

# Current Concerns

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## EU-ultimatum against Russia – another Rambouillet?

by Willy Wimmer, former Parliamentary Secretary at the German Federal Ministry  
of Defence and Vice President of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly



Willy Wimmer  
(picture ma)

*The EU leaders have learned nothing from their visit to Ypres on the occasion of the outbreak of the First World War in 1914. The Russian ultimatum means Rambouillet II, and when do you think the attack will take place?*

Recent studies of a North German Foundation have clearly shown that the support of the German population for the martial course of the Federal Government, the Federal President, the EU and NATO towards Russia is very small. This is what the deputy chairman of the CSU and Munich Member of Parliament, Dr Peter Gauweiler, pointed out in his seminal speech to the graduates of the Bundeswehr University in Hamburg. The decision of the European Union, presented by the discontinued European models Barroso and van Rompoy will increase this aversion for more than good reasons. Has the time come again to threaten states with ultimatums just like the one against Serbia in 1914?

Russia, the European Union claims, would have to engage in substantive negotiations on the "peace plan" of the Ukrainian President within 72 hours. And if not, we will fire back from 5:45 a.m. on?

It seems as if the European Commission and the European Council in Brus-

sels, represented by the aforementioned gentlemen, has gone completely crazy and want to plunge the continent into absolute misery. You do not have to visit Ypres with its cemeteries reaching to the horizon to find out the fateful aspects of this language and this attitude.

It has been 15 years now, since NATO has "successfully" followed this path by forcing the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia via the so-called "negotiations" in Rambouillet, under all circumstances and in violation of the so-called "Vienna Convention", to take up international negotiations in order to agree to a NATO dictate that meant marching through Yugoslavia. For Belgrade to understand this absolutely right, NATO had submitted plans that corresponded to those of Adolf Hitler against Yugoslavia during the Second World War up to the last detail. Rambouillet was – and we now know all too well – only a pretext for the war that would follow with bombs on Belgrade a few weeks later. As for the war in Yugoslavia, NATO had taken the nefarious detour via the dead of Racak, the blame being put on the Serbs by the disastrous American OSCE Representative William Walker in Pristina.

Are now the targeted economic sanctions the intermediate step before the trouble is going to start? Is it not sufficient that the United States have already inflicted all that damage to Iraq, Syria and the entire Middle East thereby providing the region with a huge fuse? Is the war against Russia needed, after all? After the Olympic war of Georgia against Russia you have

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## Negotiate!

*The newspapers of the past weekend were filled with articles and commentaries on the beginning of the First World War. The commemoration of the July crisis a hundred years ago, which had been triggered by the shots of Sarajevo and ended with the mutual war declarations of the European powers, resulting in slaughterings that surpassed all imagination up to this point, should serve the cry "No more war" instead of a writing on the wall for a new war in Europe. The First World War like all wars could have been avoided if one had continued to focus on diplomacy and negotiations instead of making the war almost inevitable by an ultimatum.*

*The Austrian-born Felix Somary, who had worked significantly on an amicable settlement between the German Empire, the Dual Monarchy of Austria-Hungary and the United Kingdom of Great Britain in the run up to the great war and whose draft contract was ready to be signed shortly before the shots of Sarajevo, eloquently bears witness what a single person is able to do in an almost hopeless situation in his autobiography entitled "Erinnerungen aus meinem Leben" (memories from my life). The fact that the warmongers had prevailed then should be a warning to us. What followed was, on the one hand, a terrible human catastrophe, on the other hand it fundamentally changed the situation in Europe and the Middle East and even Africa, which is noticeable to this day.*

*Currently, in the context of the crisis in the Ukraine, the EU, in particular Germany, do no longer consider war as the ultima ratio (the last resort), but the German president speaks of "not discarding the use of military means from the outset," and demands a more active military role (!) of Germany in the world again. This is deeply outrageous and undermines all efforts for peace in this very tense situation. That the President of the Council of the Protestant Church in Germany, Nikolaus Schneider, is seconding the German Federal President by agreeing to a military deployment in crisis*

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*"It is also clear that the mental maps of the leading minds of the world, especially in the West, are trapped in the past, reluctant or unable to conceive of the possibility that they may have to change their worldview. But unless they do, they will make strategic mistakes, perhaps on a disastrous scale."*

Kishore Mahbubani. *The New Asian Hemisphere. The Irresistible Shift of Global Power to the East.* 2009, p.4, ISBN 978-1586486716

# United States seek war with the energy weapon

by Prof Dr Eberhard Hamer



Eberhard Hamer  
(picture ma)

The US prepare for war using the energy boycott as a habitual measure which is – like all sanctions – actually the start-off of an economic war. The United States have extended experience in this:

– During the Second World War

the United States effectively forced the Japanese, who did not have any resources of energy in their own country, into the military conflict by means of an energy blockade.

- The United States also started the Iraq war in particular with a boycott of oil exports.
- There was a boycott on economy and oil against Iran – it should have led to a military conflict several times, but fortunately this was rejected by the US military.
- Immediately China stepped in as a substitute customer and Russia remained a customer and thus the oil boycott against Iran didn't work.
- Now the energy weapon is used in the case of the Ukraine against Russia. With the sanctions of the United States and its satellites, hostile acts of war were already initialized, because Russia was and is not willing to deliver the Ukraine to the US industry, NATO and American missiles.

It was therefore no coincidence that the construction works on the *South Stream* Pipeline from Russia to Austria through Bulgaria were stopped when the American Secretary of State together with three senators forcibly requested it. The South Stream Pipeline would have secured energy supply by Russian oil and gas to southern Europe similarly as the *North Stream* through the Baltic Sea which is operated by *Gazprom* does for Northern Europe.

The main pipeline from Russia through the Ukraine and Poland to Germany remained insafe, because the Ukraine had tapped it several times. Ukraine is no longer solvent, so it is no longer supplied. Just this pipeline was blown up now by American specialists, in order to demonstrate the uncertainty of Russian oil supplies to the Europeans.

US Government fights the energy supply from Russia to Europe for several reasons:

1. The United States regard the close economic cooperation of their Europe-

an satellite provinces with Russia as a threat to their own economic sovereignty in Europe and try to disrupt any positive relationship between Europe and Russia (Rapallo syndrome).

2. According to the *Brzezinski*-doctrine aiming at constricting Russia and contradicting the promise of 1990 on the occasion of the German reunification, that NATO would not extend beyond the rivers Oder and Neisse, the Americans didn't pull just Germany, but also the Baltic States, Poland, Hungary, Romania and Turkey into the NATO, building up an area where American missiles can be stationed and moving it systematically towards Moscow.
3. The proceedings in Ukraine did not only mean another step towards enlarging the American economic area (EU) and NATO towards the East ("keep the United States in, the Russians out and the Germans down"), but at the same time Russia was to be crucially weakened, as well.
4. The Russian state budget is strongest fed by the export of energy. To weaken Russia one must prevent the energy export. So *Obama* gave imploring statements on the "unreliability of Russian oil supplies" and prompted Europe vice versa to purchase American oil and gas (which is impossible in the short term).
5. In parallel to waging the energy war a currency war has been initialized. The United States did not only issue sanctions against Russian companies and banks, but also threaten the Russian investments all over the world. As a countermeasure against the sanctions, Russia has now parted with its dollar reserves (\$ 200 billion) and agreed with China, India and Iran to handle their foreign trade no longer in dollars, but in local currency, which in turn significantly weakens the dollar empire. As the United States have practically no gold, its dollar currency is a "paper currency without coverage".

So far there is – except the American incantations – no evidence that Europe's energy supply would be unsecured. The Russians were always faithful to their treaties and are also even existentially interested into delivering their gas to Europe. No reason for unrest and even less reason to switch to US gas.

But as the blow up of the Ukraine pipeline shows, CIA could also blow up the North Stream Pipeline in the Baltic Sea and thus actually create bottlenecks in the energy market between Russia and Europe.

If one considers the sanctions of the United States and its satellites against Russia, the ongoing currency war, and now also the struggle of the United States against the oil supply from Russia to Europe; and if one takes into account, that the insurgency on the Maidan square in Kiev is run with US money, US agents and now even US mercenaries (*Blackwater*), and if one adds the fact that the original defense Alliance NATO has become the mercenary army or the United States targets around the world, then the threat of war in Europe is as imminent as ever before since the Second World War by means of the United States various initiatives on Russia. We could again slide into a war, that actually nobody wants in Europe.

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## "Negotiate!"

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regions, "in order to provide a space where something else may develop", as he says, is a piece of the worst war propaganda and evokes past images of the clergy blessing bombs on either side. Are we really going to face that again?

In this situation there is only one thing, negotiate, negotiate, negotiate, to cooperate in searching for and finding a peaceful solution. You explain To every child that is involved in a dispute you do explain that conflicts can never be solved by violent means. Shall this no longer apply when it comes to power interests and human lives? With the UN and the OSCE, chaired by Switzerland this year, there are always ways to resolve conflicts in dialogues peacefully. *Didier Burkhalter*, the Swiss Federal President, chairs the OSCE and has repeatedly asked to engage in dialogue and offered the mediation of neutral Switzerland. He sees it as a major task of the OSCE to assist Ukraine in a peaceful settlement of the crisis. "We will certainly continue to work for a peaceful settlement of the Ukraine-conflict." It is shameful that in such a situation threats in form of ultimatums and sanctions were launched and partly already imposed by the EU and the US as well as speaking of military actions. Where is honest compassion and commemoration of the millions of senseless victims of the two terrible wars of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, which had their origin in such very duplicitous interest policy?

Thomas Kaiser

# Ukraine conflict – propaganda and reality

by Prof Dr Klaus Hornung



Klaus Hornung  
(picture ma)

*The German Chancellor is a master of headlines. This began with “no alternative” to the euro and its rescue. Now she accuses President Putin and the Russians of returning to Soviet Communism’s “old way of thinking”, to the*

*pursuit of “spheres of influence”, which had allegedly been replaced by a policy of good relations and international cooperation since the end of the Cold War 25 years ago; a cooperation as it had been performed above all by the EU and the United States. Since the beginning of the conflict in Ukraine last winter, this interpretation has become the leitmotif of Western propaganda, which unisono blames the Russian leadership for the conflict and its intensification. A look at the facts seems to be urgent.*

In 1991, after the collapse of the Soviet Union, Ukraine had become an independent state. But it remained a fragile political entity in the subsequent period. The majority of its leaders came from the old Soviet nomenclature. But even these oligarchic governments began to open up to the West. In 1992, the Ukraine joined the IMF, in 2004 the WTO. The doors to the free movement of foreign capital were opened. The result was that from 1991 to 2013 half of the companies closed down; foreign corporations and the oligarchs took over the other half. In this period the Ukrainian GDP (gross domestic product) fell down to 70 percent of its 1991 level, the steel production fell to 43 percent and the population decreased from 52 to 38 million, in particular by a huge migration. Increasingly, the weakened country came under the directorate of Western, American and European interests, prepared and financed by politi-

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Not *Putin* is the aggressor, but Obama and the financial oligarchy controlling him. For us “Atlantic friendship” would mean to stop the United States engaging in further adventures and attacks on targets instead of following them blindly and obediently. At the latest we are now directly affected by the oil-war.

(Translation *Current Concerns*)

cal foundations and media such as *Radio Liberty*, *Voice of America*, the *BBC* and the *Deutsche Welle*. In 2004 a broad popular movement managed the so-called “Orange Revolution” and *Julia Tymoshenko*, although even she was belonging to the oligarchy, became its idol and head of Government. In 2009, her ongoing disagreement with President *Yushchenko*, also originating from the Orange Revolution, led to new elections and the return of the old guard of oligarchs into the Government. But even President *Yanukovych* went on negotiating the association of Ukraine with the EU then. In the summer of 2013, the draft agreement was on the table, but then surprisingly the President refused his signature to put the agreement into force. Obviously, President *Putin* had interposed with a favorable financial offer regarding Russian oil and gas supplies for Ukraine. The result was that in memory of the events of 2004, especially in the West and Central Ukraine, again a wide resistance movement was formed against the oligarch regime and the Moscow paternalism which during the winter 2013/14 resulted more and more in a kind of popular uprising, soon also with a growing

number of deaths. On 21 February 2014, the Foreign Ministers of Germany, France and Poland traveled to Kiev to try to mediate in the escalating conflict. Actually they succeeded in bringing about the conclusion of an agreement, which provided for the restoration of the 2004 Constitution, called for early elections and the formation of a government of national unity with the signatures of the three Foreign Ministers, President *Yanukovych*, a representative of *Putin*, as well as representatives of the *Maidan* movement; all that would have meant a solution to the conflict based on political common sense. However, the three Foreign Ministers hastily left in the same night. This vacuum was misused immediately by radical forces of the *Maidan* to provoke violent action that forced *Yanukovych*’s Government to flee from Kiev. In Kiev a provisional Government and a provisional President established themselves, an action that rendered the agreement achieved by the European Foreign Ministers null and void. Shortly thereafter, however, the approval of the majority of the Ukrainian Parliament could at least be obtained to

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## EU-ultimatum against Russia ...”

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to have the impression that it has become the fashion to strike out in the shadow of international sporting events. Will the political Europe now completely reverse the Olympic spirit according to which during such events as we currently have in Brazil, peace and tranquil minds have to prevail?

And why is Russia now given an ultimatum and threatened with economic sanctions? Why does the German Chancellor not go down on her knees before the “German Bundestag”? Why – and there it would belong – does she not tell the ladies and gentlemen in the plenary session of the German Parliament, and thus the German public, where she sees the reasons which justify such behaviour against a European neighbour, who 25 years ago granted the Germans the way to our country’s national unity? What in God’s name is going on in a Chancellor’s mind who has taken her oath on the welfare of the German people? Was it not her inconstancy that prevented an association agreement with Ukraine on a flimsy pretext two years ago? Only because of the lady with blond hair coil who most Germans do not want to see in the role of having even the slightest influence on our German matters? The Chancellor obviously takes the adminis-

trative path via Brussels so that she does not have to tell the Germans the truth and deny all of us an answer to our questions.

We have already become accustomed to the NATO Secretary General raving about in the worst way and “agitating” against Russia at every possible opportunity; or what else would you call his tales? If there are or should be things, that due to Russian actions on the Ukrainian-Russian border give rise to further inquiry, then one single question should be raised: Why does neither NATO, why does neither the EU, why does neither the Chancellor nor the Foreign Minister call on the OSCE which has been provided for such cases? Praise the British, who at the same time have also made public their own way as a new outpost of Europe. Brussels beats the drums for economic sanctions and thus increases the danger of war in Europe, *Cameron* simultaneously has contracts between BP and the Russian *Rosneft* signed worth gigantic billions. Of course, neither London nor the commanders in Washington will prevent Europe from pushing the European Union further into disaster. Nothing else is the EU’s ultimatum to Russia.

