



Deepening democracy in a fragmented world

This Report is about politics and human development. It is about how political power and institutions—formal and informal, national and international—shape human progress. And it is about what it will take for countries to establish democratic governance systems that advance the human development of all people—in a world where so many are left behind.

Politics matter for human development because people everywhere want to be free to determine their destinies, express their views and participate in the decisions that shape their lives. These capabilities are just as important for human development—for expanding people’s choices—as being able to read or enjoy good health.

In the 1980s and 1990s the world made dramatic progress in opening up political systems and expanding political freedoms. Some 81 countries took significant steps towards democracy, and today 140 of the world’s nearly 200 countries hold multiparty elections—more than ever before. But the euphoria of the cold war’s end has given way to the sombre realities of 21st century politics.

Developing countries pursued democratization in the face of massive poverty and pervasive social and economic tensions. Several that took steps towards democracy after 1980 have since returned to more authoritarian rule: either military, as in Pakistan since 1999, or pseudo-democratic, as in Zimbabwe in recent years. Many others have stalled between democracy and authoritarianism, with limited political freedoms and closed or dysfunctional politics. Others, including such failed states as Afghanistan and Somalia, have become breeding grounds for extremism and violent conflict.

Even where democratic institutions are firmly established, citizens often feel powerless to in-

fluence national policies. They and their governments also feel more subject to international forces that they have little capacity to control. In 1999 Gallup International’s Millennium Survey asked more than 50,000 people in 60 countries if their country was governed by the will of the people. Less than a third of the respondents said yes. And only 1 in 10 said that their government responded to the people’s will.

Globalization is forging greater interdependence, yet the world seems more fragmented—between rich and poor, between the powerful and the powerless, and between those who welcome the new global economy and those who demand a different course. The September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks on the United States cast new light on these divisions, returning strategic military alliances to the centre of national policy-making and inspiring heated debates on the danger of compromising human rights for national security.

For politics and political institutions to promote human development and safeguard the freedom and dignity of all people, democracy must widen and deepen. That is the subject of this Report.

Economically, politically and technologically, the world has never seemed more free—or more unjust

At the March 2002 UN Conference on Financing for Development in Monterrey, Mexico, world leaders and policy-makers assessed progress towards the development and poverty eradication goals set at the UN Millennium Summit in 2000. They also pledged an unprecedented global effort to achieve those goals by 2015.

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Just as human development requires much more than raising incomes, governance for human development requires much more than having effective public institutions

Many developing countries are making progress on several fronts, particularly in achieving universal primary education and gender equality in access to education. But for much of the world the prospects are bleak. At current trends, 33 countries with more than a quarter of the world's people will achieve fewer than half the goals by 2015. If global progress continues at such a snail's pace, it will take more than 130 years to rid the world of hunger.

Two problems seem intractable. The first is income poverty. To halve the share of people living on \$1 a day, optimistic estimates suggest that 3.7% annual growth in per capita incomes is needed in developing countries. But over the past 10 years only 24 countries have grown this fast. Among them are China and India, the most populous developing countries. But 127 countries, with 34% of the world's people, have not grown at this rate. Indeed, many have suffered negative growth in recent years, and the share of their people in poverty has almost certainly increased.

The second major problem is child mortality. Although 85 countries are on track to reduce under-five mortality rates by two-thirds from 1990 levels or have already done so, they contain less than a quarter of the world's people. Meanwhile, 81 countries with more than 60% of the world's people are not on track to achieve this goal by 2015.

Most troubling, many of the countries least likely to achieve the goals are the world's poorest: the least developed countries. And most are in Sub-Saharan Africa: 23 of the region's 44 countries are failing in most areas, and another 11, such as Angola and Rwanda, have too little data to make a judgement. South Africa is the only country in the region where less than 10% of children are malnourished. In six countries—including Eritrea, Ethiopia and Niger—the share is more than 40%. Without a dramatic turnaround there is a real possibility that a generation from now, world leaders will be setting the same targets again.

