

Peace in a multipolar world*

by Prof Dr phil Dr h.c. Dr h.c. Hans Köchler**, Lecture "Current Concerns," 20 April 2017



Hans Köchler
(picture
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I will divide my reflections on peace in a multipolar world into three sections: a look back in time; assessment of the status quo; and outlook. Accordingly, I shall first deal with the era of bipolarity. In a second step, I shall analyse the phase of unipolarity, now approaching its end. Here, I'll particularly elaborate on the self-contradiction which is inherent in every unipolar order, and address what I see as the "folly of power." Thirdly and finally, with regard to the emerging multipolar constellation, I will address the question whether there can be something like a "power-parallelgram of peace."

Realistic idealism resp. idealistic realism

To begin with, however, allow me to briefly introduce the question of world order in the context of my methodological approach, which I would tentatively describe as "realistic idealism" or "idealistic realism."

In order to determine how a given world order ought to be shaped, one must first of all know how it actually exists (i.e., what its constitutive elements are and under which circumstances it can be sustained). The desire for an order of peace in the sense of the Kantian vision of "perpetual peace" among Republican polities¹ is contrasted with the human inclination to violence not only in individual, but also collective action. One cannot deny the fact that the respective international constellation, i.e. world order, is the result of a struggle for supremacy, and not of a con-

scious and deliberate realisation of ideals. That this struggle – the assertion of national interests – often takes the form of war is also an undeniable historical fact. The President of the United States justified the recent missile attack on Syria not by reference to international law, but to the national interests of the United States.

"National interest" is a central concept in the theory of international relations (cf., in particular, the pioneering work of *Hans Morgenthau*).² However, the "perpetual" competition among states for power and privilege requires *morally* defined rules. In the intergovernmental realm, these must be codified in the form of *legal* norms by way of treaties between sovereign states.

At present, the idealistic discourse dominates debates on world order. However, in order to be credible, idealism must always be founded in realism. Rather than proceeding from an image of reality that is distorted by wishful thinking, those who analyse world order from the point of view of an *ideal* must first take into account the facts. Only from there can one develop methods and strategies for the realization of morally justified goals. This is the very essence of a credible and consistent policy of peace. Realistic prudence – or better, circumspection – is all the more important since power politics has always resorted to ideals to justify and enforce its aims – if need be, even by the use of military force.

The proclamation of a "New World Order" by the President of the United States at the beginning of the 1991 Gulf War was a typical case of idealistic camouflage of power politics. President *George H. W. Bush* characterised his new order by reference to the international rule of law and respect for human rights. What he had in mind, however, was a *unipolar* system that – the eschatological pathos of

its proclamation notwithstanding – proved to be rather short-lived. A quarter of a century later, the contours of a new, notably *multipolar*, architecture of international relations are beginning to unfold.

The era of bipolarity

The beginning of the unipolar period was marked by the collapse of the Cold War system, a development that caught many by surprise. Due to economic and social dynamics, the bipolar balance of power between the United States and the Soviet Union proved to be less stable than might have been expected with regard to the capacity of nuclear deterrence of the two superpowers of the time. It is true that in this period of a power struggle between ideologically antagonistic systems a global conflagration has been avoided; but the so-called "peaceful coexistence" was precarious and did not prevent a series of catastrophic proxy wars (such as in Korea, Vietnam, and Afghanistan).

The competition between the two rivals – often also referred to as "East-West conflict" – led to the paralysis of the United Nations Organisation in matters of peace and security (a constellation that is of renewed interest also under the conditions of today's emerging multipolar order). Armed with the veto privilege, the two countries blocked each other in the Security Council – a dilemma that became painfully obvious during the Korean conflict of the 1950s and, essentially because of the veto, has remained unresolved up to the present day. In that conflict, the armed, effectively *unilateral*, intervention of the United States and her allies became only possible because the Soviet delegate had left the chambers of the Security Council, and thus no veto was cast. Otherwise, the Korean conflict might have taken a different course, as it would have been impossible for the intervening Western powers to act in the name of the United Nations and, thus, claim international legitimacy. An absurd result of this constellation is the continued existence of an international command – on the armistice line between North and South Korea – under the flag of the United Nations.

