



Global Challenges Foundation

Survey of Proposals and Ideas on Global Governance

A short overview of literature,
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1. Introduction

In August 1990, the UN's Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, IPCC, published its first assessment of the global climate changes, and stated that it was highly probable that human discharges of greenhouse gases – chiefly carbon dioxide – were contributing to the increase in the earth's mean temperature. If the discharges could not be restricted, the report maintained, there was a great risk for much higher temperatures and rising sea levels in the coming century, with devastating consequences for agriculture, water supplies, ecosystems and the health of human beings.

Slightly more than two decades later – and after four more IPCC assessment reports and nineteen international top meetings within the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change – the evidence that human beings are causing global warming has been strengthened, the understanding of what must be done to retard climate changes has increased, and the prognoses for what can happen if nothing is done about it have become even darker.

Nevertheless, the world leaders have failed to reach agreement on any political decision which might seriously contribute to reducing this threat.

One reason for this lack of political drive is probably that the institutions necessary for making and enforcing decisions at a global level do not exist. Political power rests with the sovereign states, and no state can itself stop the global warming, or handle the great risks which it means for their citizens, and the negotiations and voluntary agreements between states have so far been shown to be more or less fruitless.

The climate is not the only fateful global issue which the current international system seems poorly equipped to handle. In his book *The greatest challenges of our time* (Szombatfalvy 2009) Laszlo Szombatfalvy, the founder of the *Global Challenges Foundation*, emphasizes four global megaproblems – political violence, poverty, climate change and other cross-border environmental destruction – where the risks for humanity are enormous at the same time as effective political measures for meeting them are largely absent.

To be able to handle these global problems in a rational way – and minimize the risk of future disaster – institutions are needed with a mandate to making binding decisions at a global level, and systems to ensure that the decisions are also enforced. In brief, we need a functional global rule of law.

Throughout history, philosophers, researchers, authors, politicians and activists have been putting forward proposals for how such a legal system could be designed and how it would function, and how a transition from today's system of independent sovereign states could be achieved.

In this overview, some of these proposals are examined and discussed. If they were carried out, would they create better conditions for mastering the enormous problems and risks which humanity is facing? Are they feasible? How can legitimacy be secured and the abuse of power prevented in global power institutions? How shall today's power centres, the individual states, be persuaded to voluntarily waive parts of their independence?

The object of this overview is to give an all-embracing picture of the proposals that have already been put forward and to illustrate the challenges involved in designing a model for a better functioning world order.

Hopefully, it may also inspire a few readers to continue thinking about how these challenges can be solved.

2. Historical Background

2.1 Earlier cosmopolitans

The idea that the world is a single unity and that it should therefore in some form have a single government has deep historical roots.

The first person in the western tradition who expressed a clear cosmopolitan world view is said to be the Greek philosopher Diogenes (ca. 412 – 332 BC). On being asked where he had come from, he is rumoured to have said: “I am a citizen of the world”.

From ancient Greek and Rome and also from China and India, there are examples of influential thinkers who have maintained that the human race is a single community and that we have a moral responsibility not to stop at national boundaries (Heater 1996).

In the 14th century, Dante Alighieri (1265 – 1321), the author of *Divine Comedy* and *Inferno* argued in favour of a worldwide monarchy as a way of preventing war. He wrote in *De Monarchia* that “World government, on the other hand, must be understood in the sense that it governs mankind on the basis of what all have in common and that by a common law it leads all toward peace.” (Alighieri 1949, p 20). He also pointed out that “it is plain that for the well-being of the world there must be a single world rule or empire” (Alighieri 1949, p 9).

One of the earliest attempts to create a model for a supranational organisation was presented in *Le Nouveau Cynée* (The New Cyneas) by the French author Émeric Crucé which was published in 1623. Crucé proposed a permanent peace council consisting of ambassadors of all the countries’ rulers which would arbitrate in all conflicts between its members, and where the members would be obliged to obey the decisions of the council. The council would also have a universal police force and be entitled to use force in order to carry out its decisions (Crucé 1909)

In 1713, Crucé’s countryman Charles-Irénée Castel, Abbé de Saint-Pierre, published a pamphlet *Projet pour rendre la paix perpetuell en Europe* (Project for creating perpetual peace in Europe). This presents a plan for creating peace in Europe through a supranational social treaty. In the same way as Thomas Hobbes in his book *Leviathan* argued that people in an original state of nature, stamped by the wars of all against all, should enter into a social contract to be subordinate to a sovereign authority in order to create peace, Saint-Pierre proposed that Europe’s princes should enter into an agreement to create a federation in which each member promised to take up arms in order to enforce the federation’s joint decisions.

One of the primary sources of inspiration for many of the present day cosmopolitical thinkers is Immanuel Kant’s *Zum ewigen Frieden* (Toward perpetual peace) which was published in 1795 (Kant 1795/1881). This book has also inspired the thesis of democratic peace – the thought that democracies do not wage war against each other – which by modern political scientists is considered to be “the closest one can come to a natural law” within the field of political science.

Kant did not favour a world government but rather a confederation of free states¹ subordinate to a common law. One of Kant's central ideas is that world peace can be achieved only if all states are internally well-ordered and have a "republican"² government, and if they respect international law and refrain from aggression and interference in the matters of other states.

Kant rejected the idea of a world government, partly because he considered it unrealistic and partly because of the risk that a world ruler might develop into a world tyrant.

At the same time as Kant emphasized the risk of global tyranny, he suggested paradoxically that there was a risk that a world government would become powerless since it is difficult to maintain efficient control over an excessively large area.

In 1840, the American peace-activist William Ladd, chairman of the American Peace Society, published a book *An essay on a congress of nations for the adjustment of international disputes without resort to arms*, in which he pleaded for the establishment of a world congress, an international legislative assembly in which each state would be represented by an ambassador, and an international Court of Justice which would apply the legislation and decide disputes between states (Ladd 1916; Achibugi 2008).

Ladd was not however prepared to go so far as to give the world congress executive powers and muscles to enforce its decisions. Instead, he envisaged that its decisions would take effect through the power of public opinion – to oppose the decision of a legitimate international decision-making organ would also mean opposing world opinion and this would involve large costs. Opinion was considered by Ladd, perhaps somewhat optimistically, to be "the queen of the world".

Ladd's proposal can possibly be seen as an early draft of the League of Nations and of the present United Nations, where the General Assembly functions as a sort of world congress with representatives from more or less all the world's states and where the organisation must to a great extent rely on the power of public opinion if its decisions are to have any effect.

2.2 "The good news of damnation"

The experiences of the two bloody world wars in the 20th century led to a sharp rise in the thought of a world government. Not least the atomic bombs on the Japanese cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki in the final stages of World War II caused many persons, both influential politicians and prominent intellectuals, to realise that a world federation was the only solution in order to avoid a new war which would devastate the Earth.

Highly respected scientists, such as Albert Einstein, argued in writings and in lectures that a world government was essential if a new devastating major war was to be avoided. Einstein proposed a world government based on a constitution approved by all states, with a monopoly on armed force and with the mandate to solve conflicts between states by legislation. The function of the individual states would thus be reduced to the regulation of internal matters which did not affect international safety (Einstein 1950).

¹ Kant does not use the term "federation" with the meaning that it general has today. A confederation usually means an association of sovereign states without any joint government having a global monopoly, whereas a federation is a political union of partially independent states and a joint federal government.

² Kant uses the term "republican" to mean that the government is representative and guarantees the freedom and equality of all the citizens.

One week after the attack on Hiroshima, the Chancellor of Chicago University, Robert M Hutchins, participated in a broadcast debate in which he predicted that humanity would commit collective suicide unless war was outlawed through a world organisation with a monopoly on nuclear weapons.

When it was suggested that such an organisation was totally unrealistic, he answered that an atomic bomb might represent the “good news of damnation” in that a realisation of its terrible power might in fact frighten humanity into creating a new world order (Boyer 1995).

The University of Chicago had played a key role in the research that had led to the atomic bomb. After the radio programme, a number of the University’s researchers contacted the chancellor and suggested that he should appoint a group to develop a plan for what such a world order might look like. The result was a *Preliminary Draft of a World Constitution*, which was published in 1948 by a group under the leadership of Hutchins and the literature professor Guiseppe Antonio Borgese.

During the period after the Second World War, there was also support at the highest political levels for the idea of a world government. In Great Britain, a non-party parliamentary group founded by the Member of Parliament Henry Osborne, with 200 MPs as members, pressed for the establishment of a world government (Baratta 2003; Cabrera 2010).

In USA in the spring of 1950, Congress arranged a committee enquiry into a number of proposals which suggested that USA should support and strive to reform the UN in a direction towards a world federation.

A resolution supported by 104 members of the House of Representatives and 19 Senators, both Democrats and Republicans, proposed that Congress should announce

That it is the sense of the Congress that it should be a fundamental objective of the foreign policy of the United States to support and strengthen the United Nations and to seek its development into a world federation open to all nations with defined and limited powers adequate to preserve peace and prevent aggression through the enactment, interpretation and enforcement of world law. (p 384)

Another resolution, supported by 19 Senators, proposed that the President should invite representatives of the world’s democracies to discuss the creation of a federal union of democracies within the framework of the UN.

Another proposal was that the UN should be reformed in order to remove or circumvent the right of veto in the Security Council, so that for example the General Assembly with a qualified majority might be able to nullify a veto in the Security Council and authorise a coalition of willing states to come to the rescue of a member state which was under attack. States which supported such an agreement would also undertake to make military forces available for immediate use by UN whenever necessary.

In an interesting contemporary article, the lawyer Percy Corbett analysed and criticised the various congressional proposals. From a modern perspective, where any proposal to establish a world state is often dismissed as a utopian dream, it is interesting to see that these proposals were then seen, even by their critics, as serious political proposals worthy of a thorough analysis.

