GLOBAL GOVERNANCE AND THE EMERGENCE OF GLOBAL INSTITUTIONS FOR THE 21ST CENTURY: SELECTED MODULES ADDRESSING GLOBAL CATASTROPHIC RISKS

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Introduction

The five modules below provide brief summaries of some elements of our comprehensive proposals for global governance reform that are most relevant to the immediate priorities of the Global Challenges Foundation and its focus on the mitigation of key global catastrophic risks (GCRs). We were requested to break our various proposals up into "bite-sized" pieces, for more of a generalist audience; in keeping with the instructions received we have endeavoured to produce a short document that is readable and in a non-academic style, and to be practical and concrete rather than theoretical. Each module includes activities that could be implemented in the short term, as well as more fundamental improvements requiring substantial revisions to the UN Charter that are likely the only way to permanently reduce such risks to safe levels. Efforts to pursue both should start immediately, even if the pay-off for the latter will take some time. In addition to the short modules presented here, we have much more detailed proposals for addressing a range of specific catastrophic risks like climate change, environmental degradation and biodiversity loss, inter-state conflict and weapons of mass destruction. We also examine the interrelated problems of poverty, population growth and increasing inequality, and a financial collapse, within the context of the reformed global governance institutions, the need to strengthen national public policies as a complementary companion to better mechanisms of international cooperation, as well as the need for better regulation of the private sector.[1] The recently-launched Alliance for Multilateralism by "middle power" states evidences a growing concern among responsible governments as to intensifying global risks and the need to safeguard and strengthen the capacity of international institutions—moving beyond a false dichotomy between the national and international, and between the "self-interest" of states and strengthened global governance.[2] It is recognized that workable international governance is crucial to safeguard the well-being of populations within every individual nation. We propose that enhanced/reformed global governance institutions should be considered the 18th Sustainable Development Goal (SDG), in the light of the pressing concerns now confronting the international community.

We are aware that to an academic audience these proposals might seem bold and ambitious, not to say "unrealistic." The focus of our proposals is not mainly about identifying those reforms that might be judged to improve our current UN-based world order in some minor way, taking as a given the political and other constraints which currently impede more ambitious reforms. Rather our project is mainly driven by the question: what do we actually need to do to bring into being a system that will be able to deliver meaningful solutions to these problems? Even if, under current circumstances (that is, assuming a broadly stable political and economic framework, in which global power relations remain more or less unchanged, with various crises in coming years being limited in their impact and consequences) such reforms would appear currently to constitute a steep upward climb in order to be implemented? Rather, it is vital, given current conditions, to think hard about the policies and institutional underpinnings of a post-crises framework, assuming that we are not, in fact, in a stable equilibrium, that the longer we wait and do little or nothing, the probability of a collapse of the current system will rise, perhaps rapidly. So, to take some examples: rather than focusing on ways to improve at the margins our highly ineffective system of UN-sponsored peace keeping arrangements, we would prefer to think about how one could go about establishing an International Peace Force that would finally bring into being the collective security promise in the UN Charter that was never acted upon (e.g., Article 43). Or, rather than think up yet

another IMF facility that could assist countries in crisis, what would be involved in turning the IMF into a lender-of-last-resort for the global economy, to create a function in the global financial system which currently does not exist?[3] We think that governments are not currently—of their own volition— going to take up these conceptual challenges, partly because they have a vested interest in the status quo, partly because they have other, more near-term crises to worry about; also, in large part, because a dialogue on ambitious UN Charter reform has been frozen for too long (due to the Cold War, among other factors). We delude ourselves if we think that the current system is on a sustainable path; we want to step into this huge intellectual and conceptual vacuum and contribute to sparking and reinvigorating a serious debate on comprehensive global governance reform. In this respect the Alliance for Multilateralism referred to above indicates that new global leadership might be emerging that could, sooner than anticipated, champion a significant strengthening of global institutions.

I.   A Second Chamber—World Parliamentary Assembly

Brief description of the reforms

The idea of establishing a second chamber at the UN has existed since the organization's inception. Indeed, the idea is older than the UN; the founders of the League of Nations for a time considered adding a people's assembly as part of the League's initial organizational structure. One key motivation was to enhance the democratic character of the UN by establishing a firmer linkage between the organization and the peoples it was meant to serve. In time, rather than providing for the direct election of General Assembly (GA) members—which would require amendments to the UN Charter—proposals emerged to create a second chamber, a World Parliamentary Assembly (WPA), complementary to the existing GA, which would continue to be the main locus of government-to-government interactions.

The GA should ultimately be reformed so as to possess greater powers to legislate in a narrow set of areas (initially peace and security and the global environment), to empower it to actually begin to deliver on the main aspirations embedded in the UN Charter and to manage GCRs on an on-going basis (see Module 4). We think that this idea would gain greater acceptance and ensure better outcomes if the UN also represented peoples, not just governments and/or states, as soon as possible. The WPA, as an incremental step towards strengthening the legislative capacities of the UN (which would later include reform of the GA), would be an effective catalyst for advancing the process of reform and transformation at the UN itself because its members would have a much looser linkage with their respective governments and their specific national—as opposed to global—priorities.

A central issue to resolve is the determination of the number of WPA representatives per country. We propose using three factors: population share, the share of the country in world GNI, and a membership factor of 1/193 percent, with the average of these three shares determining a country's relative weight or share in the WPA membership.[4] The WPA would have a total of 567 members: three countries, China,

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[3] Both of these questions are substantively addressed in our book, but are not part of these modules.

