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## **Fragility and Sustainability: Two Conflicting Major Challenges of this Twenty-First Century**

*Fragilidad y sustentabilidad: los dos más grandes retos que conflictúan el  
siglo XXI*

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### **ABSTRACT**

With the Great Recession receding, but crises still afflicting large swaths of the world and a climate of rampant distrust adversely affecting governance, it may be time to ask whether and, if so, how and where our field went wrong. Have we been willing victims of sleepwalkers using metaphors as models? This paper argues as much. Specifically, it contends that, foisted on the world as the one-size-fits-all prescription for good governance, nationally and internationally, it has ended turning governance and democracy on their heads, while also undermining the very foundations on which a global order, based on peaceful coexistence and constructive cooperation through the United Nations, was predicated. The prevalence of symptoms of hurt and discontent should lead us to conclude that the roots of our predicament and problems go much deeper, to a might counter-culture, which triumphed in the 1990s but still goes strong, in places.

Keywords: good governance, democracy, cooperation, United Nations

Jel Code: H83

### RESUMEN

Con la Gran Recesión retrocediendo, con crisis en varias regiones del mundo, más el clima de desconfianza desenfundada afectando la gobernabilidad, puede ser el momento de preguntarse, qué, cómo, y dónde salió mal para la administración pública. ¿Hemos sido víctimas voluntarias de aventureros soñadores al usar metáforas como modelos? Este artículo lo sostiene en parte. Específicamente, sostiene que, impuesto al mundo como una receta única para el buen gobierno, a nivel nacional e internacional, ha terminado por transformar el gobierno y la democracia desde la cabeza; al mismo tiempo que socava los mismos cimientos sobre los que se creó un orden global, basado en la coexistencia pacífica y la cooperación constructiva a través de las Naciones Unidas. La prevalencia de síntomas de dolor y descontento conduce a concluir que las raíces de esta situación y los problemas son mucho más profundos, a una contracultura cultural, que triunfó en la década de 1990 pero aún es fuerte en algunos lugares.

Palabras clave: Buen Gobierno, democracia, cooperación, cooperation, Naciones Unidas.

Código Jel: H83

### *Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 16*

Promote just, peaceful and inclusive societies...

Peace, stability, human rights and effective governance based on the rule of law are important conduits for sustainable development. We are living in a world that is increasingly divided...

High levels of armed violence and insecurity have a destructive impact on a country's development, affecting economic growth and often resulting in long standing grievances among communities that can last for generations. Sexual violence, crime, exploitation and torture are also prevalent where there is conflict or no rule of law, and countries must take measures to protect those who are most at risk.

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) aim to significantly reduce all forms of violence, and work with governments and communities to find lasting solutions to conflict and insecurity. Strengthening the rule of law and promoting human rights is key to this process, as is reducing the flow of illicit arms and strengthening the participation of developing countries in the institutions of global governance.

“We are all builders and purveyors of unrealistic simplifications. Some of us are self-aware; we use our models as metaphors. Others, including people, who are indisputably brilliant and seemingly sophisticated are sleep-walkers; unconsciously use metaphors as models.” (Krugman 1994: 52)

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## INTRODUCTION

Briefly, this counter-culture shifted the focus of governance from domestic to foreign affairs and from welfare to warfare, while its methods and modalities veered from those of dialogue and inclusion to those of confrontation, divisiveness, pursuit of short-term gain and marginalization of all but very few. This presentation will argue that, underlying this shift, are a mindset and a model that really run counter to the spirit of the Enlightenment and the democratic principles to which we all subscribe. Eviscerating Liberty, Equality and Fraternity of their democratic core, they redefined the first in terms that excluded the others. “Society (ceased) to exist” – so said Prime Minister Thatcher. The outgrowths of this thinking are visible throughout. On the domestic front, they have come to encompass disparities of wealth, income and opportunities, with powerful individuals and mighty interest groups competing for the lion’s share of the State’s dispensations and budgets. On the global stage, however, the results are even worse; proclivity to warfare and predatory behaviour predicated on indifference to international law and the comity of nations, while also exemplifying a quest of short-term gain at the cost of long-term damage to humanity at large.

