

# OUTREACH AT THE SUMMIT

*Daily news and critical analysis of the UN Summit proceedings*

## WHAT TO DO WITH THE UNITED NATIONS?

By: *Daniele Archibugi and Raffaele Marchetti*

“The United Nations has died”, we are told again and again. In the 1990s alone, we heard this gloomy pronouncement during the siege of Sarajevo, the genocide in Rwanda, Nato’s intervention over Kosovo, the Anglo-American invasion of Iraq, and after each terrorist attack.

too vast a gulf between the will of those holding real power (today, the US) and what international legal norms dictate. From this follows the idea that any change in the organisation must reduce the gap, and make the UN even closer to the politics of Washington.

This is the core of the issue at stake in the debate over UN reform: on the one hand, any formal or substantial change in the UN is unthinkable without the consent of the US. Any institutional change must take into account the agenda of the world’s lone superpower, the country that hosts the UN’s headquarters and pays about a quarter of its ordinary budget.

*(continued on page 2)*



The almost perverse pleasure in decreeing the UN dead is perhaps rooted in the widespread expectations that the UN would become a much more important centre of power in the post-cold war geopolitical landscape. For four decades after 1945, the organisation had been paralysed by the veto power, formal and substantial, of the two superpowers, the Soviet Union and the United States.

With this era of bipolar duelling gone after the fall of the Berlin wall in 1989 and the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991, many wished to see the arid, short-term worldview of “realism” give way to a wider project of controlled cooperation; and to see the cold war’s winning side – the liberal west dominated by the US – undergo a decisive political change.

In response, realist commentators exercised conservative scepticism, noting with sophisticated arguments that such hopes were naïve. Why, they asked, should the winners of the cold war be so altruistic as to renounce their booty?

The neo-conservative thesis is, after all, clear enough: the UN can have a role only when there is not

STAKEHOLDER FORUM

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*Any democratic reform of the UN should revise the structure of the general assembly to allow for greater inclusion of three types of international agents: non-governmental organisations, multinational corporations and regional organisations.*

*Among the various proposals aiming to fill this democratic void, three emerge as the most innovative:*

- *Both government and parliament should nominate national representatives to the UN*
- *Mechanisms of representation should be created in which national members of parliament could take part in the UN*
- *An “assembly of peoples” should be created alongside the general assembly; this more radical proposal would offer a forum for NGOs, local institutions and organised civil society*

*(Continued from page 1)*

On the other hand, the US right perceives the devolution of any power to the UN as a reduction of its autonomy in foreign policy. The current US government consequently opposes any fundamental restructuring of the organisation.

The dimension of American power helps explain why expectations for reform have so far been disappointed. The grand reform aspirations presented in 1995 have come to naught; the changes proclaimed at the turn of the new millennium have evaporated.

### **Reforms and counter-reforms**

The newly-appointed John Bolton has presented 750 late amendments to the twenty-six-page “Draft Outcome Document”. In thus infuriating the diplomatic corps, he has quite possibly found the most effective way to shelve any progress.

But in spite of this abrupt attempt to obstruct its work, the general assembly will deal with a consistent body of proposals on which governments, diplomats and, above all, world opinion should stake out positions – since all will be affected by the outcome.

A huge set of proposals has been presented for the UN system. UN reform is no longer discussed only among a few diplomats: the language and the proposals advanced by visionary global movements have infiltrated the entire establishment.

But in order to become reality, these reforms need to be supported by political action. The explicit support of the secretary-general is not enough. A democratisation of the UN requires a much greater coalition of political actors.

Recent experience – in particular the establishment of the International Criminal Court (ICC) and the approval of the treaty on banning landmines – shows that changes in international norms are possible only when a mixed coalition is formed with selected governments and transnational civil-society organisations.

Civil society campaigns represent an important, but not sufficient, condition for producing institutional changes at the international level. It is thus necessary for global civil society to find trustworthy partners among governments ready to support such initiatives.

**Daniele Archibugi** is a director at the Italian National Research Council and professor of innovation, governance and public policy at Birkbeck College, University of London

**Raffaele Marchetti** is a Jean Monnet Fellow at the department of social and political science of the European University Institute and a research associate at the University of Urbino



*Daniele Archibugi and Raffaele Marchetti review different proposals for UN reform  
In the full text of their article  
on [openDemocracy.net](http://openDemocracy.net)*



# Reinventing Accountability for the 21st Century



By: **Simon Zadek**

**T**he UN General Assembly is today's closest attempt at a formal global representative model. But few of us believe for a moment that it offers a credible governance mechanism.

