on the nature and use of power within both the human and institutional contexts. Individuals who hold power must be willing to submit to certain laws and regulations that limit their freedom to use their authority as they see fit. Those who are privileged to hold political and administrative power must understand that their legitimacy derives entirely from their capacity to serve the community. Social justice is impossible unless it is fully understood that power comes with the obligation of service. In reflecting on the nature, legitimacy and use of power, consideration must be given to self-interest, enlightened self-interest, general interest and the common good. The essence of democracy resides in a shared understanding of these concepts. Along similar lines, there seems to be a need to revive the notion of a social contract both within communities and for the world as a whole. Neither positivism nor utilitarianism is likely to yield very promising fruit for the future of humankind. In the final analysis, with the opportunity having been taken to reflect upon the developments and concepts surrounding social justice and the plight of the innumerable victims of injustice, it appears that the key to the successful pursuit of justice may lie in moderation—in the use of power, in production and consumption, in the expression of one's interests, views and beliefs, and in the conception and manifestation of self-interest and national interest.

Even in the pursuit of equality, justice and freedom—often characterized by intense passion—moderation and reason should prevail. Justice and freedom share an uneasy relationship. In philosophy, political theory, individual experience and collective endeavours, these critical human objectives are often incompatible; in the pursuit and protection of justice and freedom there is more typically an occasional and fragile reconciliation than a natural harmony. Nonetheless, all through human history, those facing extreme political oppression have revolted in the name of both freedom and justice, and great strides have been made through innumerable acts of heroism. At the very least, the idea that all individuals share a common humanity and possess fundamental rights simply because they are human, and that oppression and misery are not necessarily part of the human condition, has started to permeate the collective consciousness. However, setbacks and regressions occur more regularly than advances; in this fast-moving world, the majority of societies and political regimes, including those founded on democratic principles and ideals, have problems achieving and maintaining a balance between individual freedom and

social justice. The myriad difficulties and uneven progress notwithstanding, continued pursuit of these ideals is essential; even if Sisyphus is unhappy, he must fulfil his duty.

Building upon this brief overview, the chapters below provide more detailed information and observations for further reflection and debate.

1

1.1

The Charter of the United Nations makes no explicit distinction between international justice, or justice among nations, and social justice, or justice among people.

The Charter, of which the Statute of the International Court of Justice is an integral part, treats justice as a broad principle that ought to be applied in international relations. In the Preamble and Article 1 of the Charter, justice is associated with respect for international law. In Article 2, justice is linked to the sovereign equality of all Members and to the maintenance of peace and security. The references to peace and the equality of nations imply that each State should refrain from any use of force that may jeopardize or undermine the territorial integrity or political independence of another. Another implication is that the United Nations should not intervene in matters that are "essentially within the domestic jurisdiction of any State" (Article 2, para. 7), except to enforce measures adopted by the Security Council in line with the provisions set out in Chapter VII of the Charter.[6] The "one country, one vote" rule in the General Assembly is a visible manifestation of the Organization's recognition of sovereign equality.

The concept of justice as defined above will be referred to in the present text as , with the principles of sovereign equality, non-intervention, and equal voting rights constituting the . By the mid-1960s another dimension of international justice had take Chapte4(had)oshapte4(h7/

or Aristotle, or Confucius or Averroes, or even Rousseau or Kant—saw the need to consider justice or the redress of injustices from a social perspective. The concept first surfaced in Western thought and political language in the wake of the industrial revolution and the parallel development of the socialist doctrine. It emerged as an expression of protest against what was perceived as the capitalist exploitation of labour and as a focal point for the development of measures to improve the human condition. It was born as a revolutionary slogan embodying the ideals of progress and fraternity. Following the revolutions that shook Europe in the mid-1800s, social justice became a rallying cry for progressive thinkers and political activists. Proudhon, notably, identified justice with social justice, and social justice with respect for human dignity.

By the mid-twentieth century, the concept of social justice had become central to the ideologies and programmes of virtually all the leftist and centrist political parties around the world, and few dared to oppose it directly. Social justice represented the essence and the raison d'être of the social democrat doctrine and left its mark in the decades following the Second World War. Of particular importance in the present context is the link between the growing legitimization of the concept of social justice, on the one hand, and the emergence of the social sciences as distinct areas of activity and the creation of economics and sociology as disciplines separate from philosophy (notably moral philosophy), on the other hand. Social justice became more clearly defined when a distinction was drawn between the social sphere and the economic sphere, and grew into a mainstream preoccupation when a number of economists became convinced that it was their duty not only to describe phenomena but also to propose criteria for the distribution of the fruits of human activity.

The application of social justice requires a geographical, sociological, political and cultural framework within which relations between individuals and groups can be understood, assessed, and characterized as just or unjust. In modern times, this framework has been the nation-State. The country typically represents the context in which various aspects of social justice, such as the distribution of income in a population, are observed and measured; this benchmark is used not only by national Governments but also by international organizations and supranational entities such as the European Union. At the same time, there is clearly a universal dimension to social justice, with humanity as the common factor. Slaves, exploited workers and oppressed women are above all victimized human beings whose location matters less than their circumstances. This universality has taken on added depth and relevance as the physical and cultural distance between the world's peoples has effectively shrunk. In their discussions regarding the situation of migrant workers, for example, Forum participants readily acknowledged the national and global dimensions of social justice.

1.3

In the contemporary context, social justice is typically taken to mean distributive justice. The terms are generally understood to be synonymous and interchangeable in both common parlance and the language of international relations. The concept of social/distributive justice is implied in various academic and theoretical works and in many international legal or quasi-legal texts (such as the Charter and Universal Declaration) that may only include broad references to "justice". In certain interna-

of the human person, [and] in the equal rights of men and women". It requires the promotion of "social progress and better standards of life in larger freedom" and of "the economic and social advancement of all peoples". It underlies the third stated purpose of the United Nations (after maintaining peace and friendly relations among nations), which is "to achieve international cooperation in solving international prob

mulated frameworks of moral and political values. Such frameworks vary considerably across cultures and over time, but through the centuries prophets, philosophers and other intellectuals have repeatedly attempted to identify common ground that would allow all human beings in their own and in successive generations to agree on definitions of right and wrong, good and bad, just and unjust. It is often said that all great religions and philosophies embody the same core principles and values, and beyond the different metaphysics and institutional settings, reflect the same belief in the capacity of human beings to make moral judgments and to seek perfection in some form. Progress was originally a spiritual concept and was only later applied to the fruits of human technical ingenuity, and the same is true for the notion of justice, which has retained much of the timeless immanence deriving from its religious roots. The United Nations is an outgrowth and an expression of this quest for the universal, of this purposeful search for a common humanity. Notions such as human nature and natural law have found expression in the more modern concepts of the "social contract" and "social compact". To give justice among individuals and

all societies, both affluent and poor. Every society, even the laissez-faire variety, has engaged in the distribution and redistribution of income and wealth in some form, with policies generally favouring the poorest but sometimes benefiting the richest, and it is for this reason that issues of equity in living conditions remain central to the dialogue and debate on social justice.

1.7 [illegible]

Going a step further in endeavouring to define the more concrete elements requiring consideration in relation to the idea of social justice, the Forum identified six areas of distributive inequality corresponding to situations that, from the perspective of those directly concerned and of the "impartial observer",[9] require correction. Listed roughly in descending order in terms of their relative importance and in ascending order in terms of how difficult they are to measure, the highlighted areas of inequality are as follows:

•

and employment is important; "work" encompasses all independent economic activities and what is called the spirit of entrepreneurship (an element of which

1.8

Before moving on to an assessment of recent trends in the realm of social justice and international justice, brief consideration should be given to two complementary factors relating to the conceptual framework for social justice sketched in this first chapter.

First, the six types or areas of inequality reviewed above may be referred to as "vertical" inequalities. They derive from the division of an entire population—usually the inhabitants of a country but in some cases the members of a region, a city or an age group—along the lines of income or degree of political participation or other variables theoretically applicable to all. The Forum concentrated on this approach because of the importance traditionally attached to the distribution of income as an overall measure of inequality in a country. However, there are other types of disparities that might be termed "horizontal" inequalities, reflecting comparisons made between the situations of identified segments of the population differentiated on the basis of sex, racial or ethnic origin, or area of residence, for example. Using the earlier delineation of vertical inequalities as a guide, it would be important to establish some sort of typology of the forms of horizontal inequality that are generally considered and are deemed important from the perspective of social justice. The Forum was in a position to make only a few comments in this context, notably with regard to the progress made in the critical domain of equality between women and men.

Second, further conceptual effort is required to examine the extent to which the three priority areas of equality/equity and the six areas of inequality that have been identified to lend operational content to the notion of social justice also apply to the developmental aspects of international justice. A number of the categories are clearly valid for both dimensions of justice, in particular the distribution of income, assets and access to knowledge, while others, such as the distribution of opportunities for political participation, would be applicable with some modifications in language—in this case a mention of the involvement of countries in the management of international organizations and other international arrangements such as the meetings of the Group of Eight industrialized countries. Other categories specifically relevant to issues of international justice in a fragmented and conflicted world also require consideration and counmentmbire the conxthe of

recognition of the differences in power among States. Power implies influence and responsibility. An international organization that ignored this fact and did not possess the characteristics of a world government would be reduced to impotence and irrelevance. Accordingly, the Charter established a balance between these two facets of international justice with the respective compositions and functions of the General Assembly and the Security Council.

This system is still in place 60 years later but is being subjected to increasing pressure and criticism. Concerns have prompted calls for reforming the composition of the Security Council, and questions have been raised regarding the role and effectiveness of the General Assembly. Voices urging the abandonment of the "one country, one vote" principle and its replacement (at least in some contexts) with a weighted voting system have so far been rather muted, but the recalcitrance shown by those Member States impatient with international democracy has effectively stripped the General Assembly of its powers. Particularly since the call for a new international economic order by developing and non-aligned countries in the mid-1970s gave rise to complaints of "a tyranny of the majority", the General Assembly has largely been reduced to an annual forum without much influence in world affairs. In the mid-1980s, the major contributors to the United Nations budget demanded substantial organizational 102 5et mi110(Securitysi3g/T1)-15(bf)-110(the)-1

and then at the level of the whole. This has not proved an effective way of reconciling the interests of Member States. Rather, it prompts the Assembly to retreat into generalities, abandoning any serious effort to take action."[11] One might assert that the previously alleged "tyranny of the majority" has been replaced by a "tyranny of the minority" in the age of globalization.

2.3 [illegible] ?

The various arguments advanced to support the legitimacy of an inquiry into the developmental aspect of international justice may be summarized as follows:

- The State is no longer the main actor on the international scene, and its relevance will continue to diminish as the process of globalization gains momen

interplay of private interests and forces. States must assume more responsibility for the pursuit of peace and justice. Greater equality in levels of development, measured traditionally or using indicators more sensitive to social and political conditions, would place more countries in a position to participate in the management of global affairs. This assertion is not based on naive optimism or the assumption of universal benevolence among peoples and their Governments. Simply put, countries and Governments less plagued by disorder and poverty and blessed with intangibles such as hope, respect from others, and a sense of their own worth and dignity have a greater capacity and are more likely to contribute to the building and maintenance of a harmonious world community. The various aspects of international justice are connected.

- Second, links exist not only between the reduction in inequalities in levels of development and increased respect for the territorial and political integrity of each nation, but also between international justice, so understood, and social justice. Issues of intracountry and intercountry inequality are related first through the prevailing ideas on economic organization and development. Policies and practices relating to market deregulation, free trade and domestic market protection, competition, labour costs and labour standards, systems of taxation, and tax exemptions and tax havens, for example, have a direct impact on various forms of equity and equality at both the national and international levels. Generally, the "rules of the game" established for international transactions strongly influence domestic conditions and the distribution of the fruits of economic activity. Currently, the freedom of action enjoyed by a few major public and corporate powers to set the rules of the game is paralleled by the relative impotence of a majority of lesser actors, including most of the Member States of the United Nations. This constituted a recurrent theme within the Forum. For a large number of countries, the reduction or prevention of inequalities and inequities at home would be greatly facilitated or even effected by a reduction in inequalities and inequities at the international and global levels. Certain features of the present world political economy, including those generally viewed as positive, such as the relatively free global movement of individuals with valued managerial or technical abilities, create or contribute to domestic imbalances and inequalities. In this example, the international-domestic link was established through the emergence of a transnational market for certain skills. This market affects national patterns of salary and income distribution owing not only to the cross-border movement of labour but also to the fact that there are talented individuals from developing countries who decide not to move abroad but are nevertheless in a better bargaining position because their skills are in demand elsewhere. This relatively new phenomenon of increased inequality among groups across national borders—characterized by a degree of homogeneity at both the top and

bottom of the income and status ladder (among those with highly valued and little valued skills, respectively)—is an important development. Growing regional inequalities inside countries are also a product of the "entanglement" of various types of inequality and inequity within and between countries and derive in part from the characteristics of the global economy. International justice and social justice have advanced or regressed in parallel.

2.4

Overall, the income gap between rich and poor countries and regions has been widening since the beginning of the 1980s. Per capita income in various world regions, expressed as a proportion of the average per capita income of the wealthier country members of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), evolved as follows between 1980 and the beginning of the twenty-first century: the relative share declined from 3.3 to 1.9 per cent in Africa, from 9.7 to 6.7 per cent in the Middle East and North Africa, and from 18 to 12.8 per cent in Latin America and the Caribbean, but rose from 1.2 to 1.6 per cent in South Asia and from 1.5 to 3.3 per cent in East Asia and the Pacific. Statistics on the world distribution of income indicate that in the 1990s a larger proportion of the African population moved into the lowest income quintile. The 2004 *B* reveals that the 2.3 billion people living in low-income countries earn an average of US$ 450 per year, though in some economies the figure is as low as US$ 90; for the 3 billion people in middle-income countries, the average is US$ 1,920, while the 971 million in high-income countries receive an average of US$ 28,550. In other words, the 1 billion people living in wealthier countries account for 80 per cent of the world's gross domestic product (GDP), while the 5 billion people in developing countries share the remaining 20 per cent. Within regions, income inequality among countries has also grown.[12]

The rise in income inequality between countries has been accompanied by growing disparities in the ability of various countries and regions to reduce the extreme poverty affecting portions of their population. Statistics indicate that the share of people living on less than US$ 1 a day fell from 40 per cent in 1981 to 21 per cent in 2001, but this overall decline masks widely divergent regional trends. East Asia and the Pacific, led by China, reported the largest decline in extreme poverty, with the rate dropping from 58 to 16 per cent. Absolute poverty also declined in South Asia (from 52 to 31 per cent), but remained steady in Latin America (at around 20 per cent) and rose dramatically in the former Soviet Union and in Central Europe. In Africa, the number of people living in dire poverty nearly doubled.

