

# **A Truly Global NATO, a Global Welfare State, An Early Warning System for War and Global Population Control**

Cornelia Beyer

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Cornelia Beyer is a Senior Lecturer and the Deputy Director for the Centre for Security Studies at the University of Hull. Since 2010 her research has focused on political psychology as applied to international relations, and in 2017 she published a monograph titled *International Political Psychology: Explorations into a new discipline* (Palgrave).

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For a more peaceful, globally integrated, world, some revisions of or additions to the current global order seem necessary. Many of these are ideas in development, some are discussed to more extent in my previous publication *International Political Psychology* (Palgrave 2017). The following will be discussed in this essay:

- Pacifism
- Overcoming of bipolarity and the creation of a truly global NATO
- The creation of a global Parliament and a global Welfare State
- The creation of an early warning system for war based on international mental health data
- Monitoring of global population growth as all major periods of war have been preceded by sudden massive population growth

## 1) Pacifism

In essence, from a strategic point of view, the world can only become more peaceful if the internationally leading state – the United States in our times – adopts a grand strategy of pacifism and integration. Without the US being pacifist, wars will continue as interventions will occur with following backlashes, terrorism and insurgencies and civil wars as potential responses, counterbalances such as from Russia or China, conflicts and Security Dilemmata. Pacifism is not a sufficiently researched concept in International Relations, is however so in all spiritual approaches. It is therefore also necessary to broaden the IR research programme on this topic. Some ideas as presented in the following would help support a pacifist Grand Strategy to make it work.

## 2) Overcoming bipolarity and a truly global NATO

Bipolarity has been hailed for long as the most stable systemic constellation. Where this assumption is coming from is somewhat unclear. Possibly, the relative stability of the Cold War inspired it. However, the assumption of bipolarity can be challenged – both world wars have been presented as ‘cluster bipolarities’ – two polarised alliances. The Cold War, a truly bipolar constellation as it probable never before or again has been found in history, was not peaceful – as anyone who has lived through it might remember. It also could easily have escalated into global nuclear war, if one recognises that MAD (mutually assured destruction or nuclear deterrence) is not necessarily as stable in reality forever in the future as it might be in theory. The Cold War remained without nuclear escalation, but it could have happened, and it would be wrong to describe the Cold War as peace. From an IR theory perspective, the more promising constellation is to abandon the reliance on polarities and balances of power, unipolarity possibly being the stables condition, and instead look into Institutionalism and global integration under common institutions as the answer to the question after peace. This would mean, looking into Security, to think about a truly global NATO to abolish the Security Dilemma and hence abolish the risk of war between states. The Security Dilemma – the dilemma of fear and mistrust that underlies war in Realist theory – is basically maintained through the existence of independent militaries, given that governments are already joined in the UN today. The military powers threaten each other. However, the Security Dilemma is already virtually abolished within the current NATO alliance. Hence, creating a truly global NATO, Russia and everyone else included, would serve as a global institution similar to, but below, the United Nations. It would be a new ‘layer’ in the architecture of security that could help bring maybe as much peace at least between states as the UN today. It could serve as a global police force, would abolish war between states, and only new functions would need to be found, such as disaster relief, reconstruction and aid etc., as wars would in theory become less frequent. How such global NATO can be created is less clear, lessons have to be sought from the creation of the UN, the main risk is probably the missing interest in possibly some states.

Also, since 2001 and especially recently, a bipolar tension – some call it Clash of Civilisations – has developed between the ‘West’ and Islam. This is the reason for so much right wing activity in the ‘West’. To counter this, a possibly way would be more, not less, true multiculturalism and globalisation. This would mean to turn the gaze and focus away from this struggle between the West and Islam, as far as possible, and reengage with other cultures, Asia, South America, whatnot, to deescalate the tension. Other peoples and places are important too, and have different, maybe happier, ideas. The war in Syria is still going on and fears persist that it might escalate into world war. This can possibly be avoided if globalisation, trade and democracy in the rest of the world don’t die under this new bipolar tension. Of course, a quick, lasting, and peaceful solution to the war in Syria is extremely essential too. War cannot be ended with more war.

## 3) A global Parliament, a global Welfare State

Others in this forum have discussed the idea of a global parliament already sufficiently. I would only like to support it. Democracy cannot work exclusively but must be globally inclusive without being spread by force. On the other hand, a global welfare state, managed by the UN,

would be an idea that is novel and that could help reduce civil wars, terrorism and crime, some of the worst problems of our time. Many problems of crime and violence are directly related to poverty, which is widespread globally. For example, in terrorism research, poverty is often heavily discussed as a potential cause for new young men joining terrorist groups, for example as suicide bombers. Reducing the worst problems of poverty through a global welfare state could potentially help somewhat with some of those and similar problems and would be an ethical option at the same time. A global Welfare State would not be sufficient to reduce and abolish all problems of poverty – other development options would still be direly needed in many places – but it could help somewhat to lessen the worst excesses of it. In addition, terrorism and civil wars in the Middle East, but also the tensions with North Korea for example, relate at least partially, but significantly, to massive underdevelopment and also exclusion. Integration and intensive development programmes (similar to Marshall Plans, but also other options might be possible) could help reduce these problems.

#### 4) An Early Warning System for War based on international mental health data

Depression (in mental health terms) is thought to stem from traumas and stresses, such as deaths in the family, unemployment etc. Hence, increasing rates of depression in any country would indicate an increase in problems, such as increasing unemployment, poverty, illness and death or conflict. Suicide is a common outcome of depression, and suicide epidemics have been shown since Durkheim to precede the outbreak of wars. Hence, monitoring for rises in depression on an international level would allow us potentially to predict where violence might occur and would allow us to prevent violence by intervening in

affected countries for example with foreign direct investment, foreign aid, diplomacy or whatnot early on. Currently, global mental health data are collected by the Institute of Health Metrics and Evaluation in Washington (IHME). However, data collection needs to be broadened and intensified for such as system, compared to the current standard.

#### 5) Monitoring global population growth

There have been three major periods of war in human history: 500BC the Greek wars, 1600AD the 30 Years War and following wars, 1900AD the Two World Wars and following conflicts until today. All of these periods have been preceded by periods of sudden massive population increase. Similarly, the Arab Spring and recent conflicts in the Middle East have been preceded by massive population growth in the 1990ies which resulted in a youth bulge that met with massive unemployment rates. If population growth increases population to a degree that is economically and politically not manageable, wars are likely. Some predictions put 14 billion as the world population in 2090, while today we have 7.5 billion, an increase of nearly 100%. Normally, this could mean more conflicts and wars due to population pressures ('lateral pressures'). Hence, global population growth needs to be monitored and kept stable and on a manageable level to avoid future conflicts. For this, in particular, birth control tools and women's rights need to be developed, made widely available and strengthened.