This is not because it lacks resources (although it does). And it is not because the UN is full of rather stodgy types making largely pre-prepared statements. The UN has no future in its current form because its basis of accountability no longer gives it the authority, or legitimacy, it needs for its allotted role.

John Maynard Keynes famously argued that what stops us in creating positive futures is not a shortage of good ideas, but our inability to let go of the past. We are heavily invested in particular ways of thinking about accountability. Not surprisingly, those with power and those who confront it share a common suspicion of today's accountability wave.

Businesses rail against the ability of civil society organisations to whip up public opinion against them. Governments are challenging the anonymity of e-campaigners, citing security as the core of their concern. For their part, civil rights organisations dismiss non-statutory standards as at best unenforceable, and at worst a deliberate distraction from the need to regulate.

Accountability will be reinvented, of that there is no doubt. The question is in what forms, on whose behalf, and to what



*This week, Simon Zadek of AccountAbility introduces openDemocracy's new article series: "Peer power: reinventing accountability", which looks at new, horizontal accountability mechanisms*

<http://www.opendemocracy.net/globalization-accountability/debate.jsp>

## WWF: 'Summit is Distracted by UN Reform Issue'

If the UN does not refocus attention on the original goal of deciding how to spend \$400 billion of official development assistance over the next five years it risks wasting them, said WWF the global conservation organization on Monday.

"Invested correctly this money could make a huge difference to the lives of millions of people, particularly the rural poor. While governments are talking about UN reform to make the institution's spending more effective, they are negotiating a development text that is in danger of leading to more wasted expenditure." said WWF International Policy director Gordon Shepherd.

"For all the talk about a greater role for civil society, groups concerned with poverty, human rights and the environment are locked out while key development text is being dangerously scrapped as the document moves toward the lowest common denominator," added Shepherd.

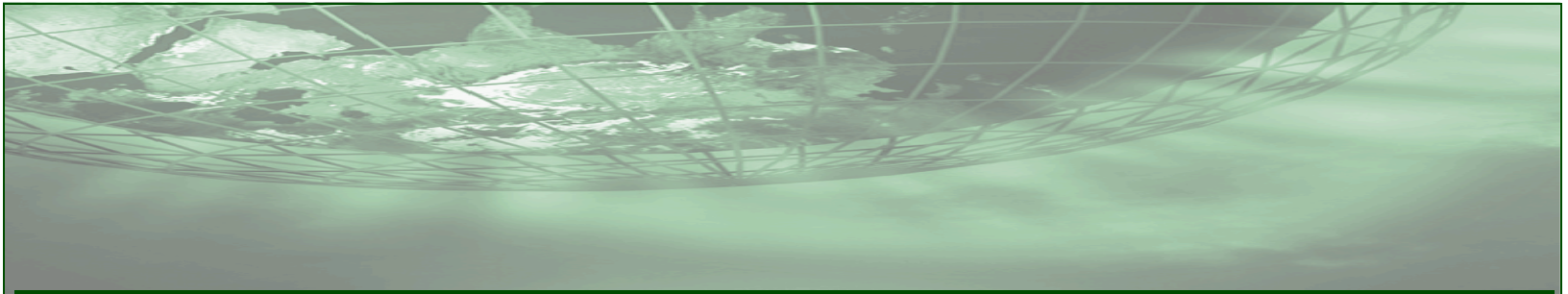
For example, in the environment section of the document, sustainable development is quarantined as just one part of development. "The two issues are inseparable," Shepherd said. "Development without environmental protections will result in millions of poor people watching helplessly as the natural systems on which they depend are destroyed over time," Shepherd said.

*For Further Information:*

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<http://www.panda.org>



*for a living planet*



# Document Hijack: Why the UN must reform its decision-making process

*By Angela Edman*

Key commitments on UN reform seem to be falling to pieces. For the past six months, diplomats have been negotiating provisions in a document that Secretary-General Kofi Annan had originally hoped would provide a blueprint for crucial reforms regarding the United Nations handling of extreme poverty, human rights and threats to global security.

In the past three weeks, as demands for new compromises and trade-offs have surfaced, the negotiation process has crumbled. We are now faced with the dangerous prospect that the final Declaration will be so weak it will barely maintain the status quo.

Great importance has been placed on management reform, particularly by the United States, during the negotiations. Yet the negotiations themselves suggest the need for an even more fundamental type of change: decision-making reform.

The World Federalist Movement-Institute for Global Policy (WFM-IGP) called for open, transparent preparatory meetings from the beginning of the UN reform negotiations. These processes have proven successful in the past; the Preparatory Commission meetings that led to the creation of the International Criminal Court were open, democratic and successful.

