

CILE 7th Annual International Conference

Background Paper

Title: A Global Ethical Approach to Social Justice and Environmental Issues

Date: March 23, 2019

Venue: Doha & Online

Objectives:

- To highlight the lack of ethics of the Global Order
- To explain the ethical impact of the Global Order on social justice and environmental issues
- To develop a multidisciplinary ethical approach to the Global Order and the contemporary moral chaos

Background:

The greater part of the world is in disorder in terms of political development, socio-economic policies and environmental concerns particularly in the Middle East. Violent conflicts and open wars are heavily affecting global peace and stability, significantly contributing to the suffering of millions of civilians. The crisis of the global economic order has intensified, inflicting substantial damages on most states and the vast majority of people. The gap between economically prosperous countries and developing countries is becoming more obvious. Wealth inequality continues to increase within nation states. Consequently, people in many regions of the world, predominantly in Africa, Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean face conflict, war, dictatorship, violations of human rights, poverty, unemployment prompting them to leave their countries in search of other countries where they can be safe and pursue a better quality of life.

Currently, there are more than 820 million or 1 in 9 people in the world who do not have enough food to eat. There are some 780 million people, or 1 in 10 people in the world, live with less than the international poverty line of \$1.90 a day. And there are more than 70 million refugees, IDPs, and asylum seekers around the world.

Besides the question of social injustice that the above figures show, the impact of the Global Order on the environment stands as one of the most urgent issues to be addressed - particularly the exploitation of nonrenewable natural resources, climate change and global warming. For example the atmospheric carbon dioxide level is currently 400 parts per million, the highest in the history. For centuries it did not exceed 280 parts per million. Moreover, the Ozone Hole has reached around 34 million square kilometers, more than four times larger than Australia and New Zealand combined. These and other environmental problems are seen as risking the future of humankind, by making the globe an unhealthy place for living. A substantial number of scholars, moral ethicists and organizations agree that the environmental problems, social injustice, political and economic inequalities are due to unethical human behavior (The Hunger Project; Food Aid Foundation; UN Food and Agriculture Organization –FAO; The World Bank, UNHCR, NASA).

The current problems have attracted critiques from scholars, human rights institutions and governments on the moral deficiencies of the Global Order. These include the injustices that result from the veto power exercised by the five permanent members of the UN Security Council (US, Russia, China, UK, and France). Prominent scholars, such as Noam Chomsky and Francis Fukuyama have addressed the problematic ideology of “neo-liberalism” and the “political decay” of the “American empire”, respectively. Decay of the political order includes the undermining of state institutions, democratic accountability, the rule of law, with the guiding philosophy suffering from flaws and internal contradictions. Al Gore, the 2007 Nobel Prize, has addressed fundamental environmental issues particularly global warming and the drivers of global climate change, and called for “Forging a New Common Purpose”.

The Global Order basically consists of international organizations such as the United Nations and its agencies including the UNDP, ILO and UNHCR, the World Bank (WB), the Organization of Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), the World Trade Organization (WTO), together with some governments and Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs). Such organizations work locally and internationally on a number of sustainable development projects and strategies to reduce economic inequalities and

advance social justice, enhance democracy and freedoms, resolve conflicts, improve human rights, uphold justice and peace, and reduce environmental damage.

To this end, in September 2015, world leaders adopted the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development to end poverty, protect the planet and ensure that all people enjoy peace and prosperity. They agreed on 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which came into effect in January 2016. The UNDP has been tasked to take a leading role in implementing these goals in 170 countries and territories, and achieving them by 2030. The SDGs are all relevant to a just Global Order particularly Goal 1: 'no poverty'; Goal 2: 'zero hunger'; Goal 3: 'good health and well-being'; Goal 4: 'quality education; Goal 10: 'reduced inequalities'; and Goal 16: 'peace, justice and strong institutions'. However, much remains to be done in achieving these targets with the sincere commitment of governments, scholarly institutions and the international community to make the Global Order ethical and just.

Guiding questions:

- Do global institutions/organizations uphold justice in the social and physical environments as it is understood in Islam? Who can measure it and how?
- What are the ethical consequences of social injustice in relation to environmental degradation? And who is responsible for that?
- Who is responsible for environmental protection and sustainability?
- Does the current Global Order harm the vulnerable (individuals, groups, and countries) and how is that?
- What has the international community done to deliver justice to the most vulnerable and weak among our fellow human beings?
- What are the guiding moral values to reform the Global Order while avoiding chaos?
- What moral values that best address issues of social injustice and environmental problems in majority Muslim societies?
- ❖ **Note:** Authors are welcome to address any other questions deemed relevant to the conference themes.

Sessions/panel themes:

1. Ethical review of global environmental status (the moral role and responsibility of individuals, groups, and governments in issues such as

- climate change, pollution, deforestation, depletion of natural resources, biodiversity, etc.)
2. Ethical review of global social justice (includes ethical perspectives on refugee, migration, poverty, human trafficking, social and political exclusion, economic inequalities etc.)

Key Information:

- Venue: Hamad Bin Khalifa University, Education City, Doha, Qatar.
- Date: Saturday March 23, 2019
- Abstract & brief Bio submission deadline: **December 20, 2018** (authors must select the panel theme for abstract submission. They can submit more than one abstract. Abstracts shall not exceed 300 words and brief bios 150 words)
- Results of abstracts review: **By December 30, 2018**
- Final papers submission deadline: **By March 2, 2019**
- Publishing opportunities: Selected papers will be peer-reviewed and published in CILE publications platforms
- The conference language: Arabic and English (Simultaneous interpreting will be available, and French for live stream)
- Logistics: The organizer covers the expenses of visa, economy air-tickets, transport, accommodation and hospitality for the authors of accepted papers.
- Contacts: For queries and abstract & paper submission please email: international.conference@cilecenter.org