GLOBALISATION IMPLICATIONS FOR ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

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This paper is more reflective than it is a strategy for action vis-ü-vis the challenge of environmental protection or enhancement, as the case may be.

There are essentially two positions adopted in discussions on globalisation. One is that globalisation involves a lost of national sovereignty, even cultural identity. The other is the diametrically opposite view that rather than the lost or weakening of national sovereignty and identity globalisation in fact strengthens it. Either position, as can be seen, has implications not only for political and economic relations between states but equally the environment and its protection, precisely because the environment or bios recognises no man-made boundaries. Therefore, what globalisation implies and entails will directly or indirectly have an impact – positive or negative as the case may be – on the readiness or otherwise of states to co-operate in the interest of the environment or bios.

Globalisation as a process

In a sense, globalisation is not a modern or contemporary phenomenon. Ever since human societies began to make contact with each other through trade, conquest or scientific social exchange, the process of globalisation has been in the ascendance: spreading and intensifying punctuated by periods of acceleration and deceleration. However, what perhaps characterises the current situation is the depth, magnitude and complexity of globalisation and its effects on human societies brought on by scientific/technological breakthroughs in communication – i.e. the so called information revolution – and bio-genetic research into areas such as cloning.

Progress in information technology has made possible not only information storage, retrieval and processing but instantaneous transfer of capital and wealth with equally instantaneous effects on the economies of the world – witness the current economic recession resulting from, among other things, the withdrawal of foreign investments from the affected countries. Advances made in information technology/communication in general have made possible direct person to person contact over long distances through the Internet and video-conferencing, and when the need arises to create artificial but real effects or conditions, such as computer simulation and, lately, virtual reality. Clearly, those who have the means to utilise such communicational devices would thrive in the global competition for wealth and influence.

Transnational entities as beneficiaries of globalisation

Who, one may ask, are the major beneficiaries of globalisation underpinned by the revolution in information technology? Without a doubt, it is the multinational or transnational corporations whose network and outreach is more often than not beyond the influence, let alone control, of a single state. Coupled with this is the globalisation of the stock market, where the inflow or outflow of funds/capital is more in the hands of investment gurus and portfolio managers than it is the prerogative of the state. Most would agree that such a mode of international financial practice is essentially good as it would ensure the most efficient and profitable use of funds/capital, thus enabling companies or corporations with good track records to access them for productive purposes.

A more recent trend in the developing world – and Southeast Asia is no exception – is the privatisation of state-owned companies/industries not only for economic/financial reasons – to obtain more investment capital for instance – but also to gain new and expanding markets by tying up with foreign multinational companies and corporations. It would appear that both international pressures – i.e. multinational corporations moving out to enjoy economic and production advantages such as cheap labour, tax reliefs and ease of transport – and domestic pressures are interlocking to push further the process of globalisation.

Another developing trend is the growing acceptance of regionalisation as a political/economic formation for reasons of geographical affinity prompted by perceived mutual advantages accruable – the EU, NAFTA, AFTA and APEC groups are all examples of this trend. Such an arrangement has enabled regions to grow and develop because of the ease and facility enjoyed in the flow of goods and people, a condition due in large part to the removal of tariffs and immigration barriers. Indeed, in the area of preserving peace and security, the UN has also encouraged the development of regional capabilities and resilience. There are, of course, fears and reservations expressed from time to time that regionalisation could lead to the emergence of trade or military blocks. But the advantage of regionalisation – which should be seen as a facet of globalisation – seems to outweigh its potential disadvantages. There is therefore, a demand on the state to make itself relevant should it wish to tap the advantages of globalisation – not only in the economic/scientific/technological sense but attitudinally as well.