Instead, the Secretary-General decided to lead the UN reform negotiations through a closed, rushed process that lacked transparency and to a certain degree, legitimacy. Particularly the last month of negotiations were thrown radically off-course by the late entrance of the new US Ambassador to the UN, John Bolton, and the process of decision-making became significantly less democratic.

When it became apparent that the negotiators were not nearing agreement on seven "contentious" issues, General Assembly President Jean Ping convened a small group of 32 heads of state to continue negotiations in private. He then broke the core group down even further into a contact group of 15 countries, who negotiated the contentious issues while the larger group negotiated the rest of the document.

This process provoked anger in the majority of delegations that were not included. The core group was heavily represented by developed nations, and provided an opportunity for a closed, imbalanced group to eliminate months of work in a

few days. Furthermore, since agreements had to be reached by consensus, any provisions that did not have consensus were eliminated.

This policy led to the disastrous elimination of all references in the Declaration to disarmament and non-proliferation. It also facilitated the ability of the United States to single-handedly, in the face of disagreement from every other delegation, delete the provision on impunity and the International Criminal Court. The Human Rights Council, which offered real hope as a legitimate replacement of the corrupt Commission on Human Rights, has effectively been rendered meaningless.

While certain agreements were reached that offer the possibility of promising and far-reaching improvements in human rights, development and elimination of threats to security, the Summit could have achieved so much more.

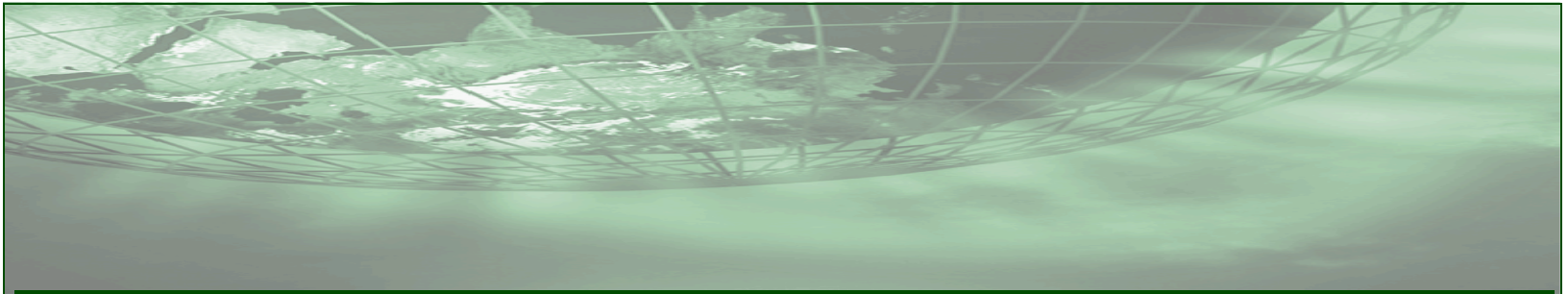
The United Nations, heads of states and governments, should see this as an opportunity to assess how the decision-making process of this summit created conditions that were undemocratic and led to certain failures. These types of closed processes allow a few select governments to control the outcome of decisions that should be reached by the majority.

Decisions that have such vital consequences for the lives of the majority of the world's population should not be left to a select few. If the United Nations and world leaders are really serious about reform, they should start by committing to a decision-making process that is open, democratic and transparent, and truly facilitates the realization of development, security and human rights for all.

*Angela Edman is a Program Associate of the World Federalist Movement-Institute for Global Policy*



**ReformTheUN.org**  
Keep track of all the latest NGO statements on UN reform on this website by the World Federalist Movement  
[www.reformtheun.org](http://www.reformtheun.org)



# A Hill of Beans: The UN's Official Gibberish on Forests and Fish

By: Felix Dodds

It's been three years since the Johannesburg Summit on Sustainable Development, and what new commitments to the environments have governments made? The simple answer is none. Section 56 of the World Summit document deals with the environment, and it is full of reaffirmations of what governments have already decided to do.

Of course, there is considerable relief from many developed governments because US President Bush has allowed language on climate change, biodiversity and replenishment of the global environmental facility to slip through. But this is not really an advance. At most, you could celebrate that there has been no backslide – at least not this week.

In this time of US attacks on multilateralism, perhaps it is a victory. In 1980, when Ronald Reagan was running for president against Jimmy Carter, he asked the American people, "Are you better off now than you were four years ago?" Perhaps that should be the yardstick; "Is the environment in a

better state now than it was in 1992 when the climate change, biodiversity and desertification conventions and Agenda 21 were agreed or initiated?" The answer, except in maybe one or two areas like Ozone depletion, is a resounding, "No".

