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Democratic Ethics and UN Reform

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Contemporary society is affected by a democratic schizophrenia. On the one hand, democracy is more and more accepted as the source of legitimate power. But, on the other hand, this is confined to the borders of individual states. This contradictory situation is partly due to the West's inconsistent behavior. Freedom and democracy have been offered, suggested, and sometimes even imposed on other countries out of a genuine (yet paternalistic) attitude (see Tom Keating's chapter in this volume). But freedom and democracy have also provided ideological cover to protect the self-interests of Western states to the detriment of so-called enemies of freedom and civilization. The history of colonialism and imperialism shows that too often the West has proclaimed the ethical truths of democracy for itself while denying and suppressing them in other states and societies. Can a genuine interpretation of democratic ethics be deployed in an inclusive way to open up the global decisionmaking processes and global governance mechanisms rather than to exclude and dominate? The cosmopolitan project aims to investigate theoretical and political avenues for developing an inclusive and democratic alternative to the present international system.

The fundamental democratic principle requires that public decisions have to be taken after consultation with all individuals who would enjoy or suffer the public consequences of those decisions. The best political tool to guarantee the possibility of influencing public decisions in any sphere of action is political participation. Participation across borders is thus a key element for reforming the outdated political and diplomatic structures of the states system and to enhance global governance. At every level of global governance politics, individual agents lack opportunities to participate, to consent, and to control the political, economic, and social outcomes that affect their lives. A democratic system at the global level is thus an imperative. A fundamental principle of justice demands a strengthening of today's

transnational institutions of democracy, with the intention of creating more inclusive mechanisms of democratic self-legislation.

This chapter analyzes and applies democratic ethics in ways that transcend the traditional intrastate and territorial limits of global governance. Above all, we argue in favor of recognizing citizens as cosmopolitan stakeholders that are entitled to rights in a number of different political spheres beyond national borders. The cosmopolitan democratic ethics that we advocate here supports a multilayered theory of democracy and, as a consequence, the reform and creation of new global governance arrangements. In particular, we analyze democratic ethics in the context of the most important global governance organization, the UN. Section one analyzes the significant but limited effect of democratic ethical norms on the creation and evolution of the UN. While originally created for furthering the rule of law, peace, cooperation, and human rights, the UN never managed to pursue consistently such aims. The founding states, whether democratic, Western, or not, have resisted the full implementation and progressive development of democratic ethics in global politics, both before and after the Cold War. Section two outlines the reasons why a democratic ethics confined to territorial states necessarily fails in an era of intensive transnational relations and intergovernmental cooperation. Although applying democracy to global governance organizations faces obstacles, the skepticism of traditional democratic theorists like Robert Dahl is unwarranted and counterproductive in light of new political possibilities that we articulate. Section three outlines cosmopolitan principles that dovetail with and support a democratic transformation of global governance at the UN by examining the most significant reform proposals recently formulated by intergovernmental commissions and civil society organizations. Our conclusion examines some of the strategic issues related to implementing democratic reforms at the UN.

The United Nations: A Democratic Endeavor

The UN is the product of a democratic endeavor generated in the aftermath of World War II. While previous attempts to construct a viable world organization, such as the League of Nations, failed, the momentum offered by the end of the war and the widespread desire to prevent the repetition of such atrocities proved to be the right occasion for major powers to implement an old ideal. The original idea of an international organization that could prevent bellicose relations is indeed much older than the UN. From the seventeenth century on, various projects for international peace provided intellectual reference for inspired politicians genuinely aiming at world, possibly perpetual, peace (see Archibugi 1992; Heater 1996; Murphy 1999). The idea of a world organization devoted to peace emerged within Western lib-

eral democracy as part of an overall effort of democratic states to regulate cooperation at the international level.

The democratic ideal of international peaceful relations was complemented by a number of key innovations in international politics, such as a system of human rights and a ban on unilateral war. Aiming to protect human rights and to foster cooperation on international problems, the UN Charter contains a number of innovative principles of international law that create a radical shift in international normative praxis toward a confederal model. A first major step in this direction, based on the idea of collective security, consists of the limitation of the unconditional right of states to resort to the use of force by devolving this right to the UN (Article 2). A second deviation from classic international law is the adoption of a majority vote on issues concerning peace and security (albeit one qualified by the voting of the Security Council, giving veto power to the permanent five—or P5—council members) (Articles 18 and 27[3]). Finally, a further relevant departure from previous international practice is the legal supremacy of the Charter over any other subsequent international treaty (Article 103).

