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ORG SPECIAL BRIEFING: CHANCES FOR PEACE IN THE SECOND DECADE – WHAT IS GOING WRONG AND WHAT WE MUST DO

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Atomic Bomb Test, Bikini Island, 1946.
Photo Credit: San Diego Air & Space Museum

Where to Start?

We survived the Cold War, the most dangerous period in human history so far.

Well, most of us did.

In reality, more than ten million people died and tens of millions more were wounded in proxy wars involving the superpowers - in Korea, Vietnam, the Horn of Africa, Central America, Afghanistan and elsewhere. Some places took decades to recover, others never have.

It is true that at least an all-out nuclear war was avoided, but there were huge risks, many accidents and some exceptionally dangerous crises. Put bluntly, we were very lucky to come through it without a catastrophe.

Moreover, for forty-five years, massive amounts of money and immense human resources were diverted away from far more important tasks to fuel war machines which, at their peak, employed tens of millions of people, wasted billions of pounds, produced vast masses of armaments, including over 60,000 nuclear weapons and threatened world-wide destruction. The many millions of lives that were lost through poverty, disease and malnutrition across the world through this appalling waste are rarely acknowledged.

More than twenty years later, the nuclear dangers are still far from over, even if we are on something more like a slippery slope to a proliferated world, rather than staring over the edge of an appalling nuclear abyss, and there is still much to do to save us from our capacity for self-destruction.

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[1] *Our normal monthly briefings address current trends in global insecurity. Whilst these briefings often touch upon alternatives to the mainstream security paradigm, we wanted to take the opportunity, with this last briefing of 2012, to reflect more broadly on the opportunities for peace in the second decade after the war on terror - informed by a longer survey of peace and conflict since 1945.*

Even so, in the early 1990s, after the end of the Cold War, there seemed the prospect of a more peaceful world order, but it disappeared in the face of deep and enduring conflicts, not least in the first Gulf War, and the bitter conflicts in the Balkans, the Caucasus and the African Great Lakes.

Bill Clinton's first CIA Director, James Woolsey, characterised the changed world in the mid-1990s as one where the West had slain the dragon of the Soviet Union but was now facing a jungle full of poisonous snakes. (1) The jungle had to be tamed to maintain stability, and this was an attitude that came to the fore in an extraordinarily robust response to the 9/11 atrocities. It failed to control political violence and led to two major wars and persistent conflict across the Middle East and South Asia.

These are trends of the immediate past and present, but the issues that will come most to dominate international conflict relate only partially to them. What is much more necessary is to recognise the underlying trends that could be at the core of insecurity and conflict in the decades to come, and to understand how we can avoid their becoming the drivers of conflicts that may dwarf the problems of recent years including even the "war on terror".

Divisions and Constraints

There are two root issues that will increasingly interrelate – socio-economic divisions and environmental constraints, especially climate change.

1. Rich-Poor World

In the past 60 years, the world economy has experienced almost continual growth. Until 1980, that was largely on the basis of a mixed economy model competing with the centrally planned economies of the Soviet bloc and China. From the early 1980s, the trend was toward a much more neoliberal free market approach with privatisation of state assets across many countries, the freeing up of markets and less regulation of trade and financial markets.

Ideas of a more planned world economy linking fair trade with development had been proposed in the 1960s, especially by the UN Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD). They reached their peak with the intended New International Economic Order of 1974, which would have promoted integrated commodity agreements, tariff preferences and other processes designed to improve the trading and development prospects of the Global South. These progressive proposals withered away by the end of the decade in the face of a determined neoliberal economic agenda.

This was pursued, in particular, by the Reagan administration in the United States and the Thatcher government in the UK, but was more generally embraced by other states and especially by international financial institutions, such as the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund, in what became known the "Washington Consensus".