Such attitudes and mindsets often feed on disinformation, which has grown *pari passu* with instrumental reasoning and narrowly defined utilitarian values. These look askance at such principles as equity and ethics which, lip service notwithstanding, are mostly ignored today, always subordinated to efficiency and effectiveness. Results over process”, the motto and battle cry of this three-decades-old mindset has firmly entrenched a principle which undermines all others. It tells you, in reality, that any which way is good, provided it brings forth the coveted result. With examples multiplying, such departures from the norms of accepted social conduct, nationally and internationally, are self-righteously condemned in adversaries but swiftly covered up, even explained away, when committed by ourselves or our allies. They have become too many to be dismissed as accidents, products of happenstance. Rather, they signal a pattern, the Market Model of Governance and the mindset it promotes (Anechiarico 2017). Perhaps the time has come to focus on this Model and its dysfunctional outcomes; to address the deeper causes, not just the epiphenomena, of a lingering malaise. The time has surely come for a new paradigm shift.

***Rerum cognoscere causas!*** is the motto displayed on the shield of the London School of Economics (LSE). Its sources go way back to a famous ode by Virgil in which he extolled the virtues of a farmer’s simple life and the happiness that comes from the quest of deeper knowledge<sup>1</sup>. Analogous expressions of faith in the virtues of knowledge can be found in the

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<sup>1</sup> “Felix qui potuit rerum cognoscere causas” (Happy is the one who is able to fathom the causes of things)  
Virgil: Georg. ii 490

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Book of Proverbs (39.1) and the Analects of Confucius (Book 1.1). For more than two millennia, equation of knowledge and happiness was an exhortation to study. Probing the causes of things was a chosen path to wisdom, the way to the “good life”, or *eu zein* to use two words attributed to Alexander the Great. At the LSE, by contrast, “*rerum cognoscere causas*” took on an added meaning. It represented the challenge to study social phenomena and institutions seriously but this as a precursor to effecting social change. Evidence-based research was now seen as prerequisite to progress and reform but also to building consensus. Since firm belief would have it that no one could argue with facts, it served as the foundation and legitimation of many new professions, whose exponential growth, during the late 19th and early 20th centuries, made these one hundred years known as the Age of Reform.

In-depth investigation became the starting point for social change. Public Administration served as the essential vehicle in this endeavour. From the turn of the century onwards, the drive gathered momentum peaking in the nineteen forties, fifties, sixties and early seventies with a series of bold steps which altered the face of society and of the world at large. Suffice it, in this context, to mention the New Deal, the War-on-Poverty Program and Civil Rights Legislation in the United States (Newland 2015a), the Welfare State in Europe but also the creation of the United Nations, a pivotal departure which soon brought in its wake three development decades of decolonization, as well as a first-ever concerted and sustained global effort to construct and operate a multilateral structure for international governance based on democratic principles.

This multi-faceted drive to transform an age-long system of power politics and mitigate the effects of rampant social injustice induced significant changes throughout the field of governance, public administration and the public service profession. In spirit, scope and thrust, as well as modes of action, administration and governance were re-fashioned and reinvented. Especially, administration which, for centuries, had served the limited objectives of a “night-watchman State”, was now required to adopt a service orientation and democratic attitudes over and above the “rules-based” approaches to which it had been accustomed. After World War II, progressively, civil service training centres and schools of administration included in their programmes, beyond administrative law, courses drawn from major disciplines like economics, politics, psychology and statistics. Development administration and other comparative studies also emerged as major fields in the education of students and public officials in a world where domestic concerns, rather than fighting wars were the focus of attention.

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## A PIVOT FROM WELFARE TO WARFARE: SOME INCONVENIENT TRUTHS

The end of the Cold War, in the early 1990s, was supposed to usher an era of global peace, development and respect for human rights. This era never came. Often mooted in the nineties, the long hoped-for “peace dividend” did not materialize. New priorities prevailed which meant that, far from receding, the Cold War could now “be expanded and pursued unopposed” (Wood 2017: 10). On the domestic front, this merely added strength to the belief, earlier articulated by Ronald Reagan that, in Bill Clinton’s words: “the era of ‘big government’ was over (Krugman 2008: A27). The “Administrative State” which, for several decades in the twentieth century, had spearheaded reforms easing the plight of the poor and building the foundations of an equitable, provident and more “inclusive” society, was now portrayed in a mostly negative light. It is currently in the cross hairs (Cohen 2017: SR4; Henninger 2017: A17), viewed widely as the progenitor of “bureaucratic waste”, dependency and paternalism. Ultra-conservative narratives in North America and Europe would have us all “embrace a philosophy that says that every problem can be solved if only government could step out of the way; that if government were dismantled ... it would ... benefit us all” (Obama, cited in Kim & Argyriades 2015: 436).