The Charter encouraged three new international norms. The first was a more extensive scheme of cooperation to safeguard peace and security, to solve common problems, and to sustain common values. Second, a broader notion of common values grounded in core principles such as human rights became the justificatory basis of international action. Third, the UN adopted a more robust norm regarding the responsibility of the organization to enforce compliance; the failures of entirely “soft” forms of compliance in the League of Nations were lessons learned (Hurrell 2001). The new legal system generated by these changes was meant to affect the authority of state sovereignty, as understood within the classic intergovernmental model (see Makinda in this volume). This was the democratic ideal underpinning of much of the discussion that took place at the founding UN conference in San Francisco in 1945; nonetheless, the Charter reflected a number of pragmatic concerns and negotiations among a variety of states.

The establishment of the UN was only possible thanks to intense political negotiations with nondemocratic regimes (Schlesinger 2003; Kennedy 2006). In particular, the diplomatic and geopolitical agreement between liberal (yet colonial) powers and the communist countries, especially the Soviet Union, proved to be essential for the establishment and consolidation of the organization (Ziring, Riggs, and Plano 2000). Realpolitik bargaining among states produced a number of compromises that damaged the democratic ideal. The first major consequence was the stall of any significant human rights operation in the organization during the Cold War. This was mainly due to the Security Council’s right to veto any decision that could affect the “domestic” sphere of any world power. A second major consequence was the acceptance of a restrictive interpretation of the right to self-

determination via state sovereignty that was used to limit the scope of human rights' application.

Beyond these political constraints, the UN also suffered a number of hypocrisies that severely limited its actual capacity to govern international affairs. The first hypocrisy concerns Western democracies. While the United States, France, and the United Kingdom have genuinely thought of the UN as a system to extend their own constitutional frameworks, they retained their right to stop any decision in the Security Council against their direct interests. This contributed to an aura of mistrust in the organization considered by many other states as a Western creature. The second hypocrisy concerns developing and socialist countries. While accusing the UN of insensitivity to the needs of weaker nations, most of these governments failed to apply democratic principles domestically. Despite its democratic promise, the UN's credibility and capacity to live up to stated principles of good governance were seriously eroded by its member states.

The gap between the UN's very wide mandate and the limited resources and volatile support of its more powerful members has created a number of crises. Unless one believes in political miracles, it would have been naive to think the UN would succeed more often than not at fulfilling its mandate. Yet a stream of columnists and politicians (including those who have consistently opposed any increased resources and capacity) have found it fashionable to announce the UN's death. We heard this gloomy statement during the siege of Sarajevo, the genocide in Rwanda, the NATO bombing in Serbia, George Bush's and Tony Blair's assault on Iraq, and after major terrorist attacks. The UN's death, moreover, has been proclaimed with anger and desperation by all those groups seeking protection from injustice: from Chechen separatists and peoples in Darfur to the Kashmir and Tamil minorities and landless peoples in Kurdistan and Palestine. Disappointment in the UN is particularly acute in the aftermath of the Cold War precisely because of high hopes that the organization would become a much more important power center after decades of seeming impotence. After secret meetings where Khrushchev and Kennedy, Brezhnev and Nixon, Gorbachev and Reagan redrew the boundaries of the world, the end of the bipolarity and superpower dueling was to be replaced with a wider project of controlled cooperation and global liberalization. The winner of the Cold War, the United States, was to take a pivotal and dominant role in revitalizing the UN in a "new world order" of global liberalization, democratization, and peace.

In recent years, many states and world public opinion at large have responded to the shortcomings of the UN by engaging in reform discourse. An ambitious project has been envisaged: making the UN the central institution in the international scenario and, in so doing, filling the unbearable current gap between the assigned tasks and its actual power as an institution.¹ Within this trend, there have been a plethora of experts' commissions

in charge of elaborating multilateral perspectives compatible with the political and economic interests of the West and not necessarily detrimental to the rest of the world. Retired politicians spent their time traveling from one independent commission to another, relaunching, from their new position, those audacious proposals they regularly shelved when in power.