(Translation *Current Concerns*)

**"Ukraine conflict – propaganda ..."**

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this provisional regulation, also promoted by the fact that a part of Yanukovich's government changed the sides and shifted to the new government.

It was easy for the Moscow Government to present the events in Kiev as an illegitimate coup d'état of Ukrainian "nationalists, neo-Nazis and anti-Semites" and to condemn it. From now on, preparations started aiming at the accession of the Crimean peninsula to the Russian Federation, both in the Crimea and in Moscow. A referendum of the Crimean population on 16 March resulted in a large majority favouring the accession. Already on 18 March President Putin in a speech in the Kremlin expressed the Russian Government's willingness to comply with the request of the Crimean population to join the Russian Federation. Putin could use the coup d'état of radical forces in Kiev as an argument, as well as defending the joining of Crimea to Russia with a far reaching historical review striking an arc from the baptism of *Vladimir of Saint*, the founder of the RUS thousand years ago in Kherson to the peninsula's connecting to Russia in 1783 by the Tsarina *Catherine*. Putin added that in the Crimean War from 1853 to 1856 the peninsula was defended by the Russians against England and France as well as again heroically against the German invaders between 1942 and 1944. On 18 March the President vigorously defended the connection of the Crimea to Russia against Western accusations that Russia had thus committed an internationally wrongful annexation, with the argument, that the Charter of the United Nations would not see this operation as a violation of general international law, since earlier in 1999 the separation of Kosovo from the Serbian state had not been condemned as a violation of international law, either. In this context, Putin could not resist the conclusion that both the bombing of Belgrade by NATO in 1999 as well as the Western military interventions in Iraq and Libya had been made without authorization by the UN Security Council and were therefore a violation of international law. Finally, he repeated the old Russian complaint that the US and NATO had not complied with their commitments in the nineties not to extend the boundaries of the Western military alliance to the East, as they had also started the installation of missile defence systems in Poland and the Czech Republic without considering Russia.

It is revealing that one day before Putin, on 14 March, *John Mearsheimer*, American Professor of International Politics at the University of Chicago, opposed the chorus of accusations of Western pol-

itics and media in the "New York Times" holding that mainly Moscow was responsible for the Ukraine conflict. The American professor sees the "tap root" of the conflict rather in the Washington pursuit to step by step withdraw the Ukraine from the influence of Moscow since the nineties. Mearsheimer pointed out that already in 2008 the annexation of Ukraine and Georgia to the Western alliance was discussed quite openly within NATO. Since the autumn of 2013, President *Obama* and the American ambassador in Kiev had strongly supported the Kiev protest movement so that the West could not have been surprised by the Russian decision on Crimea. Hence, the advice of the political scientist for the American policy was to in future respect the Russian interests regarding Ukraine and to go on recognizing its position as a sovereign buffer between East and West. As of the first in the West, Mearsheimer also pointed out that Russia was soon urgently needed by the United States for the future negotiating process on Syria and Iran as well as on the withdrawal from Afghanistan and, finally, also with regard to China as the main rival of the future.

In order to assess the new East-West conflict, one will have to look back on the contemporary historical developments and relations since the collapse of the Soviet Union 25 years ago on the whole. The first decade after 1991 had been marked by the efforts of President *Yeltsin* to convert the Soviet-Communist planned and command economy at short notice to a market economy of Western type by means of a "shock therapy". An experiment that had to fail particularly because of the Russian oligarchs' influence who succeeded to seize the Russian national wealth with criminal methods. However, the billions in profits derived thereof were not invested in Russia, but put safely into Western banks with the result that the modernization of the Russian economy was omitted and a broad sector of the Russian population became impoverished. The result was that Russia was not only forced to acquire enormous loans, from most Western banks. In August 1998, it was finally compelled to officially declare itself bankrupt.

These years of the *Yeltsin* government have gone down in Russian contemporary historical memory as the "time of troubles". It was characterized by a weak government that was largely dependent on the West and its numerous "counsellors". It was an era of its own weakness which has been exploited by the West, above all by the United States, for selfish interests.

Certainly, the phenomenon Putin is to be understood against this historical background. Putin succeeded *Yeltsin* in March 2000 and was determined to end the "time of troubles" in Russia domesticating the

oligarch rule and closing the open wound of the Chechnya conflict, thereby winning the growing support of the population. Despite the disappointment over the West, Putin continued the policy of understanding and cooperation with the European Union and the United States. Its highlight was the conclusion of the first START treaty ("Strategic Arms Reduction Talks") to reduce the nuclear arsenals on both sides. In May 2002, it was signed by president *Bush Jun.* and Putin in an official ceremony. Further stations of east-west cooperation followed, such as the establishment of the NATO-Russia Council to discuss joint strategic interests and finally the inclusion of Russia into the group of the so-called G-8 countries, not least the result of a strong increase in mutual trade relations.

However, it did not take long until this honeymoon of east-west and also American-Russian understanding was slowed down by new night frosts. It is here, where the growing western interest, particularly in the Ukraine, played an important role with the often robust methods of Western political influence. In February 2007, in his speech to the International Security Conference in Munich, Putin considered him-

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**Extended NATO and EU within the meaning of US policy**

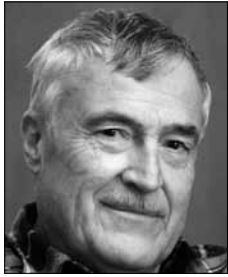
"In the short run, it is in America's interest to consolidate and perpetuate the prevailing geopolitical pluralism on the map of Eurasia. That puts a premium on maneuver and manipulation in order to prevent the emergence of a hostile coalition that could eventually seek to challenge America's primacy, not to mention the remote possibility of any one particular state to do so.

[...] It follows that a wider Europe an enlarged NATO will serve well both the short-term and the longer-term goals of US policy. A larger Europe will expand the range of American influence – and, through the admission of new Central European members, also increase in the European councils the number of states with a pro-American proclivity – without simultaneously creating a Europe politically so integrated that it could soon challenge The United States on geographical matters of high importance to America elsewhere, particularly in the Middle East. A politically defined Europe is also essential to the progressive assimilation of Russia into a system of global cooperation."

*Zbigniew K., Brzezinski, The Grand Chessboard: American Primacy and its Geographic Imperatives, 1<sup>st</sup> ed. ISBN 0-465-02726-1*

# The current situation in Iraq and Syria: Consequences of geopolitical mistakes

by Prof Dr Albert A. Stahel, Institute for Strategical Studies, Wädenswil



Albert Stahel  
(picture thk)

On 20 March 2003 the *Bush* Administration, supported by a coalition of willing allies, started the invasion of Iraq. The decision for this invasion was mainly based on three assumptions:

1. Iraq is still in possession of weapons of mass destruction. They should be destroyed after the invasion;
2. after the fall of dictator *Saddam Hussein* a process of democratization should be initiated in Iraq and the Arabic world;
3. there are connections and cooperation between *Saddam Hussein* and *Osama bin Laden's* al-Qaida. *Saddam Hussein* was involved in the September 11 attacks on the USA in 2001.

In face of the lack of US influence on events in Iraq it must be raised to question whether the desire to control the Iraqi oil-fields did play a role in the *Bush* Administration's decision.

All three assumptions proved wrong, subsequently. Iraq was no longer in possession of weapons of mass destruction. They had been destroyed under supervision of UN inspectors. The fall of *Saddam Hussein*

did not cause a wave of democratization in Iraq but only chaos. Iraq fell quickly apart into three parts:

1. a part dominated by Shia Arabs;
2. a part inhabited by Sunni Arabs;
3. the region of Sunni Kurds.

The Iraqi civil society had been pulverized by the 1980–1988 war against Iran, the war of 1991 against the USA and their allies and also by the UN sanctions. Instead of purposefully restoring the civil society, the American Proconsul *L. Paul Bremer III.* dismissed the entire Iraqi army at a moment's notice. In consequence, hundreds of thousands of Sunni soldiers and officers became unemployed and quickly organized themselves in resistance movements. His next measure was the abolition of the *Baath* party. This act criminalized hundreds of thousands of Arabs who had no prospect for employment under the de-Baathification program. In consequence of the so-called democratization, the Shiites assumed power in Iraq which had been controlled by the Sunnis for more than a thousand years. Among the Sunni Arabs, frustrations and a desire for revenge grew which soon erupted in armed resistance against the US troops and their allies.

The assumption that there were connections between the secular regime of *Saddam Hussein* and the Islamic al-Qai-

da fundamentalists proved wrong, as well. But after the invasion al-Qaida could successfully build a bridgehead in Iraq and commit terrorist attacks. Until 2006 it looked like the US would suffer a military defeat in Iraq. Under the influence of the new US Secretary of Defense *Robert M. Gates*, a new occupation strategy was implemented. Washington decided to fill up the occupation troops by five additional brigades – the so-called surge –, thus supporting the course of action of General *David Petraeus*, the new US commander in Iraq. With money and political promises, he succeeded in winning over the Sunni leaders of the Anbar province for the American side.

In 2010 and 2011, Iraq was mainly pacified. But the political future of Iraq still rested on the presence of US troops. Obviously the *Obama* Administration did not succeed in convincing the Iraqi President *al-Maliki* of the necessity of an agreement as the base for a continued stationing of US troops. It is still not clear if the *Obama* Administration did not exert sufficient pressure on *al-Maliki* to sign such an agreement or if it was not really interested in it. But as a matter of fact all US troops left the country, almost in a hurry, late in 2011, leaving Iraq to its fate.

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self compelled to clearly warn the West of political interference in Russia's and its neighbours' internal affairs. Already then, the Russian experience with the "Orange Revolution" played a role. In 2008, when the Western ambitions expanded to Georgia, Russia pulled the "red line" regarding its interests for the first time by a stalwart five-day military intervention against Georgia, in the course of which the province of South Ossetia was separated from Georgia and placed under Russian protection. In any case, it contradicts the facts when Mrs. *Merkel* warns of the resurgence of "old ways of thinking" in Moscow's "zones of influence" as the real cause of the Ukraine conflict. She often turns a blind eye to the splinter in the eyes of the West, the constant strive for expansion of the Western influential zones towards the East and above all with the well-known smart justifications of human rights and freedom, a long-term trend and strategy of the West to which the

Russian side for various reasons initially reacted reluctantly, but finally marked the "red lines" of its interests more clearly.

The solution to the Ukraine conflict will only be possible, if both sides, Russia and "the West" are willing to classify the conflict within the global-strategic overall situation, which means to acknowledge that the serious conflicts with Syria and Iran having smoldered for three years now should clearly be given priority. In other words, the solution of the Ukraine conflict is a definite presupposition for addressing the central conflict. This is possible only with Russian participation, as Professor *Mearsheimer* made clear. This was already demonstrated last year when solving the Syrian chemical weapons conflict which was possible only through the active participation of Russia. In the Ukraine conflict as well, only an east-western compromise to resolve the tension may lead to a solution, at the centre of which must be the recognition of the Ukrainian association with the EU by Russia and *pari passu* the acceptance of the Crimean annexation to Russia by

the West. This, however, is a compromise which strictly excludes the Ukraine-NA-TO membership. This is the mutual recognition and acceptance of the facts accomplished of the previous months of conflict. This desirable and also inevitable compromise, with regard to the Ukraine will have to be supplemented by its future constitution of federal regulations that correspond to both, the Ukrainian and Russian interests. Out of the global strategic perspective, this compromise will be the prerequisite for resuming the cooperation between the West and Russia. Here, one should reflect – on the thesis of the wise Singapore diplomat and scientist *Kishore Mahubani* – that looking on China teaches the necessary prudence in dealing with Russia. In this global strategic perspective the joint defence of the Islamist offensive will then play its role allowing the convergence of strategic interests of the "world between San Francisco and Vladivostok" to emerge more clearly. In this regard, the Ukraine conflict will at best play a secondary role.

(Translation *Current Concerns*)

**"The current situation in Iraq: ..."**

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The current collapse of the Iraqi army is probably the consequence of a lack of US troops in Iraq. But also the lack of morale and the inappropriate armament of the Iraqi troops who are lacking weapons for combating a guerrilla army might have facilitated the control of wide parts of Iraq by *Isis* (*ad-dawia al-islamiya fi I-iraq wa-sch-scham*, Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant). The 15,000 troops of *Isis* in Iraq are regimented by *Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi* and former officers of Saddam Hussein's army. Hence it is misleading to speak of *Isis* as a terror organization. *Isis* is an Islamic army that is successful in guerilla warfare, particularly successful in enforcing the tactics of an urban guerrilla.

Two geopolitical mistakes are responsible for *Isis*' current success in Iraq:

1. The inconsiderate invasion of Iraq with respect to geopolitics by the Bush administration and Bremer's inconsiderate decisions;
2. the lacking conclusion of a treaty between the Obama administration and the Maliki government for stationing US troops after 2011.

Is there still a chance to reverse the successes of *Isis* in Iraq by American drone

missions and/or units of the Iranian Pasdaran (Revolutionary Guards)? This seems doubtful given the current political and military situation in Iraq. With their mistakes, both the Bush and the Obama administrations have contributed to the destabilization of Iraq and hence to the geopolitical destabilization of the entire Gulf region.

Where did *Isis* come from and who promoted it? The war between the *Assad* regime and the so-called moderate *Free Syrian Army* and Islamic organizations started three years ago. The latter represented the conservative Islam of the Salafi movement. Two organizations of this orientation were increasingly successful against the *Assad* regime, *al-Nusrah* and *Isis*. According to their Salafi ideology, both organizations were fostered and armed by Saudi Arabia. In the beginning, both organizations confessed to their alliance with al-Qaida. Today, *al-Nusrah* is probably still confessing to al-Qaida. In contrast, *Isis* has become independent and now probably controls, with some 8,000 well-trained fighters, a large part of Syria. With another 15,000 troops, *Isis* has overrun the entire northern Iraq, with the exception of the Kurd areas. Goal of *Isis* is probably the erection of an Islamic Emirate including the Sunni areas of Syria, Iraq and Lebanon. If *Isis* even were to conquer Baghdad or Damascus which had been capitals of various

Caliph dynasties in previous times, the ultimate goal of *Isis* might even be the restitution of the Caliphate as the center of the Islamic and Arabic world. To reach this goal, they would, however, also have to conquer Saudi Arabia – which is still supporting *Isis* – with the Holy Cities Mecca and Medina.