On the international level, consistent with this model, the world of development aid was drastically transformed during the 1990s. This transformation started with so-called “donors’ fatigue”, pretence in other words, that the donors’ best intentions had been in vain and that alternative strategies were urgently required to make development work (Easterly 2006). This led to the dismantlement of large multilateral programmes, leading the UNDP to find a niche upstream; it offered expert services in coordinating projects sponsored by donor countries in parts of the “Third World”. A study of this approach casts doubt on its validity. Entitled “Sustainable Development, Development Aid and Poverty Alleviation”, the study was contributed by Michiel De Vries to a recent publication of the IIAS on Democratic Governance, Public Administration and Poverty Alleviation. It concluded that, in spite of some attempts to align aid programmes to the needs of recipient countries, these programmes followed mostly the geopolitical interests of donor countries instead. Often, they became the sources or agents of corruption (De Vries 2015: 85-110; Dimier 2014).

As for poverty alleviation, the IIAS publication made clear that though, for the world as a whole, some progress was accomplished in pursuit of the MDGs set in September 2000, this had been mostly the outcome of efforts by two giants, China and India. There, government had played the leadership role in raising hundreds of millions out of their dismal poverty. Elsewhere, notably in sub-Saharan Africa, large pockets of deep poverty persisted. (Kim and Argyriades 2015:37-60 et passim) They were compounded by symptoms of

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maladministration, which rendered further progress problematic at best and opened a slippery path to the fragility of States. Not surprisingly, on this account, “sustainable” was added to the “name” of development goals proclaimed by the U.N. General Assembly, in September 2015. This served as a reminder of the very elusive nature of most development efforts, whose results evaporate for lack of follow-up or when they represent spasmodic moves inadequately grounded in comprehensive strategies, duly buttressed by institutions and a duly empowered professional public administration.

Enshrined in Goal 16, the concept of sustainability points to preconditions, making for lasting outcomes that leave no one behind. It also points to flaws which sum up the predicament of failed or fragile States. Indeed, as we move forward into the 21st century, it may be aptly argued that the spread of fragile States and threats from climate change represent the steepest challenges that the world, as a whole, has to face (The New York Times 2017: A1 & A17; Gills 2017: A1 & A8; Klein 2016: 11-14; Pope Francis 2015: 17-39).

Fragility is contagious. Like climate change, its effects cannot be contained geographically. Their rapid spread, by contrast, represents a global menace touching “intelligent” States, as well as developing countries (Kliksberg 2001). Many use the terms interchangeably. But obviously, the intention, in switching to fragility from “failed States” has been to mitigate any impression of finality or “irreversibility” that the term “failed” may convey. “Fragility”, by contrast, emphasizes the signs of danger; perils that can be avoided through prompt pre-emptive action. Produced by the Fund for Peace, the Fragility Index, accordingly, highlights abnormal pressures. It identifies the countries in a descending order from Stability to Fragility and offers indicators, as well as warning signs that countries may be headed in perilous directions. The Fragile States Index is based on twelve primary indicators of the Conflict Assessment System Tool (CAST), a methodology developed by the Fund for Peace.

A useful tool, undoubtedly, this latest “fragility index” has also its limitations. It studies ongoing crises but looks at epiphenomena, though not their causes, really. Scanning the world’s horizon, we need to ask ourselves what are the deeper causes of this malaise. Specifically, what causes can be considered exogenous and which other endogenous i.e. born within a given country? The line of demarcation between the two cannot be hard and fast. With the advent of globalization, it has been murkier than ever. Lately, cases abound. They pre-eminently include countries which have been victims of aggression, proxy wars and subversion, all too frequently fomented by foreign powers. Afghanistan, Iraq, Syria, Somalia, Yemen, Libya, Eritrea, and Southern Sudan come to mind in this connection (Kaine 2017:46; Bacevich 2017: 38; Fisher 2016: A1 & A6-7; Cockburn 2016: 19-20).

