

## **WHAT HAPPENED TO GLOBALISATION? From cooperation to confrontation**

When the "Berlin Wall" fell in 1989, a new era of international relations began. The "Cold War" came to an end and, as part of a new globalisation, there was a massive intensification of worldwide contacts in the fields of business and finance, technology and communication. A global information society emerged. Many hoped that humanity would be able to master its fate together in the future.

This new development was often associated with a great deal of optimism. Francis Fukuyama spoke of the "end of history", but he was not alone in believing that the Western values of democracy and the market economy had finally prevailed. This new development was largely due to US President Ronald Reagan's policy of privatising the economy and deregulating the framework conditions for business. From Reagan's point of view, of course, this was to happen under American domination.

Other countries have also benefited from this development. China's share of global trade was just 1.2 % in 1985; by 2014 it had risen to 12.3 %. In absolute terms, China's exports increased from \$18 billion in 1980 to \$2,200 billion just 33 years later.

The optimism concerned economic development as well as political development. According to the prevailing opinion, American consumers could raise their standard of living with cheap products from China. In China itself, millions of people could overcome poverty as a result. Globalisation strengthened the tendency towards global standardisation in many areas. Technological development should bring people around the world ever closer together. Globalisation brought new opportunities to many people <sup>(1)</sup>.

A generation later, we realise that international relations are characterised by wars and economic wars; by a struggle for global supremacy between China and the USA; that fundamental questions such as

climate change or migration have perhaps not even begun to be solved. How did this come about?

## **1. The Americans' change of attitude**

Although there has always been criticism of globalisation, this was particularly evident in the 2016 presidential election campaign and ultimately led to the election of Donald Trump. However, one of the Democratic candidates, Bernie Sanders, was also extremely critical of the development of the global economy. According to Sanders, it is run by an elite that does not care about the fate of the people. The result: the 62 richest people on our planet own as much as the bottom half of humanity, i.e. 3.6 billion people combined. The richest one per cent own as much as the remaining 99%. "Some live in unimaginable wealth, while billions of people are exposed to poverty and unemployment and cannot afford housing, education or clean drinking water." <sup>(2)</sup>

While these figures may still sound somewhat abstract in terms of global development, the negative effects of globalisation on the American middle class became increasingly clear: low wages in China led to numerous companies being outsourced, wages for American workers stagnated, while commodity prices rose significantly due to strong demand from China. China quickly became a major producer of solar panels and electric cars. Fierce competition emerged in the high-tech sector.

It was no coincidence that many of those who did not have a college degree voted for Donald Trump in the 2016 election. When Presidents Bill Clinton and Barack Obama emphasised that they would invest more in education to enable more young people to advance their careers in the future, this meant little help for those who were already in the workforce.

Moreover, the individual worker was blamed for his difficult situation, not the system, globalisation. The political elites initially demanded that people should adapt to global development. But that was pure theory. From 1979 to 2016, the

The number of jobs in US industry has fallen from 19.5 million to 12 million. At the same time, the gap between the salaries of general managers in the largest companies and average wages has widened dramatically, from a ratio of 1:30 to 1:300. However, the victims of globalisation in the world of work not only suffered material disadvantages, they also lost the appreciation of their environment and their sense of self-worth <sup>(3)</sup>. It was then President Donald Trump who saw the huge trade deficit with China as the main cause of these difficulties and set about taking measures to counter them.

## **2. The USA's economic war against China**

China's economic rise over the last few decades has been spectacular. While China's GDP was only 7% of America's in 1980, by 2015 it was already 61%. China has become the workshop of the world, certainly in co-operation with large Western corporations. Today, more workers are employed in China's industry than in all OECD countries combined. With the

"With the Belt and Road Initiative, China has launched a project that aims to bring large parts of the world closer to China by expanding harbours and infrastructure. After all, this project covers 65 countries on three continents, with 70% of the world's population and 75% of the world's energy reserves. One more thing: this means that many governments are no longer dependent on making a pilgrimage to the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank, the institutions of the West, when they need money - there is an alternative.

