

Security: Economic and Social Concerns

As the *UN Report On The Relationship Between Disarmament And Development* states: "The world can either continue to pursue the arms race with characteristic vigour or move consciously and with deliberate speed toward a more stable and balanced social and economic development within a more sustainable international economic and political order. It cannot do both. It must be acknowledged that the arms race and development are in a competitive relationship, particularly in terms of resources, but also in the vital dimension of attitudes and perceptions." The same consideration applies to the vital issue of protecting the global atmospheric commons from the growing peril of climate change and other atmospheric changes. Unanticipated and unplanned change may well become the major non-military threat to international security and the future of the global economy.

There is no concern more fundamental than access to food and water. Currently, levels of global food security are inadequate but even those will be most difficult to maintain into the future, given projected agricultural production levels and population and income growth rates. The climate changes envisaged will aggravate the problem of uncertainty in food security. Climate change is being induced by the prosperous, but its effects are suffered most acutely by the poor. It is imperative for governments and the international community to sustain the agricultural and marine resource base and provide development opportunities for the poor in light of this growing environmental threat to global food security.

The countries of the industrially developed world are the main source of greenhouse gases and therefore bear the main responsibility to the world community for ensuring that measures are implemented to address the issues posed by climate change. At the same time, they must see that the developing nations of the world, whose problems are greatly aggravated by population growth, are assisted in and not inhibited from improving their economies and the living conditions of their citizens. This will necessitate a wide range of measures, including significant additional energy use in those countries and compensating reductions in the industrialized countries. The transition to a sustainable future will require investments in energy efficiency and non-fossil energy sources. In order to ensure that these investments occur, the global community must not only halt the current net transfer of resources from developing countries, but actually reverse it. This reversal should embrace the technologies involved, taking into account the implications for industry.

A coalition of reason is required, in particular, a rapid reduction of both North-South inequalities and East-West tensions, if we are to achieve the understanding and agreements needed to secure a sustainable future for planet Earth and its inhabitants.

It takes a long time to develop an international consensus on complex issues such as these, to negotiate, sign, and ratify international environmental instruments and to begin to implement them. It is therefore imperative that serious negotiations start now.

Legal Aspects

The first steps in developing international law and practices to address pollution of the air have already been taken: in the Trail Smelter arbitration of 1935 and 1938; Principle 21 of the 1972 Declaration of the UN Conference on the Environment; the Economic Commission for Europe (ECE) Convention on Long Range Transboundary Air