At the same time as these discussions were taking place in Congress, the President of the United States, Harry S Truman, supported a plan – the Baruch Plan – which suggested that all nuclear weapons, including those owned by USA, should be placed under

international control. The plan had been prepared by the presidential advisor Bernard Baruch, and it was presented as an American proposal for the UN's newly formed atomic energy commission, UNAEC, in 1946.

In his speech before the UN-commission, Baruch said:

“Let us not deceive ourselves, we must elect world peace or world destruction.”³

In practice, if the plan had been accepted, it would have meant a giant step towards a world government, since the dominating military powers would then voluntarily have released the ultimate guarantee of their sovereignty to an international organ.

But the Soviet Union refused and the proposal therefore failed. Instead, the terror balance of the Cold War took over, and all discussion of a world federation gradually disappeared from the political agenda.

Some commentators say however that the Baruch Plan was never a serious proposal but rather a way of legitimising the American President's plans for a continued military armament, by showing to the electorate that an agreement with the Soviet Union was not a realistic option (Craig 2008).

In the aftermath of the First and Second World Wars, a number of people's movements arose demanding the establishment of a world government and world law. The American Campaign for World Government was founded in 1937 and the British Federal Union was formed a year later. The Federal Union is still active⁴ and its activities include a campaign for a world parliament, a strong international criminal court, an obligation to protect people from racial genocide and an international environmental court.

Several similar organisations were founded in different parts of the world during the years that followed and in 1947, 51 organisations from 24 countries joined together to create the World Federalist Movement, AFM⁵.

At its initial conference in Montreaux in 1947, the so-called Montreaux Declaration⁶ was approved, which established that the human race cannot survive another world war, that the newly created UN is powerless, and that humanity's greatest challenge is not a choice between communism or capitalism, but between a federal world government or continuing power politics.

According to this declaration. The world federation shall be based upon

1. Universal membership
2. Limitation of national sovereignty
3. Enforcement of world law
4. Creation of supranational armed forces
5. Supranational ownership and control of all atomic weapons
6. Power to raise revenues independently of state taxes.

These World Federalists talked of a universal federation embracing all the world's countries and their inhabitants, but there were others who considered that membership of a democratic global federation should be limited to democratic states.

³ http://www.nuclearfiles.org/menu/key-issues/nuclear-weapons/issues/arms-control-disarmament/baruch-plan_1946-06-14.htm

⁴ www.federalunion.org.uk

⁵ www.wfm-igp.org

⁶ www.wfm-igp.org/site/files/Montreux%20Declaration.pdf

In 1939, the American journalist, Clarence K Streit, published a book entitled *Union Now: A Proposal for a Federal Union of the Democracies of the North Atlantic*. He favoured a political union consisting of the world's democracies which at that time meant the Western European democracies (not Germany or Italy) together with the USA, Canada, Australia, New Zealand and South Africa.

Streit imagined fifteen founder nations which together would constitute the core of a democratic world government which might with time develop into a universal democratic world government. In 1940, Streit founded an organisation called the Federal Union Inc. (not to be confused with the British Federal Union) which has now changed its name to the Association to Unite the Democracies and is working to convert NATO into a political union, open for all established democracies.

2.3 The cold war

During the cold war decades, there was little opportunity to discuss an alternative world order. The debate was dominated by power realism, and thoughts of a world union were generally considered to be naïve and unrealistic.

There were nevertheless those who continued to insist that a global rule of law was in the long run the only way to maintain peace and avoid a nuclear war. In 1958, two American lawyers, Grenville Clark and Louis B Sohn published a book entitled *World peace through World Law* (Clark and Sohn 1958) in which, in 500 pages, they give a detailed description of the constitution of a federal world state with the task of preventing future war through a total disarmament of national armed forces and a mandatory global law enforced by world courts and a permanent world police.

In the introduction to the book, Clark explains the purpose of presenting a detailed constitution for an international institution which does not yet exist:

A prime motive for this book is that the world is far more likely to make progress toward genuine peace, as distinguished from a precarious armed truce, when a *detailed* plan adequate to the purpose is available, so that the structure and functions of the requisite world institutions may be fully discussed on a world-wide basis. (p xv)

In the year when Clark's and Sohn's book was published, a newly founded organisation, the World Constitution and Parliament Association, WCPA, took the initiative for yet another proposal for a world constitution. A call to an inaugural conference was circulated throughout the world, and a first preparatory conference was held in 1963. The first draft constitution was ready in 1973 and it was circulated for discussion and comment. A document which came to be called *A Constitution for the Federation of Earth* was adopted in 1977 at a conference in Innsbruck.

2.4 After the wall fell

After the fall of the Berlin wall and the end of the cold war in the early 1990s, the debate regarding a global rule of law has had a renaissance, not least in academic circles, where a lively discussion of cosmopolitical principles and institutions currently involves researchers from a range of different disciplines, and where it is again becoming acceptable to put forward more radical proposals for a changed world order.

Among the researchers who in recent years have put forward concrete proposals for some form of global rule of law with a supranational decision-making process can be mentioned David Held, Daniele Archibugi, Luis Cabrera, Richard Falk, Andrew Strauss, Gillian Brock, Thomas Pogge, James Yunker and Joseph Schwartzberg.

In Sweden, the philosophers Torbjörn Tännsjö and Folke Terman, together with the political scientist Leif Lewin, have argued for a democratic world government.

These proposals are discussed in more detail in sections 4 and 5

3. Arguments

3.1 Is a global rule of law needed?

Historically speaking, the completely dominating argument for supranational decision-making and a global legal system has been the prevention of war. The new wave of cosmopolitan oriented literature has however put forward additional motives: to combat poverty and create fairer economic conditions, to protect fundamental human rights when national governments do not wish or are not able to do this, to handle cross-border environmental questions, and to increase people's democratic influence and participation in global political issues.

It is not however sufficient that the problems have a global compass. There may be other and better ways than supranational power to deal with them. There are those who assert that technological development and market forces will solve the environmental problems rather than supranational coercion, and that poverty in the world can best be combated through economic development and trade.

Even with regard to political violence, it can be pointed out that the number of bloody wars and conflicts in the world has greatly decreased and that the risk of dying as a result of armed conflict has, according to some calculations, never been so low – and this has been achieved without supranational force.

To meet the argument that a supranational power is not needed, it is therefore necessary to show which features of the large global threats mean that nothing other than a supranational power can be effective in the long term.

A common argument is that many of the global problems are examples of a type of a situation which in game theory is usually called “The prisoner's dilemma”, “The free-rider problem”, or “The tragedy of the commons”. In this type of problem, everybody involved has an interest in achieving cooperation but, regardless of what the others do, everybody benefits from not cooperating himself. Thus if everybody acts rationally – in accordance with their own interests – nobody will cooperate. The consequence is that everybody loses.

This description of the dynamics behind the lack of an effective global climate policy is given by for example Nicholas Stern in the Stern Report (Stern 2007). It is an argument which is often repeated in support of the argument that supranational decision-making is essential if the climate problem is to be solved (Tännsjö 2008; Tersman 2009; Held and Hervey 2011).

To motivate the necessity of establishing a global legal system, it is not of course necessary to assert that all the great global problems are such that they cannot be solved in any other way. It is sufficient to show that this applies for a few sufficiently important problems

3.2 Is a global rule of law desirable?

A common argument against the establishment of a global legal system is that such a system can easily turn into global tyranny. If this were to occur, the people would be in an even worse situation than the inhabitants in today's dictatorships. The philosopher Bernard Boxill has given expression to this idea:

If a world state is inclined to be just, it could be very just. But if it is inclined to be unjust, the consequences could be appalling. An unjust world state would have no comparable independent power capable of restraining it. Nor could there be any escape from it. Backs to the wall, people would be either despairing or desperate. This suggests it is wiser to take our chances with a world of states.⁷

This was one of the reasons why Kant opposed the establishment of a world government and instead advocated an international association of free republican states (Kant 1795/1995).

The critics are also eager to point out the problems of corruption and the abuse of power from which both UN and many other global organizations suffer.

These are without doubt risks that must be taken into account, but they must also be weighed against those risks inherent in the current system, with a large number of global mega-problems that remain unsolved. The magnitude of the risk of a serious abuse of power is dependent on how the global legal system is designed, i.e. on the authority and power resources it possesses, and on the mechanisms available for insight into and control over how the power is used.

A very important aspect when designing a model for a functional global legal system is to show how the global power can be tamed and how effective control can be maintained.

3.3 Is a global legal system possible?

A common objection to the idea of a binding global legal system is that it is not realistic to believe that the world's states – particularly not the most powerful states – would voluntarily agree to relinquish vital parts of their supremacy.

Hans Morgenthau, one of the founders of the “realistic school” among political scientists, considered that world government was in principle a necessary condition for a long-term lasting peace, but paradoxically that world government was impossible since, in contrast to the conditions in national states, there is no political or cultural solidarity which can create loyalty to the state. In *Politics among Nations*, he writes:

Under the present moral conditions of mankind, few men would act on behalf of a world government if the interests of their own nation, as they understand them, required a different course of action. On the contrary, the overwhelming majority would put what they regard as the welfare of their own nation above everything else, the interests of a world state included. (p 341)

Nevertheless, there are also influential political scientists who have asserted that a world state is not only possible but in the long term unavoidable.

In an article entitled “Why a World State is Inevitable”, Alexander Wendt claims that the world is in a continuous process of development towards larger and larger political units, and that the natural conclusion of this development is a worldwide state with a monopoly on the legitimate use of violence (Wendt 2003).

⁷ Boxill, ‘Global Equality of Opportunity’, *Social Philosophy and Policy*, 5 (1987), 143–68)

The present-day territorial states are, according to Wendt, the result of a development process driven by the struggle between individuals and groups for material resources and recognition. The capacity for violence continually escalates and the costs of self-protection thus shoot up.

When the costs and risks become too large, it has become reasonable for individuals to join together in groups and submit to a joint power which guarantees the safety of the collective. But the struggle continues between the groups and the dynamics thus force the emergence of larger and large political units.