It was an outlook that got a boost with progressive deregulation of financial institutions in the late 1980s, especially the "Big Bang" for the London's financial institutions in 1986. There was then a further boost because of the collapse of the centrally planned system of the Soviet bloc in 1990-91, even though Russia's subsequent embrace of unbridled capitalism actually set back its own

economy by a decade or more, wrecked the lives of millions of people, and still leaves a legacy of bitterness.

Across the world, economic growth continued, albeit at a slower rate than 1950-80, but what became increasingly clear was that it was becoming more and more unbalanced, with the benefits of growth falling mostly into the hands of around one fifth of the global population. While the poorest people did not generally get poorer, levels of malnutrition actually increased substantially, but what was even more significant was that by the early 21st Century, the great majority of all the world's wealth and annual income – close to 85% - was shared by about 1.5 billion people out of a world population heading towards 7 billion.

This division had become steadily more pronounced in the last two decades of the 20th Century, but one major feature of the change was that it was no longer a matter of "rich country/poor country" – more a very large trans-global elite disproportionately sharing the benefits due to the entire world community.

This now includes hundreds of millions of people in China, India, Brazil and many other countries across the South, even if the "old rich" countries of the Atlantic alliance still dominate. On top of this, is a very much smaller trans-global "super-elite", including many thousands of multi-millionaires. At the same time, along with the marginalised majority of billions of people across the South, there is also a marginalised minority, sometimes of tens of millions of people, in the old rich states of the West.

This failure to deliver socio-economic justice is particularly evident in the fast-growing Asian development region. According to the Asia Development Bank's *2012 Asia Development Report*, if there had been more even distribution of the fruits of growth "another 240 million people in the 45 countries that make up developing Asia would have moved out of poverty in the last two decades". (2)

What is insidious is that we are faced with a deep-seated trend, which is persistently disguised by the more obvious signs of economic development. City tower blocks, beach hotels, safari parks and many other accoutrements of partial economic success all too frequently disguise deep and enduring divisions, with richer people living and travelling in cocoons of well-being, not seeing the slums that ring the cities or the endemic rural poverty.

Because of the size of the successful elite - more than one-fifth of the world's population - it acts as a self-contained, if large, global entity that benefits from material well-being that is largely taken for granted. Moreover, it is for the most part a community that persistently fails to recognise the endemic mal-distribution of world wealth and income.

Thus the minority world lives alongside the majority world but is hardly conscious of the very existence of the divide. Rarely does it acknowledge the sustained benefit gained from appalling low wages and working conditions of hundreds of millions of people producing cheap goods, nor the existence of a trading system dominated by transnational corporations and favouring production of low-cost commodities at the expense of poor farmers and miners across the world.

A Success with Consequences

At the same time, none of this should diminish the progress that has been made in some aspects of international development, not least education. Forty years ago, one of the greatest challenges facing the countries of the South was the impoverishment of education, with only a minority of children getting even four years of primary education. That has changed dramatically, and most children now get a basic education. Even the pernicious gender gap is slowly narrowing.

This success has been achieved mostly by determined efforts of peoples and governments and it has more recently been combined with huge improvements in communications. There are still many communities that are notably "data poor", but the combination of improved education, literacy and communications has been one of the great development success stories of the past four decades.

Yet, there is a very powerful consequence of this in that far more people are aware of their own marginalisation. It is a phenomenon that particularly affects young people across the majority world who are educated at least to high school level but have few job prospects or hopes for a reasonable standard of living. With the current recession, this is also being experienced in rich states such as Greece and Spain, with eruptions of discontent and protest onto the streets as well as the "Occupy" and other new social movements. It has certainly added greatly to the much more widespread frustration and anger with Middle East autocracies that has underpinned the Arab Awakening that started early in 2011.

In the 1970s, it was common in countries such as Britain to talk of a "revolution of rising expectations" as the consumer society and economic growth always promised more. People would be reasonably content, because, whatever the particular problems of national economies, the overall picture was of a promise of economic growth and innovation delivering better material well-being. What is more likely in the early 21st Century is a "revolution of frustrated expectations" as people among the marginalised majorities become more aware of their own marginalisation, leading to despair, resentment and anger.

