

# Current Concerns

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English Edition of Zeit-Fragen

## The United Nations and NATO

### Which security and for whom?

by Hans Christof von Sponeck, former UN Assistant Secretary General

The world the UN advocates looks good on paper.<sup>1</sup> In June 1945, the Charter of the United Nations was signed by 51 member states. Several years later, the two great conventions for civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights came into being, and in subsequent years, important conventions on torture, genocide, women's and children's rights followed. After long negotiations, the UN member states came to a consensus at the end of 2008 on a cluster bomb treaty – unfortunately containing limitations – on which several countries insisted, including Germany.

The existence of extensive international law shows that governments in all parts of the world know what is important for human security and what must be protected.

And yet, since 1945 international law has been continuously broken. Basic rights to food, health, housing, education, work, freedom of opinion have remained unattainable for many. Wars have been (and are) carried on, in utter violation of the United Nations Charter, e.g. against Yugoslavia, Iraq and in Palestine. Torture is practiced, genocide carried out, weapons treaties ignored, the environment robbed of irreplaceable treasures. Uncontrolled financial transactions and economic activities and greed have given rise to an unprecedented crisis of worldwide dimensions. Pragmatism flourishes while moral principles are shunted aside. "Ethics" has become a foreign word. Political lying prevails. The gap between the rich and the poor grows wider. The life and survival chances of people have become yet more unequal. Behind all this lie such significant causes as the lack of political will to speak out in defense of the community of the majority as opposed to the welfare of the few and the resulting neglect of rights and the rule of law. The United Nations strains to carrying out its mandate.

#### 21st century born under the sign of worldwide hypocritical denial

It should thus come as no surprise that the twenty-first century was born under the sign of confrontation and of worldwide, hypocritical denial. Western alliances such as NATO are being challenged by new alliances with weighty members such as Russia, China and India. The key word here is "rearrangement". *Dag Hammarskjöld*, the great man of the United Nations<sup>2</sup>, in 1964 shortly before his death expressed his great concern that "ways out of the narrow, matted jungle in the struggle for honor, power and advantage" must be found. Looking back at the beginning of 2009, one can see that since the founding of the United Nations in 1945, two systems, communism and capitalism have collapsed. Maximization of profit hand-in-hand with dishonesty and ethnocentrism are among the causes.

#### The UN at a crossroads

The world of the 192 UN member states has come to a fork in the road. One way leads to a world focused on the well being of society, conflict resolution and peace, i.e. to a life of dignity and human security with social and economic progress for all, wherever they may be – as stated in the United Nations Charter. Down the other road is where the nineteenth century "Great Game" for power will be further played out, a course which, in the twenty-first century, will become more extensive and dangerously more aggressive than ever. This road supposedly leads to democracy, but in truth it is all about power, control and exploitation.



In front of the UN building in New York: "The UN may not serve as a political toolbox. The challenge of the present times is to return to the basic principles of the UN Charter." (picture pl)

#### The peace dividend never existed

Nothing has ever been seen of the peace dividend that was expected from the end of the Cold War. The aggregate military budgets of all United Nations member states set a new record in 2007, reaching \$1,200 billion. The United States military alone represents some 50% of this; the NATO countries 70%.<sup>3</sup> In the same year, development aid was \$103 billion.<sup>4</sup> or 8.3% of the amount spent on the military!

Since 1969, the United Nations has requested that every year the tiny amount of 0.7% of the GDP of the industrialized countries be allocated to development aid. In fact, the figure for 2008 is around 0.3%.<sup>5</sup> This extreme inequality between military and development spending shows that the current emphasis is not on human security as envisioned in the United Nations Millennium Goals<sup>6</sup> but on countries' military security. Those who point out how ludicrous such a comparison is willingly misunderstand that strengthening personal human security constitutes a decisive contribution to reducing the root causes of worldwide conflict. They refuse to accept that military security through alliances and the self-interest

of governments encourages and deepens international conflicts.

#### UN and NATO: bonum commune or western interests

A comparison of the mandates of the United Nations and of NATO shows clearly how opposed the purposes of these two institutions are. In the 63 years of its existence, the United Nations mandate has remained the same. The United Nations was created to promote and maintain worldwide peace. NATO exists to assure the self-interest of a group of 26 UN member countries. Its mandate, grounded in the 1949 North Atlantic Treaty, originally dealt with the defense of its member states. At the end of the Cold War, in 1989, its mandate appeared to have been fulfilled. Nevertheless, the NATO members wanted to maintain this Western alliance. This launched the search for a new role for NATO.

#### 21st century NATO incompatible with UN Charter

In 1999, NATO acknowledged that it was seeking to orient itself according to a new fundamental strategic concept. From a narrow

military defense alliance it was to become a broad based alliance for the protection of the vital resources' needs of its members. Besides the defense of member states' borders, it set itself new purposes such as assured access to energy sources and the right to intervene in "movements of large numbers of persons" and in conflicts far from the borders of NATO countries. The readiness of the new alliance to include other countries, particularly those that had previously been part of the Soviet Union, shows how the character of this military alliance has altered.

In the 1949 North Atlantic Treaty, the Charter of the United Nations was declared to be NATO's legally binding framework. However, the United Nations monopoly of the use of force, especially as specified in Article 51 of the Charter, was no longer accepted according to the 1999 NATO doctrine. NATO's territorial scope, until then limited to the Euro-Atlantic region, was expanded by its member to encompass the whole world in keeping with a strategic context that was global in its sweep. At the Budapest summit, on 3 April 2008, NATO declared that it intended to meet the emerging challenges of the twenty-first century "with all the possible means of its mission." It added that the 1949 North Atlantic Treaty of the founding countries had been ratified by the current parliaments and thereby had become international law. This did not hold for later NATO strategies and doctrines.

#### UN-NATO accord: serious threat to peace

In spite of this NATO declaration, which, officially, would serve only the interests of a small minority of United Nations member states, on 23 September 2008, an accord was signed between the United Nations and NATO Secretaries General, *Ban Ki-moon*, and *Jaap de Hoop-Scheffer*. This took place without any reference to the United Nations Security Council. In the generally accepted agreement of stated purposes, one reads of a "broader council" and "operative cooperation", for example in "peace keeping" in the Balkans and in Afghanistan. Both secretar-

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## The Universality of Human Rights

by Professor Dr iur Dr hc Heinrich Scholler

The universality of human rights is expressed both in the historical, vertical direction and in their horizontal, geographical spread. In all cultures, the idea of equal freedom, the idea of brotherhood and human dignity has been well received and supported, and the legal documents on the protection of human rights are the product of a long historical development, laying down a new border between the powers of the authorities and the sphere of the individual. Thus originally, human rights constituted a demarcation in political power relationships. Democratic participation and the social state concept of brotherly participation have strengthened the flow of human rights both in a historical and in a spatial direction. *The Universal Declaration of Human Rights* of December 10, 1948, and subsequent declarations and pacts such as the *International Pact on Civic and Political Rights* of December 16, 1966, allow the national state to impose restrictions only to the extent permitted in an open and democratic society, often followed by the comment that this society is based or must be based on equality and

peace. This created something that could be referred to as the discourse of human rights at international level. No reference is made to a specific system of restrictions in a specific country or organization, but instead to a type of open and democratic society as an abstract model. Who determines this model of an open and democratic society, the model of a society that is based on peace and justice for equality? Can it be left to the lawyers or the courts to develop the minimum standards for human rights without which there can be no question of an open and democratic society? Do these also involve social human rights? Is an open and democratic society conceivable without the fourth generation of human rights, the right to self-development, environment protection and education? This fourth generation joined the other three at the end of the 20th century, for until then there was only the concept of the basic rights as a means of defence or as active rights to participate within the framework of the first and second generation of human rights. These were followed by what were known as the third generation of

basic rights, the body of social rights that was directed not only against the state but also, in their third direction, against society. With the development of instruments of protection under international public law and generally the notion that individual rights must be protected by the community of states and not by the national state, the idea of universal or regional human rights entered a new stage. It was here that the ground was broken for the idea that the individual was not only the object but also the subject of rights against the community of states in international law. War, hunger and population explosion have in the meantime become greater enemies than state dictatorships. The inequality of resources and of the standard of living in the world also constitute a new challenge to the idea of human rights. The theory of human rights is always searching for an ur-human right that could be the ultimate source of all other human rights. There is much to argue that the modern ur-human right is to be found in the twin stars of the right to life and the right to self-determination.

**"The United Nations and Nato"**

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ies general committed themselves to acting in common to meet threats and challenges.

In these current times of confrontation, one expects from the United Nations secretariat an especially high level of political neutrality. The UN/NATO accord is anything but neutral and will thus not remain without serious consequences. The Russian representative to NATO in Brussels, *Dmitry Rogozin*, has characterized the United Nations agreement with NATO, a politico-military structure, as "illegal"; *Serge Lavrov*, former Russian ambassador to the United Nations in New York and current Russian foreign minister has declared himself "shocked" that such a pact has been ratified in secret and without consultation.

**UN-NATO-accord:  
incompatible with UN Charter**

Several important questions thus arise: Is the United Nations accord with NATO – a military alliance with nuclear weapons – in contradiction with Article 2 of the United Nations Charter, which requires that conflicts be resolved by peaceful means? Can UN and NATO actions be distinguished when three of the five permanent members of the United Nations Security Council are also NATO members? How can future violations of international law by NATO be legally prosecuted? Is an institution like NATO, which in 1999, without a UN mandate, unlawfully bombed Serbia and Kosovo, a suitable partner for the United Nations?

**UN mandate makes NATO obsolete**

Any evaluation of the UN/NATO pact must take into account that NATO is a relic of the Cold War; that NATO, as a Western alliance, is regarded with considerable mistrust by the other 166 United Nations member states; that a primary NATO aim is to assert, by military means, its energy and power interests in opposition to other United Nations member states and that the United States, a founding member of the NATO community, in the most unscrupulous ways, has disparaged the United Nations and broken international law.<sup>7</sup> Finally, it must be pointed out that the Charter of the United Nations provides for a Military Staff Committee, whose mandate is to advise and assist the United Nations Security Council "on all questions relating to the Security Council's military requirements for the maintenance of international peace and security."<sup>8</sup> If it is thus a matter of NATO countries looking after the well-being of the international community and not the interests of small group of states, then the United Nations mandate makes NATO obsolete!