Some calculations say that about 3000 years ago there were about 600 000 independent political units in the world, whereas the number is now about 200. Even though it is not particularly easy to try and calculate the number of “states” existing in the prehistoric era, Wendt maintains that “the trend is striking and prima facie evidence for some kind of developmental process”. (Wendt 2003, p503).

The current system of sovereign states is not a stable condition but only a temporary stage in a process moving forwards until the final stage, a world state, has been reached. Wendt guesses that this can occur within between one hundred and two hundred years, but he emphasizes that that this is only a qualified guess and not a scientifically supported hypothesis.

Wendt points out, however, that this is not a blind process rolling onwards at its own pace regardless of what humans do. On the contrary, he emphasizes that both the pace and the results are influenced by political choices and political actions.

The Swedish political scientist Leif Lewin points out that it took two hundred years for democracy to become established in national states, from the stage of enlightenment to the introduction of government by the people at the beginning of the 20th century. “With the same process in international politics”, he wrote, “we can expect a democratic world government in about 2120.”⁸

The extent to which it is convincing to argue that a global rule of law is unrealistic naturally depends on the type of reform that is being considered. It is probably less probable that states should voluntarily agree to eliminate themselves overnight in favour of a fully developed world state than that they should agree to delegate decision-making on certain clearly defined questions to some supranational organ.

The EU member states have voluntarily agreed on extensive restrictions to their national sovereignty; restrictions that would have been completely impossible to accept only a few decades ago. The reforms in financial policies now being discussed within EU mean that political spheres which were long considered to be indispensable aspects of national sovereignty are now being placed under joint control.

There is in many countries a resistance to further supra-national control, but at the same time countries are gradually accepting changes which mean that an increasing number of binding joint decisions are being made at the EU-level.

Some authors describe the development of EU as a source of inspiration for how a global rule of law might be created in practice (Cabrera 2004; Archibugi 2008), but there are also those who see the growth of regional structures such as EU as an obstacle on the way towards a global political integration (Tännsjö 2008).

⁸ <http://www.statsvet.uu.se/forskningsinfo.aspx?Forskningsld=787>

Some authors accept the thesis that states will never agree to reforms that mean that power is transferred to some supranational organ and they maintain that changes in the global order must therefore be achieved outside the established institutions and in conflict with the most powerful states. "Governments will not act on our behalf until we force them to do so", writes for example George Monbiot in his book *The Age of Consent* (Monbiot 2004, p 261).

The question is whether it is more realistic to believe that a radical change leading to a functioning rule of law can be achieved without the participation of the most influential and resourceful states.

3.4 Is a global *democracy* possible?

One variation of the argument that a global government is unrealistic is directed specifically to the concept of a global *democratic* government. For those who consider that democracy is a necessary condition for political legitimacy, the conclusion is then that global government is either impossible or undesirable.

In one version, the argument is that the world is in fact too large for it to be possible to exert a democratic influence in a meaningful manner. In an article entitled "*Kant, Liberal Legacies and Foreign Affairs*", Michael W Doyle, Professor of International Affairs, maintains that there is a limit for how large a political unit can be effectively governed in a democratic manner:

If the maximum effective size of a legislature is about 500, a global constituency would have to be of the order of 8 million persons. ... Since modern states may already be too large for effective liberal politics, global government cannot be a liberal aim. (Doyle 1983, p 340)

One problem with this argument is that it rejects as democracies many states which are currently considered to be democratic states such as USA with more than 300 million citizens and India with more than a billion.

Luis Cabrera refers to studies which show that the citizens of small democratic states do not feel that they have a significantly greater possibility of exerting a political influence than the inhabitants of large democratic states (Cabrera 2004). Participation and voting at elections tend to be greater in smaller states, but larger states, on the other hand, have in fact a greater capacity to execute important measures in the interest of their citizens.

Another version of the argument is that a democracy presupposes a sense of belonging and solidarity which it is impossible to maintain in an extremely heterogeneous state with many different ethnic groups and widely different cultures and languages.

According to the Canadian philosopher Will Kymlicka, democracy is a question of smoothing out conflicting interests, which presupposes trust and a willingness to sacrifice. This is easier if there is some sort of common identity which overrides the conflicting interests. A common national identity fulfils this function, but there is no corresponding common identity on a global plane that makes global democracy possible (Kymlicka 2001).

Kymlicka accepts that stronger international institutions than those which we have today are necessary to deal with questions of economic globalisation and climate change, but he insists that these cannot replace the state as the primary unit for democratic influence.

Democratic insight and influence are often put forward as the best protection against the misuse of power. Only if those in power can be controlled and deposed by those over whom they rule is it possible to prevent power being used to meet the interests of those in power at the expense of the citizens' interests.

The argument that democratic influence at a global level is impossible is thus a serious objection – if it is true – but it is hardly disputed that a common natural or cultural identity is a precondition for functioning democratic institutions. It is perhaps more important to realise that there are common problems which must be solved through cooperation.

Gillian Brock suggests that the central feature of democracy is not always that as many as possible shall participate in all decisions (Brock 2009). Sometimes it is more efficient to delegate the decisions to a panel of experts who are not subject to direct democratic influence – for example an international expert panel on climate questions or an international court of justice. It is important that there are mechanisms which in some way mean that the decision-makers are made responsible, so that their decisions must take into account the long-term interest of all the citizens (and not merely the interests of those in power).

It is difficult to see why it would be impossible to maintain such a control mechanism without deep common cultural or national identities.

To carry our fair elections in a very large and culturally heterogeneous region naturally introduces special challenges with regard to meaningful representation, communication with the electorate and the possibility of maintaining a functional party system, where the parties do not merely become tools for ethnic or nationalistic political interests.

This is a problem which those who favour global democracy must take into consideration. A central question in the discussion of a global parliamentary assembly is how to achieve a balance between representation and efficiency. A large parliament increases the degree of contact with the electorate and makes it possible to allow the mandate distribution to follow natural geographical boundaries, but at the same time there is a risk that the decision-making process becomes very unwieldy. The literature contains a number of proposals for how a reasonable balance can be achieved.

There does not, however, appear to be any decisive argument suggesting that there is any definite limit for how large a democracy can be or how many languages or cultures it can embrace.

4. Proposals

All the proposals discussed in this overview strive towards a greater political integration on a global level. They differ however with regard to the reasons why they suggest that such an integration is necessary, the extent of the reforms which are proposed, the amount of detail included and how it is thought that a transition from the present day system can take place in practice.

Some of the proposals are extremely detailed – Clark's and Sohn's constitution for a proposed world federation covers more than 500 pages in the original English version – while others are little more than sketches.

Torbjörn Tännsjö considers that it “would be ridiculous to deal with the subject other than in a brief and sketchy manner:”

No one can present a credible and very detailed blueprint for global democracy.” (Tännsjö, p 108)

George Monbiot considers that for democratic reasons we should refrain from giving too detailed descriptions in advance of how a global democracy should be organised⁹.

Monbiot’s proposal is that a democratically elected world parliament should be created, but how this is to take place with regard to representation, voting regulations, authority and other aspects must be developed through a democratic process:

If democracy is not self-establishing, it is not democracy. Far from seeking to pre-ordain its outcomes, we must pre-ordain only the openness required to permit its electors’ chosen outcomes to evolve (Monbiot 2004, p 103-104)

On the other hand, Grenville Clark considers in the introduction to the book *World Peace through World Law* that a detailed plan would facilitate the process of creating a global rule of law.

Some of the proposals discussed here relate to the creation of a complete world state with legislative, executive and judicial authority and a monopoly on the legitimate use of force (Borgese, Hutchins et al. 1950; Clark and Sohn 1958; Cabrera 2004; Tännsjö 2008)

Others propose a more limited supranational organisation and different forms of power division between organs on global, regional and national levels (Yunker 1993; Held 1995; Pogge 2002; Archibugi 2008; Yunker 2010, 2011) while still others are satisfied with limited reforms which aim to increase the democratic influence and representativity in global organisations of power such as the UN, the WTO; the World Bank and the IMF (Brock 2009).

4.1 Chicago University’s draft for a world constitution

In the years following the Second World War, eleven eminent researchers at Chicago University under the leadership of the Chancellor of the University, Robert Maynard Hutchins, developed a proposal for a world constitution.

The proposal, presented as a *Preliminary Draft of a World Constitution* in a book published in 1948, describes the organisation of a federal world republic with the task of maintaining peace, guaranteeing human rights, and creating and upholding a world law.

According to the proposed constitution, the world republic shall judge in conflicts between states, determine the formation of states and the borders between states, collect federal taxes, regulate world trade and administer a world bank.

The starting point for this work was a broadcast debate in which Hutchins participated barely a week after the atomic bomb on Hiroshima, where he asserted that a world government was in the long run the only way to avoid a devastating nuclear war. After the debate, Hutchins was contacted by a number of researchers at the university, including Giuseppe Antonio Borgese, who urged him to set up a working group to develop a proposal for how a world government might function.

⁹ Monbiot’s argument is not however particularly convincing. It is true that decisions on how democratic institutions on a global level shall be organised must be made in a democratic manner, but it does not follow that it is undemocratic to put forward an argument in favour of a detailed proposal. On the contrary, it is generally necessary that someone undertakes to put forward a detailed and well thought out proposal so that a democratic assembly has something to decide upon.

Borgese became the secretary of the group which was called *The Committee to Frame a World Constitution*. In his foreword to the book, Borgese writes that there were two main lines among the committee members: minimalists, who wished to limit the power of the world government to the prevention of war, and maximalists, who wanted to include questions such as economic justice and the prohibition of racial discrimination and colonialism in the task of the world government.

The maximalists won the struggle and Borgese writes that after two-years' work the whole group were convinced maximalists. The final proposal suggests a common currency, a common fiscal policy and economic policy and a single federal capital city.