Thus the support for *Isis* could turn out to be a geopolitical boomerang for Saudi Arabia. The destabilization will not be confined to Syria and the Iraq but it might affect the whole Middle East. The responsibility for this development would rest both with the US and the Saudi royal dynasty.

(Translation *Current Concerns*)

**Islamist combat troops – a product of "Devil's Game"?**

hbg. If you read the article by Dr *Albert A. Stahl*, as background information, it's worth while to take up the excellent historical reference work "Devil's Game" (2005) by *Robert Dreyfuss*. It is the first complete investigation of a secret area of American foreign policy: the support of fundamentalist Islam since the Second World War up to the present day. The British Empire had already made use of fundamentalist Islam to enforce its imperial interests. Dreyfuss' politically charged explanations are based on his research in archives, interviews with politicians, with members of the intelligence agencies and the US Defense Department and State Department. Thereby Dreyfuss laid the groundwork for a true understanding of the imperial grip – first by the British Empire and later by the United States – on the fate of the Near and Middle East. As for the war against *Saddam Hussein* in 2003, Dreyfuss stated the following: "The regime in Baghdad, dictatorial though it was, was a secular one whose Baath Party leadership was a confirmed enemy of the

Islamists – both the Shiite variety and the Sunni Muslim Brotherhood. But Bush, consciously and with liberation, encouraged Iraq's Islamists to reach for power." (p. 339) Today we know that at that time Bush acted under the influence of the *Neocons*. Dreyfuss characterized their plans as follows: "Neoconservatives want to control the middle East, not reform it, even if that means tearing countries apart and replacing them with rump mini-states along ethnic and sectarian lines. The Islamic right, in this context, is just one more tool for dismantling existing regimes [...]." (p. 337)

"Devil's Game" gained great attention and recognition from authors such as *Chalmers Johnson* or *Seymour Hersh*, who characterized it as a "brilliant book". *Chas W. Freeman*, too, who as an US ambassador used to stay in Saudi Arabia, thereby being a connoisseur of the *hidden agenda*, described the survey as "carefully documented".

Source: *Robert Dreyfuss, Devil's Game, New York 2005, ISBN 978-805-081374*

**Current Concerns**

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Publisher: Zeit-Fragen Cooperative

Editor: Erika Vögeli

Address: Current Concerns,

P.O. Box, CH-8044 Zurich

Phone: +41 (0)44 350 65 50

Fax: +41 (0)44 350 65 51

E-Mail: [CurrentConcerns@zeit-fragen.ch](mailto:CurrentConcerns@zeit-fragen.ch)

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# “I don’t want to be one of those people who are afraid to act in defense of their principles”

**Civil courage and true democratic spirit are contagious – the example of Edward Snowden, according to the book by Glenn Greenwald**

by Thomas Schaffner

“Will the digital age usher in the individual liberation and political freedoms that the Internet is uniquely capable of unleashing? Or will it bring about a system of omnipresent monitoring and control, beyond the dreams of even the greatest tyrants of the past?” (Greenwald, p.6) The multi-award-winning lawyer, constitutional lawyer and investigative journalist Glenn Greenwald devotes himself to this issue in his new book about Edward Snowden and the National Security Agency (NSA) “No Place to Hide: Edward Snowden, the NSA, and the US Surveillance State”. It is a book that – on the first hundred pages – encourages the readers to stand by their own democratic beliefs and to defend them as well. The variety of documents on the subsequent pages giving evidence of an unprecedented snooping and monitoring practice by the NSA, can also have a discouraging effect, which is why the first one hundred pages are worth a second reading – as an antidote to any feelings of powerlessness. For the above-mentioned reasons, the article below refrains from reproducing the NSA access systems with their well-sounding names such as Prism, etc.; instead Snowden’s, Greenwald’s and other people’s benefits will be appreciated, so that the sparks these courageous men and women are sending off, electrify as many citizens as possible or may strengthen their active sense of citizenship – even and especially if they are exposed to disgusting defamation campaigns because of their commitment to democracy, cam-

## Switzerland voted for the protection of privacy in the UN Human Rights Council

ts. Human rights apply both offline and online: This is maintained in a resolution by the UN General Assembly, which was adopted at the request of Germany and Brazil last December. This way the two countries responded to Edward Snowden’s disclosure of the eavesdropping by the NSA against their governments. In the following, a group of other countries was formed around the two nations, which filed a declaration on the right to privacy in the UN Human Rights Council in Geneva. This group includes Austria, Liechtenstein, Mexico, Norway and Switzerland. Restrictions on the right to privacy should in future be regulated and monitored independently. Human rights are universal and to be observed everywhere. “Therefore mass surveillance of foreign citizens and extraterritorial monitoring must not occur in a place immune from prosecution”, the document reads. It is also planned to set up the position of a data protection commissioner for the protection of the right to privacy. In September, guidelines should be established, which include the control of intelligence organisations, which operate mass surveillance.

Sources:

*The Right to Privacy in the Digital Age*

<http://www.ohchr.org/EN/Issues/DigitalAge/Pages/DigitalAgeIndex.aspx>,

“Neue Zürcher Zeitung” from 24 June 2014, p. 10

paigns that are orchestrated by circles of power, performed by windy, bribed journalists, career-minded politicians and other spineless fellows. However, the seekers of truth and defenders of democratic values have a strong ally: human nature, to whom the crawling gait has always been alien and still is.

We were now standing at a historic crossroads, wrote Glenn Greenwald who was appointed one of the 100 “Global thinkers” by the US *Foreign Policy* magazine of 2013. Bringing to mind the scope and the monstrosity of the global surveillance system by the US government and the historical was the great merit of the former NSA infrastructure analyst Edward Snowden. We still have the choice to shape the future of electronic communications: either take the path towards freedom or passively slip toward totalitarian repression – and it is in the hands of the citizens to determine the direction.

And in fact: Has history not always been made by people? Or rather by some kind of “world spirit” or economic determinism, by inevitable fate or an invisible hand? It is indeed Switzerland which confirms Greenwald’s approach: with its statehood springing from the cooperative spirit, its bottom-to-top structure and its direct democracy: Nothing will happen in the country, if not the citizens themselves step out of their front door and see for the things to happen, – as were roughly the words of the great poet Gottfried Keller from the 19<sup>th</sup> century – the founding age of the modern Swiss

state and the period when the instruments of direct democracy were developed at the federal level, the referendum and the initiative. This personal view of man and his role in history, however, is – to paraphrase Immanuel Kant – nothing for cowards and lazybones who do not want to use their brain. No, it requires courage to take matters into one’s own hands, and thus live human dignity, or as Kant said “Sapere aude, have the courage to use your own reason”, which has become the motto of the age of enlightenment. However, enlightenment can only be fully realized with this down-to-earth approach, in and through the cooperative system, as the Swiss historian Dr René Roca points out in his habilitation thesis.<sup>1</sup>

## The principle of public access prevents misuse of power

History has seen many examples that it takes courage to feel committed to the truth, that it takes courage and perseverance and bonding to fellow human beings to take a stance against the arrogance of the powerful, the insidiousness of opportunists and the villainy of those who act big.

“It’s getting worse, not better, from my being silent.” (p.11) This is a key message of a journalist colleague of Greenwald – but let us be honest: Who lives by this motto? Are we not often timid and prefer to remain silent for fear of consequences when we experience injustice? Wrong, say Greenwald and the just quoted Laura Poitras who was bullied repeatedly by the Homeland Secu-

## FISA – “The Trial” by Franz Kafka says hello

ts. In 1978, the US Congress created a secret court which had to deal with cases on grounds of the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act (FISA), a law for interception in reconnaissance abroad. After many years of unlawful eavesdropping, according to Greenwald, the electronic control was to be given a new legal basis and the approval by a court was introduced.

«I have never seen – like probably most other people – an order of a FISA court. It ranks among the most classified government authorities at all. All its orders are automatically subject to the highest security classification, and only few people are authorised to see its decisions.» (p. 47)

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**"I don't want to be ..."**

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rity Office because of her commitment to upholding the US Constitution and the civil liberties in the United States. Wrong, history tells us as well: the one who shows courage and does not remain silent when facing injustice, does not only live better, because he is able to look in the mirror any time without being ashamed; no, he also acts as a model for being upright and straight and lives in harmony with human dignity that is inherent in the person. And: By calling things by their names and exposing them to the public eye, misuse of power can be curbed. Greenwald writes, "They [here national security officials, but also perpetrators in general] act abusively and tuggishly only when they believe they are safe, in the dark. Secrecy is the linchpin of abuse of power, we discovered, its enabling force. Transparency is the only real antidote." (p. 12) This is a result that Swiss history confirms: Was it not a central concern to the fathers of our modern state to enforce the principle of public access so that never again "the masters" could hatch out plans in back rooms opposing the sovereignty of the people.

**Secret report by the US Army recommends: undermine credibility!**

However, let's come back to the 21<sup>st</sup> century: The American Snowden, who addressed Greenwald in order to make the

NSA documents that he had copied available to the public, expressed his concerns in an email to the journalists as follows: "In the end, we must enforce a principle [on the Internet], whereby the only way the powerful may enjoy privacy is when it is the same kind shared by the ordinary: one enforced by the laws of nature, rather than the policies of man." (quoted in Greenwald, p. 13)

Just like Snowden, Greenwald was also more than concerned about the development of the eavesdropping potential of US services. "Over the past seven years, I had been driven by the same conviction, writing almost on a daily basis about the dangerous trends in US state secrecy, radical executive power theories, detention and surveillance abuses, militarism and the assault on civil liberties." (p. 14)

Greenwald had come across a secret report by the US Army earlier, which had declared *Wikileaks* an enemy of the state in 2008. We should always remember the methods how to deal with such secretly defined "enemies", so that in other contexts we might recognize more easily when something appears to be dubious: "The report (ironically leaked to *Wikileaks*) discussed the possibility of passing on fraudulent documents. If *Wikileaks* published them as authentic, it would suffer a serious blow to its credibility." (p. 13)

**Sun Tzu and MfS as teachers of defamation**

This pattern of discrediting the self-defined "enemy" because neither the achieved transparency nor the documents can be denied, is not new. We already find it in the writings of the Chinese strategist Sun Tzu in the 6th century BC and is always effective: who would believe in someone who seems to be not quite honest? Who would deal with contents, issues and factual arguments, if the transmitter of these mostly uncomfortable news himself seems to be not quite kosher? After the collapse of the GDR the methods were disclosed in the infamous Stasi guidelines 1/76 (see box), however, they have always been an effective means of intelligence agencies, ever since they have existed. And they are also used by intelligence agencies of "good" states, Greenwald makes clear. The fact that such methods have an impact on many contemporaries has to do with the implementation and dissemination of lies, distortions, defamation and discrediting by compliant media companies – those members of the cooperative *Current Concerns* who had been members in the professional psychologists association VPM, the Association for the Promotion of the Psychological Knowledge of Man, know such proceedings, since they became witnesses and victims of a media campaign unprecedented in Switzerland.

But what about privacy in the Internet age, which Snowden and also Greenwald and his colleagues are demanding? To date, many of such fabricated stories and lies are still to be found on the Internet, and it requires an enormous effort to take them and throw them to where they belong: on the dung-heap of history. The *Google* verdict with its right to be forgotten will now finally be able to initiate a beneficial development – if the citizens become active.

**When will the slanderers be held accountable?**

Snowden as well was aware that he had to expect severe consequences for his private life due to his commitment, yet he could not help making the truth known to all: "I want to spark a worldwide debate about privacy, Internet freedom and the dangers of state surveillance (...). I'm not afraid of what will happen to me. I've accepted that my life will likely be over from my doing this. I'm at peace with that. I know it's the right thing to do." (quoted in Greenwald, p. 19) We should honour Greenwald because he could not remain silent given the fact that a man, committed to defend basic democratic values, was exposed to persecution, namely by a Western democracy, the latter being a real shame. The rest of us has the duty to do something about it and help that the bearer of bad news will not be beheaded – but that instead those will be held accountable who are abolishing precisely these principles while pretending to act in the name of freedom and citizens' security.

**Ordinary people can defeat the most terrifying adversary**

Snowden's attitude to fight against injustice and inform people about what is already happening behind their backs and against them, deserves imitation. In an interview with Greenwald on their first meeting in a hotel in Hong Kong, Snowden expressed the following basic truths that are indeed anthropologically founded and emanate from a personal view of man, "The true measurement of a person's worth isn't what they say they

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pro memoria

**Agitation against VPM – stopped by the Federal Supreme Court of Switzerland**

ts. In thousands of newspaper articles in a Stasi- resp. US-Army manner defamations were spread, in particular against the VPM's professional director/supervisor and initiator of *Current Concerns*, the psychologist and historian Dr phil *Annemarie Buchholz-Kaiser*, because the association amongst others "interfered" in the issue of drugs, of school and HIV-prophylaxis, as was insinuated. Instead of honestly and factually dealing with these important issues an attitude that would have been appropriate for a democracy – especially a direct democratic one – politicians and media villified the association. Today the substantial positions of the VPM have become common knowledge – a public excuse of the campaign-leaders and the followers is a long time in coming as well as the rehabilitation of the unjustly discredited. The inflammatory articles and the campaign could be stopped by huge legal efforts of the defamed – first by the responsible courts on cantonal level, finally by the supreme Swiss court, the Federal Supreme Court of Switzerland.

**The system of Five Eyes**

*Edward Snowden*: "My sole motive is to inform the public as to that which is done in their name and that which is done against them. The US government, in conspiracy with client states, chiefest among them the Five Eyes – the United Kingdom, Canada, Australia, and New Zealand – have inflicted upon the world a system of secret, pervasive surveillance from which there is no refuge. (cit. from Greenwald, p. 41) – Unless the citizens oppose it!



## Pro memoria: How respectable citizens are defamed by a campaign

The Stasi-Guideline No. 1/76 and the defamation of dissidents,  
not only by the NSA today – have the students outstripped the teacher?

Extract from the “Stasi-Guideline No. 1/76 for Development and Investigation of Operative Dossiers” by the Ministry for State Security of the German Democratic Republic (GDR) [...]

### 2.6.2: Forms, means and methods of disintegration

The determination of the disintegration measures to be carried out has to be done on the basis of exact assessment of achieved results with regard to the processing of the respective operative dossier, in particular the developed approaches as well as the individuality of the respective person and depending on the particular objective to be attained.

Effective Types of disintegration, which may be used are:

- Methodically discrediting the public reputation, esteem and prestige on the basis of combining true, verifiable and discrediting facts with false but plausible, non-refutable and thus also discrediting facts.
- Methodically organizing professional and social failures in order to un-

dermine the self-confidence of individuals.