The sudden disappearance of one of the two protagonists, triggered by the events of 1989 in Afghanistan and Eastern Europe, obviously resulted in a unipolar constellation, a development that was misinterpreted not only by the so-called victor, but also by many other actors. It was not due to a suddenly emerging moral consensus, let alone a common commitment

* translated from the German

** *Hans Köchler* has served as Chairman of the Department of Philosophy at the University of Innsbruck (Austria) from 1990 until 2008. Today he is Chairman of the Austrian *Arbeitsgemeinschaft für Wissenschaft und Politik*, (Working Group for Sciences and Politics), Co-Chairman of the International Academy for Philosophy and president of the *International Progress Organisation*, which he co-founded in 1972. At this point we are only able to emphasize a few aspects of his very rich work. Köchler's research focuses are among others Legal Philosophy and Political Philosophy, Philosophical Anthropology, in which his research findings in many points do correspond with the views of the Polish Cardinal *Karol Wojtyła*, the late Pope *John Paul II*. Since the early seventies Hans Köchler has been issuing numerous publications, undertaking journeys, delivering speeches and contributions to various international organisations; this way he has been committed to the dialogue of cultures, especially to a dialogue between the West and the Islamic World. In 1987 Professor Köchler along with Nobel Prize winner *Seán MacBride* launched the

"Appeal by Lawyers against Nuclear War". As a result Köchler contributed with his advisory opinion so that the International Court of Justice later declared a potential use of nuclear weapons would be a breach of international law. Time and again Hans Köchler commented on the reform of the United Nations and called for its democratisation. He especially commented on the question how international law could be implemented and took a stand against the instrumentalisation of the standards of international law by playing power politics. As special envoy appointed by the then UN-Secretary General *Kofi Annan* to the "Lockerbie Trial" he wrote a critical report which was published as a book entitled "Global Justice or Global Revenge? International Justice at the Crossroads" in 2003. His impression was, that the Lockerbie-Trial was influenced by political guidelines. Therefore he demanded a strengthening of the separation of powers and the complete independency of international criminal jurisdiction. The article published here is based on a lecture Hans Köchler has given on invitation of the cooperative *Zeit-Fragen/Current Concerns* in Switzerland on 20 April 2017.

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to the international rule of law, that the United Nations Security Council regained its effectiveness. The resolutions in the 1991 Gulf War or the establishment, by the Council, of war crimes tribunals were simply the result of the new unipolar constellation. By the end of the power struggle of the Cold War, there was only one power left to dictate the decisions. The unanimity in the Security Council – if one does not regard China's habitual abstentions as contradiction to the unanimity requirement of Article 27 (3) of the Charter – was not at all an authentic expression of a common commitment to peace under the objectives of the UN – in the time when Russia under *Yeltsin* was close to collapse. It was the result of weakness of the other permanent members in the Council and also of the fear and apprehensions of non-permanent members (mostly small and medium-sized states whose consent to coercive resolutions of the Security Council in some instances, as during the 1991 Gulf Crisis, was de facto obtained by extortion).³ Accordingly, this was not the beginning of a new global policy of peace, but the trigger of a phase where the only remaining superpower, the "global hegemon," was able to dictate the course of events. However, the triumphalist pose in which the hegemon expressed its claim to power, demanding collective obedience, contained in it the seeds of failure (i.e. the end of global supremacy), though undetected at the time.

"The folly of power" or: the self-contradiction of unipolarity

In the euphoria of victory after the Gulf crisis of 1990/1991, the United States administration, together with its closest allies, began to implement a project for a "New American Century."⁴ "Humanitarian intervention" (later euphemistically rebranded as actions dictated by a moral "Responsibility to Protect" [R2P]) became the catchword for the justification of what in actual fact were wars of aggression in the service of strategic and economic interests (e.g. in Yugoslavia-Kosovo in 1999, Afghanistan in 2001, and also Iraq in 2003 and Libya in 2011). "Officially," all these effectively unilateral actions were meant to protect human rights, democracy and the rule of law in the targeted regions.