[4] Using a measure of the weight of the economy such as the share in world GDP can seem logical in terms of relative contributions to the UN budget (he who pays the bills calls the tune), but it could also be argued that giving the rich and powerful a bigger voice than the poor because they have more money is fundamentally unjust. The one-third membership factor, while it may seem antidemocratic, acknowledges that the great diversity of nations in size, culture, forms of governance and experience within the global system needs to be reflected in, and contribute to, global deliberative processes, to enrich them in a way that purely quantitative representation cannot. Minority perspectives can shed additional light on issues that might not at first be apparent to the majority, and decision-making can be strengthened as a result. For this reason, and for other reasons of adequate representation and equity among peoples, we would suggest that in any new representative body constituted, special attention be given to ensuring that the voices of indigenous persons around the world are adequately represented and heard, building on the work already done at the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues. Our proposal

the United States and India, accounting for 41 percent of the world's population, would have a total of 16 representatives, or 29.1 percent of the total. Each of the deputies representing countries small enough to have only one WPA member, would represent an average of 4.1 million people, whereas one of the Chinese representatives would represent some 21 million people. This formula could be reviewed and modified over time. Representatives could initially be chosen from national parliaments but ultimately be chosen by direct election in member countries, as happened with the European Parliament. Our proposals call for international oversight of national elections of international representatives, subject to international certification, e.g., by an international elections commission, to ensure free and fair elections to any international legislative body.

The WPA would gain in legitimacy by taking up for debate and making recommendations on a broad range of matters of crucial international concern, such as climate change, weapons of mass destruction, poverty, income distribution, rule of law, and mobilizing public opinion in support of the goal of strengthened international cooperation. Its future could be reviewed when the GA would be ultimately elected by popular vote. A WPA, as an advisory mechanism that reflects the aspirations and priorities of the people, not just governments as is the case with the GA today, would be an excellent preparatory step for the eventual emergence of a GA with legislative powers in the areas of peace and security and management of the global commons, under a system of weighted representation.

In addition, we propose formalizing what was done by the UN in 2000 ahead of the Millennium Summit when the Secretary General invited 1,350 civil society representatives to the NGO Forum to consult on critical global problems and issue recommendations to Heads of State attending the summit. Such a Forum, meeting regularly or on an on-going basis, would recognize that solutions to some of our most critical problems require multi-stakeholder engagement and could become a Chamber of Civil Society which would also play a central advisory role with respect to the GA as an arena for creative and constructive debate to build consensus across a wide range of stakeholders. The Chamber's representatives would initially be drawn from the list of over 5000 accredited NGOs with ECOSOC. For the 2000 NGO Forum the UN invited two groups of NGO representatives: those from organizations with consultative status with ECOSOC, and those accredited to thematic UN conferences during the 1990s. However, NGO representatives could also be selected in some other way, including possibly by some form of popular vote where such elections could take place freely, without government interference, while also ensuring broad thematic representation.

Improving the capacity to mitigate global catastrophic risks

The goal of these reforms is to arrive at an effective and legitimate decision-making capacity to address GCRs, able to catalyse the actions necessary to control and avert them. The UN legislative organs will need sufficient legitimacy to be able to build wide public support for their recommendations which will need to place compelling global interest above the particular interests of powerful governments, businesses and economic actors that have long been resisting such changes.

A number of additional supporting mechanisms will be necessary to enable this process. The preparation of reforms and other initiatives in the area of international cooperation involves consideration of alternatives, consultation with stakeholders, and the preparation of documents capturing the emerging consensus, before it is debated in a decision-making setting. Even when not binding, the precise definition of problems and risks can help to push action by governments and other actors. Advisory bodies made up of individuals chosen primarily on the basis of professional credentials and expertise

aims at a just balance between these different perspectives.

would initially focus their efforts on a small set of pressing GCRs, including climate change and the whole range of issues associated with the deterioration of the environment, nuclear proliferation and the peace and security challenges this raises, and the broader set of economic development problems stemming from poverty and worsening trends in income distribution. We also propose to establish a permanent arms-length technical advisory body focusing specifically on GCRs (current and emerging), based on insurance industry and other proven risk assessment methods, to advise the UN legislative bodies in a transparent way (e.g., by issuing independent, public reports).

There is an excellent precedent in the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), created in 1988 to prepare an agreed scientific basis for actions to address climate change. Its early reports helped to provide the impetus for the adoption of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) in 1992, and subsequent reports built the momentum for the adoption of the Paris Agreement in 2015. Its experts are nominated by all the governments of the world but participate in their independent capacities as experts. They review all the relevant scientific literature, assess it through open peer-reviewed processes, and their summary conclusions are reviewed and endorsed by all the member governments, striving for a true representation of the consensus on the best science available. For climate change, in particular, it will be necessary to determine the planetary limits for greenhouse gas concentrations as the basis for negotiations on the allocations for each country to respect those limits, since only objective science can provide a sufficient basis for the difficult sharing of responsibilities to return within those limits. Similar scientific processes will be needed for other global risks, such as those stemming from various forms of environmental degradation. Such groups could be established for each global risk identified (e.g., as sub-groups of the GCR advisory body); authoritative reports on these issues would focus results-based global action to address risks.

Steps towards implementation

There are multiple paths to the establishment of a WPA (with a companion NGO Forum). One possibility would be to follow the model used in the negotiations of the Land Mines Treaty, a "single negotiating text method" could be adopted for the creation of the WPA. Initial efforts to establish this WPA would include consultations between like-minded, sympathetic stakeholders and would be enabled by the support of a core group of supportive states. As the experience of the ICC has shown, while desirable, it would not be essential to have the consent of the great powers to get this institution off the ground. Any state could join it and it is expected that citizens would urge their governments to support the WPA. In time, as the WPA gained democratic legitimacy, it could be integrated into the international constitutional order, attached to the General Assembly to create a bicameral world legislature. Furthermore, the creation of this WPA is not envisaged through a revision of the UN Charter, but rather as an initiative implemented on a shorter-term horizon as an advisory body to the General Assembly (Article 22 of the Charter empowers the GA to create "subsidiary organs").

An alternative to persuading a two-thirds majority of the GA to launch a WPA could be through a stand-alone treaty which might get the WPA off the ground with the participation of some 30 members, representing a broad spectrum of the UN's membership and could set a process in place for the subsequent ratification by other members as was done for the creation of some of the UN's leading specialized organizations, such as the WHO and the ILO, as well as the ICC. Learning from past experience, it would be useful to support civil society coalitions making the case for the establishment of such a body, seeking to obtain the support of sympathetic governments to play a catalytic role within the GA to build a critical mass of support. In this regard the Canadian government and the European Parliament could be potentially important allies. Having a larger measure of democratic legitimacy, its deliberations and recommendations would be imbued with a degree of credibility and urgency that

existing organs such as the Security Council and the GA have lacked, at great cost to global welfare and our collective future. It could thus become a powerful catalyst for actual change across the UN.

