

A global open partnership for an international sustainable development policy

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The submission calls for the recognition of the enhanced role of non-state actors in international affairs by starting eight sectoral platforms corresponding to the aspects of Agenda 2030. Drawing on existing international structures, membership in a Global Partnership would be open to all actors having real expertise in the specific area, regardless of their nature. Each platform identifies the goals its sector needs to meet. By working concurrently on several projects on the platforms, actors would develop synergies and identify best practices thanks to a large “project library” drawing from the power of big data. The Platforms and the database are to be financed by more efficient resource coordination through the platforms, voluntary contribution and by the institution of a global tax, e.g. on carbon.





1. Abstract

Based on past and present lessons and with the twofold aim of being both realistic and effective, we have decided to position our model within the following framework:

- It is not revolutionary – we do not call into question the existing international order, nor its principles (non-recourse to war, state monopoly of the “maintenance or restoration of international peace and security”, equality between states and respect for their sovereignty), nor its institutional architecture (preservation of existing international organizations, no creation of a new international interstate organization);
- The recognition of the enhanced role of non-state actors (local authorities, businesses, NGOs) in international affairs;
- A structure, approach and objectives that have already been formulated and accepted by the United Nations, namely in the shape of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, which draws on global partnership and an *integrated* approach where all 17 Goals form an *inseparable* unity.

Our model associates the four contemporary global risks – climate change, environmental damage, conflict and extreme poverty – and re-examines them using an approach that is both positive and integrated: an international sustainable development agenda. This policy does not cover disarmament, nuclear weapons, weapons of mass destruction, or war. These issues should be dealt with by the Security Council and the UN Conference on Disarmament, since no realistic alternative scenario exists to reform the mechanisms for the “maintenance or restoration of international peace and security”. However, an international sustainable development agenda helps to reduce sources of tension, or even conflicts about access to economic or natural resources and thus acts in a preventative manner.

This policy is to be conducted under the auspices of a United Nations global partnership, which would include eight sectoral platforms corresponding to all aspects of an international sustainable development agenda: construction and housing, water, sanitation, hygiene, (WASH), energy, mobility, telecommunications, health, education and sovereign functions (administration, taxation, security and justice). These platforms could draw on existing structures like the World Water Council or the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria.

Membership of the platforms would be open to actors having real expertise in the specific area, regardless of their nature – local authorities, businesses, independent contractors, NGOs and foundations as well as national development agencies – or their location. The actors would be encouraged to join the platforms in clusters, that is, in collaboration with existing partners who may have been donors, implementing bodies or beneficiaries. The aim of the clusters is to build on the experience and relationships of trust developed during previous projects: in turn, this will enhance replication and improve performance, in terms of cost or speed of execution. The principle of openness and voluntary membership of the platforms has the specific aim of overcoming the opposition or even inability



of some national governments to participate in an international sustainable development agenda.

The sectoral platforms shall make use of communication, mobilization and coordination tools; these are designed primarily for their members. However, the platforms must also communicate and mobilize externally so as to increase their effectiveness and convince even more actors to join them. The platforms must thus first define the goals that are not being met in their respective sectors, while applying the technical terms of the 17 Goals and the 169 targets of the UN 2030 Agenda.

Every project, as a basis for action, must commit to working on one or more of these goals and also demonstrate its capacity to improve the corresponding indicators, ex ante by means of an estimate and then ex post by means of an evaluation. It does not necessarily follow that the projects have to be mono-sectorial. On the contrary, where relevant, they would work on several platforms so as to avoid the pitfalls inherent in using only Sector-Wide Approaches (SWAp) and encourage research into synergies between sectors, for example, via the deployment of intelligent systems in construction or transport or amalgamating civil engineering works when implementing network infrastructures.

Global partnership and the sectoral platforms would be accompanied by an IT system that would collate – in an intelligible, dynamic and interconnected manner – completed projects, those still at the preparation stage (calls for projects and finding partners) as well as projects that are currently underway. This large database would make it easier for actors to connect and would also promote best practice at a global level.