2. Environmental Limits

On its own, the problem of a socio-economically divided world is ethically unacceptable, as well as being potentially unstable. The more the divisions endure in an increasingly connected world, the more there is the risk of anger and revolts from the margins, but what is even more important is that these persistent divisions are working in parallel with global environmental constraints – the inability of the global ecosystem to absorb human impacts, especially the carbon emissions that are leading to climate change.

Environmental constraints are many, and they include major issues of water resource use, as well as competition and conflict over strategic minerals, especially in Central Africa. The buying up of land by foreign interests, not least in Africa and Latin America, is a further example. In terms of the world's non-renewable resources, the concentrated location of oil and gas is the most remarkable. More than 60% of the world's readily accessible high quality oil is found in just five countries around the Persian Gulf – Iran, Iraq, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia and the UAE – with another 20% in Russia, Kazakhstan and Venezuela. The concentration of natural gas is even more extreme, with over half the world reserves in just three countries – Russia, Iran and Qatar.

Such a narrow resource base for these energy reserves is at the root of the strategic importance of the Persian Gulf and does much to explain recent and current conflicts, but the even greater global concern stems more from the potential impact of climate change.

Put in its most basic form, huge fossil fuel reserves of coal, oil and gas were laid down over millions of years, mainly during the Carboniferous Era, and large quantities of the carbon locked up in these reserves are now being released into the atmosphere, not in millions or even thousands of years but in centuries and, to some extent, even just decades. Most of this carbon release is in the form of carbon dioxide and this gas increases the absorption of the sun's radiation in the atmosphere. The overall impact is one of increasing temperatures and that is already happening, but this is not a uniform process across the world.

Until about twenty years ago, climate research suggested that the most pronounced impacts of climate change would be felt in the temperate latitudes. For the most part, these were the wealthier regions of the world and might best be able to cope. That view has changed dramatically, and it is now clear that the impact of climate change will indeed be asymmetric, but not in the way originally thought.

It is true that the northernmost latitudes will probably be greatly affected, with the near-Arctic already seeing a substantial rate of change that is much greater than elsewhere, but there will also be dramatic effects on the tropical and sub-tropical land masses.

Drought in Somalia. Picture Credit: Oxfam

In overall terms, climate change looks likely to have relatively little impact in atmospheric temperatures over the world's oceans. By contrast, temperature increases across Central America, Amazonia, the Middle East, Central Africa and South and South-East Asia will be well above average. The impacts are likely to include the drying out of the tropical rain forests of the Amazon and South-East Asia, and the progressive loss of the "reservoirs in the sky", the glaciers in the Himalayas, the Karakorams and the Tibetan Plateau that feed the great rivers of southern Asia.

The overall impact is likely to be a substantial decrease in the ecological carrying capacity of the tropical and sub-tropical croplands, making it far more difficult for the majority of the world's people to access affordable food. This is particularly serious, because these are precisely those parts of the world in which people have least material wealth and are least able to cope.

Consequences

If we stay for the moment with present trends, not with what will happen if we make many positive changes, then the outlook is bleak. Leaving aside for now the huge issue of

environmental limits, the socio-economic divisions alone point to a very disturbed future. Nearly forty years ago the economic geographer Edwin Brookes pointed to the circumstances we had to avoid of "…a crowded, glowering planet of massive inequalities of wealth, buttressed by stark force yet endlessly threatened by desperate people in the global ghettoes…" (3)

In many ways we can see Brooke's dystopian prognosis already becoming evident. The heavily protected gated communities increase in size and frequency in cities across the world, and more extreme protests are common. China now has a formidable problem of endemic social unrest to which the authorities respond with more heavily armed internal security forces. The Arab Awakening has many elements, but among the driving forces are the poor economic prospects and lack of opportunity facing millions of young people.