Relying on conservative skepticism, realist commentators noted with sophisticated arguments, however, that such hopes were naive. Why should the winners of the Cold War altruistically renounce the booty of the war with the Soviet Union? By their actions, these same states invoking reform have not demonstrated a commitment to the requisite political changes needed to augment and improve the UN's democratic performance in global governance. In particular, there was no reason to expect that the new unipolar world power would opt for multilateralism and democratic inclusion for both powerful and powerless players. Boutros Boutros-Ghali learned this when attempting to affirm a more active role for the UN: his mandate as UN Secretary-General was not renewed—for the first time in the history of the organization—primarily because of US opposition (see Boutros-Ghali 1999, chapter 1).

The Democratic Challenge

Until recently the effects of human actions were mostly contained within a defined territory; most people could influence (and be influenced by) the lives of a limited number of other people. The relationship between responsibility and vulnerability was thus far more legible, and one could, for the most part, reasonably expect to maintain the integrity of this relationship through domestic democratic political channels. The present situation is different: by intensifying the level of global interaction, the current world system pushes beyond the traditional limits of the relationship between rulers and ruled, with the effect of loosening the moral and political ties of accountability.

In principle, the democratic correspondence between rulers and ruled should be public, universal, and all-inclusive in order to preserve individual autonomy. Such congruence should cover all the relational dimensions in which individual life is embedded, that is, one should be in a position to self-legislate within one's entire range of activities. Having the possibility of choice at the local level is self-defeating if it is not complemented by the equivalent possibility of a voice in the decisionmaking and frame-setting processes at the national level. Issues such as the environment or the spread of infectious diseases clearly show how ineffective a local policy can be when it is not integrated into a wider sphere of action (see Matthew, Goldsworthy, and McDonald in this volume). Applying democratic princi-

ples only within the territorial state is, at best, a partial and, at worst, a self-defeating effort in light of the different domains and multiple levels that affect individuals.

Such circumstances consequently compel us to confront demands for inclusive moral responsibility and envisage new political mechanisms of social liability. Since social action is spread over distinct, yet overlapping, spheres of conduct, democratic accountability is only possible through recognition of the political system as multileveled and all-inclusive. From a normative perspective, the inclusion of vulnerable agents in public and impartial decisionmaking and frame-setting processes at the international level represents a unique chance to improve the democratic legitimacy of the entire political system, both domestically and globally. The widely accepted creed of democracy remains fundamentally flawed unless it is complemented with an international dimension of democratic participation.

Three political problems have put the problem of democratizing the UN and other international organizations at the front of the political agenda. First, the intensification of internationalization and globalization in recent decades has made the UN system more visible, thus increasing demands for accountability and participation. The distance between rulers and ruled has widened. Second, the heterogeneity of the ruled has also increased significantly insofar as such diverse political agents as individuals, groups, and states all claim recognition at the global level. Third, pressures for UN reform emerge from the tensions between the organization's statist and territorialist basis (favoring a one state, one vote formula) and the idea that the UN should represent people as individuals (i.e., one person, one vote) (Bienen, Rittberger, and Wagner 1998, 290).

Applying the democratic model to international institutions entails a consistent implementation of democratic accountability at each level of action, be it local, regional, national, or global. Accordingly, the major democratic challenge that lies ahead of the UN in the current system of global governance consists of the enlargement of political participation parallel with and yet beyond the state; such participation would be a means of guaranteeing peace and security and the protection of human rights (Marchetti 2006a, 2006b). Beyond the different interpretations of global governance, a major normative question arises concerning the legitimacy of these global institutions and their relation to democratic theory. In particular, such institutions allocate unaccountable political power to various global agents while excluding others (Woods 2000, 217). New social actors, from individuals to nongovernmental organizations, to multinational corporations, have an increased role in international affairs (Pianta and Silva 2003; Macdonald and Macdonald 2006). And yet these new would-be-global or quasiglobal political actors are effectively excluded from international decisionmaking mechanisms.