Lastly, the model would be financed by two types of source funding. In the first instance, it would be advisable to record and co-ordinate more effectively those resources already being utilized in an international sustainable development agenda, but are not being recorded statistically. This is particularly relevant for NGO and business expenditure; also of note is investment in developed countries that contributes to the preservation of public goods, for example, by prioritizing the protection of biodiversity and the reduction of greenhouse gases.

In the second instance, we propose raising new revenue via a global carbon pricing system and/or the creation of a tax or voluntary contribution paid by multinational companies. Since multinationals represent some of the principal beneficiaries of globalization and have a major impact on public goods (at times indeed negatively), their political role and their desire to take responsibility beyond a limited business sphere needs to be fully recognized as well as their participation in the conception and implementation of a formalized international sustainable development agenda in exchange for transparent and significant financial input in order to achieve this policy.



2. Description of the model

0. PAST AND PRESENT LESSONS

About one hundred years ago a historic work was published, *The Great Illusion* by the English journalist Norman Angell. Although the great European powers were embroiled in an arms race, the author of the book [1] was of the opinion that there had been trade and financial interdependence between these powers since the second half of the 19th century (the “first globalization” according to Suzanne Berger [2]) and that this made war unlikely as it was not economically profitable.

Fully aware that armed conflicts could be motivated by factors other than that of attaining material advantage, Norman Angell (who was speaking, above all, to his fellow citizens) encouraged them to again be an example to the rest of Europe and the world by publicly renouncing aggression as a foreign policy tool and instead maintaining only a defensive army.

When the First World War broke out in 1914, which a posteriori proved to be the beginning of a second Thirty Years’ War in Europe, many readers of Norman Angell disregarded his theories as naive and unrealistic. Indeed, even today, the example of the Great War remains the most convincing demonstration that the **existence of a collective interest or of a public good** – here, economic prosperity – **even if it is recognized by large numbers of the population, is not enough in itself to influence decisions that promote preservation.** This is an important lesson that we need to remember when we confront contemporary global risks like climate change, environmental damage, conflict and extreme poverty.

However, the accusation of idealism against Norman Angell was unfair for several reasons. First of all, his hypothesis on the economically non-profitable character of war in a globalized world was correct: the two world wars left Europe in ruins and allowed the United States to take over as the greatest economic power on the planet.

Furthermore, it is not insignificant that, after 1945, most of the ministries of war throughout the world were gradually renamed ministries of defence. **Despite repeated violations, the rule of non-recourse to war**, formulated in the Kellogg-Briand Pact of 1928 and renewed and extended in the Charter of United Nations in 1945, **is, at least in principle, accepted by almost every state on the planet.** This universal recognition, although often in name only, nevertheless constitutes significant progress.

In the same way that the Treaty of Westphalia, signed in 1648 at the end of the Thirty Years’ War, laid the foundation for an order that lasted until the French Revolution at the end of the 18th century, the Bretton Woods Agreement of 1944 and the Charter of the United Nations, adopted one year later, led to the institutions and constitutional principles of the postwar international order. Their underlying principles are still valid today. It could also be noted here that **these great political constructs were born of major conflicts.** Without going as far as to suggest that this could be a historical necessity, it is useful to recall this argument for those who have been quick to criticize the United Nations system and wish to do away with it all together in order to reconstruct a completely new international order that is more effective and fairer.



The similarities between the Westphalian order and that of the UN are not limited to their origin. It is tempting to say that the UN order is a global extension – its role specifically shaped by the decolonization movement and the end of the Cold War – of the principles established by the Westphalian order and was originally formulated with the aim of establishing lasting peace in Europe. Both systems acknowledge that **states have an exclusive monopoly on the administration of international relations and the representation of the peoples of the world**, on whose behalf the Charter of the United Nations was drawn up. Even the UN Economic and Social Council brings together states, in contrast to other bodies bearing the same name at European or national level that include representatives of businesses, unions and other associations and non-governmental organizations (NGO).