Current political appetite for reforms

The creation of a WPA has already received strong endorsements from a number of important bodies. In 1993 the Canadian House of Commons Standing Committee on External Affairs and International Trade recommended that Canada support the development of a UN Parliamentary Assembly. In 2005 108 Swiss Parliamentarians sent an open letter to UN Secretary General calling for the establishment of a WPA. In June of 2005 (and again in July of 2018) the European Parliament issued a resolution that called for "the establishment of a United Nations Parliamentary Assembly (UNPA) within the UN system" and stated that "the Parliamentary Assembly should be able to adopt recommendations directed at the UN General Assembly." These declarations were given a further boost in 2007 with the establishment of the International Campaign for a UN Parliamentary Assembly, an umbrella organization that, as of 2018, brings together over 150 civil society groups and 1540 parliamentarians from 123 countries. There are a number of similar initiatives, including by the East African Legislative Assembly. Of these initiatives perhaps the most important ones are the resolutions coming from the European Parliament, given the number of member countries, the large share of the EU in the global economy and the fact that, as noted above, a WPA could initially be set up by a core group of some 30 states, many of which could be EU members.

Nevertheless, some opposition is likely. First, there may well be resistance within some UN member states for whom institutional inertia is a defining characteristic. This might be particularly the case for some of the larger states, including those with veto power in the Security Council, which might hesitate to introduce institutional innovations that could upset internal power relationships or introduce a degree of unpredictability in the management of UN affairs. A second kind of obstacle to the establishment of a WPA could stem from a potential lack of agreement on the basic architecture of such an organ. Who would be its members? What would be the criteria for representation in a community of geographically, economically and politically diverse nations? How would one address the issue of the non-democratic nature of many of the members of the UN? Might democratic nations object to the participation of non-democratic regimes in an institution that would have as a primary purpose to bring to the UN a measure of democratic legitimacy?

These are important questions, but they are amenable to sensible proposals and solutions. Obviously, the design of the WPA's architecture would have to employ a consultative process and involve a broad cross section of humanity. A High-Level Panel (external or internal to the UN) could be set up to review existing answers to the above questions and to suggest, as needed, alternative avenues. In the first instance, the WPA would be set up as a largely advisory body, with the power to make recommendations on GCRs and other key issues of international concern but with no direct political power; an adjunct institution to the GA with responsibilities that would be difficult to perceive as a threat to the established political order.

II.   A New Way to Fund the United Nations

Brief description of the reforms

The UN has a regular budget which funds the UN Secretariat and its multiple activities, a peace-keeping budget, and a budget that finances the activities of its specialized agencies. These budgets are financed by assessed contributions from members. In addition, there is a separate budget that is funded by voluntary earmarked contributions from some of its wealthier members in support of particular agencies,

projects and programs. Contributions to the UN budget are heavily asymmetric. The top 10 contributors account for 70% of the budget; the top 20 for 84% of the budget.

Our proposal envisages two stages, with the first being implemented over the next 5 years. In this first phase the UN would simply assess member contributions at a fixed percent of their respective Gross National Income (GNI). Total world GNI at market prices in 2017 was US$ 79.8 trillion. To take an example, a 0.1 percent of GDP contribution to the UN budget would generate US$ 79.8 billion, a sizable sum to start with, five times larger than the current regular budget and some 50% higher than the most comprehensive budget including all earmarked contributions and peace keeping operations (see Table 1). The main advantage of this system is simplicity and transparency. Every country gets assessed at the same rate; the criterion for burden sharing is crystal clear. Contributions are linked to economic size— as in the current system—but without the need for carveouts, exceptions, floors and ceilings, discounts and the need to develop "formulas," often vulnerable to political machinations. There is no need to develop a separate UN tax collection machinery, which has been noted as a potential problem in other proposals put forward in the past to address the problem of UN funding.

Table 1. Total revenue of the UN system by UN agency and by financing instrument 20155 (in (in millions of US$)

Agency	Assessed contribution	Voluntary Untied	Voluntary Earmarked	Other fees	Total 2015
UN Secretariat	2771	0	2094	683	5548
UN Peacekeeping	8504	0	195	72	8771
Specialized Organizations	3244	4557	23114	2745	33660
Of which:					
FAO	497	0	744	10	1251
WHO	467	112	1857	39	2475
IAEA	377	0	236	5	618
UNICEF	0	1067	3836	106	5009
Total	14519	4557	25403	3500	47979

Source: Financing the UN Development System, Pathways to Reposition for Agenda 2030, 2017

In the longer term a Tobin-like, internationally agreed uniform tax, administered by each government over its own jurisdiction, applying to all purchases of financial instruments denominated in another currency would be introduced, to supplement the existing contributions fixed at a share of each country's GNI. With more than US$5 trillion traded daily just on the currency markets, a 0.05 percent tax could generate some US$2.5 billion per day in revenue (US$600 billion annually) which could then be directed to multiple ends, from climate change mitigation, to worthy projects aimed at poverty alleviation, peace and security, inclusive economic growth, and other global public goods, and so on. In this second phase, starting in 2024, funding of the UN system would consist of two parts: a fixed share of each member's GNI and a portion of the revenue collected through the Tobin-like tax.

Improving the capacity to mitigate global catastrophic risks

A United Nations with a more reliable and larger income stream will be a more effective organization, at a time when budgets everywhere are going to come under pressure because of demographic trends (e.g., aging populations which will put growing pressure on pension and health systems and other social

expenditures), the costs associated with the impact of climate change (e.g., rebuilding after extreme weather events, relocating large numbers of environmental refugees from areas affected by rising sea levels, investing in new infrastructures, such as protective sea barriers, for the large number of people living near coastal areas), addressing the effects of environmental degradation, the need to facilitate the transition to a more productive economy, with a smaller military-industrial complex and the need to deal, sooner or later, with the effects of the next global financial crisis, among others.