International exclusion occurs when political agents are deprived of their direct institutional entitlements to influence public decisions at the international and global level. At the moment, this is nowhere more visible than at the boundary between national and international jurisdictions concerning political participation. Increasingly, decisions taken in one country affect people in other countries who are not able to express their consent because of their subaltern status as nonfellow, ergo disenfranchised, citizens (Held 1995; Archibugi, Held, and Köhler 1998). A state-based political system remains an unsatisfactory framework for self-determination in relation to transborder interests, such as those embodied by nonnational or transnational political agents like migrants; people of transborder religions, minorities, workers, and so on (Scholte 2004, 22; Marchetti 2005). As individual and social existence is increasingly spread over a number of different domains, a common social framework and an updated conception of multi-level political agency is needed to bring together this diffusion of engagement. In the absence of such a framework, the social and political existence of individuals would be fragmented and exclusionary; any pursuit of a good life would most likely be self-defeating. In response to this, cosmopolitan theories propose the enlargement of political participation to include new social subjects in transnational politics (Archibugi 2008; Marchetti 2008a).

A new system of cosmopolitan democracy can be envisaged. Following David Beetham (1999) and Norberto Bobbio (1991), democracy can be defined according to three basic requirements: nonviolence, political participation and control, and political equality. The advantage of such a definition is to be general enough to include most normative conceptions of democracy. Can these basic democratic requirements be applied within international organizations and in global governance generally? In Table 4.1 we compare how such democratic principles are currently embodied in intergovernmental organizations and how they could be expanded and deepened through democratic reform.

The notion of democracy as embedded within international and transnational organizations, and at the UN in particular, remains controversial. A prominent advocate of democracy, Robert Dahl, recently restated his objections to applying such principles to global institutions (1999, 2001). One of these objections could be labeled the *restricted-size argument*. Following classical writers such as Montesquieu and Rousseau, Dahl argues that it is difficult to expand a democratic polity beyond a certain size. The larger the state the smaller the weight each single vote has in proportion to the total of the voting lot—consequently, the less democratic the state is (Dahl and Tuftle 1973; Dahl 1999). Three counterarguments can be used to refute Dahl. First, as already made clear by federalist writers, the right size of a republic is not at all clear: if we stick to the original ideal of a republican society, states such as the United States, Russia, or Brazil, or indeed most

Table 4.1 Democratic Principles and International Governmental Organizations

Basic Principles	Current Application in IGOs	Proposed Democratic Reform of IGOs
Nonviolence	Commitment of member states to address international conflicts peacefully and to use force for self-defense only	Enforcement of the nonviolence principle through: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • compulsory jurisdiction of international judicial power (for example, the International Court of Justice, ICJ) • individual criminal responsibility for international crimes • humanitarian intervention to guarantee the security of peoples threatened by democide or genocide
Political control	Control exercised by member governments Publicity and transparency of acts Norms and procedures codified in international treaties, covenants, charters, and statutes	Expanding political control through a World Parliament, the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU), and other peoples' representatives Opening IGOs to global civil society and its NGOs Monitoring of national governments by cosmopolitan institutions
Political equality	Formal equality of states Equality of citizens in terms of rights sanctioned by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights	Equality of states on a substantial rather than formal basis (involvement associated to the share of stake held) Political equality among citizens according to a minimal list of rights and duties (cosmopolitan citizenship) Direct participation in world politics through a directly elected World Parliament

Source: Archibugi 2008, 138.

contemporary states, are structurally inadequate for any form of democratic government. Second, the currently interdependent state of global politics makes it unlikely that individuals are affected only by decisions within their community; individuals' life circumstances are affected by decisions made outside of a particular democratic community. In light of this, excluding the possibility of enlarging democratic participation beyond state borders seriously hampers the very same principles of democratic accountability and equality. Third, we should be aware how the political preferences of each individual currently pass through a long process of delegation before they are represented in the international arena: first from the citizen to a national representative (such as a Member of Parliament or MP), second from an MP to the government, and only finally from the government to the public arena of international organizations and other global fora. Institutional arrangements remaining as they currently are, the relative weight of individual preferences would be even more modest compared with a more direct form

of global democracy in which individuals directly vote for their representatives.

