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## Sustainable development and international security

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## Sustainable development and international security,

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Development is considered as a situation of progressive and irreversible improvement of the economy, to the benefit of all humans. Speaking of « sustainable » development seems, in this context, a pleonasm. However, sustainable implies some values that economy, in its fundamental selfishness, seems to have forgotten. It is so for ecology, environment, health and education. Security is an essential component of a durable development and armament is often a powerful brake for sustainable development if it is possible to reduce predation and wars. Disarmament is interesting, but a situation of peace is not necessarily preferable to a situation of conflict, tyranny, slavery or non- respect of the human rights. Peace is a basic need for sustainable development.

Le développement est considéré comme une situation d'amélioration progressive et irréversible de l'économie, au bénéfice de tous les humains. Parler de développement " durable " semble, dans ce contexte, un pléonasme. Cependant, durable implique des valeurs que l'économie, dans son égoïsme fondamental, semble avoir oubliées. Il en est ainsi de l'écologie, de l'environnement, de la santé et de l'éducation. La sécurité est une composante essentielle d'un développement durable et l'armement est souvent un frein puissant au développement durable, si la prédation et les guerres ne sont pas des menaces. Le désarmement est intéressant, mais une situation de paix n'est pas forcément préférable si elle se réalise dans une situation de conflits, de tyrannie, d'esclavage ou de non respect des droits de l'homme. La paix est un besoin fondamental pour le développement durable.

Mots clés : Développement soutenable, paix, guerre, sécurité  
Sustainable development, peace, war, security

A development is called “sustainable” when it allow an improvement of everyone’s life conditions (according to different rhythms), without questioning the development potential of the future generations. This concept differs from the notion of growth, notably the one of Growth National Product, which expresses both a one-dimension conception of economy and a short-term vision of it. Like this, a country may dispose from a strong economic growth, but which benefits are reserved to the smallest number, or which realisation supposes forms of slavery unfavourable to workers fulfilment. Besides the macroeconomic data, which are a partial and even biased indicator of economic reality, observable facts do exist. What is the importance of the GNP per capita for the one who disposes no income to survive? He will only have the satisfaction to starve to death in an oasis of riches and wastes. Development is considered as a situation of progressive and irreversible improvement of the national economy, to the benefit of the men who compose it. Speaking of “sustainable” development is, in this context, a pleonasm. A development, which would not be “sustainable”, would then only be oriented towards economic values of short or middle term, given that from a threshold it would meet limits liable to question its own process. However, the term “sustainable” also implies some values that economy, in its fundamental selfishness, seems to have forgotten. It is so for ecology, environment, health, education, security, but also more generally for men fulfilment.

### **Security, as an essential component of a durable development**

When the Forrester Report and the book of Meadows, entitled “Halt to growth” denounce all wastes and recall that raw materials and energy are in a situation of scarcity in the forthcoming half century, they do it in defending human values but above all in underlining the impossible future growth to

which leads the actual rise of the added value. In other words, if ecology is not respected, we could always obtain very satisfactory results in the short term, but in the longer run, the economic crisis will be unavoidable and it would result a strong recession and a decrease of resources available for the future generations. A development is then not sustainable if it generates negative values in the society which would progressively slow down and then destroy, its own potential. These ideas were new but in some way they also perpetuated other contesting analyses of growth at any price. Thus François Perroux defined the foundations of economy on the basis of a triple exigency which he called the costs of the man, namely to feed the men, to treat the individuals and to free the slaves. The function of struggle against hunger is natural to economy, and yet misery and malnutrition still exist today. The will to treat people also answer to the respect of life, but the life expectancy strongly diverge according the nations and their development level. Finally, the exigency of slaves' release, according to the emphatic term of François Perroux, probably refers to the necessity of growth, but not in any situation. Men need a true life, an existence that is not only based on the imperative and constant exigency of word, in a universe far from the rules of liberty and democracy. Amartya Sen, who analyses a developed economy as an economy liable to furnish important rights to everyone, what he calls the "entitlements", has continued these ideas. In other words, a nation will only be developed which it will be able to ensure the liberty, the democracy, the equity (and not the equality), the respect of all and each.