The second essential characteristic of the Westphalian and UN orders is the **sovereign equality of states**[3]. This principle, which has increasingly lost its relevance as it has progressively been extended demographically, economically and even militarily to non-egalitarian states, nevertheless ensures to us all the protection under law of independent status and formal equality with regard to decision making. In practice, in the case of the United Nations, the privileges of the permanent members of the Security Council and the weakness of some states, which reduces their function to that of a “client” of the great powers, demonstrates the limits of this declared equality.

The ongoing integration of trade and finance from the 17th to the 20th century, enabled specifically by technological progress, made it necessary to add an economic component to the international order. This culminated in the Bretton Woods Agreement and the creation of three institutions or systems in the 1940s: the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (predecessor of the World Bank), the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT), the original form of the World Trade Organization (WTO).

The interwar experience had indeed demonstrated that a lack of coordination of exchange-rate policies and trade tariffs at international level could exacerbate the impact of an economic crisis and impede recovery. Furthermore, economists like John Maynard Keynes from the UK [4] elaborated on the ideas of earlier thinkers like Montesquieu who stated in the 18th century that “the natural consequence of trade is to bring peace” [5]. This is why, although the “maintenance of international peace and security” remains the main goal of an international order, it has become commonplace to consider economic policies like the coordination of exchange-rate policies and trade tariffs, or even the fight against poverty, as contributing to the achievement of this objective and thus justifying their inclusion in international institutions.

It should be noted at this point that **two of the four identified global risks – conflict and extreme poverty – are already covered by dedicated institutions – the UN and the World Bank respectively – while the two other risks – climate change and environmental damage – receive very little coverage**. The awareness that natural resources were being exhausted and that pollution was a result of the modus operandi of the industrial economy only began to reach public consciousness from the 1960s on, thanks to publications like *Silent Spring* by Rachel Carson and the Club of Rome’s report.



Even if the UN has addressed this issue in a series of initiatives (conferences and earth summits, the United Nations Environment Programme, climate and biodiversity conventions), some researchers, intellectuals and activists regard these efforts as insufficient and thus believe it is necessary to create a new specialized body. According to these critics, only a world environmental organization would have the power to give the protection of the environment the same importance as the liberalization of international trade and investment or the fight against poverty, led by the trio of the WTO, the IMF and the World Bank.

However three objections can be raised with regard to this proposition. The first questions the feasibility of such an organization, even in the medium term. Is it realistic to expect 193 states to comply with a new organization, given the difficulties that have been experienced over the last twenty years in negotiating with the international community in global or semi-global processes like trade or climate negotiations?

Secondly, even if we hypothesize that an agreement would be unanimous or almost unanimous (as was the case in 2015 with regard to the Paris Agreement) do states have the effective capacity to act on global warming, while a great number of the instruments for action are actually within the remit of local authorities and private businesses?

Finally, should the protection of the environment continue to be the subject of a separate public policy or, in order to increase its impact, should it not be integrated into trade and investment policy or even into development aid? The existence of a dedicated institution is not a sufficient condition for the prioritization of an issue, as is demonstrated by the example of the International Labor Organization (ILO), whose activities are essentially limited to collecting statistics and the “gentle” promotion of norms and best practices. On the other hand, it is notable that this is one of the few specialized UN agencies to have non-state actors (representatives of employers and workers) as members of its Governing Body.

The Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement between the EU and Canada (CETA) takes a different approach. Although it focuses on trade and investment, it contains many provisions regarding the protection of the environment and social legislation that are upheld by dispute settlement procedures. This model could inspire work towards global governance.

What guidelines can be drawn from this brief overview of the foundations of the current global order that could help to find a solution that is both effective and feasible and has the aim of improving the capacity of international cooperation for dealing with the interlinked dangers of climate change, large-scale environmental damage, violent conflict and extreme poverty?