Dahl articulates an alternative set of criteria for a democratic polity, which he believes are unlikely to ever be applied successfully to global governance institutions like the UN. Although he is correct to suggest that any form of global democratic governance needs to be evaluated by such criteria, we are more optimistic about the possibility of applying a democratic ethics beyond the state. Table 4.2 compares Dahl's democratic criteria with

Table 4.2 Robert Dahl's Democratic Criteria Applied to International Governmental Organizations

Dahl's Democratic Criteria	Possible Extension to IGOs
"Final control over important government decisions is exercised by elected officials."	For some areas it is possible to envisage elected officials (for example through a World Parliament). Elected officials can also be appointed for activities where IGOs have a strong territorial activity (health, food, refugees).
"These officials are chosen in free, fair and reasonably frequent elections."	The electoral principle may be applied at various levels. Other forms of democratic participation could also be conceived.
"In considering their possible choices and decisions, citizens have an effective right and opportunity to exercise extensive freedom of expression."	Since freedom of expression is often repressed by authoritarian governments, IGOs could also protect individual freedom of expression and provide the instruments to exercise it.
"Citizens also have the right and opportunity to consult alternative sources of information that are not under the control of the government or any single group of interest."	Information and media are still largely national in scope. Attempts to generate a regional or global public opinion have had limited effect. But media are increasingly under the pressures of globalization and they are globalizing even without explicit political direction. New information and communications technologies, moreover, provide a variety of information channels that are more difficult to keep under government control.
"In order to act effectively, citizens possess the right and opportunities to form political associations, interest groups, competitive political parties, voluntary organizations, and the like."	National political life could also be expanded at the transnational level. Political parties, trade unions, and NGOs already have linkages across borders and they are already increasing their significance. Strengthening global institutions may also lead to a reorganization of political interests and delegation.
"With a small number of permissible exceptions, such as transient residents, all adults who are subject to the laws and policies are full citizens who possess all rights and opportunities just listed."	The UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights already sanctions individual rights. A cosmopolitan citizenship, even if granted by states (as in the EU case), may extend political equality to the inhabitants of the planet and strengthen their rights vis-à-vis their governments.

Sources: Dahl 2001, 28; Archibugi 2008, 135–136.

what we consider feasible within international organizations. The most obvious institution for implementing such democratic principles at the global level is the UN. As the central intergovernmental institution of the current international institutional order, and having a nearly universal constituency, the UN undoubtedly constitutes the first target of any reform for global democracy.

Cosmopolitan Political Principles and UN Reform: From Theory to Practice

According to the cosmopolitan project, the UN should be the fulcrum of a global legal and political system. In order to achieve this status, the organization needs to gain authority through legitimacy; to gain such legitimacy it needs to adhere to shared democratic values. Enhancing democracy in the UN requires reform on the basis of three additional principles: legality, transparency, and enhanced participation. Applying these principles in a cosmopolitan fashion will support the democratic ethics of nonviolence, political control, and political equality.

Legality

Some argue that international law is a doormat made to be trampled on. Despite this, international law is a constitutive and regulative reality in world politics. All international organizations, beginning with the UN, exist because there is, though imperfect, an international law. Despite the absence of automatic sanctions for transgressors, this international law is foundational for any civil interaction. Law remains the key democratic mechanism to implement a nonviolent order, even when it is violated. The relationship between democracy and international law extends further: with democracy as the dominant regime type globally today, the hypocrisy of democratic states disregarding the global rule of law should become more difficult to sustain. Citizens will ask why they must respect the rule of law if their states fail to do the same.

Transparency

The democratic principle of political control requires transparent public decisionmaking so that citizens can hold public authorities to account (minimally by rewarding or punishing governments at elections). Already to a degree, the UN is a forum where governments are expected to publicly and reciprocally declare and announce their actions. The traditions of secret diplomacy and pacts by subsets of states have been nominally rejected although such practices have not disappeared. Decisions are still wrapped in

the cloak of “reason of state” and, as with the United States and Iraq in 2003, intelligence that can be cited but not shown. The farce of the Iraqi weapons of mass destruction has proved how little correspondence exists between secrecy in foreign policy and the interests of the citizens. Within this context, the UN is one of the institutions that, at least partially, contributes to the dismantling of this well-orchestrated smokescreen, for it could allow, if fully empowered, public opinion to have a better grasp of international affairs and consequently to assess freely the specific political cases.