This is a classic case in international relations where a rising power tries to challenge the dominant power. At any rate, this is how this is perceived by large parts of the USA, with the huge trade deficit with China in particular being blamed for its own difficulties.

As a result, President Donald Trump, who ran on the slogan "America first", began to impose tariffs on imports from China, which soon turned into a real economic war. As much as Joe Biden criticised this policy during the 2020 election campaign, as president he soon developed his own

China doctrine under the motto "China is our enemy, indeed a danger to the civilisation of the whole world" (4). This is a decisive break with the China policy that Washington had pursued since the establishment of diplomatic relations under Richard Nixon almost two generations earlier. This also severely impaired one component of globalisation, the optimism associated with it.

This is particularly the case because Biden's China policy is an essential part of his "Alliance of Democracies", which is directed against the rulers in Beijing and Moscow. While the initial aim is to isolate China politically, decisive measures have also been taken in Washington to halt China's economic development, for example with regard to the

Semiconductors, batteries for electric cars or "rare earths", microprocessors and memory chips. It is not just a question of the USA keeping pace with developments in China through its own efforts, but rather of forcing friend and foe to support American policy under threat of sanctions. Allies are being strongly urged to break off or at least restrict trade relations with China. If there are no other arguments, human rights violations in Xinjiang against the Uyghurs are cited as justification. Ultimately, the aim is to secure jobs in the USA.

This has created a peculiar situation in which Beijing is in favour of open trade relations and compliance with WTO rules, while Washington is pursuing a protectionist course. In this sense, the US already left the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) in 2016, while China is now endeavouring to become a member.

President Biden's policy is supported by academics and think tanks. For example, Rush Doshi, a member of the National Security Council, argues in his book "The Long Game: China's Grand Strategy to Displace American Order" that everything must be done to contain China. So while efforts were previously made to reshape the world together with China, under American leadership of course, the strategy that characterised the Cold War has now been adopted, "containment". Although there is no indication that China will give the world its

political system, the US wants to curb China's influence wherever possible; through sanctions and by preventing business relationships with companies such as Huawei.

At the same time, efforts are being made to promote their own competitiveness, including through protectionist measures, such as the "United States Innovation and Competition Act" passed in 2021. This provides for subsidies for semiconductor research totalling \$52 billion and \$29 billion for research in the field of artificial intelligence. A myriad of other programmes are designed to stand up to China.

Will this make it possible to stop China's further rise? Can China be prevented from spending more on research and development and on the military? Hence Rush Doshi's call to confront China now in the South China Sea, in Taiwan and wherever Beijing makes demands. In the economic sphere, this means export controls wherever American products could promote China's rise. In the political sphere, it means confronting China in the United Nations and other international organisations.

Even if trade between the US and China still totalled \$690.6 billion in 2022 (\$153.8 billion in US exports; \$536.75 billion in imports), Jake Sullivan, President Biden's National Security Advisor, has previously argued "That more trade is always the answer". And the CIA stated in its 2023 annual report, "China is the biggest threat to the United States in the field of high technology (5). This is unlikely to change in the next few years.

- 3. The Covid pandemic and the weak points of globalisation** The Covid pandemic that broke out at the end of 2019 played a decisive role in encouraging states to focus on solving the given difficulties within a national framework. Back in 2007, I wrote a publication entitled "From the world of states to the world state and back" as part of the National Defence Academy's publication series <sup>(6)</sup>. As much as it was and is in the nature of globalisation,

that there will be a "backlash", the pandemic has contributed to this to a very decisive extent. First there were national solo efforts, then the European Union decided on an aid package totalling \$850 billion. Companies in difficulty received massive support, as did artists who became unemployed, with governments running up huge debts. But something else was also important: masks, vaccines and medical equipment were needed to fight the pandemic. Suddenly, it was realised that globalisation had led to widespread deindustrialisation, even in vital areas such as vaccines. Difficulties in supply chains increased awareness of how dependent developed countries in particular were on China or India <sup>(7)</sup>.