In political terms, inequality between countries has certainly not declined in recent years. One country has gained hegemony, the Security Council has retained the same permanent members, and developing countries appear to have less leve-

rage in world affairs than they did 20 years ago. Developing countries have made no significant progress in their quest for a greater say in the management of the world economy and for control over global private economic and financial forces. Financial and trade practices still favour the most powerful, and exceptions to general rules are granted more rarely and reluctantly than ever before. There are strong inequalities and imbalances in the global decision-making processes affecting all countries. The processes and operations associated with the formulation, implementation and evaluation of the rules and regulations governing the functioning of the world economy are still largely controlled by rich countries. Financial dependency may be an important contributing factor; a number of Governments continue to rely on ODA for their daily operations. Personal security is another area of concern; countries at different levels of development remain extremely unequal in their degree of exposure to various risks and in their capacity to deal with the consequences of natural catastrophes or man-made conflicts and violence. Developing countries with low to moderate levels of power and influence have no more political autonomy now than they did several decades ago. For the countries of the world, the distance between the rich and the poor, the powerful and the weak, and the self-sufficient and the dependent is now often characterized as an abyss.

3

Even when reliable statistics are available from national sources and the much-used (and indeed indispensable) aggregates and averages for indicators such as per capita income and enrolment ratios are provided, data are generally not broken down enough to capture critical details relating the situation of specific population groups. In the present context, data on individuals in the top 5 per cent or 1 per cent in terms of income or assets could be further disaggregated in some countries to allow an examination of the situation of the very rich. Those at the other end of the socio-economic scale would also benefit from a closer look; the extremely poor are rarely the focus of regular detailed analysis.

Data on social and economic conditions are often expressed in absolute numbers, percentages or ratios; indicators relying on other forms of measurement offer an added dimension to the analytical process. The use of the Gini coefficient, on which most analyses and comparisons of trends in income distribution are based, is a case in point.[14] For example, an observed increase in income inequality in the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland since the beginning of the 1980s may be interpreted differently from a similar increase observed in the United States during the same period based on the countries' respective Gini scores; the United Kingdom currently has a Gini index of 32.5, which roughly corresponds to the levels in developing countries, whereas the index for the United States, at 41.4, is closer to the levels of most Latin American countries.

It should be noted that the qualitative aspects of inequality are often extremely difficult to measure; current statistics and indicators are glaringly inadequate in this respect. Only very specific and detailed enquiries could, for instance, reveal the extent of open and covert discrimination that in most societies affects people who are in any way different from the majority.

3.2

In spite of the complexity and scope of the subject of inequality, and in spite of the difficulties in measuring or simply assessing its dimensions, the Forum was able to state with a reasonable degree of certainty that the overall level of inequality in the world had risen since the beginning of the 1980s. The trend towards greater equality, evident in most regions following the Second World War, has to a significant extent been reversed during the past few decades, and all signs point to a continuation of this tendency. In reaching this conclusion the Forum relied on its own observations and on the results of regional studies it had commissioned. Immense intellectual satisfaction was undoubtedly gained from the fact that the Forum's findings were in agreement with those obtained by the World Institute for Development Economics Research (WIDER) through its comprehensive investigative efforts, the results of which were published at the beginning of 2004.[15] The subsections below offer evidence of the overall aggravation of inequality in different

societies during the past several decades, incorporating regional distinctions and other details where possible.

3.2.1 [illegible]

Inequalities in income distribution have worsened in most countries during the past 20 to 30 years. Typically, the share of total national income accruing to households in the top income decile has increased, while the share of the bottom 10 per cent has decreased. Between those at each end of the scale—the richest 1 per cent and the poorest 1 per cent—the gaps have grown even wider. In a number of countries, particularly in Asia, the rise in income inequality has been accompanied by a reduction in extreme poverty as measured by the threshold of US$ 1 per day or by national poverty lines. However, it appears that in the majority of countries around the world, both income inequality and extreme poverty have increased, affecting larger numbers and proportions of the population. The current situation in various regions and country groupings may be summarized as follows:

- In , poverty in the context of inadequate economic development is a dominant problem. Though data are scarce, income inequality appears to be significant and is becoming an issue of growing concern. Estimates put the Gini index at 44 per cent; the shares of total income for those in the highest and lowest income quintiles are 50 and 5 per cent respectively. Statistics indicate that about a quarter of Africa's residents are experiencing long-term poverty and that up to 60 per cent are extremely vulnerable and move in and out of extreme poverty. It should be noted that the incidence of poverty and levels of inequality vary widely among countries, and there are indications that negative trends are being reversed in some parts of the continent.
- In , income inequality has grown very rapidly and dramatically in some countries, including China (whose Gini index is believed to have risen from 25 to 37.2 per cent between 1984 and 2000), and more slowly and steadily in other countries, notably Bangladesh, India, Indonesia, Malaysia, Pakistan, Sri Lanka and Thailand. At the same time, overall standards of living have improved as a result of fast economic growth, and extreme poverty affects a smaller proportion of the region's population today than it did 10 or 20 years ago. The trend towards a reduction in extreme poverty, initiated several decades ago, was interrupted by the financial crisis of 1996/97 but has resumed in recent years.
- *L* has traditionally experienced high levels of income inequality, as evidenced by the region's current Gini index of around 44 per cent. Inequalities have increased during the past several decades, particularly in Bra-

zil, Chile and Venezuela. The combined results of national household surveys indicate that 211 million people in the region were experiencing absolute poverty at the end of the 1990s, compared with 136 million in 1980 and 200 million in 1990.

- In *E* , the region encompassing the former Soviet Union and Central and Eastern Europe, dramatic increases in both income inequality and extreme poverty occurred in the wake of the enormous political and social upheaval accompanying the shift from a planned economy to a market economy. In the Russian Federation, for example, the income share of the poorest 20 per cent of the population fell from 11.9 per cent in 1991 to 5.9 per cent in 2001, while the share of the richest 20 per cent rose from 30.7 to 48.3 per cent. During this period, 80 per cent of the country's households experienced a drop in income. Absolute poverty affected 50 per cent of the population in the Russian Federation and around 80 per cent in most of the Central Asian republics at the end of the twentieth century. Over the past few years, with the resumption of a certain level of economic growth, levels of extreme poverty in the region have improved somewhat.
- Income inequality has increased markedly in a number of *OECD* ; towards the end of the 1990s, Gini indexes were 41.7 per cent for Australia, 41.4 per cent for the United States, 40.2 per cent for New Zealand, and 32.5 per cent for the United Kingdom. Levels of income inequality have remained stable in other OECD countries, including France, Germany, Japan, the Republic of Korea and Sweden, and have actually declined in Canada, Italy, Norway and Spain. A few other exceptions to the general trend of worsening income distribution are also worth noting; in Latin America, income inequality has improved in Honduras and Uruguay and has apparently remained relatively stable in Mexico. For the Forum, these exceptions seemed to suggest that those Governments that wished to do so somehow found it possible to resist the wave of liberalism that has arguably been responsible for the deepening of income inequalities in the world. However, it would be imprudent to attach too much meaning (and for those involved in activities aimed at reducing income inequalities, too much hope) to these deviations from the general trend; countries that have not experienced increased income inequality may yet do so at some point in the future. In all of the OECD countries, absolute poverty, measured according to national poverty lines, has become more prevalent during the past 20 to 25 years. There is no compelling evidence indicating that those countries that have experienced stable or improved income distribution have managed to avoid worsening inequalities in the other domains listed below.

3.2.2 [illegible]

Although asset distribution is not as well documented as income distribution, there is no question that both have been characterized by the same negative trend. During the past quarter of a century, the distribution of assets, especially capital, has become more skewed in favour of those at the top of the socio-economic ladder. As labour has lost ground in relation to capital for the remuneration of the factors of production, the share of capital income in total income has increased, and this capital has been more heavily concentrated in fewer hands rather than more evenly distributed. The almost universal trend towards privatization that swept the world during the last part of the twentieth century rarely, if ever, resulted in the spread of "popular capitalism". The main beneficiaries of the shift from a State-controlled, State-dominated, or even State-influenced economy to a more liberalized economy in various parts of the world have been those privileged few in positions of power or influence. Nowhere have employees and small entrepreneurs succeeded in modifying the national distribution of assets to their advantage; few have been given the chance to try. The much freer circulation of capital and the opening up of investment opportunities across national borders, combined with the privatization movement, have led to a global redistribution of assets characterized by the transfer of significant amounts of capital from national to foreign hands. In the mid-1990s, transnational corporations controlled half of the 100 largest companies in Latin America and accounted for 43 per cent of the sales of the region's top 500 companies. Another factor contributing to the uneven distribution of assets is capital flight, which seriously hinders development in many countries. The highest incidence of capital flight occurs in Africa, Latin America and the Middle East; capital flight from severely indebted sub-Saharan African countries was recently estimated to have reached US$ 22 billion. The disappearance of land reform and land redistribution from the development agendas of most countries has further skewed the distribution of assets in the world. Almost everywhere, the position of the "haves" in society has been strengthened by the evolution of tax systems that

preneurial talents either independently or as members of domestic or foreign companies. Notwithstanding the well-publicized role of oligarchs and plutocrats in the Russian Federation, the opening of the country's economy is believed to have given many young men and women a chance to prove their worth and be rewarded accordingly. The same appears to be true for the former socialist countries of Central and Eastern Europe. In India, already a democracy, economic reforms and an overall policy more favourable to capitalist and free market ideals have led to more and better opportunities for young graduates and professionals both at home and abroad. Even in a number of well-established economies in which market-oriented reforms have been instituted in a very gradual and controlled manner, there are more economic opportunities available now than 20 years ago; the United Kingdom is a case in point. Overall, these developments suggest that some progress has been made towards achieving economic justice. At the same time, however, the commitment made at the World Summit for Social Development to pursue the goal of full employment has largely been neglected. Globally, unemployment and underemployment have increased and now affect a much larger proportion of individuals on the lower rungs of the socio-economic ladder—the poor, the uneducated, and those with skills not valued in the economy—than those with an education, social connections, and more highly valued skills. In both developed and developing countries, women and youth are disproportionately affected by unemployment and underemployment. Work and employment opportunities are generally more scarce in rural areas than in urban areas, even though rural residents make up the majority of the population in many developing countries, and the situation does not appear to be improving. In India, for instance, growth in rural employment stood at only 0.67 per cent at the end of the 1990s, the lowest rate registered in the country's post-independence history. In a significant number of countries, the gap between rural and urban salaries appears to have widened. Around the world, new job opportunities have emerged predominantly in the services sector, and in developing countries in particular, most of these opportunities have been within the informal economy, where workers are poorly compensated and not provided with any kind of social security, and where labour laws and standards are seldom observed. Precarious working conditions are now the rule rather than the exception in many contexts, pointing to the treatment of labour as a "commodity", a practice denounced more than a century ago by Karl Marx and others. Seemingly everywhere, wages and other forms of remuneration have become increasingly unequal within and between sectors, communities, countries and regions, and between nationals and immigrants, the skilled and the less skilled, and urban and rural residents. Even within the public services sector, which has generally been "downsized", differences in remuneration have widened as attempts have been made to reward initiative and competence rather than dedication and se-

niority. These trends suggest that while progress has been made in the realm of economic justice, with the rewarding of initiative and talent, levels of inequality have continued to increase. Employment and work opportunities have improved for a minority but have deteriorated, in both quantitative and qualitative terms, for the majority of people in the world.

3.2.4 A

This complex and somewhat ambiguous title effectively represents an invitation to those interested in pursuing this line of inquiry rather than a set of informed conclusions reached by the Forum. Clearly, segments of the population that previously had little or no access to information now find it far more readily available. Radio, television and newspapers have touched the lives of people all along the socio-economic spectrum in virtually every corner of every nation. Wired and wireless technologies have revolutionized the exchange and dis-

mains a persistent problem. In Latin America, for example, around 75 per cent of young people in urban areas are from households in which the parents received less than 10 years of education, and on average, more than 45 per cent of them fail to complete the 12 years of schooling considered necessary to secure a decent and stable job and income. Just over 30 per cent of young people whose parents did not complete their primary education manage to finish the secondary cycle, compared with 75 per cent of those whose parents had at least 10 years of schooling.

There appears to be a strong link between rising inequalities in the distribution of opportunities for a quality education and the recent tendency to commercialize education and treat it as a commodity subject to the rules of an open

lennium Development Goals is to ensure that, through cooperation with the pharmaceutical industry, individuals in developing countries are provided with access to affordable essential medications.

Some countries and regions have experienced a regression during the past few decades, even in terms of broad indicators such as life expectancy and infant mortality. This has been especially true in Eurasia. At least until recently—and the evidence of a reversal is far from overwhelming—health conditions were deteriorating dramatically in much of the region, particularly in the Russian Federation in the context of general neglect, the under-financing of public services, and the breakdown of a wide range of social institutions. An actual decline in life expectancy was registered—a rather exceptional development in these modern times. This overall decline in health conditions was accompanied by increased inequalities, as the affluent minority had access to higher-quality private health care and facilities at home or abroad. The health sector, perhaps to an even greater degree than the education sector, is becoming highly commercialized in many parts of the world. It is fast becoming an industry driven by supply and demand, with producers and consumers, and those with means have a distinct advantage over the poor in terms of their ability to secure a wide array of quality services. Social security systems are under severe stress, as the demand for services far exceeds available resources in many settings, and private insurance is increasingly seen as an alternative to publicly financed systems of protection. Those living in more affluent countries typically have greater access to health information and are theoretically in a better position to understand their health and nutritional needs and the workings of the health-care system. Nonetheless, the residents of richer countries tend to be prone to obesity, while poor people in developing countries are undernourished, and many are starving. Those higher on the social ladder, particularly in developed countries, are also more aware of environmental challenges and are better able to protect themselves from pollution and other hazards. Affluent countries and social groups consume more energy and are therefore the biggest polluters, but they are also the ones with the greatest capacity to mobilize resources to ensure a clean environment.

3.2.6 A[illegible]

The Forum was not in a position to address this vast and complex subject beyond offering a few general observations. Judgments on progress or regression in the realm of political participation are heavily dependent on the perspective and criteria adopted by the observer; this is true with regard to all the aspects of inequality examined thus far but is particularly the case here. Apart from the

intense focus on issues of violence and security in recent years, the international discourse has concentrated on the progress of democracy. Since the collapse of the Soviet Union, a great many countries have shifted from dictatorial or authoritarian regimes to political systems or structures that incorporate at least some aspects of democracy, including the holding of elections. In and around the Russian Federation, in Latin America, in Africa, and to some extent in Asia, the practice of democracy—even in limited form—is now the rule rather than the exception. The remaining authoritarian and single-party regimes seem to be increasingly on the defensive, as the isolation and strict control of more informed citizens are allegedly more difficult to achieve and sustain.