It is hardly a happenstance that most of the above countries have been afflicted chronically by serious endogenous flaws. Corruption, in particular, had been widespread and endemic

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compounding the instability, which made them highly vulnerable to infiltration and subversion from abroad. Notoriously, few have a fully developed capacity to govern (Dror 2001). Still, the salience of exogenous and instigated fragility speaks volumes on the ways in which today's power politics play out in the world. Corruption grows in tandem with subversion and destabilization. They are vectors of fragility leading to civil strife, state fragmentation and failure. Regrettably, in our days, they have become the tools of Realpolitik (Mazarr 2017: 27; Woods 2016: A23). Arguably of these, corruption may be the most pervasive. It saps the institutions of governance bringing about degeneracy, disharmony and decay (Caiden 2016; Caiden 2015: 145-180; Col 2015: 181-200; Underkuffler 2009: 37).

“Corruption occurs where the private search for economic advantage and personal advancement clashes with laws and norms that condemn such behaviour. Further complicating the picture, some illegal corrupt transactions accord with social norms of favouring one's family, friends, and ethnic group. Other actions may be formally legal but have harmful effects similar to bribery. Reformers often label practices ‘corrupt’ simply because they disapprove of them. (Rose-Ackerman and Soreide 2013: xiv)

Failure to tackle corruption has often been the outcome of conscious political choice. Political myopia and opportunism are almost in all cases the staunch allies of graft. Arms purchases and sales are others, given the enormous sums and tangled negotiations involved in the procurement of sophisticated weaponry, submarines and fighter aircraft being two prime examples.

They help perpetuate mismanagement and maladministration. In large swaths of the globe, in developing countries especially, these have received a boost from foreign interference, subversion, aggression and wars. In more than twenty years since the end of the Cold War, a pattern has emerged; a sequence so predictable as to belie the rhetoric regarding noble intentions propounded on all sides by the agents of War. In almost every case, since the early 1990's, a pattern has emerged highlighting the following steps:

- Corruption, infiltration and destabilisation of targeted countries;
- Subversive propaganda and disinformation;
- Invasion or support of local rebel groups and other credible proxies fomenting civil war within the targeted countries, mostly in the name of freedom and human rights (The New York Times 2017: A1 & A9);
- With rival sides competing for tactical advantage, aggression and warfare may spread to neighbouring countries, inviting further calls for more “decisive action”: “boots on the ground” in Syria; a “surge” in other countries, as in Afghanistan, where fighting has continued for more than sixteen years;

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- Collapse or grave debility of central government followed by fragmentation, de jure or de facto, of countries that were targeted for “regime change” and nation-building;
- Enormous loss of life, both military and civilian, damage to property and infrastructure sustained by countries chosen for “nation-building” and “democratization” (Zenko 2017: A17). Estimates vary greatly, depending on their source, from a few tens of thousands to several hundreds of thousands. Only casualties sustained by “coalition forces” are accurately measured and reported to the press; and
- Massive flights of population from countries ravaged by war, often in the throes of anarchy and random violence. These swell the waves of migrants and refugees which batter neighbouring countries in search of a safe haven. (Cohen 2016:SR1) Millions of refugees from Syria and Iraq are joined by other people fleeing the war-torn zones of Africa and parts of the Sahel afflicted by the effects of climate change. These are not going away. Migrants drown at regular intervals, as they try to cross rough seas to ports in Southern Europe. Still, thousands more are willing to try this perilous journey, responding to push and pull factors that prove hard to resist.