Be that as it may, since the end of the Cold War confrontation between the former USSR and the US, the idea of the independent or sovereign state has become, if anything, stronger, bolder and more immovable: a condition no doubt made all the more intense by the UN charter which among other concerns acknowledge the principle of sovereignty and non-interference in the internal affairs of another state. It is significant to note in this regard that as recently as late July 1998, when the ASEAN Foreign Ministers met in Manila, the principle

of "non-interference" was again reiterated. This re-affirmation of political philosophy arose following a suggestion from the Foreign Minister of Thailand, Dr Surin Pitsuwan, to institute "flexible engagement" in future ASEAN fora. If adopted, it would allow a member state of ASEAN to raise questions on sensitive issues or developments that have crossborder – contagious – consequences such as, for example, the spillover from the economic recession brought on by one state leading to a domino effect and the problem of refugees fleeing Burma for Thailand. In rejecting the Thai Foreign Minister's suggestion, other member states of ASEAN – with the exception of the Foreign Minister of the Philippines – appeared to have suffered a temporary amnesia. Just a few months ago and earlier, Singapore, Malaysia – East and West – and parts of eastern and western Indonesia were covered intermittently and over long periods of time by smoke with high sulphuric content – euphemistically called "the haze" – emanating from the forest fires in Sumatra and Kalimantan in the island of Borneo. For several months visibility was reduced to a few yards in critically affected areas. The Pollution Standard Index (PSI) consistently recorded figures way above the safe level. To date, no reliable costing to health, economic dislocation and lost of biodiversity has been worked out. An estimate of US$ 1.4 billion has been suggested by one source – the Economic and Environment Programme for SEA. Regional and international contributions to control the forest fires were both modest and slow in coming, a state of affairs exacerbated by Indonesia's lack of means for legal enforcement, and technical expertise to face the problem squarely. It was in expectation of divine intervention – i.e. rain – that many hoped relief would come. The overall response to the haze was a curious admixture of regional solidarity and respect for national sovereignty which in both cases led to an ad hoc approach.

The Southeast Asian haze poses two critical questions in the area of environmental protection: (a) who should be held responsible in the first instance to ensure that forest fires do not occur or at least minimised? And (b) what are the rights and responsibilities of neighbouring states affected by them? The assistance rendered by Australia, Singapore and Malaysia to control the forest fires in Indonesia cited earlier, was a mixture of altruism, good neighbourliness, sense of regional solidarity, enlightened self-interest and perhaps a genuine concern to protect the natural heritage of mankind. None of the affected states sought compensation notwithstanding the public complaints and criticisms expressed in the media. The foregoing seems to suggest that ASEAN member states should come to the assistance of each other whenever there is a catastrophe with regional/transnational consequences without rancour and reservation or even expectation of compensation. The operating philosophy appears to be anchored on the adage "one good turn deserves another" – the principle of reciprocity, to be activated at the appropriate time as events call for without intrusion into the internal policies of another state. Can this be a viable way forward to address issues with transnational or crossborder consequences?

Harmonisation and optimisation

Clearly, two forces are at work. The intelligent and sensitive management of both will rebound well on efforts to protect man's very source of survival, i.e. the environment. One is the unstoppable force of globalisation – a process that a nation state can only ignore to its own peril. The demand on each nation state in this connection is how to plug into the global system to optimise its chances of survival and development. The other is the force of nationalism anchored on the notion of "national sovereignty" and the principle of "non-interference in the internal affairs of another state."

Given that the world needs to be governed to ensure orderly exchange among peoples or nations according to accepted standards of international conduct – not to mention the great diversity of race, language, culture, religion etc. – the notion of the independent and sovereign state as a unit of political organisation of the international or global system will remain indefinitely. Taking a leaf from history, the historical evolution of human societies had been paralleled by the evolution of the independent state though they do not necessarily overlap.

Yet, at the same time, national borders have become increasingly porous precisely because of globalisation. The demand in this regard is not to stop globalisation in its tracks but to court it so as to enhance national resilience and international standing.

Growing economic interdependence and the decreasing ability of any single state to cope with the issues that affect mankind as a whole – such as the destruction of the environment, the spread of contagious diseases including AIDS, international terrorism, white collar crime, drug trafficking and money-laundering, the unregulated sale of fissionable materials, the violation of human rights, illegal trade in endangered species – necessitate a global approach.

