

# Citizens for Global Solutions Minnesota

## Newsletter March 2007

### UNIVERSAL REGIONAL REPRESENTATION AS A BASIS FOR SECURITY COUNCIL REFORM

Joe Schwartzberg, President, Minnesota Chapter, CGS

The past few years have seen dozens of proposals for Security Council reform. Virtually all of them would expand the Council to anywhere from 18 to 25 seats so as to make that body more representative of the increased membership of the UN itself since 1966 when the Council was last enlarged from 11 to 15 members. But every recommendation for enlargement has foundered on the resentment of envious “wannabes” who failed to make the cut (e.g., Pakistan vis-à-vis India, Italy vis-à-vis Germany) and US reluctance to have its proportional voting strength diluted. In a paper to be presented in June at the annual meeting of the Academic Council on the United Nations System in New York, I shall offer a radically new approach. I envisage a **universally representative, veto-free Council with twelve “regional” seats**, four of which would be held by single nations and eight by multi-national groupings representing all the remaining countries of the world. Each seat holder would cast a weighted vote based on the average of three percentages: **P**, the region’s percentage of the total population of all UN members, **C**, the contribution of the region’s members as a percentage of the UN’s total budget, and **8.33%** (1/12), signifying the presumed equal worth of each region’s global perspective. Here are some relevant data:

**Table One: Regions to Be Represented in the United Nations Security Council**  
(Data on number of members and area do not figure in the calculation of voting weights)

Region (see notes)	No. of UN Members	Population (%)	Total GNP (%)	Area (%)	Weighted Vote (%)
Africa	44	10.3	1.0	15.1	6.56
Arab League	20	4.8	1.8	10.6	4.96
China	1	21.0	3.9	7.2	11.09
East Asia	29	10.5	3.5	5.3	7.46
Europe	41	8.6	31.7	3.8	16.19
India	1	17.0	1.5	2.4	8.95
Japan	1	2.1	13.7	0.3	8.03
Latin America	33	8.5	6.5	15.3	7.77
Russia	6	3.5	1.4	13.5	4.38
United States	1	4.7	30.0	7.0	14.32
West Asia	12	8.2	1.5	6.0	6.04
Westminster League	3	0.9	3.6	13.5	4.27
Totals	192	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

**Notes:** Africa excludes African members of Arab League. East Asia excludes China and Japan and includes other mainland and Pacific island states. Europe excludes most former republics of USSR, but includes Baltic states, Cyprus and Israel. Latin America also includes Caribbean states. Russia also includes five other former Soviet “European” republics. West Asia includes non-Arab Islamic states of Asia as far east as Bangladesh. Westminster League includes Canada, Australia and New Zealand. World totals refer only to the member nations of the UN and exclude their dependencies.

Each region would, by a method of its own devising, put forward from three to five candidates to represent it in the Security Council, with no two candidates coming from the same state in multi-state regions. From such slates the General Assembly would elect the regional representative and one alternate. Each multi-state region would also devise rules for instructing representatives in presenting regional positions in SC debates and in voting based on regularized, (largely electronic) communication among members' foreign ministries.

An alternative to the above proposal would allow nations to opt for membership in two regions, with appropriate reductions in their voting strength within each region. Turkey, for example, might wish to be represented in both West Asia and Europe, while the UK might opt for membership in both Europe and the Westminster League.

In either proposal weighted votes would be periodically adjusted to reflect demographic and economic changes.

The full-length, footnoted version of this paper, including two world maps, provides much additional detail on functional aspects of both proposals, demonstrates their appropriateness given global changes since 1945, and explains their numerous advantages. Chief among these are: a) representation would be universal; b) voting weights would be objectively determined and would fairly closely reflect the distribution of power in the world outside the UN itself; c) the system would foster regional consultation and cooperation; d) the selection process would promote meritocracy; and e) by enhancing the voting weight of the great powers, there would be a meaningful trade-off that would permit them to give up the veto.