- Purposefully undermining convictions in connection with particular ideals, models, etc. and creating doubts about the person’s perspective.
- Creating distrust and mutual suspicion within groups, groupings and organizations.
- Creating or making use of and increasing rivalries within groups, groupings and organizations by purposefully making use of personal weaknesses of individual members.
- Keeping groups, groupings and organizations busy with their internal problems with the aim of limiting their hostile-negative actions.
- Preventing or limiting in place or time the mutual relations of the members of a group, grouping or organization on the basis of existing legal provisions, e.g. by tying them to workplaces, assigning them to far-away workplaces, etc.

In carrying out the measures of disintegration, reliable, experienced unof-

ficial collaborators (IMs) suitable for solving such problems are to be used with priority.

Effective means and methods of disintegration are:

- Making use of anonymous or pseudonymous letters, telegrams, phone calls, etc., compromising photographs such as of actual or faked meetings.
- Calculatedly disseminating rumours about certain individuals of a group, grouping or organization.
- Targeted indiscretion or the faking of deconspiracy of an MfS (Ministry for State Security) counter-intelligence measure.
- Summoning individuals to state departments or social organizations for plausible or implausible reasons.

Such means and methods are to be used, improved and developed creatively and with nuances according to the specific conditions of the operative dossier in question. [...]

Source: <http://revolutionarydemocracy.org/rdv5n1lgdrkpd.htm>

### “I don’t want to be ...”

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believe in, but what they do in defense of those beliefs (...). If you’re not acting on your beliefs, then they probably aren’t real.” (quoted in Greenwald, p. 45) These are statements that express a basic human right that of freedom of conviction.

In his childhood and youth he had learned that “it is we who infuse life with meaning through our actions and the stories we create with them.” People were only that as what their actions defined them. “I don’t want to be a person who remains afraid to act in defense of my principles.” (quoted in Greenwald, p. 45) And: History showed “that seemingly ordinary people who are sufficiently resolute about justice can triumph over the most formidable adversaries.” (quoted in Greenwald, p. 46) And again: what prevented people from choosing the upright posture, “is fear of repercussions, but once you let go of your attachment to things that ultimately don’t matter – money, career, physical safety – you can overcome that fear.” (quoted in Greenwald, p.46) A process, which was immortalized by *Henrik Ibsen*. In his piece, “An Enemy of the People” a doctor must experience how the commitment to truth and the bonum commune, the common good, interferes with the

greed for money, power and influence of a small clique that rules over money and the media, and here again: When the truth is revealed and nothing can eliminate it, the bearer of the truth is being attacked. And ad personam, by defamation, etc., as has already been explained above.

### The citizens themselves must be able to decide where we are headed

Snowden emphasized that he did not want and was not able to destroy the system of the NSA, but he wanted “to allow the public to decide whether they should go on.” (quoted in Greenwald, p. 47) What he thought would happen to him, if he revealed his identity as an informant, Greenwald wanted to know from Snowden. He would be accused of violating the 1917 Espionage Act and that would imply that he had aided America’s enemies and endangered national security, and: “I’m sure they’ll grab every incident they can from my past, and

probably will exaggerate or even fabricate some, to demonize me as much as possible.” (quoted in Greenwald, p. 50)

He was facing a possible prison sentence calmly, he could live with everything they would do to him. “The only thing I can’t live with is knowing that I did nothing.” (quoted in Greenwald, p. 51) An attitude that, since it is committed to the preservation of democratic values, deserves more than a Prix Courage – an attitude, without which democracy, especially direct democracy, could never succeed.

### Not to be silenced by threats

Greenwald and Laura Poitras were inspired and motivated by Snowden’s courage. It gave reason to Greenwald’s book project, which he explains as follows, “I felt a duty to report the story in the spirit that had animated Snowden’s original act: fearlessness rooted in the conviction of doing what one believes is right, and a refusal to be intimidated or deterred by baseless threats from malevolent officials eager to conceal their own actions.” (p. 51) Apart from civil servants we could name, of course, other lackeys of power such as purchased campaign journalists of the cheapest kind, as could be observed in the above-mentioned media campaign in

### Attack ad personam

Edward Snowden: “I know the media personalize everything, and the government will want to make me the story, to attack the messenger.” (quoted from Greenwald, p. 52)

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"I don't want to be ..."

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Switzerland. Or politicians in the wake of the unspeakable *Joseph Fouché*, who betrayed everything to achieve their career goals, their own history, their own dignity, and even their own children, when was in the interest of having a supposedly clean slate. It is self-evident for every citizen, who does not only want to describe the uprightness, the commitment for the bonum commune to his descendants, but live it daily as a model, that we have to confront with resolute resistance the accomplices of that kind that Snowden and Greenwald list up.

### "I know the media personalize everything ..."

Snowden also knew the approach of most media and their internally or externally controlled ad personam attacks, when it came to keep a lid on unpleasant facts. So he said to Greenwald: "I know the media personalize everything, and the government will want to make me the story, to attack the messenger." (quoted in Greenwald, p. 52)

The fact that Greenwald was contagioned by Snowden's courage, is expressed by the following statement, "Such attacks would not deter our reporting; we would publish many more stories from the documents, regardless of fearmongering and threats, carrying out our duty as journalists. I wanted to be clear: the usual intimidation and demonization were futile." (p. 79) A journalistic and civic ethos, which everyone should take for a model, especially all those somehow "embedded" journalists. Thus, the full human being can develop out of the caricature of a purchased scribbler ...

### The nature of man is on the side of those who seek the truth

It was important to Greenwald and Laura Poitras that the world would learn the truth

from Snowden himself before the slander was started, "We were determined that the world would first hear about Snowden, his actions and his motives, from Snowden himself, not through a demonization campaign spread by the US government while he was hiding or in custody and unable to speak for himself." (p. 80) It is certainly what we would wish everyone – to be heard without any prejudice on the part of the addressee, because as soon as a human bond and trust have been established, it is more difficult for propaganda, slander and incitement to blur the minds and hearts of the people. But even if incitement is faster and is exerted with concentrated firepower, the citizens do not need to go to their knees, but can rely on and work to ensure that the truth always succeeds in the long run. Of course, it often requires the skills of a marathon runner, especially if on the opposite side there is a lot of criminal energy at work. But in the end every demonized person has as an ally on his side the social nature of man, as an incorruptible anthropological constant. It does not come as a surprise that this personal concept of man as a social being, who is capable of doing good and of establishing social bonding, faces constant fire from the above-mentioned circles of the power elite.

### Closing of ranks among all democratically-minded forces is due

How will Snowden go down in history? The battle is raging. One who is familiar with revelations of undemocratic wheelings and dealings in the US has already spoken out and leaves Snowden pre-eminence in the history books: It is *Daniel Ellsberg*, the whistleblower of the Pentagon Papers (see page 6) "There has not been in American history a more important leak than Edward Snowden's release of NSA material – and that definitely includes the Pentagon Papers 40 years ago." (quoted in Greenwald, p. 84) This is acknowledgement and recogni-

tion from an authoritative source, which we can hardly ignore. However, the question of Snowden's position cannot be decoupled from that of the role of Greenwald, Laura Poitras and last but not least of every citizen: Today we can combine sentences from the left wing such as "All the wheels come to a standstill, if it is your strong arm's will", "Who does not fight back, lives the wrong way" or "When justice becomes injustice, resistance becomes a duty" with bourgeois respectively direct democratic motifs such as "Let us maintain the old things if they are good. But let us build the new ones on the old foundations each hour." Only a solidarity of all democratic-minded forces from the left to the right is able to defy the power and feasibility mania of those whose aim is total control. So it is not just about how Snowden's actions are to be assessed, but how each individual citizen, we all, is willing to go down in history: Upright and protecting human dignity or lazy, cowardly and creeping? Yielding to power or living what our forefathers have so brilliantly put into words in the UN Declaration of Human Rights? In Article 1: "All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights. They are endowed with reason and conscience and should act towards one another in a spirit of brotherhood." With all our might we should continue to earn this precious and legally protected good the respect it deserves! •

<sup>1</sup> Roca, René. Wenn die Volkssouveränität wirklich eine Wahrheit werden soll ... Die schweizerische direkte Demokratie in Theorie und Praxis – Das Beispiel des Kantons Luzern. Schriften zur Demokratieforschung, Band 6, edited by Zentrum für Demokratie Aarau. Zurich 2012. ISBN 978-3-7255-6694-5.

Glenn Greenwald. *No place to hide. Edward Snowden, the NSA and the Surveillance State.* London 2014. ISBN 978-0-241-14670-5

## Pentagon Papers and the historical truth ...

ts. In 1967, the then Secretary of Defense *Robert McNamara* commissioned a study. It was entitled *United States – Vietnam Relations, 1945–1967: A Study Prepared by the Department of Defense*. On more than 7,000 pages, entirely published by the US Government in 2011, you get an insight into the history of the Vietnam War and Washington's decision-making processes. Politically charged: The war had been prepared long before and was not performed due to geostrategic considerations, but in order to avert the United States' possible loss of face. Four US presidents had deceived the public and the Parliament. Indignant at these facts, *Daniel Ellsberg*, former US embas-

sy staff in Vietnam and employee of the think tank *Rand Corporation*, who had access to the files, revealed some of the papers under the name *Pentagon Papers* via "New York Times" in 1971.

According to *George Friedman* from the *Stratfor-Institute* the US wars since the Second World War have also had an other background: Many wars they did not win, but this not of inability, but because a victory had not at all been the goal. In fact the aim with these wars was to prevent something: namely, that the enemy could become a danger for the United States: "The United States must not win wars. It is sufficient when they throw the other side off balance and pre-

vent them from becoming so strong that they pose a threat." And if you consider the US wars against this background, the bill has come off: The wars had badly affected the countries and the population, it took years, if not decades, to get more or less back on their feet.

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*George Friedman. Die nächsten hundert Jahre. Die Weltordnung der Zukunft.* Frankfurt 2009, ISBN 978-3-593-38930-1. p. 15

# The hubris of certain brain researchers

## Against dehumanization of the individual

by Eva-Maria Riester, biologist

Although, according to scientists, a theory of neuroscience is still missing,<sup>1</sup> the “hype” over neuroscience is still quite large. Similar to the Human Genome Project (founded in 1990, completed in 2003), in which the genetic information of the human genome was decoded, and which promised incredible therapeutic possibilities for medicine, immense sums are being invested in certain approaches of brain research accompanied by all those promises that had not been fulfilled in the genetic project. An approach that besides imaging methods is promoted with millions of research funds, is based on the idea of the possibility to simulate the functioning of the brain in computers. It is based on the assumption that the brain functions as a computer and so it might be possible to determine for example mental illness due to an alteration in brain activity. In his book “Neuro mythology” Felix Hasler, a pharmacologist and neuroscientist, clears up thoroughly such dull notions of brain functioning.<sup>2</sup> Nevertheless, for instance, the Disability Insurance of Lucerne let itself be carried away to implement “brain scans” for the detection of mental illness or working ability although they lack every scientific basis as a “diagnostic method”.<sup>3</sup> The biologicistic approach that wants to reduce the human being to an alleged digital functioning of his brain, creates different problems. It is more than just doubtful whether one can help the sick people with such an approach. For instance, Prof Andreas Heinz<sup>4</sup> judges the benefits of neurosciences as follows: “A lot of money was put into this field – the clinical outcome was little.”

A reductionist approach according to which man seems to be a kind of machine runs the risk to import a notion of man in society that dehumanizes him and surrenders him to a utilitarian thinking. Man as a person, his soul, his mind, his spirit are no longer appreciated. In this view, the mentally ill has just a sick brain, and he needs a drug for his brain to work properly again. However, who is still asking questions about his life, his experience, his suffering?

The dull input-output thinking which emerges in various new curricula in Germany as in Switzerland is based on the same view of man. Children are regarded as “learning systems”, the individual is nothing more than a high-performance learning machine. And in case that the “system” child does not work it is diag-

nostically labeled instead of given pedagogic support to learn and raise up.

Since a systemic-cybernetic reduction of man to its digital brain function is problematic in many ways it shall be explained below, why from a biological perspective alone this is a one-sided restriction: the brain does not simply work like a computer.

How does the brain really work? Where does the comparison with a computer fail? Or is there a kind of binary code behind the function of nerve cells? Can thus a brain be rebuilt sooner or later, if only the amount of data and their processing can be optimized?

If the doctor wants to test the brain activity of a person, he can make an EEG (electroencephalogram). He measures the electric voltage change which occur in the nerve cells. Their work is based on electrical pulses in the range of millivolts that can be measured. When graphically representing the voltage changes of a nerve fiber, you can see “spikes”. These are always at the same level, so their value is always the same. When electrical impulses are forwarded along a nerve fiber, there are only two alternatives: spike or non-spike, only “yes” or “no” is possible. This all-or-nothing principle corresponds to the way a computer works. Here there are only two alternative states: either 0 or 1, and all information is encrypted correspondingly. The coding for the letter A, for example, in this binary code (binary = consisting of 2 units) is 00001, B is 00010, etc. This type of information encoding (encryption) is called digital. The forwarding of information to the nerve fiber with only two alternatives (Spike yes – Spike no) corresponds with the digital coding of a computer. This, however, only describes the process along the nerve fibers, but not the one along the entire nerve cell.

During the transfer of information from one nerve cell to another, a change of encoding ( encryption of the information) take place, namely from digital to analog. How would you describe it? A nerve cell consists of a cell body – you can imagine him as a star. From the ends of its points come nerve fibres. Some of them lead an electric impulse toward the cell body, and often there is only one fiber, which is able to conduct it away from cell body towards an other nerve cell. This efferent fibre (axon) ends with a little thickening, which has no contact to the subsequent nerve cell. There is a small gap. Now, when an electrical pulse get conducted along the

nerve fibre, it does not come across this gap, just as electricity cant pass an electric cable which is cut through. The gap in the line puts a stop. Well, how get the gap between the end of the fibre and the subsequent nerve cell – this switch point is called synapse – bridged?

As soon as the electrical impulse arrives at a synapse, it causes transmitter substances (which are stored in the thickening at the end of the fiber) to be released into the gap. They float toward the opposite cell and trigger a chemical reaction. This, in turn, causes a change in the electrical voltage of the subsequent nerve cell. The function of a nerve cell always follows the scheme: electrical (nerve fiber) – chemical (synapse) – electrical (nerve fiber) – and thus makes its way from one nerve cell to another.

The chemical process, however, represents an analog coding. What does that mean? Analog means that stimulus and signal correspond to each other, they are proportional. Previously, you could hear for example at an analog phone, which number had been dialed. If you had dialed three, three clicks could be heard in the receiver, with a seven dialed there were seven clicks to be hard. Analog means: The stronger the stimulus, the stronger the signal. With a nerve cell this means: the more transmitter substances are released, the greater is the change in electrical voltage at the subsequent nerve cell. A certain stimulus level is followed by a precisely corresponding response that can continuously have all possible intermediate values (not just two alternatives).