The pandemic has also had the effect of slowing down global trade. At the same time, there has been a growing awareness that international interdependence, the dependence on China, has gone too far. In addition, relations between China and the United States have been further damaged. President Donald Trump spoke deliberately referred to a "Chinese virus" in order to emphasise the blame of the Chinese for the origin of the disease. Beijing, in turn, wanted to prove that its own political system was better able to overcome the challenges associated with the pandemic. A new Cold War was increasingly taking shape. In any case, it became clear that even in a globalised world, the solidarity needed to overcome a state of emergency together was not available in an emergency.

Although Chinese President Xi Jinping has taken the path of "mask diplomacy" and delivered Chinese vaccines to Asia, Africa and Latin America, the pandemic has created a global economic crisis that has intensified the already existing economic war. The fact that large corporations such as Amazon, Microsoft and Google have made massive additional profits through the measures taken in connection with the pandemic, such as lockdown or home office, has strengthened many people's distrust in the driving forces of globalisation <sup>(8)</sup>. At the same time, the pandemic has triggered a huge boost in the field of medical research, which has led to a new test of strength.

between China and the United States. Overall, it can be said that Covid 19 has worked against the ideals of a global world.

#### **4. Export controls and state subsidies around the world**

The Covid pandemic is not the only reason why countries have now made greater efforts to align their economic policies with national priorities. Many governments have decided to generously subsidise the transition to renewable energies. Large sums have been spent to promote domestic production, research and development in the field of high technology. The USA alone has subsidised "new energies", electric cars and semiconductors to the tune of \$465 billion. Support is granted on the condition that production takes place in America. At the same time, export bans were imposed on sensitive products. According to President Biden, this was intended to ensure the USA's dominance in the field of high technology. Leading politicians in America and Europe promised to rebuild the industry at home.

Of course, this was associated with the risk of a "spiral of protectionism". While some promised direct aid, others lured with tax breaks. Indonesia banned the export of nickel, while other countries began to control the production of lithium in their country. Political considerations always played a major role alongside economic ones. For example, the USA feared that it would also fall behind in the development of artificial intelligence if China dominated chip production. This in turn could have decisive consequences for the military sector of the future.

If the USA has been at the forefront of business, science and technology in the world for decades, it is because its own achievements in these areas were better than those of others. Now, however, a different policy was being pursued: Competitors, especially China, were to be prevented from overtaking America. With this in mind, laws were initially passed, such as the CHIPS Act, which supports the semiconductor industry with \$52 billion. There was also the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA), which

The EU is promoting its own environmental industry with \$400 billion to reduce its dependence on China in this area.

The United Nations has found that over 100 countries, which account for 90% of global economic production, are in the process of supporting domestic industry at the expense of foreign competitors. The G7 countries alone tripled their economic subsidies between 2016 and 2020 <sup>(9)</sup>. The production of semiconductors is being subsidised just as much as that of batteries for electric vehicles. Australia and Canada are spending billions of dollars to support their own mining industry. In the USA, only electric cars that have been produced there may be sold. This has of course strengthened the voices in the European Union calling for similar measures in Europe.

In addition to subsidies, the control of foreign investments was also increasingly used to promote the country's own economy. UNCTAD found that 63% of all foreign investments were already subject to scrutiny in 2022, a huge increase compared to previous years. The USA, in particular, does not hesitate to recognise foreign investments that represent undesirable competition to its own economy as

"threat to national security". Today, 60% of all companies listed on American stock exchanges may fall under this. There is broad agreement in Washington that "American capital" must not be used to strengthen the technological capabilities of competitors.

In contrast to the first years of the globalisation wave, subsidy policies, investment controls and export restrictions have become established in the developed economies over the last ten years.

The advantages are seen more in a protected national economy and no longer in a free world market without borders.