– Unless a new world war or a catastrophe of unimaginable scope occur (which of course is not to be recommended), it is very unlikely that the current international order will be replaced by a completely new system. However we would like to propose a reformist, evolutionary and incremental method that respects existing institutions and principles and is not a revolution.

– At the same time, it is indisputable that the distribution of power is more fragmented today than in the 1940s, both with regard to states themselves and



between states and other actors like local and regional authorities, businesses or even some NGOs. In order for these actors to participate in the implementation phase, it is essential that they have a role beyond that of mere consultation in the decision-making process.

– When accepting the rule of the sovereign equality of states, the hypothesis must be accepted that not everyone will comply with the proposed system of international cooperation from the very start. Finding a compromise between its universality and its binding character, which is a guarantee of its effectiveness, must not remove the “teeth” from this system. Experimenting first with a limited number of states in a robust system is perhaps preferable to dooming the system to political impotence in the name of universalism.

– Following the logic that has led certain economic policies to be coordinated at international level so that they contribute to achieving the main goal of an international order of maintaining international peace and security, the four contemporary global risks – climate change, environmental damage, conflict and extreme poverty – must be dealt with in an integrated manner. The first two risks do not come under the remit of dedicated institutions and thus entail a significant security dimension. In order to clarify our proposal, we will continue with this integrated approach in the following section.

1. AN INTEGRATED APPROACH

During the summer of 2015, several months before the COP21 climate conference, which concluded with the approval of the Paris Agreement, the United Nations came to a consensus about the adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, comprising 17 Goals, including the eradication of poverty, the fight against climate change, the protection of the environment and the promotion of peaceful societies [6]. This is a “positive” agenda that responds to the four global risks mentioned above and, although it is not legally binding for states or for other international organizations within the UN system, it has the merit of drawing on the greatest possible political legitimacy.

Furthermore, the Agenda acknowledges the integrated and inseparable character of the objectives and targets of sustainable development as well as the necessity of complying with a Global Partnership to achieve them. This approach, put forward by many researchers, public development aid agencies and NGOs, is also the framework within which we present our endeavour. This is why, rather than discussing the four global risks, we prefer the term **“international sustainable development agenda”, based on a positive and integrated approach.**

This choice, however, excludes the issues of nuclear weapons, weapons of mass destruction and war from the scope of our proposal. We are of the opinion that unless there is an explosion or a major global catastrophe, the current system of “maintenance or restoration of international peace and security”, based on the Security Council, will not be reformed, replaced or bypassed in the medium term. It should be noted that, despite its many flaws, the Security Council has succeeded, over the course of seventy years, in preventing the outbreak of a third world war.

Neither do we see an alternative to the UN Conference on Disarmament nor to the instruments it has helped to create, like the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. Even if the results of the work of this Conference are mixed,



to say the least, it is very unlikely that states – the main decision makers on this subject – would unanimously agree to give up all their military equipment over the medium term, which is the prerequisite for guaranteed and complete disarmament globally. Equally, our approach considers security issues since an international sustainable development agenda helps to limit sources of tension, or even conflict, regarding the accessing of economic or natural resources and thus has a preventative affect.

2. A GLOBAL PARTNERSHIP AND EIGHT SECTORAL PLATFORMS

The second characteristic of our proposal draws on the global partnership that is mentioned in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

This concept does not foresee the creation of new international institutions, such as a specialized organization like a global environmental organization or a global super-government that would oversee or even be a substitute for the UN and the trio of the WTO/IMF/World Bank.

This choice is justified by two reasons. Firstly, in the absence of a hegemon capable of imposing this new order on the planet and/or an unprecedented catastrophe that would annul the legitimacy of the current system from the viewpoint of states and their peoples, it is extremely unlikely that these same states would agree to hand over their powers to specialized or general international organizations. The politics of the current US president Donald Trump – clearly opposed to multilateralism – demonstrate how Washington has abandoned its role of principal guarantor and promoter of an open international order that is shaped by stronger and more sustainable links than those created by short-lived bilateral deals.

