



## **CHAPTER 21: GOVERNANCE.**

**218.** The globalization of national economies has led to an unprecedented pace of economic and social change, largely driven by market factors. Governments have increasingly been forced into the role of responding to changes outside their control. Individuals have been reduced into even more passive roles.

**219.** It is time for governments to reassert political control over these processes, and to enable their citizens to influence the directions of change.

**220.** Governments should reassert control over areas that have been abandoned to market forces: employment, poverty, control of violence and pornography in the media.

**221.** The fields of population, women and environment cross many departmental boundaries. All three require special coordinating mechanisms between ministries, and policy units close to prime ministerial or presidential level.

### **Participation.**

**222.** Participation is the root of sustainable development and good governance.

**223.** \*Subsidiarity and decentralization: Legislating for participation means devolving power and budgets to lower levels. Decisions have to be kept with the people and delegated only when conflict of interest need to be managed. Decisions should be taken at higher levels only when they are beyond the capacity of lower levels to decide.

**224.** The dialogue of governments with NGOs and civil society must be strengthened by new forms of consultative bodies.

**225.** Creating the conditions for participation: rights to free speech, assembly, association etc. Right to information. Structures that permit participation. Above all education and literacy.

**226.** Re-inserting values of caring and compassion into government.

**International:**

**227.** International cooperation to re-establish direction, goals, long term priorities.



**228.** The Economic, Social and Cultural Rights embodied in the UN Declaration and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights remain vague, and no mechanisms exist for their monitoring and implementation.

[The following proposals are based among other things on proposals from the World Alliance on Nutrition and Human Rights and the NGO Forum for the Social Summit.]

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**229.** \*\*We need A UN which has strong mechanisms to advance quality of life according to clear standards, targets and timetables.

**230.** \*\* The Economic and Social Council should widen its mandate and title to Economic Social *and Environmental* Council.

**231.** \*\*It should be strengthened with an Economic, Social and Environmental Security Council, with the largest countries as permanent members (but without veto power).

**232.** \*\*An international meeting should be held to clarify the obligations of states parties to the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights. The aim would be to make the covenant's rights more specific and to set up mechanisms of implementation

and accountability. The meeting would also clarify the responsibilities of non-signatory nations and examine ways to achieve universal ratification.

These mechanisms might include the following measures:-



**233. \*\***The International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights should be supplemented by a memorandum specifying minimum levels of concrete rights such as health, employment, women's equality and freedom from hunger. These levels would include and systematize the major standards and targets already agreed at international meetings, adding new ones where they do not exist.

**234. \*\***Mechanisms should be set up to implement economic and social rights according to clear targets and timetables, to monitor national performance, to ensure compliance, and to coordinate international assistance to countries which do not yet comply with a view to raising them as soon as possible to the required level.

**235. \*\***An optional protocol should be adopted to the Covenant, allowing individuals to bring complaints to the UN Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and the Committee on the Rights of the Child.

**236. \*\***The involvement of civil society in UN activities was pioneered by the International Labour Organization and furthered by the Rio conference on environment and the Cairo conference on population. This involvement contributes to a decision making process which is closer to grassroots reality and mobilizes public participation. A commission should be set up to examine ways in which this involvement could be



broadened and deepened in all UN organizations and activities [check against recommendations of Governance Commission].<sup>5</sup>

### 237. Other UN considerations<sup>6</sup>



**Conflict of objectives:** the World Bank's IMF link and country economic policy work conflicts with the Bank's own work and that of other agencies in quality of life sectors. Can they be coordinated so that quality of life takes priority?

Reform of the World Bank: greater voting power for developing countries. Dethronement of economists as country operations staff: equal numbers of social scientists and environmentalists.

[Is this too technical for our Commission? Can we suggest simply that a task force be set up to examine this?]

**Environmental agency?** [What's wrong with UNEP, and why not expand UNEP rather than create a new agency? We've already got World Bank and GEF and UNESCO and FAO involved as well as the Commission on Sustainable Development.]

<sup>5</sup> This recommendation is suggested as an alternative to the Commission suggestion for a tripartite structure for UN agencies, on the lines of the ILO, in view of the difficulties of identifying three parties in many cases (eg UNESCO, FAO, UNFPA, UNICEF, UNEP, World Bank).

<sup>6</sup> Care should be taken not to spread too far beyond the commission's remit, or to cover areas that are adequately covered by the Commission on Governance. We will check these against the contents of the governance commission.

**Education:** probably the most important national and international activity of all - yet it has not got its own specialized agency. UNESCO's remit too broad? A new agency for education, leaving science and culture to UNESCO?



238. \*\*Tobin tax : New taxes on financial transactions to raise \$350 billion a year for global priorities. [Details not available at the time of sending out this draft.

239. [Other options for international taxation include internationally tradeable carbon permits.]

240. **Aid:** Aid should be given according to need, not political interest. Focussed on the poorest countries. Aid given to nations with per capita real incomes above a certain level should not be counted as aid.

Suggestion: \*\*The DAC should exclude from its calculations of aid all aid given to nations with a real per capita income of more than \$4,000 [this would include, eg, Egypt, but exclude, eg, Colombia].

Respect 0.7% overall target.

Coordinated. Aimed at strengthening the capacities of national governments.  
Sustained. Aiming at sustainability.

241. \*\*Once mechanisms have been set up to make the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights more specific and actionable, and to add environmental and reproductive rights, all aid should in future be targeted and coordinated to help poor nations to reach the specified standards for each right.

**242.** \*(Alternative to 241) Donors should move towards giving 50 per cent of aid for sustainable improvement in the quality of life.

Sectorally, aid should focus on human development and sustainability. It should aim to enhance human caring capacity and our chances of remaining within carrying capacity.

Work towards a 50 per cent share for human development and environment. Suggested overall shares based on what is feasible (ie actually practised by one or more countries):

- |                                  |                                     |
|----------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| 4 per cent population.           | (based on Amsterdam and Cairo)      |
| 22 per cent education.           | (highest share of any EC country)   |
| 12 per cent health               | (highest share of any EC country)   |
| 16 per cent environment-specific | (Netherlands share is 19 per cent). |



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