Remarkably, the prevalence of this recurrent pattern has not so far suggested a thorough investigation into the causes of things. (*rerum cognoscere causas*) Other than climate change, the need to address the causes -- not merely measure symptoms -- has barely made a dent into the current narratives. These are mostly exculpatory, even frequently self-serving. According to these narratives, the “international community”, in whose name these wars are mounted, was fully justified in taking needed action to promote certain standards of conduct or stop their violation. It is readily admitted that “blunders” and “mistakes” have occasionally been made, as in the assessment of perils from the WMD in Iraq (2003) or the mayhem in Mosul and destruction of that city, some 14 years later. (Verini 2017: 36-43). In its recent report on Mosul, the Amnesty International described what, in its view, was a humanitarian disaster, caused by the “disproportionate”, as well as “indiscriminate” use of lethal force (Amnesty International 2017). It needs to be said of Mosul that it is only the latest disaster in a 14-year old war that was declared and waged in spite of a contrary vote of the Security Council and in strict violation of the United Nations Charter.

Short on accuracy and consistency, as well as objectivity, the majority of accounts on this pattern of events, observed over twenty-some years, shed little light on the major global challenges that the proliferation of fragile States represents. They certainly provide few elements with which to build a sustainable strategy towards an effective response. As once already mentioned, analysts have been inclined to focus on the epiphenomena, ignoring or discounting the elephant in the room. “External intervention” is cited as an afterthought, in a long list of factors contributing fragility to States. Among these are included the following: “refugees and IDPs, demographic pressures, group grievances, human flight, uneven



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development, poverty and economic decline, legitimacy of the State, public services, human rights, security apparatus and factionalized elites”.

In reality, as we know, most of the above are traceable to or gravely exacerbated by external intervention. In almost every case. “Legitimacy of State” has been an early casualty of subversion, intervention, invasion and defeat. If, as it often happens, it carries in its trail the fragmentation of States, the stage is surely set for all of the added factors. Continued occupation and “protectorization” of vulnerable countries becomes a vicious cycle, as both “collaboration” and opposition grow and armed insurgents rise against the foreign power and its local surrogates. This was precisely the case in Nazi-occupied Europe during World War II (Mazower 2008: 416-476). Asymmetrical warfare encourages actions and practices which few consider moral or justified. But, as in World War II, both surrogates (“the Quislings”) and partisans almost invariably include some fanatical extremists, who either have no scruples or use egregious tactics of intimidation. The strains and stresses of warfare offer precious little guidance on civic virtue, governance and “nation- building”. What is more, experience shows that sustainable development – safeguarding needed ownership of process and results – requires that it be entrusted to local hands, although these may be somewhat “capacity-challenged” in some cases.

Even though one could believe in the invaders’ good intentions, it should be pointed out that, as experience shows, in asymmetrical warfare, the costs of “regime change” and nation - building” are disproportionately born by the targeted peoples and States. As in the Vietnam War, cities and infrastructures are “destroyed in order to save them” (words of General Westmoreland). They are telling testimony of both the costs of war and the “collateral damage” borne mostly by civilians and innocent bystanders. In retrospect, remembering the many lasting benefits brought to war-ravaged Europe by the Marshall Plan, as well as three decades of decolonization and development in the rest of the world, one may safely conclude that, pace Tony Blair, the post-Westphalian order extolled in the late nineties as the best way to go, has proved profoundly flawed. With “Things [falling] Apart”, the time has surely come to look for better models, nationally and internationally (Niblett 2017: 18).

### **SURGE OF A COUNTER-CULTURE: THE MARKET MODEL OF GOVERNANCE AND VALUES**

Mindful that the “scourge of war” has visited the world three times already in a century – last time within our days, we need to recognize that the United Nations was founded in 1945 to foster better practices in mediating disputes and in resolving conflicts. They are patently the ways of cooperation, dialogue and compromise; not those of confrontation. Of course, negotiations cannot offer an assurance that we are always winners. As the saying goes, “you

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win some, you lose some”. In the long run, nonetheless, everybody is a winner because the ways of peace are also those of reason, respect for human rights, tolerance, welfare and progress; worthwhile, as well as welcome, because they are sure alternatives to deadly and wasteful warfare. The ways of peace are difficult and time-consuming. For effectiveness, they rest on solid institutions and values which promote civility, morality and restraint. They nurture sustainability. Repeatedly flouting these values by the Axis Powers, during the 1930s, was what caused the collapse of the short-lived League of Nations. It led to World War II.