Political participation is presumably less hampered now than in the past by inequalities in social status, as privileges and opportunities for advancement are no longer reserved exclusively for those in the more elevated social classes, positions and professions, and the subservience and passivity of the masses, once resigned to their unalterable circumstances, are largely a thing of the past. In rigid, hierarchical social systems in which roles, duties and responsibilities are clearly defined, those in the lower and larger part of the pyramid must either accept or revolt against the status quo. During the time of Adam Smith and Voltaire this stratification was called social inequality and was considered the main obstacle to political and social progress. When money becomes the main determinant of social status and stratification, social mobility increases significantly, which theoretically makes political participation easier as it is more directly linked to individual choice. In such circumstances, individuals and communities tend to become more aware of their rights and options; logically, they shoulallyand loOas In udi

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Growing disparities in the distribution of income and assets, the direct link between socio-economic class and access to quality health care and education, and the decline in the participation of average citizens in public affairs are only a few of the many indications that social justice is receding, both as an objective of Governments and as a feature of societies. If one also takes into account the worsening of absolute poverty, particularly in affluent countries, it becomes readily apparent that the world is experiencing overall social regression, at least as measured by the traditional yardsticks of the founding texts of the United Nations. The spread of a

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4.1 A

By the end of the 1960s, international cooperation for development had become the most visible endeavour of the United Nations. As the cold war was effectively "freezing" the Security Council and its peace-making and peace-keeping activities and seriously constraining the potentially immense role of the Organization with regard to human rights and fundamental freedoms, development, seen as the progressive reduction and eventual closing of the gap between developed and underdeveloped countries, rose to the top of the international agenda. Close to half of the regular budget and an equivalent proportion of the staff of the United Nations were mobilized in support of economic and social development. In contrast, "political" matters (including Security Council activities), legal issues, and the development of international law and human rights together were allocated less than 10 per cent of the Organization's human and financial resources. New programmes and funds were created, including the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) and the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA). Extrabudgetary resources, obtained through voluntary contributions provided by affluent countries in addition to their assessed contributions to the regular budget and to the then-small peace-keeping budget, gave the Organization more flexibility in its development-oriented activities.

These additional resources were used to address major issues of international concern, including refugees and later the environment and human habitat, but they were also earmarked for research, analyses and publications by the Secretariat on conceptual and political problems of development and economic and social progress. Governments providing these voluntary contributions clearly had a political agenda, which is just as true today, but this agenda included a number of items of benefit to the Organization, such as strengthening the capacity of the Secretariat to devise or further elaborate economic models and forecasts and to assess social and environmental indicators that could complement economic indicators and provide a comprehensive measure of the progress or regression of societies. In a context of steady growth in the Organization's regular budget, such loosely "tied" financial aid—representing about 35 per cent of the total annual expenditure of the United Nations by the beginning of the 1980s—gave the Secretary-General and the

Secretariat the capacity to establish a strong and respected voice in the debate on development and to play a significant role in concrete development activities. Third world development constituted the most dynamic part of the United Nations and its most recognized face in rich and poor countries alike.

At the beginning, the growth model offered by the regimes of the countries that emerged victorious from the Second World War and, very soon after, the example offered by the rapid reconstruction and economic recovery of defeated countries, particularly Germany and Japan, were accepted without question. Economic growth, through judicious investments, the establishment of a modern infrastructure, employment creation, education and training, and a mix of public and private initiatives, constituted the key to development. Outside the Soviet Union and its sphere of domination in Central and Eastern Europe, the influence of communism on development

quarters, the development model itself was seen as flawed. Widespread reliance on exports of primary commodities and imports of manufactured goods within the developing world meant that countries along the "periphery" were largely dependent on those at the "centre". Strategies were devised for import substitution and, more ambitiously, for economic and political self-reliance. Rural development programmes were adopted to address the rural-urban migration associated with traditional industrial development and the consequent spread of urban slums. Different approaches to development were formulated by social scientists, particularly in Latin America. The almost exclusive reliance on economic development among

through the establishment of cartels, had acquired the capacity to control the prices of their products. Ultimately the crisis led to an extended slowdown in economic growth—again, chiefly in Europe and Japan. Perhaps most importantly, there was evidence that developing countries were using this opportunity to try to modify the balance of economic power in the world in their favour and to practice a form of economic nationalism that could seriously hinder the development of global capitalism.

The above-mentioned documents on the establishment of a new world economic order emphasize the right of every State to regulate and control foreign investment and the activities of transnational corporations within its borders. Recognition is also given to the right of each State to choose its political, social and economic systems; nationalizations and expropriations are considered permissible within this context. Other controversial provisions of these texts relate to science and technology transfer and research cooperation. Full disarmament is also envisaged, as is cooperation in environmental protection. The Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States was adopted by the General Assembly in December 1974 by 120 votes to 6, with 10 abstentions. In March 1975, the Second General Conference of the United Nations Industrial Development Organization adopted the Lima Declaration and Plan of Action on Industrial Development and Cooperation. In this Declaration, it was stated that the share of developing countries in total world industrial production "should be increased to the maximum possible extent and as far as possible to at least 25 per cent of total world industrial production by the year 2000, while making every endeavor to ensure that the industrial growth so achieved is distributed among developing countries as evenly as possible."[18] Irrespective of its substantive merits, this target was immediately taken by commentators of the Western world as clear evidence of the irresponsibility of activist developing countries and of their supporters in the secretariats of international organizations. It was both ridiculed as an unattainable objective and denounced as an attempt to place the world economy and its market forces within the straightjacket of world planners and technocrats.

4.3 A [illegible]

It was arguably at this point that the most powerful developed countries decided to effectively neutralize the role of the United Nations and its specialized agencies as forums for debate and for important decisions regarding the functioning of the world economy. From the mid-1970s onward, these countries relied increasingly on the better-controlled Bretton Woods institutions, strengthening their role and influence in global economic development, and pressed for the reform of the United Nations, which was formally initiated at the end of 1986 and is still very much on the international agenda. With the collapse of the Soviet bloc at the end of the 1980s,

Second, consistent with the emphasis on people, section III of the Declaration focuses on development and poverty eradication. The right to development is mentioned, but its application for "everyone" and to "the entire human race" suggests that it is regarded more as an individual and collective right than a right of nations. Reference is made to the "abject and dehumanizing conditions" endured by billions of "our fellow men, women and children" in extreme poverty. There is no mention of the distribution of income and wealth among countries or of the various gaps that separate developed from developing countries. It is stressed that development will depend first on "good governance within each country" but also on "good governance at the international level and on transparency in the financial, monetary and trading systems". The multilateral trading and financial system must be "open, equitable, rule-based, predictable and non-discriminatory". The special needs of least developed countries are addressed in this section, and industrialized developed countries are called upon to undertake various measures for their benefit, including (a) the cancellation of bilateral debt "in return for their making demonstrable commitments to poverty reduction" and (b) the granting of "more generous development assistance", again, "especially to countries that are genuinely making an effort to apply their resources to poverty reduction".[20]

Third, and most importantly, the eighth Millennium Development Goal[21]—to "develop a global partnership for development"—is perfectly representative of the "new

expressed their strong support and are working in the field to achieve the objectives and targets established at the beginning of the new millennium. This is truly exceptional for an initiative of the United Nations.

A resolution of the General Assembly rarely enjoys such wide exposure or what

cies are also to provide development assistance, but an increasing proportion of this support is to be given to least developed countries. Developing countries, for their part, have to improve levels of organization and efficiency in their domestic affairs. Good governance is an essential condition for development. It is normally associated with the practice of democracy and with respect for human rights. Unless otherwise indicated, good governance is understood as the authority exercised by institutions that operate according to the rule of law, that are not corrupt, and that facilitate the free exercise of private initiative by both domestic and foreign sources. The central role of private initiative and of the private sector is emphasized in the eighth Millennium Development Goal. The private sector is a partner in development on par with States.

This conception of international justice, which essentially amounts to fair competition and an element of solidarity with, or even charity for, the poorest and weakest countries, not only reflects the dominant political culture, but is also consistent

nant political culture of the time, it is a culture that essentially reflects the interests and views of the most powerful actors on the international scene. It represents a regression in the conception and practice of international cooperation that has been gaining momentum since the creation of the United Nations. The following points were made during the course of the Forum meetings:

- Goal 8, with its pragmatic dryness and absence of ambition, bears no resemblance to the values and principles highlighted at the beginning of the Millennium Declaration. Equality, solidarity and shared responsibility cannot be reduced, when it comes to relations between developed and developing countries, to open trade, partnerships with the private sector, and traditional aid for the least developed countries. When there is such a disconnection between values and policies, one is forced to conclude that the values represent little more than empty rhetoric and that policies are made in accordance with the traditional requirements of political realism.

- What sort of "development" is this global partnership supposed to bring to developing countries and to the world? Is it sustainable development? If so, why is the crucial point made in the Declaration with regard the value "respect for nature"—that "the current unsustainable patterns of production and consumption must be changed in the interest of our future welfare and that of our descendants" (para. 6)—not reflected in Goal 8, or in Goal 7, which relates to environmental sustainability? Is it a development respectful of cultural diversity, pluralism, and national responsibilities and choices? Such notions are totally absent from the Millennium Development Goals. It seems, then, that it is the traditional model, in which development is identified with growth and the latter with an increase in gross national product, that is proposed for developing countries. Developed countries, unconcerned with the Goals, presumably represent this model. Does this mean that developed countries are facing no problems in their efforts to achieve economic and social progress? Are the voices claiming that today's dominant civilization is physically, politically, morally and spiritually unsustainable to be totally ignored?
- In any event, Goal 8, with all its limitations, largely ignored. When it comes to the Millennium texts, all attention is focused on poverty reduction. It is as if the eighth Goal and the issue of development has been included in the Millennium Development Goals —as if poverty must first be reduced, then development will be achieved. Meanwhile, the formal and informal rules governing trade, finance and other aspects of the world economy are still heavily biased in favour of the affluent and powerful countries. Greater participation by developing countries in the management of world affairs in general and of the world economy in particular—an objective conspicuously absent from the Millennium Development Goals—is not being achieved.

Those offering such criticisms maintain that the pursuit of international justice, understood as the quest for equality for all members of the international community, is disappearing from the international scene, and the United Nations is failing to halt this trend. In fact, the very notion of an international community is endangered, not only as a working reality but as a project and an ideal.

5

The evolution of views on international justice in the United Nations and the changing perception of the relevance of social justice within the Organization are two stories

reaffirmed, with the same conception of justice for peoples, and a number of its provisions are elaborated.

The Charter and the Universal Declaration provided the United Nations and its Secretariat with a solid foundation for contributing to the propagation of justice in the world. Early efforts focusing on decolonization, self-determination, the recognition of human rights for all without discrimination (including equal rights for men and women), the creation of equal opportunities for education and work, improvements and greater equality in living conditions, and the provision of adequate social security were all linked, as these were objectives that together constituted a new beginning for humankind. Intellectually, and even politically, the promotion of justice seemed a legitimate undertaking. There were enormous problems, but the path to progress seemed reasonably well marked. The ideals of justice, equality and equity were shared; the ideological competition and then confrontation between liberalism and communism/socialism were much more about freedom and the meaning of democracy than about the need for equality and equity in society.

5.2

"Social justice" first appeared in United Nations texts during the second half of the 1960s. At the initiative of the Soviet Union, and with the support of developing countries, the term was used in the Declaration on Social Progress and Development, adopted in 1969.[23] Five years later, it appeared in the Charter of the Economic Rights and Duties of States. Chapter 1 of this Charter includes a list of 15 principles that should govern relations between States, and a few of these are particularly relevant in the present context; the thirteenth principle is the "promotion of international social justice", the first is "sovereignty, territorial integrity and political independence of States", and the eleventh is "respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms". By the time the latter text came out, social justice was a familiar concept in those parts of the Secretariat involved in social affairs. The Social Commission, one of the first subsidiary bodies of the Economic and Social Council, had become the Commission for Social Development. Social justice, equality and equity were sometimes defined as distinct concepts but were more often used loosely and interchangeably.

Why was it that social justice appeared on the agenda of the United Nations by the end of the 1960s? Why was it felt necessary to add this qualifier to the venerable word "justice"? A little history and some explanations are provided below in the hopes of contributing to a better understanding of the present situation.

The separation in the United Nations between human rights activities and the work being carried out to promote economic and social advancement was completed in the 1960s. Linked in the United Nations Charter, as they are in human experience, these two domains became identified with different disciplines (law for human rights,

and economics for what the Charter refers to as "social progress and better standards of life", which came to be called "development"), and also with different political

information on conditions and policies in developed and developing countries, but these reports had, and still have, a limited audience, even within the Secretariat and its different departments. Furthermore, the General Assembly regularly adopted resolutions on economic and social development and resolutions on the economic, social and cultural rights of people as if the two subjects had nothing in common.

Human rights efforts focused on the individual, while the work on development and social justice concentrated on society and international cooperation for development. The pursuit of social justice, which involved efforts to achieve greater equality

A similar trend prevails with regard to efforts focused on the rights and situation of children, at least within the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), and an integrated approach is increasingly being applied in activities undertaken on behalf of indigenous peoples and persons with disabilities. The Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, a subsidiary of the Economic and Social Council, has a comprehensive mandate and an integrated secretariat. The Department of Economic and Social Affairs, working in close cooperation with the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, has assisted the General Assembly in the preparation of the Draft Comprehensive and Integral International Convention on Protection and Promotion of the Rights and Dignity of Persons with Disabilities. There is some political support for the idea of allowing the United Nations do meaningful work along these same lines with regard to the issue of migrant workers. At present, there is a relative lack of momentum in this area; the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families,[27] which entered into force in 2003, has been ratified by only a limited number of countries, and the Commission on Population and Development has a mandate to act upon relevant provisions adopted by the Internauny3t(y)10(

rents that were criss-crossing through the United Nations at the end of the twentieth century. In the words of former United Nations Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali, the Copenhagen Declaration on Social Development and Programme of Action of the World Summit for Social Development represented "a new social contract at the global level" reflecting "a sense of solidarity within nations and between nations".[28] The Secretary-General observed that "social problems, which once could be confined within borders, now spread across the world; once considered to be the exclusive responsibility of national Governments, these problems are

the World Summit for Social Development, "economic activities, through which individuals express their initiative and creativity and which enhance the wealth of communities, are a fundamental basis for social progress. But social progress will not be realized simply through the free interaction of market forces. Public policies are necessary to correct market failures, to complement market mechanisms, to maintain social stability and to create a national and international economic environment that promotes sustainable growth on a global scale. Such growth should promote equity and social justice" (para. 6).