The most ambitious – and now disastrously failing – geopolitical project so far was also launched in the period after the 1991 war against Iraq: the creation of a so-called "New Middle East" (or "Greater Middle East") with the aim of reshaping the historical region of the Near East and the wider Middle East, including Afghani-

stan, according to the Western world view and conception of life (here also, with regard to democracy and human rights) and with the overarching goal to permanently integrate this region into the Western sphere of influence.

This claim to "re-education" of an entire civilization – to be supported by the use of armed force – was nothing short of totalitarian. It has not only destabilised the targeted area and jeopardised world peace in the long term; it also has plunged the neighbouring region of Europe into a deep political crisis – not only in terms of security policy, but also as regards the, as yet completely unresolved, problems of refugee flows and migration. The phenomenon of the so-called Islamic State and the terror it inspires would not exist but for this policy of "régime change," i.e. the violent change of governments, for which the United States is primarily responsible. The motivation of acts of violence that emanates from the "Islamic State" is evident in the declarations of an increasing number of Islamic movements also in other regions of the world such as Mindanao in the Philippines. As is becoming ever more obvious, the hedonistic consumer society of the West has nothing but crude weapons technology to respond to this development.

In the unipolar constellation the single most powerful country felt emboldened to pursue its strategy of worldwide dominance – and it did so with impunity and without fear of serious opposition. In actual fact, the above-described policies led to much greater geopolitical instability and insecurity as compared to the era of bipolarity, a time when the two competitors for global power held each other in check.

Despite the mobilisation of all its resources in terms of "hard" and "soft power," the dominant country has been unable, in the prevailing unipolar constellation, to fill the political vacuum its actions had created in Iraq, Afghanistan, and Libya in particular. Instead, the interventions in these countries triggered a chain of events that has proven uncontrollable. Missile attacks (such as recently in Syria) or the deployment of a so-called MOAB ("Mother of all Bombs," in Afghanistan) – to name only the most recent symbolic acts, accompanied by martial rhetoric of the commander-in-chief – have done nothing to change this predicament.

"The sands of time cannot be stopped"

The blindness and delusion of the autocratic ruler, which is typical for such a constellation, was particularly obvious in the "National Security Strategy" proclaimed by President Bush Junior after the events of 2001. It was that document's guiding principle that there must never occur a situation in which another power

would reach military parity with the United States (*National Security Strategy of the United States of America*, September 2002, Chapter IX). As history has amply demonstrated, however, no power in the world can halt time. For me, at that juncture already, the proclamation was an example of denial of reality *par excellence*. Such an excessive collective will to power, repressing, almost neurotically, the consequences of its actions, ultimately always negates itself. The world – the community of peoples – is witness of such a process according to *actio-reactio* scheme at the very moment. One might also characterize the underlying social dynamic as "dialectic of power." I shall briefly illustrate this by reference to two aspects:

First aspect: The pressure exerted by a state with global claim to power immediately generates counter-pressure and provokes the affected peoples and ethnic groups to *resist* it. This is particularly the case in situations where the organisational infrastructure of the targeted state has been destroyed. This, on turn, will trigger developments in which the people(s) reorganize themselves and reshape the very order under which they existed – in a way that may also challenge traditional state boundaries (as has been the case in the Arab-Islamic region following events triggered by the so-called Arab Spring).

Whether we are prepared to acknowledge it or not, we have to face reality: As early as two years ago, the ideologues of the Islamic State have launched the motto by which to describe this development, namely "collapse of Sykes-Picot." This means the disintegration of the Middle Eastern order that was established towards the end of the First World War (1916) in a secret treaty between a British and French negotiator after whose family names the treaty is named. This old order is now definitively breaking up. Even analysts of international affairs of whom one would not necessarily expect it, in the meantime are giving careful consideration to the aspect of pressure and counter-pressure, and to the fact that, in the end, peoples always challenge the status quo imposed upon them by the erstwhile powers. Earlier last year, *Zbigniew Brzezinski*, National Security Adviser under President *Carter*, made a remark in a similar vein. In his consideration of a "Global Realignment" (in: *The American Interest*, April 2016), he undertook an effort to identify the reasons why the United States, the sole superpower after the Cold War, may have to give up its claim to undisputed global rule and again join the ranks with other states in a global alliance. (He particularly mentioned Russia and China.)

