

HANNS W. MAULL:
World Politics in Turbulence

The global economic and financial crisis which, in contrast to previous financial crises such as the Asian crisis in 1997/8, emerged from the center of the global economy, has compelled governments to implement a policy of unprecedented rescue packages. There is every reason to believe that the pattern of the present crisis – the failure of normal political mechanisms, necessitating the adoption, in crisis mode, of extreme, scarcely repeatable policy measures – is paradigmatic for the future of international relations.

The new, turbulent global politics is characterized by three overarching trends: (i) the supersession of geopolitics by geo-economics; (ii) mutations of the global security problematique, which increasingly is shifting from inter-state relations into societies *and* to the transnational sphere; and (iii) the growing weight and increasing intensity of conflicts between different value systems and ideologies. The normal state of politics under conditions of globalization today is one of shared impotence, experienced both jointly and individually – although rarely admitted – by political actors and governments, by no means one of power. Paradoxically, however, hand in hand with the growing impotence of politics in the age of globalization, its responsibilities are also growing.

Smart foreign policies under such circumstances will work towards effective and sustainable strategies of multilateral cooperation to cope with opportunities and risks, through soliciting broad-based support and winning over as many key actors as possible. This requires an ability to take the lead and properly establish one's legitimacy through forging coalitions based on leadership by example, consensus-building and compromise.

MELANIE MORISSE-SCHILBACH:

»Ach Deutschland!«

Greece, the Euro Crisis, and the Costs and Benefits of Being a Benign Hegemon

Commenting on recent developments in Europe, German author, poet and »good European« »par cœur« Hans Magnus Enzensberger deplores the fact that governments are »messing Europe up« and that they »antagonize people for no good reason.« Unfortunately, Germany has become a major player in this risky game of antagonizing Europe, which is the Europe of ordinary people and political elites alike. The Greek quasi-bailout, the euro turmoil, and the current crisis management among EU member states all reveal that »messing Europe up« is nowadays a policy outcome that German politicians are more than willing to put up with. Europe's current crisis is, for the most part, a crisis of Germany in Europe, the biggest and most influential member state in the EU. Instead of sighing »Ach Europa,« as Enzensberger did in the late 1980s, »Ach Deutschland« might be a more appropriate commentary on Europe's current state. Economically, after World War II, Germany became a benign hegemon by default, a status granted by its former enemies. Nowadays, it is on its way to losing this comfortable position as benign leader and legitimate power in the EU, not because others are rejecting its leadership or denying fellowship, but because it made a deliberate – and misguided – political choice: in the current Greece and euro crisis, it is acting unilaterally instead of seeking to gain support for its own policy by leading and persuading others. Germany is losing control because it lacks vision. However, without a vision of how Europe might best be served and tied closely to its own economic fate, German leadership is doomed to failure. Benign hegemony is not about administering the status quo, but about creating environments according to one's own interests, persuading one's partners to follow. The current euro crisis shows that the German government does not have a vision of monetary Europe and has no idea of what leadership in EMU and Europe might be for. Persuasion is thus in short supply. Germany is glibly tossing away its role as hegemon in EMU and Europe. Presenting the main analytical concepts on benign hegemony and cooperation the paper seeks to show that reestablishing Germany as a benign hegemon within the framework of European monetary cooperation would be the best way of serving the interests of both Germany in EMU and EMU itself.

Relations between Russia and the West have experienced a period of détente since Obama's »reset.« Such »sunshine« periods are nothing new, the previous one ensuing after September 11, 2001. However, they have always been succeeded by »Klimastürze« (periods of climatic upheaval). Both sides need to make an effort if this pattern is not to repeat itself.

What is needed in the West is to extend relations beyond the hitherto narrow corridor of strategic arms control and the joint non-proliferation policy towards Iran. This would also involve at long last clarifying the strategic nature of relations with Russia, for example, with regard to developing European security. Here two approaches confront one another, with prominent supporters on both sides. On one side are those who stress the exclusive nature of Western security organizations as a guarantee of counter-insurance against Russia and to that end favor their further expansion. On the other side are those who, for the purposes of pan-European responsibility call for at least a progressive integration with Russia, sometimes even NATO membership.