In the Copenhagen Declaration, the pursuit of social justice and development is not separated from the recognition and promotion of human rights. Since the East-West divide had disappeared by the time the Summit was held, Western countries were in a position to convince developing countries that, although they still retained "primary responsibility" for their development, they had to conform to international norms, first and foremost the International Bill of Human Rights. At the beginning of the Copenhagen Declaration, it is stated that "social development and social justice cannot be attained in the absence of peace and security or in the absence of respect for all human rights and fundamental freedoms" (para. 5). The principles and goals that precede the commitments in the Declaration emphasize the need to respect all human rights and to ensure "the equitable distribution of income and greater access to resources through equity and equality of opportunity for all" (para. 26 (g)). Other principles and goals focus on achieving "equity among generations and protecting "the integrity and sustainable use of our environment", and recognizing "the interdependence of public and private spheres of activity" and "the importance of transparent and accountable governance and administration in all public and private national and international institutions" (para. 26 (b), (d) and (n)).

For developing countries, and for a number of developed countries (particularly those with a socialist or social democratic tradition), human rights are all-inclusive and indivisible and encompass social and economic rights as well as civil and political rights. The references to human rights in the Copenhagen Declaration and in other documents of that nature represent a commitment by the international community to act positively to fulfil the most fundamental requirements for survival and well-being,

economic and, a fortiori, social and cultural rights are perceived as nothing more than objectives that have been unduly presented as rights under pressure from

5.4

The commitment just mentioned was never acted upon. Actually, all but one of the commitments made at the World Summit were rapidly forgotten by the most powerful Governments and international organizations, including the United Nations. The Forum was not in a position to provide a detailed analysis of the disappointing outcome of a conference that by all accounts had been a great success. Among the explanations that would need to be sorted out and weighed would be the difficulty of the subject, its comprehensiveness, and its lack of appeal for the media; the typical short life expectancy of international pronouncements; the failure to achieve, in the important follow-up stage, the conjunction of personalities that made the Summit possible in spite of formidable obstacles; changes in the leadership of various Governments and institutions; and perhaps above all, the evolution of the ideological and political context. The Forum was able, however, to offer a number of observations.

For some participants and perhaps even the organizers, the successful conclusion of the World Summit for Social Development was an end in itself, as evidenced by the weakness of the provisions for its follow-up. With previous United Nations conferences of this magnitude, the meeting and outcome texts had incorporated explicit provisions relating to the reinforcement or reorganization of the Secretariat to ensure that the necessary preparatory and follow-up work could be undertaken, but that was not the case in this instance. Commitment 9 of the Copenhagen

inequality in the distribution of wealth and more equitable distribution of the benefits of economic growth within and among nations" (para. 5).[31] Incorporated in the commentary on further actions and initiatives under Commitment 9 are a number of recommendations on the mobilization of resources for development at the national and international levels that amplify those adopted in Copenhagen. It is suggested, for instance, that action be taken to explore "ways to combat the use of tax shelters and tax havens that undermine national tax systems" (para. 142 (c)) and "ways and means of promoting the micro- and small enterprise sector whereby it becomes a possible vehicle for a new development model" (para. 142 (h)). Alluding to the Tobin tax and other proposals for levying taxes at the international or global level, one of the recommendations advocates "conducting a rigorous analysis of advantages, disadvantages and other implications of proposals for developing new and innovative sources of funding, both public and private, for dedication to social development and poverty eradication programmes" (para. 142 (g)). However, in terms of monitoring these renewed commitments and recommendations, the Assembly could only agree to "request the Economic and Social Council to assess regularly, through the Commission for Social Development, the further implementation of the Copenhagen commitments and the outcome of the special session, not excluding the possibility of bringing together, at the appropriate time, all parties involved to evaluate progress and to consider new initiatives" (para. 156).

to eradicate poverty has become the centrepiece of international cooperation. In the introductory paragraph of Commitment 2 of the Copenhagen Declaration, poverty eradication is referred to as "an ethical, social, political and economic imperative of humankind". The Millennium Declaration emphasizes the need to "free our fellow men, women and children from the abject and dehumanizing conditions of extreme poverty" (para. 11), and both the Declaration and the associated Millennium Development Goals incorporate concrete targets for achieving this objective. Specifically, as stated in the Declaration, efforts are to be made "to halve, by the year 2015, the proportion of the world's people whose income is less than one dollar a day and the proportion of people who suffer from hunger and, by the same date, to halve the proportion of people who are unable to reach or to afford safe drinking water" (para. 19); these and a number of related and equally precise objectives pertaining to education, health, and urban conditions make up the targets for the first six Millennium Development Goals. As mentioned previously, Goal 7 relates to environmental protection and Goal 8 to building a partnership for development.

The argument is put forward that the World Summit for Social Development laid the groundwork and defined the core objectives for what would become the Millennium Development Goals. From this perspective, it has fulfilled its role, which was to pave the way for the formulation of an essential component of the strategy of the United Nations, and of the world community as a whole, for the first part of the twenty-first century. To assert that the tenth anniversary of the Copenhagen Summit marks a decade of neglect, and to draw negative political conclusions therefrom, is to ignore the essential fact that issues that are directly relevant and matter most to people have assumed a prominent place on the international agenda. The reduction and elimination of poverty is a goal that encompasses all the dreams and aspirations of the world's people, Governments, and international bodies; ultimately, it represents the raison d'être of public institutions and policies. Is there a better way to put people at the centre of national and international policies, as recommended by the Summit, than to fight poverty? The Forum was made aware of additional arguments in support of this position, including the following:

- The Millennium Development Goals, in particular the target of reducing poverty by half before 2015, have prompted the unprecedented mobilization and cooperation of international organizations, Governments, and civil society. In all countries, from the strongest to the poorest and weakest, the Goals are known, debated and acted upon. There is no better proof of the validity of a policy than such widespread support from public and private agencies around the world and across national and institutional traditions, ideologies and political orientations.
- The Millennium Development Goals come from the United Nations, an organization that enjoys virtually universal membership and represents the closest approximation of an international democracy. In this case, the United Nations has

managed to convince powerful Governments and powerful international organi-

Development Goals. However, no follow-up action was taken, either in Geneva in 2000 or at the meeting of the Commission for Social Development in 2005, to determine what kind of progress had been made towards meeting the World Summit targets. There is widespread scepticism surrounding target-setting, which experience would suggest is completely justified. Nonetheless, the Forum was willing to suspend judgment with regard to the pursuit of the Millennium Development Goals.

the following: "Poverty has various causes, including structural ones. [It] is a complex multidimensional problem with origins in both the national and international domains. No uniform solution can be found for global application. … Poverty is inseparably linked to lack of control over resources, including land, skills, knowledge, capital and social connections" (para. 23).

The absence of such policy orientations in the Millennium texts cannot really be explained by the preference for brevity that constitutes a characteristic of the current diplomatic culture in the United Nations. Developing countries are apparently expected to rely on existing policies, including those recommended or imposed by the Bretton Woods institutions and other international entities, to achieve poverty reduction. The implication is that economic growth alone is sufficient to reduce poverty and that distributive and redistributive policies are therefore unnecessary. Further, it is implicitly understood that economic growth will derive from the liberalization of economic forces and the progressive or "brutal" integration of national markets into the global economy.

The Millennium texts, which include few national policy recommendations, do

for development and poverty eradication, but only if a way can be found to reconcile capitalist interests with the needs of the poor. The Copenhagen and Geneva texts are far more demanding towards the rich countries of the world and far more open to the creation of new institutions, new developments in international law, and new global arrangements to facilitate the achievement of social justice.

Second, poverty reduction and eradication, while critical, do not constitute the defining characteristic of social justice. Policies to reduce poverty are not synonymous or even necessarily compatible with policies to promote equity and equality. In fact, focusing exclusively on poverty and the poor can perpetuate and even aggravate inequalities. Singling out part of a population as "poor" effectively segregates certain individuals and families, both in their own eyes and in the eyes of society. Being designated as poor and seeing oneself as different from others is disempowering, particularly nowadays, as the old clichés linking individual poverty to laziness and other character defects have reappeared and are increasingly accepted as fact. Furthermore, public assistance remains a form of charity, though without the empathy that often accompanies private charity. It would appear that organized and targeted assistance provided for the purpose of lifting individuals and groups out of poverty is effective only when it constitutes part of an overall economic and social policy aimed at achieving growth and equity. Another important consideration is that the poor/non-poor dichotomy is somewhat artificial, as it does not correspond to the reality of poverty. The "poor" are not a homogeneous and unchanging group. There are, in both developed and developing countries, people who stay poor all their lives and families that remain destitute through successive generations, but there are also those who move in and out of poverty, those who have been so marginalized that they are beyond the reach of the public welfare system, and those who are just above the contextually defined poverty threshold but essentially face the same challenges as those officially identified as poor (or even greater challenges if their economic status makes them ineligible for public assistance). The intense focus on poverty and the poor is particularly difficult to justify when the members of these latter categories make up the majority of a country's population.

In the Copenhagen Declaration, the goal of eradicating poverty is placed within the context of addressing inequalities. Again, the text calls for the adoption of national policies and strategies to reduce inequalities and eradicate absolute poverty

by their evocation? Is it not preferable to focus on a more tangible objective, such as strengthening cooperation with pharmaceutical companies to ensure access to affordable essential drugs in developing countries, and to make concrete progress in this direction, than to insist on, for instance, a legislated code of conduct for multinational companies, which is both unrealistic and a bad idea? The establishment

social development, which was seen as interventionist, old-fashioned, and vaguely socialist in its orientations. Perhaps because of its novelty and also because of its

reference was made to social development or social justice in this document. Presumably, the goal of reducing poverty was seen to represent the essence of past concepts and efforts.

6

A [illegible] ?

There have been increases in various types of inequality, changes in the orientations of United Nations pronouncements on matters of justice and development, and a shift in the international language. Words such as "equity", "equality" and "redistribution" have largely disappeared from mainstream United Nations documents, as have the words "compassion" and "solidarity". The term "social justice" appears only once in the Millennium Declaration. Further, the closing of the development gap between developed and developing countries is no longer a mobilizing objective. What are the reasons for the weakening of these once powerful ideas? Is it a temporary decline linked to the current global political configuration, or is it a manifestation of profound societal changes? Have the people of various regions, in particular the poor and the middle class, lost interest in equity and justice, or does the apparent change in the spirit of the times simply reflect the domination of a new international upper class?

6.1 [illegible] ?

At the global level, rates of economic growth in the 1980s and 1990s were lower than those registered in the 1960s and 1970s, though trends for individual countries and regions varied widely during the later period. In the former Soviet Union and in Central and Eastern Europe national income actually declined for a number of years, and there was no growth in most of Africa and Latin America (per capita income essentially remained the same in the latter region between 1998 and 2003), while extremely rapid growth was recorded in many parts of Asia. The earlier period had been characterized by greater evenness in terms of economic performance; much of the developing world, including Africa and Latin America, had experienced steady growth and an overall improvement in living standards, at least when demographic pressures were not too extreme. The downward trend during the past couple of decades has meant that a number of countries in both the developed and developing world have had fewer resources than before to distribute among competing sectors and social groups.

This last observation must be qualified in several respects. The world as a whole

inequalities and inequities to follow their course. Countries with the highest and steadiest rates of economic growth, notably the United States, have experienced

is as much a deliberate policy as is a policy to orient investments towards certain sectors or to protect the domestic agricultural sector through price supports and im-

former Soviet Union and Central and Eastern Europe opened up their economies, and a similar policy was pursued in the major countries of Asia, especially in China and to some extent in India and Pakistan, though the approaches taken to economic liberalization and market development varied from one country to another. In these countries, as in the developed world, increased inequalities in income, assets and access to essential services constituted the accepted, if not

formulate and implement their own policies. This statement must be understood in relative terms, as no country possesses full autonomy in an interdependent world, but it is nonetheless true that the political demarcation between the "developing" and the "developed" world remains firmly in place. When, to use the words attributed to the leader of a large Latin American country at the beginning of the 1990s, neoliberalism became "the only game in town", developing countries had little choice but to open their economies and societies to the dominant ideas and forces. Governments in the South were pressed to allow the free interplay of domestic and foreign economic and financial forces. Without the checks and balances provided by distributive and redistributive public policies—distribution and redistribution being interpreted in the broad sense as relating not only to income but also to power and influence—levels of economic and social differentiation and inequality increased.

A couple of observations may provide a somewhat more nuanced picture of the apparent passivity and quasi-victimization of the developing world by external forces playing the role of the colonial powers of the past. First, a number of the Governments of developing countries were keenly interested in strategies that promised growth and development while allowing domestic power structures to remain firmly in place. That equality is an idea universally comprehensible and cherished is an illusion sometimes entertained by intellectuals of Western background. Respect for social rank and economic and political power is actually a more "natural" and certainly more widespread tendency. Justice, and social justice in particular, represents a conquest. This idea is further explored below, but the point here is that the power elites in the South were extremely receptive to the message of international advisers and consultants that increases in income differentials and social disparities were normal consequences, and even necessary conditions, of the process of capital accumulation and development. Second, a few Governments in the developing world—some with and some without socialist orientations—continued to pursue their own development strategies while also liberalizing their economies, endeavouring to strike a balance between growth with equity and economic openness and independence. Their efforts certainly deserve attention and support.

In the analysis of the three types of policy stances, the focus remained on inequalities within countries. However, the ideas and approaches that aggravated domestic inequalities in the majority of developing countries were also primarily responsible for exacerbating inequalities between rich and poor nations. Integration into a global economy governed by liberal principles inevitably brings about a deepening of inequalities between the strong and the weak, at least in the short and medium run. When players of very uneven strength compete, even on an open, level and neutral playing field, the strongest will prevalng JETBTdn ETBT/T

plicable to all have replaced various preferential systems, which means that at the international level, as well, economic justice (whereby equal opportunities are provided and benefits accrue "to each country according to its capacities and strength") is supplanting social justice as the primary development objective. The pursuit of social justice continues at the international level, primarily through official development assistance, technical assistance, and debt relief, but with limited support from the main players. Furthermore, the emphasis on least developed countries, as logical as it may seem in the context of the new global compact between developed and developing countries, has connotations of charity that parallel the emphasis on humanitarian action seen as a substitute for social development.

6.3 **A**

imposed, capacity. From the perspective of political economy, this translates into the freedom of market forces to influence the organization of society. Within this type of framework, perceived obstacles to the exercise of such freedom, including the control of capital movement across borders, the excessive taxation of profits and capital, and more generally the public regulation of the activities of private corporations, are combated and largely eliminated.

One of the most important reasons for the depth and extent of this transformation is that people around the world perceive freedom, very simply and tangibly, as that which makes it possible to secure work and a decent income, to attend a good university, to see the world and its wonders, and to escape the constraints of an often narrow social milieu. That such aspirations and dreams often turn out to be illusory—a fact to which the countless numbers of migrant workers who look for El Dorado and find a nightmare may attest—is, from the perspective of the people concerned, a moot point. Freedom includes opportunities and risks.