It is urgent that one or several member states petition the International Court of Justice to rule on the interpretation of the UN/NATO pact of 23 September 2008, in conformity with the Courts statutes.<sup>9</sup>

The people of the world have a right to request such a ruling and a right to expect an answer. It will be recalled that the preamble to the Charter of the United Nations Char-

**Seven challenges for the present:**

- 1) Progress towards a fundamental reform of the UN as a global objective. Multilateralism in the interests of humanity can be achieved;
- 2) Return to the principles of the UN Charter. The UN must no longer simply be a political toolbox;
- 3) Recognition and furtherance of human security as the priority for dignified survival. Military security cannot substitute for human security;
- 4) Compliance with international law. Political responsibility without having to render accounts for the consequences of actions must not be permitted;
- 5) Abandonment of the free (and anarchic) market economy. Order, supervision and control of the economy and of the finance industry are a guarantee and not a threat to democracy;
- 6) Urgency of a UN declaration against double standards. The elimination of special rights for alliances is a precondition for settling conflicts and serves peace;
- 7) Development of ethical principles for state and governmental information and media standards. Organized untruths must be punished.

Finally, an appeal to the general public to continue to make demands of the body politic and to take a more active role in contemporary events. Dag Hammerskjöld used the term "negotiations with oneself."

*Hans Christof von Sponeck*

ter states, "We, the peoples of the United Nations, determined [...] to establish conditions under which justice and respect for the obligations arising from treaties and other sources of international law can be maintained," and not "We, the governments!"<sup>10</sup>

Thus, the question of what road the peoples of the world should take would be answered. Whoever seeks to serve the cause of peace and conflict resolution must take the rough road of United Nations multilateralism and eschew the smooth road of the NATO alliance. As the Canadian foreign minister *Lloyd Axworthy* said to the Security Council in 1998: "We must find our way to multilateralism, which exists for the benefit of the world community and not for the self-interest of the few." The way to it will be a long one, for there has never yet been a multilateralism of this kind.

In 1994, the United Nations began promoting the concept of "human security". In so doing, it wished to emphasize how important it is to see human rights as part of the daily lives of individual persons – freedom from fear and freedom from want. In 2000, for the first time in the history of the United Nations, development goals were quantified. This represents real progress for the strengthening of human security. Eight so-called Millennium Development Goals in the fight against poverty, child and mother mortality, primary education etc. are to be reached between 2000 and 2015.

**"Military humanism" –  
deception for self-interests**

In this way, the United Nations seeks to make clear that besides country-related (national/military) security, there is also human-related security. Advocates of national security, for example governments, whose goal is military security through the strengthening of allian-

ces such as NATO, know this. They openly speak of "military humanism". They pursue their legitimate interests. From this comes their interpretation of the new concept of "responsibility to protect".<sup>11</sup> This is a sham, for it is a matter of advancing specific, individual interests and not of simply protecting the innocent. Were this really the case, it would be obvious in Afghanistan, Darfur, Gaza, Goma, Somalia, Zimbabwe and elsewhere.

In all areas of human security, there has been progress. Yet it is improbable that the Millennium Goals will become reality by 2015. A sum of \$ 135 billion will be needed for the attainment of these goals in the remaining time of 2009–2015. This comes to \$ 22.5 billion per year. Those who claim that this is a huge sum probably do not realize that the United States spends \$ 180 billion per year for its military operations in Iraq and Afghanistan – or that in late 2008 the countries affected by the economic and financial crisis made available at a few days' notice some \$ 3,000 billion (!) for the bailout of mismanaged institutions in need of reform within their borders.

**The possibilities are available –  
the political will is required**

The success of the United Nations Millennium Goals is not a question of money even in the context of the present economically critical times. Progress in the area of increased human security requires political will for such a transformation. Over the previous decades of international discussion about financing international cooperation, it has been repeatedly demonstrated that it would be easy to create innovative financing alternatives.<sup>12</sup>

Plausible suggestions are ignored or rejected. Many governments fear that the independence of international institutions such as the United Nations might become too great.

Those who in the twenty-first century want to live in peace will encounter no difficulty in choosing the road to follow. Access to this road is open. The Charter of the United Nations, which is to be the means by which we beat swords into ploughshares and not ploughshares into swords, remains the basis for human progress and security. •

(The article is based on a lecture given on 6 December 2008 at the Congress of the Deutscher Friedensratschlag in Kassel.)

<sup>1</sup> The new alliances include i) the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), founded in 2001 by China, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan. Its main objective is security in Central Asia. India, Pakistan, Iran and Mongolia enjoy observer status with the SCO. ii) Brazil, Russia, India and China (BRIC) created a political and commercial community in 2001, and iii) Brazil, India and South Africa, a combination that has on several occasions brought about the downfall of the WTO Doha trade round on the grounds of a dispute on tariffs.

<sup>2</sup> Dag Hammerskjöld, born near Lund (Sweden) in 1905. He was the second UN Secretary General from 1953 to 1961, when he was killed in a mysterious air crash near the Congo border in Rhodesia.

<sup>3</sup> See: Swedish International Institute for Peace Research (SIPRI), *2008 Almanac*, 9 June 2008.

<sup>4</sup> See: Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), *Aid Targets Slipping out of Reach?* DAC 1 Official and Private (Aid) Flows.

<sup>5</sup> According to a 1969 UN guideline, donor countries should provide 0.7% of their GNP each year for international development cooperation. Only Denmark, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Norway and Sweden have so far achieved this target.

<sup>6</sup> In 2000, the UN General Assembly adopted eight development objectives for the period 2000–2015. These include reducing hunger and poverty by 50%, basic schooling for all children, equality of men and women, reducing child mortality by 66% and mortality rates for women in connection with childbirth by 75%.

<sup>7</sup> The keywords are the 2003 invasion of Iraq, Guantanamo, Abu Ghraib and torture flights.

<sup>8</sup> Chapter VII Article 47 of the *UN Charter* provides for a Military Staff Committee consisting of the chiefs of staff of the five permanent members of the Security Council. Although it has never been convened since 1945, the Article has remained in effect.

<sup>9</sup> The statute of the International Court of Justice is given jurisdiction for the interpretation of treaties by Chapter XII, Article 36.

<sup>10</sup> See Preamble to the *UN Charter*.

<sup>11</sup> This concept is mentioned in the UN Document *2005 World Summit Outcome (A/60/L.1 – 15 September 2005)*, paras. 138 and 139, see also para. 79). In this document, the UN General Assembly clearly states that only the Security Council has the right to use Chapter VII of the Charter to protect populations against genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity, if necessary using force.

<sup>12</sup> The innovative proposals for financing also include the "Tobin tax" named after *James Tobin*, an American economist, who in 1972 proposed that a tax (0.05–1.00%) should be levied on international currency transactions that could be used inter alia to finance development aid.

**Historic Sentence in Italy  
Causality between Uranium dust and cancer  
acknowledged by a Florence court**

*bha*. The Italian Ministry of Defense was sentenced to pay half a million euro by a court in Florence. This sum constitutes compensation to a soldier who was contaminated and fell ill from radioactive substances – Uranium – that he had come in contact with during the IBIS operation in Somalia. The court's decision states causality between the inhaled uranium dust and the development of a Hodgkin lymphoma. The causality is presented in the publication of the judgment ([www.vittimeurario.org](http://www.vittimeurario.org)), well elaborated by a medical-legal advisor of the court.

The court said it was an offence, that the principle of precaution was not applied by the Italian Ministry of Defense. The US troops had worn protective suits, protective masks, gloves and eyeglasses in Somalia with weather conditions like 40 degrees Celsius in the shade, while the Italian soldiers walked around in short trousers and undershirts. *Falco Accame*, who founded an association

of soldiers – *Anavafaf* – who had become ill from radioactive uranium ammunition, comments on the court's ruling:

Since 1984, the Italian Ministry of Defense held documents on the use of uranium ammunition, which was probably also the case in other NATO countries. In the 1991 Gulf War, the principle of precaution had not been applied by the USA, yet. It was, however, applied in 1993 with the deployment in Somalia. The dangers were only made public in Italy in 1999 by the KFOR troops in the Balkans. The Florence Court ruled that the non-application of the principle of precaution must be classified as a crime.

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*The same tragedy will be repeated with the Lebanese soldiers. They have moved and still move without any protective suits during the attack while Americans and French soldiers were there in full protective clothing.* •

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# What is the Background of the So-called “Gas War“?

by Karl Müller, Germany

In recent years, *Russia* has gone a long way to stop the decline experienced in the 1990s and to make a change for the better. The disastrous decline had been no coincidence but the result of a strategy, starting out from the USA and US-‘advisors’ like *Jeffrey Sachs*. In her book, “*The Shock Doctrine: The Rise of Disaster Capitalism*” (ISBN 9780141024530) *Naomi Klein* described this phenomenon in the chapters dealing with *Russia* in more detail. Part of this decline was that *Russia* should not only be materially exploited but also politically brought to the brink of the abyss – just as *Zbigniew Brzezinski*, the political advisor of the new US President had then proposed.

Since *Russia* took countermeasures, there has been a campaign against the country instigated by US circles and emulated by European politicians – in Germany by the chancellor in particular, who does it in an especially disgraceful and duplicitous way.

Do we have to look upon the gas dispute between *Russia* and the *Ukraine* – just as the other official European and US reactions – as part of this campaign?

There are many hints that support this hypothesis and suggest that the word ‘dispute’ is inappropriate. It was perhaps no dispute but a provocation performed for weeks by the *Ukrainian* President *Yushchenko* and steered by the US administration in the background.