These conceptions of development which must always be recalled – not to forget that economic development is made by the man and for the man in an economic universe where the dominant thought often states that "man is always a wolf for man" – underline the necessity to ensure to everyone, today and tomorrow, his "costs of man" or his "entitlements", but they do not sufficiently insist on the idea of economic development duration and on the fact that each generation is also responsible of the next. In other words, earth belongs to those who live in it and to those who will. Now, for development to be sustainable, the rules of nature must be respected but also the destroying tendencies of human nature must be struggled. If tomorrow earth is nothing but a trash or if it knows a nuclear war, development would not be anymore questioned, but rather people needs satisfaction reduction. Great firms do not

generally use weapons in the economic competition, but this one also implies men death. The underdevelopment has probably killed ten times more that all war actions since 1945. It is a grave error to believe that the useless death of men would be stopped with weapons destruction. Economic inequalities based on the domination create the conditions of misery and of death. Moreover, most arms race models contain a parameter of fatigability, which indicates the degree of the economic and social acceptance of the arms effort. Like this, unavoidably, the military and the economic are opposed.

The international security is not limited to the military dimension alone. In its larger acceptance, the international security is ensured when people feel secure, if their life is not threatened, if their basis needs are satisfied and if they are not threatened by armed conflicts. Nations are secured in space when they can guarantee the rights of their citizens and in time when they can preserve the environment for the future generations. The contemporary world is more and more open and transparent because of frontiers opening, infrastructures development and of the extraordinary improvement of means of communications. The causes of insecurity are numerous: natural, occasional, accidental or voluntary. There exist narrow interrelations between the threats. Like this, the poorest countries are also those who have the less means to face the external threat. Generally, one country's insecurity obeys to cumulative processes, all causes being superposed.

The United Nations Organisation has, since its origin, advocated for the disarmament. "There exists a close link between disarmament and development. The progress of the first would largely contribute to the realisation of the second. The resources freed by the application of disarmament measures should then be devoted to the economic and social development of all nations and serve to fill the economic gap which separates developed countries from developing countries". However, this analysis makes the hypothesis of the peace and of the uselessness of armament. Now, security is not an innate good. It is conquered, like all social and economic satisfaction. Security represents a decisive factor of the "sustainable development".

- The internal security can not be ensured is those left out of development are numerous; for the general Omar Bradley, the greatest enemies of democracy are not the revolutionaries or the army, but unemployment, hunger, and the mortal cycle of crises.

- The states protect their riches through the national defence, which is ensured at least partially by the military expenditures. If this cost of security ensures the peace lasting, then arms expenditures would participate to the “sustainable development”. The defence effort has an ambiguous influence, because it both reduces civil investments and creates unquestionable distortions to the conditions of an efficient production. There is then a choice to make between the security of today and of tomorrow, choice that depends of the nature and intensity of international relations. Now the, the contemporary economy is a field of war (boycott, embargoes, disloyal competition, etc.) and a drastic limitation of the defence effort can lead to a rapid and violent change of the world geography of the needs satisfaction and of the international competitiveness map. Conflicts are not limited to the arms production. For the defenders of the New International Economic Order, disarmament rather appears as a consequence of development. In these conditions, disarmament processes first imply the development of the poorest countries and even in some cases, a more equitable redistribution of world resources. Underdevelopment constitutes a threat for the world peace. USSR collapsed because it was unable to manage the “razor edge” which would have permitted to conciliate, in a very competitive world, both the economic development and the security, without that the first is condemned by the excessive importance accorded to the satisfaction of the second.
- Military expenditures normally satisfy the security need of a national community against external threats. Their role is then contradictory. On the one hand, if they prevent conflicts through deterrence, they directly participate to the improvement of population’s welfare (like expenditures of police or justice). On the other hand, they are also factors and vectors of war, and in this context, they are anti-economic. However, in this hypothesis of a permanent peace, the military expenditures ineluctably exert a negative effect on the world economic development. In other words, the arms race is a negative sum game. The rise of military expenditures of two enemy states often leads to maintenance or even a deterioration of the international security. In these conditions, a negotiated disarmament is presented as an interesting investment in a situation of economic crisis.