A world republic shall, according to the constitution proposal, be run by a federal convention with elected delegates from all countries in proportion to their populations – one delegate per million inhabitants and one delegate each for countries with a population between 100 000 and one million.

It was suggested that the UN General Assembly should be given the task of organising the first founding federal convention, including its financing and the establishment of rules for voting and the distribution of delegates after a global population census. When the founding convention by majority decision had adopted the constitution, this would achieve legitimacy by “ratification by collective majorities within as many delegations of states and nations as represent two-thirds of the population of the earth”.

The federal convention would be the highest organ of governance in the world republic. The convention would be extremely large – almost 7000 delegates in today's world – and thus rather unwieldy, but it would meet for only 30 days every third year.

The convention elects in turn a president and a council of 81 members representing all parts of the world. The council enacts legislation while the executive power is invested in the president who is elected for a period of six years and cannot be re-elected. The President appoints a government.

The proposal also contains detailed instructions for how the judicial power shall be constructed, with the supreme judiciary power vested in a Grand Tribunal of sixty justices with the President of the World Republic as Chief Justice and Chairman.

The federal convention shall also appoint a people's tribune which shall speak for minorities and defend the human and civic rights of both individuals and groups.

The control of the armed forces shall be in the hands of a security council consisting of the President and a further six members appointed by the Council.

The proposal is thus fairly detailed with respect to how a world republic shall be organised, but it gives in principle no guidance as to how the transition from today's system of sovereign states is to be achieved.

Borgese, who appears to have been the person who in practice wrote the greater part of the text to the draft constitution, has published another book, *Foundations of the World Republic*, in which he develops and explains the ideas behind the proposal, and also corrects some details which were noted and criticised after the draft had been published (Borgese 1953)

4.2 World peace through world law

Grenville Clark was an influential American lawyer and advisor to President Franklin D Roosevelt during the 1930s. During and after the Second World War, he devoted

himself to the question of how the world could avoid a third world war. In 1958, together with lawyer colleagues and the Harvard Professor Louis B Sohn, he published a book entitled *World peace through World Law* which contains a detailed draft of a constitution of a proposed world federation.

The basic thesis is that “there can be no peace without law” and that “ universal and complete national disarmament” is essential in order in the long term to prevent a nuclear war.

Clark and Sohn believed that it would be easier to take steps towards a new world order if there were a concrete and detailed plan to discuss and decide upon. Their proposal therefore contains detailed descriptions of voting regulations, numbers of members in the various decision-making organs and the representation of different countries in the General Assembly.

Some of these statements should be seen rather as a basis for discussion than as necessary preconditions for achieving the goal, but Clark and Sohn indicate some requirements which in their opinion must be fulfilled before world peace can be guaranteed.

The first requirement is that there must be mandatory international laws which require total disarmament by all states, the prohibition of the use of force against other states and the compulsory affiliation to certain international legal institutions.

Another requirement is that there must be a clearly global constitution which defines the limits of the world government’s authority, a permanent world police which can watch over and take action against infringements, and a world court of law which can try disputes.

Yet another requirement is that there must be a mechanism for evening out global economic differences. This appears to be outside the purely peace-keeping function, but Clark and Sohn maintain that economic differences lead to instability and conflict.

They also maintain that all, or essentially all, states, must participate in this “world peace authority”. The system can manage if a few remain outside, but these must nevertheless be bound by the decisions of the authority.

Since, in order to succeed, a world constitution must be supported by a large majority of the world’s nations, Clark and Sohn recommend that it shall come into force

only when ratified by five sixths of all the nations in the world, the ratifying nations to have a combined population of at least five sixths of the total world population and to include all the twelve nations which then have the largest populations. (p xviii)

This would thus mean that USA, China, India and a further nine nations would in practice be given the right to veto the change.

One may wonder whether such a right of veto would not in practice make the proposal impossible to implement. Experience of how the veto rights have been exercised in the UN Security Council do not give much reason for optimism regarding the possibility of making radical changes.

The proposal is written in the form of a revised United Nations Charter. Clark was strongly critical of the UN which was created after the Second World War. He did not however find any reason to criticise the purpose of the United Nations as presented in the existing charter. The problem was “that the means provided to fulfil these aims have, in practice, proved inadequate” (p 4)

The central organ of power in the revised UN-organisation is the General Assembly, which receives a new composition and a new mandate, while the Executive Council, which replaces the present Security Council, has a completely new composition, other tasks and is subordinate to the General Assembly.

In the first place, the General Assembly has a legislative role, even if its authority is "strictly limited to matters directly related to the maintenance of peace" (p xix). The General Assembly shall have the authority "to enact effective laws to implement universal and complete national disarmament" and also "to enact legislation providing for the punishment of acts in violation of the disarmament plan and for the apprehension and fair trial of violators" (p 40).

The General Assembly shall also have the authority to decide when a situation becomes a threat to peace and "to decide upon and apply effective measures to prevent violence, restore order or vindicate the authority of the Charter" (p 112).

With the exception of what is necessary to maintain world peace, the states shall, according to Clark and Stone, retain their sovereignty with respect to "domestic affairs" (p xix).

Since the large countries, from a population viewpoint, such as USA and China, would according to Clark and Sohn be unlikely to accept that the General Assembly possessed legislative power if all countries, regardless of the size of the population, had the same number of votes, the distribution of mandates must be changed, but the system cannot be fully proportional either because small nations such as Iceland would then totally lack influence. Instead they proposed a hybrid variety where each state had at least one member, the four largest states had 30 members each, and the next eight had 15 and so on. With the division into states which prevailed in 1960, this would have resulted in a total of 551 members.

Although the members of the General Assembly were considered to be the "representatives from all the member nations" (p 20), it was suggested that after a transitional period they should be appointed by direct elections and not by the land's government.

One of the tasks of the General Assembly – according to Clark's and Sohn's proposal – is to appoint an Executive Council to replace the present day Security Council. The Executive Council shall, in contrast to today's Security Council, be subordinate to the General Assembly which has the ultimate responsibility for maintaining peace. The Council shall however have the executive responsibility for implementing and watching over a general national disarmament, and shall have control over the military forces which the revised UN is expected to command.

The Council shall be elected by the General Assembly every fourth year according to certain distribution rules: the four largest countries shall always have one representative each, among the eight next largest, four representatives shall be appointed, two from Europe and two from countries outside Europe, and the remaining countries shall have a total of nine members to be elected from nine equally sized regional groups of member nations. Those eligible for appointment as members of the Council shall be elected representatives in the General Assembly.

Clark and Sohn proposed this distribution, saying that it "embodies another careful balancing of the interests of particular nations and of the world community" (p 73).

In addition, as in the current UN, there should be a secretariat with a Secretary General, with amongst other things the task of warning the General Assembly of any threat to world peace, and a system of supranational courts of law and arbitration courts with the task of solving conflicts.

To enforce the law and to be able to intervene in countries or groups which are threatening peace, the UN must have its own military organisation, a permanent peace corps, which according to the proposal shall consist of at least 200 000 and at the most 600 000 men. If necessary it shall be possible to increase this number. All the member countries shall be obliged to make further resources available for this force.

The force shall be recruited through volunteers and shall thus in practice be a professional army. In order to avoid one country or one region becoming dominating, there shall be a limit to how large a proportion of the peace corps shall come from any single country. The military leadership shall be under the control of the Executive Council, but any decision relating to its involvement shall be made by the General Assembly.

In addition to total disarmament, conflict resolution and compliance with international laws, the revised UN should devote much energy to the promotion of economic development in the world's poorest countries. The world organisation should be able to make large resources available for this task. "No solid and stable peace" can, according to the authors, be guaranteed unless attention is given to the task of "amelioration of the worst economic ills of mankind" (p xxxvii).

The financing of this revised UN would require taxes. Clark and Sohn suggest that the question of taxation should be delegated to the member countries. It is however the General Assembly which approves the budget and the amount which each member nation shall pay.

As in the case of the Chicago researchers, Clark and Sohn present a detailed description of how a world federation shall be organised and how it shall function when it has been established, but they present no plan for how the transition from the present situation shall take place.

4.3 A Constitution for the Federation of Earth

Another extremely ambitious proposal for a world constitution was developed between the end of the Second World War and the end of the Cold War.

An organisation called the World Constitution and Parliament Association, WCPA, was founded in 1958 with the goal, through a process involving persons from the whole world, of developing a proposal for a constitution and subsequently running a worldwide campaign to get the proposal ratified by as many people and states as possible.

The first draft constitution was ready in 1973 and in 1977 a final document was adopted by the delegates to a World Constituent Assembly in Innsbruck.

Thereafter the organisation has worked, hitherto without any great success, to get national parliaments to ratify this constitution. A Provisional World Parliament has also been called to meet on three occasions to discuss proposed legislation relating to the world economy, climate policy and nuclear weapons. I have not been able to find out how the delegates to this Provisional World Parliament have been elected.

The Constitution is available in eight languages on the Internet together with a diagram which schematically describes the construction of the Federation. In a book entitled *One World or None*, Errol E Harris, Professor of Philosophy at the Rhodes University in South Africa develops and explains the principles behind the proposal (Harris 1993).

Whereas many other proposals for the creation of a global legislative assembly recommend two chambers, the Constitution for the Federation of Earth proposes a parliament with three chambers. The first two chambers have functions similar to those in the other proposals, the first being directly elected and representing the world's population as individuals while the second chamber represents the nations. The third chamber functions as expert advisor, its members being nominated by universities and seats of learning around the world, and is elected by the first two chambers. This third chamber shall be entitled to put forward proposals and ask questions of the first two, but it has no voting rights except in cases where the first two chambers have become deadlocked.

Instead of a president or prime minister, this proposal recommends a presidium consisting of five persons elected by the World Parliament's three chambers together after having been nominated by the third advisory chamber.