It may hardly be known that on 2 October 2008, the *Ukrainian* Prime Minister *Julia Timoshenko* and the *Russian* Prime Minister *Vladimir Putin* had agreed in a memorandum on the *Ukraine* raising the gas price to world market standards within the next three years. (cf. *Russia*, *Ukraine* to switch to market gas prices in next 3 years, *RIA Novosti* 2 October 2008 and *Eric Walberg: Russia-Ukraine Gas War: Europe’s Winter of Discontent*, [www.globalresearch.ca](http://www.globalresearch.ca)) Moreover, they agreed upon the *Ukraine* paying all its debts from *Russian* gas deliveries (cf. <http://russland.ru> of 24 November 2008).

*Russia* had delivered gas to the *Ukraine* far below world market prices until the end of 2008, namely for US \$ 180 per 1000 cubic meters. Recently *Gazprom* itself had to import the gas that they delivered to the *Ukraine*, namely from Central Asian states – at a price of US \$ 375 per 1000 cubic meters. This led to a billion dollar deficit for the *Russian* gas supplier.

At the end of 2008, the existing contract between the *Russian* *Gazprom* and the *Ukrainian* gas corporations expired – both gas corporations are under state control. A new contract about a new gas price in terms



The so-called “gas war” between the *Ukraine* and *Russia* is obviously part of a US-led campaign against *Russia*. This campaign began when *Russia* opposed its Bleed-out after the disastrous 1990s and looked for its own independent course. (photo reuters)

of the October 2008 memorandum and valid from 1 January 2009 on was prevented by the *Ukraine*, although *Russia* had made an offer to deliver the gas at a price of US \$ 250 per 1000 cubic meters which is less than the current world market price.

Thus *Gazprom* stopped its gas deliveries to the *Ukraine* on 1 January 2009. And this led to the *Ukraine* unlawfully tapping the transit pipelines running through the *Ukraine* to other European states. *Russia* reacted by discontinuing the gas transfer across the *Ukraine*, completely.

How had the *Ukrainian* change of mind come about? It is true that the *Ukraine* experiences a severe economic crisis and has some currency problems. It is also true, however, that representatives of the US State Department visited the *Ukraine* and President *Jushchenko* in November and negotiated a treaty about a “Charter of Strategic Partnership”, which in the meantime was signed by both Secretaries of State. The text of this treaty can be found on the internet: <http://russland.ru/rupo10010/morenews.php>.

This treaty includes passages indicating that the US want to “help” the *Ukraine* “restore and modernize” their gas pipelines. *Russia* reacted vehemently – which is understandable. The *Russian* newspaper “*Iswestija*” reported that the US was reaching out for the *Ukrainian* gas pipelines. *Jevgeni Fjodorov*, head of the *Duma* Committee for Eco-

nomics Policy, blamed the USA for the failure of *Russian* gas deliveries to Europe.

“The quarrel between *Moscow* and *Kiev* has a commercial as well as a political character; the orange revolution had been carried out with the intention to create problems for *Russia*”, *Fjodorov* said in an interview with the *Russian* radio channel *Echo Moskwy* on 14 January. And the *Russian* President *Dimitri Medvedev* raised the question whether the European countries had been informed about the fact that “the US, that neither further any gas in Europe nor transfer it, negotiate a gas transit agreement” (cf. “Stecken die USA hinter dem Gas-Streit zwischen Russland und der *Ukraine*?”, [www.nachdenkseiten.de](http://www.nachdenkseiten.de) of 15 January).

It must be added that *Russia* has been trying for some time to gain access to the *Ukrainian* pipeline network in order to invest in the system of pipelines and guarantee an uninterrupted gas delivery to Europe. It has therefore suggested to establish an international consortium for the maintenance of that network (cf. *RIA Novosti* of 6 October 2008).

So how do we have to judge the US State Department’s “concern” about the halt of the *Russian* gas flow to the *Ukraine*, and their demand for immediate negotiations and their claim that the *Russian* behavior raised “serious questions on the use of energy as a political means of pressure” ([www.manager-magazin.de](http://www.manager-magazin.de) of 2 January)? There had been negotiations

before the visitors from the US came and these negotiations had been successful.

Despite this back story, an agreement could be made which is linked to the memorandum of October. It can be attributed to the sedulous and fact-bound efforts of the *Russian* negotiators and to economic circles in Europe and also in Germany who aim at cooperation with *Russia*. It can also be attributed to the fact that the *Ukrainian* Prime Minister competes with her former “companion”, the President, for the power in the country (cf. *Der Standard* (Austria) of 21 January). *Timoshenko* negotiated the treaty with the *Russian* Prime Minister although *Jushchenko* called it a disastrous defeat for the *Ukraine*.

Opinion polls say that acceptance of the US administration’s man in *Kiev*, *Jushchenko*, has dropped to less than 3%. *Timoshenko* is eagerly trying to bring the majority of the population – still oriented towards *Russia* – over to her side. Thus the American trees in the *Ukraine* may no longer grow to the skies.

The behaviour of some European governments, with the President of the EU Commission *Barroso* leading the way and Chancellor *Angela Merkel* following him, was rather questionable.

Instead of sticking to the truth, she let it be known in a government press conference on 16 January – immediately before the quarrel was settled – that *Russia* was suffering a “loss in reputation and reliability” and put the “blame” for the *Russian* halt to the gas flow on *Russia* as well as on the *Ukraine* in equal shares. “Both sides do not meet their responsibilities. That is the essential point.”

In the meantime, a foreign policy think tank, the *Deutsche Gesellschaft für Auswärtige Politik* (German Association for Foreign Policy) was asked to think about further actions of the EU in the future: no complete alienation from *Russia*, which is practically impossible – but a greater “diversification” of energy supplies – including the pipelines that bypass *Russia*. Moreover – will wonders never cease – it also includes “a new strategy for the involvement of *Iran*” (cf. *Stefan Meister: Gas-Streit zwischen Russland und der *Ukraine*. Eine dauerhafte Lösung ist das Ziel, DGAP Standpunkt*, January 2009).

It is necessary to carefully observe the development to be able to correctly assess the future “improvements” in Middle and Central East, in particular against the background of an intentional aggravation of the confrontation with *Russia* by the US administration (both the foreign policy advisor *Brzezinski* and the old/new Secretary of State *Gates* are *Russia*-haters).

## The Transparent Cabal

### The neoconservative manipulators behind the american disaster

by Friedrich Romig

The dominant strategic idea of American Neocons that an unconditional support of Israeli interests in the Middle East is in the best interest of the United States has culminated in a disaster for the erstwhile world power, the impact of which is shaking the entire globe. Nobel Award Winner and former Chief Economist of the *World Bank*, *Josef E. Stiglitz*, estimates that the cost of the *Iraq* war up to the year 2009 will encompass the unimaginable sum of 3 trillion US dollars. The consequences of this war have practically ruined the USA, not only in financial terms. The political goals of enhancing the security of the US, pushing back terrorism, bringing democracy to *Iraq* and peace to the Middle East have not been achieved.

Currently, the threat of an extension of the war with *Iran* is becoming more imminent. Vast parts of the Muslim world consider the US to be their enemy and have become a breeding ground for terrorists. Al Qaeda has not been destroyed, instead it has been able to strengthen its position. Even in *Afghanistan* the US and its allies have not prevailed. The clashes in *Georgia* have bolstered *Russian* influence from the Baltic up to *Iran*. A

new arms race has started. The non-proliferation of atomic weapons is crumbling. Forces hostile to the USA are coming to power, and even in Europe US criticism is gaining ground. After books have been published by authors such as *Jimmy Carter*, former US President (“*Palestine Peace, not Apartheid*”, 2006), the political scientists *John J. Mearsheimer* and *Stephen M. Walt* (“*The Israel Lobby and American Foreign Policy*”, 2007), *Stephen J. Sniegoski*, an approved historian, has again addressed the subject of *Israel/US* relations. Using broadly and assiduously researched sources, he points out how the Neocon network has succeeded in “hijacking” American foreign policy to *Israel*, a fate which has also not spared EU and its member states’ foreign policy, including the foreign policy of “neutral” *Austria*.

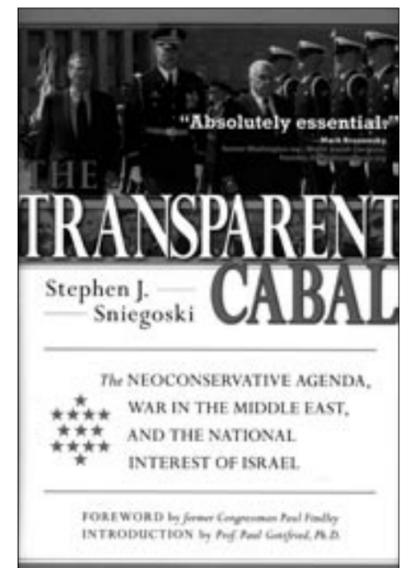
The book is particularly deserving because it rejects the usual half-truths, such as all “Neocons” were Jews and that all Jews support *Israel* and its influence on America’s politics. Neither *G.W. Bush* nor Vice-President *Dick Cheney*, *Condoleezza Rice* or *Donald Rumsfeld*, who carried out *Israel*’s war agenda in Middle East, are Jews. It is true that

many neoconservative Jews formulated the strategies of American politics and are significantly represented in the decision-making bodies. It is also true that, using the connections to the mass media and to the relevant lobby organizations, the Neocons have succeeded in “selling” their war and destabilization policies to the population and to Congress.

However, it is also true that numerous Jews, particularly those from the business world, in 2002 already rejected the *Iraq* war (36%). In 2007 all opinion polls showed that 56% of Americans consider the *Iraq* war to be a failure, of the Jews polled many more were of this opinion (77%, p. 371). What is decisive for the formulation of US policies in the Middle East is not the best interest of America or of American Jews, but the interests held by *Israel*, successfully represented by the Neocons in the US and towards its allies. Even after the November presidential elections no much will change.

Insights, a mass of material and carefully researched sources make *Sniegoski*’s book compulsory reading for every politically-interested and responsibly-acting individual

who refuses to accept the – globally disastrous – policies formed by the Neocons and their networks.