The second reason is more profound. From our point of view, the current model of international organization, which depends on cooperation between member states, has fallen into disuse. In all other circumstances, for example, running military operations or conducting scientific research programmes, the project model proposes that “the mission should determine the coalition, and not the other way around” as noted by the US Secretary for Defence Donald Rumsfeld in 2001. In other words, we have moved into an era of ad hoc partnerships that do not aim to be permanent and that bring together relevant voluntary actors to achieve a specific objective during the time available.

This evolution has been made possible, at least in part, by technological progress in the fields of transport and communication, enabling contacts between geographical locations that are great distances apart and allowing virtual coordination of the actions of a large number of partners. This evolution is essential because of the growing fragmentation of power and knowledge distribution between a greater number and diversity of actors – states, local authorities, businesses, NGOs – as well as individuals who produce information, raise funds and develop innovations (Linux, SpaceShipOne, HeroX) via participatory crowdfunding platforms.

It is noteworthy that space exploration, long the privilege of a selected club of states due to the exorbitant costs and its non-profitability, is now available to private businesses, even to groups of students. Similarly, in the field of aid and development, the private foundation of Bill and Melinda Gates, with more than 1,000 collaborators and USD 4 billion in grants spent every year, has an impact



that is unquestionably more significant for the population of our planet than that of many state agencies, even states themselves.

In terms of international policy, the partnership model that we favour is not completely new. Although the global partnership presented in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development is not yet operational, the following organizations already exist: Global Partnership for Education (GPE), the Vaccine Alliance (GAVI) or the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria. Pascal Lamy, former Director-General of the WTO, wrote in this last dossier, “the World Health Organization, to be frank, has never been effective, proven by the fact that it was necessary to create the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, which works well. The WHO is based on a type of Westphalian governance in the Security Council version, while the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria is a type of ‘multi-level governance’ [7]”.

What these initiatives have in common is that they have concrete goals and are open to non-state actors. Initiated at the beginning of the 21st century, they can justly pride themselves on having attained excellent results. Thus, we would like to propose the application of this model in fields not yet covered by such programmes and **the establishment, under the auspices of a United Nations global partnership, of eight sectoral platforms that correspond to all the aspects of an international sustainable development agenda: construction and housing, water, sanitation, hygiene, (WASH), energy, mobility, telecommunications, health, education and sovereign functions, (administration, taxation, security and justice). They could, of course, build upon existing structures.**

Each of these platforms would be open to actors with solid expertise in the specific area, regardless of their nature – local authorities, businesses, independent contractors, NGOs and foundations as well as national development agencies – or their location. The actors would be encouraged to join the platforms in clusters, that is, in collaboration with existing partners who could be donors, implementing bodies or beneficiaries. The aim of the clusters is to build on the experience and relationships of trust developed during previous projects: in turn, this will enhance replication and improve performance, in terms of cost or speed of execution.

The open nature of the platforms facilitates the acceptance of contributions from actors wishing to participate in an international sustainable development agenda, even when facing opposition from their host state. It is not surprising that the United States come to mind here; as a state it withdrew from the Paris Agreement, yet there are more than 200 cities, nine federal states and a thousand businesses, representing in total one-third of the population and GDP of the US, that continue to adhere to the Paris Agreement [9].

3. CLEAR OBJECTIVES AND RELIABLE MONITORING INDICATORS

The sectoral platforms shall make use of communication, mobilization and coordination tools; these are designed primarily for their members. However, the platforms must also communicate and mobilize externally so as to increase their effectiveness and convince even more actors to join them. The platforms must thus first define the goals that are not being met in their respective sectors, while applying the technical terms of the 17 Goals and the 169 Targets of the UN 2030 Agenda.



Every project, as a basis for action, must commit to working on one or several of these goals and demonstrate its capacity to improve the corresponding indicators, *ex ante* by means of an estimate and then *ex post* by means of an evaluation. In the era of the Internet, crowdsourcing and big data, it is high time that we recognize, also in the field of statistics, that states no longer enjoy an almost complete monopoly when it comes to collecting data and to stop using the linear process of action-measurement-report-compilation and instead utilize an automated system that enables a great number of participants to provide information and obtain feedback in well-nigh real time. An example of this revolution is the speed and high level of precision of forecasts from Google Flu Trends, which predicted when influenza epidemics would break out long before the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) [10].