There shall also be a government consisting of about twenty ministers who are also heads of the various departments and agencies specified in the constitution. The ministers are nominated by the presidium and are elected by the parliament. The intention is that both the presidium and the government shall be answerable to the parliament.

This proposal is in certain respects more detailed than many (most?) national constitutions. For example, it fixes the number of departments and agencies under the world parliament and what these shall be. It is not particularly easy to understand why this shall be fixed in the constitution, and it seems also to be rather impractical if new needs should arise or the old should cease to be relevant.

The Federation's common legislation shall be applicable directly to individual citizens not states. The Federation has at its disposal a judicial system with courts of law, a prosecution authority and a world police force. If any state or group should revolt and try to withdraw from the federation, the federation has sufficient military force at its command.

Countries which become members of the federation renounce the right to use military force against another member, whatever the reason, and must relinquish control of all weapons of mass destruction.

A country becomes a member by ratifying the constitution, which is done by voting in the national legislative assembly and by a public referendum. Membership must therefore be interpreted as being voluntary, even though the federation is described as being universal. There are also clauses which deal with the federation's external relations, i.e. relations with those countries which have not yet become members, but there is nothing which indicates whether a country has the right to withdraw from the federation after it has become a member.

4.4 Cabrera's proposal for a democratic World Government

Luis Cabrera is a journalist and researcher in political theory at the University of Birmingham. As a journalist he reported for the news agency AP from the large demonstrations in Seattle on the occasion of the WTO-meetings in 1999.

In the introduction to his book *Political Theory of Global Justice: A Cosmopolitan Case for the World State*, he describes his surprise at the demonstrators' demands that the negotiations for a new global trade agreement should be discontinued and that international organs such as WTO should be dissolved. Why did the demonstrators instead not see greater economic and political integration as a possibility and demand reforms that would mean that supranational institutions such as WTO would become instruments for improving the living conditions in poor countries?

Cabrera considers that a cosmopolitan view of justice –which gives all human beings equal rights to have their basic needs fulfilled – is fundamentally incompatible with today's system of sovereign states.

Instead, he puts forward a system with a distribution of power on different levels: some questions are resolved locally, others on a national level and yet others by a supranational regional organ similar to EU – but above these regional organs there is a need for a global supranational level; a democratic world state.

In contrast to the detailed constitution proposals presented above, Cabrera avoids giving detailed instructions with regard to the world government's composition, voting rules etc.. He considers it better to specify a number of requirements which the world organisation shall fulfil, and then allow the organisation to grow successively in an evolutionary process which may lead to different possible forms.

The requirements which a democratic world state must fulfil include the existence of some form of written constitution which limits the authority of the supranational institutions. This constitution shall also establish certain fundamental freedoms and rights for its citizens.

There shall also be a democratically elected parliament. In contrast to the EU parliament, such a world parliament should have a primary legislative authority. It should also have organs with executive powers – a world government – and judicial institutions to resolve disputes and to judge infringements of the law.

As is the case in EU, he presupposes that individuals can take legal action against both the state and the supranational organs and have their decisions tested in supranational courts of law.

Laws passed at a supranational level should take precedence over laws passed at a lower level. Here Cabrera also follows EU's example, where the principle that when EU legislation collides with national legislation it is the EU law which takes precedence has been established in a number of legal cases in the EU courts.

This principle must however be combined with a strong subsidiarity principle. The supranational organ must be able to prove that the matters which they decide cannot be solved at a lower level, or that they are solved much more effectively at a higher level. States and other lower decision-making organs must be able to question the authority of the higher organ to decide a certain question and to obtain a judicial assessment of whether or not the requirement that the matter cannot be dealt with as effectively at a lower level has been met.

According to Cabrera, the establishment of a world state lies far in the future. He suggests however that a number of minor reforms which are steps in the direction of a world state can be carried out more rapidly. Here also he finds inspiration in the development of EU. He considers that EU is a model for how a political integration over state boundaries, which guarantees certain fundamental rights for all, regardless of nationality, can be achieved in small steps at the same time as states and regions retain their autonomy in larger matters.

4.5 Tännsjö and global democracy

Torbjörn Tännsjö is Professor of Practical Philosophy in the University of Stockholm and one of the present-day academic authors who plead for a fully developed democratic world state. In his book *Global Democracy* (Tännsjö 2008), he presents not only the arguments for why a world government is necessary – peace, justice and the global environment, particularly the climate threat – but also suggestions for how a world government might be established and organised.

Briefly, his proposal is based on the utilisation of the historical situation that the world currently has only one superpower – the USA. Tännsjö also considers that the road to a democratic world government is through a reform of the UN.

Tännsjö suggests that the General Assembly should be divided into two chambers where the existing General Assembly with representatives of the member states should, at least in the beginning, be the first chamber, but that in parallel a global people's assembly should be created where the members are directly elected in proportion to the populations of the different states or regions.

If a country will not permit a free election then these seats will be left empty. Tännsjö considers that this will create an incentive for countries to allow free election to these seats, otherwise the country will have no influence in the world government.

In addition to these two chambers, there shall be a government in which countries such as USA, China, India, EU and Russia – for strategic reasons so that they shall feel secure – should be permanent members.

To create a world parliament elected by the people in this manner should not, in Tännsjö's opinion, cause anxiety to anyone as long as it has no governmental authority. Governmental authority will be gradually introduced when the structure is in place and countries have become used to the idea.

The decisive question is the control of military power. Tännsjö's idea is that the states shall be offered the opportunity to voluntarily transfer control of their military resources to the world government in exchange for its protection. For most countries which are not living under an acute threat this should mean an economic advantage, so that it is to be expected that many countries will accept the offer.

Gradually, most states will follow suit, with the exception of the only remaining military power – USA. But what use will USA have for a large and expensive military power if there is no longer any military threat? Will the citizens of USA accept that the country arms itself to defend itself against the UN?

Tännsjö's description of the organisation of the world state is consciously rather vague. "No one can make a reliable and very detailed blueprint for global democracy", he says. The purpose of his presentation is to show that the idea is not totally utopian, and to give an indication of what a realistic road towards a global democracy might look like.

4.6 Yunker's limited world federation

The proposals that have hitherto been presented aim in principle towards the creation of a global governance following the same model as present-day states, with legislative, administrative and judicial powers and with a monopoly of military force. Cabrera and Tännsjö imagine a stepwise process and Tännsjö considers that a world parliament should initially have limited authority if it is to be accepted, but the intention is that the authority shall gradually increase.

James A Yunker. Professor of Economics at the Western Illinois University, considers however that the established picture of a world government is a hindrance to its implementation. Yunker asserts that the absolute majority of the world's population is strongly against a powerful world state, since they consider that it would lead to a paralysing bureaucracy, widespread corruption, the misuse of power and ultimately to global tyranny.

For a world government to be acceptable to the great majority, says Yunker, its power must necessarily be very limited. At the same time, he considers that such a limited world government would be sufficient to solve the problems which humanity is now facing.

Yunker emphasises three factors which mean that the proposals for a world government of the type put forward by, for example, the Chicago group, Clark and Sohn, and WCP appear unacceptable to many persons and states.

In the first place, they require in general that the states relinquish the right to military defence, and that a world government has a monopoly on the use of military force. In the second place, the rules for representation and voting rights which are proposed lead to an enormous shift of power from today's rich and powerful countries to countries which have larger populations but which are economically poorer. And thirdly, they require that membership is universal and obligatory and that the laws enacted are binding for all.

This shift of power may in fact appear to be just: why shall the voting strength in international organs be related to financial assets? But together, these requirements mean that the countries which currently have great power risk not being able to protect themselves from the demand for a dramatic redistribution of wealth. Again, given the great injustices which exist, such demands may seem to be justified, but since the rich countries currently have the power and realise what they risk losing, they will surely block such reforms.

To make world governance possible, Yunker proposes three principles:

- 1) Membership in a world federation must be voluntary, and all members shall have the right to withdraw from the federation whenever they wish;
- 2) Each member state shall have the right to retain its military forces, including nuclear weapons, for as long as they feel that they need them;
- 3) The voting principles in the legislative assembly shall exclude laws and decisions which cannot be agreed upon by a sufficiently large majority of both rich and poor countries.

In Yunker's own proposal for a world federation, which he calls *the Federal Union of Democratic Nations*, all decisions are taken in the legislative assembly according to the

double qualified majority principle, where the votes of the different countries are weighted firstly according to the size of the population and secondly according to the different countries' financial contributions to the Union, so that any decision requires 60 per cent of the votes based on both the population and on the financial status.

The financial contribution paid by each country shall be a flat tax based on a certain percentage of the country's GNP, which means that each country's voting strength will thus be proportional to both its GNP and its population. The rich countries thus have in practice a right to veto drastic redistribution programmes which they find unacceptable while the poor countries as a result of their larger populations have a right to veto proposals which they find unacceptable.

To eliminate in the long term these political effects of different economic conditions in different countries, Yunker proposes a "Marshall Plan"¹⁰ to eradicate poverty in the world.

That the member countries have the right to retain their military forces and are thus able to take up arms against a joint decision of the world federation can of course be seen as a great weakness, not least if the world government is to be an instrument for guaranteeing peace. Yunker considers, however, that this is essential if a world government is ever to be created and that disarmament is a long-term goal which a world government can help to achieve once it has been created.

Even if the power of the world federation is restricted, however, Yunker insists that in all essentials it will correspond to a "legitimate, authentic and fully-fledged government" (Yunker 2010, p 43), with legislative, executive and judicial institutions, all of which shall be subject to democratic transparency and control.

The federal union shall be based upon a written constitution, shall be entitled to decide upon and collect taxes from the member states and shall maintain a permanent supranational military force. According to Yunker:

It would have a permanent administrative structure, a capital city, a flag, an anthem, and all the other customary forms and appurtenances of governmental authority. (ibid.)