Nerve conduction, including brain activity, always means a change from digital to analog encryption (encoding) of information: digital (nerve fiber) – analog (synapse) – digital – analog ... The work of the brain is based on complex accounting transactions of these very processes. Along a nerve cell there are between 1 and 200,000 (!!) synapses.

An example: We all know the experience that you concentrate on a job and at the same time you are listening to the radio. However, the brain can hide the auditory stimulus so much that people do not remember having heard a song at all. This means that the nerve cells account the incoming analog electrical signals, evaluate the information, and only a portion of the stimuli received is actually forwarded to the cerebrum. This is where such accounting processes take place, which, for exam-

# Is this what we really want?

## Reflections on the basics of Curriculum 21

by Dieter Sprock

*The consultation on the curriculum draft was completed in late 2013. Now, the draft is being revised, however its concept will hardly change thereby unless we vigorously demand it. Although with Curriculum 21 important decisions will be taken for the future of our children and of the whole country, its concept has been discussed very little until now which has to be made good for.*

*It is absolutely essential for a project of such far-reaching importance as the curriculum is, that its principles and objectives are openly published and widely discussed so that the voters are able to form their own opinion about it and to decide whether they really want this curriculum. Such an approach is one of the self-evident democratic practices of our country.*

Those who drew up the curriculum, like to justify themselves by referring to Article 62 of the Federal Constitution, the so-called educational article requiring a harmonization of the national education system, which the Swiss people agreed to in 2006. However, this only provides for a harmonization “of the school starting age, of compulsory education, of the duration and objectives of educational levels, of their transitions, as well as of the recognition of qualifications” and it does not justify a complete realignment of the elementary school.

Curriculum 21 is not a question of, as officially proclaimed, harmonizing 21 curricula, but it is about profoundly changing all learning objectives and teaching practice. With its orientation “towards competence development of the Common European Framework of Reference” (LP21, languages p. 12), towards PISA and the theories of constructivism (see below for

more), it breaks with our proven European educational tradition and changes elementary school from the ground up.

### About a good school ...

The elementary school's task is to develop the human and intellectual abilities of the younger generation, to prepare them for their further education and for professional life and to train them to be responsible citizens, being able one day take their place in society in an active and responsible way. The former Swiss elementary school has excellently fulfilled this task.

The teaching profession enjoyed a high reputation in Switzerland, the elementary school was very well embedded and accepted in all social classes. It not only laid the foundation for later academic achievement, but it also contributed significantly to the preservation of direct democracy. It prepared the children for their duties as citizens.

Our elementary school's democratic foundations at cantonal and municipal level were unique in the world. A popularly elected school governing board exercised and ensured that everything was as it should be.

### ... via “new” forms of learning to education cutbacks

Of course, also a good school cannot rest on its laurels, i.e. remain on the level that has been achieved; there is always a lot to be improved and to be developed. But there was no reason to call into question everything that has been well-proven and to radically change the school, as it happened in our country.

In order to prepare the ground for the destruction of this proven education system, first of all the elementary school has

been branded for years now as extremely backward and outdated and the teachers' reputation has systematically been undermined. In newspapers, radio and television, and even in seminars for teachers, the impression was disseminated of the school as being no longer in tune with the times. Then one reform followed the other.

Teacher-guided classroom instruction was attacked in a particularly vehement way and it has pejoratively been described as “chalk and talk” or “frontal teaching”. “New” individualizing forms of learning were propagated such as workshop instruction, weekly lessons, lessons including different age-groups and learning by self-discovery. Propagandists claimed that it was impossible that all students could learn the same stuff at the same time without being damaged, since they had too many different needs, skills and knowledge. In order to support their assertion, they compared differences between the students within a class with those between different species of animals such as birds, dogs, monkeys and elephants in a completely absurd manner.

Under the pretext that school and school supervision had to be professionalized, major interventions into the school's democratic foundations were made. Important tasks were transferred from the elected community's school board to “professional” actors. Following the business model, head teachers were deployed and specialized agencies for school assessment were established, which had the task to implement the reforms, even against the advice of experienced teachers.

### Promise and reality

Flourishing learning environments, more joy at school and a holistic, individual-

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### “The hubris of certain brain ...”

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ple, enable you to focus on something specific.

If for research purposes a limitation of brain study on the digital encoding is made, you have to admit that a substantial part of the brain activity of people has thus been blinded out. If something else is propagated, it contributes to the construction of a view of man in which the human brain appears ultimately as a machine whose replica seems to be within reach, if only a few methodological problems will be solved. However, we have not even discussed that the brain can change its structures and work in close conjunction with

the second control system of our body: the endocrine system.

Reducing the brain function to a mere digital coding of the nerve fiber can be made for research purposes, but you have to say so and do not pretend you were achieving a comprehensive knowledge then. I do not want to be misunderstood: it is not a matter of torpedoing meaningful basic medical research, but rather of illuminating the absoluteness of a present research approach pretending to capture the human being in its essence as a whole. However, the brain does not work like a computer, the human being is not a machine. Man *has* a brain, but he *is* not his brain. Other sciences – philosophy, anthropology and psychology, for example – have contributed a lot more to the un-

derstanding of the nature of man than the neurosciences.

A friend put it this way: You would never believe in finding the Moonlight Sonata, if you take the piano to pieces. •

<sup>1</sup> “Es fehlt eine Theorie der Neurowissenschaft”, (A theory of neuro-science is lacking) interview in “Neue Zürcher Zeitung” from 16.4.2014 with Felix Treter, medical director of the addiction department at the Isar-Amper-Klinikum Munich East.

<sup>2</sup> Felix Hasler, *Neuromythologie*, transcript Verlag Bielefeld 2012

<sup>3</sup> “Allein angewandt wären sie Mumpitz” (Applied on their own they would be nonsense), “Neue Zürcher Zeitung” from 18.1.2014

<sup>4</sup> Prof Andreas Heinz is Director of the Hospital for Psychiatry and Psychotherapy at the Campus Charité Berlin; <http://www.nzz.ch/wissenschaft/bildung/das-gehirn-ist-ein-wunderbares-organ-1.18295786>, 5.5.2014

**"Is this what we actually want?"**

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ized advancement was promised. It was advertised with positive terms such as "learning to learn" "team learning" and "learning social skills", with "key skills", "holistic thinking", "autonomy", "opening of the school" and others. But reality is different.

In reality, the children learn less and less. They are often left alone at school, and work according to their own program, each on its own. Mainly the low-achieving students suffer! While in the classrooms they could be rescued by an experienced teacher and by the class community, they have no chance with individualized learning; left alone, they often give up. They quickly fall into the spiral of clarifications, diagnoses, exemption from learning goals and drug treatment with serious consequences for their lives. Students, being perhaps a little weaker and therefore needing more guidance, are turned into patients. Meanwhile, nearly every schoolhouse has a whole team of professionals doing social therapy work.

Undoubtedly, there are students who learn under all circumstances or can even skip classes single-handedly. They swing on top in the fierce competition, but on closer inspection they also often lack solid foundations and especially social bonding.

More and more, the promised "opening of the school" is turning out to be a dictatorship of an ideology that makes learning more difficult, if not impossible in our schools. Many parents are desperate, because their children no longer keep up at school and lose their pleasure in learning. Often people, even the most educated among them, do not understand the complicated tasks in the chaotic teaching aids. Instructors complain of some candidates' poor German and mathematics skills, some are not even prepared to learn, and there is a lack of the necessary readiness to work. After nine years of school, more and more young people are unable to read and understand a simple instruction manual. They only have little or no knowledge of the history of our country and the importance of direct democracy. The secondary schools have to make up for the missing bases with elaborate remedial courses, or to lower their requirements drastically.<sup>1</sup>

**The basics of Curriculum 21**

Curriculum 21 goes on with this disastrous development and obliges the 21 German-speaking cantons to going on in the same direction. Its theoretical foundations are – as the authors themselves say – constructivism and a focus on PISA specifications, both of which had already played a leading role when rejigging the proven elementary school.

**Preventing learning with constructivism**

Constructivism is a collective term for various philosophical movements of the 20th century. Most and especially the more radical forms assume that man is unable to recognize reality objectively, and everybody constructs his own reality. Consequently, statements about the true nature of the world are not possible. Likewise, there can be no universal values and educational goals, because everyone has his own truth.

The child, it is alleged, is primarily tuned in on itself, it is developing "essentially from within itself, from what exists in his own mind"; it is largely constructing itself. Not the world around it and its interpersonal relationships, but: "The brain is found to be the ultimate designer of reality by this theory." (after Ahrbeck 2004, pp. 85f.) In case of difficulty, consequently, no longer the child with its complex network of relationships and its personal thoughts and feelings is in the centre, but its brain functions. This theory is reflected in the diagnosis of numerous nervous children and their treatment with psychotropic drugs.<sup>2</sup>

Transferred to school this means: If no statements about the true nature of the world are possible, it makes no sense to teach this nature. Teaching is emptied of its contents. "Willingness, approaches and attitudes", as a substitute for content, will become all the more important now. The child does not have to understand the world, it is enough if it can find its way around and move in it. It "discovers the world by acting." The traditional conveyance of knowledge and values is replaced by simple action concepts and simple skills that cockily are called competencies in the curriculum.

Teachers and educators become companions of a development that is determined by "the autonomy of adolescents". Their task is to provide learning opportunities from which the children choose, but which they may change or reject, as well. The teacher is required to largely refrain and to leave the responsibility for the child's own development to the child.

Curriculum 21, which wants to rebuild the school according to this abstruse image of man, means a radical break with the European understanding of education and its understanding of man as a person. Man is reduced to a "self-control system". The reality and the interpersonal dimension of life and learning are largely concealed. And education degenerates into a collection of banal skills that can be measured and checked but have nothing to do with genuine expertise in the sense of European educational tradition.

**Aligning the learning contents to PISA**

In the eighties, at the insistence of the US government under President *Reagan*, the OECD developed standardized tests, which are known as the PISA test today. Their goal was to bring the educational policy of each member state resisting centralization under control.

Today PISA is used to control the education policies of sovereign states by OECD standards worldwide. PISA does not measure the quality of education, as is generally believed, but controls education, thus determining its content; children learn for the test. From the beginning PISA has been nothing more than a political control instrument.<sup>3</sup>

(Media-supported) the first tests triggered a flurry of reforms all over Europe. Meanwhile, via the education administration, PISA has become an important management tool in Switzerland, too.

**How EU and OECD control Swiss education policy**

At the University of Bremen, a study was published in 2010 in the context of a special research project entitled "Transformations of the State", which examined the influence of international organizations, especially the OECD and the EU on Swiss education policy. The focus was put on the Bologna process, pushed forward by the EU Commission and on the OECD PISA study. The results show in short, an "unexpectedly high influence" of international organizations on the framing of Swiss education policy. They succeeded in modifying the "national guiding principles of education" in order to correspond to those of OECD and EU. In this process certain "national actors" had used the international initiatives such as PISA and Bologna "strategically". Amazingly the "veto players and the cultural guiding principles of Switzerland" had not been able to prevent this process. The "transformation of the Swiss education sovereignty" was said to represent a role model for political change in other countries!<sup>4</sup>

For years the Swiss education system has been influenced by international organizations and turned inside out in line with the latter's standards. Curriculum 21 fits seamlessly into the educational concept of the OECD and the EU, which want to force education into line worldwide. This curriculum does not contain anything individual, which becomes obvious by the empty phrases that are used in similar projects in our neighboring countries Germany and Austria.

# Children want to get to know real life

by Ursula Felber

The bell rings. Many children run into the school. They laugh, scream, talk. Most of the children are lively, awake, curious, and involved. At school they want to cooperate, be there, learn and they are dependant on someone who relates to them and teaches them things. Despite the fact that they are quick thinkers, they often let their thoughts momentarily be distracted and hop from one thought to the next. They often carry with them non-digested impressions of their daily lives and the media and have unanswered questions about them.

The children enter the classroom this way, full of life, chatting, unpacking their school materials, running quickly to the child in the last row and often don't realise that the bell rang and that the lesson has already begun. It is the job of the pedagogue to get the children to concentrate and to instruct them step-by-step how to solve the daily exercises. He or she notices if the children are mentally not yet in the school. Today's children are often weighed down with nonsense. In their environment they are taken on fantasy trips, they are told ghost and monster stories, are confronted with all the occurrences in the news, the computer animates them to play war games – all these things are far away from the real world.

## Alex, an example

The 9 year old Alex in an example of what preoccupies children. An examination before school showed that Alex needed a person to help him organising his things during the lesson, for example, to open books, take out the appropriate notebook, put his jacket on and take care of his shoes etc.

He was certified to be talented but has difficulties with orientation. There was no matching teaching person to be found for this responsibility. (In hindsight it was proven that the diagnosis was false.) It already had been noticed in the first few weeks of school that Alex sunk into his fantasies during the lesson and didn't participate in the class activities.

Conversely, he tried to get attention by making noises, antics and hectic movements. During break he didn't want to go outside. When he was to work alone, he couldn't apply the instructions because he was mentally too preoccupied with other things.

He repeatedly spoke of impressions that he had experienced in the internet or by playing with the play-station. Everything indicated that this boy spent several hours using new media (such as computer, internet, Gameboy, mobile, Playstation, Smartphone).

## Getting the parents involved and looking towards the future

At several meetings the teacher explained the parents that too much computer consumption has negative effects on thought and speech as well as on motor abilities development with children. The parents were instructed to pay attention to the Internet sites their son visited. At the same time Alex needed to be introduced to real life. We suggested to the mother to include Alex more in the housework. Carry down the garbage bag, hang up the washing, load and unload the dishwasher, set the table, help with the shopping and wash the car. His fine motor skills weren't well developed. He learned to close his jacket with a zipper. The teacher practised tying shoes with him using a cardboard pattern and laces. During the lesson she especially paid attention to giving him fitted, small step instructions and not letting him vanish into his fantasies. She would bring him back by asking him questions or making him aware of something. She was interested in how he was doing. He complained above all that his little sister always bothered him. Alex was preoccupied with questions which were uncommon for his age. In the Internet he read

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## "Is this what we actually want?"

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### Whom does this curriculum serve?

Against this background, the main question rises, who is actually served by this curriculum: Does it serve our children or does it just meet the OECD- and EU-standards? Or will it prepare a society in which only 20 percent of the people are needed to keep the economy going, whereas the rest must merely be fed and entertained somehow, requiring just simple skills?