Enhanced Participation

UN reform requires enlarged participation if it is to be inclusive enough to meet the demands of democratic ethics. Equal participation is a complex matter at the UN: the Charter recognizes sovereign equality and rights but then immediately violates this principle by investing the undemocratic veto power in the Security Council. The current institutional structure has to be changed. But even if the Security Council’s veto norm was modified and decisions over security granted uniquely to the General Assembly (GA), the procedure would still be utterly undemocratic. This is because, on the one hand, a large number of states do not have internal democratic voting systems and therefore vast sectors (perhaps the majority) of their population would be excluded from representation and, on the other hand, even the currently “democratic” states would deprive their minorities, be they national or transnational, from representation. Concerning the latter democratic states, furthermore, a serious problem of accountability remains, insofar as the multiple steps of delegation weaken the actual possibility of their national constituencies to control the work of their governments. Finally, the situation would still be one of formal “equality” between the representative of San Marino, with a constituency of 20,000 voters, and the representative of India, with a constituency of 1 billion, which negates the democratic rule of “one person, one vote”: the will of one citizen of San Marino would count as much as would the will of 50,000 Indians. Democracy would still remain in the far distance.

* * *

How can these three political principles be inserted into a process of democratic reform of the UN? Here we move from the ethical dimensions of democratic theory to practice.

Debate and proposals for UN reform are as old as the organization. There are five principal areas that reform advocates generally target: (1) enlarging the Security Council and abolishing the P5 states’ veto power; (2) creating an Assembly of the Peoples that would be juxtaposed with the GA of member states, thus creating direct representative links between the UN

and the world's citizens in addition to balancing the power of member states; (3) strengthening the global judiciary by expanding the jurisdiction of the ICJ, in addition to supporting the recently created ICC; (4) increasing the UN's financial resources and political capabilities to achieve its mandate in coordinating a response to human rights violations; and (5) reformulating the UN's peace mandate in ways that more adequately address the changing requirements of peacekeeping and peace enforcement (see Pines 1984; Baratta 1987; Archibugi 1995; Imber 1997; Falk 2005; Zweifel 2005). To these five typically envisaged reforms to the UN we add the idea that a democratized UN will encourage and play a key role in domestic democratization. Democratizing global governance at the UN is an alternative political strategy to the current trends in exporting democracy (see Keating in this volume). Rather than forcing poor countries to embrace the democratic creed through bombing, the UN's democratization could prove that a society of free peoples is tolerant and inclusive of those people struggling for self-government.

Moving from ideals and proposals to political practice is often elusive. It comes as no surprise, then, that great expectations for democratizing the UN have so far been disappointed. The grand reform projects presented in 1995, on the UN's fiftieth anniversary, went ignored. Similar proposals at the Millennium Summit in 2000 also evaporated. Just slightly less disappointing, the 2005 summit held on the sixtieth anniversary resulted in only modest reforms.² Nevertheless, serious democratic reform of the UN would go well beyond the targets that the organization has thus far set. Despite these failures the continued formulation of reform proposals continues to animate the debates of foreign ministries, civil society organizations, and—we hope ultimately—world public opinion. In what follows we outline the most suggestive of recent reform proposals and link them to the cosmopolitan democratic ethics discussed above.

With respect to the Security Council, former Secretary-General Kofi Annan's 2005 report, *In Larger Freedom*, recommends increasing the number of members in order to make the body more representative (United Nations 2005, 42–43). From civil society, Socialist International suggests enlarging the Security Council by giving seats to regional organizations such as the EU and the African Union (AU) (Socialist International 2005). Furthermore, Socialist International suggests that the veto power wielded by the permanent members of the Security Council should be restricted to certain areas only and, eventually, abolished altogether (2005, 23–24). Sadly, the past fifteen years of resistance and rivalries among states has made Security Council reform very unlikely. Excessive focus on this aspect of the UN should not eclipse radical reforms in other, perhaps more feasible, areas.