The legislative assembly shall be elected by the people and an election shall be held every fifth year. Yunker suggests that the world be divided into about 200 constituencies, each of which elects one representative to the legislative assembly. Certain countries will thus have more than one representative, while others will share a representative. The elected representatives will not however each have one vote in the assembly. Instead the votes will be weighted according to the number of electoral votes which they represent and the financial contribution to the Federal Union from the countries which they represent.

Yunker accepts that a number of very small countries may feel that they lack representation with such a system and will therefore remain outside, but he says that the Federal Union would manage without their participation.

4.7 A Union of Democracies

Clarence K Streit was an American journalist who in the period between the two World Wars worked in Europe as a foreign correspondent for the New York Times, and during

¹⁰ An American initiative to aid Europe, in which the United States gave economic support to help rebuild European economies after the end of World War II

the 1930s he followed at close hand the failure of the League of Nations to prevent the military rearmament of Germany, Italy and Japan and the expansive politics which led up to the Second World War. He drew the conclusion that a much more powerful political union was required to dissuade Hitler from further aggression and guarantee a long-term peace, and he devoted his energies to the development of a model for what such a union might look like.

In a book entitled *Union Now: A Proposal for a Federal Union of the Democracies of the North Atlantic* (Streit 1939), which was completed in the autumn of 1938 and published in 1939, he advocated a political union consisting of the world's, at that time, fifteen stable democracies: USA, Great Britain, Ireland, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, South Africa, France, Belgium, the Netherlands, Switzerland, Denmark, Norway, Sweden and Finland.

He asserted that a union of these countries would from the start be able to mobilize such enormous power that Hitler and Mussolini would not dare to attack any of the member states.

In the long term, he envisaged that the union would expand with more members – simply because membership appeared to be attractive – and gradually at a pace “that best serves humanity's freedom” develop into a universal world government. The fifteen founder nations would be the core, but the union would be open for all democracies which guaranteed their citizens the rights established in the union's joint declaration of rights.

The Union would be based on five common concerns:

- 1) common citizenship
- 2) a common defence
- 3) a common currency
- 4) inter-state free trade and freedom from customs
- 5) a common postal and communication system

Streit emphasized that a union with a common citizenship means that it is in the first place a union of individuals and not a confederation of states. In a confederation of states, each state has the same voting rights, whereas in a union of individuals each citizen has the same voting rights. Countries with large populations thus have a greater influence.

It also means that the union's joint legislation applies directly to the individual citizen. Streit had witnessed, for example when Italy invaded Ethiopia in conflict with the laws of the League of Nations, how ineffective sanctions against states could be. The Union must therefore have its own independent judicial system which can enforce the acceptance of common legislation without the approval of the states.

This does not prevent the states from having their own laws and judicial systems in matters which lie outside the mandate of the Union. This model is taken from USA where there is a separation between the laws and judicial systems at the state level and the federal laws and judicial institutions. In the same way, the Union shall have the right to tax individual citizens directly and not be dependent on the member states for its taxation income.

The Union shall be based upon a written constitution and the legislative assembly shall be divided into two chambers. The representation in the first chamber shall be

completely proportional to the population, while the second shall modify this to give states with small populations a greater influence. Again, the model is based on the American system.

With regard to the administrative power, Streit suggests, instead of a president or prime minister, an executive board consisting of five persons, of whom three are directly elected by the people while the legislative assembly's two chambers appoint one each. The purpose of this is partly to emphasise that all power is derived from the people and partly to create a division of power which reduces the anxiety that a single person may have too great a power.

4.8 A UN-parliament elected by the people

All the proposals referred to above, and the majority of similar examples contain some form of global parliament elected by the people, and some of the proposals focus completely on this.

Many persons consider that the road to such a parliament involves reforming the UN. A world parliament is then considered to be some sort of second chamber in the UN General Assembly. This an opinion expressed by, for example, David Held, a British political scientist and one of the foremost names in modern research into democracy and globalisation. Held considers that such a second chamber in the UN would be the first step in a process of development where the goal is to completely replace the current General Assembly with a world parliament elected by the people.

There is also an international Campaign for the Establishment of a United Nations Parliamentary Assembly, or the UNPA Campaign, with the goal to establish a parliamentary assembly elected by the people. This campaign is led by the German *Komitee für eine demokratische UNO*, KDUN, which has published a number of papers on the subject, some of them by their chairman, Andreas Bummel.

Much of the discussion is related to the principles for distributing the seats and the voting weights in such a parliament. The problem lies in finding a balance between the demands to treat people as equals and the demands to take into consideration the special interests of different nations. Bummel recommended (Bummel 2010) what he calls a "degressive proportionality principle" which means that countries with more citizens have more seats, but that the number of citizens required for yet another seat increases progressively the more seats the country already has.

Large countries thus have more influence than small countries, but the citizens in small countries have a relatively greater influence than the citizens of large countries.

One way of creating a UN-parliament is through a reformation of the UN-charter. This can, however, be problematical because such a reform can be blocked by each of the five permanent members of the UN Security Council.

One way of circumventing the need for the approval of the permanent members of the Security Council is for the UN General Assembly to create a parliamentary assembly as a "subsidiary organ" in accordance with Article 22 of the UN Charter:

The General Assembly may establish such subsidiary organs as it deems necessary for the performance of its functions.

Joseph E Schwartzberg analyses several different models for the distribution of influence in a world parliament and shows how a parliament under the aegis of the UN might be developed in three stages (Schwartzberg 2012) from a relatively powerless

second chamber under the General Assembly, whose members represent the governments of the member states, to a legislative assembly directly elected by the people and reflecting the democratic principle of “one man one vote”.

The first stage would be for the UN General Assembly to decide to create a parliament in accordance with Article 22. This parliament should be open for all member states and its members should be appointed by their respective governments. The way in which these are appointed is in principle up to the country concerned but the method which Schwartzberg considers should be recommended is that they be appointed by their country’s parliament in proportion to the number of seats which the different parties have in the national parliament.

For economically strong and powerful countries to accept such a parliament, the number of members – or alternatively their respective voting powers – should be proportional not only to the size of the country’s population but also to its financial contribution to UN¹¹. Like many other authors, he also considers that the parliamentary decisions made during an initial period must be advisory rather than binding,

With time, he argues, voices will be raised, as in the UN, demanding that the position of the parliament be strengthened and that its members be elected by the people. In stage two therefore, proportional representation to the UN-parliament will be introduced and an election commission will be appointed with the task of developing rules for the election and of supervising that the election is correctly carried out in all countries.

In stage two, the electoral constituencies are still synonymous with national boundaries and Schwartzberg considers several models for the distribution of mandates between different countries. There are a number of different considerations which must be welded together: the parliament shall not be so large that it becomes impossibly unwieldy, all countries must be represented, and the distribution must to some extent be proportional to the size of the population. He also considers the possibility of weighting the members’ votes in different ways.

Ultimately in the third stage, which may lie relatively far into the future, there will be acceptance for allowing the principle of “one man one vote” to be fully expressed. In this stage, Schwartzberg also believes that constituencies can be independent of state boundaries.

4.9 A world parliament outside the UN

A world parliament need not, however, be linked to UN. A UN-parliament can only be established if a broad majority of the UN member states give it their support, even if one follows the way which Joseph Schwartzberg advocates, which does not require any amendment of the UN Charter.

Several writers, including Richard Falk, Andrew Strauss and George Monbiot (Falk and Strauss 2001; Monbiot 2003; Strauss 2005; Falk and Strauss 2011) consider that there is no need to wait for the states’ approval. A parliament elected by the people can be established by the civil society without the consent of the states, provided there is sufficient popular support

Such a parliament would, at least in the beginning, lack formal power. Its influence would be completely dependent on the support given by the world’s inhabitants.

¹¹ This is in principle the same idea as that expressed by Yunker. See above.

Monbiot maintains that

Directly elected, owned by the people of the world, our parliament would possess the moral authority which all other bodies lack. And this alone, if effectively deployed, is a source of power. (p 94)

Monbiot imagines that the parliament will discuss and vote on resolutions, and thereafter request that states and global institutions of power such as IMF and the World Bank follow its decisions. These are not obliged to follow the world parliament but – given that the parliament possesses a high degree of political legitimacy – it will mean the loss of a lot in public respect to defy the parliament.

The function of the parliament will be to hold those in power accountable. Monbiot points out that if an institution or state conforms to a parliamentary decision then this means at the same time that it acknowledges the parliament's legitimacy. The authority of the parliament will thus gradually increase.

He suggests, for example, that a world parliament could take the initiative and approve a proposal for a global solution to the climate question¹². If the parliament is seen to be legitimate, its proposed solutions will be accepted as the starting point for further negotiation, and thus as proposals to which all other actors must conform.

The world parliament would not be able to force anyone to accept its solutions, but those who reject them would have to explain why, and it would be difficult merely to say that there is another solution which one personally prefers.

The way in which the world parliament develops would depend on the will of the people and on the extent to which states acknowledge its authority

It may, if the people will it and if states begin formally to recognise its powers, become a legislative body. (p 103)

One of Monbiot's points is however that it is not up to him or to us to decide on this. It must be up the parliament itself which decides how it shall develop. His suggestion is thus to start a process which *can* lead to a democratically elected global legislative assembly with the authority to reach binding decisions relating to global questions.

He says that when the process has been initiated, we must rely on democracy. No democracy is better than its electorate, not even a world democracy. There is thus no guarantee that a democratic world parliament will be able to solve such fateful questions as the climate threat. It will depend on the extent to which the world population understands the problems and what needs to be done.

Falk and Strauss also believe that the power of the world parliament can progressively grow as its political legitimacy increases. When a concrete organisation which claims to be a world parliament has really come into existence, individuals and organisations can exert political pressure on their government to recognise it and become a member – and as more and more states become members, the pressure on those outside to join in progressively increases.

Such a parliament can eventually, according to Falk and Strauss, very well come to be incorporated as a second chamber in the UN General Assembly, and the route thither does not necessarily have to involve negotiations and formal treaties between states.