At the moment the UN budget is too small to allow it to play a role in the effective management and mitigation of GCRs. However, a gradual move to the system we propose would significantly enhance the capacity of the UN to play a more central role in the management of multiple GCRs, where international cooperation will be pivotal for the success of mitigation efforts. To the extent that, at even the relatively low 0.1 percent of GNI level, the UN would be empowered to do a great deal more in terms of the delivery of enhanced environmental and other forms of security to its members, this new system could make great economic sense in terms of the efficiency of resource allocation. Just as systems of collective security generate budgetary savings because they diminish the need for national defence spending (as has happened already in the European Union with the diminished risk of interstate conflict since its inception), empowering the UN to do more to tackle GCRs would also make economic sense, given the systemic/global nature of the main risks and the necessity of concerted global action, as opposed to fragmented national initiatives.

As noted above, even at 0.1 percent of GDP, contributions today would exceed the UN budget, generating resources which could be put in an escrow account or invested, as Norway has done so successfully with its Petroleum Stabilization Fund, to enable the UN to respond promptly to unanticipated peace and security emergencies, major environmental disasters and so on. Also, since climate change shocks are expected to affect all nations, one can imagine situations in the future where all UN members might have the right to draw on such resources in an emergency, as is the case, for instance, with many of the International Monetary Fund's funding facilities, a feature that has also enhanced this organization's perceived usefulness among its members.

Steps towards implementation

The changes to UN funding proposed do not require UN Charter amendments. At present, there are a large number of countries for which their assessed contributions amount to less than US$ 0.05 per person per year, amounts that are absurdly low and that have contributed to a culture of lack of ownership of the UN by many of its members. In the proposed system, an increase in the assessed dollar contributions of smaller states will be more than offset by the fact that low-income, smaller countries would be the main beneficiaries of its various activities and programmes. The *apparent* lack of political appetite for reform (see section below) has less to do with institutional or legal barriers and more to do with lack of familiarity on the part of national decision makers within the UN with a fiendishly complicated and opaque funding system. In this respect, we think that a detailed analysis of the UN's current funding mechanism and practices and a reasoned discussion of alternative proposals could go a long way toward encouraging a constituency for change at the political level. For this reason, our forthcoming Cambridge University Press book on global governance will contain a major chapter on new funding mechanisms for the UN. Furthermore, as part of bilateral contacts we have had with senior UN officials working on budget issues, the possibility has been raised that we might contribute a version of this chapter to the principal bi-annual UN publication on budgetary matters. Within our own international dissemination efforts, we are discussing these issues explicitly and in some detail. If necessary, a global "smart coalition" could be mobilized on this issue (see discussion on implementation in other modules below).

Current political appetite for reforms

A reformed and more effective UN system, with strengthened/expanded institutions will need a reliable source of funding, free of the inconsistencies, opaque practices, arbitrariness and contradictions that have emerged through decades of practice. Also, the system must be de-linked entirely from the kinds of domestic political considerations that have sometimes intruded upon budget debates and have held hostage the UN's activities and blocked addressing GCRs in a serious way.

We think there is broad recognition that the UN needs to move to a better system of revenue generation and budgetary management. In the General Assembly (GA), responsible for the UN budget, the United States, Japan, China and Germany, the four largest contributors with 28 percent of the world's population, formally have a two percent voice (4 out of 193 members). This distortion has been a primary factor explaining the emergence of the inefficient practices and all-around uncertainty which today characterize UN finances, including a high level of unpaid contributions. Several features of our proposal are likely to be well-received by members because they deliver benefits to all.

First, the ultimate authority for funding levels remains with UN members, but in a way that is more transparent and efficient than the current system, which has distributed power over the budget in a very uneven way and has rendered the UN increasingly irrelevant in a number of areas (see below). A 0.1 percent of GNI contribution rate could be agreed upon by members, in light of perceived needs and the desirability of creating a reserve for future contingencies. In principle, it could be reduced or increased, in line with the likely need for global action in the future across a range of areas. As the UN is empowered to come to the assistance of not just low-income countries but becomes a truly global organization with something to offer to all its members, public perceptions of the organization's usefulness would shift in a fundamental way. We think that the business community could be a strong advocate for the creation of a dependable system of revenue generation for the UN, given the large economic costs associated with climate/environmental degradation, and economic and political instability in many parts of the world. Framing our proposals within a system that envisages a transition to a more representative system of weighted voting in the GA would be strongly supported by the UN's most influential members and donors.

Our proposals would also facilitate a gradual return to the original vision of the UN Charter, one in which expenditures would truly be subject to GA oversight and scrutiny (see Article 17) and voluntary contributions would not play the disproportionally large role that they play today. A final advantage of this system is that it would reposition the UN and, in particular, ECOSOC, to play a more vital role in questions of economic and social development, as envisaged in the Charter. The existing funding arrangements have done much to side-line the UN from vital debates which have taken place in recent decades—for instance, in terms of the response to the global financial crisis of 2008—with other groupings—the G-20—playing a more prominent role but, obviously, facing legitimacy issues because of the absence of voice for the other 173 members.

III. Peaceful Settlement of Disputes and Enforcement of International Law

Brief description of the reforms

To ensure the legitimacy and efficacy of the international order, jurisdiction of the International Court of Justice (ICJ) should be made compulsory for all members of the UN, rather than optional/subject to states' consent,[5] and Chapter VI of the Charter on the Pacific Settlement of Disputes should be

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[5] To date, only 73 states (less than 40% of UN members) and only one permanent member of the Security Council have recognized compulsory ICJ jurisdiction, undermining its ability to be a true enforcer of international law.

transformed into obligatory and binding procedures for the peaceful resolution of international disputes, before UN collective security action or other coercive measures are contemplated.

Reforms are also needed to both the statute and procedural rules of the ICJ, in order to make it more modern, fair, and effective. To protect the court's independence and impartiality, the tenure of the 15 ICJ judges should be limited to one nine-year term and the practice of appointing ad hoc judges from the states party to litigation would be abolished. Other reforms should enhance the Court's advisory functions, grant additional powers to collect evidence, oblige compliance with orders and decisions of the court, provide access to interested parties (including civil society groups) to intervene, submit amicus briefs and trigger proceedings in certain contexts, and increase its capacity to employ additional, diversified court-management staff and clerks having expertise in specialized areas of international law.[6]

A revised Charter Chapter on the peaceful settlement of disputes would include clear procedures for the sequencing and timing of the range of dispute-resolution mechanisms currently listed in Article 33(1)— "negotiation, enquiry, mediation, conciliation, arbitration, judicial settlement, resort to regional agencies or arrangements, or other peaceful means of their own choice"—striking a balance between some flexible choice as to method and an obligation to engage in peaceful solutions in a timely manner. To facilitate the efficacy of such mechanisms, an additional standing body, a global Mediation and Conciliation Commission would be created, whose recommendations or decisions would not be binding, except with consent of the parties.