These mixed prospects highlight a troubling paradox. The spread of democracy, the integration of national economies, revolutions in technology—all point to greater human freedom and greater potential for improving people's lives. But in too many countries, freedom seems to be under ever-greater threat.

Democracy. The world is more democratic than ever before. But of the 140 countries that hold multiparty elections, only 80—with 55% of the world's people—are fully democratic by one measure. And 106 countries still limit important civil and political freedoms.

Peace. The number of wars between countries has dropped considerably. In the 1990s conflicts between countries killed about 220,000 people, a drop of nearly two-thirds from the 1980s. But civil conflicts are more damaging than ever. In the 1990s about 3.6 million people died in wars within states, and the number of refugees and internally displaced persons increased 50%.

Opportunity: New technology and increasing economic integration are paving the way for truly global markets. But amid the wealth of new economic opportunities, 2.8 billion people still live on less than \$2 a day. The richest 1% of the world's people receive as much income each year as the poorest 57%. And in many parts of Sub-Saharan Africa the lives of the poorest people are getting worse.

Some argue that bridging the gulf between potential and reality is a matter of time and political will. For others the slow pace of change is not the problem—it is the basic direction. But on one point there is broad agreement: in a more interdependent world, politics and political institutions are even more central to human development. Around the world, discussions on development are placing more emphasis on institutions and governance. These debates have focused on the effectiveness of public institutions and the rules for making markets work and promoting economic growth—from the professionalism and transparency of tax systems to the capacity of judicial systems to enforce commercial contracts.

Such issues are important for human development. When institutions function badly, poor and vulnerable people tend to suffer most. But just as human development requires much more than raising incomes, governance for human development requires much more than having effective public institutions. Good governance also requires fostering fair, accountable institutions that protect human rights and basic freedoms. It is not only about whether judges are trained, but whether they observe due

process and are blind to differences of race and class. It is not only about whether schools are built, but whether students in poor districts are as well-equipped as students in affluent areas.

This remains relatively new territory for serious research, and the links between political institutions and economic and social outcomes are not fully understood. This Report explores those links from the standpoint of advancing human development. It argues that countries can promote human development for all only when they have governance systems that are fully accountable to all people—and when all people can participate in the debates and decisions that shape their lives.

Advancing human development requires governance that is democratic in both form and substance—for the people and by the people

Democratic governance is valuable in its own right. But it can also advance human development, for three reasons. First, enjoying political freedom and participating in the decisions that shape one's life are fundamental human rights: they are part of human development in their own right. In Brunei Darussalam, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates women's right to vote has never been recognized. Regardless of their income, this significantly restricts their choices in life. Democracy is the only political regime that guarantees political and civil freedoms and the right to participate—making democratic rule a good in itself.

Second, democracy helps protect people from economic and political catastrophes such as famines and descents into chaos. This is no small achievement. Indeed, it can mean the difference between life and death. Nobel Prize-winner Amartya Sen has shown how elections and a free press give politicians in democracies much stronger incentives to avert famines.

Since 1995 an estimated 2 million people—a staggering 10% of the population—have died of famine in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. In 1958–61 nearly 30 million people died of famine in China. But since achieving independence in 1947, India has not had a single famine, even in the face of severe crop failures. Food production was hit hard during the 1973

drought in Maharashtra. But elected politicians responded with public works programmes for 5 million people and averted a famine.

Democracies also contribute to political stability, providing open space for political opposition and handovers of power. Between 1950 and 1990 riots and demonstrations were more common in democracies but were much more destabilizing in dictatorships. Moreover, wars were more frequent in non-democratic regimes and had much higher economic costs.

Third, democratic governance can trigger a virtuous cycle of development—as political freedom empowers people to press for policies that expand social and economic opportunities, and as open debates help communities shape their priorities. From Indonesia to Mexico to Poland, moves towards democratization and political opening have helped produce this kind of virtuous cycle, with a free press and civil society activism giving people new ways to participate in policy decisions and debates.