¹² He himself has an idea of what is the only just and sustainable way of dealing with this problem, but he realises that a world parliament might have another opinion.

One question which must be resolved when a global parliamentary assembly is established, regardless of whether it lies within or outside an established organisation, is how the voting strength shall be distributed between different countries, different parts of the world and different interests, and how the constituencies shall be defined. Monbiot suggests a much simpler model than those put forward by Bummel and Schwartzberg. His model is based on a division of the world into constituencies which each have 10 million inhabitants and which each elect one member to the parliament. Each adult person shall have one vote.

This means that constituencies and national borders will not normally coincide and this, according to Monbiot, is an advantage since those who are elected shall represent individuals and not states, and since the risk that their politics will be stamped by national interests will thereby be reduced.

One complication which Monbiot mentions but to which he has no answer is how the parliament and the elections shall be financed. The cost of a global election is estimated to be of the order of 5 billion dollars, and the annual operating costs for the parliament to be about 1 billion dollars¹³. Companies and states will not however be allowed to contribute money. In a later stage, when the parliament has perhaps acquired the authority to levy taxes, the problem may be smaller, but the question is how shall the financing take place until then.

There is an initiative which seeks to demonstrate how a world parliament can be created through a global referendum. The project, which is described in the book *Rescue Plan for Planet Earth* by Jim Stark, the person whose initiative it was, (Stark 2008), provides an opportunity for persons to vote “yes” or “no” for the creation of a democratic world parliament via the Internet. The text on the voting paper reads:

Do you support the creation of a directly elected, representative, transparent, and democratic world parliament that is authorized to legislate on global issues?

So far, in the eight years during which voting has been possible, a total of 22 126 persons have voted, of which 95 per cent have voted “yes”. For the voting to be considered to give legitimacy to a world democracy it is said that at least 50 per cent of the world’s adult population must have voted, and that at least 67 per cent of the votes must say “yes”.

4.10 Cosmopolitan democracy

There is a relatively large group of philosophers and researchers who since the 1990s have been working to find forms for a democratic influence and supranational decision-making at a global level which does not constitute a fully developed world state or world government but which is nevertheless more comprehensive and obligatory than cooperation within the UN.

Those favouring this direction, which is often referred to as cosmopolitan democracy, include David Herd, who was mentioned in the section on the UN-parliament, Gillian Brock, Professor of Philosophy at the University of Auckland, New Zealand, Daniele Archibugi, an Italian economist and political scientist working in Rome and in London, Thomas Pogge, a German philosopher and professor at Yale University in America, and Anne-Marie Slaughter, Professor of Politics and International Affairs at Princeton University.

¹³ These figures are based on a comparison with e.g. the European parliament.

These authors differ with regard to the concrete reform proposals they present and, in contrast to the previously discussed proposals, none of them presents a detailed plan for a new global rule of law. They deal more with general principles and with proposals for reforms in certain limited regions.

They are united in an approach to justice which means that national boundaries lack moral relevance and that the demands for justice apply to all human beings equally regardless of nationality or other group loyalties, and also in the belief that peoples' democratic influence is successively being weakened as a result of the increasing powerlessness of states to deal with global problems such as the climate threat, the spread of antibiotic-resistant bacteria and economic crises.

The creation of joint institutions able to make efficient and binding decisions with regard to global concerns and the increase of democratic control of existing institutions are, according to the cosmopolitan democracy argument, ways of restoring the influence of people in matters which are important to them.

There are some slight differences of opinion regarding what is involved in the democratisation of global decision-making. According to certain authors, it is important to increase representativity and the political participation of the citizens (Held 1995; Archibugi 2008). Others emphasize that the central need is for global institutions to be responsible and sensitive to human interests – of both present and future generations.

In her book entitled *Global Justice* (Brock 2009), Gillian Brock argues for example that it is often a good idea to delegate decisions which require expert knowledge, or decisions which require short-term sacrifices which can be unpopular among the voters, to panels of experts or officials who are not appointed directly in democratic elections or who do not reach decisions by democratic methods (cf. e.g. the independent status of the Swedish Riksbank).

It is important not that the citizens are participants in the decision-making process but that there are mechanisms which ensure that these institutions are sensitive to the citizens' long-term interests and that they can be held accountable for any misuse of power.

From this viewpoint, Brock suggests that global democracy could be strengthened by the establishment, for example, of a global panel of experts with the authority to make binding decisions regarding the combating of climate-influencing discharges, even if such a panel is not in itself a democratic institution.

Even if greater democracy is an important goal, the proponents of cosmopolitan democracy do not in general consider that internal democracy shall be a necessary requirement for states to participate in the global institutions (Archibugi 2008). Cosmopolitan democracy is instead in the long-term also a means of promoting internal democracy.

In the cosmopolitan democracy model, it is in general thought that there shall be a supranational global decision-making organ, often a world parliament, and a mandatory global legislation in certain fields, at the same time as the states shall retain their autonomy in other fields.

In his book entitled *The Global Commonwealth of Citizens*, Daniele Archibugi describes the cosmopolitan model as being something intermediate between a world federation of

the type proposed by authors such as Clark and Sohn and a somewhat more loosely bound federation.

In a confederation, membership is linked to states, and citizenship, legal institutions, defence etc. remain fully under state control. In a federation the opposite applies. The individuals are primarily citizens of the federation, which also has control of the armed forces and has a compelling jurisdiction over the states.

The cosmopolitan democracy model is based upon divided citizenship and a careful division of power between the supranational and the national levels.

Thomas Pogge is in favour of a “vertical dispersal of sovereignty”, where authority is divided over a number of different, partially overlapping, political entities – the local community, regions, states, supranational organs – with the authority to decide over different political areas, without any level being in general superior to the others.

Gillian Brock considers that there can be a need for supranational political institutions in certain limited regions – for example within certain aspects of taxation politics – but she prefers independent states rather than a world state, albeit with some limitations to their sovereignty.

Pogge also sees taxation politics as a region for global cooperation. One of his more controversial proposals is a global tax on the exploitation of natural resources. He maintains that such a tax – he puts forward the suggestion that it might correspond to one per cent of the global GNP – would generate a large resource which could be used to combat poverty.

Basically, Anne-Marie Slaughter (Slaughter 2004, 2005) shares the cosmopolitan values which drive authors such as Held, Pogge and Brock, but at the same time she expresses frustration over the lack of concrete and feasible political proposals in the discussion:

The challenge before cosmopolitan thinkers and policy makers now is to find the policies and techniques that will make these visions real enough to actually help solve global problems.
(Slaughter 2005, p 128)

She insists that such proposals must be innovative and take into account how the world really is. It is not at all certain that political institutions which have been developed on a national level – such as a sovereign central power with a monopoly on the use of force – can be transferred to global problems.

Slaughter points out that nationalistic sentiments are a strong motive force and that it is doubtful whether these will disappear in the near future. Those who seek to promote a stronger global feeling should thus find ways to unite these with the retention of national identity and institutions.

Slaughter wants to create global institutions which have the national states as a foundation, for example the trans-national networks of ministers and government officials at different levels who work in the same political field in different countries – e.g. environmental politics, financial politics etc..

The idea is that networks which involve committed politicians and officials from influential states can contribute to breaking down the deadlock in for example climatic questions. Slaughter considers that it is probably easier for national governments to accept this type of network than more ambitious proposals for reform.

5. Discussion

5.1 Demands for a global rule of law

There are a number of demands which must be made of a global rule of law if it is to be able to deal with the enormous problems and risks which mankind is facing. This section presents a general discussion of the extent to which the various proposals presented do in fact meet these demands.

In the first place, it must be possible to make decisions in matters which present large problems and risks affecting the whole world or the greater part of the world and which can be solved neither by separate states nor by a voluntary cooperation between sovereign states. This presupposes that there is some supranational organ that has both the *authority* and the *ability* to make such decisions.

In the second place, the decisions made must be complied with and transformed into practical political measures. This presupposes both that the organ is seen to be *legitimate* by the actors who are expected to comply with the decisions and that there is some mechanism for guaranteeing that the decision made has a practical *effect*.

In the third place, there must be some mechanism which provides *protection against the misuse of power* and guarantees that the global institution of power which is created is used to meet the long-term interests of the whole population of the world.

Finally, it is meaningless to put forward ambitious proposals if they are obviously impossible to implement considering how the world is in fact structured. The question of realism or *feasibility* is therefore a central aspect of this evaluation.

5.2 Authority

The term “authority” is here used to indicate the formal right to make certain types of decision or to adopt certain types of measure, primarily the right to make and enforce binding decisions at a supranational level.

The proposals which have here been studied differ rather considerably in how extensive an authority they consider that the supranational decision-making organ should have. Some proposals suggest extensive authority not only to enact but also to enforce global laws and the authority to decide international disputes and to decide on the use of military force,

The most extensive proposals – those of Borgese and the Chicago researchers, of Clark and Sohn and of WCPA – suggest a global supranational government that shall have the power to enact binding global laws and to have available not only a world police force but also courts of law and military forces to enforce them. According to these proposals, the World Federation shall in principle have a worldwide monopoly and its decisions shall override those of individual states.

Clark and Sohn suggest in fact that the power of the World Federation shall be restricted to the fields which are necessary for the maintenance of peace, but there is no mechanism or independent agency which can prevent supranational decisions in any field.

These proposals thus give without doubt sufficient authority, provided the decisions can be carried out and that they are conformed with in practice.

Other proposals are careful to restrict the authority. Cabrera, for example, wants a court of law to be able to assess whether a world government is more suitable to make a decision in a given field than national or regional organs.

Several authors feel that it is essential that global decision-making institutions are initially given very limited authority. Otherwise, they maintain, it will be impossible for them ever to become a reality. Monbiot, Tännsjö, Falk and Strauss, and Schwartzberg recommend a world parliament which at first has no formal power at all, and whose potential for political influence depends entirely upon its moral authority.