For instance, much can be done to reform the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) (O'Donovan 1992; Ul Haq 1995; United Nations

1995). Socialist International suggests a two-step reform strategy: In the short term ECOSOC should act as a coordinator of policy dialogue among the different international economic institutions. In the longer term, however, they propose an altogether new Economic, Social, and Environmental Council with status equal to the Security Council (Socialist International 2005). Such a renewed Council would have a mandate for actions such as strategic coordination and assessing the performance of the specialized agencies; the supervision of global public goods; and managing not only economic and social problems but also the environment, development, and debt issues. Obviously, such a Council should also be empowered with greater economic resources and be open and inclusive to regional organizations and civil society representatives.

Humanitarian intervention is another key area that requires immediate reform. Too often the absence of a reliable UN structure to prevent and react to humanitarian crises has left the issue to the discretion of powerful member states (see Lu in this volume). Such states decide whether and how to intervene, not simply on the basis of altruism but, predictably, for strategic self-interest. In the case of Rwanda in 1994, the UN opted for nonintervention precisely because it lacked independent capacities and because of the unwillingness of major powers. The International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty (ICISS) report, *The Responsibility to Protect* (ICISS 2001), created a conceptual vocabulary that represents a crucial redefinition of the UN's mandate. The report rejects conclusively the anachronistic notion of absolute sovereignty but also invests a duty to respond by the international community within the legal and moral framework that has gradually developed in the UN Charter era. Subsequent reports have endorsed the doctrine, including that of the High-Level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change (United Nations 2004a) and Annan's *In Larger Freedom* (United Nations 2005). At the September 2005 UN Millennium Plus Five summit, the heads of state and government also endorsed the concept of R2P, although without creating a definite means of implementing humanitarian intervention in practice (Bellamy 2006). A key feature of the R2P doctrine is the concept of responsibility to rebuild shattered societies. Reflecting this, the Secretary-General urged the creation of a Peacebuilding Commission (United Nations 2005, 31; Zedillo 2005) and this has been established. Reforming the GA has also received attention (Strauss 1999).

Democratizing the UN should include revising the structure of the Assembly to allow inclusion of nongovernmental organizations, multinational corporations, and regional organizations. The High-Level Panel and the UN–Civil Society Relations panel chaired by Fernando Enrique Cardoso (United Nations 2004b) are among those who have advocated such forms of engagement. Many important recent UN events, including the “informal interactive hearings of the GA with non-governmental organizations, civil

society organizations and the private sector” held in 2005, can be seen as the first steps in this direction. If such a forum becomes institutionalized and regular it will become a possible nucleus for a Parliamentary Assembly. Unfortunately, the hearings held in 2005 have been discontinued, stopping a very interesting attempt to bridge the GA and global civil society. In the future such an assembly should be organized annually and simultaneously with the plenary session of the GA.

Three innovative proposals have been raised recently to more generally fill the democratic deficit at the UN. On the one hand, following the International Labour Organization’s (ILO) model of triple representation (government, unions, and enterprises), proposals for national representatives to be nominated both by governments and national parliaments have been formulated. On the other hand, alternative proposals have been forwarded for national legislators to take part in the UN. Most radically, a third option supported by many NGOs is for an “Assembly of Peoples” created alongside the GA. Such an elected assembly would offer a place for representation of NGOs, local institutions, and, more generally, for organized civil society.

Human rights and migration are also key themes in current UN reform proposals. The recently established Human Rights Council is undoubtedly a step forward toward more effective protection of human rights. Time is still needed, however, to assess its efficacy. On migration, since November 2003 the creation of a fully political UN agency specifically dedicated to the theme of migration (beyond the current International Organization on Migration, IOM) has been invoked, and a High-Level Dialogue on International Migration and Development has been set up with modest results (United Nations 2006). Further development in this direction could lead to the creation of a World Migration Organization, an ideal target to pursue in order to increase international cooperation and secure a humane and effective migratory regime (Ghosh 2000). Table 4.3 outlines possible UN reforms in relation to the democratic and cosmopolitan principles discussed in the previous sections.