Fear of political domination by another state and the perceived need to have full control over decisions that affect its people lies at the heart of a state's concern for national sovereignty. Clearly, neither globalisation nor the motivation to maintain national sovereignty will suffice to deal with the many complex problems and demands. Both should be seen as complementary to each other: one cannot fully function to the exclusion of the other. Their interfacing should lead to mutual reinforcement while creating a win-win situation for all.

Putting theory into practice

The benefits accruing from globalisation are indisputable. Indeed, if anything human civilisation could not have reached its present state had societies closed each other off to subsist on a diet of self-sufficiency. The existence of the independent state as a unit of political/legal organisation on the other hand has been both boon and bane: a boon because it has contributed to a significant measure of peace and security in the international system – if we accept the proposition that world government is unattainable – and a bane because of its inherent structural defect – it is prone to conflict and confrontation if the ambitions of states are not kept within bounds.

There are in this regard several paradoxes, each requiring a different approach to reconcile. In the case of the independent state, some scholars believe reconciliation can only come with the presence of a super-state/super-power – such as Great Britain in the 18th and 19th century and the United States in the 20th and very likely 21st century – in short a hegemon with the wherewithal and coercive resources to impose a pattern of international behaviour on the rest, however inequitable it may be viewed. Be that as it may, evidence that seems to point to the greater impact – as well as acceptance in international relations – of world opinion or collective moral, but not excluding material, sanctions in achieving desirable international behaviour is mounting. It is an approach that applies equally in efforts to promote bios and the environment. Indeed, irresponsible damage to the environment represents

a much greater evil to the long term survival of mankind as a whole.

What can be assumed as a fundamental truth is that there is no single solution, or even an ideal set of solutions, for every national or international context vis-ü-vis the resolution of transnational or crossborder concerns such as the protection and conservation of bios and the environment. There are what might be termed hierarchies of authority and power, priorities of development, nuances of meaning and interpretation of concepts and principles both nationally and internationally, differential access to resources and expertise, historical antecedents of co-operation or conflict, degrees of trust or mistrust of prospective partners, sense of urgency etc.

The foregoing realities therefore call for multi-prong, multi-level and multi-lateral approaches or measures. In activating them, one need also to consider the following: (a) measures that take into consideration the inter-connectedness of the environment and related areas of human activities within a community, society, state or region (b) measures that take into consideration the difference between environmental protection or conservation and environmental repair (c) measures to pass needed environmental protection laws and their strict enforcement. (d) measures that would make it obligatory to pay an environmental tax based on frequency or intensity of usage of common resources and facilities such as, for example, the seas and oceans of the world. (e) measures that would impose an obligation on multinational entities such as corporations, industries and international financial institutions to contribute to environmental conservation or enrichment as the case may be locally regionally and globally since they are the major beneficiaries of globalisation (f) measures that delineate the rights and responsibilities of each member state within a regional set-up, particularly in the conservation of critical ecosystems whose destruction has a permanent transborder, adverse impact (g) compensatory measures that would allow affected states to obtain alternative sources of livelihood, consequent on their having to make "sacrifices" for the sake of the larger good by not exploiting their environmental resources, and (h) last but not least, measures aimed at the development and dissemination of values and attitudes of right living through precept, learning and example at all levels of society in the interest of the environment.

The message that man's survival rests squarely on the intelligent use and management of the environment should be driven home again and again until it becomes ingrained in every individual and infuses every aspect of existence. In this regard, kindergartens, schools, colleges and universities should develop and inculcate an environment-sensitive curriculum to shape the necessary consciousness towards care and respect of the environment.

The measures advocated earlier are not exclusive to each other. Neither are they new and exhaustive. All the same, they need systematic application in both outreach and intensity. In this local communities need to be engaged, so that a feeling of ownership and responsibility toward the environment emerges over time. Workable and exemplary models of effective environmental husbandry could be made more readily available for application elsewhere. Tax reliefs could be offered to corporations and industries who demonstrate through action and deed a pro-environment philosophy. Here and there, there are good precedents but they need to be generalised or institutionalised preferably with the appropriate incentives. In parts of Southeast Asia, collusion – a phenomenon popularly known as "collusion, cronyism and nepotism" – between politicians in power and their supporters has been responsible to a significant extent for the indiscriminate despoiling of the timber and mineral resources. This mode of economic activity based on patronage exacerbates efforts – both real and potential – in addressing the issue of environmental protection. This facet of the environmental problem requires that political reforms be in place to provide the necessary conditions for other measures to be activated.