**5. How have the wars affected globalisation?** After the collapse of communism, the USA was the sole dominant power in the world. It also intended to retain this, particularly because of its military strength. A "Defence Policy Guidance" from 1992 stipulated that the military leadership of the



USA must not be questioned by any other country in the world. The use of the military became an integral part of American foreign policy, according to the motto "Foreign policy without the backing of the military is like a baseball-game without a baseball-bat". It was also openly endeavoured to install governments friendly to America all over the world through "humanitarian interventions", "regime change" or "nation-building". The "global war on terror" provided a further opportunity for this.

Without analysing the results of these wars in their entirety, we will only briefly touch on the question of how these wars have affected globalisation, the political context in the world and ultimately the supremacy of the USA.

On 24 March 1999, NATO began bombing Serbia under American leadership. The aim of the attacks was to achieve the independence of Kosovo, a province of Serbia that was largely inhabited by Albanians but had a special significance for the Serbs due to its history. The attacks were successful to the extent that the leadership in Belgrade had to accept the withdrawal of Serbian troops from Kosovo. These were replaced by NATO peacekeepers. However, this war led by the West had an extremely negative impact on relations with Russia. Moscow realised that the stronger party could use its weapons to achieve political goals, even against international law. And: the victor sets the rules and can, if he wants, change national borders.

The US invasion of Afghanistan in 2001 initially met with broad international approval, as the aim was to find the people responsible for the attacks of 11 September 2001. However, the war then lasted 20 years, although it was obviously not possible to achieve the political goals set by military means. The hasty withdrawal of American troops, which was also not agreed with the allies, could only be seen in Beijing and Moscow as a defeat for the West and thus as a further step towards a multilateral world order.

The first Iraq war in 1990/91 also met with the approval of many countries. After all, the aim was to punish the "aggressor Saddam Hussein". The war was even presented as a model of a just war within the framework of the new world order. The situation was different when the USA invaded Iraq again in 2003, officially to take away Saddam Hussein's weapons of mass destruction. This war was a disaster for the USA and the entire region. The invading American troops were not welcomed as liberators, as exiled Iraqis had predicted. The country did not develop into a "flourishing democracy", as the US Secretary of Defence Donald Rumsfeld believed, but instead descended into chaos. This was the breeding ground for the "Islamic State" to develop there. And the fall of Saddam Hussein and his Sunni upper class strengthened Iran, where Shiite religious fanatics had established their regime.

After the "Arab Spring", a new geopolitical course was set in the region. As part of the civil war in Syria, Russia was able to make a name for itself as the protecting power of the official government, on the same side as Iran. Turkey also pursued power-political interests in Syria. By supporting Azerbaijan in the war against Armenia, it was also able to demonstrate its weapons systems and power later on. After the Muslim Brotherhood with Mohammed Moisi won the elections in Egypt in 2011, the Saudis supported General Al-Sissi's coup two years later in order to prevent a "new theocracy". In Libya, the fall of the long-time dictator Mohammed Gaddafi led to chaos and often opaque coalitions in a civil war with the help of NATO. France and Qatar support different sides there, although both countries co-operate very well in other areas and maintain good relations. In any case, the chaos in Libya has led to the entire Sahel region being flooded with weapons, terrorists gaining strength in the region and new waves of migration.

The proxy war being fought in Ukraine will have a major impact on the future political and economic constellation in the world. As early as 2022, President Joe Biden declared that with the help of the

Ukraine, Russia will be brought to its knees and a new bring about "regime change". Others even spoke of dividing up the whole of Russia after a Ukrainian victory. In any case, the West acted from a position of strength. The expansion of NATO was pushed right up to the Russian border. Russian security concerns were "not even ignored", as NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg proudly proclaimed. At the same time, however, it had to be recognised that Russia was only able to wage the war despite massive Western sanctions because many parts of the "Global South" went their own way, which deviated significantly from Western ideas.

The war between Israel and Hamas, which began in October 2023, undoubtedly represents a further escalation of the ongoing tensions in the Middle East. The reactions of governments, manifestations and votes in international bodies show that there are supporters and opponents for both sides, not only among states but also within individual countries. On the one hand, political parties, trade unions, religious communities and NGOs have called for demonstrations of solidarity with Israel. On the other hand, there were also pro-Palestinian rallies, which were strongest in those countries where there is a high level of Muslim immigration. If the USA, with certain reservations, fully supports Israel, it can be said that the "Global South" shows preferences for the concerns of the Palestinians. In any case, this war will also impair the political globalisation of the world more than it will promote it.