Two prominent examples are participatory budgeting and gender-responsive budgeting. In Porto Alegre, Brazil, citizen participation in preparing municipal budgets has helped reallocate spending to critical human development priorities. During the first seven years of this experiment the share of households with access to water services increased (from 80% to 98%), and the percentage of the population with access to sanitation almost doubled (from 46% to 85%).

Gender-responsive budgeting, which examines the implications for gender equity of national and local budgets, has been pursued in at least 40 countries. In South Africa such efforts have trained parliamentarians in scrutinizing budget proposals and led to the inclusion of gender-sensitive analysis in policy papers and to more effective targeting of public spending.

The links between democracy and human development are not automatic: when a small elite dominates economic and political decisions, the link between democracy and equity can be broken

In recent years people around the world have fought for and won democracy in hopes of gain-

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ing political freedom—and social and economic opportunities. But many now feel that democracy has not delivered. During the 1990s income inequality and poverty rose sharply in Central and Eastern Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), sometimes at unprecedented rates. And despite more widespread democracy, the number of poor people in Sub-Saharan Africa continued to increase.

When democratic governments do not respond to the needs of poor people, the public becomes more inclined to support authoritarian or populist leaders who claim that limiting civil liberties and political freedoms will accelerate economic growth and promote social progress and stability. In Latin America high income inequality and poverty go hand in hand with low public trust in political institutions and greater willingness to accept authoritarian rule and violations of human rights.

Authoritarian leaders promise better outcomes and argue that democracy must be sacrificed for economic growth and social progress. But there is no evidence of such a trade-off. Statistical studies find that neither authoritarianism nor democracy is a factor in determining either the rate of economic growth or how it is distributed. Experiences around the world support these findings. Costa Rica, Latin America’s most stable democracy, achieved 1.1% annual growth in per capita income between 1975 and 2000, faster than the regional average of 0.7%, and boasts the region’s most equitable distribution of income, education and health. But in Brazil democracy coexists with economic and social inequalities that are among the world’s largest. More authoritarian Paraguay achieved the region’s average per capita income growth rate but has also failed to expand social and economic opportunities.

Democracy that empowers people must be built—it cannot be imported

In many countries a central challenge for deepening democracy is building the key institutions of democratic governance:

- A system of representation, with well-functioning political parties and interest associations.

- An electoral system that guarantees free and fair elections as well as universal suffrage.
- A system of checks and balances based on the separation of powers, with independent judicial and legislative branches.
- A vibrant civil society, able to monitor government and private business—and provide alternative forms of political participation.
- A free, independent media.
- Effective civilian control over the military and other security forces.

These institutions come in many shapes and forms. Because the democracy a nation chooses to develop depends on its history and circumstances, countries will necessarily be “differently democratic”. But in all countries democracy is about much more than a single decision or hastily organized election. It requires a deeper process of political development to embed democratic values and culture in all parts of society—a process never formally completed.

Building democratic institutions while achieving equitable social and economic development poses tensions. Granting all people formal political equality does not create an equal desire or capacity to participate in political processes—or an equal capacity to influence outcomes. Imbalances in resources and political power often subvert the principle of one person, one voice, and the purpose of democratic institutions. And judicial proceedings and regulatory institutions are undermined if elites dominate them at the expense of women, minorities and the powerless.

One critical problem is money in politics, which subverts democratic institutions when it exerts undue influence on who gets elected and what legislators vote for. Recent U.S. debates on campaign finance reform and the financial links between Enron and leading politicians from the country’s two major parties show that this is a serious concern in long-standing democracies as well as new ones.

Presidential candidates in the 2000 U.S. election spent \$343 million on their campaigns, up from \$92 million in 1980. Including spending by political parties, more than \$1 billion was probably spent on the 2000 campaigns. In 2001 Michael Bloomberg spent a record \$74 million to become New York City’s mayor, the

equivalent of \$99 a vote. His main opponent spent \$17 million.

As campaign costs rise, so does the risk that politicians will be disproportionately influenced by business interests. In the 2000 U.S. election cycle, corporations gave \$1.2 billion in political contributions—about 14 times the already considerable amount contributed by labour unions and 16 times the contributions of other interest groups. Although many European countries have more stringent limits on corporate funding, similar patterns emerge in many other countries. In India large corporations provided 80% of the funding for the major parties in 1996.