## **Is armament a brake to the sustainable economic development?**

For the economists, military expenditures are analysed as unproductive expenditures. They however represent nearly 800 milliards of dollars, that is 5% of the world GNP, more than 50 millions people are employed in military activities and the research-development on arms uses more than 20% of the scientific engineers of the earth. The influence of military expenditures on the economic growth has generated several studies, sometimes contradictory. However, three main ideas are drawn:

- First, military expenditures have a contested role in the modern society. For the Marxists, (notably Baran and Sweezy), the rise of military expenditures is necessary to market economies so as to struggle against the tendencial law of the profit rate fall, therefore favouring workers exploitation. For Galbraith, the military sector exerts effects of power and regulation on the capitalist economies; the army's budget function is to sterilise a part of the surplus coming from an always increasing supply of products with an always decreasing customers demand, because of the limitation of the purchasing power. The Liberals of course contest this type of conclusion, estimating that the market economy should lead both to disarmament and development.
- Moreover, military expenditures play a negative role on the economic growth. For Seymour Melman, the militarization of economy undermine the power of the market economies, then favouring inflationary tensions and decreasing the role of efficient production units. For Michael Ward, if military expenditures are liable to have in the short run positive effects in the growth of some countries, these ones, in terms of opportunity costs, do not create as much jobs and economic activities as other public expenditures.
- Finally, for Ron Smith, military expenditures decrease the effort of investment (crowding-out effect). In these conditions, it is not only the short-term growth, which is threatened, but also the economic development in the longer run. The famous study of E. Benoit, according to which the military effort should favour industrial modernisation, the education and the information of men, improve infrastructures, the complete use of production capacities of developing countries, the sense of order and of discipline and the will of independence, and then should not slow down the economic development, has been strongly contested on the form (Deger & Smith 1983)

and on the content. Armament ensures states security against the covetousness of their neighbours. Finally, the military strength furnishes the means of the political domination, which would benefit to the great powers in the commercial and monetary negotiations, to the detriment of the less protected countries. Military expenditures, destined the one nation's defence, have "perverse" effects which pay have disastrous consequence on the sustainable development (effects of domination, wars, threats). The ambiguous links between security and development have different effects according to States economic strategies.

### **Strategies of development and security**

There exist today four economic actions of development: the search for comparative advantages through trade liberalisation, the development based on exports, the rise of industrialising industries or the policy of import-substitution.

- According to the liberal theoreticians, the opening of economic frontiers promotes in an egalitarian way the economic and social progress and favours peace. Each country must specialised in the products in which its cost-advantage is satisfying. It is useless to produce arms for themselves, as the merchant and the producer must supplant the warrior. The production of the arms necessary for the security must be localised in the allied countries, which dispose of the best comparative advantage. However the arms producer country could later exert its military power even against its Allies, so as to have development advantages. The arms industry is not an activity like the others; it questions security and liberty.
- The policy of import-substitution aims at substituting imports by an internal production. This theory is simple in its principle: as there exists an internal demand, one must produce locally all that what is bought outside; like this, the search for an endogenous development is opposed to the liberal theories based on the comparative advantages and on factors endowment. If it is true that arms production favours national industries above, it also allows the penetration of foreign assets and the transnationalisation of military industries. The influence of scientific has shattered the international strategies; without a good military research and development, countries



security is constantly threatened, unless a military Alliance ensures it. The technological competition is unlimited and it accelerates the obsolescence. That is why the developing countries can hardly claim for the economic independence, as they have to obtain foreign licences, – generally technologically out of date – for the material essential to their defence; it is more easy to import sophisticated material than to receive the licences necessary to their production. In these conditions, the national production may even contradict the country's security.