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Second aspect: In all corners of the world, states are beginning to form new alignments, both with regional and global objectives. Examples of the former are the creation of the Eurasian Union, initiated by Russia, but also the founding of the Shanghai Cooperation Council. The latter is exemplified by the grouping of states, which has become known under the acronym "BRICS" (Brazil, Russia, India, China, South Africa). As to the former, i.e. the regional aspect, I should like to note an interesting geostrategic development in the area east of Afghanistan. The "China-Pakistan Economic Corridor" (CPEC), based on an agreement between China and Pakistan on transport and infrastructure projects from the Chinese border to the Arabian Sea, marks the disengagement of the nuclear power Pakistan from its erstwhile protector – not vaguely and secretly, and around several corners, but by now clearly and openly, as I recently could convince myself during a visit to Islamabad.⁵ This is just one recent regional element of a global development that demonstrates what I have called the "dialectics of power."

Ultimately, we are dealing here with the symptoms of a gradual *loss of control* in the unipolar system. The intergovernmental groupings and agreements mentioned earlier, both regional and global, have set in motion a new dynamism of politics at the global scale. They most likely will become the building blocks of a future multipolar order, a form of organisation of inter-state relations that – lest we forget – was contemplated by the United Nations in the year 1945, upon its foundation.

**Multipolarity:
power parallelogram of peace?**

Perhaps we should pause here briefly and make sure we understand the nature of order in relations between states. In the era of globalization, it is an ever more complex system of interaction and dependence on different levels. As a multidimensional framework of interaction, including the economic, political, socio-cultural and military dimensions, it is dynamic from the outset. It exists in no other than the dynamic form. In this sense, the stability of world order is always to be understood as *relative*. Stability *sensu stricto* is an unattainable ideal. The respective world order is a parallelogram of forces that results from the complex interaction of the interests of state actors and – in our increasingly globalized world – non-state actors alike. This necessarily implies a perpetual struggle for influence, in fact a struggle

for power that results from the collective will of the citizens of all states. As I have indicated earlier, this collective will is not *per se* ethically motivated – oriented, for example, at the principle of mutuality, or mutual respect. Rather, it is guided by the natural pursuit of advantage, aimed towards the benefits the respective governments promise their citizens in order to legitimize their rule. Whether we like it or not, the *reality* of international relations is such that normative considerations are of secondary importance. Only when more and more people become aware that the reckless pursuit of interests by each state, acting in isolation, is ultimately detrimental to all, will normative ideas gain traction. Acknowledging the constraints of realpolitik, but without giving up on the ideal, one thus might be resigned to the wisdom of "better late than never."

The aspect of mutuality is essential for international law as well. Mutuality is, above all, the normative foundation of the sovereign equality of states. Philosophically speaking, the *principle* of sovereign equality can, *in theory*, also be derived from the universal validity of human rights. In actual fact, however, the continually changing world order, centered on the state as sovereign agent, is the result of the articulation and assertion of interests by a multitude of actors and on multiple levels. It is not a deliberately created system of inter-state relations based on rules on the normative validity of which all would agree. If this were the case, the history of conflicts would have come to an end with the entry into force of the United Nations Charter in 1945. Since its very foundation, the ultimate goal of the world organisation has been the safeguarding of world peace. According to the binding norms and strict procedural rules of the Charter, especially the provisions of collective security under Chapter VII, a state of peace should thus have prevailed from this point onwards.

It is also an undeniable fact that world order is often the result of a war which reconfigures, or redefines, global power relations, at least for a certain time. The creation of the League of Nations after the First and the United Nations Organization after the Second World War are testimony of this. Both organizations came into existence as result of global armed conflict, and their statutes reflected – resp. reflect – the power constellation after the preceding war. With regard to the UN, this notably applies to the *veto privilege* of the five states that were the victorious powers of World War II. Writing that privilege into the organisation's Charter (Article 27),⁶ they aimed to eternalise the position of power they enjoyed at the time, trying, as it were, "to stop time." (The Charter cannot be amended without the consent of those states.)