It is well known where to this constructivist "departure into new educational worlds" is leading. The victims are all those children who get no support at home, either because their parents can not give it to them or do not have the money for expensive tutoring. Do we really want to have this approach to be the basis of our elementary school?

Man is not a "self-controlling system." By nature, man wants to cooperate with his fellows. His human and intellectual abilities can only be developed in relationships with others and by actively and consciously dealing with the world. Teaching and learning have a strong interpersonal component.

Children cannot develop "out of themselves". By self-discovering learning, they develop only a limited and mainly self-centered view of the world. In order to expand their view and to lay the foundation for the understanding of more profound contexts, personal teaching is needed, based on the existing knowledge of our ancestors. There is no need to reinvent the wheel.

A well-managed classroom offers the ideal basis, including group- and individual learning, of course. Working together guided by a teacher increases the joy of learning. It also provides a chance for less-achieving students and helps quite essentially to consolidate what they have learned. Thus, clearly the best results are delivered and yet the "Gemeinschaftsgefühl" (sense of community) is fostered in a very natural way.<sup>5</sup>

The claim that such a school is no longer appropriate, has proved to be an intentional act of manipulation. Meanwhile, even economic circles recognized that the much cited "knowledge society" does not need less but more solid basic knowledge. Children want to learn to understand the world and have the right that school helps them to do so. It is unacceptable that

school reduces education to simple skills or competences to act and leave them to themselves. Do we really want to continue to look on as the further destruction of our elementary school is taking place without doing anything about it? •

<sup>1</sup> For more details see "Was ist mit unserer Schule los. 25 Jahre Schulreform in der Schweiz", by Dr Alfred Burger, headmaster and teacher. The brochure is still available by *Current Concerns* editorial.

<sup>2</sup> More about the impact of radical constructivism in education in "Kinder brauchen Erziehung. Die vergessene pädagogische Verantwortung" by Prof Dr Bernd Ahrbeck, 2004. He teaches at the Humboldt University in Berlin, Institute for Rehabilitation Science with the focus on "Verhaltensgestörtenpädagogik" (Pedagogy of the behavior-disturbed). ISBN 978-3-170-17973-8

<sup>3</sup> Read in Roman Langer, Warum haben die PISA gemacht, in Langer, R. (ed.) 2008: *Warum tun die das? Governanceanalysen zum Steuerungshandeln in der Schulentwicklung* ISBN 978-3-531-15807-5

<sup>4</sup> <http://www.sfb597.uni-bremen.de/homepages/bieber/arbeitspapierBeschreibung.php?ID=159&SPRACHE=de&USER=bieber>, a German translation is on the homepage of the school forum Switzerland under [www.schulforum.ch](http://www.schulforum.ch)

<sup>5</sup> Furthermore "Auf die Lehrer kommt es an! Für eine Rückkehr der Pädagogik in die Schule" by Michael Felten, 2010 ISBN 978-3-357-9068-824

**"Children want to ..."**

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something about the speed of sound and the crash of the Concorde. He provided this information spontaneously during the lesson and wanted to impress the other children. She was aware that he wasn't on the same level with the other children. She concentrated on not letting herself be distracted from his disruptions and to look forward and strive to attain the prescribed goal with the children. As time went by, only winking to him was enough, a gesture requiring him to give his opinion and explain how he understood his schoolmates so that he kept up with the pace of the lesson. She showed him what he could do positively for the community for example, placing the chairs on the desks, watering the flowers, writing something on the board, reading or handing out notebooks.

In gymnastic lessons the teacher encouraged him to climb the pole or to rope-jump. He dreamed of being a good soccer player, however he didn't want to take part in the necessary individual exercise steps and stood in the sidelines. He behaved as if he were caught up in himself.

**Dangers of the Internet**

Alex once mentioned that his father watched horror movies and that he was afraid and couldn't get to sleep. A few talks, some of which included the school's social worker, were necessary to make the parents aware how their son experienced such films and what he needed in order to spend his free time without the media. It doesn't help to forbid the media. The children and parents must be given a guide as to how to sensibly organise their time. In the meanwhile, some teachers offer courses in which the parents learn how to do homework with their children, how to play board games and activities that are appropriate for their children. During the lesson and before the holidays, the children make a list of activities which are proposed for the holidays.

Alex' noises and mumbles in the classroom eventually came to an end. He was integrated more in the class. Learning and engaging in the material and themes and not least in homework, calmed and satisfied him. By working with the book "Digitale Demenz" by Manfred Spitzer, the teacher realised how strongly some of her pupils were involved in using the internet. In the last three years, the spread of the Internet and Smart phones had enormously been promoted. Through exact questioning, she found out that one third of the third graders have their own Facebook-Profile although this is not permitted before the age of 12. More than half of the pupils own a mobile phone and many of them have their own television in

their room. Only one child had no access to the internet. Children are very cunning and educated in dealing with the media. They often impress the older generation. Many parents also think that they are offering their children the best. They are led to believe that their children can learn better with the latest media. Recently the children arrived at the classroom excitedly and said that a schoolmate can be seen on *YouTube*. The teacher asked for the precise details and looked at the home-made film on the computer. A boy in underwear posed with a naked torso and wanted to use this method to find a girlfriend. In another posting, Alex and his mates gave instructions how one can disturb the lesson. The teacher stood there, speechless. She had never experienced such a thing. The pupils used to come home on Wednesday afternoon, sit in front of the computer, make productions of themselves and look at themselves afterwards on *YouTube*. Children with this kind of behaviour are so self-absorbed that they cannot pay attention to the lesson. The school director was informed. Only when the parents, with the accompaniment of the school director, were made to watch the almost pornographic films of their children, were they affected. Now they requested that these postings be deleted immediately. Unfortunately this was not possible with all of them and now the whole world can continue to watch these self-portrayals. Since then Alex had no more unobserved access to the internet. The results are immediately noticeable in the lesson, how he is sitting there, how he looks at others how he participates. This is remarkable.

**Real-life as a guideline for school**

As a rule, parents are aware of the dangers in the internet. They know how one can block certain internet sites. However, on a daily basis, they don't pay attention to the consumption of media by their children and are not consequent with maintaining the rules with regards to the media. The school board recognised that an Advisory Evening by a media expert is too late in the middle school and recommends that this Advisory Evening begins in the 2<sup>nd</sup> grade. Teachers, Parents, Councils and Police need to work closely together and cooperate. The excessive media consumption can be fought when we use real life as a guideline for our children and take them with us in our desire to shape the future.

Alex is now in the third grade. He lies less often on the sofa using his game console. He is a good pupil and has more possibilities today to busy himself. The bee theme fascinates him. All the children learned much and they could pass their knowledge on to other children. They gave presentations to different classes with pictures, objects (bee-keeper hat with veil,

hives, different honey varieties, bees) and texts they learned by heart. Alex went to the library and picked up more fact-books about these animals. Proudly he told about the construction of the beehive. He was fascinated with the class reading the book "Der starke Bär" and wanted to read the book again at home.

At school we can teach other things in life when we choose real, factual information and give the children the opportunity to contribute something to the community. When the pupils are involved in a subject together, a serious mood prevails. They think together, ask questions and discuss their experiences and learn with and from each other. The reality of a typical workday especially interested them. The second graders visited the blacksmith in the village. The huge anvil, the fire and the big tongs fascinated them very much. They got a view onto the world in front of their house door that they have not yet seen. As the chimney sweep stood in the classroom with his apprentice, they were so awestruck, they couldn't close their mouths. The chimney sweep told something of his special clothing, on which no dirt is visible and which does not catch fire, about the bristles of his brooms, which are made of goose-feathers. He also explained some history. The chimney sweep is a symbol of luck which has its origins in the times when people discovered that one must clean the chimneys to avoid fires.

The visit to the fire station was interesting for the girls and boys. What is a computer game compared to the experience of sitting in a real fire truck and climbing on the ladder?

It was noticeable when visiting the craftsmen, how easily and naturally they could explain their jobs. The chimney sweep invited the children to ask, in six years, to do a trial internship with him if they wanted to. Career-seeking doesn't just begin in the upper classes. And as the blind man with the seeing-eye dog came to the class, the children sat there and listened attentively to the 80-year old man.

This is also an event which they can take with them and never forget.

How our children are prepared for the future, whatever factual information, what words we give them will influence their effectiveness in democracy and have an effect on our lives together. •

(Translation *Current Concerns*)

# On enhancing dialogue, trust and cooperation for a new Asia of peace and stability

## Declaration of the Fourth Summit of the Conference on

### Interaction and confidence building measures in Asia CICA, Shanghai, 21 May 2014

km. On 21 May representatives of the Conference on Interaction and Confidence-Building Measures in Asia (CICA) Member States met for their fourth summit in Shanghai, China. The summit was attended by 12 member states' heads of state and government. Also present was the General Secretary of the United Nations. At the end of the conference, a joint declaration was adopted, the "Shanghai Declaration". The Western mainstream media did not cover these events.

And yet, by now 26 countries in Asia and Northern Africa have joined forces in the CICA, namely: Egypt, Afghan-

istan, Azerbaijan, Bahrain, Bangladesh, China, India, Iran, Iraq, Israel, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Cambodia, Mongolia, Pakistan, Palestine, Qatar, Russia, South Korea, Tajikistan, Thailand, Turkey, Uzbekistan, United Arab Emirates and Vietnam. Several other states, including those from outside Asia and also several international organizations, including the UN and the OSCE, have attained observer status. The establishment of the CICA goes back to an initiative of the Kazakh President Nursultan Nazarbayev in 1992. The organization itself was founded with a first

meeting of the Foreign Ministers of the then 15 member states in 1999.

The member states hosted their first summit in 2002, and from then on there has been a summit every 4 years. CICA is to become for Asia what the OSCE is for Europe. Kazakhstan held the chair of the conference in the years 2002 to 2010, from 2010 to 2014 Turkey did, and now China has taken over the presidency until 2016. The CICA's aim is progress in maintaining peace, safety and stability in Asia. This year's final declaration of Shanghai is also to serve this goal.

We, the Heads of State and Government of the Member States of the Conference on Interaction and Confidence Building Measures in Asia (CICA), met in Shanghai, the People's Republic of China on 21 May 2014 for the Fourth CICA Summit;

- Recognising that the world is undergoing extensive and continuous changes; the trend towards multi-polarity and economic globalisation is gaining momentum; countries are becoming more inter-dependent; multilateralism and democracy are increasingly important for the international community; and more favourable conditions are emerging for safeguarding world peace and stability;
- Emphasising that traditional and non-traditional security challenges threaten regional and global peace and stability;
- Mindful of the fact that Asian countries face identical development challenges and have urgent need to jointly create a favourable environment that they could share in the long run;
- Maintaining that the Member States should uphold solidarity and make further efforts towards enhanced peace and stability in Asia and the world, taking into account richness in the cultural diversity, on the basis of dialogue and cooperation under CICA framework and shared responsibilities in international and regional affairs;
- Reaffirming our commitment to the UN Charter and universally recognised norms and principles of international law, upholding the objectives and principles of CICA enshrined in the *Declaration on the Principles Guiding Relations among CICA Member States* of 14 September 1999 and the *Almaty Act* of 4 June 2002 (see box on p. II); deciding to further ad-

vance the CICA process and continue implementing confidence building measures; and build Asia into a harmonious region with enduring peace and prosperity through comprehensive and in-depth dialogue and cooperation in the political and security fields;

- Emphasising the unique importance of common indivisible, equal and comprehensive nature of security;
- Underscoring the need to strengthen cooperation between regional organisations and forums in Asia by encouraging establishment and promotion of cooperation ties between CICA and other regional and international organisations and forums;

Declare the following:

#### I

1.1. We believe that in the context of globalisation, security has become an all-encompassing concept with increasingly prominent transnational, comprehensive and interconnected features. The countries in the region share common interests and security concerns. No country can stay immune in the face of security problems. We should seek common, comprehensive, cooperative and sustained security based on the common understanding that has been reached so far.

1.2. We reiterate our collective desire to carry forward the spirit of solidarity, cooperation and mutual assistance; respect each other's sovereignty; seek common development and progress; and stay committed to building a security environment in Asia based on confidence, mutual trust, good neighbourliness, partnership and cooperation among all States deeply rooted in the heart of the Asian people.

1.3. We maintain that no State will strengthen its security at the expense of security of other States. Bearing in mind the UN Security Council's primary responsibility under the UN Charter for maintenance of international peace and security, we emphasise that no State, group of States or organisation can have pre-eminent responsibility for maintaining peace and stability.

1.4. In accordance with the UN Charter and international law, we reaffirm to respect each other's sovereignty, independence, territorial integrity and inviolability of internationally recognised borders; to refrain in our international relations from the threat or use of force against territorial integrity or political independence of any state in any manner inconsistent with the principles and purposes of the UN Charter; to uphold resolution of disputes by peaceful means; not to interfere in the internal affairs of States; not to adopt or support actions that aim at overthrowing legitimate governments; to respect equal rights and self-determination of peoples in accordance with the UN Charter and international law; to respect human rights and fundamental freedoms for all without distinction of race, sex, language or religion; and international cooperation in solving international problems of economic, social, cultural or humanitarian character. We also renounce application of double standards in international affairs.

1.5. We reaffirm that diversity in traditions, cultures and values in Asia is a valuable asset to the rich content of the cooperative relations among CICA



**"On enhancing dialogue ..."**

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Member States. We stand ready to advance extensive dialogues across cultures, civilisations and faiths; encourage inclusiveness, mutual learning and understanding; draw on each other's strengths for common progress; and promote regional connectivity through people-to-people contacts.

1.6. We shall respect each other's right to freely choose and develop our political, social, economic and cultural systems.

**II**

2.1. We support the United Nations playing a leading role in safeguarding and advancing international peace, cooperation and security; and promoting common development, human rights and supremacy of international law. There is an urgent need for the international community to enhance cooperation to jointly and effectively address terrorism, violent extremism, trans-national organised crime, illicit drug trafficking and corruption, as well as other threats and challenges such as scarcity of resources and climate change, in

accordance with relevant international instruments.

2.2. We emphasise that the international community should jointly combat terrorism in all its forms and manifestations in accordance with the purposes and principles of the UN Charter and support full implementation of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy. We also emphasise the need to jointly curb the spread of terrorist and extremist ideologies; and promote interreligious and interethnic tol-

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**Initiatives on international law coming from CICA member states**

km. On 14 September 1999, the Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the then member states of the CICA decided on the "Declaration on the Principles Guiding Relations among CICA Member States"; (the text in English is to be found on the website of the CICA: [http://www.sc-cica.org/page.php?page\\_id=439&lang=1&parent\\_id=12](http://www.sc-cica.org/page.php?page_id=439&lang=1&parent_id=12)) at their meeting in the Kazakh megacity Almaty (until 1993 Alma Ata). This declaration is a type of CICA policy statement. Here the CICA States refer to the purposes and principles of the United Nations Charter and international law, emphasizing the growing desire of their peoples to live in peace, friendship, mutual understanding, good neighbourship and to live together cooperatively. The states of the CICA want to improve and intensify their relations and respect the principle of sovereign equality. Conflicts shall be prevented.