- The strategy of development through exports is very dangerous when it is applied the military field. The exportation, necessary to a costs reduction through economies of scale, also crates an economic dependence. Arms exports are often considered as a very lucrative activity. Nevertheless, the sales are coupled with credit conditions that are particularly satisfactory for the buyers and sometimes they do no imply inverse monetary transactions, notably for the strongly indebted countries or developing countries. Moreover, some materials are sometimes sold less abroad than at the national army and there exists some pauperising exports, that is, exports which tend to economically weaken the country, when they participate to the deterioration of the exchange terms notably.
- Arms industries are also considered as industrialising industries of poles of development. The economic development must be realised through driving investments, which exert induced leading effects. In this sense, the military industry constitutes a pole of development, with the supplying effect, (backward linkage effect), which underlines the rise of the demand in all production sectors that are above of the investment beneficiary sector, or with the outlet effect (forward linkage effect), which concerns the sectors below. The production of military materials stimulates the civil sector through the purchase of intermediate consumption on the domestic market and through the creation of new jobs. However, these induced effects are not decisive for the development, as the risk of obsolescence is considerable in an economy, which is yet feebly innovative, the risk of export to attain the sufficient economies of scale is great and the military industries are strong capital consumers. In these conditions, given the risks, armament does not favour the “sustainable development”.

### **Does disarmament produce favourable effects on the national economies?**

A negotiated disarmament must take into account some economic and strategic advantages of international security. Like this, the cost of a plane-support is often compared to the number of schools or hospitals, which it represents. The excess of armament always provokes situations of economic, politic, or strategic crisis. Generally, one can say that if, in the short term, a deceleration of the arms race exerts unfavourable economic effects, in the longer run it favours development.

- 1) All disarmament does not necessarily correspond to a reduction of military expenditures. The destruction of weapons stocks and the verification of international agreements even imply supplementary costs.
- 2) The limitation of arms quantities incites the states to improve the quality of their products, in increasing the costs of the research-development, to create new weapons often very expensive and to produce more expensively than the arms concerned by the agreement. Any reduction of military expenditures is not equivalent to an immediate amelioration of the national economic situation. If it is possible to convert the military expenditures in other forms of public or private expenditures; the factories, equipment, men, that were formerly affected to the national security are liable to know important difficulties of conversion and even, for the dual production enterprises (military or not), some grave financial problems, threatening the competitiveness of other products for the civil market. The substitution of military expenditures in favour of civil expenditures does not allow the rapid financing of the capital necessary to the maintenance of the jobs weakened by the obsolescence or the maladjustment of the installations destined to the arms production. One must, moreover, be engaged not only in the profitable conversion of the existing materials, but also reinvest, develop new activities and find new outlets;
- 3) In the context of a procedure of disarmament for development, the transfer of the sums non engaged in armament in favour of the poorest countries responds first to politico-military considerations, then to the economic interests of the donator country and only at last to the economic development necessity of Third World countries. Developing countries must then avoid that

the transfer is, at last, pauperising. Finally, an aid of developed countries may lead to a misdevelopment, notably if this aid is interested. Some forms of transfer appear to be costly, politically and economically, notably when they are devoted to prestige expenditures, when they aggravate social inequalities, when they favour the rise of societies in which the human rights are not necessarily respected. Transfers may also generate sordid calculus of interest tending to accustom the populations to a type of consumption, which make them dependant from industrialised countries.