Obviously, after all these wars, the world is more divided than united. The wars have created more problems than they have solved. The question arises as to why the USA, with its huge armed forces, has not been more successful in enforcing its policies worldwide. We have those generals and military experts in mind who have repeatedly predicted on television and in talk shows that success would be "just around the corner". How did this come about? One explanation could be that these generals are not speaking as soldiers, but as "politicians in uniform". The defence companies for which they work as consultants also plays a role. In any case, they want to win votes or stir up public opinion. Again and again, experts

are also victims of their own propaganda. While it was said that we have to fight the terrorists in the Hindu Kush so that they don't come to us, the war in Afghanistan has created new terrorists. The question is also whether it makes sense to demonise the whole of Russia in such a way that it seems right not to grant the country any security interests of its own.

Obviously, there are limits to what can be achieved through the use of weapons and war. The level of military spending cannot be the only measure of how security can be established. Mao Zedong said that "political power comes from the barrel of a gun". Yet China in particular has gained power and influence worldwide thanks to the huge economic upswing of recent decades. This probably means that diplomacy, confidence-building measures and mutual support play an extremely important role in international relations. Neutrality was a very positive basis for Austria's foreign policy. Surely that could also have applied to Ukraine.

The fact that politics is always based on wishful thinking can be seen in the example of the sanctions imposed by the USA against friend and foe in recent years. In the following chapter, the effects of this policy will be explained in more detail <sup>(10)</sup>.

## **6. Sanctions-Who is isolating whom?**

Sanctions can be very brutal. When US Secretary of State Madeleine Albright was asked what she thought about the fact that US sanctions against Iraq had caused the deaths of 500,000 children, she said dryly: "That's the price you have to pay". French Finance Minister Bruno Le Maire also believed in the effect of tough sanctions when he declared on French television: "With economic sanctions the likes of which the world has never seen before, we will bring Russia to its knees". The RAND CORPORATION, an American think tank, recommended precisely this concept in a study back in 2019: Russia must be persuaded to invade Ukraine. Its troops would then bleed to death there. Massive economic sanctions, combined with the forced cessation of

Nord Stream 1 and 2, combined with economic sanctions, would destroy Russia. A desirable side effect: the Americans would then be able to sell their liquefied natural gas to Europe.

The sanctions imposed on Russia by the USA and the European Union in March 2022 were expected to have a decisive impact on Russia's military strength. The sanctions were also seen as a "victory for multilateralism" because Europe and the USA were acting together <sup>(11)</sup>. Furthermore, the USA demanded that the measures laid down by Washington be followed by all states in the world. With this in mind, the Commerce Department was tasked with ensuring global compliance. Soon after the invasion of Ukraine by Russian troops, one could read "US casting global net to cut off goods for Russia" <sup>(12)</sup>.

As early as 2010, a third of humanity was living under US sanctions <sup>(13)</sup>, as Nicholas Mulde writes in his book "Economy as a Weapon". It also describes how sanctions can work and what effects they have: as early as 1935, Italian companies were denied the opportunity to finance their imports by the Bank of England. However, the result was also the alliance between Rome and Berlin. In August 1941, Japan was largely cut off from world trade, losing 90% of its oil supply and 70% of its export revenue. However, these sanctions also contributed significantly to the Japanese generals' decision to attack Pearl Harbour.

In fact, the Russia sanctions had a serious economic impact, but also in the West. Cheap energy imports from Russia were cut off, oil and gas prices rose dramatically, resulting in inflation. And there were headlines such as "Stagnating exports weigh on Germany", stating that German exports to Russia had fallen by 40 % and to China by 8.7 % in 2023.