Social justice has a relatively insignificant place in this perspective and discourse, and the same is true for international justice, at least in the redistributive context. Individuals and nations do their best, compete, and succeed or fail. A charitable hand, and sometimes a second chance—but certainly not permanent support—might be extended to those who fail. Historical precedent suggests that the popularity of this vision or ideology has been nourished by the shortcomings of the previous ideology, which was in place for much of the twentieth century and, for quite some time after the Second World War, represented the dominant view in the organization of societies and the world. An essential element of this ideology was the idea, dominant in national and international political and intellectual circles since the great economic depression of the 1930s, that the State had specific responsibilities in the economic and social domains that might involve the public appropriation of certain means of production and the implementation of interventionist economic policies and extensive redistributive policies financed by progressive taxation. For want of a more precise term, this earlier set of ideals might be said to represent the social democratic ideology. At the final meeting of the Forum, it was regretfully asserted that social democracy, as an idea and as a project, was dead. There are still a number of successful social democratic regimes in the world, but social democratic parties are short of new ideas and are on the defensive everywhere. This pronouncement regarding the death of social democracy may prove as imprudent as the statements linking the current ideology to the end of history; it is possible that social democracy will, and many believe it should, experience a rebirth, possibly with a different name and a renewed doctrine.

In any event, it was quite easy for the proponents of the victorious ideology of neoliberalism—and this, again, is a term chosen for lack of a more concise alternative that might capture the truly liberal, the often conservative and even resolutely

reactionary, and the sometimes revolutionary characteristics of the regimes that embody the dominant ideology—to capitalize on the real or perceived failures and shortcomings of the social democratic approach to government. One of the major problems was high unemployment, which still gravely affects a number of affluent countries that are otherwise reluctant to espouse all the tenets of the neoliberal doctrine. These same countries, and social democratic and socialist regimes in general (and certainly communist regimes), were accused, often rightly, of suppress-

mobility is required within a given generation and, even more importantly, from one generation to the next. Education and the greater geographical mobility that often comes with it have been the traditional means of improving one's station in life. The increased inequality in access to a decent education, noted in chapter 3, constitutes an obstacle to such mobility in poor and affluent countries alike. It appears that in some of the latter, with the combined increases in both extreme poverty and various forms of inequality, the average individual now has fewer opportunities to move upward on the social ladder than he or she did 25 years ago.

There are elements other than social mobility, social cohesion and economic growth that might also be counted among the basic principles underlying the organization of society; these principles have a close, if complicated, relationship with justice, which is itself an important (and perhaps even the most important) principle. In [illegible], John Rawls offers the following observations with regard to the relationship between the principles of stability, efficiency, coordination and justice: "In the absence of a certain measure of agreement on what is just and unjust, it is clearly more difficult for individuals to coordinate their plans efficiently in order to insure that mutually beneficial arrangements are maintained. Distrust and resentment corrode the ties of civility, and suspicion and hostility tempt men to act in ways they would otherwise avoid. So while the distinctive role of conceptions of justice is to specify rights and duties and to determine the appropriate distributive shares, the way in which a conception does this is bound to affect the problems of efficiency, coordination and stability."[37]

It is true, as frequently noted by those reasonably satisfied with their place in society and with the position of their countries in the international pecking order, that intellectuals throughout history and from all cultures have always detected and deplored signs of distrust, resentment, corrosion of the ties of civility, and other societal weaknesses and failures. It is also true, however, that the price paid for not heeding Cassandra's call can be extremely high. The intention of Rawls was above all to establish a solid philosophical foundation for the pursuit of social justice. Can such a need be seriously denied in today's world?

The "just savings principle"[39] Rawls refers to deserves to be highlighted here because of its importance and because one of the signs of the indifference towards social justice is the silence on the concentration and utilization of wealth. For example, international texts on poverty eradication tend to provide surprisingly little information on developments at the other end of the income and wealth spectrum. Attitudes towards wealth and its uses are critical at all times and for all societies. There are moral issues relating to the obligations and responsibilities that most traditional philosophies and religions assign to those that have more than others. There are political issues relating to the difficulties that democratic States—even those that have an egalitarian view of the public interest—encounter in establishing or maintaining progressive tax systems and redistributive policies. Finally, there are economic issues pertaining to the use of wealth for consumption and investment; capital formation remains key to sustained economic prosperity and development, including the prevention and reduction of poverty.

The reasons why some countries invest more or less than others and why investment levels vary over a country's history are difficult to comprehend fully, but the behaviour of the richest 10, 5 or 2 per cent of the population is one important factor. There is no automatic link between an increase in profits and the propensity to save and invest productively. Further, it not necessarily true that if a minority of people get rich (or richer), society will inevitably grow richer; in fact, it appears that if a small proportion of the population holds too large a share of the national income, capital formation declines. It was noted within the Forum that, in the Keynesian tradition, investment should be seen as a social tax on profit. In recent years, in the most affluent countries, the income and wealth of the leaders of the private sector have, if judged by the standards informally developed since the industrial revolution, reached extraordinary levels, and it might be appropriate for Governments and international organizations concerned with equity to look again at the "just savings principle".

The principles of justice that have traditionally guided the establishment and development of societies are not only being transgressed; in many contexts their essential relevance and validity appear to be in question. Other organizing principles of society and the world, such as the reign of force, are finding their way back into the political discourse. Retributive justice involves the legally authorized and codified use of force. Neither social justice nor international justice can be brought about by force.

7

Informed and guided by the principles and spirit of the Charter of the United Nations and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the Forum offered the following conclusions and observations with regard to the pursuit of justice in the world today, identifying six critical areas of priority for "positive development" from among the current doctrinal orientations of the United Nations:

- The increased emphasis on the close link between civil and political rights and economic and social development is welcome and important. Even if there are still some reservations about the concept of good governance, notably because its relationship to good government has not been clarified, and even if the word "democracy" is used somewhat loosely, reuniting the pursuit of fundamental freedoms and efforts to improve living standards is critical. Peace, development and human rights are indeed indivisible, and it is essential for the future of humankind that the United Nations proclaim this message urbi et orbi.
- A related and equally critical message is that the principles of national sovereignty and non-interference by outside parties in a country's domestic affairs can no longer be invoked by Governments to escape the consequences of abuses perpetrated against citizens. Some form of what is referred to as the "right of intervention", applicable to all, must be established within the framework of international law under the aegis of the United Nations. The development of humanitarian law is a sign of progress reflecting the emergence of a global awareness that respect for human rights and human dignity should ignore borders. The establishment of the International Criminal Court is a step towards achieving international justice.
- The notion of equal rights, a foundation of social justice, is an important part of the international discourse and is probably gaining ground overall, at least in the global consciousness. Many groups that have traditionally suffered discrimination now have some hope of enjoying equal rights. The considerable progress made towards achieving gender equality has been mentioned repeatedly. For quite some time, global efforts have been under way to ensure recognition of equal rights for indigenous peoples, persons with disabilities, and other vulnerable groups; migrant workers are receiving an increasing amount of attention in this context. The idea that all members of the human family have equal and inalienable rights—irrespective of their socio-economic status, gender, origins, or group affiliation—seems to be slowly penetrating different societies around the globe. Inherited rank and privilege are probably being used less frequently to claim the right to special treatment before the law, or at least such a claim is made less often with the sincere belief that birth or acquired social position ipso

facto confers special rights. Those at the bottom of the socio-economic ladder are becoming increasingly convinced that they should enjoy equality before the law, benefiting from the same rights as their wealthier and more fortunate compatriots. Around the world, a growing number of individuals and societies are embracing the view that it is only differences in income and wealth that constitute a legitimate justification for a social hierarchy and social classes and for dif

the Anglo-Saxon culture and remains the dominant approach, though positivism and divine and revealed law have experienced a revival that has challenged the status quo. Further reflection and debate on the nature and foundations of justice are relevant to the question of universalism and pluralism but are also important from the perspective of building knowledge and creating a better understanding among people. It has been said that the opposite of violence is not benevolence but thought.

- If justice, consisting of social justice and international justice, can once again be established as a key organizing principle of society and the world, some sort of common understanding of the values and virtues that support it or at least are not incompatible with it will have to be achieved. Is frugality, simplicity or (to use a concept dear to Hume) moderation a virtue that will help bring more justice to the world? Moderation is probably useful in protecting the environment and can therefore contribute to the achievement of justice for future generations. However, among other questions that should be addressed candidly in the United Nations setting, what will become of economic justice if simplicity is a value and moderation a moral norm applied to economic activities? It is often maintained that humankind urgently needs to expand, deepen and enrich its spiritual, moral and political horizons, and the findings of this limited inquiry indicate that such an assertion is not unfounded. The potential role of the United Nations in facilitating this process must not be underestimated.
- The relationship between freedom and justice has always been problematic. Their reconciliation is at the heart of all theories of justice based on secular premises, and their antagonism is at the core of most personal and political conflicts. This is an issue that can be "perfectly" settled only through the suppres-

are making a fundamental mistake. In the hearts and minds of the men and women in today's societies, freedom and justice are both cherished. It is the duty of organizations such as the United Nations to help them and the States in which they live.

0 and 1, where 0 corresponds to perfect equality (everyone has the same income) and 1 corresponds to perfect inequality (one person has all the income, and everyone else has none). The Gini index is the Gini coefficient expressed in percentage form, and is equal to the Gini coefficient multiplied by 100.

[15] See Giovanni Andrea Cornia, *G P* (Helsinki, United Nations University/World Institute for Development Economics Research (UNU/WIDER), 2000).

[16] See General Assembly resolution 3201 (S-VI) of 1 May 1974.

[17] See General Assembly resolution 3281 (XXIX) of 12 December 1974.

[18] Lima Declaration and Plan of Action on Industrial Development and Cooperation, adopted by the Second General Conference of the United Nations Industrial Development Organization at its final plenary meeting (Vienna, June 1975), para. 28.

[19] See General Assembly resolution 55/2 of 8 September 2000. The Millennium Development Goals derived from this Declaration by the Secretariat were not formally

[29] United Nations, Copenhagen Declaration on Social Development and the Programme of Action of the World Summit for Social Development, 6-12 March 1995 (DPI/1707-9515294; August 1995), foreword, p. v.

[30] United Nations, "Implementation of the outcome of the World Summit for Social Development" (A/RES/50/161; 22 December 1995), para. 24.

[31] United Nations, "Report of the Ad Hoc Committee of the Whole of the twenty-fourth special session of the General Assembly", *O*, twenty-fourth special session, supplement 3 (A/S-24/8/Rev.1), annex on further initiatives for social development; also see resolution S-24/2 on further initiatives for social development (1 July 2000).

[32] United Nations, Commission for Social Development, Declaration on the Tenth Anniversary of the World Summit for Social Development, adopted on 11 February 2005 by the Commission at its forty-third session, held in New York from 9 to 18 February.

[33] United Nations, *z P N 21 C M -G N* (A/54/2000; 27 March 2000).

[34] Equally specific policy prescriptions appear in the outcome document of the special session held in Geneva in 2000.

[35] United Nations, "We the Peoples": The Role of the United Nations in the 21st Century—Millennium Report of the Secretary-General of the United Nations (A/54/2000; 27 March 2000).

[36] United Nations, "In larger freedom: towards security, development and human rights for all: report of the Secretary-General" (A/59/2005; 21 March 2005).

[37] Rawls, op. cit., p. 6; see, in particular, chapter 5, on distributive shares.

[38] Ibid., pp. 53 and 266.

[39] The "just savings principle" is based on the idea that "each generation must not only preserve the gains of culture and civilization, and maintain intact those institutions that have been established, but it must also put aside in each period of time a suitable amount of real capital accumulation. This saving may take various forms, from net investment in machinery and other means of production to investment in learning and education" (ibid., p. 252.)

At the international level, we will:

(h) Promote international peace and security and make and support all efforts to settle international disputes by peaceful means in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations;

(i) Strengthen international cooperation for achieving social development;

(j) Promote and implement policies to create a supportive external economic environment, through, inter alia, cooperation in the formulation and implementation of macroeconomic policies, trade liberalization, mobilization and/or provision of new and additional financial resources that are both adequate and predictable … and more equitable access of developing countries to global markets, productive investments and technologies and appropriate knowledge, with due consideration to the needs of countries with economies in transition;

(k) Strive to ensure that international agreements relating to trade, investment, technology, debt and official development assistance are implemented in a manner that promotes social development;

(l) Support, particularly through technical and financial cooperation, the efforts of developing countries to achieve rapid, broadly based sustainable development;

(m) Support, through appropriate international cooperation, the efforts of countries with economies in transition to achieve rapid broadly based sustainable development;

(n) Reaffirm and promote human rights, which are universal, indivisible, interdependent and interrelated, including the right to development as a universal and inalienable right and an integral part of fundamental human rights, and strive to ensure that they are respected, protected and observed.

2

We commit ourselves to the goal of eradicating poverty in the world, through decisive national actions and international cooperation, as an ethical, social, political and economic imperative of humankind.

To this end, at the national level, in partnership with all actors of civil society and in the context of a multidimensional and integrated approach, we will:

(a) Formulate or strengthen as a matter or urgency, and preferably by the year 1996; the International Year for the Eradication of Poverty, national policies and strategies geared to substantially reducing overall poverty in the short-

est possible time, reducing inequalities and eradicating absolute poverty by a target date to be specified by each country in its national context;

(b) Focus our efforts and policies to address the root causes of poverty and to provide for the basic needs of all. These efforts should include the elimination of hunger and malnutrition; the provision of food security, education, employment and livelihood, primary health-care services including reproductive health care, safe drinking water and sanitation, and adequate shelter; and participation in social and cultural life. Special priority will be given to the needs and rights of women and children, who often bear the greatest burden of poverty, and to the needs of vulnerable and disadvantaged groups and persons;

(c) Ensure that people living in poverty have access to productive resources, including credit, land, education and training, technology, knowledge and information, as well as to public services, and participate in decision-making on

3

We commit ourselves to promoting the goal of full employment as a basic priority of our economic and social policies, and to enabling all men and women to attain secure and sustainable livelihoods through freely chosen productive employment and work.