Comparative advantage

There is no doubt that globalisation is economically driven. To illustrate, the experience of the ASEAN states in recent years may be instructive. In the ASEAN states, economic diversity – not to mention socio-cultural, political and ethnic/racial diversity – ranges from Singapore's high-tech based industries – primarily information technology including communications – to the agricultur-ists of the highlands of Indonesia, Thailand, Malaysia, Burma, the Philippines, Cambodia and Laos. Despite this, there are certain commonalties of policy and development objectives undergirding the ASEAN economies. Gone are the days of the absolute or dominantly agrarian economy, or agrarian/plantation type, associated with such countries as Indonesia, Malaysia, Thailand etc. Almost all ASEAN states – with the exception of Burma, Cambodia and Laos at this moment – admit to the need for economic openness in order to plug into the global system for real or potential benefits. Each ASEAN state is at the same time desirous of being a major economic node: to ground if not at least to capture a slice of the economic action – such as that associated with international communication, land and sea transport, high tech industry, tourism and the capital market – within its national borders. In this regard, Malaysia, Thailand, the Philippines and Indonesia are in varying degrees of intent and purpose following on closely the footsteps of Singapore. Then there is rising competition in the aforesaid areas of economic activity made more ugly by political overtones, such as the present President of Indonesia's – Dr. B.H. Habibie, previously the Minister for Research and Technology – intent not long ago to require all Indonesian cargo and commercial planes to use Hang Nadim airport on the Indonesian island of Batam situated a few miles from Singapore. The Malaysian Ministry of Transport in recent months has threatened to pass legislation requiring all shippers and haulage companies in Malaysia to ship goods and merchandise through Port Klang, a Malaysian port situated approximately 40 kilometres from the Federal capital of Kuala Lumpur. In addition to that, Malaysia recently opened its modern state-of-the-art international airport at Sepang, 65 kilometres from Kuala Lumpur to vie with Singapore's Changi International Airport. Malaysia's much publicised Multi-Media Super Corridor outside the Federal Capital is also another initiative in the same direction. Until recently, Thailand had planned to cut a canal through the Isthmus of Kra, an initiative that would include the construction of a port/city on its banks to enable ships and tankers leaving for Cambodia, Vietnam, China, Japan and eastern Russia to bypass Singapore.

The merits or otherwise of the various initiatives apart, what can be seen is that globalisation in this instance seems to point to more competition if not also political tension between ASEAN states despite their overt declaration of unity and solidarity. It portrays more a unifying ambition, national in aetiology and economic in motivation, to acquire the trappings of a modern state. To some extent, such an inclination is understandable because if globalisation means anything at all to the less developed/developing states it is in the desire to attain developed status in the community of nations. Be that as it may, the notion of comparative advantage in the production of goods and services for the competitive market is overlooked, even jettisoned. Such a situation, as can be seen inherently, militates against co-operation and mutual accommodation in other non-economic areas as well such as co-operative and

unified approaches to meeting environmental goals. Therefore, there is a great deal to be said for states in regional groupings to re-focus on the notion of comparative advantage and in doing so re-evaluate their development strategies to optimise their individual strengths. In this way, both national interests as well as regional resilience are served. This in fact was the attitude recently adopted by the Thai government with regard to the decision to abandon the Kra Isthmus project. In deciding not to proceed, the Thai government was of the view that a port at the Isthmus of Kra would not be able to provide the range of services and infrastructural support comparable to Singapore, which concurred that it was much better situated strategically to serve insular and mainland Southeast Asia.