Widespread access to the Internet, electronic devices (computers, mobile telephones, tablets), user-friendly applications, as well as the nascent Internet of Things, strengthen our capacity to identify very quickly and precisely the nature and location of problems such as criminality or state violence, sources of pollution or traffic congestion. These can then be classified in order of priority so as to direct available intervention resources where they will have the greatest impact.

The integration of an array of public policy monitoring indicators and project management tools must also facilitate benchmarking on a global scale in order to identify the most effective solutions and to speed up their reproducibility, where both possible and relevant, adapting and/or improving them where necessary.

The attempt to bring the, often isolated, actions of national governments and their agencies, local authorities, NGOs and even businesses (to name only a few) into a common framework is ultimately only an extension of the concept of Policy Coherence for Development (PCD), examined in great depth by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), but which has, to date, largely focused on coherence between public policies (agriculture, trade, etc.). **The platforms will go further by aiming to ensure the complementarity of actions between different levels and types of actors and thus acknowledging a role for non-state bodies in both defining and implementing an international sustainable development agenda.**

4. THE PROJECT MODEL

If the model of voluntary and open sectoral partnerships and not that of interstate cooperation in international organizations is the basis of our concept of links between the actors of an international sustainable development agenda, it follows that **the project is the operational building block of this model.** Whether it is the construction of a school, of a training programme for judges or the replacement of a fleet of buses to reduce the greenhouse effect, these projects all contribute to achieving an international sustainable development agenda and to reducing global risks. They should therefore be accounted for as such.

As noted above, this means that these projects must be connected to a number of sectoral indicators, and, indirectly, to the targets and objectives of the 2030 Agenda. This does not mean, however, that the projects should be mono-sectoral. On the contrary, where relevant, they would work on several platforms so as to avoid the pitfalls inherent in using only *Sector-Wide Approaches* (SWAp) and encourage research into synergies between sectors, for example, via the



deployment of intelligent systems in construction or transport or amalgamating civil engineering works when implementing network infrastructures.

We also view the project model as the vehicle best adapted for implementing the integrated approach mentioned above as well as facilitating cooperation, working towards one or several joint objectives with diverse actors (governments, public agencies, local authorities, private businesses, NGOs, etc.) that are at times geographically very far apart.

The innovation that we introduce here is that global partnership and the sectoral platforms would be accompanied by an **IT system that would collate – in an intelligible, dynamic and interconnected manner – completed projects, those still at the preparation stage (calls for projects and finding partners) as well as project that are currently underway.** This large database would make it easier for actors to connect and would also promote best practice at a global scale.

5. FINANCING

The final element of our model is the issue of financing, which, in our opinion, also reflects the integrated approach and the evolutionary method that has been proposed so far. The difficulty of allocating an annual budget of USD 100 billion to the Green Climate Fund – a target fixed in 2009, yet representing less than 0.002% of global GNP of the period – shows that **the traditional instrument for collecting voluntary state contributions cannot deal with the challenges of the 21st century.**

Similarly, the well-known objective of 0.7% of gross national income committed by the member countries of the Development Assistance Committee (DAC) of the OECD to support official development assistance (ODA) is losing its relevance even before it has been achieved. “This does not mean that international solidarity has decreased: on the contrary, the funds invested in what is called ‘international public policy’ increase each year”. [11] This trend, however, is no longer thanks to state support, but instead comes from NGOs and businesses within the framework of Corporate Social and Environmental Responsibility (CSER), expenditures that are not counted as official development assistance.