At the same time, political parties are in decline in many parts of the world. In France, Italy, Norway and the United States the membership of established political parties is half what it was 20 years ago, sometimes less. And recent surveys in Latin America and Central and Eastern Europe found that people have more confidence in television than they do in political parties.

Triggering a virtuous cycle for human development requires promoting democratic politics

Promoting democratic politics means expanding capabilities such as education, to enable people to play a more effective role in such politics, and fostering the development of civil society groups and other informal institutions to help democratic institutions better represent the people.

Over the past two decades there have been many new ways for people to participate in public debates and activities. Though membership has fallen in political parties, trade unions and other traditional vehicles for collective action, there has been an explosion in support for non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and other new civil society groups. In 1914 there were 1,083 international NGOs. By 2000 there were more than 37,000—nearly one-fifth of them formed in the 1990s. Most developing countries have seen an even sharper increase in the number of domestic NGOs and non-profits: in 1996 India had more than 1 million non-profits, and Brazil had 210,000.

More than \$7 billion in aid to developing countries now flows through international NGOs, reflecting and supporting a dramatic expansion in the scope and nature of NGO activities. In addition to advocating for and engaging in development projects, NGOs are taking more direct roles in local decision-making and monitoring and are developing new, collaborative forms of governance. The Forest Stewardship Council brings together environmental groups, the timber industry, forest workers, indigenous people and community groups in certifying sustainably harvested timber for export. In Porto Alegre, Brazil, and elsewhere, budgeting processes now involve consultations with civil society groups. In the United Kingdom the Women's Budget Group has been invited to review government budget proposals.

Volunteerism is also flourishing. In the Netherlands work by volunteers is estimated to equal 445,000 full-time jobs, equivalent to \$13.6 billion. In the Republic of Korea nearly 3.9 million people volunteer more than 451 million hours, with a value exceeding \$2 billion. In Brazil at least 16% of adults volunteer their time. Consumer action is another way for ordinary people to engage in public debates about policy issues—say, by boycotting rugs made by child labour or purchasing products that help small coffee growers. The threat of such action can hold corporations accountable to public expectations of corporate social responsibility.

These and other examples hold enormous scope for broadening participation in governance and promoting more equitable outcomes for people. By and large, civil society works to strengthen democratic institutions, not undermine them.

Civil society groups do not fit easily into traditional models of governance and accountability—which is part of their value to democracies. But when such groups spring from agendas or use tactics that are contrary to democratic values, they can be both civil and “uncivil”. The rise of such groups poses challenges for truly democratic political engagement.

There are no simple solutions to this problem. But many civil society groups recognize that they must be publicly accountable for their ac-

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tions. In Ethiopia domestic NGOs have adopted codes of conduct to promote effective self-regulation. The codes emphasize the importance of transparency and accountability—and the need for the NGOs to ensure that they truly represent the people whose lives they affect.

A free, independent media is another crucial pillar of democracy. Around the world, restrictions remain on basic civil liberties—such as the rights to free speech, assembly and information. Few countries have freedom of information laws, for example. But in many countries new press freedoms and technologies are enabling the media to contribute more to democratic politics by opening public debates and exposing corruption and abuse. The transparency of Ghana's 2000 election results was helped by the efforts of the country's many private radio stations. The stations made it difficult to rig voting, bringing credibility to the announced results.

Especially in developing countries, most ordinary citizens have many more sources of information to turn to than they did 10 years ago. And less of that information is subject to rigid state control. But to be plural and independent, the media must be free not only from state control but also from corporate and political pressures. Although market reforms and economic integration have reduced state ownership of the media, it has increased concentration in private ownership. Four private media groups own 85% of U.K. daily newspapers, accounting for two-thirds of circulation. And in the United States, six companies control most of the media.