India will soon be the world's most populous country and has been enjoying impressive rates of growth, but economic development is hugely skewed in favour of a minority, with the country having to face up to a bitter and wide-ranging insurgency from the neo-Maoist Naxalites. They are active in close to half the states of India and stem from the marginalisation of millions, especially as mining and industrial developments take little notice of peoples' rights.

Naxal Youth, including girls. Photo Credit: www.naxalitereview.blogspot.co.uk

These are early indicators of problems that arise from the existing organisation of the world economy, but the real issue is to add these to the growing impact of climate change. What we are therefore likely to face is not just Brooke's "crowded, glowering planet", but a constrained planet leading to a degree of desperation that will transcend the problems we already face. There is a particular risk of mass migration as people become desperate in their own communities and seek something better, and we are talking about much greater pressures than are already apparent. There is also a great risk of "revolts from the margins" as people turn to radical action to try and ensure their survival.

A previous analysis, written more than a decade ago, and pointing to "markers of rebellion", put it this way:

> *"There is sufficient evidence from economic and environmental trends to indicate that marginalisation of the majority of the world's people is continuing and increasing, and that it is extremely difficult to predict how and when different forms of anti-elite action may develop. It was not predictable that Guzman's teachings in Peru would lead to a movement of the intensity and human impact of Sendero Luminosa, nor was the Zapatista rebellion in Mexico anticipated. When the Algerian armed forces curtailed elections in 1991 for fear that they would bring a rigorous Islamic party to power, few predicted a bloody conflict that would claim many tens of thousands of lives.*

> *What should be expected is that new social movements will develop that are essentially anti-elite in nature and draw their support from people, especially men, on the margins. In different contexts and circumstances they may have their roots in political ideologies, religious beliefs, ethnic, nationalist or cultural identities, or a complex combination of several of these. They may be focussed on individuals or groups but the most common feature is an opposition to existing centres of power. They may be sub-state groups directed at the elites in their own state or foreign interests, or they may hold power in states in the South, and will no doubt be labelled as rogue states as they direct their responses towards the North. What can be said is that, on present trends, anti-elite action will be a core feature of the next thirty years - not so much a clash of civilisations, more an age of insurgencies." (4)*

"Liddism" Rules OK

More than a decade later, we can see that the expected impact of climate change will exacerbate these trends, and the problems we face in the future stem from this unique combination of a divided and constrained world. It is a predicament that leaves us, in its most basic form, with two possible choices – trying to maintain control or working to confront the challenges.

The first is "liddism" – we keep the lid on the problems and maintain the status quo. We stay rigidly with the belief that the free market is the only economic system and that the world economic system as it has evolved is, without question, the only way to operate. When threats to this system arise they are dangerous and must be countered. This means vigorous support for elite regimes facing revolts from the margins, it involves stringent control of migration, persistent intervention in failed and failing states when they threaten "our" interests and extending even to the violent termination of regimes deemed to threaten the security of the established international system – "our" world.

Economic migrants are after our jobs. Asylum seekers are scroungers, living on welfare paid by our taxes. If more than a thousand people drown in the Mediterranean trying to reach Europe in the early months of 2011, it is of little account and no concern of ours. If people riot in cities in the West, they are criminals pure and simple, and there is no need for any further discussion. If rebels oppose a friendly autocratic government in the South, they are terrorists, a dangerous threat to established order and to be repressed with all necessary force.

In short, it is a matter of taming Woolsey's "jungle full of snakes", secure in the belief that the jungle can be tamed and order maintained.

Lessons from a War

In a very real sense the response to the appalling 9/11 atrocities and the consequent war on terror are striking examples of this approach and provide strong markers for future behaviour. At the peak of that response, when Bush delivered his "mission accomplished" speech on 1 May 2003, Afghanistan was thought to be transforming into a pro-western developing state with a geopolitically useful US military presence and enhanced influence in Central Asia. Al-Qaida was dispersed and degraded.