Table 4.3 UN Reforms and Cosmopolitan Principles

Democratic Principles	Cosmopolitan Principles	UN Reforms
Nonviolence	Global rule of law	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Peacebuilding commission • Human rights council
Political control	Global transparency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Peoples assembly • Economic, social, and environmental council
Political equality	Global participation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Security Council reform • UN migration agency

Conclusion

To conclude, what strategies ought to be adopted to help realize these shorter- and longer-term goals? First, democratizing the UN should be viewed as concurrent with, and not as entirely separate and distinct from, democratization within specific troubled states and regions. Certainly many UN member countries are far from reaching a minimum democratic threshold internally. However, membership in a democratic UN could help promote regime change in authoritarian member states. Democratization of the UN has to run in parallel to the democratization of single countries. The presence of international organizations inspired by democratic values will influence the domestic structure of the member states (see Pevehouse 2002). By favoring civil society contact from below and by fomenting democratic groups, the UN could constrain and erode the power of autocratic regimes and this would in turn contribute to the process of its own democratization.

Second, two extreme yet prevalent attitudes toward UN reform should be rejected. One is an antisystemic perspective that views any deepened coordination of international policies at the UN as a dangerous threat to absolute national sovereignty. The other, more insidious, attitude to be rejected is that international organizations should be administrative devices for the convenience of national governments, rendering the UN a mere technical secretariat, a paper pusher for decisions taken elsewhere. Neither of these perspectives supports democratic global governance and the political, multilateral, and reformist strategy advocated here.

Third, looking at the nature of the proposals, and above all at the institutions advocating them, it can be noted that the themes raised more than a decade ago by a small group of political utopians or specialized technocrats have today been adopted by much more authoritative institutions. UN reform is no longer a Gregorian chant sung only by few diplomats: the language and the proposals advanced by visionary global movements has affected the entire establishment, media, and public opinion. This, however, does not mean that substantial changes are near. In order to become reality, these reforms need to be supported by political action. The so-called great powers, the P5 Security Council member governments, are almost inevitably inclined to a conservative attitude in defense of the status quo. Consequently, a democratization of the UN needs a much greater coalition of political actors.

Recent experience, and in particular the establishment of the ICC and the approval of the Ottawa Treaty to ban landmines, shows that changes in international norms are possible only when a mixed coalition is formed among selected like-minded governments and transnational civil society organizations. In particular, it is difficult to think that the ICC and the Ottawa Treaty could have been approved without the active role of committed governments such as Italy and Canada. A “small steps” strategy within

which civil society and state actors pursue specific reforms while keeping open the possibility of opting out or joining in at different moments is key. In this vein, civil society campaigns represent an important, yet insufficient, condition for producing institutional changes at the international level (see Lynch in this volume). It is thus necessary for global civil society to find partners among governments ready to support such initiatives.

As an example, Socialist International has recently become an important player for UN reform, encouraging the governments headed by its member parties to support actively its proposals. Former secretary of Socialist International, Antonio Gutierrez, has personally taken part in the campaign *Reclaim Our UN* promoted by the Italian Peace Roundtable. The Brazilian government of Ignacio Lula da Silva has close ties with the WSF. The Spanish government of Rodriguez Zapatero, through the initiative for the Alliance of Civilizations, is also active at the time of writing.

The EU is an important potential actor for UN reform. The complex experiment of European democracy is an institutional example for many other macroregions in the world. The European role in the international arena is not based on coercion, but rather on common interest and incentives. In the international arena, Europe often acts as a balancing force against US hegemony. Despite internal divisions, European governments could present a common strategy to foster a more active UN role (Telò 2007). Above all, it is to be hoped that vibrant world public opinion will produce the beneficial effect of awakening the people of the United States, who have too often listened to the sirens of empire (della Porta 2007). The potential for the United States in this regard should not be underestimated. After all, the US peace thinker William Ladd made some far-sighted proposals in the 1840s for the creation of a Congress of Nations as a legislative body and an International Court as a judicial body. The UN General Assembly and the ICJ were much more developed implementations of such proposals. Ladd also stated that conditions were not present for a world executive power, and that this should be left in the hands of world public opinion, which he graciously and optimistically called "the Queen of the world." For many decades the Queen has been a silent sleeping beauty. But she will eventually awake. The times are now ready for her to take the place she deserves in the affairs of our planet.

Notes

1. The most authoritative statement in favor of democracy has been former UN Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali's *Agenda for Democratization*, released on December 30, 1996, just the day before he left office (Boutros-Ghali 1996).

2. Major achievements were the creation of a new Human Rights Council and a Peacebuilding Commission. However, the jury is still out on how effective they will be.