

PEOPLE CENTERED DEVELOPMENT: PRINCIPLE FOR A NEW CIVILIZATION

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New civilizations are characteristically defined by what they reject from the civilizations they replace. Because it opposes the tenets of contemporary Euro-American civilization, it is absolutely fair to characterize the principles of a people-centered civilization in terms of their opposites. In keeping with this, some paragraphs essentially address how to handle a variety of current development challenges by rejecting principles and their people-centered alternatives. This will ultimately require addressing the challenge of democratization. The types of reform indicated involve complex organizational changes that the large official donors have little capacity to address. Organizations with the potential to act as catalysts for institutional and policy change must play a central leadership role. Some national government agencies have shown the potential to serve in these roles, and many others have the potential – if they choose to develop the necessary technical and managerial capabilities.

In addition to the eight rejected principles, key actions at three levels are needed to advance the principles of people-centered development. These include World Government; National Policies; and Local Economic Self-Reliance. These levels are laddered down from the higher-ups.

Global Governance. An objective set of laws known as global governance regulates conduct for the benefit of all people through formal and informal organizations, procedures, conventions, and agreements. Activities in the public and private sectors that cross international, transnational, and regional boundaries are included in the concept of global governance. In this concept of global governance, cooperative action is based on

rights and rules that are enforced through a combination of financial and moral incentives. In the absence of a single authoritative institution or a global governance structure, global governance is made up of public and private elements and methods.

Global governance processes must be reorganized so that economic issues are balanced against other public policy priorities under democratic control and accountability. The current structure of global governance leaves the definition of global economic policies that operate in secret beyond the reach of democratic accountability and puts corporate and economic concerns ahead of social and environmental concerns. The initiatives of the United Nations should give high priority to the functioning of the United Nations Security Council within the main structure of the United Nations. Global policies on trade, aid, and investment, as currently framed and carried out by the World Bank, can be considered within the larger context of social and environmental concerns within that more democratic and transparent policy-making framework, which is a crucial step toward people-centered development.

National Policies. National policies must be reoriented to enable growth that is centered on people and the environment, especially in wealthy nations. The people of the wealthy nations as well as the rest of the world would have an interest in this. For instance, tax and subsidy systems must be changed to reduce resource waste and pollution, lower the cost of hiring workers to increase job creation, and give individuals the opportunity to engage in fulfilling unpaid work in lieu of paid employment.

A more competitive environment and the need for greater efficiency have meant that the role of the public sector is shifting from one of implementation to one of facilitation and coordination when it comes to the formulation and implementation of national policies. Even though the public sector remains dominant, the business sector, non-governmental organizations, the scientific community, and other institutions are growing in importance. Forest policies seek to reflect this economic and institutional

reality and adapt to a new balance between the roles of government institutions and civil society, and between central and regional and local institutions.

Regional Economic Self-Sufficiency. People-centered development emphasizes the importance of increased local economic autonomy and self-reliance. One of its tools will be local currencies. Why should locals be unable to conduct entirely local transactions between themselves, using local resources to suit local needs, without first earning national money that is governed by national monetary policies? The only people-centered financial instrument, in the opinion of a purist, is the trading system, in which a group of people issues its own money to finance transactions with one another. However, there will undoubtedly be a role for a variety of local currencies in the coming years, issued by regional governments and potentially even by local businesses and community organizations.

Generally speaking, the contemporary era has a critical focus on globalization. However, despite the forces of globalization's necessary interdependence and inner determination, economic theory has a significant impact on these forces. This economic theory underscores the centrality of human development in any economic theory that seeks to sustain globalization. The people-centered approach is an aspect of the disputed theory that human development must be people-centered and justified by contemporary human rights and development theory. The idea of people-centered development implies that the normative priority given to economic development should have a specific focus on human beings directly and not on abstractions such as the glorification of state sovereignty, the deification of private property or the exclusion of human interests from the vast aggregates of global capital accumulation. In a broad sense, this implies that there is a global normative imperative requiring the recognition and adoption of a human right to development.

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