On the Russian side, similar clarification is needed. Although Russia finds itself in an inferior position in relation to the organizing power of NATO and the EU, without an autonomous ability to set the agenda, nevertheless the question arises of whether Russia wishes to assert itself in cooperation with and in support of the West or separately and in confrontation with it. In his famous speech at the Munich security conference in 2007 Putin withdrew allegiance to the USA and established Russia as an independent pillar in a multipolar parallelogram of power. The steady economic rise and global power shift in favor of the BRIC countries (Brazil, Russia, India, China) turned this self-confidence into hubris, however, until the global economic crisis of 2008/2009 brought Russia back to earth with a bump, making it starkly aware of its limitations. This has altered not only Russia's foreign policy rhetoric but also its priorities, although not its notion of itself as an independent great power.

To the same extent that Russia became aware of its international integration and dependencies, its international competitiveness and modernization became more important. However, this requires a cooperative foreign policy stance which President Medvedev has pursued perfectly credibly, but with limited practical results. The European Security Treaty which he proposed at the end of 2009 fits in with this very well. In the West, his initiative was seen largely as a sinister maneuver in a long line of attempts by Moscow to undermine NATO. In fact, however, it represents a legitimate and, as regards its level of aspiration, moderate attempt to obtain a hearing for Russia's voice in Europe. The West – and Germany too – should take a much more constructive approach than they have been ready to take hitherto.

JOHANNES WETZINGER:

Georgia's Foreign Policy under Mikhail Sakashvili:

A Dangerous Game between the Conflicting Interests of Moscow and Washington

Since the fall of the Soviet Union Georgia has found itself caught once more between conflicting geopolitical interests. While in the South Caucasus Russia is asserting traditional »vital interests,« since the mid-1990s the significance of the United States has increased markedly, leading to clashes with Moscow on a number of occasions. Mikhail Sakashvili, who took office in Georgia at the beginning of 2004, saw Washington's heightened engagement as an opportunity. By allying closely with the USA and NATO, so the reasoning went, it would be possible to balance Russia's influence, which was generally perceived as negative. However, Georgia's political leadership, with its one-sided orientation towards Washington, vociferous anti-Russian rhetoric, and aggressive actions against the two breakaway regions of Abkhazia and South Ossetia, has contributed to an escalation of relations with Moscow. By taking this course, Tbilisi was ultimately playing a dangerous game, which became obvious at the latest in the »five-day war« between Georgia and Russia: on the one hand, Sakashvili overestimated the level of support Washington was prepared to give, although his delusions were encouraged at least to some extent by US rhetoric under George W. Bush. On the other hand, Russia's willingness to take action was significantly underestimated. In recent years, Russia's self-confidence has grown and it is evidently no longer prepared to accept infringements of its interests on the global stage. Russia's military response to Sakashvili's advance on breakaway South Ossetia must therefore be seen in an international context: the Kremlin in this way made it clear to the West that »red lines« – above all Moscow's rejection of further NATO enlargement to the east – must be observed. After a long period during which Sakashvili's one-sided Western orientation prevailed as the political consensus in the South Caucasian republic, in the past year opposition to his foreign policy has broadened: for the first time since the early 1990s well-known figures in the opposition in Georgia have openly advocated a rapprochement with Russia and received a warm welcome in Moscow from Vladimir Putin. The chances of a shift in Georgian foreign policy during what is left of Sakashvili's term of office are slim: the positions of Moscow and Tbilisi have become entrenched and an improvement in relations is not in prospect. Rapprochement with Russia on the part of individual Georgian politicians risks a further heightening of domestic political polarization, since Sakashvili has already tried over the past few years to discredit political opponents as puppets of the Kremlin.

KARSTEN JUNG:**On Keeping One's Commitments****Or: Why an Eventful Year Ended Inconclusively in Afghanistan**

What began as a promising year in Afghanistan is now coming to a discouraging close. Against the backdrop of a failed offensive in Marjah, a stillborn attempt at reconciliation with the Taliban, and a parliamentary election marred by violence and fraud, the air of optimism and resolve surrounding the London conference in January has given way to a profound sense of uncertainty. With increasingly urgent calls for a change of strategy and drawdown coming from all directions, yet another Afghan year is ending inconclusively.