There was no shortage of conflicts in the decades that followed the end of World War II. It would be fair to argue, on the other hand, that these were mostly the outcome of an often “messy” process of decolonization, which brought about the emergence of several new States. This swiftly enlarged the membership of the United Nations which, in turn, precipitated the UN-system -- led multilateral aid programmes that lasted three decades. Though not invariably helpful, former colonial powers still, on the whole, displayed a measure of restraint, mostly because the principle of self-determination, embedded in the Declaration known as the Atlantic Charter (1941), formed part of the zeitgeist of these post-war decades, but also on account of pragmatic considerations, lest escalation of conflicts led to a Third World War. The Cuban Missile Crisis, as well as the Wars in Korea and Vietnam afforded good examples of caution and restraint displayed by political leaders on both sides, occasionally in defiance of military advice, which might indeed have led to a nuclear confrontation. Somehow, “the common interest”, invoked in the Preamble to the Charter of the UN prevailed and, most importantly, the “international machinery” was used “for the promotion of the economic and social advancement of all peoples”. Nationally and internationally, hopes for a better future were rooted in a shared system of values and institutions, which set limits to the quest of self-aggrandizement and the pursuit of power or wealth by any means, fair or foul.

Curiously, the conclusion of the Cold War, which followed the collapse of the USSR, saw the end of this state of affairs. Not only the “peace dividend” soon proved to be an illusion but a string of “endless wars” matched the retreat of government from domestic welfare projects and development pursuits in favour of aggression in distant parts of the world. The predatory character of these new foreign ventures and “proxy wars” is in contrast to the pattern which prevailed in the decades of decolonization and socio-economic development. With the benefit of hindsight and the lessons that have accrued from the tumultuous history of these past thirty years, it is hard not to conclude that, at the root of it all, is the manifestation of a mighty counter-culture which stands at the antipodes of the one that had preceded it. Discounting solidarity in favour of freedom of action with “no holds barred” when opportunity beckons, the prevalent model of governance, national and international, looked askance at the bounds set by norms and legal codes, democratic institutions or the comity of nations. In this new counter-culture, codes of conduct, even treaty obligations take on a

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transient character. They are viewed as desultory; as being of limited value and to be safely ignored. They should not stand in the way when opportunity beckons ... and, as in Julius Caesar, “we must take the current when it serves, or lose our ventures” (Act 4, Sc. 3).

In all too many respects, “our ventures”, in this instance, had all the marks and makings of a game change; a swift return to the state that preceded World War II, or even farther still. “The era of big government [was definitely] over”. Even President Bill Clinton could argue as much (Krugman 2008:A27). Soon it transpired, however, that “big government” was “over” mostly in the fields of services and regulation; not those of the conduct of war. From the turn of the century onwards, in the US especially, expenditures on armaments and military preparedness escalated, reaching levels that have dwarfed those of all other countries combined. Though none other could compete, the countries that felt threatened were compelled to follow suit (Wood 2017: 10; Nye 2011: A23).

Thus, a pattern based on fear made a comeback; relations based on trust, on the rule of law, due process, respect for treaty obligations and peaceful coexistence, through the United Nations, appeared to be in decline, giving way to a “free for all”. (Sommermann 2002; IIAS 2002: 67-81) Not only neo- conservatives, who took control of government in the US at the very dawn of this century, but even Tony Blair, the Labour party leader in Britain showed little hesitation to ignore the Security Council when it didn’t go their way over the war on Iraq (Erlanger & Sanger 2016: A1 & A4).

Curiously, at a time of peace and with no credible threat apparent on the horizon, two leading global players were willing to “go it alone”, rather than “lose [their] ventures”. With such blatant disregard for the Charter, it comes as no surprise that both the comity of nations was soon in steep decline and the United Nations progressively but surely marginalized. In the words of Mrs. Albright, US Secretary of State in the Clinton Administration, its place could be described as that of a mere “tool in the [US] President’s toolkit.”

Manifestly, in retrospect, on both the international and the domestic levels, a wholly new approach to governance and government set in, as humanity retreated from the twenty-first back to the early twentieth century. A lot more “opportunist”, it was also less consistently rules-based, as well as less inclusive. It can hardly be accidental that, revisiting the Goals set in the year 2000 by the Millennium Assembly, the General Assembly of the United Nations, in 2015, laid stress on those critical facets of governance, where overall performance, nationally and internationally, left much to be desired. In SDG16, specifically, it emphasized the need to “promote just, peaceful and inclusive societies.”

