



2005 Global Youth Exchange Program

"Toward a New Paradigm for the World --

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For “Our Common Future”

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This presentation discusses the following three issues pertaining to the relationship between developing countries and developed countries in the globalizing world:

- (a) State affairs: Issue of “failed states”,
- (b) Development, and
- (c) International affairs: Our common future in the anarchical society

1. State affairs

Some researchers and journalists argue about “failed States”. But have they really failed as States?

Especially in Africa, new States were formed with the colonial boundaries that had been laid down with arbitrariness, taking no account of pre-colonial State boundaries, indigenous societies or geographical zones. On the other hand, during the colonial period, ethnicity had been identified and stressed, and, according to this, different means of rules had been applied to different ethnic groups. Christianity had been promoted to minority groups and military police had been created with a major minority group, to exploit ethnic rivalry, as in Myanmar. (Clapham, 1985) Under such circumstances, it was quite a tough task to build Nation - a mass of people who recognize themselves as forming the State within the boundaries - for the State after liberation from the colonial rule. Many developing countries are still in the process of nation-building. They have not failed as States.

2. Development

- (1) What is development

There have been many development theories. However, one critical point is that while there had been a tendency to equate the development goal with the more narrowly conceived objective of economic growth as measured by the rise in gross national product during the first years of development of developing countries, it was recognized during the second half of

the 1960's that attainment of social and cultural goals were part of the development process (United Nations, 1971).

As such, economic underdevelopment is not the only problem in developing countries. There are also problems of social underdevelopment and political underdevelopment. There are certain interlinkages of these as well. (Handelman, 2000)

Therefore not only economic problems but also social and political problems should be tackled.

(2) Diversity of development

Many development theories do not apply universally. Many of the earlier theories, such as import substituting industrial development, were based on the situation in Latin America which had already been independent States. The proponents of the Green Revolution were looking into certain Asian Countries where Green Revolution had been successful. (Oman and Wignaraja, 1991) Even though there are those theories that apply to more countries, different theories have different geographical applicabilities.

(3) ODA

Although the role of ODA has been diminishing in proportion to other international flows of resources, especially foreign direct investments, ODA is still an important means of development promotion.

However, monetary amount should not be the single target to be achieved. While the amount may be one of the targets, definitely more important are its effects on the development of the recipient country. The effects on the development should be an essential target and ODA should be evaluated against such targets.

3. International affairs in the anarchical society

(1) Our Common Future

The word "Sustainable development" has been well known since the Brundtland Commission used it in their report, "Our Common Future" (World Commission on Environment and Development, 1987). However, it is not well known that it is a concept involving North-South relations as the report explains it at the beginning of its chapter on "Sustainable Development":

It [sustainable development] contains within it two key concepts:

- the concept of "needs", in particular the essential needs of the world's poor, to which overriding priority should be given; and
- the idea of limitations imposed by the state of technology and social organization on the environment's ability to meet present and future needs.

Thus the goal of economic and social development must be defined in terms of sustainability in all countries - developed or developing, ...

A 1975 decision of the Governing Council of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) also reads, "sustainable development of all countries, aimed at meeting basic human needs without transgressing the outer limits set to man's endeavors by the biosphere".

Furthermore the word "our common future" had been used in the report of the Brandt Commission, "North-South: A Programme for Survival", in 1980 (Independent Commission on International Development Issues, 1980).

As such, “sustainable development” is an issue of the people both in the North and the South who share the common future.

(2) International justice in international development affairs

Globalization is a fact of life. We are a global community, and like all communities have to follow some rules so that we can live together. These rules must be fair and just, must pay due attention to the poor as well as the powerful, must reflect a basic sense of decency and social justice. In today's world, those rules have to be arrived at through democratic processes; the rules under which the governing bodies and authorities work must ensure that they will heed and respond to the desires and needs of all those affected by policies and decisions made in distant places. (Stiglitz, 2002)

(3) Responsibility of major States for the United Nations

When an invasion is over and the difficult, often dangerous, phase of reconstruction and democracy-building begins, then you are better off rinsing the operation in UN-blue. You do this by pulling out your own soldiers and replacing them with blue helmets from Member States like India, Pakistan, Bangladesh and Nigeria. And meanwhile, you can send the rapidly rising bills for rebuilding a war-shattered country straight to the UN. When these blue helmets fail (as you did) to establish democracy - because they have too few weapons, too little training and inadequate mandate, or because the local population perceive them (as now in Iraq) as tools of American foreign policy - then you can point an accusing finger at the UN. The UN has failed, you say. A claim often heard after a successful blue-rinse. (Polman, 2004)

(4) Actors in international relations

An ideal type of world politics: a world in which politics is continually characterized by active or potential conflict among states, with the use of force at any time.

Another ideal type of world politics: a world in which actors other than states participate directly in world politics, in which a clear hierarchy of issues does not exist, and in which force is an ineffective instrument of policy. (Kohane and Nye, 2000) There, even domestic problems may be a subject of global concern and where various actors play various roles.

3. Conclusions

Even the “least developed” countries have not failed as States. They are still in the process of “nation-building”. And people there are steadily responding to, and adjusting themselves to, new situations, whether these are results of the liberalization of the economy or they are caused by other elements (Kodamaya, 1999). Efforts and assistance are important for the nation-building in this reality.

In the efforts of development and assistance for such efforts, the diversity of development in terms of social, cultural and even political difficulties as well as of geographical and historical differences should be understood. Also, in the ODA, more efforts should be made to set targets in terms of specific development indicators in association with monetary targets.

People in developing and developed countries share common future. The discussions of “sustainable development” are applicable to various issues of concern of developing and developed countries. In such discussions of international development, international justice must be fully integrated with full consideration of, and with participation by, the people concerned. And developed countries, especially more powerful countries, must fully collaborate with other countries.

However, States are not the only players in many areas of the contemporary international affairs. The roles of other players, such as the business, local governments, NGOs, etc., should also be fully taken into account, and, as appropriate, should be promoted.

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