**Your comments and questions are invited; please write to [schwa004@umn.edu](mailto:schwa004@umn.edu).**

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## **IS "FREE TRADE" THE ONLY POSSIBILITY IN A GLOBAL ECONOMY?**

**William McGaughey, CGS Minnesota Board Member**

To the man in the street, not just in the United States but around the world, "globalization" is apt to be considered a dirty word. This may seem a threat to members of a group called "Citizens for Global Solutions." But it ought not to be. Globalization defined in terms of free trade is indeed harmful to many people. Globalization seen as international cooperation to improve living standards and protect the environment would be beneficial. The free traders, however, dominated the discussion of global economic issues, making it seem that there is no alternative to what they propose.

There is an alternative; the problem is that no one has heard of it. Economic dogmatists control our universities. Corporate interests control the media and, it would seem, the government. Supported by powerful interest groups, the free traders have managed to convince us that their opponents are "protectionists" who would stick their heads in the sand and pretend that other countries do not exist.

NAFTA was sold as a win-win situation for the three North American countries. It was sold as a way to create jobs in Mexico so Mexicans would be under less pressure to migrate north in search of employment. In fact, the opposite has occurred. As free trade in corn has destroyed the rural economy in Mexico, the displaced farmers have fled into urban areas and ultimately in increased numbers to the United States.

Free trade is an international political consensus

that national governments reduce tariffs and non-tariff trade barriers to a minimum to promote growth of international trade. Tariffs are a form of taxation. Free trade is, therefore, a system by which nation states have agreed among each other not to use this type of tax but, instead, rely upon other types for their revenues.

The alternative is that nation states continue to have tariffs but design them to promote certain economic and environmental objectives. An important objective would be that the citizens of these states be fully employed in useful, productive jobs. Considering that unemployment and underemployment are problems in most industrial nations, it is an objective widely shared among nations. Nation states could be promoting regulatory change that would increase employment and use tariffs as an enforcement mechanism.

Instead, expect our small-minded politicians to blame our trading partners, especially China, for the huge trade surpluses that they have vis-à-vis the United States by suggesting that these nations must have "cheated" or otherwise have engaged in unfair trade practices. No, it is U.S. corporations, driven by pressure from major retailers, who have relocated production in China and such countries to take advantage of their cheap labor. Our economic and political elite has done it to the U.S. wage-earner, not the Chinese government.

In the better future that I envisage, we could instead be cooperating with China, India, and other low-wage

countries to allow tariffs to buffer the extreme income differentials that exist between them and ourselves while encouraging wages to rise in those other countries. The key to it all is a coordinated reduction in work time so that a large complement of workers will still be needed despite increased substitution of capital for labor in all industrial economies. This possibility is spelled out in two articles that I wrote in the early 1990s for the Green Party publication, *Synthesis/Regeneration*. You can find them on the web at <http://www.greens.org/s-r/06toc.html> and <http://www.greens.org/s-r/09toc.html>.

Even though no elected official has yet picked up on this approach, the free traders cannot claim that there is no articulated alternative to what they propose.

Neither can they claim that they alone are globalists. We need instead, a global order in which national governments cooperate to bring economic and social improvement into the international trading system. A former Democratic member of Congress told me recently that the Democrats would block fast-track authority for the President with respect to trade agreements. However, neither the Democrats nor the Republicans are offering a viable alternative. In the current session of Congress, they will be content merely to oppose the Republicans on trade issues.

**N.B.** The opinions expressed in this essay may or may not reflect the views of other members of Citizens for Global Solutions in Minnesota or elsewhere in the United States.

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## THIRD THURSDAY GLOBAL ISSUES FORUM

Free and open to the public. Come and bring a friend.

**Where: Hennepin Avenue United Methodist Church, 511 Groveland Avenue, Minneapolis**

Parking in church parking lot.

**March 15, 7:00-9:00 p.m. THE UN MILLENNIUM DEVELOPMENT GOALS.** At its summit meeting in 2000, the UN agreed on a vision for the future: a world with greatly reduced poverty, hunger and disease, greater survival prospects for mothers and babies, better education for children, equal opportunities for women, and a healthy environment; a world in which developed and developing nations would be partners in working for the betterment of all. While specific targets were set for the year 2015, progress toward meeting them has been quite mixed and promised contributions from the developed world, especially the US, has been inadequate. We will consider why this has been so and what actions we can now take to correct the situation.