What does the Summit Document say about the critical issue of over-fishing, considering many of the key fish stocks we eat are beyond replenishment? As the FAO State of the Worlds Fisheries Report said in March 2005, 52% of marine stocks are fully exploited, which means increased fishing of these would reduce reproduction to dangerously low levels. 7% of marine stocks are already depleted, and 16% are over-exploited.

In response to this grave threat the Summit document says:

"Improve cooperation and coordination at all levels in order to address issues related to oceans and seas in an integrated manner and promote integrated  
(Continued on page 6)

## STAKEHOLDER FORUM BOOKS

### Human and Environmental Security—An Agenda For Change



This book is edited by **Felix Dodds** of Stakeholder Forum and **Tim Pippard** of Jane's Information Group and came out for the MDG Summit as a contribution from Stakeholder Forum to the debate around the report to the Secretary General – Challenges, Threats and Change. Stakeholder Forum will be organizing a series of round Tables on the issues in the book with some of the authors in September. If you are interested in being kept informed then email - [fdodds@stakeholderforum.org](mailto:fdodds@stakeholderforum.org)

The contributors to the book are:  
**Foreword** -**Celso Amorim** Foreign Minister Brazil-**Introduction**- **Klaus Toepfer** Executive Director UNEP  
**Section 1 Peace and Security**

- 1. Peace and Conflict: New Threats and Challenges-**Lord David Hannay**: Member of the Secretary General's Panel on Challenges, Threat's and Change; 2. Human Security and the War on Terror-**Oliver Richmond**; 3. Achieving Nuclear Non-Proliferation-**Marian Hobbs** Minister for Disarmament and Arms Control New Zealand; 4. Peace building Commission-**Anders Liden**; 5. Gender and Human Security-**Norleen Heyzer**: Director of UNIFEM.

#### Section 2 Sustainable Human Development

- 6. Human Security for the Poor - **Jan Pronk**: Former Minister of Environment and Development in the Government of the Netherlands; 7. Trade and Security in an Interconnected World - **Hilary Benn**: Secretary of State for Overseas Development UK; 8. Securing a Healthier World - **Dr Christine Durbak**, **Dr Claudia Strauss**; 9. Migration and Development-**Devyani Gupta**; 10. Protecting our Biodiversity - **Jeff McNeely**: IUCN Chief Scientist; 11. Food Security-**Henrique Cavalcanti**: former Chair of the UNCSD (1995) and Brazilian Minister of the Environment; 12. Water for All - **Patricia Wouters**; 13. Climate Change: Impacts and Security - **Melinda Kimble**: Vice President UN Foundation; 14. Human Security for Human Settlements -**Anna Tibaijuka**: Executive Director UN Habitat.

#### Section 3 Global Governance

- 15. Changing role of the State and the emergence of Regional Governance - **Sabin Mendibil Intxaurreaga**: Minister of Environment Government of the Basque Country; 16. Human and Environmental Rights: A need for Corporate Accountability-**Hannah Griffiths**: Friends of the Earth; 17. Democracy in Trouble - **Felix Dodds**: Stakeholder Forum; 18. Reforming Environmental Governance - **Serge Lepeltier**: French Minister of the Environment; 19. America as Empire - **Jim Garrison**: President of State of the World Forum.

(Continued from page 5)

management and sustainable development of the oceans and seas.”

Huh? I'm sure it gives you confidence that we will sustainably harvest our seas from now on.

Here is the text on forests:

“Strengthen the conservation, sustainable management and development of all types of forests for the benefit of current and future generations, including through enhanced international cooperation, so that trees and forests contribute fully to the achievement of the internationally agreed development goals, including those contained in the Millennium Declaration, taking full account of the linkages between the forest sector and other sectors. We look forward to the discussions at the 6th session of the UN Forum on Forests.”

I guess the 6<sup>th</sup> session of the UN Forum on Forests is expected to make sense of what this means. It would do well to remember that the 5<sup>th</sup> session was a complete disaster.

Perhaps one of the most disturbing sections of the Document is the one dealing with the transportation of radioactive waste:

“Note that cessation of transport of radioactive materials through Small Island Developing States regions is an ultimate desired goal of small island developing States and some other countries, and recognises the right of freedom of navigation in accordance with international law.”

It seems to me that the nations transporting radioactive waste have no intention of taking any notice of Small Developing Islands. Yet another example of the powerful and the way they can operate.