However, the actors, as ambitious as they may be, here too have come to the bitter realization – I say this not without irony – that time cannot be brought to a halt. Today's power constellation is no longer that of 1945. The community of states has entered a phase of radical change, indeed *global interregnum*. The transition from a unipolar to a multipolar order has become more and more obvious – as "unintended consequence" of an unrestrained, often militarily enforced, assertion of power.

**Collective security
in a multipolar world**

In these times of global change, the United Nations Charter might gain new relevance nevertheless: namely as normative framework, or body of rules, for the emerging multipolar balance of power. The UN system of *collective security* could well serve as a blueprint of a future order of peace. However, progress in that direction will only be possible if the structure of the Security Council is adapted to the new realities. Vested with almost unlimited powers, the supreme executive organ of the UN – of which Hans Morgenthau spoke as the "Holy Alliance" of our time – is indeed construed along the lines of a *multipolar* balance of power. The five veto-wielding permanent members were meant to hold each other in check in all decisions on the maintenance or restoration of peace. The Charter of the United Nations does not provide a framework for unipolar rule, but embodies the *multipolar* constellation of 1945, with the five great powers of the time as permanent members (United States, France, Great Britain, China [initially: Republic of China], Soviet Union [now: Russia]). Because of the veto, the Council is only able to act on the basis of consensus among those states between which there should ideally exist a balance of power. This was the expectation of the founders of the organization in the final phase of the Second World War. In the course of the Cold War, however, the multipolar architecture of the Charter became outdated rather quickly. The development of military technology led to an arms race between the United States and the Soviet Union. This resulted in a *bipolar* balance of power between these two antagonists, which, in turn, meant the marginalisation of the role of the other permanent members and, ultimately, a paralysis of the Security Council due to the mutual blockage of these two veto-wielding states.

What was conceived in 1945, albeit with different intention (for the sake of perpetuating the power constellation of the moment), is, nonetheless, still relevant today.

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Peace between a multitude of sovereign actors, i.e. in a multipolar framework, can only be secured *cooperatively* and not through an unrestrained competition for power and privilege. This is, I believe, the essence of the system of collective security according to Chapter VII of the UN Charter. Decisions on the maintenance of peace, i.e. the enforcement of the prohibition of the threat or use of force between states, must be reached by way of unanimity between the permanent members. The real meaning of the "veto" – a word nowhere to be found in the Charter – is *consensus* among the most powerful states who bear special responsibility because they possess the means of enforcement.⁷ In statutory terms, the veto is certainly not about bolstering an agenda of power politics in the interest of each of the permanent members.

In order not to create false hopes, one must emphasize here that the rule that prescribes unanimity among the permanent members in matters of collective security only makes sense if a party to a dispute is obliged to abstain from voting. This is not the case under the present statute. (Most observers of international affairs are not in any way aware of it.) According to the Charter, a permanent member that launches aggression against another country can prevent a decision of the Council in this matter by simply vetoing it. Would the basic legal principle of bias be ignored in such a way at the domestic level, any person having committed a violation of the law could be judge in his own cause. Whichever way you look at it, this is actually the case under the decision-making rules of the UN, according to the wording of Article 27 of the Charter.⁸ The idealists who expect nothing but good of the UN easily tend to overlook the so-called fine print in the text of the Charter. After all, the UN is not as perfect as one would wish it to be – and it never will be, even if the provisions of the Charter were implemented up to the last comma. Because of the dictates of power politics, the text contains serious normative contradictions that undermine the very system that the UN is supposed to promote.⁹

In view of this systemic inconsistency it is of particular importance that the Charter – reflecting the power balance between the victors of World War II – should be adapted to the newly emerging multipolar constellation. The development towards multipolarity has become more and more apparent in the wake of the regional crises we mentioned earlier; for the time being at least, it is not a result of World War III. One can only hope that this will remain so in the future.

The adaptation of the Charter would mean that decisions of the Security Council on the maintenance or restoration of

peace are reached on the basis of consensus among the global regions. In a multipolar world it will no longer be possible to exclude entire continents – Africa, Latin America, Southeast Asia – from the decision-making processes. Should this continue to be the case, systemic instability in the emerging multipolar framework will further increase and the United Nations Organization will, so to speak, abolish itself, i.e. make itself obsolete.