A major dilemma in globalisation is that it is pursued in the drive for profit or economic gain against the need to create a more just or equitable distribution/allocation system. Globalisation has meant the ever-increasing production of goods and services for the competitive market. Economists, especially those of the free enterprise or capitalistic persuasion, laud this as the most efficient use of limited resources of land, capital, labour and enterprise. It is a compelling argument given the global system and the fact that other alternatives have failed. Moreover, the capitalistic system of acquisition and distribution seems inherently egalitarian – or is it? Seen in terms of the need to conserve the environment and its resources, if nothing else to ensure that future generations are not deprived of the means of survival, there are however two major flaws in the present system of production. One is the inevitable depletion of natural resources over time – a development made worse by the surplus production of goods and services – and the other, the sheer waste resulting from it. Competition or competitive enterprise brings out the best – if one may also add the worst – in human qualities, so it is claimed. Yet, it does not deter from the fact that the Earth's resources are finite notwithstanding the scientific/technological breakthroughs that have enhanced human survival.

There is no doubt a fundamental dilemma arising from the pervasive economic logic supporting globalisation and the equally powerful logic anchored on moral responsibility and equity. Clearly, if the productive system of goods and services is founded on need, it would to that extent conserve resources and therefore directly promote the well-being of the environment. To do so, would require fundamental re-alignment in both thinking and development approach not to mention a modification of lifestyle.

Can this be done? If so, how? Perhaps, as a start a moral dimension should be incorporated into the production and distribution system. This would ensure that the world would live within its environmental means and not squander them away in the name purely of variety, wider choice, quality and efficiency. Since money – or profit – pivots the capitalistic ethos, it might help to reduce monetary dependence by appeals to mutual help, community support and responsible citizenship, not forgetting at the same time the need to stress reduced consumption.

Indeed, the necessary behavioural and value change calls for new orientations in the global reward and distribution system. Investments of capital should somehow take into account the possible environmental impact arising from the industries set up as a result, besides the accepted criteria of profitability/returns, political stability, quality of the work force and comparative advantage. With the ease of movement of capital and investment as a result of globalisation, the potential use that this could be put to in the interest of the environment could be enormous. At the same time, this would imply the sieving out of speculative investment funds which are both distorting and predatory.

Fundamentally, a system to reward moral responsibility, work, and investment needs to be institutionalised to form the basis of distribution/allocation.

The foregoing proposals are aimed at creating a world system where societies with different endowments of natural resources as well as cultural preferences live in contentment, security and harmony with each other and with themselves, undergirded by a biocentric morality, while they simultaneously work co-operatively on reducing the injustices of poverty, economic waste/extravagance, political oppression, racial hatred and religious bigotry. This requires that globalisation be culturally anchored, that is, it must fit in with the specific cultural milieu where it unfolds and which gives it meaning, relevance and direction. Globalisation is not unrestrained competition where the strong remain strong and the weak remain weak. It is more the process of gradual and sustained levelling up for the weak, aided by enlightened self-interest from the strong, underpinned by the need to achieve balance between the heterogeneous demands of human existence and the demands of environmental protection. Globalisation can never be total homogenisation. It must be adaptable and flexible enough to cater to the variegated demands of bios dispersed as it is in equally variegated environmental conditions.

The new renaissance in biocentric values

The intrinsic benefits accruable at large from globalisation are clear. Yet at the same time while globalisation in inexorable and inevitable, it is fundamentally neutral in moral/ethical terms. It is a process, socio-economic in character that is driven by the very fact of man's desire to improve himself through incorporation and participation with ever larger human collectivities. Because globalisation, as it is unfolding today, is economically driven it has to that extent distorted reality and in the process displaced equally important human concerns, among them being the need to conserve environmental resources, maintain biodiversity and protect vital ecosystems sustaining life or bios. In this regard, the problem of overpopulation, which in turn puts pressure on land usage and water supply in developing and underdeveloped states, should be addressed as well. For such states, globalisation has in some ways exacerbated their existence because the resources available are quite often appropriated by the politically powerful including multinationals. The challenge then is to guide or direct globalisation along paths that lead to a convergence of interests so that all round benefits are accruable, not least the nurturing of life or bios and the strengthening of vital ecosystems. To be sure, there is a recurrent theme emanating from less developed countries that they are made to bear the burden of environmental conservation without the requisite compensatory measures to assist them in providing for their populations. It is a legitimate complaint that calls out for viable and mutually satisfactory solutions. In this connection the concept or notion of "sustainable development," while intrinsically sound, has been interpreted as condemning the developing countries to a perpetual state of economic inferiority and penury vis-ü-vis the wealthy and developed states which are seen to have arrived. It would be unfortunate should the notion of "sustainable development" assume an ideological dimension.