Stephen J. Sniegoski, *The Transparent Cabal*, 2008, ISBN 978-1-932528-17-6

# Childhood Cancer in the Vicinity of German Nuclear Power Plants

## Background and a short radiobiological evaluation of the data situation

by Professor Dr med Dr hc Edmund Lengfelder, Institute of Radiobiology at the Ludwig Maximilians University, Munich\*

cc. At the end of November 2008, the Hippocratic Society Switzerland, [www.hippokrates.ch](http://www.hippokrates.ch), had an extraordinarily well attended meeting at the University Hospital of Zurich. The German childhood cancer study and risks of the nanotechnology were its controversial topics. The following article summarizes the first thematic part: Professor Edmund Lengfelder wrote down the focal points of his lecture for Current Concerns.

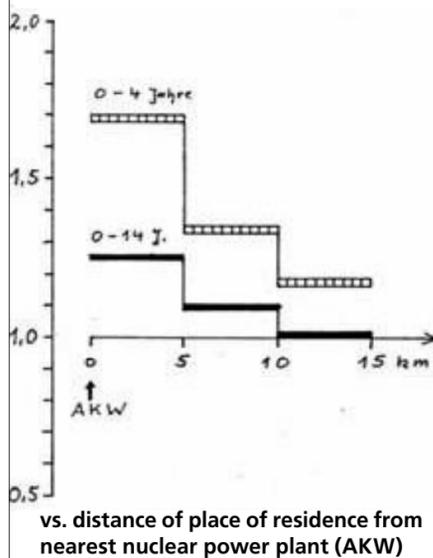
After the occurrence of an unusual number of leukaemia cases in children in the vicinity of the nuclear plant Krümmel and the neighbouring research center Geesthacht in the east of Hamburg, scientific commissions and researchers were asking the question about the causes. On behalf of the Environment Minister Dr Töpfer, Professor Michaelis from the German Childhood Cancer Registry in Mainz investigated all German nuclear power station locations during the period between 1980 and 1990. As a result, the German population was informed in 1992 by the Ministry of the Environment that within a 15-km-zone around nuclear power stations no increase of cancer and leukaemia cases in children under 14 years could be determined. Control of the results by the members of the leukaemia commission of Schleswig-Holstein (active from 1992 to 2004) resulted however in the following findings (see figure 6):

In the 5-km-zone, the number of leukaemia cases was significantly higher in children under 4 years. On the area of a 5 to 10 km periphery there were fewer cases, in the periphery of 10 to 15 km even fewer. In epidemiological cause studies, such a trend dependent on the distance is a clear indicator for the fact that there is a connection with an emitter of pollutants in the centre, whose concentration decreases by dilution with increasing distance. If significant numbers from the 5-km-zone are "diluted" with regard to the large area of a 15-km-zone, then the "absence" of an effect is not amazing. And it is a radiobiological fact that the dose causing the induction of leukaemias in children is the smaller the younger they are. The operators of the nuclear power stations, the Mainz Childhood Cancer Registry and the politicians of the Kohl administration did not see any effect and no connection with radioactive emissions from the atomic power plants. The increased radioactivity measured in the proximity of Krümmel/Geesthacht, found by some members of the commission, were either denied by these circles or simply attributed to the Chernobyl fallout.

By demanding and urge of social circles, numerous physicians and a large number of adjacent residents around German nuclear power plants, the Childhood Cancer Registry in Mainz was assigned with a new study in 2004 by the German Ministry of the Environment. They were to carry out a particularly exact investigation on childhood cancer in children under 5 years in the proximity of German nuclear power stations. This current KiKK study (Childhood Cancer Study – case control study) includes an exact distance measurement of the children's homes accurate to 20 m to the next nuclear power station (stack) and all conceivable measured variables (confounders such as x-rays, animal contact, household chemicals etc.) on the induction of cancer. Around each power station location 3 administrative districts were examined. A team of 12 experts was additionally concerned with the details of the planning of the study.

In December 2007 the result of the Mainz Childhood Cancer Registry was publicly announced by its new head, Mrs Professor Blettner: "Our study confirms that in Germany a relationship is observable between the proximity of the home to the nearest nuclear power plant at the time of diagnosis and the risk of contracting cancer (respectively leukaemia) be-

**Fig. 6**  
Relative risk of children in the vicinity of nuclear power plants to develop severe leukemia (related to reference region = 1.0)

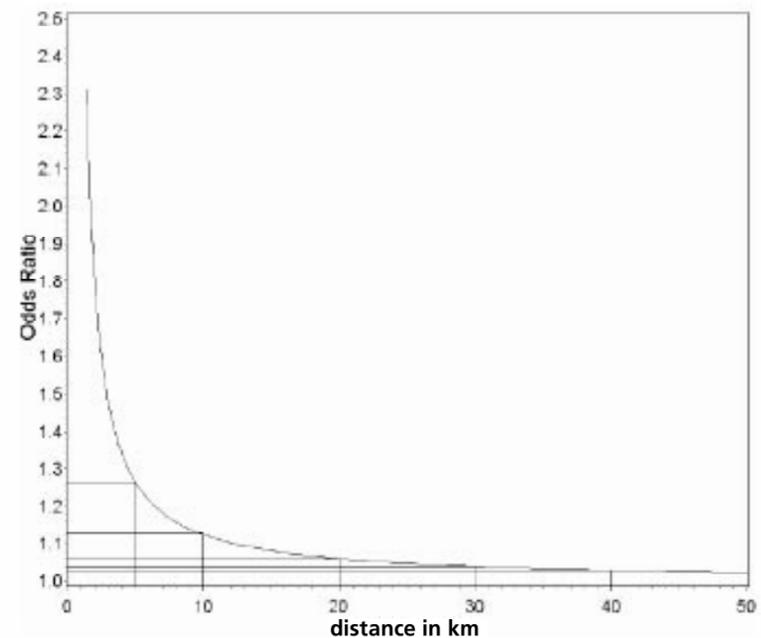


fore the child's fifth birthday [...] The exposure to ionizing radiation was neither measured nor modelled. [...] can [...] the ionizing radiation emitted by German nuclear power plants in normal operation basically not be interpreted as a cause."

The statement of the authors in the KiKK study that the radiation exposure of the children was not modelled, in the meantime has turned out to be wrong. Because in 2006, they published the methodology of the KiKK study in a "Report on a Current Epidemiological Study". Therein they explained in detail that because of the absence of individual data for the children's radiation dose the individual distance of the home to the nuclear power plant is determined as a dose surrogate and with the help of the distance law a dose effect relationship can be assessed. However, after finding "unexpected" results, the authors now claimed in the KiKK study, that radiation was not the cause for the cancer and leukaemia cases in children. They simply suppressed the methodical principle specified before: *The distance from the nuclear power plant as substitute parameter for the radiation exposure.* This procedure in fact constitutes an act of falsification and/or fraud in science.

The authors' claim that the radiation emitted by nuclear power plants is far more than a thousand times smaller than the natural background radiation dose, is not substantiated by any own dose determinations and it is not convincing in view of the study's results. The natural radiation dose contributes between 5 and 10% to the number of the annual cancer cases (425,000 in the year 2002). It is also interesting, how the limits of 0.3 mSv per year due to airborne releases and wastewater from nuclear plants were set, valid in Germany for the public. In the justification for these limits, the *International Commission on Radiological Protection* ICRP (1958) explains that these limits represent a considerable burden for the public by genetic damage. "However, they can be regarded as

**Figure 3.4:** Estimated regression curve explaining the main topic<sup>a)</sup> presentation of the parameters from table 3.15



The diagram shows the main result of the Childhood Cancer Study (KiKK). It proves that with an increasing proximity of the children's homes to a nuclear power plant (distance in km), there is a steep increase in their risk of developing leukaemia under the age of 5. The increase concerns in particular the "radiotypical" disease leukaemia.

According to the distance law, such a graph must be expected. Even at a distance of 50 km the normal numbers for childhood cancer cases (in the graph at 1.0) are not yet reached. ([www.bfs.de/de/bfs/druck/Ufoplan/4334\\_KiKK\\_Teill\\_T.pdf](http://www.bfs.de/de/bfs/druck/Ufoplan/4334_KiKK_Teill_T.pdf))

sustainable and justified regarding the advantages that can be expected by the application of nuclear energy." In 1965 the ICRP determined a gonad dose of 5 rem as limit: "[...] grants a reasonable latitude for the expansion of the nuclear energy programs." The German Atomic Commission, which set the still valid limits with reference to the ICRP, explained in 1969: "[...] that with still reasonable expenditure this radiation burden is inevitable."

The government appoints scientists as advisors to its radiation protection commission. Example: The chairman Professor Jacobi explained on television in 1987: "Those who die from cancer caused by Chernobyl, do not need to die from other causes, as we all must die." Dr Kinzelmann, works doctor of the atomic power plant Neckarwestheim, answered the question of the controversial statements of scientists in the assessment of nuclear power at a public meeting in the summer of 1993 as follows: "I will always find a scientist with the <correct> results, if I pay enough."

Professor Hubert Markl, president of the Max Planck Society, comments on the increasing number of cases: "We cannot deny that in science – more frequent than the scientists prefer – there are lies and deception, not only negligent sloppiness, but really intentional fraud."

We can completely prove that with asbestos, passive smoking, Chernobyl consequences and other examples influential circles in politics and economics make use of "suitable" scientists, in order to play down obvious and severe health damage or to deny it and thus deceive the population. Thus, for mere economic advantages the suffering and death of numerous people is accepted with recklessness. •

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Before new nuclear power plants are built, environmental issues have to be discussed and the population has to be informed about it. (photo caro)

# Forgotten by the International Community

## Bloody conflict in Sri Lanka continues

Interview with Professor Dr S.J. Emmanuel, President of the International Federation of Tamils

CC: Professor Emmanuel, western media report only little or nothing at all about the situation in Sri Lanka. As a Catholic priest, you have been able to stay in close contact to your homeland so far. What is the situation in the Tamil areas?

Today, in Sri Lanka we have the worst head of government you can imagine. He governs, together with his three brothers, and Sinhalese Buddhist extremism prevails. The government does not aim at a political, but a military solution; it denies the ethnic conflict and only wants to fight "terrorism". There are 350,000 internally displaced people in the region Vanni today and every day civilians are bombed and kidnapped. On 25 December 2008, government troops even bombed a church and killed or wounded several believers. The situation of the refugees is disastrous; they have no humanitarian assistance since the Sinhalese government expelled the international relief organizations. The government wants to wage their war without any witnesses. In addition, there has been a continuing rain period for several weeks, and the refugees are at the mercy of the rain, unprotected under the trees. The injuries inflicted on the civilians are horrible – and the majority of the victims are civilians – since cluster bombs and thermobaric bombs among others are being used just like in the Lebanon war.