Commercial and political pressures will always skew the playing field in the marketplace for ideas. But the answer to excessive corporate or political influence is not a return to strict regulation by the state. The media need to be free as well as accountable—which is why greater emphasis is being placed on high standards of professionalism and ethics. Journalists and the media are free only when they serve the public first, and the government or private shareholders second. A range of mechanisms can promote these goals without resorting to government controls, including self-regulation through independent bodies, professional codes of ethics

and the use of official ombudspersons, as well as training and raising awareness of journalists.

Establishing democratic control over security forces is another priority—otherwise, far from ensuring personal security and peace, security forces can actively undermine them

Popular disillusionment is not the only problem facing the world's democracies. In many an even greater obstacle is the extensive power of the military, police and intelligence services—not to mention warlords, paramilitary groups and private security companies.

In the second half of the 20th century 46 elected governments were forcibly overturned by authoritarian rule. And since 1989 national armies have directly intervened in the political affairs of 13 Sub-Saharan countries, or about one in four of the region's countries. In some countries—Nigeria in 1993, Myanmar in 1990—military leaders have wrested control from (or failed to cede power to) elected governments under the guise of maintaining civil peace. In others, like Zimbabwe in 2000–02, elected governments have undermined democracy and personal security by using parts of the security sector for their own ends. In still other countries the risk of a failed state—where the security sector is fragmented or even privatized—is as great as the risk of returning to brutal authoritarian rule.

When order breaks down in a country, poor people usually suffer first and most. All too often, violence against civilians emanates from forces under government control. During the 20th century governments killed about 170 million people, far more than died in wars between countries.

Undemocratic governance of security forces can also distort security priorities. Many governments continue to militarize their police forces, blurring their distinction with the military, or seriously underfund them. Without democratic civil control over security forces—including an effective, even-handed national police force—governments cannot guarantee people's safety and security, and human development is severely held back.

Relations between civilians and security forces rarely measure up to the ideal even in

long-standing democracies. But encouraging examples in some new democracies, including South Africa, several Eastern European countries and previously coup-prone Latin American countries, show that progress is possible. Success in this area can contribute to the broader process of strengthening democratic institutions and politics. It can also promote external peace and stability, because wars between democratic countries are quite rare.

In wartorn societies, regaining control over the armed forces is a basic condition for progress. Otherwise, peacemaking efforts face the constant risk of reversal, especially moves to share power and expand political representation. Lack of control can also generate rampant lawlessness and provide the conditions in which violent extremists can flourish—as in Afghanistan and Somalia in the 1990s.

Even in these circumstances solutions are possible. But they require political leaders committed to inclusive, fair processes—especially in demobilizing and reintegrating former combatants and building ethnically balanced, professional security forces—and to investments in a just and enduring peace, including recent innovations such as truth commissions. Creating political space for broadly based reconciliation and promoting dynamic local leaders, including women and young people, are critical to national recovery. In some cases, as in Afghanistan and East Timor, countries also need large-scale international help to maintain peace and order, bring human rights violators to account and build democratic institutions that can resolve deep-seated disputes without resorting to violence.

Global interdependence also calls for more participation and accountability in global decision-making

Empowering people to influence decisions that affect their lives and hold their rulers accountable is no longer just a national issue. In an integrated world these democratic principles have a global dimension because global rules and actors often affect people's lives as much as national ones.

This new reality has been reflected in recent antiglobalization protests in both industrial and

developing countries. Though these protests take different forms and are driven by diverse agendas, they are often united by the demand that global actors and institutions be more inclusive and responsive to the problems of the world's poorest people. The protestors are not alone in considering this an urgent problem.

In 2001 a global health fund was launched to address an imbalance in health research. Malaria, for example, kills at least 1 million people a year, nearly all of them in the poorest countries. In the 1950s the World Health Organization aimed to eradicate the disease. But over the decades it has attracted little public funding for research or treatment. In 1992 less than 10% of global spending on health research addressed 90% of the global disease burden.

International trade rules have also worked against the economic interests of developing countries and failed to restrain protectionism in industrial countries, especially through antidumping rules and other nontariff barriers. On average, industrial country tariffs on imports from developing countries are four times those on imports from other industrial countries. In addition, countries that belong to the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) provide about \$1 billion a day in domestic agricultural subsidies—more than six times what they spend on official development assistance for developing countries.

