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Horasis Extraordinary Meeting 2020

October 1, 2020, 09:30 pm. CET

Panel

Populism vs Multilateralism

Talking points and questions

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- o Conceptual: Polemical use of the term “populism” and lack of precise definition / how can populist politics be distinguished from common practices in representative-parliamentary systems?
- o Structural: State sovereignty and national interest are shaped by the logic of “my country first” / how can the priority that must be given to the rights and interests of a state’s citizens be reconciled with a multilateral approach? / “rational” unilateralism, on the basis of mutuality, as solution? [cf. a leader’s speech at this year’s opening of the UN General Assembly]
- o International: The Charter of the United Nations Organization upholds the principles of multilateralism, but actually facilitates unilateral action by the most powerful countries (P5) / what measures of reform are required to make that organization a framework for multilateral action?

Comment on the description of the panel’s topic:

- In a democracy, the goal cannot be that “all voters” agree. It is about majority rule on the basis of constitutional guarantees for minority rights. Uniformity is not a characteristic of democratic societies. At the international (global) level, the challenge lies in how to reconcile sovereign equality (of states) with the diversity of national interests.
- Almost without exception, so-called populist governments have the worst record in the handling of the crisis caused by the coronavirus pandemic.