The government announced that it would have solved the "Tamil problem" by the end of 2008. What does that mean for the civilian population there?

"Tamil problem" for the government means that it is a problem of "terrorism". They know that the conflict actually needs a political solution, but until today the government has not yet made a meaningful proposal. The government claimed that a parliamentary election had taken place in the eastern province and a Prime Minister had been assigned to this region, but the truth is different. A brother of the President governs and he does not care about the population there. Every day, Tamils are killed and kidnapped. The administration wants to attain a similar solution in the north now, after having destroyed the LTTE. The Government's "solution" for the Tamils is to install two representatives of the Government as ministers and to bring the whole population under army control. Thus, it means a return to the worst colonial age.

What does that mean?

Arbitrary suppression. For me, as a clergyman, who knows much about the world and the wars, the situation for the Tamils is shocking. It is a 60-year-old ethnic conflict. From the beginning the government has tried to

react to the non-violent Tamil protest by state terrorism. As a response the Tamil Tigers movement developed in order to defend the homeland. As a consequence, we have experienced a 30 years' war with more than 60,000 victims and 1 million refugees all over the world. The conflict has not yet attained the attention of the world. A long conflict involving a war on a far away island has nearly become a forgotten war. We Tamils are deeply frustrated – on the one hand about the late developments in Sri Lanka, and on the other hand about the attitude of the international community, in particular that of the great powers with their double standards and their interest-oriented policy.

Everything began in the post-colonial era with the "British Blunder" when they left the island. The Tamils which had their own kingdom in former times became a minority under the Sinhalese. The English made a mistake by putting together two ethnic groups in a state and handing over the power to the majority. Today, England behaves as if it had nothing to do with the conflict and supports the Sinhalese government in this war.

Second, the superpowers like the USA and India pursue their own geopolitical interests in Sri Lanka with its ports. They back the Government and treat us like terrorists.

Third, Sri Lanka has a Sinhalese-Buddhist majority democracy. The Sinhalese are in the majority, thus they can suppress the Tamils. Moreover, they have a Sinhalese army with which they can enforce the power. The Tamils have been fighting for 30 years, and they have hoped and resisted non-violently. Whereupon the other side reacted with state terror. We know, there will only be a peaceful solution, but we must defend ourselves against this state terror that knows no limits.

What does the daily life look like for the people at the moment?

The greater part of Northern and Eastern Sri Lanka, the part that constitutes the Tamils' homeland, is under absolute control of the Sinhalese army with – their daily curfews and hundreds of checkpoints, daily renditions of people, murders and similar crimes. In the northeastern part – the so-called Killinochchi region – a brutal war prevails with bombings of civilian population and public buildings like hospitals and schools. People live in great fear; they have no work and no food. 40,000 children cannot go to school. All NGOs left the region. There are no physicians, Tamils are not allowed to study, there are hospitals, but there is no medicine or bandaging material.

For more than 2 years, there has been a total economic blockade in the Tamil areas,

and it is a miracle if people survive. Even at the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the UN Declaration Against Genocide, Sri Lanka is specified as one of the eight endangered states. People always think of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Reich when they hear the word genocide, but a whole people is likewise being destroyed here, its language, its culture, its traditions – all under the pretence of democracy.

Which solution do the Tamils suggest?

Tamils have always wanted a political solution and have made several proposals during the past 60 years. From the beginning, they wanted a federal system for all of Sri Lanka.

That was categorically rejected, however, by the Government. The Tamil rebels took up arms to defend themselves against this state terrorism. However, they never believed in a solution achieved by terror.

The international community, too, has all the time spoken of a political solution; however, it still supplies weapons to the Government and supports them in their military proceedings. Recently military representatives of some countries were sent by them to the northeastern part of the country (among them representatives of the USA, Pakistan, China, Bangladesh, and India), in order to demonstrate the military progress, but the representatives were not shown the 300,000 refugees.

At the beginning of December 2008, there was a Europol seminar in Germany about the LTTE? Who was the Tamil representative at this conference?

There were no representatives of the Tamils, but only representatives of the Sinhalese government, who campaigned for an inhibition of Tamil organizations in Europe and a limitation to their activities.

How do you judge that?

It is absurd to invite those to a conference, who are responsible for state terror and 500,000 Tamil refugees in Europe, in order to discuss with them how to behave towards the Tamil refugees in Europe. Such events lead



to the result that the hunted go on to be hunted. Many of these expellees are today citizens of the respective country and have integrated themselves, just like me. What is the point of this procedure? Objectivity requires to invite the Tamils and ask them about the situation in their homeland.

What can the people of European states contribute to an amelioration of the situation?

The Tamils are very grateful that they could come over here and stay in security. Sri Lanka exerts some influence on the European governments, but we Tamils are not consulted although we are citizens of the host countries, they apparently plan to take action against us? The European citizens must demand from their governments to do all they can to achieve a fair peace in Sri Lanka but stop to offer support for any military solution.

Professor Emmanuel, thank you for the discussion and we wish you a lot of success and support with your efforts for a peaceful solution of the conflict.

### SRI LANKA:

## SOS – Agonising Cry of the People of Vanni

### A letter from a group of concerned persons to the United Nations Secretary General forwarded by the Asian Human Rights Commission

His Excellency Ban Ki Moon The secretary General, United Nations

Your Excellency,

The Agonising Cry of the People of Vanni, Sri Lanka

We, the Roman Catholic Priests and Religious serving the people in Vanni, the theatre of ongoing vicious battles, make the following ardent and urgent appeal.

1. The „uncleared“ area of Vanni which consisted of Killinochchi, Mullaitivu, parts of Mannar, parts of Jaffna and parts of Vavuniya districts has now shrunken to parts of the Mullaitivu district alone, as a result of the ongoing military operations carried out by the Sri Lankan security forces against the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE).
2. About 491,000 people from the above-mentioned districts are now forced to live in the shrunken Mullaitivu district alone. Day after day, displacements continue un-

abated, as a result of the aggressive artillery poundings and aerial bombardments in and around civilian settlements.

3. In these indiscriminate attacks, babies in mothers' wombs, infants, children, women and men, young and old are killed and maimed and wounded every day. Even schools, hospitals, places of worship, civilian settlements etc., the security and safety of which are guaranteed in the Geneva Convention on the Conduct of War, are not spared in this aggressive war.
4. The merciless Economic Embargo imposed on Vanni and the Eviction of the INGOs worsen the predicament of the innocent civilians. A shortage in fuel, food supply, medicines, shelter materials and drinking water weigh heavily upon an already beleaguered people.
5. As the geographical territory occupied by the people keep on shrinking daily, it is becoming almost impossible for the peo-

ple even to move towards "safer" areas, away from the battle fields. A GREAT HUMAN TRAGEDY HAS EXPLODED IN VANNI. Such a gruesome experience is unprecedented in the recent history of these people.

6. In times of war, the parties in conflict, particularly the Government which is a signatory to the Geneva Convention on the conduct of war has the bounden duty to uphold the Convention. The safety and security and human dignity of the innocent civilians cannot and should not be trampled upon by anyone, particularly by the Government, waging a war.
7. What is at the root of this ongoing war is the STRUCTURAL INJUSTICE, a vehement denial of EQUALITY and DIGNITY of the Sri Lankan Tamils, perpetrated by the successive Sinhala dominated Governments of Sri Lanka for decades.
8. Therefore, we earnestly urge Your Excellency to take immediate action to stop this

senseless war and put an end to the untold sufferings of the innocent civilians in Vanni whose lives have become a real struggle for survival. And kindly take the necessary steps to bring the parties in conflict to the negotiating table in order to find a humane and just and lasting political solution to the ethnic conflict in Sri Lanka.

Yours sincerely,

(Signed) Rev Fr James Pathinathar,

(On behalf of the Priests and Religious of Vanni)

St. Jude's Church,  
Mullaithivu-Paranthan Road,  
Udaiyarkaddu,  
Mullaithivu District,  
Sri Lanka,

About AHRC: The Asian Human Rights Commission is a regional non-governmental organization monitoring and lobbying human rights issues in Asia. The Hong Kong-based group was founded in 1984.

January 19, 2009

# Violaciones flagrantes del derecho humanitario internacional

Declaración de Richard Falk del 9 de enero  
Reportero especial de la ONU para las zonas ocupadas en Palestina desde 1967\*

hd. El 12 de enero el Consejo de derechos humanos cerró la novena sesión extraordinaria consagrada a las «graves violaciones de los derechos humanos en el territorio palestino ocupado, incluyendo la reciente agresión en la Franja de Gaza». El 9 de enero fue motivo de deliberación en el Consejo de derechos humanos en Ginebra. Sobre todo el informe de Richard Falk, enviado especial de la ONU para Israel y las zonas palestinas ocupadas, apoyado por la alta comisaria para derechos humanos, Navanethem Pillay, puso a Israel en la picota por la violación del derecho internacional, lo cual había comenzado ya antes de la guerra en contra de Gaza.

Israel es miembro de la ONU y, por lo tanto, está obligado al igual que todos los otros países, a respetar los derechos humanos, el derecho internacional y humanitario, y cada contravención de su parte debería ser sancionada. La guerra contra Palestina es una ruptura flagrante del derecho internacional, de los derechos humanos y del derecho internacional humanitario.

El informe de Richard Falk, quien no pudo estar presente el 9 de enero y fue representado por su asistente, muestra claramente hasta qué punto son pisoteados los principios de la ONU y con ello la posibilidad de una existencia pacífica entre los pueblos.