At the same time the diversity of the national characteristics, traditions, cultures and values of the Asian countries should not be regarded as bothersome, but appreciated as an enrichment for relations. Security in Asia is considered as indivisible, confidence-building measures are considered to be particularly important.

The signatories recognize a close relationship between peace, security and development in Asia and peace and security in the whole world. The signatories consider the disarmament of all types of weapons of mass destruction extremely important, and they also turn against the upgrading of conventional weapons. The declaration concretely takes position on the following points:

- for a sovereign equality of states and respect for the rights inherent in sovereignty,
- against the use or threat of violence,

- for the territorial integrity of the member states,
- for a peaceful settlement of disputes,
- for non-interference in internal affairs,
- for disarmament and arms control,
- for economic, social and cultural cooperation,
- for human rights and fundamental freedoms.

The "Provision of Almaty" adopted on 4 June 2002 ("Almaty Act"; the text is to be found in English on the website of the CICA: [http://www.s-cica.org/page.php?page\\_id=439&lang=1&parent\\_id=12](http://www.s-cica.org/page.php?page_id=439&lang=1&parent_id=12)) is based on the Declaration of Principles of 1999 and focuses on issues of security threats and establishing security in the Asian region. In addition, the internal organization of the CICA is determined more accurately.

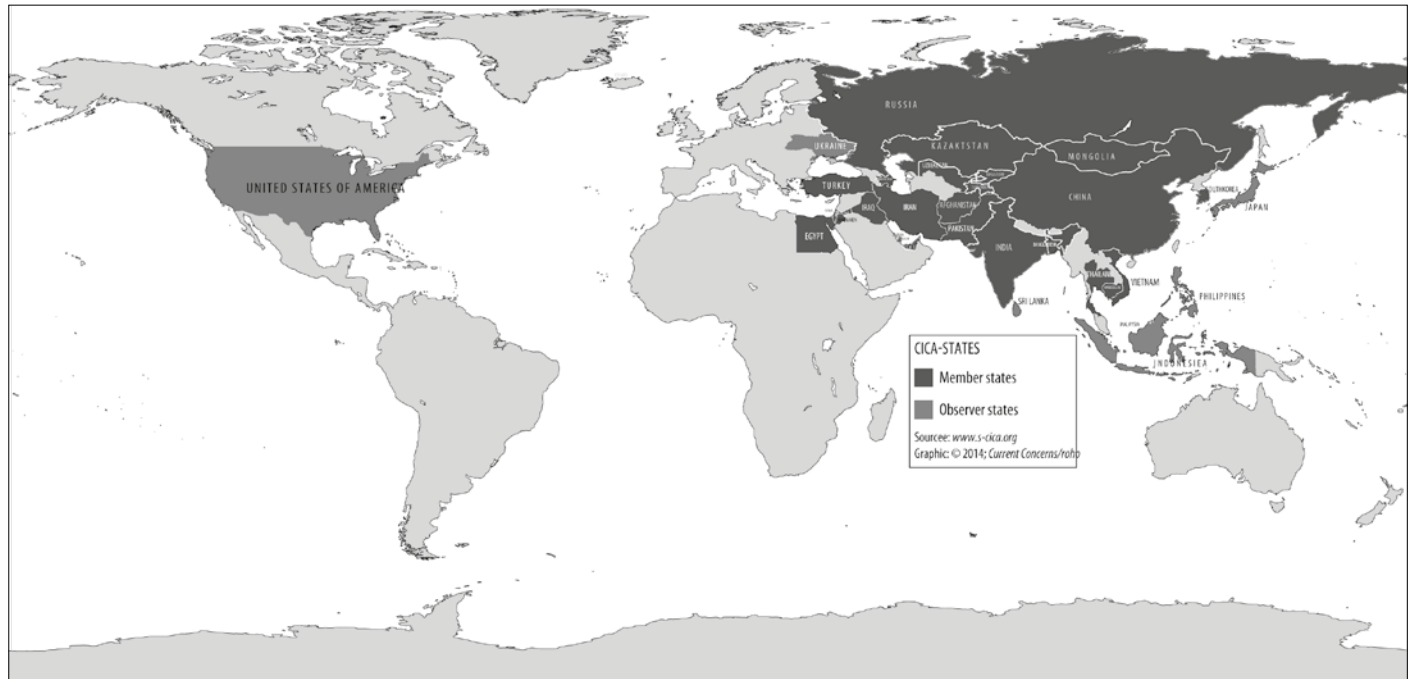
The focus on issues of peace, security and disarmament is also evident in other initiatives by the CICA Member States. On 12 October 2011 the "International Forum for a Nuclear Weapon-Free World" in the Kazakh capital Astana adopted a "Declaration for a nuclear-free world" (<http://www.inform.kz/eng/article/2411544>). Kazakhstan itself had refrained from its 1500 nuclear weapons from the time of the Soviet Union after 1991 and closed its former nuclear test site. This declaration was followed by concrete decisions by CICA states such as the "Statement of Mongolia" dated 17 September 2012 (at the UN as an attachment to the document *A/67/517-S/2012/760* to find), which was also seen as a constructive contribution to nuclear disarmament and nonproliferation of nuclear weapons and the strengthening of trust and predictability in the region by the General Assembly of the United Nations.

The CICA States have also taken initiatives to other problems that threat-

en the security of the region and international security, like international drug trafficking or international terrorism. For example, one initiative of the Iranian government against violence and extremism has been incorporated in a General Assembly resolution of 18 December 2013 ("A world against violence and violent extremism"; *A/RES/68/127*).

But CICA also takes up initiatives taken by the United Nations: for example the initiatives to solve problems of developing countries without access to the sea or the results of the UN conferences on environment and development, and refers explicitly to the provisions of these conferences.

The United Nations Conference of Environment and Development, held in Rio de Janeiro from 3 to 14 June 1992, adopted a final declaration, the "Rio Declaration on Environment and Development" (<http://www.un.org/documents/ga/conf/151/aconf15126-1annex1.htm>). Principle 7 of this Declaration, to which the CICA states explicitly refer to is the following: "States shall co-operate in a spirit of global partnership to conserve, protect and restore the health and integrity of the Earth's ecosystem. In view of the different contributions to global environmental degradation, States have common but differentiated responsibilities. The developed countries acknowledge the responsibility that they bear in the international pursuit of sustainable development in view of the pressures their societies place on the global environment and of the technologies and financial resources they command." This also is a counterweight against efforts to abuse the results of the UN conferences on environment and development, to slow down economic development in emerging markets and developing countries.



### “On enhancing dialogue ...”

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erance, dialogue and understanding. In this context we welcome the adoption of the United Nations General Assembly resolution entitled: “A World against Violence and Violent extremism” (A/RES/68/127) [see box on p. II] initiated by the Islamic Republic of Iran, and call for the full implementation of this resolution.

2.3. We reaffirm the importance of promotion and protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms and our commitment to fulfill these obligations in accordance with the UN Charter, UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights, international law and other applicable international human rights instruments. We further reaffirm that all human rights are universal, interdependent, interrelated and indivisible. International community must treat human rights globally in a fair and equal manner. While the significance of national and regional particularities and various historical, cultural and religious backgrounds must be borne in mind that it is duty of states, regardless of political, economic and cultural systems, to promote and protect all human rights and fundamental freedoms.

2.4. We emphasise that separatism and violent extremism are threats to state sovereignty, unity, territorial integrity, security and stability. We will not support any separatist movements and entities on the territory of another Member State. We also reiterate our resolve that our territories will not be used by any separatist movements and entities and we will not establish any kind of relations or communications with separatists.

2.5. We recognise that all necessary actions are required at national, regional and global levels to cooperate to significantly reduce and eventually eradicate suffering of people from hunger, malnutrition and food scarcity caused by many reasons, including wars, belligerent actions and military sieges. The international community should undertake joint efforts to increase investments in agriculture and rural development to ensure the right to adequate food, particularly for women and children. We call for open markets, increase of domestic and international funding for agriculture and rural development; promotion of sustainable agricultural production; reduction of poverty; and work towards achieving access to food for all. We believe that a universal, rule-based, open, non-discriminatory and equitable multilateral trading system will promote agricultural and rural development in developing countries and contribute to world food security. We also recognise the need to address the root causes of excessive food price volatility including structural causes at all levels.

2.6. We acknowledge that energy security has direct impact on sustainable development at national, regional and global levels and well-being of people in all countries. We commit ourselves to further promote and reinforce energy security in line with the concept of the sustainable development and eradication of poverty as set out in the final outcome of Rio+20 by taking into account the diversified national priorities and needs of all countries, developing countries in particular. We believe that diversification of energy sources and the routes of their delivery will increase competitiveness of international energy markets. The international community should, on the basis of

the principle of “common but differentiated responsibilities”, further promote and reinforce energy security featuring mutually beneficial cooperation and diversified forms of development, particularly in developing countries, aimed at sustaining economic and social development. Countries should also step up research and promotion of advanced energy technologies, including fossil fuel, take actions, as appropriate, to develop joint infrastructure projects and ensure necessary level of investments in productive capacities, as well as vigorously develop economically efficient and environmentally sound energy resources.

2.7. We emphasise that joint efforts for promotion of regional connectivity, especially integrated and competitive transport and logistics systems, will help achieving more efficient use of trade opportunities among the Member States and accelerate regional and international transport and transit cooperation that will duly serve the goal of sustainable economic development.

2.8. We reaffirm our commitment to non-proliferation, disarmament and peaceful uses of nuclear energy, as also stipulated in the relevant CICA documents, in particular those adopted at Summit and Ministerial level. We highlight the threat posed by the continuing existence and proliferation of nuclear weapons to world peace and security. We note the initiative of the Republic of Kazakhstan to propose adoption of a Universal Declaration on a nuclear-weapon-free world by the UN General Assembly. We support the objective of the global and total elimination of nuclear weapons and strengthening in all respects

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**"On enhancing dialogue ..."**

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the nuclear non-proliferation regime based on the principles of non-discrimination, equal, indivisible and undiminished security for all states.

2.9. We support establishment of a Middle East Zone Free of Nuclear Weapons and All Weapons of Mass Destruction, based on arrangements freely arrived at among the states of the region concerned.

2.10. We welcome the nuclear-weapon-free status of Central Asia, which is a significant contribution to strengthening of global regime of non-proliferation. In this respect we welcome signing on 6 May 2014 by five NPT nuclear-weapon States<sup>1</sup>, the Protocol on negative security guarantees to the Central Asia Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone Treaty [Treaty of Semey]<sup>2</sup>.

2.11. We also welcome the declaration of September 2012 by Mongolia and the five NPT nuclear-weapon States on the former's nuclear-weapon-free status as a concrete contribution to non-proliferation and the enhancement of confidence and predictability in the region.

2.12. We support the inalienable right of all states to develop and use nuclear energy for peaceful purposes, including power generation, with due respect to their non-proliferation obligations and their commitments emanating from agreements to which they are parties; in particular the IAEA Safeguards Agreements.

2.13. We take note of Kazakhstan's offer to host an IAEA Low Enriched Uranium Bank on its territory and call upon IAEA to make the supply of Low Enriched Uranium from this bank available to all its

member states without any conditionalities that detract from the IAEA Statute.

2.14. We note with appreciation that the Nuclear Security Summits held in Washington, Seoul and The Hague contributed to setting out concrete steps and measures to strengthen nuclear and radiological security.

2.15. We also take note of the international conference on Disarmament and Non-Proliferation with the motto "Nuclear Energy for All, Nuclear Weapon for None" held in Tehran on 17-18 April 2010.

2.16. We believe that information and communication technologies have greatly promoted the economy and social welfare of mankind, but they can also be used for purposes against international peace and security. We are deeply convinced that international cooperation, including co-operation in elaboration of international norms, rules and principles of responsible behaviour of states in the use of information and communication technologies is extremely important for reducing risk and enhancing security. CICA Member States are ready to work together to build a peaceful, secure, open and cooperative information space.

2.17. We support full operationalisation of the International Think Tank for Landlocked Developing Countries in Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia which was established in July 2009. We urge landlocked countries in Central Asia to ratify or accede to the Multilateral Agreement for Establishment of the International Think Tank for Landlocked Developing Countries of September 2010 at their earliest convenience in order to bring it into full operation. We recognise the Think Tank's potential role in providing technical and capacity-

building support to member countries and deem it desirable that it should collaborate with existing networks and initiatives in the region.

**III**

3.1. We express our support to the orderly and peaceful conclusion of the ongoing developments in the Middle East and North Africa, in conformity with the UN Charter, International Law and legitimate aspirations of the peoples of the region.

3.2. Taking into account different positions on the Middle East peace process, we remain concerned and call upon all parties concerned to implement all the relevant UN resolutions to achieve comprehensive, lasting and just peace and security and stability in the region by resuming negotiations, to establish the Palestine State, based on the relevant UN resolutions and on internationally recognised legal basis on this issue with the aim of achieving the two-state solution of two states living in peace and security with each other, while fully preserving the peace, security, sovereignty, territorial integrity and political independence of all other states in the region. The international community, including the Quartet, should continue to provide efforts aimed at realising this goal.

3.3. We recognise the significance of regional dialogue and cooperation as means of building trust in Northeast Asia. In this regard, we welcome the relevant initiatives by regional countries, including the "Ulaanbaatar Dialogue on the Northeast Asian Security" proposed by the President of Mongolia and the "Northeast Asia Peace and Cooperation Initiative

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## Not any longer ...: *Zbigniew Brzezinski*. The Grand Chessboard. American Primacy and Its Geostrategic Imperatives

"This huge, oddly shaped Eurasian chessboard – extending from Lisbon to Vladivostok – provides the setting for 'the game.' If the middle space can be drawn increasingly into the expanding orbit of the West (where America preponderates), if the southern region is not subjected to domination by a Single player, and if the East is not unified in a manner that prompts the expulsion of America from its offshore bases, America can then be said to prevail. But if the middle space rebuffs the West, becomes an assertive single entity, and either gains control over

the South or forms an alliance with the major Eastern actor, then America's primacy in Eurasia shrinks dramatically. The same would be the case if the two major Eastern players were somehow to unite. Finally, any ejection of America by its Western partners from its perch on the western periphery would automatically spall the end of America's participation in the game on the Eurasian chessboard, [...].