**Presenter: Dr. BHARAT PAREKH.** A native of India, Dr. Parekh earned his PhD in physics from the University of Rochester and has lived in the Twin Cities since 1987. An educator and consultant for US and Indian companies and NGOs, his work has involved technology transfer and trade in the environmental and rural development sectors, the development of bio-diesel fuels, modeling of water resource systems. He is a Board member of the UN Association of Minnesota and participated in the Pugwash International Conference on Science and World Affairs and in a symposium on Technology Transfer for Development at the 1992 Rio Earth Summit.

**April 19, 7:00-9:00 p.m. WHAT NOW IN IRAQ?** A substantial majority of Americans now believe that our country should speedily disengage itself from the quagmire that the Bush administration has created in Iraq and an increasing number of Congresspersons are – belatedly -- voicing a similar view, despite widespread fears that civil war, if not a wider regional war, will follow. But a civil war is already under way. Our speaker will provide a first-hand account of the current situation in Iraq, comment on the role of the US military and on the resistance, discuss the aspirations and hopes of ordinary Iraqi people, and offer his views on our options for the future and our moral responsibilities in the region. How can we make maximum use of diplomacy? Can we engage the UN, the Arab League and Iran in a meaningful peace process? Can we and should we hope to avoid partitioning of the country?

**Presenter: SAMI RASOULI.** An Iraqi-American who grew up in Najaf, Sami Rasouli left Iraq in the late 1970s and eventually moved to the United States. He has lived in the Twin Cities for more than 17 years and was the popular owner of Sinbad's restaurant. In November 2004, nearly 30 years after leaving Iraq, he returned to help rebuild that country. Since then, he has worked with the Karbala Human Rights Organization in Najaf and started the Muslim Peacemaker Team movement, a group dedicated to the principle of nonviolence. He returns to the US for two to three months each year to help build bridges between the people of his two homelands.

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## **A CALL FOR OPEN DISCUSSION OF THE ISRAELI OCCUPATION OF PALESTINE**

The Board of the Minnesota Chapter of Citizens for Global Solutions notes with deep concern the harsh criticism, even to the point of vilification, of former President Jimmy Carter for having had the temerity to use the term "apartheid" in respect to Israeli policies in the territories it occupies in Palestine. This is especially deplorable, in our judgment, because no other American has done more than Carter to advance the cause of peace in and around Israel/Palestine.

We oppose attempts by many vested interests, both Jewish and non-Jewish, to limit free discussion not only of Carter's book, but more generally of massive human rights abuses and other violations of international law by Israeli authorities, often with US support. Such actions are contrary to the American traditions of free speech and support for the rule of law and they are inimical to the search for a just and enduring peace in the region. In the face of the egregious abuses we have noted, we deplore the self-imposed silence of most politicians in both major parties and in most of the mainstream American media and we extend our gratitude to peace groups in this country and in Israel itself for their efforts to make the facts known.

In putting forth our views we do not wish, in any way, to exonerate those who commit immoral acts, including grossly unlawful acts of terrorism, directed at Jewish citizens or the state of Israel. But we are firmly convinced that the taboo against reporting impartially and fully on Israeli behavior has prevented Americans from obtaining a balanced view of the situation in Israel/Palestine and that it will ultimately prove to be politically counter-productive.

**The Board, Minnesota Chapter, Citizens for Global Solutions**

**N.B.** This statement, which we shall be circulating widely, expresses the sentiments of the Minnesota Board, which may or may not reflect the views of other members of Citizens for Global Solutions in Minnesota or elsewhere in the United States.

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Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere. **Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.**

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### **Citizens for Global Solutions Minnesota Chapter**

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**[www.globalsolutionsmn.org](http://www.globalsolutionsmn.org)**

Peace and justice are two sides of the same coin. **Dwight D. Eisenhower**

Please observe Sunday, April 15 as "Generosity Sunday." Find out more at [www.spiritualprogressives.org](http://www.spiritualprogressives.org)

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