Rightly, SDG16 called for a model of governance exemplifying the quest of “peace, stability and human rights” because, lip service notwithstanding, none has been very prominent in the

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past sixteen years. We dismiss them to our peril as if trends and events, which dominated the nineties and the dawn of the 21st century, represented a series of accidents; a mere happenstance, not a pattern and the outcome of deliberate choices by governments, which reflect their current values and the way they choose to govern or indeed conduct themselves in the global public space. We stress the specificity of public space and the demands it makes on public officials at large, for it lies at the hard core and underpins the ethos of democratic governance. In denying or minimizing the degrees of separation that ought to lie between them, the Market Model of Governance and Values introduced a “no holds barred” approach to both the private sector and “the business of government”.

The results have been dysfunctional. Not only have we seen the public sphere, including the conduct of war, become accepted pathways to personal enrichment but, worse still, such enrichment turn out to be a prerequisite for political success. With politicians – and occasionally some generals – relentlessly shuttling between them, private and public sectors have become rife with dysfunction and graft. Corruption has become a way of life, in several parts of the world and, in vulnerable States, a major cause of fragility and failure.

Its prevalence in fact and its disastrous impact, in our days, should have prompted us to explore the deeper roots and causes of this alarming phenomenon (*rerum cognoscere causas*), instead of merely measuring its discrete manifestations or feigning to be puzzled by their egregious nature. We attribute this phenomenon to the “Market Model of Governance and Values” because, in light of this model, lip service to the contrary notwithstanding, “anything goes”; “values” defy definition. Like stocks and shares, they shift according to contingencies and circumstance, subjective considerations, expediency and effectiveness but, most of all, utility to government or self. What we condemn in others -- hacking, bribery, interference, cyberwarfare and aggression -- we find entirely acceptable when we are the perpetrators and regard it as being done either in our own or a dubious “national” interest. In the long run, to be sure, such an egregious conduct, so full of contradictions, produces dysfunctional outcomes. In SDG16, the most harmful and outrageous are prominently displayed:

“High levels of armed violence and insecurity [having] a destructive impact on a country’s development, affecting economic growth and often resulting in long-standing grievances among communities that can last for generations.”

The surge of such conditions and prevalence of practices exploiting those conditions for short-term gain are very largely accountable for the proliferation of fragile and failed States, as well as deplorable actions in other countries still widely viewed as “functioning”, though some even in Europe, have lately been seen tottering on the brink of bankruptcy and failure. Implicitly or explicitly, the SDG16 alludes to such conditions and practices. It refers to the centrality of “the rule of law ... promoting human rights ... reducing the flow of illicit arms

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and strengthening the participation of developing countries in the institution of global governance. In spite of much lip service to “inclusion”, “peace”, “democracy” and “human rights”, observable patterns of governance, both nationally and internationally have, since the dawn of our century, been dominated largely by short-term considerations, mostly marked by opportunism, divisiveness, sectarianism and growing ethnocentrism, as well as a perilous deficit of principled strategic thinking, of a global scope in particular.

Of the above, the absence of consistency and prevalence of opportunism may aptly be regarded as constitutive elements of what we like to call the “Market Model of Governance and Values.” They bespeak lack of concern for the broad long-term implications of specific policy measures or the precedents created by particular government actions. Underpinning this model, however, is the dominance of Economics and of instrumental reasoning with a focus on expediency, efficiency and effectiveness, virtually to the exclusion of all other considerations. In a remarkable lecture titled “Towards an Ethical Economy”, the President of Ireland addressed this pivotal issue. Speaking at the Dublin City University on 11 September 2013, Michael D. Higgins remarked that, while “the social sciences all deal with values” – religious, moral or other – economic theory alone “treated value as a substance”. He quoted Emile Durkheim concluding that:

“... political economy appears to deal with facts of a very different nature from the other social sciences. Morality and law are essentially a matter of opinion. Wealth, which is the subject of political economy seems, on the contrary, to be essentially objective and independent of opinion.” (Higgins 2013)