Efforts to build more inclusive, accountable global governance face two main challenges. The first is increasing pluralism: expanding the space for groups outside formal state institutions to participate in global decision-making, particularly in developing mechanisms to change the behaviour of private corporations. The second is increasing participation and accountability in multilateral institutions to give developing countries a larger role.

Increasing pluralism in global decision-making. Through a series of high-profile campaigns, civil society movements have been promoting pluralism at the global level. Some tactics have been dramatic and effective, such as the human chain that the Jubilee 2000 debt relief campaign formed around the leaders of G-8 countries in Birmingham, the United Kingdom, in 1998. Similar activism has put the

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spotlight on other issues—from the role of “blood diamonds” in financing guerrilla warfare in Africa to the way that the World Trade Organization (WTO) agreement on Trade-Related Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS) risked depriving poor people of access to essential medicines.

Increased pluralism in global politics has also been aided by new forms of collaboration between governments and global civil society groups. Perhaps the most successful example is the 1998 treaty seeking to establish the International Criminal Court. Despite the opposition of several major countries, the treaty was recently ratified—reflecting the support mobilized by hundreds of human rights organizations around the world.

Greater pluralism is also being built into international mechanisms and systems, as with the World Commission on Dams, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and World Bank’s new consultative approach to national poverty reduction strategies and the recently launched UN Global Compact on corporate social responsibility.

Increasing participation and accountability in multilateral institutions. Though the emergence of a global civil society has created opportunities to deepen democracy at the international level, existing international institutions need reform. Developing countries should be given a stronger voice in their operations. Given their enormous—and growing—influence, these institutions should also be held more accountable for their policies and actions.

Consider the World Trade Organization. Every member country has a seat and a vote, which is very democratic. But actual decision-making occurs by consensus, heavily influenced by the largest and richest countries. The imbalance in developing country participation is also evident in global civil society movements. Of the 738 NGOs accredited to the WTO’s 1999 ministerial conference in Seattle, Washington, 87% were from industrial countries.

The democratic deficit in international organizations is unavoidable because people do not directly elect their representatives to the WTO, IMF, World Bank or UN Security Council.

Many argue that the imbalances of global political and economic power also make unrepresentative decision-making inevitable at the intergovernmental level. This argument has considerable force. Notably, the influence of the United States over institutions such as the IMF and WTO has little to do with formal voting power—and much to do with the global standing of the United States.

It is perhaps no coincidence that the more representative international institutions, such as the UN Economic and Social Council and the UN General Assembly, are also considered the least powerful. The reality is that powerful countries—crucial to the success of any international institution—tend to gravitate towards institutions that give them the most influence. And they take their power with them: whether it is to the WTO’s “green room” meetings or the meetings of the IMF executive board. Efforts to enhance the representation of developing countries must take into account these basic realities.

Still, there is considerable room for making global institutions more democratic. Many proposals have been made to remove such patently undemocratic practices as the veto on the UN Security Council and the way the leaders of the IMF and World Bank are selected. Various commissions, think tanks and civil society organizations have also recommended increasing transparency by, for example, publishing decisions made by the executive boards of the major international financial institutions and making WTO decision-making more inclusive and transparent.

In recent years the IMF, World Bank and United Nations have made important efforts to become more open and transparent. Progress on many of the more ambitious proposals for democratic reform—such as at the UN Security Council—has stalled. But there continues to be strong pressure to extend democratic principles to such organizations, particularly since many have recently become so much more deeply involved in national economic, political and social policies. The deeper is their intervention in sensitive governance reforms in developing countries, the greater is the need for international organizations to be open and accountable.

The traditional argument against such reforms is that they would make decision-making clumsy and unworkable. But against this must be set the realities of a more integrated world. Whether the goal is peace, economic growth or environmental sustainability, international efforts to promote change do not work if national actors feel excluded. Around the world, the United Nations, IMF, World Bank and WTO are coming up against the fact that ownership matters. Increasingly, the leading global powers may recognize that a widespread sense of exclusion and powerlessness in developing countries can threaten economic growth and security in industrial countries as well as developing.

