

BIO-DIPLOMACY AND THE STRUGGLE FOR ECONOMIC POWER

[H.E. Ambassador Kai Falkman](#)

Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Sweden

The United Nations has just celebrated its 50th anniversary. The power structure is the same today as it was 50 years ago: Five great powers with permanent seats in the Security Council and holders of the right to veto. This power structure does not reflect the real powers of the world today and demands are made for changes.

Economic super-powers like Japan and Germany also want permanent seats in the Security Council. Demographic super-powers like India, Nigeria and Brazil also want to be permanently represented in the Council. Human experience is that those in power never want to share their power with others, if they can avoid it. Therefore, it will be difficult to create a new power structure in the UN that reflects present realities.

What is power? The best definition, I think, has been given by von Clausewitz: Power is the sum of resources and will. Resources can be measured, in dollars, in numbers of people, in guns, in nuclear weapons. The "Big Five" are all in possession of nuclear weapons - some others may also be, but not officially. This possession gives them a military power that they use for political ends. France has little economic power in comparison with Japan and Germany, therefore, they boast with their nuclear power in order to retain their political power.

How did France get its political power 50 years ago, defeated by Nazi Germany, occupied by German troops and devastated economically? France was without resources but had will-power, expressed by General de Gaulle. Without his strong ambitions, tenacity and absolute belief in the historic mission of France, Churchill and Roosevelt would never have given France a seat as a Great Power in the Security Council of the United Nations. Will power can never be measured, it is always subject to change, from day to day. Thus, power as a whole is immeasurable and, therefore, it is always tested and challenged.

What are the realities of today? They have several dimensions. One is that economic power is more important than political power, less visible but more influential. Japan and Germany show little political will but their economic might has global dimensions.

States are restricted by borders and international agreements, but, money has no borders. A financial decision in Tokyo, Frankfurt or New York has immediate repercussions all over the world and can topple governments.

Borders seem increasingly artificial also, from political perspectives. States do not fight against enemies anymore but against rebels, terrorists and criminals within their own territories. Groups and gangs with modern weapons break the rules of law and exercise control over large populations. As weapons have become increasingly cheap and easy to find anywhere, the economic power of the users can be relatively small. But, the political power can be devastating and upset governments, who cannot any longer exercise full control over their territories. Examples are easy to find in the former Yugoslavia, in Africa and several other parts of the world.

In situations like these, it has been possible to refer to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in order to move in international forces under UN command to protect the human rights of groups or individuals. This is a new development in international diplomacy, showing the primacy of the human being over the State.

This development, I believe, has been enhanced by the existence of nuclear power. The radioactive fallout from Chernobyl took no consideration of State borders - the Lapland in northern Sweden was hit as well as the adjoining lands in the Ukraine. The prevailing wind becomes the general who directs the attacks with no consideration for borders or citizenship.

The poisoned grass in Lapland shows a new dimension of present realities. Not even the human being is any longer in the centre of our concerns. The centre is bios, life. Bios is the basis for all human rights. When the right and possibility to live is endangered, then, all other rights disappear.

Bios shows that humans exist as a dot in the corner of a Chinese landscape painting, not as a centrepiece in a European Renaissance painting. Biopolitics is an inspired effort to define the human place in our multi-dimensional world and to show the interdependence with these dimensions, thus outlining actions for change. It is an effort to lift humanity from an anthropocentric position into a multi-dimensional, biocentric position.

With reference to Clausewitz's definition of power, Biopolitics has the will, clearly expressed by its Founder and President, and increasing resources, shown by the presence in the Biopolitics International Organisation of involved individuals from 85 countries. With steadily

increasing resources and a common will, Biopolitics will change the values of our society and create a new framework for action.

Ambassador Kai Falkman has served successively as Attach? at the Swedish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Attach? in Tokyo, Secretary at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, First Secretary in London, Counsellor in Lisbon and Ambassador in Luanda. He has also worked with Special Duties at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and has been engaged in studies at the CFIA at Harvard University. Ambassador Falkman holds a Law degree and, from 1991 to 1995 was the General Consul of Sweden in Istanbul.