One should not underestimate the importance of such an institution from a public opinion point of view, as long as it is felt to be a legitimate representative of the world population. Nevertheless, it is improbable, at least in the short term, that it would suffice to solve acute global problems such as the climate crisis. These authors believe, however, that in the long term it would be possible to extend the world parliament's authority.

It is apparent that this is one of the greater challenges for anyone who wishes to design a model for a functioning global rule of law; on the one hand, such a legislative system must incorporate sufficiently extensive authority to be able to make decisions in pressing matters while, on the other hand, the resistance it faces probably increases as the authority it is given becomes greater.

5.3 Legitimacy

Political authority presupposes *legitimacy*. It is not sufficient that there is a set of regulations – for example, a constitution – that establishes that a certain organ has the authority required. The regulations must also be generally accepted and interpreted as binding by a sufficiently large number of those who are expected to conform to them; in this case a sufficiently large proportion of the world's population and states.

This what Hans Zetterberg, Professor of Sociology and a former Editor-in-Chief of Svenska Dagbladet, writes about the relationship between power and legitimacy:

If power is to be exerted effectively in the long run, the power must be "legitimate". In this case, "legitimacy" means not only a formal legitimacy in the sense that decisions relating to the exercise of power are made in accordance with valid regulations, i.e. "according to the law", but rather an authority which can be exercised with the approval of those who are affected (Zetterberg and Westholm 1976).

This view means of course not that sanctions are superfluous but that the validity and maintenance of the law rests not completely on military muscles and force but also on being accepted and acknowledged by the majority.

In several of the proposals which have been studied, a directly elected parliament is a central feature as a method of creating legitimacy in relation to the world citizens as individuals. The extent to which this succeeds depends of course to some extent on how large a participation in the election can be mobilised. If a large proportion of the world's population participate in the election to a world parliament, the decisions of the parliament would undoubtedly carry weight in public opinion.

Several of the authors rely completely on this with regard to the enforcement of decisions, since it would be associated with a great loss of public support if states and international organs were to act in conflict with the majority decision of an assembly which represented the majority of the world population.

There is however a tension between the desire to link the legitimacy of the legislative assembly to the world population as individuals and the need to achieve acceptance by the majority of the states, which are still in control of the means of power.

Several of the proposals thus embody compromises where the states in an initial stage, or perhaps more permanently, are guaranteed a decisive influence over the decisions. The compromises are evident in systems with two chambers, where one is elected by the people and the representatives in the other are appointed by the member state governments.

Some authors, such as Tännsjö, say expressly that this is an undesirable but necessary compromise, similar to the two-chamber parliament in Sweden which was abolished when democracy had become

firmly established. Others see it as a legitimate way of balancing common global interests with the interests of individuals as members of a particular nation.

Another way of creating legitimacy for the establishment of a global rule of law lies in the process of writing, adopting and ratifying a global constitution, but the same tension exists here. Some authors say that a constitution must be ratified both by the national parliaments and through a direct referendum of the people, while others, particularly Monbiot, adopt a radical position and place the whole process outside the control of the states. This position appears to be based primarily on moral philosophical arguments.

No proposal is based on a pragmatic analysis of which type of acceptance – whether by the state or by the individual – is the most central if a global rule of law is to be able to fulfil its function and solve the acute global problems which humanity now needs to deal with.

5.4 Decision-making competence

Competence in this case relates not only to a competence to assess risks and make sound decisions on measures to be adopted but also requires that the decision-making process is so designed that there is no risk that it will be blocked by power struggles and vetoing rights.

It is hardly possible to design a completely satisfactory system where the risk of blockage is completely eliminated. We should however ask how great is the risk that the decision-making process can be blocked in any really important question.

None of the proposals discuss this problem explicitly, but there are elements in several of the proposals which can have an effect on the competence to reach a decision.

Several proposals introduce some sort of power-distribution system which aims to make the process less threatening for the different actors and to balance different interests against each other.

Yunker, for example, proposes a system with double voting to ensure that rich and poor countries can decide upon measures only when there is a majority within both groups. He considers that such guarantees are necessary if the present-day rich and powerful countries are ever to accept the transfer of legislative power to a global assembly. The problem is that it is obvious that such a mechanism can impede effective decision-making in, for example, climate questions.

Power distribution and various types of control mechanism are intended to prevent the misuse of power and to protect minorities from the oppression of the majority, but at

the same time they often increase the inertia of the decision-making process and mean that it can be blocked by dissatisfied groups.

A serious challenge in the work of designing a satisfactory global rule of law is to find a reasonable balance between constitutional protection mechanisms and the need for an efficient decision-making competence in matters affecting the fate of the world.

5.5 Protection against the misuse of power

A frequent objection to a global rule of law is that there is a risk that it would lead to corruption and the misuse of power on a large scale. This is indeed a problem with which all states struggle but at least in democratic countries where corruption is relatively limited there is probably a more or less well-founded suspicion that a global governance would risk making the problem much worse.

The best protection mechanisms against corruption and the misuse of power are usually considered to be democratic transparency, accountability, freedom of speech and a free and independent press.

Democratic transparency is a central feature of all the proposals considered here. At the same time, it is an indisputable fact that not all the countries in the world are democracies, and that freedom of speech and the freedom of the press are restricted in many parts of the world. It is improbable that countries such as China, Iran and Belarus will open the way for a free press to investigate conditions relating to global questions.

It is questionable whether an effective inspection can be possible in a world organisation where a not inconsiderable number of the members are closed dictatorships. On the other hand, one can also ask whether a world organisation is meaningful without, for example, including China as a member, or whether there is time to wait until all countries have become open democracies.

Most of the proposals lack a deep discussion of how these problems are to be dealt with. Are there other methods of achieving transparency and accountability than those adopted by the stable democracies?

One of the proposals does adopt a clear position. In his proposal for a union of democracies put forward in 1939, Clarence K Streit maintained that democracies and dictatorships have such extremely different interests that a union is impossible. A world union must therefore be based on a central core of stable democratic states. The union shall be open for new members as they meet the requirements, and by becoming attractive the union will create an incentive for lands outside the union to seek membership.

These thoughts are similar to those which lie behind what is often called EU's "soft power". By being attractive and open for expansion, at the same time as clear demands are made with regard to democracy and respect for human rights, EU is considered to have exerted a strong positive influence on neighbouring countries.

Nevertheless, the fact remains that a global union of the type which Streit recommended would place important countries outside, and without these countries a solution to, for example, the climate question appears impossible.

Once again, this is a great and important challenge for how a functional global rule of law shall be organised.

5.6 Feasibility

Several of the proposals studied above have ignored the question of feasibility and have focused solely on arguments for a global rule of law and how this shall be organised, but for others the route to get there has also been a central concern.

This is, for example, true of Yunker who recommends a world organisation with limited power, the member states having the right to retain their military defence and to leave the federation whenever they so desire. He considers that these compromises are necessary if a world federation is to become a possibility.

Tännsjö argues in favour of taking advantage of the historical circumstance that the world has only one totally dominating military superpower, while Monbiot argues that a global grass-roots movement shall take the matter into its own hands, ignore the power politics of recalcitrant states and simply create a democratic world parliament outside the established institutions.

Schwartzberg presents a three-stage plan for creating a democratic world parliament under the aegis of the UN.

It is impossible within the framework of this limited overview to decide to what extent these various proposals are feasible in practice. It is however possible to note that many of the proposals which seek to make a supranational decision-making more attractive to powerful country leaderships – and thereby increase the probability that it can be implemented – mean that one must, at least in an initial phase, compromise with regard to other demands which should be made of a global rule of law, such as sufficient authority and competence.

To find a solution to this equation in a satisfactory manner is one of the greatest and most important tasks facing those who believe that a global rule of law is a necessity.

6. Conclusions

In his book entitled *The Politics of World Federation*, Joseph Preston Baratta identifies four important problems which any advocate of world federalism must deal with:

The first is membership. Shall membership of a world federation be obligatory or voluntary, and shall it be open to all or only to those countries which meet certain requirements, such as democracy?

The second is power. How extensive an authority and resources of power shall a supranational agency have at its disposal?

The third is representation. How shall the influence on decisions be distributed? Shall the members of a global legislative assembly represent states or the electorate as individuals? And how shall the voting strength be distributed among countries with populations of different sizes and different financial conditions?

And the fourth is transition. How does the road go from the reality of today to the desired goal? Is there a possible route? And how large are the compromises we should be prepared to make with regard to the final result in order to reach the goal?

These problems are closely linked to the challenges outlined in the discussion in this overview. There is a tension between the demand that a global rule of law shall have sufficient authority and resources of power to be able to solve large global problems and

the demand that it shall be feasible, at least in the long term. There are a number of different conflicting interests to which attention must be given with regard to representation and influence, and there is a tension between the measures which are suggested to create security against the misuse of power and the oppression of minorities and the demand that it shall not be possible to block a global decision-making organ on important issues.

The question of feasibility is central. At the same time, it is necessary to exercise caution in assessing what is realistic or what is unrealistic.

The demand for realism must not be allowed to lead to an inability to see beyond the limits created by today's power relationships and *realpolitik* interests. Such factors tend to change with time, and the discussion of world governance must be allowed to be long-term and visionary.

Several authors also emphasize the importance of utopias as a driving force for political change.

In his book entitled *The Law of Peoples* (Rawls 1999), John Rawls coined the phrase "realistic utopia", a vision of society which is realistic in that it is compatible with human psychology and the conditions under which humans live, but utopian in the sense that it describes an ideal condition which has not yet been realised.

According to Jean-Jacques Rousseau, a realistic utopia takes "human beings as they are and laws as they can become". (Rousseau 1762/1993)

To achieve real political power, however, the long-term vision must be combined with politically feasible proposals for measures that lead towards the goal. This is one of the great challenges for those who see the global rule of law as a necessity if today's fateful problems are to be solved.

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