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An abiding lesson of the past decade is that national political institutions are not keeping pace with the governance challenges of a more in-

terdependent world. As new democracies struggle to lay the foundations of democratic governance, new forces and institutions are exerting powerful influences on people's lives. And new types of conflicts are proliferating within and between countries.

Many hoped that the September 11 terrorist attacks would inspire global unity in confronting the challenges of national and international governance. And there have been encouraging signs in that direction, such as the increased aid committed at the March 2002 Conference on Financing for Development. But there is an equally strong possibility that the attacks and their aftermath will further weaken global institutions, undermine human rights and exacerbate social and economic fragmentation.

The need to act is clear. Still needed is the will to act in ways that cultivate democracy, advance development and expand human freedoms around the world.

International efforts to promote change do not work if national actors feel excluded

Human development balance sheet

GLOBAL PROGRESS

GLOBAL FRAGMENTATION

DEMOCRACY AND PARTICIPATION

- Since 1980, 81 countries have taken significant steps towards democracy,¹ with 33 military regimes replaced by civilian governments²
- 140 of the world's nearly 200 countries now hold multiparty elections, more than at any time in history³
- In 2000 there were 37,000 registered international NGOs, one-fifth more than in 1990. More than 2,150 NGOs have consultative status with the UN Economic and Social Council, and 1,550 are associated with the UN Department of Public Information⁶
- 125 countries, with 62% of the world population, have a free or partly free press⁹
- Between 1970 and 1996 the number of daily newspapers in developing countries more than doubled, from 29 to 60 copies per 1,000 people, and the number of televisions increased 16-fold¹⁰
- The number of countries ratifying the six main human rights conventions and covenants has increased dramatically since 1990. Ratifications of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR) and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) grew from around 90 to nearly 150¹³
- In 10 countries more than 30% of parliamentarians are women¹⁶
- Only 6 vetoes were cast in the UN Security Council between 1996 and 2001—compared with 243 between 1946 and 1995, an average of 50 a decade¹⁸
- Of the 81 new democracies, only 47 are fully democratic. Many others do not seem to be in transition to democracy or have lapsed back into authoritarianism or conflict⁴
- Only 82 countries, with 57% of the world's people, are fully democratic⁵
- 51 countries have not ratified the International Labour Organization's Convention on Freedom of Association, and 39 have not ratified its Convention on Collective Bargaining⁷
- NGOs still do not have consultative status with the UN Security Council or General Assembly. Only 251 of the 1,550 NGOs associated with the UN Department of Public Information are based in developing countries⁸
- 61 countries, with 38% of the world's population, still do not have a free press¹¹
- In 2001, 37 journalists died in the line of duty, 118 were imprisoned and more than 600 journalists or news organization were physically attacked or intimidated¹²
- 106 countries still restrict important civil and political freedoms¹⁴
- 38 countries have not ratified or signed the ICCPR, and 41 have not ratified or signed the ICESCR¹⁵
- Worldwide, only 14% of parliamentarians are women—and in 10 countries none are women¹⁷
- The World Trade Organization operates on a one-country, one-vote basis, but most key decisions are made by the leading economic powers in "green room" meetings
- The executive directors representing France, Germany, Japan, the Russian Federation, Saudi Arabia, the United Kingdom and the United States account for 46% of the voting rights in the World Bank and 48% in the International Monetary Fund¹⁹