For the notion "sustainable development" to work, developing countries should be given every assistance to create wealth. Only by developing a local, national or regional capability in

economic and scientific/technological terms can the aforementioned notion be realisable in full measure. It is only when national resilience has been achieved can the subject of environmental protection or repair be of real meaning to them. In a still imperfect world where the wealthy are not inclined to suffer a drop in their standard of living or pattern of consumption – if they can help it – for the sake of a larger good, however morally persuasive the arguments may be, a strategy which assists and facilitates developing states to achieve a progressive improvement in their livelihood would probably work better and more importantly result in permanent long term benefits. Yet, at the same time, the process of globalisation requires wider and deeper multifaceted tie-ups involving states, organisations, institutions and strategies aimed at addressing crossborder issues like the preservation of vital ecosystems, including rivers, oceans, and seas. In this, funding and development agencies – such as the World Bank, IBRD, Asian Development Bank including national and commercial banks located in each state – should progressively upgrade their criteria of loan and assistance to promote pro-environment objectives. Equally, given that vital natural resources are diminishing at an unprecedented pace due to a variety of reasons – most of which can be controlled or managed – the world, as a whole, will have to learn quickly the virtues of reduced consumption, resource conservation and good husbandry.

Globalisation as it is unfolding encourages multiple responses. The potential for a single state or hegemon to dictate the terms and pace of human evolution or development is receding into the past. The multiplicity of states in the world are learning fast to accommodate each other in the name of equality, mutual respect, and common responsibility.

At the same time non-governmental organisations are multiplying, and their contributions to instilling consciousness in common concerns would provide a needed balance to narrow interests, whether they are represented by national governments or multinational business groups. This is an aspect of globalisation that augurs well for the future. In this connection both national governments and non-governmental organisations need to implement a common vision: a vision anchored on biocentric concerns besides others to set the world on the path of a new renaissance in human endeavour. As suggested earlier, national boundaries are becoming more and more porous by the day. But at the same time, states are also defending their autonomy or sovereignty jealously. This fundamental dialectic will demand level-headed, multi-level, multi-dimensional and co-ordinated approaches to achieve the most efficacious long lasting results. The moot question is, of course, whether the political will exists to push for the realisation of the vision.

In the meanwhile, certain biocentric precepts need to be universalised to serve as a covenant, of good behaviour:

1. *Man as guardian:* The exploitative, almighty mentality of raw subjugation, domination and manipulation of the environment most perforce be altered to be replaced by the precepts of nurture, co-existence, balance, harmony and symbiosis between man and man, and between man and nature.

2. *The middle way:* Human existence guided by moderation will rebound well on the environment and its resources. The perceptual adage is "to live within one's means" so that accountability guides consumption and in the process minimise waste or alternatively check extravagance. It also calls for a balanced lifestyle, one that incorporates physical, mental and moral health.

3. *Every action has both intended and unintended consequences:* This rule or biocentric precept gives emphasis to the inter-relatedness of things, the inter-penetration of phenomena and influence in everyday life and the need to search for alternatives. This fact calls for careful planning and deliberation, guided by high moral/ethical standards to optimise the good effects and to minimise the bad. The protection of bios or the enhancement of the environment in this regard should be seen as a component or aspect of a more inclusive structure of concerns, such as for example eco-tourism, which not only aims at preserving vital ecosystems but at the same time revitalises the local economy by providing gainful employment. In diametrical opposition is the issue of cloning: what are its implications for human life itself, not to mention the future of the environment?