To this end, at the national level, we will:

(a)

the increasing acts of racism and xenophobia in sectors of many societies, and to promote greater harmony and tolerance in all societies;

(f) Recognize and respect the right of indigenous people to maintain and develop their identity, culture and interests, support their aspirations for social justice and provide an environment that enables them to participate in the social, economic and political life of their country;

(g) Foster the social protection and full integration into the economy and society of veterans … ;

(h) Acknowledge and encourage the contribution of people of all age groups as equally and vitally important for the building of a harmonious society, and foster dialogue between generations in all parts of society;

(i) Recognize and respect cultural, ethnic and religious diversity, promote and protect the rights of persons belonging to national, ethnic, religious or linguistic minorities, and take measures to facilitate to facilitate their full participation in all aspects of the political, economic, social, religious and cultural life of their societies and in the economic progress and social development of their countries;

(j) Strengthen the ability of local communities and groups with common concerns to develop their own organizations and resources and to propose policies relating to social development, including through the activities of non-governmental organizations;

(k) Strengthen institutions that enhance social integration, recognizing the central role of the family and providing it with an environment that assures its protection and support. In different cultural, political and social systems, various forms of the family exist;

(l) Address the problems of crime, violence and illicit drugs as factors of social disintegration.

At the international level, we will:

(m) Encourage the ratification of, the avoidance as far as possible of the resort to reservations to, and the implementation of international instruments and adherence to internationally recognized declarations relevant to the elimination of discrimination and the promotion and protection of all human rights;

(n) Further enhance international mechanisms for the provision of humanitarian and financial assistance to refugees and host countries and promote appropriate shared responsibility;

(o) Promote international cooperation and partnership on the basis of equality, mutual respect and mutual benefit.

5

We commit ourselves to promoting full respect for human dignity and to achieving equality and equity between women and men, and to recognizing and enhancing the participation and leadership roles of women in political, civil, economic, social and cultural life and in development.

To this end, at the national level, we will:

(a) Promote changes in attitudes, structures, policies, laws and practices in order to eliminate all obstacles to human dignity, equality and equity in the family and in society, and promote full and equal participation of urban and rural women and women with disabilities in social, economic and political life,

To this end, at the national level, we will:

(a) Formulate and strengthen time-bound national strategies for the eradication of illiteracy and universalization of basic education, which includes early childhood education, primary education and education for the illiterate, in all communities, in particular for the introduction, if possible, of national languages

combating unemployment and social exclusion in our societies, and emphasize the role of higher education and scientific research in all plans of social development;

(j) Develop broad-based education programmes that promote and strengthen respect for all human rights and fundamental freedoms, including the right to development, promote the values of tolerance, responsibility and respect for the diversity and rights of others, and provide training in peaceful conflict resolution, in recognition of the United Nations Decade for Human Rights Education (1995-2005);

(k) Focus on learning acquisition and outcome, broaden the means and scope of basic education, enhance the environment for learning and strengthen partnerships among Governments, non-governmental organizations, the private sector, local communities, religious groups and families to achieve the goal of education for all;

(l) Establish or strengthen both school-based and community-based health education programmes for children, adolescents and adults … ;

(m) Expedite efforts to achieve the goals of national Health-for-All strategies, based on equality and social justice in line with the Alma-Ata Declaration on Primary Health Care … ;

(n) Strive to ensure that persons with disabilities have access to rehabilitation and other independent living services and assistive technology … ;

(o) Ensure an integrated and intersectoral approach so as to provide for the protection and promotion of health for all in economic and social development …;

(p)

(s) Strive to ensure that international organizations, in particular the international financial institutions, support these objectives, integrating them into their policy programmes and operations as appropriate. This should be complemented by renewed bilateral and regional cooperation;

(t) Recognize the importance of the cultural dimension of development to ensure respect for cultural diversity and that of our common human cultural heritage. Creativity should be recognized and promoted;

(u) Request the specialized agencies, notably the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization and the World Health Organization, as well as other international organizations dedicated to the promotion of education, culture and health, to give greater emphasis to the overriding goals of eradicating poverty, promoting full and productive employment and fostering social integration;

(v) Strengthen intergovernmental organizations that utilize various forms of education to promote culture; disseminate information through education and communication media; help spread the use of technologies; and promote technical and professional training and scientific research;

(w) Provide support for stronger, better coordinated global actions against major diseases that take a heavy toll of human lives, such as malaria, tuberculosis, cholera, typhoid fever and HIV/AIDS; in this context, continue to support the joint and co-sponsored United Nations programme on HIV/AIDS;

(x) Share knowledge, experience and expertise and enhance creativity, for example by promoting the transfer of technology, in the design and delivery of effective education, training and health programmes and policies, including substance-abuse awareness, prevention and rehabilitation programmes, which will result, inter alia, in endogenous capacity-building;

(y) Intensify and coordinate international support for education and health programmes based on respect for human dignity and focused on the protection of all women and children, especially against exploitation, trafficking and harmful practices, such as child prostitution, female genital mutilation and child marriages.

7

We commit ourselves to accelerating the economic, social and human resource development of Africa and the least developed countries.

To this end, we will:

(a)

gies that establish a more favorable climate for trade and investment, give priority to human resource development and further promote the development of democratic institutions;

(b) Support the domestic efforts of Africa and the least developed countries to implement economic reforms, programmes to increase food security, and commodity diversification efforts through international cooperation, including South-South cooperation and technical and financial assistance, as well as trade and partnership;

(c) Find effective, development-oriented and durable solutions to external debt problems, through the immediate implementation of the terms of debt forgiveness agreed upon in the Paris Club in December 1994 … ; invite financial institutions to examine innovative approaches to assist low-income countries with a high proportion of multilateral debt … ; and develop techniques of debt conversion applied to social development programmes and projects in conformity with Summit priorities. … ;

(d) Ensure the implementation of the strategies and measures for the development of Africa decided by the international community, and support the reforms efforts, development strategies and programmes decided by the Af

(b) Review the impact of structural adjustment programmes on social development, including, where appropriate, by means of gender-sensitive social impact assessments and other relevant methods, in order to develop policies to reduce their negative effects … ; the cooperation of international financial institutions in the review could be requested by interested countries;

(c) Promote, in the countries with economies in transition, an integrated approach to the transformation process, addressing the social consequences of reforms and human resource development needs;

(d) Reinforce the social development components of all adjustment policies and programmes, including those resulting from the globalization of markets and rapid technological change, by designing policies to promote more equitable and enhanced access to income and resources;

(e) Ensure that women do not bear a disproportionate burden of the transitional costs of such processes.

At the international level, we will:

(f) Work to ensure that multilateral development banks and other donors complement adjustment lending with enhanced targeted social development investment lending;

(g) Strive to ensure that structural adjustment programmes respond to the economic and social conditions, concerns and needs of each country;

(h) Enlist the support and cooperation of regional and international organizations

surate with the scope and scale of activities required to achieve the objectives and goals of the present Declaration and the Programme of Action of the Summit;

(m) Increase the flow of international resources to meet the needs of countries facing problems relating to refugees and displaced persons;

(n) Support South-South cooperation, which can take advantage of the experience of developing countries that have overcome similar difficulties;

(o) Ensure the urgent implementation of existing debt-relief agreements and negotiate further initiatives … ; invite the international financial institutions to examine innovative approaches to assist low-income countries with a high proportion of multilateral debt … ; [and] develop techniques of debt conversion applied to social development programmes and projects in conformity with Summit priorities;

(p) Fully implement the Final Act of the Uruguay Round of multilateral trade negotiations as scheduled, including the complementary provisions specified in the Marrakesh Agreement establishing the World Trade Organization, in recognition of the fact that broadly based growth in incomes, employment and trade are mutually reinforcing, taking into account the need to assist African countries and the least developed countries in evaluating the impact of the implementation of the Final Act so that they can benefit fully;

(q) Monitor the impact of trade liberalization on the progress made in developing countries to meet basic human needs, giving particular attention to new initiatives to expand their access to international markets;

(r) Give attention to the needs of countries with economies in transition with respect to international cooperation and financial and technical assistance, stressing the need for the full integration of economies in transition into the world economy … ;

(s) Support United Nations development efforts by a substantial increase in resources for operational activities on a predictable, continuous and assured basis, commensurate with the increasing needs of developing countries, as stated in General Assembly resolution 47/199, and strengthen the capacity of the United Nations and the specialized agencies to fulfil their responsibilities in the implementation of the outcome of the World Summit for Social Development.

10

We commit ourselves to an improved and strengthened framework for international, regional and subregional cooperation for social development, in a spirit of partnership, through the United Nations and other multilateral institutions.

To this end, at the national level, we will:

(a) Adopt the appropriate measures and mechanisms for implementing and monitoring the outcome of the World Summit for Social Development, with the assistance, upon request, of the specialized agencies, programmes and regional commissions of the United Nations system, with broad participation of all actors of civil society.

At the regional level, we will:

(b) Pursue such mechanisms and measures as are necessary and appropriate in particular regions or subregions. The regional commissions, in cooperation with regional intergovernmental organizations and banks, could convene, on a biennial basis, a meeting at a high political level to evaluate progress made towards fulfilling the outcome of the Summit, exchange views on their respective experiences and adopt appropriate measures. The regional commissions should report, through the appropriate mechanisms, to the Economic and Social Council on the outcome of such meetings.

At the international level, we will:

(c) Instruct our representatives to the organizations and bodies of the United Nations system, international development agencies and multilateral development banks to enlist the support and cooperation of these organizations and bodies to take appropriate and coordinated measures for continuous and sustained progress in attaining the goals and commitments agreed to by the Summit. The United Nations and the Bretton Woods institutions should establish regular and substantive dialogue, including at the field level, for more effective and efficient coordination of assistance for social development;

(d) Refrain from any unilateral measure not in accordance with international law and the Charter of the United Nations that creates obstacles to trade relations among States;

(e) Strengthen the structure, resources and processes of the Economic and Social Council and its subsidiary bodies, and other organizations within the United Nations system that are concerned with economic and social development;

(f) Request the Economic and Social Council to review and assess, on the basis of reports of national Governments, the regional commissions, relevant functional commissions and specialized agencies, progress made by the international community towards implementing the outcome of the World Summit for Social Development, and to report to the General Assembly, accordingly, for its appropriate consideration and action;

(g) Request the General Assembly to hold a special session in the year 2000 for

The special session requested in paragraph (g) of Commitment 10 was convened in Geneva from 26 June to 1 July 2000. At this session, entitled "World Summit for Social Development and beyond: achieving social development for all in a globalizing world", the General Assembly adopted resolution S-24/2 on further initiatives for social development. This comprehensive document (A/RES/S-24/2) comprises a political declaration, a review and assessment of the implementation of the outcome of the World Summit, and a section on further actions and initiatives to implement the commitments made at the Summit. In adopting this text, Member States of the United Nations not only reaffirmed the validity of the agreements and commitments made in Copenhagen but in many respects strengthened their resolve to work towards their achievement. For example, they detailed the requirements of a people-centred approach to development and international cooperation, notably with regard to international macroeconomic and financial policies; they highlighted the necessity of implementing effective employment policies to reduce poverty and improve living standards; they affirmed their support for the comprehensive ILO programme on decent work; they adopted a number of precise objectives and targets, pledging, for example, to close the gender gap in primary and secondary education by 2005 and to ensure free compulsory and universal primary education for both girls and boys by 2015; and they went further than the Copenhagen text in identifying the measures required for ensuring adequate financing for social pro-

tion of the Millennium Development Goals. The General Assembly, for its part, has also received annual reports of the Secretary-General on the follow-up of the World Summit and has conducted brief debates followed by the adoption of essentially routine resolutions.

In February 2005, the Commission for Social Development had before it a report of the Secretary-General providing a comprehensive and critical assessment of the degree of implementation of the Copenhagen commitments. The Commission adopted, by consensus, the Declaration on the tenth anniversary of the World Summit for Social Development (E/CN.5/2005/L.2). In ten paragraphs, this Declaration reaffirms that the texts adopted in Copenhagen and Geneva "constitute the basic framework for the promotion of social development for all at the national and international levels" (para. 1) and that the Copenhagen commitments "are crucial to a coherent, people-centred approach to development" (para. 2). It acknowledges that "ten years after Copenhagen, despite the efforts made and progress achieved in economic and social development, the situation of many developing countries, particularly in Africa and the least developed countries as well as countries with economies in transition, requires further attention and action" (para. 9). It also emphasizes that "the implementation of the Copenhagen commitments and the attainment of the internationally agreed development goals, including those contained in the Millennium Declaration, are mutually reinforcing" (para. 2). Finally, it evokes "a shared vision for a more just and equitable world" (para. 10). This Declaration, submitted to the Economic and Social Council, represented the fulfilment by the Commission of its responsibilities for the ten-year review of the World Summit, as well as its contribution to the high-level plenary meeting of the General Assembly for the review of the Millennium Declaration, held in September 2005.

In March 2005, in preparation for this high-level meeting (referred to as the World Summit), the Secretary-General issued a report entitled "In larger freedom: towards development, security and human rights for all" (A/59/2005). Devoted to an assessment of the level of implementation of the Millennium Declaration and to proposals for reforms of the Organization that were "within reach" if the "necessary political will" could be garnered (para. 5), this report makes no reference to the ten-year review of the World Summit for Social Development. It mentions the achievement of "an unprecedented consensus on how to promote global economic and social development" (para. 23). It states that the "past 25 years have seen the most dramatic reduction in extreme poverty that the world has ever experienced. … Yet at the same time, dozens of countries have become poorer, devastating economic crises have thrown millions of families into poverty, and increasing inequality in large parts of the world means that the benefits of economic growth have not been evenly shared" (paras. 25 and 26). In an important departure from previous official positions of the Secretariat, the report recognizes that it is necessary "to see

the Millennium Development Goals as part of an even larger development agenda. While the Goals have been the subject of an enormous amount of follow-up inside and outside the United Nations, they clearly do not in themselves represent a complete development agenda" (para. 30).

There are important elements of this larger and more complete development agenda in the "2005 World Summit Outcome", the comprehensive document adopted by the General Assembly at the conclusion of its well-attended Summit of 14-16 September 2005. Negotiated for months under the leadership of the president of the General Assembly, this document has the distinct merit—apart from its advances in the domains of peace and collective security, human rights and the rule of law—of placing the reduction of poverty and other specific goals back within the context of development and international cooperation for the overall betterment of the human condition. The words "justice," "social justice" and "social development" are virtually absent (social development is mentioned once as one of the three dimensions of international development), and the World Summit for Social Development and its ten commitments are also ignored, but a number of the dimensions of international justice and social justice —as understood in this inquiry—are indeed highlighted in the "2005 World Summit Outcome"; among the issues addressed within this context are the participation of developing countries in the management of the global economy, employment (the goal of full and productive employment and decent work for all is explicitly endorsed), and migration and development.

With regard to the growing de facto interdependence of countries at different levels of development, the document notes that since "the scope for domestic policies … is now often framed by international disciplines, commitments and global market considerations … it is for each Government to evaluate the trade-off between the benefits of accepting international rules and commitments and the constraints posed by the loss of policy space" (para. 22 (d)). This recognition that national Governments have the right to "policy space" and therefore the right to elaborate their own policies to respond to the forces of globalization is one of the conditions for reconciling justice and freedom at the national and international levels. Another condition, the building of international and global organizations that would offer a political counterweight to the current power of these globalizing forces, remains in the realm of utopia.