The model of official development assistance also reflects a division between donors and beneficiaries that no longer corresponds to the reality of the 21st century. The increase in power of emerging countries, both large (China) and medium-sized (South Korea, Turkey), has led to some states being both beneficiary *and* donor. Furthermore, as was noted by a French diplomat, “all countries need to deal with sustainable development” given the scale of global risks.

The first source of financing of an ambitious international sustainable development agenda must thus come from more precise reporting and from better coordination of the funds already being utilized by this policy but which are not being recorded in the statistics. This is particularly relevant for NGO and business expenditure; also of note is investment in developed countries that contributes to the preservation of public goods, for example, by prioritizing the protection of biodiversity and the reduction of greenhouse gases. This will be one of the functions of the IT system mentioned in the preceding section.



There is also the option of looking for ways of raising supplementary funds. Here, we propose two instruments that could generate significant revenues and whose implementation is feasible both at a technological and political level.

A global carbon tax is an obvious first choice. Such a mechanism would make it possible not only to raise large sums of money, but would also encourage businesses and consumers to adopt products, services and processes that emit fewer greenhouse gases and thus help to reduce the magnitude of climate change.

Its application also reflects the principles of our model. First of all, a carbon tax is not the preserve of states: some businesses already integrate an internal carbon price in their calculations to promote the use of solutions that save energy and natural resources.

Furthermore, this is an integrated mechanism, since the revenues generated can be reinvested in projects with multiple objectives, combining, for example, the protection of the environment with the fight against poverty. This sharing of benefits could convince a large number of relatively less industrialized states to espouse an international sustainable development agenda [12].

Finally, it is not necessary for all the states of our planet to decide unanimously on a global tax for this to attain a critical mass: it is possible, while adhering to current international trade regulations, to enter the carbon market “club” that already exists in about forty countries. The other countries would be encouraged to join because of border adjustment measures [13].

The second potential instrument recalls the increasing role of businesses in our societies and their aim, often unachieved, of holding responsibility at the level of their global impact. In the case of multinationals, there can be no doubt that these are some of the main beneficiaries of globalization. The commercial and financial integration of the planet is not only a condition of their very existence, but also provides a favourable environment for their growth – the fragmentation of value chains (thanks to the removal of barriers to trade), economies of scale, the search for natural resources, talent and other comparative advantages throughout the world – while also sometimes increasing the risk of social, fiscal and environmental dumping.

If globalization is to survive a global danger like the populist movements in a number of countries that are calling globalization into question, we suggest that multinationals pay a tax or voluntary contribution that would finance the functioning of a United Nations global partnership and the eight sectoral platforms mentioned above as well as the implementation of projects developed within these platforms.

In exchange, this would help to legitimize the participation of these businesses in the design and implementation of an international sustainable development agenda, since today their role in this field lacks transparency and coordination. Businesses are already associated with initiatives like the Global Partnership for Education. However, as we noted in the introduction, with the exception of the ILO, they are not formally represented in international organizations or have, at best, a limited consulting role, for example, during the COP climate conferences.



They do however play a very significant role behind the scenes: via lobbying, they have, for example, considerable influence on global decision-making processes with regard to trade issues. Rather than trying to prevent this from happening (an endeavour that has had limited success), we believe it is more effective if we recognize the political role of business in globalization, while also making it accept its responsibilities, including its financial ones.

Three IT companies alone – Apple, Google and Microsoft – have more than USD 450 billion of liquid assets! Given the current low rates of interest, this money could be utilized to meet enormous global challenges instead of being invested in Treasury bills for low return. The leaders of this kind of business are often young, ambitious and visionary and do not back away from participating in politics; they view their mission as going beyond the narrow limits of their company. Mark Zuckerberg has even been considered as a potential candidate for US president. However, given the magnitude of Facebook (more than 2 billion active users and USD 35 billion in Treasuries), it makes sense to ask if it is the White House or Menlo Park that has the greatest impact on the affairs of the world. Let us ask these companies to participate where they can be most useful.