## Richard Falk:

1. Este informe se refiere especialmente a las repercusiones que tiene el ataque militar de Israel en Gaza, que dura desde el 27 de diciembre hasta hoy, sobre la situación humanitaria de 1,5 millones de palestinos encerrados en la franja de Gaza. De acuerdo a la misión de un enviado especial, los comentarios se limitan a todo lo relacionado con la obligación de Israel, como potencia de ocupación, a respetar el derecho internacional humanitario. Ésto resulta, en primer lugar, de las obligaciones fijadas en la IV Convención de Ginebra de 1949, la cual expone detalladamente las obligaciones de Israel como potencia ocupante.

Las obligaciones esenciales del derecho humanitario internacional se consideran como obligaciones que están cimentadas en el derecho consuetudinario. Este informe toca cuestiones de las leyes internacionales de derechos humanos (International Human Rights Law IHR) pero también violaciones tanto del derecho humanitario internacional como de las leyes de derechos humanos que implican también al Derecho Penal internacional (International Criminal Law ICL). Es además indispensable, evaluar las exigencias de seguridad de Israel: según éstas, la intervención militar en Gaza fue acorde con el derecho internacional y la Carta de la ONU, por ser una operación de «defensa» y porque no existía una «crisis humanitaria» que hiciera aparecer a la violencia militar empleada como «excesiva» o «desproporcionada».

2. Si bien Israel sostenía que al retirar sus tropas de Gaza dejaba de ser una potencia de ocupación, en numerosos círculos de expertos en derecho internacional se coincide que Israel sigue teniendo el status de potencia ocupante dada la persistencia del control que mantiene sobre las fronteras, el espacio aéreo y las aguas territoriales.

3. Seguramente le quitará importancia a este informe el hecho de que falta una apreciación de la situación humanitaria existente anteriormente en Gaza; ese era el objetivo de una misión del enviado especial para reunir información para un informe destinado a una sesión regular del Consejo de derechos humanos en marzo de 2009. La misión fracasó porque al enviado especial se le negó la entrada a Israel el 14 de diciembre, se lo tuvo detenido 15 horas en una celda de arresto en el aeropuerto Ben Gurion y al día siguiente fue expulsado. Un trato semejante hacia un experto de la ONU en cumplimiento de una misión, cuestiona seriamente, para la organización en general, las obligaciones de un estado miembro de cooperar y tratar dignamente a aquellos que realizan un trabajo para la ONU. Es de espe-

rar que sea posible convencer al gobierno de Israel de repensar su política de exclusión, con la que ha impedido el trabajo para esa misión. La preocupación sobre esa política se acentuó por el hecho de que se les negó la entrada a periodistas extranjeros, tanto en el período anterior al ataque israelí a Gaza, como durante la operación militar. Esa política fue disputada con éxito en los tribunales israelíes pero hasta ahora sin resultados concretos. Según informó el «New York Times», Israel impide que representantes de los medios puedan hacerse una imagen de las consecuencias de sus operaciones militares en Gaza; al mismo tiempo, apoya a periodistas para que vean los daños producidos por los misiles en la población civil de Israel. Incluso pedidos del Comité Internacional de la Cruz Roja para investigar posibles violaciones del derecho internacional humanitario, han sido rechazados hasta hoy: por ejemplo, la visita a la ciudad Zaytoun, lugar de una acción militar en la que, según informes, fueron asesinados 60 miembros de la familia Samouni, entre ellos numerosos niños.

La cuestión del acceso es decisiva para el trabajo del reportero especial y merece el interés del Consejo de derechos humanos y de las Naciones Unidas en general.

4. El motivo de esa sesión especial es la existencia de una situación de emergencia humanitaria en Gaza – una serie de condiciones que fueron cuestionadas en diversas sesiones públicas por la ministra del exterior israelí Tzipi Livni. Según la Sra. Livni, una «tregua militar» no es necesaria ya que no existe una crisis humanitaria. Su argumento es, que Israel ha permitido el acceso por la frontera de los envíos de alimentos y medicamentos, pero la Organización de Ayuda y Desarrollo de la ONU (UNRWA) y otros colaboradores han constatado que esos envíos pueden aliviar el hambre y todos los problemas que resultan de la alimentación, siempre y cuando sea posible su reparto; ésto no es posible por el estado de guerra en que se encuentra la mayor parte de la franja de Gaza. [...] A la crisis actual se suman otros aspectos que deben ser mencionados: casi un 75% de la población no tiene acceso al agua potable, y tampoco tiene electricidad. Éstas son circunstancias agravantes para la subsistencia de la población en Gaza las cuales han resultado del largo bloqueo; éste además ha dañado la salud física y mental y ha empeorado la alimentación de toda la población en Gaza de tal manera, que un 45% de los niños sufren de anemia aguda.

A raíz de las trabas para el aprovisionamiento de medicamentos, de suministros médicos y el cierre de las fronteras, para muchos habitantes de Gaza era imposible recibir atención médica en caso de enfermedades graves, o de poder continuar con un tratamiento. Se ha llegado a la conclusión que, con seguridad, un 80% de la población en Gaza vive en estado de indigencia, que la desocupación alcanza a un 75% y que el sistema de salud está a punto de colapsar a raíz del bloqueo. Teniendo en cuenta estas condiciones, observadores internacionales independientes están convencidos de que la población en Gaza antes del 27 de diciembre ya sufría una grave crisis humanitaria.

5. El uso de la violencia por parte de una potencia de ocupación para defender su seguridad amenazada por la población ocupada, está permitida dentro de los límites fijados en el derecho internacional. Israel alega que su acción militar actual es necesaria y adecuada dadas las dimensiones y la gravedad de los ataques con misiles contra la población civil en las ciudades de Sderot y Ashdod en el sur de Israel, los cuales son atribuidos a Hamas. Para valorar esa afirmación es necesario aclarar ciertos puntos que no han sido suficientemente discutidos ni en el marco de la diplomacia, ni en los medios.

6. Debe darse claramente por sentado, que no existe una justificación legal (o moral) para lanzar misiles a objetivos civiles, y que una acción tal viola las leyes internacionales de los derechos humanos (IHR) incluyendo el derecho a la vida, y que

es considerada como un crimen de guerra. Al mismo tiempo, la infracción debe estimarse dentro del contexto en el que tuvo lugar: es decir, considerando la importancia del armisticio temporario que fue respetado desde junio de 2008, hasta ser gravemente interrumpido por un ataque israelí que causó la muerte de militantes palestinos el 4 de noviembre de 2008 en Gaza. Durante todo el año, antes del 27 de diciembre, no hubo un solo caso de un israelí muerto por misiles arrojados en Gaza. Además, desde junio de 2008, las dos partes respetaron el armisticio; hubo algunas infracciones, pero no se cuestionó la voluntad de ambas partes de mantenerlo. Se esperaba que Israel durante ese tiempo levantara el bloqueo o por lo menos lo aligerara; éste había sometido a la población de Gaza a graves privaciones, sobre todo en el aprovisionamiento de alimentos, medicamentos, suministros médicos y combustible. Israel no lo hizo. Altos miembros de la ONU en el lugar de los hechos, así como el mandatario general de la Organización de Ayuda y Desarrollo de la ONU (UNRWA) que se ocupa de suplir en forma directa las necesidades humanitarias de la población de la franja, han llamado la atención repetidamente sobre el sufrimiento que ese bloqueo añade a la población civil en Gaza.

7. El bloqueo existente desde hace 18 meses era ilegal; se trata de una forma masiva de castigo colectivo y, como tal, es una infracción del artículo 33 de la IV Convención de Ginebra, y también del artículo 55, el cual exige que la potencia ocupante asegure el aprovisionamiento de alimentos y asistencia médica para la población civil. Un bloqueo tal, no cambia el carácter ilegal de los ataques con misiles, pero lleva a dos conclusiones importantes desde el punto de vista del derecho: primero, que la dimensión del sufrimiento para la población civil a raíz de las acciones ilegales de Israel, es mucho más grande que la ocasionada por las acciones ilegales de los palestinos; por otro lado, que toda iniciativa de negociar un armisticio sólido, debería asegurar que tanto Israel como Hamas respeten el derecho humanitario internacional. Concretamente, ésto significa que debe ponerse fin a las trabas para la entrada de provisiones necesarias para mantener la vida civil, y que éstas no puedan volver a ponerse en práctica como represalia en caso de un ataque con misiles en el futuro. De igual manera, en caso que Israel recurra en el futuro a esas restricciones, entonces no tendrá ninguna protección legal frente a nuevos ataques con misiles u otra forma de violencia por parte de los palestinos en contra de la población civil israelí. Existen ciertas dificultades para hacer responsables a Hamas por todos los ataques con misiles. En Gaza operan milicias independientes, e incluso, antes de Hamas, autoridades del gobierno no lograron evitar los lanzamientos de misiles a pesar de todos sus esfuerzos.

8. La acción militar de Israel fue justificada por los dirigentes israelíes como una reacción «necesaria» e «inevitable» a los ataques repetidos de misiles. También aquí es importante analizar el entorno real de las justificaciones israelíes; en qué medida esas acciones son proporcionadas y su carácter defensivo. La mayor parte de los informes sobre el armisticio limitado, indican que una matanza israelí, de facto, puso fin al armisticio el 4 de noviembre de 2008; ésto llevó automáticamente a un crecimiento de los ataques con misiles a Gaza. Es también relevante el hecho que Hamas había propuesto repetidamente prolongar el armisticio, incluso hasta 10 años, a condición de que Israel levantara el bloqueo. Esas posibilidades diplomáticas, por lo que se sabe, no fueron consideradas por Israel. Si bien el controvertido status legal de Hamas como representante De-facto de la población de Gaza puede ser una dificultad, la propuesta tiene relevancia jurídica, ya que un principio fundamental de la Carta de la ONU es que el recurso de la violencia es sólo posible como última posibil-

idad. Ésto obliga a Israel a buscar por medios pacíficos el fin de los ataques con misiles.

9. Desde el punto de vista del derecho internacional, es importante determinar en qué medida el recurso de la violencia para salvaguardar la seguridad frente a la provocación, es proporcionado y necesario. Aquí tampoco resultan convincentes los argumentos de Israel. Como ya se mencionó, los ataques con misiles, si bien ilegales y peligrosos, han producido pocos daños y ningún muerto. [...]