With strengthened international judicial bodies and mechanisms, there will be a heightened need for a skilled and well-trained international judiciary, to lend legitimacy to and confidence in its genuine impartiality and detachment from national political concerns, requiring a modern and well-resourced International Judicial Training Institute, with both international and regional branches.

An office of Attorney General of the UN system should also be established, to perform functions similar to those provided nationally, e.g., to be guardian of the rule of law, to serve as independent legal advisor to executive and legislative branches on the legality of proposed action or legislation, to advise regarding types of international litigation pursued before various international courts in the global public interest, and to ensure proper administration of justice—including independence of the judiciary—across the international system. A UN Bill of Rights/Charter of Fundamental Rights should also be adopted to apply to all UN action, to give individuals adequate protection in the light of enhanced global governance institutions.

Improving the capacity to mitigate global catastrophic risks

Functional governance at the international level requires a coherent and effective system of rule of law (e.g., including an independent and well-trained judiciary, properly-equipped courts and binding, enforceable laws), just as is required at the national level to ensure effective governance in the public interest. To address current and emerging GCRs, the system of international law must be significantly enhanced, where global policies and "hard" rules to address relevant GCRs can be implemented and reliably enforced throughout the world. Currently, there is often global agreement on strong international norms to address pressing GCRs, but a dramatic deficit in the meaningful enforcement of these norms. The reforms proposed above would do much to correct these deficiencies.

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[6] A system of regional Chambers of the ICJ (for example, in cooperation with regional organizations), with mixed panels of regional and international judges (whose independence would also be strictly safeguarded), could be contemplated.

Addressing catastrophic climate change, the 2015 Paris Agreement is an example of an essentially unanimous international treaty, which, however, lacks meaningful enforcement to hold states to account. For catastrophic biodiversity loss and ecosystem collapse, the UN Convention on Biological Diversity is another agreement which, while subject to essentially universal global support, lacks meaningful international enforcement. Both treaties address veritable existential and unprecedented threats to the human species. There are numerous other international environmental treaties that similarly cannot be enforced effectively under the current system.

In relation to the GCRs posed by Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMDs), binding peaceful international dispute resolution and enforceable international rule of law are crucial to ensuring an end to perennial arms races where states threaten or use military force as an instrument of international politics. Crucially, because of "security dilemma" dynamics, states will not be able to disarm and end arms races (including WMD) without a clear and binding shift to peaceful dispute resolution. Moreover, as with GCRs related to the environment, there are existing international agreements, such as the Non-Proliferation Treaty and the Biological Weapons Convention, which are widely accepted but lack meaningful enforcement mechanisms. Accelerating technologies, current shifting global power configurations and contestations may spawn the proliferation of new WMDs, such as killer robots, nano weaponry, cyberwarfare driven by powerful AI techniques, and so on. These will all have to be regulated by binding and enforceable international law.

With respect to the GCR risk multipliers of poverty, economic inequality and population growth, the movement towards a binding global peaceful dispute resolution and rule of law system, opening the opportunity for comprehensive disarmament, will give rise to a peace dividend which can then be invested into these social problems (e.g., universal education for women and girls to address population growth and poverty, general education and social security investments).

Steps toward implementation

The first step to implement the above-described reforms would be to convene a carefully-crafted expert group to study the proposed reforms and to make specific recommendations for: 1) ICJ modernization; 2) obligatory international peaceful settlement of disputes; and, 3) the establishment of an International Judicial Training Institute and Office of International Attorney General.

Such a group, in the first instance, could be constituted outside of the UN system in order to avoid political interference and the dilution of the essential features of the proposed reforms. The expert group should be composed of individuals with long experience within existing institutions, such as former judges of the ICJ and retired UN officials, as well as legal experts with practical experience (for example, legal advocates before the ICJ and the Permanent Court of Arbitration), former ambassadors or national officials involved in international negotiations, academic specialists on the relevant areas of international law and/or rule of law institutions at the national level, as well as civil society representatives.

Amendments to Chapter VI of the Charter on the Pacific Settlement of Disputes and to provisions on the ICJ within the Charter, as well as the statute of the ICJ, will require Charter amendment. The expert group would draft the proposed Charter amendments and accompanying concise policy background documents. A sponsoring state or group of states within the UN General Assembly (GA) may table the specific Charter revisions at the GA, under Article 108 (or under Article 109, if a general Charter review conference seems feasible). Approval of the proposed changes to the statute of the ICJ can also be sought from the ICJ itself, as it may also propose amendments to the statute by way of written communication to the UN Secretary General (Article 70 of the statute of the ICJ).

The Judicial Institute and office of international Attorney General, which may be established in the first instance without Charter amendment, can be proposed by a sponsoring state or states within the UN GA to be studied by the Assembly's 6th Committee (Legal), in order to determine, in particular, where to establish such new institutions/offices within the existing UN architecture, bearing in mind the proposals of the experts group. The 6th Committee or the expert group may also recommend such reforms through a Charter amendment or an incremental pathway which involves both steps.

Before introduction of the proposed reforms within the official UN process, a "smart coalition" of like-minded states and global civil society organisations should be convened to launch an international campaign to advocate for these reforms as a package, to strengthen the rule-based international order and to ensure the enforcement of international law addressing urgent GCRs.

Current political appetite for the reforms

The UN GA and international meetings of heads of state have made numerous resolutions unambiguously supporting the Peaceful Settlement of Disputes at the international level. Likewise, rule of law at the national and international levels, with regular reminders that states should seek recourse to the ICJ, have been endorsed repeatedly at the highest international political levels in official documents. Most recently, SDG Goal 16, embraced unanimously by the international community, affirms the importance of the rule of law at the national and international levels, "access to justice for all" and "effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels." Moreover, within the last years, "middle power" democracies throughout the world, concerned with the resurgence of great power politics and a lack of global leadership in service of multilateralism, have been more frequently and vigorously asserting that the time is ripe to affirm and strengthen the rule-based international order. These trends present a very important window of opportunity.