3. Motivation

1. CORE VALUES

The objectives and targets of our model are the same as those of the United Nations' 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. This “positive” agenda is a response to four global risks – climate change, environmental damage, conflict and extreme poverty – and although this agenda is not legally binding for states or international organizations in the UN system, it is based on political legitimacy and the greatest possible consensus.

The functioning of the partnership is based, for its part, on the principles of openness and voluntary participation. In our model, democratic legitimacy is derived from the recognition of the equal worth of every human being and this is ensured at the level of our objectives (see above). The choice of instruments and means, however, is left to the bodies with the technical and financial capacity for implementation.

At the same time, democratic legitimacy is reasserting itself at the micro level, in the preparation and implementation of projects via consultation mechanisms and citizen participation.

2. DECISION-MAKING CAPACITY

The objectives and targets of our model have already been defined by the United Nations' 2030 Agenda. The principles of openness and voluntary participation that characterize the global partnership and the sectoral platforms removes obstacles to decision making since actors only participate in those platforms and projects that they want to be involved in.

Our model even makes it possible to circumvent certain vetoes and existing blocks. For example, the government of the United States is not supporting the implementation of the Paris Agreement or the financing of international



organizations. Our model enables substate bodies like local authorities or businesses to contribute to the formulation and implementation of an international sustainable development agenda.

3. EFFECTIVENESS

Thanks to its global dimension and open character, both in geographical terms and in terms of the participants, our model facilitates access to excellent existing solutions, thus responding to macro challenges and risks via micro projects. Its open and voluntary character reduces the need to rely on a “global police force” to ensure the execution of decisions. The careful monitoring of results and the impact of projects as well as the transparency of the IT system that records these enables citizens and the media to exert pressure so that decisions are actually executed and are cost-effective.

4. RESOURCES AND FINANCING

From a technical perspective, the global partnership can be administered by an existing international organization like the United Nations, which would provide the secretariat and maintain the IT system. Any additional administration costs arising from this model are minimal since the essential data and other resources already exist and often only need to be better coordinated.

However, an international sustainable development agenda will attain its objectives even more quickly if it has access to significant funds. We propose raising new revenue via a global carbon tax and/or a voluntary contribution or a global tax imposed on multinationals who, in exchange, have the right to fully participate in a transparent way in the design and implementation of an international sustainable development agenda.

Multinationals are indeed some of the main beneficiaries of globalization today and are increasingly threatened by both global risks and the development of populist movements in a growing number of countries. Thus, they have an interest in taking responsibility with regard to the planet in order to protect what they have gained from globalization.

5. TRUST AND INSIGHT

The functioning and activity of global partnership, sectoral platforms and projects are completely transparent and accessible thanks to the open IT system.

Global partnership enjoys the greatest possible policy legitimacy at international level since its principles have already been approved by the United Nations.

At an operational level, the sectoral platforms utilize intermediaries only for setting up relationships and monitoring. Consequently, the trust that the model enjoys depends on the trust enjoyed by the participants themselves. From this point of view, the involvement of NGOs is crucial to ensure citizen monitoring of the functioning of the model, while also bestowing a note of confidence.

6. FLEXIBILITY

The model is based on the principles of agreement and voluntary participation: in consequence, it is completely flexible. Its implementation does not require states to be unanimous; project implementation, for its part, depends on the commitment of the partners. The main concept of the model is that “the mission



should determine the coalition, and not the other way around”. The number of participants is virtually unlimited.

7. PROTECTION AGAINST THE ABUSE OF POWER

The main system of monitoring follows from the transparency of the model, which provides all citizens and the media with the opportunity to monitor its functioning and to report any potential problems. Furthermore, the model does not call into question the principle of the sovereignty of states. In consequence, these retain the power to block, in the sense of their internal constitutional rules, the participation of substate actors in global partnership or even project implementation in their territory.

8. ACCOUNTABILITY

The open nature, the transparency and voluntary participation in the system ensure that the partners are responsible for the success of the projects and that results are known to all, giving citizens and the media the opportunity to exert pressure and thus encourage the actors in question to commit themselves to projects and to respect these commitments.

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