Según observadores calificados, hasta el momento el número de palestinos muertos se estima en 640 y unos 2800 heridos, muchos de gravedad, de los que aproximadamente un 25% son civiles. Del lado contrario, según últimos informes, murieron cuatro soldados israelíes a raíz de «friendly fire» es decir causado por disparos propios. El desequilibrio del número de víctimas es una medida para la desproporción. Otra es el grado de destrucción y la dimensión del ataque. [...]

10. A ésto se agrega una serie de inculpaciones por parte de observadores calificados, tanto con respecto a los ataques israelíes a objetivos legalmente inaceptables, como al uso de armas también ilegales. Ésto viola el derecho internacional consuetudinario, que prohíbe armas y tácticas que son «crueles» o que provocan un «sufrimiento innecesario». Entre los objetivos, cuya destrucción es ilegal según el derecho humanitario internacional, se encuentran: la Universidad islámica, escuelas, mezquitas, instalaciones médicas y personal, (incluyendo ambulancias). Entre las armas, que según el derecho internacional son cuestionables, se encuentran: gas de fósforo en granadas y misiles, que queman el cuerpo humano hasta los huesos; Dense Inert Metal Explosives (las armas DIME) que despedazan a las víctimas y para los sobrevivientes aumentan el riesgo de cáncer; uranio empobrecido, utilizado en las llamadas «Bunker buster», bombas con gran capacidad de penetración, utilizadas contra el túnel en la franja de Gaza. Éstas pueden provocar enfermedades por radiación en los próximos siglos a todo el que esté expuesto a ella.

11. La dimensión del «sufrimiento innecesario» relacionado con el ataque israelí, tiene un aspecto especial, al que no se le ha prestado atención. En muchos conflictos bélicos actuales, gran parte de la población civil busca huir para escapar del peligro inminente, convirtiéndose así en «desplazados» o «refugiados».

Con el estricto control de las salidas, Israel le niega, directa o indirectamente, a la población civil la posibilidad de devenir «refugiados» – lo que no es una verdadera opción sino siempre un acto de desesperación. Esa negación de los israelíes hace evidente que, en definitiva, la población de la franja de Gaza, es prisionera de la política de ocupación israelí. [...]

12. Según el mandato para las zonas palenestinas ocupadas, en esta sesión extraordinaria tendrían que ser consideradas especialmente las recomendaciones siguientes:

1. Exigir el restablecimiento del acceso para los reporteros especiales como parte imprescindible de la función de control de la ONU.
2. solicitar iniciativas de la Asamblea general para la inspección de inculpaciones de crímenes de guerra.
3. proponer un armisticio a largo plazo sobre las bases del término de los lanzamientos de misiles en Gaza, y el levantamiento ilimitado del bloqueo.
4. solicitar un dictámen del Tribunal internacional para juzgar el estatus jurídico del control de Israel en Gaza después de su retirada en 2005.

Fuente: <http://unispa.un.org/unispa.nsf/47d4e277b48d9d3685256ddc00612265/bb0c3c85fe5579bd8525753900615472!OpenDocument>

(Traducción Horizons et débats)

# Will Society Finally Make up its Mind to Protect Their Youth Effectively?

## The Munich conference "Computer Games and Violence" – Media researchers present new results

650 participants from universities, schools, counseling institutions as well as parents had come: The two lecture halls of the Munich College for Applied Sciences could hardly manage the press of visitors. This shows the attention and concern with which responsible grown-ups and professional youth workers are observing a development that is dragging more and more children and youngsters into the wake of electronic violence. The newest research results fully confirm all the old worries.

Media violence – horror films and violent games played at the computer or the play station – is linked to higher levels of aggressiveness and aggressive behaviour and even to violent crime. The clearest measurable correlation is between violent games and violent delinquency. All experts pointed out that the studies showed that alterations of behaviour and personality take place via alterations of feelings, beliefs and attitudes: Hostility towards others, hate and feelings of revenge fantasies of murder and destruction, following the frequent exposure to media violence will eventually lead to aggressive actions. The longitudinal studies give evidence that the amount of exposure to media violence predicts higher aggression in any case and that the child's development to a sensitive and humane personality is hampered by frequent exposure to media violence. As might be expected school achievement declines as well if children and youth play violent computer games, often or watch violent programs and films, frequently. These children quarreled with teachers more often and got involved into more fights with peers. This was found in Germany as well as in the USA and Japan.

### Research findings are reliable and consistent

Ever and again the validity of available scientific findings concerning the effects of media violence is questioned, an issue, however, the scientific community does no longer debate. Direction and causality of effects of viewing media violence can very well be determined. "We are not helpless, we know very well how to achieve reliable results," said Helmut Lukesch, Professor of psychology and media effect researcher. All studies presented in Munich had been conducted by independent scientists. The evidence was the clearest within the best controlled and most carefully designed studies. The correlation between violent media exposure and aggressiveness is similar to that between smoking and lung cancer. One study e.g. showed that bullies had spent the longest hours on playing violent games (17.7 hrs per week), bystanders 12hrs and victims 9 hrs.

Lukesch and his colleagues proved the "selection hypothesis" to be wrong, once and for all. This hypothesis suggests that already existing aggressive behaviour in children stimulates the exposure to violence, in other words: a child that has been aggressive before viewing media violence, chooses violent media products more often and that explains the high correlation between aggressiveness and frequent viewing or gaming. The researchers, however, showed by means of path analyses that this interrelation – suggested by the selection hypothesis – is much weaker than the interrelation suggested by the effect hypothesis. The effect hypothesis is substantiated without doubt: Frequent viewing of media violence has the effect that it increases aggressiveness and aggressive behaviour in children.

### State of research in the USA: Frequent gamers are more aggressive

Violence is aggression that aims at harming another person intentionally. That is how Dr Douglas Gentile from Illinois, professor of psychology and researcher of media effects defined the term. Such violence occurs in 91% of all games. If the games award violence they must be called "violence-glorifying" games.

In his longitudinal studies of the last two years he found: Frequent viewers and frequent gamers regard the world as a hostile place, they quarrel more often with their teachers, they get involved in fights more often and their school achievements are lower. What is particularly worrisome is the fact that youngsters who were the least aggressive before playing violent computer games had increased their aggressiveness the most after playing these games. "We must regard computer games as if they were teachers, Dr Gentile said. The kids learn what they are taught."

Gentile reported the state of research in the USA: There have been comprehensive meta-analyses, which represent – besides longitudinal studies – a most reliable research instrument. The following six variables were linked to playing violent games: aggressive behaviour, aggressive thought, aggressive feeling, aggressive arousal, low empathy and less pro-social helping behaviour. All these factors proved to be highly interrelated with frequent violent media use.

### "No matter what culture – practice makes perfect"

In 2007 Dr Gentile conducted an experimental study: Children, who had played violent games, punished their pals much harder (40% increase) than children who had not played such games. Two new Japanese longitudinal studies showed that Japanese youngsters also behaved more aggressively. The result did not surprise the researcher: "No matter, what culture, things happen in the head, in the brain," Gentile said. "And practice makes perfect." Younger children show a higher increase in aggressiveness than older ones. That is why all experts emphasized the necessity of intervention programmes on primary school level. The Stanford Curriculum and the intervention programme of Möslle at al. from the Institute for Criminological Research in Hannover aiming at the reduction of electronic media use can serve as models. In 2008 Gentile conducted a study concerning helping behaviour. The interrelations of the variable "helping behaviour" with pro-social games, neutral games and violent games were examined. Although not published yet, the outlines of the results are already visible: "Children who played violent games are the least helpful, those who played pro-social games, are the most helpful."

Since the legal situation in the USA is very different from that in Germany, Gentile focuses on parents as the main agents of opposition and protection against the current wave of media violence: He recommends: parents have to consistently control the media use of their children. If parents had controlled the electronic media use all the time their children were less involved in physical fights and had better grades; this was a finding of one of his studies, as well. In order to enable parents to do so, however, it is necessary to inform them honestly and much more comprehensively about the contents of their children's media products, e.g. films and games. They require a more precise description. American parents are dissatisfied with the labeling and rating of games and films because they are misleading and unreliable. They don't trust them. They want to know: What exactly happens in the game. What is shown? Are the contents brutal? Are there pornographic scenes? Only if these important questions are answered parents can exercise a responsible control.

### Our society breeds criminal youth

The first German longitudinal study, conducted by the Bavarian school psychologist and media research expert Dr Werner Hopf in cooperation with Professor Günther Huber and Dr Rudolf Weiss at Bavarian secondary schools provided evidence for the causal interrelation between violent computer games and violent delinquency, defined as the inclination to commit criminal assaults that in-

volve brutal battery. Horror films and other violent films had the effect to increase aggressive behaviour at school, intermediated by aggressive feelings and attitudes. Compared to other eight factors like parental violence, negative school climate and personality factors, the factor use of computer games caused the highest incidence of violent delinquency. Dr Hopf emphasized: "We are breeding criminal youth by enhancing in them the feelings of hate, revenge and pleasure of destruction through media violence." That will have fatal consequences for the future of our society. Hopf warned against "psychological fascism", which we produce if we induce hate and fantasies of murder and destruction in our youth by letting them play violent games. Psychological fascism is the forerunner of political fascism. Hopf called it a disaster that in our society the legal protection for children and young persons is being systematically undermined by the USK (Unterhaltungssoftware-Selbstkontrolle = entertainment software self control), an institution that is closely connected with the games industry. By unreliable ratings this institution "makes it impossible for the stately Bundesprüfstelle für jugendgefährdende Schriften" (Federal Inspecting Authority for Media Products Liable to Corrupt the Young) to index certain games, and in this way it makes the instruments of youth protection inoperative." Hopf reported on a survey among 13-year-old youths from all types of schools: 51% of the interviewed had already played the new violent game GTA IV with a USK-rating for the age of 18; 71% admitted that they did not care for the rating.

The media expert and journalist Dr Rainer Fromm also emphasized the social consequences of the ever more brutal media products: If 91% of all games contain violence and if children and youth play them ever more hours per day "creeping militarisation of society will be the consequence," Fromm said.