Under the guidance of the Coalition Provisional Authority, Iraq would become a shining example of a true free market economy, a pro-western beacon for the Middle East with, as in Afghanistan, a useful US military presence. The most dangerous threat, Iran, would be thoroughly constrained by this new regional order. More generally, the idea of a New American Century of an unrestrained free market world order, led by the United States, would be "back on track".

The 9/11 attacks were visceral in their effect and it was almost impossible for the Bush administration and its closest allies to see them as grievous examples of a grotesque trans-national criminality. Instead, they could only be seen as the starting point for a war against Islamo-fascism that even came to include whole states that threatened the western world in an "axis of evil".

What happened was radically different to expectations. A three-week regime termination in Iraq turned into a bitter eight-year war, with the country even now in a deeply unstable state and with millions of people still displaced. Iranian influence in the region is actually stronger than before the war and that of the United States is diminished.

In Afghanistan, an "eight-week campaign" against the Taliban is now in its second decade. Even the al-Qaida idea survives in a diffuse yet potent form, much dispersed but with affiliates active across the region, not least in Yemen, Somalia, Mali and Nigeria.

According to a report from the Eisenhower Research Project at Brown University in 2011:

- At a conservative estimate, the overall death toll in Iraq, Afghanistan and elsewhere, including civilians, uniformed personnel and contractors, is at least 225,000.
- There have been 7.8 million refugees created among Iraqis, Afghans and Pakistanis.
- The wars will cost close to $4 trillion dollars and are being funded substantially by borrowing, with $185 billion in interest already paid and another $1 trillion likely by 2020. (5)

In so many respects, the conduct of the war on terror was an example of what some call the "control paradigm", the early recourse to re-gaining control with little attention given to the reasons for conflict. The human costs have been appalling. If no lessons are learnt from this experience, then there is every probability that "taming the jungle" will be the order of the day - no doubt with prolific use of armed drones and Special Forces, but this will only make matters far worse. If the deep injustices of the present world economic and environmental order are not addressed, then the result will be greater suffering and instability, leading rapidly to more conflict. The idea that the elite world can close the castle gates is a myth – it is simply not possible in a globalised and highly connected world.

Choices

"Liddism" may be the first choice but the second is addressing the underlying causes of future insecurity. In the simplest of terms it is straightforward, but translating the obvious into the actual is far from easy. Severe climate change has to be prevented by a rapid transition to low carbon economies, with the main carbon emitters of the North decreasing carbon outputs by 80% in less

than two decades. Lesser emitters must be enabled to develop along economic paths that are truly sustainable, aided substantially by the states of the North that have been responsible so far for the great majority of emissions.

Such an environmental transition has to be paralleled directly by an economic transformation to a far more equitable and emancipated system, both trans-nationally and within states. For the Global South, this involves much greater debt relief and the linking of trade with development in a manner similar to what was advocated by UNCTAD nearly half a century ago but never implemented – a genuine New International Economic Order. Technological innovations may well help, not least in adapting to that level of climate change that is already inevitable, and a rapid transition to versatile renewable energy sources, often seriously localised, can readily enhance economic emancipation.

These two paragraphs summarise the changes needed, but they seem so vast that there is an immediate feeling of powerlessness. That may be understandable but needs to be met head-on with a sense of hope. Thirty years ago, in the early 1980s, there was a palpable fear of nuclear annihilation and doubts whether we would make it to 1990, yet we did. Thirty years before that, some far-sighted politicians sought European economic cooperation as a means of preventing a third European civil war. Whatever we think of the European Union, a Franco-German conflict is now hardly likely.

There are also many examples where events prompt action, even more so when the necessary thinking and planning is already there. Take just a few examples:

- Municipal engineers like Sir Joseph Bazelgette were already working on plans for proper sewage disposal in the squalid and cholera-ridden London of the 1850s, but it took the "Great Stink" of the 1858 summer to prompt sustained an effective action, with London leading the way for many other cities and resulting in sustained improvements in health.