4. *Commitment to ethical practice:* All human relationships should be guided by good ethics and should overflow into the area of environmental conservation and the protection of bios. With ethics comes responsibility and accountability according to Newton's law of motion, whereby every action has an equal and opposite reaction. In religious terms, the accumulation of merit requires meritorious action. In concrete terms, a great deal of the spoliation of the environment today is the result of the lack of ethics. In the head-long rush to obtain the benefits of globalisation, ethics or ethical business practice is quite often thrown overboard.

5. *Respect for international law and opinion:* Ethics and law produce a somewhat similar effect in human and interstate relationships, though they do not overlap. Ethics appeals because it calls for fairness, empathy, decency, morality and responsibility. There is also the element of guilt should one act unethically. Law on the other hand stresses the rights and responsibilities of fellow citizens within a state or between contracting parties and states. Failure to play by the rules can therefore lead to sanctions by a court of law – such as ICJ or the European Court. With globalisation, the need for an international code of conduct, be it for business transaction or the protection of the common heritage of mankind – the environment – is irrefutable, indeed necessary and obligatory. What are the mechanics or modalities that can bring this about, and under what circumstances? The efforts directed at environmental conservation cannot avoid this issue in order to be effective.

6. *Action, not excuses:* The efforts made in defence of national sovereignty cannot be used as an excuse for not addressing international problems that have a crossborder adverse effect, particularly in the area of environmental conservation. The state, while watchful of its interests, nonetheless has to take into account international responsibility. Globalisation implies that, and therefore obliges states to act proactively following the adage "no man is an island all unto himself."

Conclusion

In safeguarding the environment and biodiversity within the rubric of cumulative globalisation, the following propositions merit attention.

First, globalisation does not inherently threaten the integrity or sovereignty of the independent state. On the contrary, it requires that states work more closely with each other to attain

mutually satisfactory outcomes, be they environment or non-environment related.

Secondly, since globalisation is economically driven – a process which no doubt has political and cultural connections and consequences – it is necessary to undergird all economic transactions and decisions on sound ethical principles, especially those that contribute to environmental objectives. Such ethical principles will also help to allay fear and suspicion of crossborder entities and their operation.

Thirdly, because environmental resources are finite and unevenly distributed and the needs of mankind infinite and variegated there can never be a state of absolute equality either (a) in access to environmental resources or (b) in the allocation and distribution of goods and services. Nonetheless, mechanisms should be available and efforts made to assist disadvantaged communities or countries to level upwards through developing national resilience and local capacities. There is no single meaning for the term development.

Fourthly, because globalisation tends to benefit certain entities or interest groups operating across borders, a mechanism should be worked out to levy a charge on them based on the principle of "usage and benefit." The environmental pool so accumulated could be disbursed to achieve desirable environmental objectives.

Fifthly, the principle of comparative advantage in economic production should be reiterated. This will result in two interrelated outcomes (a) the reduction of duplication of production processes, thus conserving resources and (b) the strengthening of national resilience and eco-cultural diversity.

Sixthly, the current production system, based as it is on the ethos of profit maximisation, needs to be reviewed to tamper its negative effects, among them waste, surplus production and duplication, all of which make unacceptable demands on limited environmental resources. Money cannot and should not be the measure of all things. The current world economic crisis is a manifestation of the negative aspects of globalisation.

Seventhly, states must be made more accountable to international responsibility in matters relating specifically to the environment. In this they should treat the environment or vital ecosystems as mankind's common heritage in which they are guardians. The desire to preserve sovereignty should not be an excuse for non-action.

Eighthly, development funding agencies, including local/national banks, should incorporate environmental caveats which take into account bio-assessment and the notion of sustainability.

Ninthly, there must be a global renaissance in biocentric values. Such values should be focused on key concepts: (a) guardianship (b) moderation (c) accountability (d) ethical responsibility and (f) reciprocity.

Last but not least, non-governmental organisations should form the third bulwark – next to national governments and multinationals – in leading the environmental cause.

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