At this critical juncture, the article scrutinizes the key developments and circumstances that have shaped and determined the international coalition's shifting fortunes over the course of the past 12 months. In doing so, it identifies one key factor that has obstructed success in Afghanistan: the lack of political will to pursue the agreed goal and strategy. Neither in Kabul nor in coalition capitals have governments mustered the courage to foot the bill entailed by their pledge to promote security and stability in Afghanistan by means of a »comprehensive counterinsurgency campaign.« The article thus concludes that, rather than considering their premature abandonment, governments should finally begin to fully honor their commitment to the goals and strategy on which they have agreed. In this way, it hopes to make a productive contribution – although somewhat against the grain – to a debate that, at present, appears to be headed dangerously in only one direction: to get out of Afghanistan, fast.

GERDA AXER-DÄMMER:**When »Citizens in Uniform« Are Obligated to Kill:****Is the Civic Establishment of the »Bundeswehr« Becoming Obsolete?**

From the very beginning, the armed forces of the Federal Republic of Germany have understood themselves as part of the common Western effort to protect democratic freedom against the totalitarian threat from the Soviet block. The »Bundeswehr« was meant to be an army *of* sovereign citizens *for* sovereign citizens, embedded in a democratically organized society and governed by its principles. Its mission was linked inseparably to the democratic nature of the German state. It is difficult for armed forces based on such an establishment to accommodate a role as fighters and »killers« in conflicts with no clear relations to their democratic core mission. Such soldiers – professionals socialized into the unique form of organization which the armed forces represent – are increasingly under strong pressure to adopt a less political and more organizational and group-centered orientation and ethos. The fairly wide scope which Germany offers its

citizens to opt out of military service – one unintended consequence of which is to foster the selective recruitment of soldiers with authoritarian, right-wing, and even somewhat belligerent inclinations – reinforces this tendency. The civic model or »Leitbild« is being eroded. A growing distance between the armed forces and civil society is emerging, reinforced by the latter's »benign indifference« to the former. There is no easy solution to the mounting tension between combat reality and the concept of the »citizen soldier,« which has been essential for the self-understanding of the democratic German state. The concept was not designed to take account of highly controversial combat missions »out of area.« But how could its demise be accommodated by a democratic Germany? There is an urgent need for a public debate.

GERD GANTEFÖR:

Population Growth and Climate Change: Why Fossil Fuels Are Indispensable for Poor Countries

Population growth is a much more serious problem than global warming. Unless measures to curb population growth are given the highest priority, famines, epidemics, and civil wars will plunge large parts of the planet into poverty. Population growth is being driven by the high birth rates in poorly developed countries with extremely low levels of GDP. Birth rates fall almost automatically when GDP rises above the threshold of extreme poverty. Economic growth, in turn, is closely linked to energy consumption and only the availability of large quantities of inexpensive energy enables growth in poorly developed countries. Affordable energy is obtainable at present only from coal, oil, natural gas, and uranium. These primary energy carriers will remain indispensable until there are no more countries with a GDP below an annual 1,000 euros per capita. Wind power and solar energy are prohibitively expensive for such countries. For that reason, they will invest massively in such inexpensive forms of energy as coal, which will lead to a further increase in the concentration of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere. Many new nuclear power stations are being built. This will continue regardless of the decisions and wishes of the industrialized countries. The efforts of richer countries, such as Germany, to bring about reductions in carbon dioxide emissions will have virtually no effect on the global carbon balance. Instead, it would make more sense to export extremely efficient coal power stations to the least developed countries. Such measures would make it possible to save much larger quantities of carbon dioxide than economies at home. The same applies to nuclear energy. If the highly developed countries opt out of nuclear energy the likelihood of another Chernobyl will increase dramatically. This is because less developed countries would be forced to purchase nuclear plant technology from countries with much lower safety standards. The number of dangerous nuclear

power stations which are still operational will increase markedly. The export of safer nuclear plant technology is the only rational way of avoiding another worst-case scenario. On top of that, more should be invested in the development of forms of energy generation which meet the requirements of less developed countries. This includes, in particular, methods which take up little space, are affordable, and perform reliably in terms of the quantity of gigawatts generated. This includes, for example, geothermal energy. In European, wind energy, the price of which is admittedly high but still affordable, has the potential to significantly reduce the utilization of coal and natural gas.