- A century later, 4,000 people died in 1952 in the four-day "Great Smog of London" but this prompted radical improvements in air pollution control across Britain that were already being called for.

- Atmospheric chemists and the UN Environment Programme were already pointing to the dangerous effect of CFC pollutants on the world's ozone layer in the late 1970s, and, partly because of this, the discovery of the extent of the Antarctic "ozone hole" in 1983 prompted a rapid international response, with the global Montreal Convention signed just four years later.

- Even at the height of the Cold War, the shock of the Cuban Missile Crisis of 1962 was a major factor in leading the US and the Soviet Union to a welcome process of trust building and some key agreements, including the Partial Test Ban Treaty, as well as leading to a political climate that helped bring about the Non-Proliferation Treaty.

On the big issues that face us we certainly have an urgent need for wise political leadership, but that may be far more possible, if there is a powerful sense of vision from within the realms of civil society. The world community faces challenges that are quite extraordinarily profound, and we need to think through the many challenges and how they might best be met. If we define

prophecy as "suggesting the possible", then we need a great deal of prophetic thinking, and we need it soon.

We may be aided by major events, and there are many other examples from recent history of individual incidents that have catalysed substantial change, not least because some people had recognised the underlying problems, anticipated the need for change and thought how to help bring it about. It may well be that extreme weather events – so-called "global weirding" - may turn out to be advanced warnings of climate change, like the canary in the coal mine, and if there has been enough "suggesting the possible", then the change can happen before excessive suffering.

Much good work is already being done and there are innumerable examples from right across the world. Take just three examples from the hundreds in Britain alone: the Centre for Alternative Technology's extensive work on renewables and energy conservation, the New Economics Foundation's *Great Transition* project, and Oxford Research Group's work on sustainable security. Don't forget, also, that there are close to a billion members of cooperatives in over a hundred countries.

We also need a broader sense of perspective. There is sound evidence that the 1990s saw more conflicts and loss of life world-wide than the first decade of the 21st Century, in spite of the impact of the war on terror. More generally, if we look back over several centuries, there is a legitimate argument that, given the growth in the world's population, proportionally fewer people have been the victims of violence, including war, over the past fifty years than in similar periods in previous centuries. (6) This does not mean that there is even a remote case for complacency, especially given the increase in destructive power of weapons, and the threat to the whole global environment, but it does help give a sense of hope.

A Century on the Edge – and of Hope

As individuals we may feel thoroughly daunted in the face of the changes that need to be made, yet each of us may have skills, knowledge and abilities that lie in particular directions and can vary greatly. However modest we think our individual contributions may be, they still help and they really can add to the efforts of many others into something really powerful.

In this we need to remember three things. Any one person is part of a whole movement, and recognising the big picture while contributing to one part of it makes great good sense. The second is that knowledge really is power – it is ever so important that we learn from all the many sources of information and ideas that are now in circulation, a process made much easier by the new social media. This enables us to be much more effective in expressing what needs to be done, and to convince others. Finally, there is the essential need to maintain a sense of hope, even during times of pessimism. Indeed, on the matter of hope, there is a particular way of looking at things which can actually help.

We may, in our arrogance, always think that our own time of living is the most significant in human history, but there is a sense in which one particular century, from 1945 to 2045, may actually fulfil that definition.

Why 1945?

Well, that's easy. The first atom bomb was tested in July; two Japanese cities were destroyed the following month, and within a decade, the world was in the midst of an appallingly dangerous nuclear arms race that could have set our world community back centuries. We had, for the first time in millions of years of human evolution, developed the means to wreak utter destruction world-wide.

As was remarked back in the introduction, we avoided it largely by luck, and we are not out of the woods even now. Yet we may be learning slowly to cope with our capacity for self-destruction, even if we have many challenges to come, not least from the potential misuse of bio-molecular science and nanotechnologies.

Why, then, 2045?