Although with considerably more discretion, and as proposed by its Third Committee, the General Assembly at its sixtieth session adopted resolution A/60/500 of 15 November 2005 on the implementation of the outcome of the World Summit for Social Development and of the twenty-fourth special session of the General Assembly. This resolution goes beyond a pro forma reaffirmation of the validity of the commitments made ten years before at the World Summit for Social Develop-

ment in Copenhagen. It re-actualizes the policies that were attached to these commitments. Notably, it emphasizes that "poverty eradication policies should attack poverty by addressing its root and structural causes and manifestations, and that equity and the reduction of inequalities need to be incorporated in those policies (operative para. 8). The promotion of "full and productive employment and decent work for all under conditions of equity, equality, security and dignity" should involve the incorporation of "employment creation … into macroeconomic policies" (operative para. 9). Similarly, social integration is linked to "access to basic social services" and to addressing the "challenges posed by globalization and market-driven reforms on social development" (operative para. 10). Most importantly, it is stresses that the "development agenda cannot be advanced without addressing the challenges of inequality within and between countries and that the failure to address this inequality predicament will ensure that social justice and better living conditions … remain elusive"(operative para. 2).

Should this resolution of the General Assembly be taken seriously by national Governments and international organizations, including the United Nations, the struggle for greater justice in the world might gain a new impetus.

13. Under-five mortality rate
14. Infant mortality rate
15. Proportion of 1-year-old children immunized against measles

5.

Target 6. Reduce by three quarters, between 1990 and 2015, the maternal mortality ratio.

16. Maternal mortality ratio
17. Proportion of births attended by skilled health personnel

6. **/A**

Target 7. Have halted by 2015 and begun to reverse the spread of HIV/AIDS.

18. HIV prevalence among pregnant women aged 15-24 years
19. Condom use rate of the contraceptive prevalence rate
    19a. Condom use at last high-risk sex
    19b. Percentage of population aged 15-24 years with comprehensive correct knowledge of HIV/AIDS
    19c. Contraceptive prevalence rate
20. Ratio of school attendance of orphans to school attendance of non-orphans aged 10-14 years

Target 8. Have halted by 2015 and begun to reverse the incidence of malaria and other major diseases.

21. Prevalence and death rates associated with malaria
22. Proportion of population in malaria-risk areas using effective malaria prevention and treatment measures
23. Prevalence and death rates associated with tuberculosis
24. Proportion of tuberculosis cases detected and cured under DOTS [directly observed treatment short course]

7.

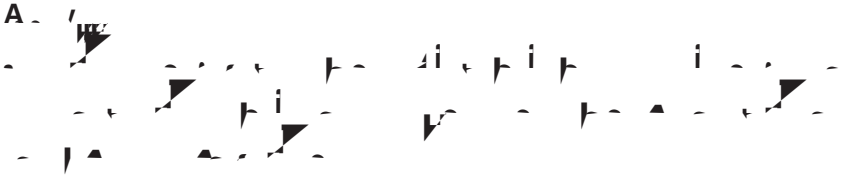
Target 9. Integrate the principles of sustainable development into country policies and programmes and reverse the loss of environmental resources.

25. Proportion of land area covered by forest
26. Ratio of area protected to maintain biological diversity to surface area
27. Energy use (kg oil equivalent) per US$ 1,000 GDP

36. ODA received in landlocked countries as a proportion of their GNI
37. ODA received in small island developing States as a proportion of their GNI

Market access:

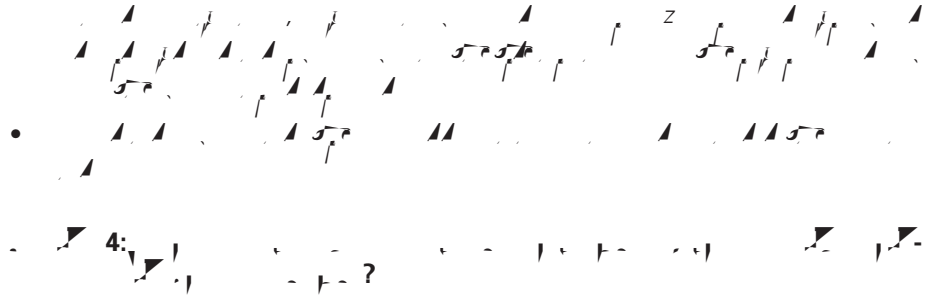
38. Proportion of total developed country imports (by value and excluding arms) from developing countries and from LDCs, admitted free of duty
39. Average tariffs imposed by developed countries on agricultural products and textiles and clothing from developing countries
40. Agricultural support estimate ford.RTj-1.9CD.RTj-1ountries



First meeting of the Forum
Financing Global Social Development

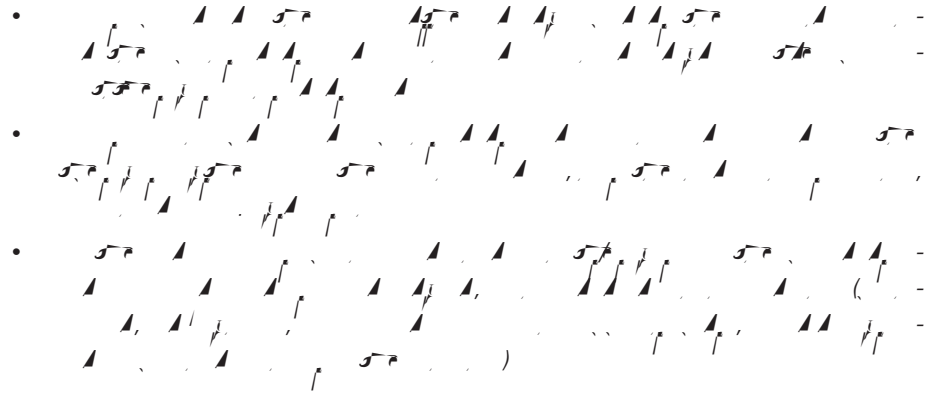
Traditionally, financial and other forms of international assistance were channelled to developing and least developed countries because of their relatively low levels of wealth; such support was seen as a complement to national efforts. This aid was considered transitory, to be provided only until the country "graduated" to a level of development considered acceptable. To the extent that the issue was explicitly debated, the justifications for such assistance and cooperation included a mutual interest in shared prosperity, reparations for historical events such as colonialism, the moral obligation to help those less fortunate, and, quite simply, adherence to the agenda of cooperation set by the United Nations.

While still largely valid, this scenario has been modified by a few recent developments. Humanitarian assistance, which focuses on the situation of people rather than countries and on addressing "accidental" rather than structural needs, has gained importance and sometimes overlaps with international cooperation for development. It is often a matter of perspective; if, for example, poverty eradication were to achieve the status of a global public good, there would be a quasi-legal rationale for the global financing of efforts to that end. There has also been something of a change in the meaning and perceived value of solidarity, which now appears to be more closely linked to the notion of social justice at the world level. Iocial for9do1(fo 102 2



The financial needs and problems of developing countries have been debated for a number of years. In the 1960s, developed countries made a commitment to provide official development assistance equivalent to at least 0.7 per cent of their gross national income. The debt issue has been high on the international agenda since the beginning of the 1980s. It has been noted in a number of United Nations documents that there is a reverse flow of resources from developing to developed countries. Before the liberalization of capital flows and the increased pursuit of foreign direct investment, the policies and practices of transnational corporations in developing countries were subjected to frequent inquiry and debate. The texts adopted by the World Summit for Social Development in Copenhagen and by the General Assembly at its special session in Geneva five years later contain a number of detailed commitments and recommendations for improved development financing from both domestic and international sources. In many circles, new proposals for international taxes, in particular the Tobin tax and a tax on fossil fuel consumption, have been given serious consideration. On 14 January 2002, at the meeting of the Preparatory Committee of the International Conference on Financing for Development, the Secretary-General of the United Nations urged developed countries to double their official development assistance from the current level of US$ 50 billion to US$ 100 billion annually.

Discussions relating to the present thematic focus prompted the following questions:



Second meeting of the Forum
Cooperation for Social Development: The International Dimension

1:

For the past several years, the agenda of international cooperation for development has been dominated by the issue of poverty eradication. The United Nations system is mobilized for the achievement of one of the primary objectives identified in the United Nations Millennium Declaration and Millennium Development Goals, which is "to halve, by the year 2015, the proportion of the world's people whose income is less than one dollar a day and the proportion of people who suffer from hunger and, by the same date, to halve the proportion of people who are unable to reach or to afford safe drinking water". * The World Summit on Sustainable Development, held in Johannesburg in 2002, added a comparable target relating to sanitation. In 1999, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank launched the Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers initiative, through which low-income countries develop their own comprehensive strategies for poverty reduction; each Paper is to incorporate an assessment of the country's poverty situation and a framework for domestic policies and external cooperation and assistance, representing a crucial link between national public actions, donor support and the development outcomes aimed for in the Millennium Development Goals. At a more general level, four of the ten commitments incorporated in the Copenhagen Declaration on Social Development explicitly mention social development. International cooperation comes in many forms and encompasses a broad range of objectives and actions focusing on different aspects of social development in developing countries. Examples include the agreements concluded by the IMF with Governments facing financial difficulties; the humanitarian assistance provided to the victims of natural disasters and other humanitarian emergencies; the technical assistance provided in a multitude of domains including human rights and public administration; the efforts to address the spread of major epidemic diseases such as HIV/AIDS; and the interventions of the International Labour Organization (ILO), United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), and United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) in their respective areas of competence.

* Millennium Declaration, para. 19; and targets 1 and 2 under the first Millennium Development Goal.

Discussions relating to the present thematic focus prompted the following questions:

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The current process of globalization, driven in part by the creation of world markets and facilitated by scientific and technological innovations, derives and proceeds from a model or a set of values delineating the contours of what constitutes a good and successful life and society. It encompasses a particular vision of social progress for the world. For a developing country, integrating into or joining this process means adopting its premises and underlying values. Active and meaningful participation requires more than mere integration, however. Full involvement must reflect a conscious choice, ideally one that is well-informed, carefully considered, and guided by democratic principles. Participants must have the capacity and desire to question the globalization process and to enrich it and shape it, both for their own benefit and for the benefit of mankind, reflecting a genuine understanding of what it means to be part of a world community.

Effective participation in the process of globalization requires that countries other than those leading the movement have a degree of political freedom sufficient to allow informed choices and decisions. This political freedom is not fully realized until a Government has a say in the institutions setting the terms of multilateral relations and regimes—whether in trade, finance, human rights or sustainable development—and has the capacity to negotiate on its own terms with transnational

economic and financial forces. International cooperation should help developing countries achieve this degree of political freedom and autonomy in decision-making vis-à-vis the process of globalization. Such autonomy might be considered a condition for social development.

Discussions relating to the present thematic focus prompted the following questions:

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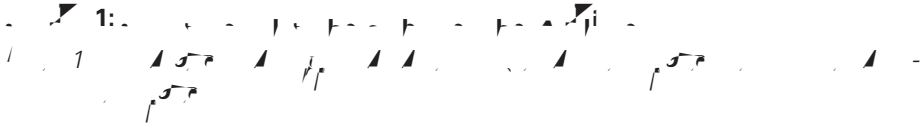
The concepts underlying international cooperation and the modalities of its implementation are inevitably affected by ideological and political developments at the world level. During the past few years, international debates and blueprints for action have focused on open markets and good governance as the most crucial elements for achieving prosperity in developing countries and in the world as a whole. Governments of developing countries are called upon to remove obstacles to the free movement of goods, services and capital, and to create internal political conditions that reflect certain democratic norms and encourage national and foreign investment. International cooperation tends to incorporate the dissemination of to ofvToar2qe of

ing in developing countries. In contemporary international parlance, the expression "emerging markets" is often used in place of "developing countries", as the former denotes dynamism and opportunity and the latter stagnation and uncertainty. A better distribution of the benefits and opportunities emanating from the globalization process is a more frequently stated objec

process of working together towards the same goal and the provision of assistance. A new balance must be sought between the requirements for the shared pursuit of mutually agreed goals and the conditions surrounding the unequal relationship implied by the provision or receipt of assistance. There is believed to be enormous potential in the development of South-South cooperation. Ultimately, true cooperation derives from the conviction that each party has something to give and something to receive.

Discussions relating to the present thematic focus prompted the following ques

Third meeting of the Forum
International Migrants and Development



International migration is a subject that lends itself to speculation and conjecture, in part because the various types of movements across borders are notoriously difficult to measure. There are tourists, students, economic migrants and asylum-seekers. Some tourists and students are actually job-seekers. The distinction between migrant workers and asylum-seekers has become increasingly blurred. Among migrant workers there are those intending to stay abroad for a short time and those planning to settle in the host country. It is only in some of the developed countries that reasonably accurate data are available at least on the entry of non-nationals and on work permits or equivalent documents granted to foreigners.

The most recent United Nations estimate puts the number of individuals residing for more than a year in a country other than their place of birth at 175 million. The number of illegal or undocumented immigrants is unknown, but there are believed to be several million living in North America and Western Europe alone. There are no reliable statistics on short-term migration, which usually involves working in a foreign country for a few months, but this practice is apparently becoming more prevalent and, again, the number probably comes to several million. In general, the return of migrants to their countries of origin is not properly measured. There are some 16 million people currently recognized as refugees by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNWRA), though this group is, in principle, included in the aforementioned overall estimate of 175 million. There are also internally displaced persons—presently numbering between 15 million and 20 million—who are differentiated from asylum-seekers only by their legal status and who, in terms of vulnerability and hardship, are generally in a worse situation than most of the international migrants.

A common but apparently erroneous belief is that international migration is ex-

facilities and support for obtaining travel and work documents and for acquiring nationality in the country seeking his or her contribution to its prosperity and prestige. This group represents the traditional brain drain from developing to developed countries. When these migrants return, or simply through the role they play in various international networks, they also represent a source of development for developing countries.

At the other end of the spectrum are the poor, desperate individuals who often use smugglers to try and reach countries where they hope to secure employment and an income; the members of this group are frequently victims of exploitation. In this "victim" category are also many of the women "imported" for domestic work in countries that do not grant them the protection to which every human being is entitled. The number of people who are forced to leave their homes and countries for reasons ranging from violent conflicts to drought and starvation is increasing. Their poverty and vulnerability derive from their lack of financial resources, lack of skills in current demand, and lack of social connections. They constitute the proletariat of international migration.