At the same time, there are countless reports on how Russia sanctions are being circumvented. You can read about how goods are travelling unhindered to Russia via the United Arab Emirates <sup>(14)</sup> or

how Russian oil is exported via "disguised ships" <sup>(15)</sup>. It was to be expected that Russia would imitate the products of Western companies leaving the country. In addition, imports of Western goods from neighbouring countries have increased massively <sup>(16)</sup>. In 2022, exports from the European Union to Turkey increased by 222 %, those to Kyrgyzstan by 345 % and those to Armenia by 165 %.

Despite all the difficulties in assessing the impact of sanctions, one thing can be said for sure: the success desired by the West has not materialised. Initially, the impression was created that tough economic sanctions could prevent a major war. However, the Swiss bank UBS stated in December 2023 that "Russia has become richer in the past year despite the war in Ukraine - the West, on the other hand, lost trillions of dollars" <sup>(17)</sup>.

So were the sanctions against Russia in vain? An article in the "Neue Zürcher Zeitung" states that the impact of the sanctions on everyday life in Moscow is limited <sup>(18)</sup>. But the impact on daily life in Russia and on the ability to wage war at all is one side of the coin. The other side is the geopolitical impact. These were enormous. Russia was thrown into the arms of China, the BRICS states were able to demonstrate their political weight and Europe was massively weakened.

Since, despite the war in Ukraine, decision-makers in Washington still describe China as the main enemy of the US, it is no wonder that Moscow and Beijing are moving closer together. At the same time, President Biden has moved away from the US's long-standing Taiwan policy, according to which the island, for all its peculiarities, is regarded as an integral part of China. The current administration in Washington has repeatedly taken steps that Beijing regards as provocative. In any case, the priority given to Asia in US foreign policy can also be interpreted as prioritising confrontation with China. So why shouldn't Moscow and Beijing move closer together?

The new ties between China and Russia encompass official policy, but also bilateral trade and contacts between the two countries.

citizens of both countries. China's President Xi Jinping and President Vladimir Putin have repeatedly described relations between the two countries as a "strategic decision" based on "fundamental interests of both peoples". Trade between the two countries exceeded \$200 billion in the first eleven months of 2023, and Chinese car manufacturers have replaced Mercedes and BMW, which had to withdraw. If Russian oil and natural gas now have to be sold to China at preferential rates due to the sanctions, this will give the Chinese economy a further competitive advantage.

Obviously favoured by the coverage in the state media, Russia has become more attractive to many Chinese. According to the New York Times, young people are flocking to the border city of Harbin to pose in Russian clothing in front of a former Russian cathedral. In any case, China has been a big winner from the sanctions imposed on its big neighbour <sup>(19)</sup>.

The BRICS states (Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa) have also found an important role due to Russia's political and economic marginalisation. At the summit in Johannesburg in August 2023, this group of states was heavily criticised for being too incoherent and lacking in direction. Maybe so. But by supporting Russia politically and economically in the conflict with the West, the BRICS have made a decisive contribution to Moscow's ability to hold its ground. As a result, they have also decisively raised their profile and meant that the "Global South" must be seen as a new factor in international relations.

The BRICS are not a traditional international organisation; there is no presidency or permanent secretariat. Each year, a different country holds the presidency and organises the annual summit. Decisions are taken unanimously, including the admission of new members, which include Saudi Arabia, Egypt, the United Arab Emirates, Ethiopia and Iran. This will make the BRICS an economic power in the energy sector, controlling 54% of global oil production <sup>(20)</sup>. Also

The largest deposits of "rare earths" are located in Brazil, Russia, China and South Africa.

But it is not only their involvement in overcoming Western sanctions against Russia that shows that the BRICS play an extremely important role in the newly emerging international order. For example, China maintains close relations with Ethiopia, which is an important link in the New Silk Road in Africa. Beijing has also played a decisive role in settling the long-standing conflict between Iran and Saudi Arabia. In this way, China wants to make a name for itself as a peacemaker, in contrast to the USA, which it accuses of wanting to use its 800 military bases around the world to exert its power.