Moreover, political blockages have left international legal professionals under-utilized in designing and reforming international legal institutions. There currently exists, in the modern practice of international law, a great deal of mature international legal and judicial expertise which might be mobilized in the service of technically-sound reform proposals on the above topics, building on recent significant technical successes, with strong enforcement mechanisms established in certain subject matter areas (for example in relation to the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW), the law of the sea, and the WTO). Likewise, the mobilization and advocacy capacities of transnational civil society have proven remarkably successful for recent international legal reform and could be employed more generally and ambitiously.

Blockages to such reforms will certainly include funding concerns, which will have to be effectively resolved (see Module 2). The permanent members of the Security Council and "emerging powers" may oppose such changes as undermining their privileges/military prerogatives. The majority of states could elect to take the route of sidestepping great power politics, as with the adoption of the Rome Statute of the ICC, the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons and other important international instruments. However, the permanent members of the Security Council have affirmed internally strong official commitments to the rule of law, as well as supporting international statements on this matter, so it is not unfeasible that they may eventually accept such reforms involving Charter amendments if first proposed by the GA, and then later ratified by the permanent members (as has happened previously with reforms proposed by the GA under Article 108).

IV.   **Replacing the Security Council with an Executive Council**

Brief description of the reforms

The ultimate solution to give a reformed United Nations the capacity to manage effectively and prevent the development of new Global Catastrophic Risks (GCRs) will be to give it binding legislative, executive and judicial functions in the major areas of global risk: initially peace and security, and the global environment. While it will likely take some time for the world community to be ready to reform significantly or replace the UN Charter, early discussion of the issues and of the rationale for fundamental reform is an urgent and necessary prerequisite and could also stimulate action on a variety of interim measures that could also begin to diminish global risks. Governments will only be willing to take steps in the direction of substantial reform if they are assured that their national autonomy will be guaranteed through the essential safeguards incorporated in our proposals, including the importance of subsidiarity.

The UN Security Council is the only UN organ whose decisions are legally binding, and which can authorize military action to enforce its decisions. Yet its functions to act proactively to maintain peace and security, resolve disputes, regulate armaments, apply sanctions and take military action if necessary have not been implemented effectively because of a fundamental flaw: the five permanent members with a veto. This provision, necessary at the time to assure Stalin and the US Senate that the UN would be powerless to take any action against their sovereign national interests, and which is contrary to the Charter's own principle of the sovereign equality of States, has always been criticized. It has not only prevented the UN from maintaining peace and security when the interests of the permanent members were involved, but also blocked all attempts to apply the Charter's own provisions for UN reform. The present Security Council is incapable of preventing the catastrophic risks of a war involving major powers.

The major Charter reforms proposed are to replace the Security Council with an Executive Council (EC) with broad management and executive responsibilities across the UN system, to reform the General Assembly (GA) as the primary legislative body with the ability to pass laws with binding effect under a system of weighted voting, initially for global issues of peace and security and the environment, to establish a World Parliamentary Assembly (WPA) with advisory powers on a range of issues of global concern (see Module 1), and to give the International Court of Justice (ICJ) compulsory jurisdiction and binding authority to adjudicate all disputes (see Module 3). This module focuses on the first of these, although they are all ultimately interrelated.

In our proposal the EC would be composed of 24 members. One seat each would be given to the USA, China, India, the European Union (as a group) and Russia. The other 19 seats would be allocated to the other 161 members clustered regionally and consulting among themselves to acknowledge regional differences and specificities. Each seat would have the same weighted voting power as its governments have in the reformed GA. Individuals occupying the seats would have 2-year terms, renewable as decided in their respective groups. All governments would therefore have a voice in the EC. The EC, in a range of matters, would operate in cooperation with and under the jurisdiction of the GA, and its main focus would be shifted to implementation, management and effective operation of the United Nations, with collective security implementation as only one of a range of executive functions.

Decisions of the EC on important matters would be by a vote of 16 of the 24 representatives, including a majority of the eight members of the Council with the highest populations, and a majority of the 16 other members of the Council. For normal business, decisions would be taken by consensus or majority vote. Subject to its ultimate responsibility to the GA, the EC, as the executive arm of the new United Nations, would have broad authority to monitor, supervise and direct various aspects of the work program in the areas of security, conflict prevention and management of the global environment in particular, as well as other areas of priority identified by the GA. The Secretary General would serve as the chair of

the EC, to provide coherence and continuity within the UN system, and to link to the UN Secretariat.

Improving the capacity to mitigate global catastrophic risks

The EC would be supported by an office for peace and security, an office for environmental security and another for social justice and security, where intervention within or between states in the global common interest may be required. The three areas require quite different knowledge bases and technical responsibilities and could each provide the action arm for a major global component of the UN. One specific issue for the EC could be to review and where appropriate consolidate or replace the many different intergovernmental meetings, governing councils, conferences of the parties, and commissions that have proliferated across the intergovernmental system. The EC would also accompany states to improve the quality of governance at the national level, and to defend and extend the principle of subsidiarity so important to the efficient functioning of a multi-level governance system.

The GA would itself be reformed with proportional representation to become a more balanced body of all the governments and peoples of the world, with a primary function to adopt binding legislation to prevent global catastrophic risks. It would become the main seat of power in the reformed UN, with the EC implementing its decisions and overseeing the application of global legislation aimed at preventing catastrophic risks, including through relevant action at the national level.