But first of all. Europe is America's essential geopolitical bridgehead on the Eurasian continent. America's geostrategic stake in Europe is enormous (unlike

America's links with Japan) the Atlantic alliance entrenches American political influence and military power directly on the Eurasian mainland. [...] Conversely, without close transatlantic ties, America's primacy in Eurasia promptly fades away US control over the Atlantic ocean and the ability to project influence and power deeper into Eurasia would be severely circumscribed."

*Zbigniew Brzezinski. The Grand Chessboard. American Primacy and Its Geostrategic Imperatives, 1997. ISBN 0-465-02725-3*



Conference on Interaction and Confidence-Building Measures in Asia, CICA, in Shanghai on 21 May 2014 (picture www.news.cn)

**“On enhancing dialogue ...”**

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(NAPCI)” proposed by the President of the Republic of Korea. We hope that these initiatives can create synergy with other initiatives and make important contribution to confidence building and security co-operation in the region and beyond.

3.4. We believe that the peace and reconciliation process in Afghanistan should be Afghan-owned and Afghan-led. We call upon the Afghan armed opposition groups to renounce violence, sever ties with Al-Qaeda and other terrorist organisations and respect the Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan. We applaud the people and the government of Af-

ghanistan for holding the recent presidential and provincial council elections that mark peaceful transition of power from one elected government to another. We take note of the completion of the transition process from ISAF forces to Afghan forces at the end of the 2014 and the beginning of the transformation decade. In this context, we remain committed to support Afghanistan and work with the rest of the international community to contribute to Afghanistan’s and the region’s security, stability, economic growth and development. We recognise the important and impartial role of the United Nations as well as contributions of regional organisations and initiatives in assisting Afghanistan to achieve these goals. In this regard, we support China in hosting the Fourth For-

eign Ministerial Conference of the Heart of Asia-Istanbul Process on Deepening Cooperation for Sustainable Security and Prosperity of the Heart of Asia Region in Tianjin in August 2014.

We recognise that terrorism, violent extremism and illicit drugs pose great threat for security and stability of Afghanistan, region and beyond. While appreciating the Afghan national efforts and the joint and concerted regional and international cooperation to address the challenge of terrorism in all its forms and manifestations, including dismantling of terrorist sanctuaries and safe havens, as well as disrupting all financial and tactical support for terrorism, we emphasise

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## ... but: *Kishore Mahbubani*. The New Asian Hemisphere: The Irresistible Shift of Global Power to the East

“For most of the previous three centuries, the peoples of Asia, Africa, and Latin America were objects of world history. The decisions that drove history were made in a few key Western capitals, most often London, Paris, Berlin, and Washington, DC. The misnamed World War I and World War II were carried out without consulting the majority of the world’s populations. They were co-opted into fundamentally European wars – at least until Japanese aggression appeared in China and the Pacific. Today, the 5.6 billion people who live outside the Western universe will no longer

accept decisions made on their behalf in Western capitals. [...]

The reluctance of leading Western minds to acknowledge the unsustainability of Western global domination presents a great danger to the world. Western societies have to choose whether they will seek to defend Western values or Western interests in the twenty-first century. Most Western minds like to think that they are primarily promoting Western values, democracy high among them. But the rest of the world notices how the West promotes democracy selectively. No Western society is keen to promote

democracy in Saudi Arabia for fear of endangering oil supplies to the West, for example. [...]

I often despair when I read the op-ed pages of the *New York Times* and the *Financial Times*. Newspapers are filled with an inzealous discourse among minds who believe that the 12 percent of the world’s population who live in the West can continue to dominate the remaining 88 percent who live outside the West.”

*Kishore Mahbubani. The new Asian hemisphere: the irresistible shift of global power to the East, 2008 ISBN 978-13: 978-1586484668*

**"On enhancing dialogue ..."**

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the need for continuing these efforts further. It is necessary that the international community assists Afghanistan in countering illicit drug production and trafficking and promoting alternative livelihood; and take other necessary measures in countering illicit drugs, precursors and consumption worldwide. In this context we call upon all the Member States to intensify activities aimed at combating illicit trade in drugs, preventing diversion of precursor chemicals used in illicit drugs, reducing drug abuse and dependence through a comprehensive approach and detecting and blocking financial flows linked to illicit trafficking of drugs and precursors.

3.5. We are concerned that the conflict between Armenia and Azerbaijan remains unresolved and continues to endanger international and regional security. We support peaceful resolution of this conflict on the basis of principles and norms of international law and the decisions and documents adopted in this framework. In this regard, we call on the OSCE Minsk Group<sup>3</sup> to re-invigorate its efforts towards settlement of the conflict.

**IV**

4.1. We recognise and appreciate the efforts of all CICA Member States, who have actively carried out dialogue and cooperated in enhancing the Confidence Building Measures (CBMs), since the founding of CICA. We stand ready to further strengthen cooperation; work on further evolution of CICA process; and support CICA in playing more significant role in Asian affairs. We are ready to act upon the "Shanghai Declaration" adopted at the Summit and contribute to bringing lasting peace and common prosperity in Asia.

4.2. We welcome efforts of the coordinating and co-coordinating countries to promote cooperation in different dimensions of CBMs. We appreciate establishment of CICA Youth Council and CICA Business Council; and holding of three CICA Business Forums in Bangkok, Istanbul and Ekaterinburg. In this respect, we commend, in particular, efforts by Russian Federation and Republic of Kazakhstan to achieve progress in economic and human dimensions respectively. We stand committed to promote CBMs in various fields and expand long-term dialogue and cooperation among Member States.

4.3. We reaffirm that poverty eradication is the greatest global challenge facing the world today and indispensable requirement for sustainable development. We

acknowledge the importance of sustainable development in accordance with national circumstances and priorities and all the principles of the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development, including, inter alia, the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities, as set out in principle 7 thereof. We further resolve to accelerate our efforts towards the achievement of Millennium Development Goals by 2015. We believe that sustainable development goals being developed as per Rio+20 mandate should effectively address the three pillars of sustainable development and would contribute to the post-2015 Development Agenda.

4.4. We underline the important role of balanced Multilateral Trading System, beneficial to the realisation of the developmental goals of all Member States. In this context, we support the early resumption of the process of accession of some CICA Member States to the World Trade Organisation.

**V**

5.1. We appreciate the work carried out by CICA Secretariat to develop CICA; and support further strengthening of the Secretariat for better fulfillment of its mandate. We appeal to all CICA Member States to make voluntary contributions to the budget of the Secretariat. We welcome the plan to relocate the CICA Secretariat to Astana, capital of the Republic of Kazakhstan.

5.2. We highly commend the contribution made by Ambassador *sas* CICA Executive Director [2010 - 2014]<sup>4</sup> to development and strengthening of the CICA process.

5.3. We welcome the adoption of the new CICA Rules of Procedure.

5.4. We emphasise the importance of strengthening cooperation, partnership and external relations between CICA and other regional and international organisations and forums. In this regard we encourage CICA Secretariat to continue its efforts to forge institutional level relationships with regional and international organisations and forums.

5.5. We also welcome the signing of the Memorandum of Understanding between the CICA Secretariat and the SCO Secretariat on the sidelines of the CICA Shanghai Summit.

5.6. We request those Member States, which have not already done so, to ratify the Statute of the Secretariat of the Conference on Interaction and Confidence Building Measures in Asia on an expedi-

tious basis. We also request those Member States, which have not done so already, to sign and ratify the Convention on the Privileges and Immunities of the Secretariat, its Personnel and Representatives of Member States of the Conference on Interaction and Confidence Building Measures in Asia.

**VI**

6.1. We express our deep appreciation for the significant contribution made by the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan, H.E. *Nursultan Nazarbayev*, to the establishment, development and growth of CICA as the founding Chairman.

6.2. We highly commend the work carried out by the Republic of Turkey since it assumed CICA Chairmanship in 2010. The past four years under the able guidance of Turkey witnessed important progress in achieving CICA objectives and principles.

6.3. We welcome and support China's assumption of the Chairmanship of CICA and are confident that China, in close cooperation with other Member States and the observers, will pursue efforts to raise CICA cooperation and development to a higher level.

6.4. We are pleased to note increasing interest in the CICA process. In this regard, we welcome the People's Republic of Bangladesh and the State of Qatar as new members of CICA.

6.5. We agree to hold the Fifth Meeting of CICA Ministers of Foreign Affairs in 2016 and the Fifth CICA Summit in 2018.

Source: <http://www.s-cica.org>

See: Documents, political declaration, Declaration of the Fourth CICA summit

Editor's notes:

<sup>1</sup> USA, Russia, China, France, United Kingdom: Nuclear weapons states that have signed the Non-Proliferation Treaty.

<sup>2</sup> The Treaty of Semei was signed by Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan at Kazakh Semei (former Semipalatinsk) on 8 September 2006. It bans the testing, acquiring, possessing and manufacturing of nuclear weapons in Central Asia.

<sup>3</sup> The OSCE Minsk Group was created in 1992 by the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe CSCE, (now OSCE) to encourage a peaceful, negotiated resolution to the conflict between Azerbaijan and Armenia over Nagorno-Karabakh.

<sup>4</sup> The Executive Director is appointed by the CICA Ministers of Foreign Affairs upon recommendation of the Member State Chairing the Conference from its nationals. The Executive Director holds the office during the chairmanship of the concerned Member State: 2002 – 2010 Kazakhstan; 2010 – 2012 (and then extended until 2014) Turkey; 2014 – 2016 China. With the change of the chair also the respective Executive Director changes.

## The Asian countries profess their commitment to international law and prepare against claims of a unipolar world power

### When will Europe remember its ethical and cultural substance?

km. This year's final statement of the CICA summit deserves special attention: because of its clear commitment to international law and the Charter of the United Nations, because of the emphasis it put on the outstanding role of the United Nations for peace, security and stability in the world, because of the rejection of a unipolar world under the rule of one state or a group of states and because of the emphasis on the equality of all states.

The declaration emphasizes the interest of all CICA States in peace, security and stability in the region and thereby assigns a prominent role to the closer cooperation between the states while simultaneously stressing the mutual respect for the sovereignty of the member states and not only this.

With their commitment to the rights and obligations of the United Nations and the World Security Council, the declaration turns against the arrogance of the USA and its allies as well as that of NATO who want to take over the role of a "world policeman". The expressive renunciation of "double standards" in international relations marks a clear difference to western policies of the past 25 years.

The declaration emphasizes both the high value and respect for the diversity of traditions, cultures and values in Asia and the aim to have an extensive dialogue beyond all boundaries of cultures, civilizations and religions. They want to learn from each other, deepen their mutual understanding and promote cohesion in the region through interpersonal contacts. Thereby every people's right to freely choose and develop its political, social, economic and cultural system should be respected, just as the two International Covenants on Human Rights of 1966 require.

Obviously, the vast majority of Asian countries demonstrates an understanding of coexistence in a globally connected world that is different from that of Western leaders. It is no longer the "West" which takes a stand for the principles and values that the world community set sights on after the horror of two world wars. Today, other states and peoples of the world and their governments do so. Even more: The study of the "Declaration of Shanghai" and its reference points show that the Asian countries have already tackled an active international legal work for several years and thereby also esteem such initiatives that have been –

and still are – discounted in the West with polemic or are not known at all; although substantive issues such as nuclear disarmament are at stake, which should concern and deeply interest all nations of the world.

However, the governments of the countries in the "West" seem to have currently turned away – if we consider their actions and not their words – from the classical principles and values of the international community. Even *Angela Merkel*, the German Chancellor, has recently commented on this in a significant way by saying that, "Even in the long run Russia will not be able to escape from globalization neither politically nor economically". ("Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung" of 16 May 2014) This statement can only be understood if one knows that this kind of "globalization" does not mean cooperating under equal rights in a coalescing world – about which the Russian government, criticized by *Angela Merkel*, has itself repeatedly submitted proposals in recent years. Here, however, the word globalization is used in a sense which actually means a subordination to the US claim for hegemony and its financial power and at the same time it means a threat to all those who wish and strive for a different development in the world.

*Thomas P. M. Barnett*, a neo-conservative adviser of the Secretary of Defence *Donald Rumsfeld*, did this more than 10 years ago after the first phase of the Iraq war, when he already spoke with great arrogance of the "next round of away games of the US military" against states that would refuse "globalization" and also included Russia and a number of Asian States, as published in German translation in the "Frankfurter Rundschau" of 25 June 2003.

This arrogance has remained, even though the United States and NATO changed their power strategy after the failure in Afghanistan and Iraq towards "smart power". Now even the US President announced a kind of "reluctance" in the leadership of open wars when making a speech at West Point.

These strategic variations did not change anything about the ambition and the will to apply numerous sinister covert means for the preservation of power – means that go beyond the international law and the Charter of the United Nations. At the same time those who this policy is directed against, are provoked permanently so that they can be labeled as "war culprits".

This arrogance has had serious consequences until today. Already at the time of *Thomas P. M. Barnett* it was misjudged that the governments of most other States – here in Asia – are not made up of gamblers. There are politicians at work who do everything to prevent further escalations, but show also self-confidence and are no longer willing to submit to the "West", to consider all eventualities and take precautions – after all we can say from without.

The attention and the respect for the Asian states' achievements may not be misunderstood. It is not a matter of demanding an Asian or Russian way for Europe. Moreover, there is a questionable applause alleging that the Asian states and Russia in particular have motives, ideas and inspirations which have only little to do with the actual situation in these countries. They have more to do with the motives and ideas of elitist and authoritarian political forces in Europe itself, which probably want to (re-)gain strength by referring to Russia.

Europe, however, also has another intellectual and cultural tradition, which it can and must continue if it wants to survive in the coming upheavals in the world. It is time to remember the substance that concerns our existence, our moral and ethics, that forms and bears our culture. This substance bases on Christianity and modern Natural Law, on Humanism, the Enlightenment and the scientificity in all disciplines and should be used to face future challenges.

Europe was the birthplace of the recognition of human dignity and human rights, of freedom, the separation of powers, of a subsidiary, federal, democratic and social constitutional state under the rule of law. Europeans put forward the idea of international law and the sovereignty of state, people and citizens. The demand for tolerance and freedom of religion hails from Europe. Europe has tried to oppose an economic and social development towards social Darwinian capitalism with a socially committed market economy in which the liberal use of property and the development of productive forces are based on the general interest, i.e. the well-being of all people.

The citizens in the States of Europe can refer to all this and much more. So there are foundations for a sound, realistic European self-confidence with which Europeans can engage on a par with the other members of the big family of mankind.