The Summit agreement is a soft law agreement and not a hard law agreement and so it does not have to go in front of any parliament – or the US Congress. It is a moral commitment like Agenda 21, the Beijing Platform of Action and the Millennium Declaration.

In the following weeks we must look to the statements made by individual governments and see if we might see individual commitments. If not – at least as far as the environment is concerned – we will look back on this Summit as a wasted opportunity to move beyond agreed text or to put environmental issues within the new paradigm of human and environmental security.

**Felix Dodds** is the Executive Director of Stakeholder Forum and co-editor of the book “Human Environmental Security – An Agenda for Change.”

## Young and Shut Out *The view from outside the Millennium Summit*

By: **Emily Freeburg** countries are 15-24 years old, and 45% of them live on less than two dollars a day.

Like the bulk of civil society, young people are shut out of the United Nations this week, some hovering across the street or down the block from where world leaders are meeting.

The young were well represented among civil society in the pre-Summit hearings in July, but the messages of those hearings are now overlooked as member state negotiations continue on tooth and nail.

Five years after world leaders agreed to the Millennium Development Goals, the Millennium Summit still holds high stakes for young people.

More than 85% of the 1.2 billion people who live in developing

More than 88 million young people are unemployed worldwide, and every day 6,000 young people are infected with HIV. That's more than 50% of HIV infections globally.

And yet - there is currently only one mention of young people in the Summit Draft Outcome Document - in paragraph 48:

“...we resolve to make the goals of full and productive employment and decent work for all, including for women and young people a central objective of our relevant international policies ...” [as of 12:30 pm Sept. 12]

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The Lutheran World Federation urged member states and lobbyists to consider language that stresses the full potential of youth. We suggested additions on youth employment and opportunities, education for young women and girls, greater inclusion of youth in global political processes, and conflict prevention through youth engagement.

The world's young are prepared to take a lead in reaching the Millennium Development Goals. We are not waiting for resources or outcome documents; we are already at the forefront of community development all over the world, providing services and education to our peers, participating at the United Nations, and working at the local and national level in our own countries.

We will go on working and dreaming, but we hope the leaders of the world will reflect our hopes and potential as they

meet this week. We wish to challenge world leaders today to work together to with us to achieve the Millennium Development Goals. More than 1.2 billion youth will be adults in 2015 - they expect nothing less.

Emily Freeburg is the Executive Secretary of the Lutheran World Federation



- See the Youth Portal on the MDGs, including a Youth Campaign Toolkit at: [www.mdg.takingitglobal.org](http://www.mdg.takingitglobal.org)

- Download a policy paper with recommendations and case studies on youth and the MDGs: [www.mdgyouthpaper.org](http://www.mdgyouthpaper.org)

### BAD PRESS:

### QUOTES FROM TODAY'S NEWSPAPERS ABOUT THE UN SUMMIT

- ◆ "The UN General Assembly on Tuesday adopted a watered-down document on poverty, human rights, terrorism and reform for world leaders to ..."  
Minneapolis Star Tribune, USA
- ◆ "After bitter and divisive negotiations, the 191-member General Assembly yesterday approved ..."  
Globe and Mail, Canada
- ◆ "For a United Nations official to discuss reform of the international system is rather like an Englishman talking about the weather ..."  
Daily Times, Pakistan

### UNBELIEVABLE

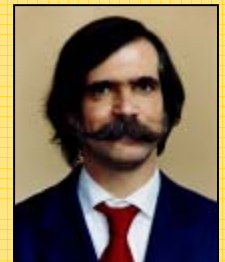
JOHN BOLTON TO COMPETE IN 2005 WORLD BEARD AND MOUSTACHE CHAMPIONSHIP, SAID TO BE EARLY FAVOURITE



Willi Chevalier



John Bolton



Marco Salvetti



Stefan Golz



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International *Gordon Shepherd*.



## WEBLOGS TO WATCH DURING THE SUMMIT

### 2005 Blog

Commentary from leading experts at the Overseas Development Institute  
<http://odihpn.org/cs/blogs/2005/>

### UN Dispatch

Daily posts on the UN Summit from Peter Daou  
<http://www.undispatch.com>

### :::the:::mdgs:::

Reflections on the Millennium Development Goals:  
comments, papers, meetings  
<http://emdgs.blogspot.com/>

### World Changing

Environmentally biased towards democracy and human rights  
<http://www.worldchanging.com/>

## NOT INVITED TO THE MEETINGS? FOLLOW SUMMIT HERE:

### UN Webcast

<http://www.un.org/webcast/>

### UN Radio

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## OUTREACH AT THE SUMMIT

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