The GA and EC will need supporting advisory mechanisms to ensure that the common global interest with respect to catastrophic risks is defined in law and implemented based on the best information available. Scientific advisory bodies for the overall global environment and for major areas of risk, including the existing IPCC and IPBES, would report directly to the GA and EC. An Office of Technology Assessment would analyze and report on new and emerging catastrophic risks from geoengineering, artificial intelligence, genetic modifications and other technological developments that might require global regulation. An Office of Ethical Assessment could comment on proposals from the perspective of the principles established in human rights charters and other legal agreements and represent the interests of future generations threatened by catastrophic risks. These expert advisory bodies would be constituted globally to be transparent, objective, independent and accountable, following the model of the IPCC. We also propose a Chamber of Civil Society (see Module 1), formalizing the advisory role of major groups and other stakeholders, and selected in similar ways by election within the major groups, which would be organized around issues of global concern to ensure that the major voices of civil society can contribute to legislation and implementation.

We also build on the strengths of the present UN system through reinforcement of the UN Specialized Agencies responsible for areas of catastrophic risk including climate change and the environment, as well as proposing new bodies to reduce inequality within and between countries, correct the imbalances that foster continuing rapid population growth in some regions, and reform the economy to move towards sustainability and avoid the risks of financial collapse.

Steps towards implementation

Given this ultimate goal to reduce and prevent global catastrophic risks, the immediate steps forward would include the following, based on our comprehensive, detailed and well-documented description of these and other proposals for UN reform forthcoming from Cambridge University Press. First, organization of dialogues on the strengthening of the multilateral system with UN officials, diplomats and civil society from around the world to debate and refine the proposals to reflect multicultural perspectives and to demonstrate that UN Charter reform or replacement is a reasonable medium-term goal. Second, identification of governments of "middle" powers in all regions that would be ready to

champion the goal of a reformed UN and to work to build a coalition of the willing among like-minded governments. Third, provide content to stimulate public debate on the goal of stronger global institutions for the 21st century as a positive alternative to populist and xenophobic retreats within national borders, using multiple media channels including video and social networks. Fourth, create an expert group to estimate the costs and benefits of UN reform, including improved functionality in addressing global risks and reduced duplication and inefficiency from the present fragmented and immobile structures, to reinforce the rational arguments for change.

Current political appetite for reforms

The resistance to change by permanent members of the Security Council with a veto has always prevented UN Charter reform, and is likely to continue to be a stumbling block to our proposals, which is why we suggest as an alternative the replacement of the UN Charter by a new Charter for a successor organization by a process that would escape from the veto and the paralysis it has engendered. While it might be difficult to ignore all the present permanent members in implementing such a change, isolating one or two in the short term might be sufficient to bring them finally to the table. A severe crisis might also be sufficient to force an acknowledgement that the advantages of a legitimate, representative and functional UN executive body outweigh those of their uniquely privileged national sovereignty as permanent members, which breeds deadlock and dissatisfaction within the international community.

Governments presently with autocratic regimes, high levels of corruption, or other reasons for those in power to fear international interference with their power and privileges, will also fight to protect themselves from strengthened multilateral processes, yet their peoples would benefit the most from more effective global governance and would likely support reform if given a chance. Replacing discredited regimes with honest, representative and effective governments is a widespread public desire presently difficult to achieve, which accompaniment by a supranational body like the EC could make possible.

Nevertheless, there are a number of factors which suggest that, under the pressure of a host of unresolved global problems, the political appetite and momentum for reforms in coming years could increase. First, few credible people think that the current system is sustainable, that the international community can just muddle through for the next several decades without meaningfully addressing some of the global catastrophic risks that cast a shadow over our future. Second, the forces of integration have also led to the realization that the costs of non-cooperation are much higher today. A war between two global powers, in the age of nuclear weapons, will be infinitely more catastrophic in its consequences than it would have been before 1945. The 2008 financial crisis rapidly spread from one country to become a global, deeply destabilizing, phenomenon. Third, civil society and the business community are empowered today in a way that was not the case back in the 1950s. All of the major successful initiatives in the area of international cooperation in the past 2 decades from the creation of the ICC to the Paris Accord on Climate Change, to the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, could not have been undertaken without the involvement of other stakeholders beyond governments. And, fourth, information technology has made it much easier to mobilize public opinion with a much greater awareness globally of the problems and risks we face.

An additional source of positive support would come from all those countries with stable and forward-looking governments, including many "middle powers," that see the rise in nationalistic and populist regimes as threats to their own well-being and to the globalized economy and systems of exchange that have helped them to prosper. It should be relatively easy to convince them that a strong multilateral system of governance is in their own best interests and would provide the only lasting protection from global catastrophic risks that otherwise could sweep them away. Enlightened business interests similarly should recognize the benefits of a more stable international system.

V.   International Peace Force and Disarmament

Brief description of the reforms

In the 20th century, two ruinous wars led to two attempts to prevent the scourge of future wars through international institutions for collective security, the League of Nations and the United Nations, but both have largely failed at their essential purpose. The forces to arm for warfare, whether for political domination, self-protection or from economic lobbies, have prevented real disarmament and instead fostered an arms race that is again accelerating today. Most disarmament agreements since WWII, including bilateral agreements between the USA and USSR, were really arms authorisation agreements to recognise the status quo, and were as often ignored as respected. Behind the political confrontation lies a complex of arms industries and vested interests in military power with influential lobbies that thrive on high military expenditures and represent a significant component of some national economies.

Disarmament requires trust that no state will profit from the actions of another, and alternative dispute resolution and enforcement mechanisms in which all parties can have confidence that the outcome will be just, and better than what might be obtained through war or the threat of war. Therefore the disarmament proposals summarised here need to be accompanied by an International Court of Justice (ICJ) with compulsory jurisdiction whose decisions are binding (see Module 3), and a General Assembly (GA), Executive Council (EC), and subsidiary bodies able to establish the global rule of law and to authorise action, including the use of force, when that law is broken by any state (see Module 4).

The essential elements of collective security are complete disarmament of all states to only the level necessary to maintain internal security within the country, and an International Peace Force (IPF) more powerful that any state force, able to intervene as a last resort to enforce peace between nations. While the creation of such a Force is not part of these Modules (though it is discussed extensively in the book), it is nevertheless useful to say a few words here. Proposals for the creation of an international security force were actively discussed at the time of the establishment of the League of Nations and were returned to in the period leading to the creation of the UN. The UN Charter contains explicit undertakings in the area of peaceful settlement of international disputes and various instruments emerged over time as the UN sought to give operational meaning to the peace and security principles in the Charter. In the book, we analyse the experience with peacekeeping operations and the lessons that can be drawn from their mixed success. We analyse the extent to which there has been dramatic erosion in the effectiveness of the uses of warfare to achieve particular national strategic objectives and argue that the current system of global security is absurdly costly in relation to the meagre security benefits it confers. We present a proposal for the creation of an International Peace Force, to be established in parallel to a process of comprehensive international arms control. A number of operational issues which emerge when considering the establishment of such a Force, many of them based on an assessment of several decades of experience with peacekeeping, are also discussed.