### Poison gas in war games

"Where have we come to, if poison gas is being used in war games for the killing of human beings?" The audience was disgusted with the particularly brutal game named "Backyard Wrestling" that Dr Fromm presented. It contained scenes in which a man was being perpetually battered and knocked down with various weapons accompanied by the noise of breaking bones and cries. With excessive virtual violence the games industry "is making huge amounts of dirty money", 3.2 billion dollar only this year, stated Dr Fromm.

What will be the effects on the future of our societies, asked Dr Ingrid Möller researcher at the university of Potsdam, as children who prefer the use of violent media in their leisure time "are less able to feel compassion and empathy and express a higher consent to aggression promoting norms." Three surveys in context with a longitudinal study conducted by her university had provided evidence that the ability to moral judgement and pro-social behaviour had been reduced in such children.

The Criminological Research Institute Niedersachsen (KFN) headed by Professor Christian Pfeiffer had conducted a two-year longitudinal intervention study in Berlin primary schools (grade three to five). If children had played violent video and computer games during their 3<sup>rd</sup> grade they were inclined to play three times as frequently in their 5<sup>th</sup> grade than did children who had not played these games, said Dr Thomas Mössle. By means of an intervention programme – modeled on the Stanford Curriculum SMART – the media use of children could be reduced which had a positive effect on their social behaviour.

### "Will society finally make up their minds to protect their youth effectively?"

There was only one way, to reduce the disastrous consequences of media violence, the experts agreed. We have to make sure that children and youth will be less, respectively not at

all, exposed to virtual violence. How to put that purpose into practice? Either by not admitting these products to the market or by prohibiting their sale to children and youths or by teaching parents and teachers to detain children from using them and to guide them to better leisure activities. The participants were visibly moved as media expert and school psychologist Dr Hopf reported the example of a child that – after being taught lessons within the intervention programme to reduce electronic media use at a Munich suburb primary school – told him: "I've never been to the forest. Last weekend (without any electronic media use) was the first time all that I went to the forest".

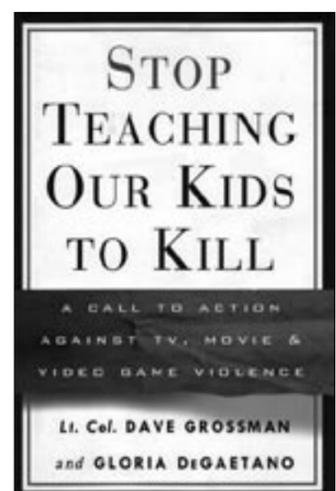
Two thirds of the German population advocate a ban of "killer games". This ban was advocated by some of the experts as well as by Bavarian Minister for Foreign Affairs Herrmann: "It is intolerable that hundreds of thousands of children and youths are consuming violence glorifying computer games for many hours per day," Herrmann said according to a press release on the occasion of the conference.

Since the producers of these violent media products are the ones that cause the devastating consequences Hopf claimed: "The only way to deal with many of these products is to forbid them." Since they are already on the market, however, parents must be taught to control the use of electronic media products more effectively. To enable them to do so, however, the information on the products must be honest, detailed and comprehensive and must be provided by a state supervisory authority that takes youth protection seriously. Politics should pass regulations for extensive mystery shopping and severe penalty for traders and parents who do not abide by the age limit. The ratings of the so called voluntary self control institutions are irresponsible since they let pass extremely brutal and war glorifying games for the young. This institution should be abolished.

But the most important, says Hopf, is to win over and qualify teachers to enable them to teach them critical media use and to conduct intervention programmes. The main goal, however, must be clear: Reduction of electronic media use and more commitment to real life.

The request to teach "media competence", however, is nothing but an empty phrase, employed by the electronic media industry and allied media pedagogues since the 90s in order and shuffle off responsibility and shift in on to parents and teachers with the aim to go on making a profit by producing and selling violent games.

The teaching material for the intervention programme at primary schools can be downloaded at [www.medienstudie.twoday.net](http://www.medienstudie.twoday.net). Information on the teaching material for the intervention programme at primary schools in English, the Stanford SMART Curriculum, can be found on the internet under L. S.M.A.R.T: Smart Student Media Awareness to Reduce Television. •



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# How Does War Get into the Heads and Hearts of People?

## Cologne appeal against computer-violence

### I. Killer-games are land-mines for the soul

From morning to night kids from five over 15 up to 25 years old spend hours and hours in front of computers where they play "games". The titles of those games are: *Counterstrike*, *Doom3*, *Mortal Combat*, *Call of Duty*, *Halo 3*, *Crysis*, *Grand Theft Auto 4* and many others. What all these games have in common is that the users are systematically trained to practise excessive violence against some enemy. The "gamers" learn how to use weapons of all kinds, from machine guns to machine saws, to threaten, humiliate, torture, shoot, maim, cut into pieces and kill people on their computer screens.

By now there is enough scientific evidence available, which proves that media violence, particularly killer games have devastating effects on people, particularly on children and young ones. Parents, teachers, and others who deal with children every day know that kids who play such games on their computers become more violent, more aggressive, more insensitive to suffering. Researches have also found that their school performance is going down.

Many parents are desparate. Teachers have to deal with a general increase in brutality and school failure.

### II. Killer-games are active trainings for war

Killer-games were developed for the US army and air-force to give soldiers a professional training in war-craft. The aim of these programs is to teach young men shooting techniques, precision in hitting a target, immediate and fast reaction, as soon as an enemy appears. This training is meant to make them immune for feelings of empathy for thrit "targets" and thus to condition them for cold blooded killing. The psychological goal of this training is to destroy the normal inhibition to kill, which exists in all human beings.

In the same way children and young people – mostly young men – learn military tactics and acquire special knowledge in the use of all kinds of weaponry. However, these "games" are in reality simulations of real wars. They cause fear, stress and a continuous adrenalin production.

Thus these children and youngsters are conditioned, according to the stimulus-response theory, for immediate reaction without being able to think or reflect critically on the consequences of their actions and to feel compassion with others. Hence the "playgrounds" of our children resemble very much the real battlegrounds and illegal today's wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. To distinguish between "virtual" war theatres and "real" ones becomes almost impossible.

As military crews sit in front of their computers in their airplanes, helicopters and

tanks and kill real people children sit in front of their computers and learn how to destroy their "targets". This is the lesson they learn.

### III. Who is profiting from this "war in the heads"

While the world economy is in the grip of the deepest recession, the games industry, particularly the global players, i.e. games industry corporations can boast of the highest growth rates they ever had. The profits of the games branch of the computer industry amounts to 30 billion per year, the business growing in double digit figures. This is partly because computer games are expensive, but require very low investment costs. Hence the worldwide "war in the heads" is the most profitable business. In Germany this booming market is even subsidized by the government.

Moreover, the games industry works in close cooperation with military research, development and use of weaponry. Military simulations and those of the computer games complement each other. The US army even uses computer games to recruit new soldiers. ([www.americasarmy.com](http://www.americasarmy.com)) Games corporations can therefore be regarded as part of the military-industrial-media-complex. Hence, the language used in their day to day routine is that of warfare. Thus, both the gamers and the soldiers are conditioned to accept contemporary and future wars as "normal". These games drastically violate human rights, international law, and the constitutional rights of all democratic states. We are wondering why governments all over the globe are not doing anything against this.

### IV. Accomplices, collaborators and other profiteers of the killer-industry

The development of these computer games would not have been possible if scientists and universities had not collaborated with the games industry, particularly by playing down the negative effects of these games on children and young people. Universities have even created new courses and institutes which are financially supported by games corporations. Also professors are sponsored by this industry. Their task is to teach the students "computer competence" and to invent a new language with hazy concepts which serve to rather veil reality than to explain the true facts. They use allegedly scientific concepts like "framing competence" and "media competence" to evoke the impression that this kind of research is based on solid scientific principles while in reality it is just pseudoscience. These professors claim that children and youngsters could use such games in a "meaningful way", that they would do no harm to their souls and bodies. But these games have been deliberately developed in such a way, that harm cannot be avoided.

Any criticism of those violent games is rejected. Critics are defamed and even mobbed. They are accused of being "unscientific". The defenders of these games claim that there is no scientific proof that these games have a negative impact on their users. This argument is absurd. 3,500 empirical investigations have shown negative correlations between media violence and an increase in aggressiveness. Scholars who deny this interrelation also become accomplices and members of the club of profiteers from the military-industrial-media-complex.

Their institutes receive comprehensive financial funding by the games industry. Universities today receive hardly any state funding and this way they become servants to the industry. Consequently, scientific corruption and dependance on corporations and the military are actually provoked.

What is worse, politics and public institutions also play into the hands of such private economic interests. For instance, the German Parliament had recently to deal with drafts intending to declare computer games as a "public cultural good" (öffentliches Kulturgut), which means "art".

If violent computer games are defined as "art" all legal protection of children and young people is undermined and becomes meaningless. The Federal Centre For Political Education – another public institution – has for

years collaborated with those who play down the negative effects of the violent computer games. This centre publishes material and books of authors who are closely connected with the games industry and who propagate violence in computer games. This way taxpayers finance their own disinformation.

The Federal Centre for Political Education thus openly violates the constitutionally guaranteed principle to promote peace education.

### V. Who is responsible?

If, in spite of all the downplaying of the negative impact of those games, such negative results can no longer be ignored, the producers and propagators of these games are usually pointing to the teachers and above all to the parents. They are advised to explain to their children that there is a difference between "virtual" reality on their computers and "true" reality. The propagators of those games constantly emphasize that children are able to distinguish between the two "realities".

We stress explicitly that not the parents but the producers, distributors and propagators of killer-games are responsible "if anything goes wrong" with their kids and for the growing violence of youngsters in our societies. The inflationary use of these games all over the world is the result of deliberate politics. Science and media have consciously supported this industry. Instead of acquiring "media competence" children need true media education, that means education of the heart and mind. Children and young people will become responsible citizens only when they learn how to solve real problems in a humane way. Parents, teachers and all citizens must therefore name those who are really responsible for the damage done by these killer-games. They have to be made accountable for the damage they have done.

### We shall not allow

- that the heads and hearts of our children continue to be poisoned by those killer-

initial signers:

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