Accordingly, the United Nations Organization must undertake a *process of reform* that will give regional intergovernmental organizations the status of permanent members in the Security Council. Possible candidates would be the African Union or the European Union (the latter replacing France and the United Kingdom as state members). If one were to keep the veto rule, decisions on war and peace, i.e. coercive measures under Chapter VII of the Charter, including the use of armed force, would have to be taken by way of consensus among the global regions. Such a procedure might also better protect the interests of a weaker state party, being part of a larger regional grouping, in a bilateral confrontation with another state, whether within or outside that grouping.

Whatever the system of intergovernmental rules or procedures may be, one has to admit that genuine peace cannot be established by executive fiat. In conformity with the Purposes and Principles of the United Nations Charter, orientation towards the consensus principle is decisive. It is also more realistic in a multipolar framework than in a unipolar one where stability is achieved by pressure and coercion.

The nuclear dilemma

World order indeed seems to develop in the direction of multipolarity. In our era of globalization, this also means that the traditional sphere of state action is supplemented, and partly superimposed, by economic interests and social forces in the ever more complex interactive framework of the information society. Non-political actors increasingly shape the political space. That is the very essence of multipolarity.

However, in this age of arms of mass destruction, honesty obliges us to mention a serious caveat. There exists a virtually indissoluble dilemma as regards peace in an ideal multipolar world where regional organisations, each representing the collective interests of member states, together shoulder the tasks of peacekeeping – by way of consensus so as to avoid that one can overrule all the others. The dilemma I am referring to is the *distortion of power relations* due to the *nuclear potential* of individual states.

Any balance of power, of whatever kind, will be *distorted* – or may become com-

pletely *unstable* – due the destructive nuclear potential of individual actors, irrespective of their weight in other spheres – whether political, social, economical, or cultural. Any commitment, as credible as it may be, to decision by consensus among equal partners will become stale, indeed obsolete, as soon as a state considers the nuclear option. The recent aggravation of the crisis on the Korean peninsula has made everyone of this. As long as the system of rules in a multipolar constellation cannot effectively deal with the imbalance of power resulting from the possession of nuclear weapons, peace will remain *precarious* under any circumstances, irrespective of the existence of otherwise well-established mechanisms to balance the interests of sovereign states at the global level.

In the era of weapons of mass destruction, peace is not a *positive quality*, but the *absence of war* due to mutual deterrence. This means that peace rests on fundamental mutual *distrust*, however unpleasant it may be to admit it. (The technical term "nuclear mutual deterrence" has been in use since the years of the Cold War.) The system is only stable as long as no one, under any circumstances, departs from this distrust. A legally binding prohibition of nuclear weapons, such as the one now being proclaimed by a group of states with Austria as one of the initiators,¹⁰ will remain ineffectual as long as those who are already in their possession cannot be obliged to give up their nuclear potential. Above all, voluntary renunciation of nuclear arms that is demanded from the weak (i.e. smaller, less powerful states) will remain an illusion if the great powers, in particular the United States and Russia, continue to insist on their privilege.

Under these circumstances, the only solution would be to close the "vicious circle" of peace politics and bring about conditions in which no member of the international community will feel threatened in its survival as state. After all, this is what the United Nations has declared to be one of its central goals. The existing imbalance between nuclear and non-nuclear powers and the risk of war resulting from it will persist *indefinitely* if states are only prepared to disarm if they do not feel threatened in their survival. As absurd as it may seem, this is the kind of *perpetuum mobile* that is characteristic of international power politics in the nuclear age.

This means that the nuclear dilemma cannot be solved even in a multipolar framework as long as there is no change of mind in *moral* terms. This would require a joint commitment of all states to general nuclear disarmament, i.e. a nuclear-free world without exceptions. North Korea, a country which is relatively small and eco-

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nomically weak, with only marginal influence beyond its borders even in terms of "soft power" (i.e. propaganda and information), nonetheless is strong enough to unsettle the regional and wider international power balance – simply due to its possession of nuclear weapons. The situation will be particularly serious if the country should indeed be capable, or believed to be capable, of delivering a nuclear warhead at long range, e.g. to the territory of the United States (Hawaii).