The process of carefully staged disarmament, and the construction of an IPF, need to be balanced to avoid creating any vulnerabilities in the process that a mal-intentioned nation might take advantage of, ensuring that the whole process can be trusted to be completed successfully. Parts of our proposal are aimed to build and maintain that level of trust.

Improving the capacity to mitigate global catastrophic risks

One of the most dangerous global catastrophic risks is that of a third World War or an exchange of nuclear weapons or other Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMDs) between states, either of which could precipitate the collapse of the present global society and wipe out a major part of the world population. The rise of an increasing number of political leaders with autocratic tendencies, and associated withdrawals from multilateralism, are increasing the danger of stumbling into war with uncontrollable consequences. It is urgent to reverse this trend, with collective security and disarmament a major part of risk reduction. In addition to the need to strengthen human security, there are strong economic arguments to reduce the enormous waste of resources in unproductive investments in armaments and military capacity that could be used better to improve human welfare.

One of the causes of extreme poverty in many countries is the excessive diversion of national human, material and financial resources to military ends. Freeing up those resources would make possible much more significant efforts to eliminate extreme poverty, including providing supporting infrastructure for development in deprived rural areas. Where poverty is reduced and education extended, population growth diminishes as well.

Steps towards implementation

The present UN Charter already has provisions for collective security and disarmament that have never been implemented because of the rivalries and national interests of the Permanent Members of the Security Council with the veto. Some limited steps could already be taken within the present Charter if enough pressure can be put on recalcitrant States, but full disarmament and the creation of an IPF would require some Charter revisions which we describe.

Several immediate steps can already be taken to create momentum. We have begun detailed analysis both of requirements for stepwise disarmament with confidence-building measures, updating previous proposals, and of detailed operational considerations for creating a standing IPF and accompanying reserve, as significant parts of our book. These would serve as the basis for expert meetings to refine the proposals to the point where they could contribute to launching intergovernmental processes. We propose an International Expert Commission on Disarmament that could already be established and start to work.

Much could be done to calculate the economic costs of the efforts by all countries to maintain and increase their armaments and military preparedness, and the savings that could be achieved and resources that could be reallocated if collective security was put in place and the need for armaments reduced to a minimum. The "peace dividend" might finally be within reach. This could be a strong argument for public support for disarmament. Widespread public campaigns could highlight the wastefulness of war and preparations for war and challenge the preconceptions and myths that surround military superiority and the exercise of power by force. As personal memories of the tragedy of WW II fade, the younger generations need new ways to appreciate the true horrors of warfare. Many civil society movements could be enlisted to support such campaigns, building strong public pressure on governments to disarm, and emphasising the benefits of a world at peace.

Achieving peace could trigger an economic downturn if not carefully managed, given the important role of military expenditures in many national economies. It will be essential to develop and propose alternatives to all those whose livelihoods and careers depend on the military and the arms industry. Some could be diverted directly to more constructive civilian purposes in security services, infrastructure development and disaster response, among others, with government funding continuing as before. There will be a transitional need for the technical challenges of disarmament itself, destroying or recycling arms, munitions and military facilities which could be funded by the extension of defence funding and employ those who created or maintained them. Nuclear weapons will present special challenges,

including long-term management and storage of the resulting nuclear wastes. Such a fundamental change in the structure of many economies will inevitably take time and require painful adjustments (unless the process is facilitated by even more painful destruction by military action).

There will be powerful lobbies in the military-industrial complex that stand to lose from disarmament and will do everything to try to derail it. Offering alternatives as described above will be one part of the answer, but great efforts will also be needed to oppose their lobbying and to neutralise the negative messages that they are sure to propagate.

In terms of a timeline to implement these reforms, several parallel tracks will need to be mutually reinforcing, assuming no intervening military adventure triggers a global catastrophe. In addition to the proposals above, small confidence-building steps towards disarmament could already be initiated, both by increasing adherence to recent arms control initiatives, and proposing new controls on some of the most abhorrent existing and proposed weapons systems. A system of multilateral sanctions could be developed to pressure countries to join and respect these agreements, as was done with Iran. Expert studies of different proposals could be completed within a few years, and discussions with positively-inclined governments on their implementation could be initiated.

Once Charter reforms are adopted and an adequate financial mechanism is in place, creating an IPF would require about 5 years to be operational and 10 to reach full strength, with governments seconding a quarter of their military forces in the meantime to bridge the transition. Disarmament with independent observers for technical verification would proceed in stages of 3-5 years each, to allow compensating measures to be put in place. Complete destruction of some weapons systems like thermonuclear weapons will be technically difficult, requiring intermediate steps of irreversible decommissioning before complete destruction and permanent waste storage, which may take decades.

Current political appetite for reforms

There are many countries, including middle powers with enlightened leadership, that recognise the need for multilateral solutions to peaceful dispute resolution and collective security, for whom a coherent package of proposals with a reasonable prospect of adoption would be attractive. They could provide the foundation to move forward, making their forces available proactively to the UN. Valuable lessons can be learned and capacity developed even taking small steps towards disarmament.

The major military powers show, and have long shown, no appetite for these reforms, as they are trapped in a military/power paradigm from which it may be impossible for them to extricate themselves without major pressure from outside. In some cases, their political power rests on the military, and to abandon this would be political suicide and might plunge their nations into chaos, as happened in the former Yugoslavia. A political transition would have to be organised at the same time. It may take a major military incident to overcome their resistance. For the highly profitable military industries, the threat of their collapse with disarmament, combined with assistance to develop alternative business plans, might help them to reduce their lobbying and support the transition. In the meantime, the ground can be prepared by putting the detailed plans for collective security and disarmament machinery in place, ready to move forward when conditions are right.