That is not so straightforward but revolves around the idea that we now have the potential to cause huge damage to our environment, including diminishing prospects for our own well-being. That, too, can be overcome, and we need to be well on the way by 2045 - indeed the second decade of this century is the period in which serious change must start.

The Key Decade

If we succeed, then there is every chance that young children who are alive now will look back in their later life, perhaps even at the dawn of the 22nd century and recognise, happily, that there was enough wisdom, energy and commitment eighty or so years earlier to begin the changes that helped make the 21st century the most peaceful, just and sustainable period in human history. That is what makes this second decade of the 21st Century so important. If we can really begin the transformation by 2020, and if that leads on to much greater progress in the 2020s, then we can approach the following years not just with hope, but with confidence, too.

Notes

(1) Statement by James Woolsey at Senate hearings, February 1993.

(2) Neena Bhandari, "Rising Inequality Could be Asia's Undoing", *TerraViva- Inter Press Services,* UN, New York, 13 April 2012.

(3) Edwin Brookes, "The Implications of Ecological Limits to Development in Terms of Expectations and Aspirations in Developed and Less Developed Countries", chapter in; Anthony Vann and Paul Rogers (editors), *Human Ecology and World Development,* Plenum Press, London and New York, 1974.

(4) Paul Rogers, *Losing Control: Global Security in the 21st Century,* (1st edition) Pluto Press, London, 2001.

(5) *The Costs of War,* a report from the Eisenhower Research Project of the Watson Institute for International Studies at Brown University, Providence RI, June 2011, available at www.costsofwar.org.

(6) This is a point powerfully argued by Steven Pinker in his book, *The Better Angels of Our Nature,* (Viking Press, New York, 2011).

Further Information

There is a mass of information available on the issues covered here, so the following sources are just a beginning:

- The Oxford Research Group is a helpful source on sustainable security and related issues (www.oxfordresearchgroup.org.uk and www.sustainablesecurity.org).
- One of the best web journals covering a huge range of topics is Open Democracy (www.opendemocracy.net). It is particularly good in terms of the wide range of people who write for it and the breadth of subjects covered.
- Information on the New Economics Foundation's *Great Transition* project is available on the NEF website (www.neweconomics.org).
- Of the groups campaigning on development issues, see especially the World Development Movement (www.wdm.org.uk/).
- Carbon Brief provides copious information on climate change (www.carbonbrief.org/).
- A good source on renewables and energy conservation is the Centre for Alternative Technology in Mid-Wales (www.cat.org.uk).
- A useful resource on international peace and security issues is Open Briefing (www.openbriefing.org).
- One recent book that focuses on land-grabbing in the Global South and, in the process, says much about how the entire current system runs, is Fred Pearce's *The Landgrabbers: The New Fight Over Who Owns the Earth,* (Eden Project Books, 2012).

*Background to this Briefing

Over the past few years, I have done numerous talks, mostly in the UK, about future causes of conflict and how these might be avoided. The groups have varied greatly, from Quaker meetings, UNA branches, world affairs discussion groups, and students in schools and colleges, through to business people, politicians and classes at defence colleges.

Mainly because of my own disorganisation my notes tend to be "back of the envelope" stuff, and the talks get updated and evolve in a rather unstructured way. There are, though, invariably lively discussions and disagreements, and I've been getting comments at the end of the sessions along the lines of "have you written this up anywhere?" I've had to say "no" until now, so this is an attempt to try and do just that.

Quite a few people have been kind enough to comment on drafts of this pamphlet, and I've also benefited hugely from the many discussions at the talks. Thanks very much to all those, who have passed on ideas. However, I'm responsible for the end result.

About the Author

Paul Rogers is Global Security Consultant to Oxford Research Group (ORG) and Professor of Peace Studies at the University of Bradford. He writes regular reports and monthly global security briefings for ORG. They are available from our website at ***www.oxfordresearchgroup.org.uk****, where visitors can sign-up to receive them via email each month. These briefings are published free of charge for non-profit use, but please consider making a donation to ORG, if you are able to do so.*

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