4) The disarmament requires a series of decisions, notably concerning the international economic order, the nature of the development, the management of the technological progress liable to be developed in a less militarised society or the realisation and sharing of economic resources. These questions are only seldom discussed in arms race limitation discussions. However, Nation's economic development is a fundamental factor of international security. It intervenes in the disarmament, at less at three levels:

- First, in a world of scarcity, military expenditures, in essence unproductive, constitute a waste, in a world without international conflicts. The recent experience of the Soviet Union proves that an excessive effort of military expenditures progressively deteriorates the economic apparatus efficiency and reduces the national potential of defence.
- A disarmament that is disconnected from the reasons which base the arms race may reveal, in the long term, particularly dangerous for the peace or for the democratic political systems. As the great development power can directly or indirectly benefit from domination effects, a modification of the strategic power relations is liable to also transform the international economic map.
- Finally, when men's dignity is threatened, it frequently arrives that nations prefer the struggle to the status quo. The international security can not be durably maintained with domination effects or excessive economic and social inequalities.

All situation of peace is not necessarily preferable to a situation of conflict, notably which it is based on tyranny, slavery or exploitation and the non-respect of the human rights. Disarmament is a major political decision, based on States mutual confidence.

### **A “sustainable” development is necessarily pacificatory**

The best solution to struggle the mutual hostility is the realisation of a common project of a great dimension, which transcends the conflicts. If the Soviet and the American had been threatened by extra-terrestrial, it is probable that they would have united. Now, the nuclear may be possessed by unstable governments or by terrorist states. A previous co-operation is then necessary to find a solution to this problem. Several projects are conceivable: common research-development, exchange of information and of research on pollution, the extension of transport and communication infrastructures, development of students and teachers exchanges, co-operation on medical and spatial exploration research, common action to reduce hunger and illiteracy. The dominant idea of this century according to which the rise of the international trade is a factor of peace is contestable, in a system of inequalities and domination, of imported or exported crises. Finally, an aid of developed countries may lead to a misdevelopment.

Jan Tinbergen estimates that individuals or households, 15% by the local governments and 15% by the governments makes 70% of the decisions in the world. At least 3% should be left for the decisions of common world decisions of interest. There are problems of pollution or more generally external effects, which can not be solved individually. One must then well underline this kind of collective “concern”, to create some spaces of solidarity between the governments and the countries. It is true that if everyone co-operates, there is no more reason of conflict. But is it possible to co-operate when there is a conflict that simple economic reasoning can not explain well (ideological or religious factors for example).

However, the idea according to which the states could accept an international jurisdiction is interesting, because it supposes the search of solidarity and justice. Countries must try to be useful for their neighbours. It is not enough to prevent the faults, but one must also encourage the progresses, create some “remunerative laws” which would complete the right to conflict resolution. One must encourage the individuals or groups to act in conformity to the collective interest. It however refers to a thought on human nature. For Girard, conflicts are inherent to the man, through the nemesis. In these conditions, the

individual is always in conflict with the individual, as he wish to be what the other is. For other authors, the war is first a social factor due to the struggle for the power, for the ideas (religions or ideologies), or some purely economic reasons. How not to underline the fact that our conception of peace depends of our philosophy on the human behaviour? For example, if one estimates that the man seeks the rationality, it is conceivable to prepare strategies of defence, which recall the scientific logic and rigor. If on the contrary the man is perceived as a capricious creature, sharing fashions or ideas without scientific base (anti-Semitism for example), the rationality claimed by the social sciences can not be really concretely significant and a strategy based on this hypothesis may lead to the worse abuses. One must think on the violence made to the men, notably the economic inequalities or the violence of the daily work. It would then be interesting to build indicators of security, to underline the causes of conflict, the non military threats (human rights, environment, relative poverty, etc.), to determine the eventual measures liable to bring remedies to each cause of insecurity, to establish a strategy able to reduce all factors of conflicts, through the application of a synthetic method. It is therefore useless to negotiate disarmament, if not other action is started to reduced, and even suppress, the arms race causes. It is then necessary to deliberately construct the peace and not only to dissuade the war. Peace must then be made more attractive than the war.

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