A clear goal of the BRICS is to push back the power of the US dollar. As the US currency is repeatedly used as a weapon, the BRICS are endeavouring to conduct their trade in a national currency. This is certainly not an easy endeavour. Replacing the US dollar with another currency was once likened to trying to replace English as the international lingua franca. Even die-hard nationalists probably find it easier to say "good morning" in English than in Mandarin or Hindi.

After all, the BRICS have amassed huge gold reserves since 2010, with Russia, China and South Africa among the largest gold producers. The massive use of the dollar weapon in the Russia sanctions and the exclusion of Russia from the SWIFT system has contributed significantly to states making efforts to switch to their national currency in their own trade relations. So far, China, Russia, Brazil, Iran, and even Australia and Japan have stipulated in trade agreements with these countries that they will exchange goods in their national currencies.

So the question remains not only what is achieved with sanctions, but also who is actually isolating whom? The war in Ukraine in particular has shown that war can create new alliances. The West's sanctions have not cut Russia off from the rest of the world either economically or politically. If the USA and the European Union



international community", they represent just 10 % of the world's population. The remaining 90 % often think differently.

## **7. What has changed, what hasn't?**

The question remains as to why the desire for a better world, which many spoke of at the beginning of the new phase of globalisation, has not been fulfilled. If capitalism, undoubtedly in various forms, has certainly prevailed worldwide, the same cannot be said of peace and democracy. So if Francis Fukuyama was at least partly right, the "one world" that Thomas L. Friedman had in mind has not materialised. Having travelled to India, China and the Middle East, he was convinced that the new technologies that had spread around the world would connect humanity like never before. This "one world" would be a "force for good" for the economy, for the environment, indeed for all people <sup>(21)</sup>.

Why has this not happened? One reason probably lies in the fact that a development that brings advantages for some can be associated with disadvantages for others. A factory that is outsourced to China creates jobs in the "Middle Kingdom", but unemployed people in Europe and the USA. Even in a "global world", economic development can take very different paths and create new inequalities, both within individual countries and between them.

Although the USA has remained the strongest economy in recent years with a share of over 20% of global production, countries such as China and India have been able to significantly increase their shares. According to new calculations, the total GDP of the BRICS has already overtaken that of the G7 with a share of 33% of global production. The development of the world's population is similarly dramatic. While Europe and North America still accounted for 28.5 % of the world's population in 1950, this figure will fall to 11.8 % by 2050. At the same time, Africa's share will increase from 9.1 % to 25.5 %, while Asia's share will remain more or less the same at 55 %. Changes in economic power or population structure can be the basis for shifts in power in the political or military sphere. Through

New alliances open up new opportunities, a new self-confidence can lead to a desire to rediscover past greatness in a new era.

However, the following is probably also crucial: In spite of the drastically changed framework conditions, people retain their usual behaviour patterns. This applies to social policy, political systems and international relations. In countries that have been characterised by a tribal society for centuries, it will be difficult to realise the model of a Westminster democracy in a short space of time. In Europe, we had a development that perhaps began with the Magna Charta in 1215 and continued through enlightenment, liberalism and numerous revolutions until we arrived at a system that we call democracy. Countries with a different history are used to living in different political systems, which makes democracy building extremely difficult.

"Change through trade" can alter material living conditions, but at the same time leave personal character traits untouched. Before the First World War, there was already a period of strong economic interdependence. At the same time, however, many were convinced that war was the solution to the problems and subordinated all others to this conviction. This meant that even increased trade relations could not save the peace. Although the wars of recent decades have always ended in disaster, the opinion has recently prevailed in Europe that the successful peace project since the Second World War must be abandoned and rearmed. However, one factor should not be overlooked that has significantly influenced the outcome of wars over the last few decades: In the secularised states of the

In the West, the attitude towards "death on the field of honour" is very different from that in countries where religion, the belief in a "better hereafter", still plays a role. While some seek above all "happiness on earth", others are much more willing to die for their ideals. This should also be borne in mind by those who believe that the solution lies in supplying more and more weapons to Ukraine.

It is time to give diplomacy another chance. The framework conditions created by globalisation can be put to good use.

## NOTES

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