ECONOMIC JUSTICE

- The proportion of the world's people living in extreme poverty fell from 29% in 1990 to 23% in 1999²⁰
- During the 1990s extreme poverty was halved in East Asia and the Pacific and fell by 7 percentage points in South Asia²¹
- East Asia and the Pacific achieved 5.7% annual growth in per capita income in the 1990s; South Asia, 3.3%²⁴
- The more than 500 million Internet users today are expected to grow to nearly 1 billion by 2005²⁷
- The richest 5% of the world's people have incomes 114 times those of the poorest 5%²²
- During the 1990s the number of people in extreme poverty in Sub-Saharan Africa rose from 242 million to 300 million²³
- In Central and Eastern Europe and the CIS per capita income shrank 2.4% a year in the 1990s; in Sub-Saharan Africa, 0.3%²⁵
- 20 countries in Sub-Saharan Africa, with more than half of the region's people, are poorer now than in 1990—and 23 are poorer than in 1975²⁶
- 72% of Internet users live in high-income OECD countries, with 14% of the world's population. 164 million reside in the United States²⁸

Human development balance sheet

GLOBAL PROGRESS

GLOBAL FRAGMENTATION

HEALTH AND EDUCATION

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Since 1990, 800 million people have gained access to improved water supplies, and 750 million to improved sanitation²⁹ • 57 countries, with half of the world's people, have halved hunger or are on track to do so by 2015³⁰ | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Child immunization rates in Sub-Saharan Africa have fallen below 50%³¹ • At the current rate it would take more than 130 years to rid the world of hunger³² |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some developing countries have made progress in tackling HIV/AIDS. Uganda reduced HIV prevalence from 14% in the early 1990s to around 8% by the end of the 1990s³³ | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • By the end of 2000 almost 22 million people had died from AIDS, 13 million children had lost their mother or both parents to the disease and more than 40 million people were living with HIV. Of those, 90% were in developing countries and 75% were in Sub-Saharan Africa³⁴ |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Between 1970 and 2000 the under-five mortality rate worldwide fell from 96 to 56 per 1,000 live births³⁵ | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Every day more than 30,000 children around the world die of preventable diseases³⁶ • Around the world there are 100 million "missing" women who would be alive but for infanticide, neglect and sex-selective abortion³⁷ • Every year more than 500,000 women die as a result of pregnancy and childbirth³⁸ |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Worldwide, primary school enrolments rose from 80% in 1990 to 84% in 1998³⁹ • 51 countries, with 41% of the world's people, have achieved or are on track to achieve universal primary enrolment⁴⁰ | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 113 million school-age children are not in school—97% of them in developing countries⁴¹ • 93 countries, with 39% of the world's people, do not have data on trends in primary enrolment⁴² |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 90 countries, with more than 60% of the world's people, have achieved or are on track to achieve gender equality in primary education by 2015—and more than 80 in secondary education⁴³ | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 60% of children not in primary school worldwide are girls⁴⁴ • Of the world's estimated 854 million illiterate adults, 544 million are women⁴⁵ |

PEACE AND PERSONAL SECURITY

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 38 peacekeeping operations have been set up since 1990—compared with just 16 between 1946 and 1989⁴⁶ • The International Criminal Court's 60th country ratification, in April 2002, established a permanent structure for adjudicating crimes against humanity | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Genocide occurred in Europe and Africa, with 200,000 people killed in Bosnia in 1992–95 and 500,000 killed in Rwanda in 1994⁴⁷ • New forms of international terrorism have emerged, with 3,000 people from more than 80 countries killed in the September 2001 attacks on the World Trade Center in New York City⁴⁸ |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The 1990s saw a large decline in deaths from interstate conflicts, to 220,000 people over the decade—down from nearly three times that in the 1980s⁴⁹ | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nearly 3.6 million people were killed in wars within states in the 1990s⁵⁰ • During the 1990s the number of refugees and internally displaced persons grew by 50%⁵¹ • Half of all civilian war casualties are children,⁵² and there are an estimated 300,000 child soldiers worldwide⁵³ |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reflecting pressure from some 1,400 civil society groups in 90 countries, the 1997 Mine Ban Treaty has been ratified by 123 states⁵⁴ | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Major countries such as China, the Russian Federation and the United States have not signed the Mine Ban Treaty • 90 countries are still heavily affected by landmines and unexploded ordnance, with 15,000–20,000 mine victims a year⁵⁵ |

Note: The notes to this balance sheet appear in the Notes section of the Report.