A caveat of *realpolitik* appears to be appropriate yet again: all measures or provisions for the maintenance of peace – whether in a unipolar, bipolar or multipolar framework – remain precarious as long as individual states believe that, in order to safeguard their existence, they must not dispense with nuclear weapons. This also applies to the nuclear superpowers insofar as they may see themselves threatened by a competitor. Here, the reality of power politics also contrasts with a basic norm of international law: national sovereignty. The principle of sovereign equality of states (Article 2 [1] of the UN Charter) is incompatible with the threat potential inherent in the possession of weapons of mass destruction. Furthermore, the threat resp. fear of mutual destruction can preserve peace only temporarily, but never permanently. The capability of nuclear destruction ultimately reduces to absurdity the meaning of *deterrence*; in the final consequence, any threat of use of nuclear arms is a gamble with the survival of mankind.

Having contemplated the contradictions and challenges of international re-

lations in the nuclear age, I would like to conclude with a more positive note on the prospects of a multipolar order. The emerging multipolarity of the global power constellation may also foster alliances, "coalitions of the willing," so to speak, for constructive, non-military purposes – forms of cooperation that would not be possible in an all-encompassing unipolar framework. In this context, individual actors – the states on behalf of their citizens – will have much greater freedom to act compared to a constellation where they are facing a single hegemon. They also will enjoy a relatively wider margin to act than in a bipolar system – as has become obvious in the days of the Cold War when a state's freedom of action often was confined to being able to play off one superpower against the other.

What this wider margin means for an effective maintenance of peace can probably only be fully appreciated when the United Nations system of collective security will have been brought in tune with the development towards a world with several centers of power (if we put aside, for a moment, the distortion of power relations resulting from the nuclear potential). The end state of such a transformation of world order will be a constellation where – instead of the leading industrialized powers – the global regions are represented equally in the Security Council.

Here, our reflections on peace in a multipolar world turn full circle. The ideal of peace can only be meaningfully advanced if one takes into account the reality of collective action. In the absence of paradise, where alone the good reigns supreme, collective security requires credible deterrence, even before the nu-

clear threshold. This is the very meaning of the coercive powers of the Security Council that are not only more credible, but also more effective, in a genuine multipolar constellation (i.e. one which rests not alone on statutory provisions). Under these conditions, these vast powers will also be more compatible with the ideal of *partnership* between peoples and states than in a framework of coerced peace under the auspices of one or two of the most powerful actors. •

¹ Kant, Immanuel, *Perpetual Peace: A Philosophical Sketch*/Zum ewigen Frieden. Ein philosophischer Entwurf (1795).

² Politics Among Nations: The Struggle for Power and Peace, 1948.

³ For details see also Childers, Erskine. "Empowering 'We the Peoples' in the United Nations," in: Köchler, Hans (ed.), *The United Nations and the New World Order*. Vienna, 1992, pp. 25ff.

⁴ A think tank was founded in Washington DC under this designation. *Dick Cheney*, Secretary of Defense in the administration of President *Bush Senior*, later to become Vice President, and *Donald Rumsfeld*, two-time Secretary of Defense, were members, among others.

⁵ Conference at the National Defense University of Pakistan on the topic "Islam and Modernity in an Age of Transition," Islamabad, 31 March 2017.

⁶ For the historical record, it is to be stated that France did not take part in the negotiations preceding the establishment of the UN ("Dumbarton Oaks Conference") and "China" was represented by the Republic of China (Taiwan).

⁷ Article 27 of the Charter uses the phrase "concurring votes of the permanent members."

⁸ For details see the author's paper "The Voting Procedure in the United Nations Security Council," Chapter V (b), Vienna, International Progress Organisation, 1991.

⁹ For details see the author's analysis "Normative Inconsistencies in the State System with Special Emphasis on International Law," in: *The Global Community – Yearbook of International Law and Jurisprudence 2016*, Oxford University Press, 2017.

¹⁰ Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, adopted on 7 July 2017 by 122 member states of the United Nations (not yet in force).

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