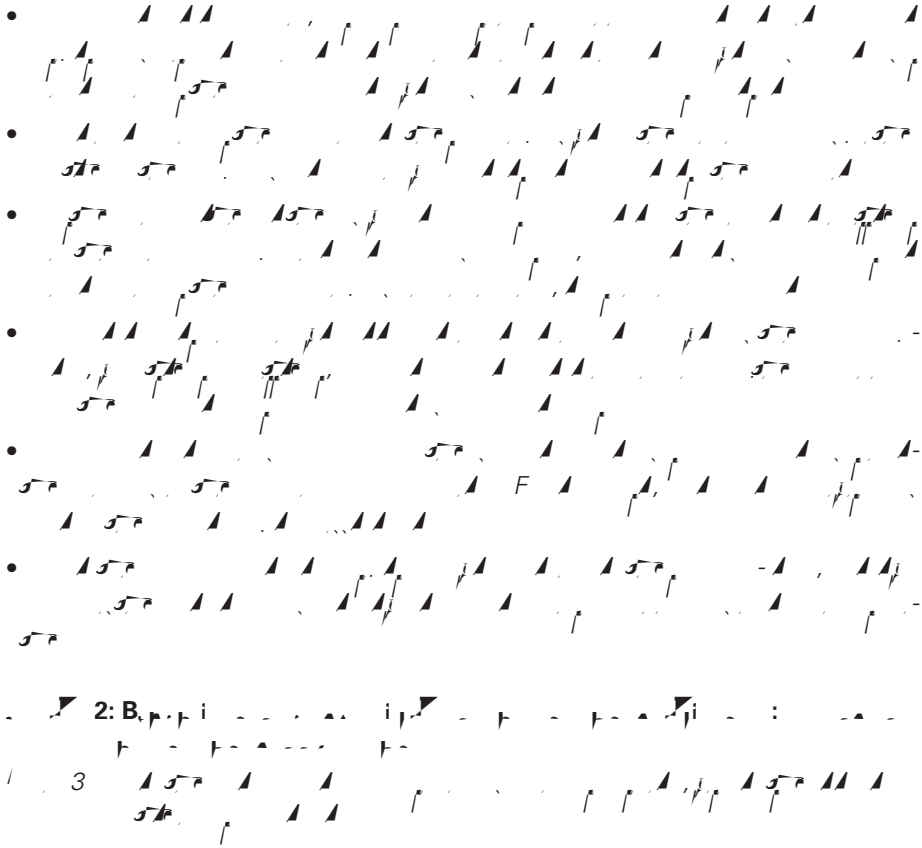
In between is a third group that probably constitutes the majority of international migrants. These individuals do not have the range of options enjoyed by the "aristocracy" of international migrants; however, they are not, strictly speaking, forced to leave their countries by events or circumstances beyond their control. They represent the "average" migrant worker, always at risk but not helpless. In poor cities and villages they are often the most able and dynamic residents, who decide to seek work and income opportunities abroad, sometimes in distant lands. Some return home, usually with savings to invest, and some settle in their new countries for an indefinite period or for good. Those who fail join the victims of international migration; those who succeed achieve a greater degree of control over their lives and provide their children with a decent education and a chance for upward mobility.

A rather common set of perceptions, especially in developed countries, is that foreign immigrants are too numerous, have difficulty respecting the laws and customs of the host country, and compete with nationals for employment. They are seen as a source of problems, or at best as beneficiaries of the societies that receive them, but rarely as contributors to those societies. It seems that their contributions, even from the obvious economic perspective, are always recognized after the fact, with the passage of time. Locals regard foreigners with suspicion, especially when they have a different appearance, language or religion, and already settled immigrants do not automatically welcome newcomers, as the latter are often perceived as competitors for jobs. The history of international migration is replete with cases of discrimination and exploitation.

Discussions relating to the present thematic focus prompted the following questions:

ploitation of "imported" women and girls appears to have reached alarming levels in many regions. Unaccompanied minors are more and more frequently among the world's illegal immigrants. All of these victims involved in forced, anarchic and criminal movement across borders are confronted with issues of survival. They know the

Discussions relating to the present thematic focus prompted the following questions:



Most of the affluent countries in which the majority of migrant workers and asylum-seekers hope to settle are presently trying to limit the number of foreigners entering their territories. The traditional destinations of migrants—the United States, Canada, Australia and New Zealand—have become increasingly restrictive and selective. A drastic change in policy occurred in Western Europe in the mid-1970s, in the wake of the oil crisis. Many of the countries in this region had been actively recruiting manpower from abroad, but with the sharp decline in levels of economic growth, various measures were adopted and implemented during the last quarter of the twentieth century to limit the entry of foreign workers. However, at the same time—for humanitarian purposes, to facilitate the social integration of immigrants, and for a host of other reasons—developed countries opened their doors to allow "family reunification", a concept that was liberally interpreted and resulted in a large influx of immigrants.

Violent and prolonged political conflicts and upheavals, notably in the former

asylum that were often difficult to distinguish from demands for work, and these circumstances, together with the almost concomitant collapse of the Soviet Union and the opening of borders for a large number of Central European countries, provided an added rationale for the adoption of policies by affluent countries to restrict the entry of asylum-seekers and new migrants seeking employment. Borders have been tightened further in recent years owing to the growing fear of terrorism, which has been used to justify the application of restrictive and sometimes discriminatory policies.

The imposition of policies restricting the entry of new migrants is often accompanied by claims of determined efforts to integrate already established immigrants. Some countries grant foreigners the right to participate in local elections. Legislation allowing or denying foreigners the right to acquire nationality varies enormously, but the present trend is not towards greater liberalism. Host countries, in developing and implementing relevant national policies, are confronted with difficult issues relating to social cohesion, a sine qua non for any society. Examples of harmonious integration and coexistence are paralleled and often obscured by examples of fractured and divided communities, discrimination, exploitation and racism.

Developed countries are linked to developing countries through their aid and development policies. Although the overall political rationale for bilateral and multilateral cooperation for development remains the closing of the economic gap between developed and developing countries through various forms of solidarity and the rearrangement of international economic relations, an explicit connection is sometimes made between the provision of aid and technical assistance and the lessening of the pressure for emigration. This issue is not as straightforward as it might seem. There is evidence that candidates for emigration come from communities that have been lifted out of absolute poverty and isolation; it is only after decades of overall development that nationals can find sufficient work and income opportunities at home to balance the perceived advantages of moving abroad.

Most developing countries with high levels of emigration do not try to limit the freedom of movement of their citizens. Some of them restrict the emigration of women, a policy based on arguments of protection that sometimes provokes allegations of unjustified discrimination. In countries receiving substantial migrant remittances, there has lately been somewhat less emphasis on the problems caused by the brain drain.

Migrant workers, asylum-seekers, and other international migrants are often compelled to travel through transit countries on their way to their final destinations. Those migrants without the appropriate documentation exist in a legal vacuum, and transit countries are a privileged field of operation for smugglers and traffickers. Some of these countries are themselves the destinations of migrant workers and asylum-seekers are in the difficult situation of having to elaborate different policies

for people whose intentions and status are often unclear. Many migrants are subjected to detention or quasi-detention, expulsion, endless waiting, and the usual

There is currently no agreement among Member States as to whether international migration should be placed on the agenda of the United Nations. The narrow limits of international cooperation on this issue are illustrated in the following:

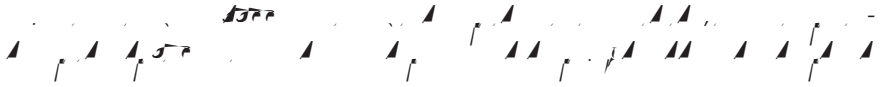
- Even in the European Union (EU), the world's most integrated regional grouping, the development of a common policy on migration has proved difficult.
- Since the beginning of the 1990s, the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) has been very active in exploring the international migration issue through debates, studies and other means. It has a Working Party on Migration and regularly publishes a report on international migration trends, but these activities have so far not been translated into policy initiatives.
- The ILO was created in 1919 and became the first specialized agency of the United Nations in 1946. Labour migration was regulated through instruments such as Convention No. 97 of 1949 concerning Migration for Employment and Convention No. 143 of 1975 concerning Migrations in Abusive Conditions and the Promotion of Equality of Opportunity and Treatment of Migrant Workers. International migration is an important aspect of the work of the ILO, but this organization has never had the authority to ensure that its legal instruments are enforced.
- The World Bank has undertaken a number of studies, notably on remittances, but international migration is not part of its policy prescriptions and recommendations to developing countries.
- The General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS), which constitutes one of the primary legal foundations for the World Trade Organization (WTO), contains an annex on the "movement of natural persons"—an expression also used in the Monterey Consensus of the International Conference on Financing for Development. Negotiations under this Agreement for the liberalization of the delivery of services will also address the liberalization of the movement of persons actually delivering these services, but such negotiations have hardly begun, and any decisions made within this framework will, at least initially, involve only a small fraction of international migrants.
- The IOM, the only major organization focused exclusively on international migration, provides services to Governments, migrants, refugees and displaced persons on a considerable scale, but it is not part of the United Nations system and has no mandate to address normative issues.
- The United Nations itself has developed legal instruments relating to international migration, the most comprehensive of which is the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families, which entered into force in July 2003. However, as none of the countries with significant levels of immigration has ratified the Convention, it is unlikely that its provisions will be implemented.

- The United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and its two protocols on human trafficking and the smuggling of migrants were adopted in 2000. There appears to be less opposition to international cooperation in this domain.
- The most elaborate normative text concerning international migration is incorporated in the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development, held in Cairo in September 1994. The authors of this non-binding text advocate the notion of "orderly international migration" (para. 10.1) and encourage "more cooperation and dialogue between countries of origin and countries of destination" (para. 10.2 (b)). It is emphasized that people should have the viable option of remaining in their countries of birth. The Commission on Population and Development is responsible for the follow-up of the Programme of Action, but the last time international migration was on the agenda of this Commission, its members were unable to reach a consensus on the need for meaningful debate.
- The United Nations Millennium Declaration includes some reminders of the human rights of migrants and exhortations to address "increasing acts of racism and xenophobia" and to promote "greater harmony and tolerance in all societies" (Commitment 4, para. (e)). However, migration issues do not constitute an integral part of this Declaration, which essentially focuses on the reduction of poverty—a central goal within both the United Nations system and the international community.
- International cooperation in matters relating to asyl0 1 Tf-1.d([a.178p30niFjEMC EiGaBT

extent of inequality within and between countries. Other factors that might be considered in ascertaining overall levels of equity and equality include the distribution of assets, the distribution of opportunities for independent work and remunerated employment, the distribution of access to essential public social services, the distribution of possibilities for political participation, and the distribution of human security.

It is impossible to offer any verifiable general conclusions, given the lack of systematic inquiry into these aspects of equity and equality; however, various facts suggest that the overall trend towards rising income inequality has not been offset by greater equality in other domains. Evidence that inequality persists at multiple levels can be found in the continued failure of developing countries to achieve a greater say in the management of the world economy and greater control over private global economic and social forces.

The preceding paragraphs have focused on various aspects of "vertical" inequality, which is measured using a scale based on income or any other variable applicable to all the members of a defined group (such as the entire population of a country or the entire membership of the United Nations). Developments with regard to "horizontal" inequality, measured by comparing separate, identifiable groups, offer a somewhat brighter picture. Especially noteworthy are the advances made in the pursuit of equity and equality between women and men. Progress, while often slow and uneven, has nonetheless been steady in this critical domain. Various initiatives undertaken within the United Nations, such as the creation of a forum for indigenous peoples and the various agreements and activities focused for



national development policies is still an essential part of the United Nations ethos.

Lately, however, quite apart from the debates and controversies surrounding the massive violations of humanitarian norms and respect for national sovereignty, it has been said with increasing frequency that with the current form of globalization and increased interdependence, Governments are experiencing a reduction in their autonomy and in their margin of manoeuvre to design and implement the policies of their choice. Analyses of the situation suggest that developed countries are constrained by the growing interdependence within the international arena and by the multiple types of relationships they have with one another (examples include the Group of Eight and the European Union), and developing countries are, to a much greater extent, limited in their political and socio-economic choices by the same interdependence and by multiple external influences that they either welcome or do not have the capacity to resist. Among these outside influences are international institutions that impose requirements and conditions developing countries must satisfy in order to receive aid and assistance, which explains why many of these countries assume the burden of "responsibility without power".

Do these facts indicate that national responsibility for development is an illusion or a remnant of the past? The general trend of rising inequalities, associated as it has been during the past few decades with the dominant policy of economic liberalization and reduced government intervention, suggests that States have had to follow a common path but have been affected quite differently by events occurring in this context. As mentioned previously, inequality has increased overall since the 1980s, both within and between countries, though there have been important exceptions to this trend.

Explanations for both increases and decreases in inequality are generally very complex, as they involve analyses of disparate political circumstances, cultures and structures. However, evidence suggests that the factors contributing to the recent increases in inequality include the diminished progressivity of the tax structure, reductions in expenditures on universal social programmes, rising unemployment, the

a market economy is generally quite low; in most developed and developing countries, levels of inequality are above this threshold. Greater distributional equality provides a favourable "initial condition" for rapid and sustainable growth, and is a necessary condition for reducing poverty. To conclude, while it is true that outside forces or global trends may impose certain constraints or limit choices, the policy choices made by national Governments are ultimately primarily responsible for the increases or decreases in inequality.

Discussions relating to the present thematic focus prompted the following questions:

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For the United Nations, is both a guiding principle and a central

sion and guardian of the sovereign equality of States, on which the contemporary understanding of international relations is based. The Charter also acknow-ledges that the world is characterized by a very unequal distribution of power, and therefore of responsibility, and it is from this fact that the concept of emerges.

The principles of equality and equity at the international level have also guided United Nations efforts to promote development, which is defined in the Preamble of the Charter as "social progress and better standards of life in larger freedom". The presumption is that international cooperation is a moral imperative, necessary for the reduction of inequalities between States. In this context, equality demands the participation of all States in the debates and negotiations required for effective international cooperation, while equity requires that the more affluent members of the international community express their solidarity through the provision of assistance, first through multilateral channels, to the poorer members. Equity further

cratic debate and the achievement of a consensus on what constitutes the common good. As it is no longer possible for nations to remain independent of one another, defining the common good has become an absolute necessity. Notwithstanding the global solidarity and mobilization that have characterized the pursuit of the Millennium Development Goals, the United Nations is clearly facing enormous obstacles in its efforts to promote and preserve international equity and equality.

From the perspective of the contribution of the United Nations to the pursuit and achievement of equity and equality, there are two main justifications for making a conceptual distinction between [illegible] and [illegible] efforts. First, the traditional activities of the United Nations, in particular those relating to human rights and development, have largely reflected a focus on people rather than on their countries of citizenship. Efforts to reduce the incidence of HIV/AIDS are typical of a global approach to a global problem. The UoT]2(e)-uf H(d)-2( )-1172( )-o3fmnproglobaincide

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