The tendency to treat economic values as facts independent of opinion has been strengthened by the hold that quantitative analysis has exerted on economics and the other social sciences, with a pronounced impatience for non-quantifiable values; an attitude which flows from fascination with numbers and “hard data”. It has extended to fields, including public management, which chose to model themselves on economic science. Indicative of this approach is the dictum often heard in senior management circles: “What I cannot measure, I cannot manage.” (Kim and Argyriades 2015:424). Impoverishment or worse has been the regrettable outcome of such fundamentalist thinking. Public Administration was deconstructed, reduced to Public Management which, by reason of its affinity to Applied Economics, reigned supreme, indeed dominated our field, since the early 1990s. Other related disciplines, which previously contributed to Public Administration and public service training, progressively receded to secondary place; as arguably being “nice” but really non-essential (Nabatchi 2010).

In spite of much lip service to their intrinsic merit, political theory, ethics but even history, law, sociology and psychology have been so relegated to the backburner. Their gradual disappearance has tended to produce a “One-Dimensional Man” (Marcuse 1964), a type of

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public servant who fully understood the cost but only dimly the value, historical significance or broader implications of actions and decisions in which he played a part. Of this new type of manager/official, it has been argued that:

“Over time, they become insular and tone-deaf ... dismissive [of the public or others’] views. This cultural isolation can lead them to cling to ... solutions that don’t mesh with the values ... of those who must live with the results” (Johnson, cited by Caiden 2015: 167).

Double standard, double think and double speak are characteristic features of this mindset in both management and governance. With the “invisible hand” in command and government in retreat on the domestic front, we evade responsibility for failures and shortcomings in public infrastructure or social wellness projects. Likewise, explained away are galloping disparities in income, assets, prospects and dispensations. Such, we are often told, are the inevitable outcomes of globalization. How globalization can still be reconciled with neo-conservative rhetoric and unilateral activism in world affairs is a feat of double think and double speak, which the Market Model of Governance and Values has cultivated assiduously. In the ways of P.R., it exudes self-adulation; evades or glosses over such hard, contentious issues as the outsize role of pressure groups in public space or military expenditures, which far exceed the amounts earmarked for the defence of other leading countries, all put together.

More than all else, however, neo-conservative rhetoric and unilateral activism reflect a deliberate effort to redefine the structures designed for global governance, as well as the role of the State. They re-shape the international order in ways mostly incompatible with the terms of the U.N. Charter. Article 2 of the Charter specifies that Member States must respect each other’s sovereignty and refrain from interfering in each other’s domestic affairs. The principle in question goes way back— 370 years, in fact – to the Treaty of Westphalia (1648). An only positive outcome of a disastrous war, which lasted thirty years and tore Europe apart, it served to bring to light the futility of war, especially wars of religion (Slaughter 2016:89). Seemingly ignoring this lesson, in 1999, Mr. Tony Blair, Prime Minister of Britain propounded a new doctrine: “liberal interventionism”. It declared that, in a world of growing interdependence, “the principle of non-interference must be qualified in some important respects.” (Niblett 2017: 18).

Whether by accident or design, this new interventionist doctrine provided the underpinnings for a string of “endless wars” (Bacevich 2016: 36-44). Though, in theory, the doctrine was intended to pre-empt and to prevent atrocities, its inherent contradictions soon came to glaring light (Erlanger and Sanger 2016: A1 & A4). As with the war on Iraq, “coalitions of the willing” did not outright reject an international order based on the U.N. Charter. They just conveniently ignored it, selectively by- passing provisions of the Charter, Chapters VI & VII especially, which had established boundaries on “Action with Respect to Threats to

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the Peace, Breaches of the Peace and Acts of Aggression”. Contrary to provisions in Articles 39 and 40, which rest responsibility in such important matters on the Security Council, groups of governments promoted proxy wars invoking “western standards of human rights” (Niblett 2017: 18).

This “interventionist” doctrine looks for moral underpinnings to a binary view of the world: one that divides humanity into two rival camps; the forces of Good on one side and those of the “Axis of Evil”, on the other; the “City on the Hill”, combating the “Evil Empire”, as Ronald Reagan put it. We are currently reaping the harvest of such self-righteous rhetoric, reverting to a vocabulary of ages past, which denounces “lawless savages” while posing as the champion of “Western civilization” (Wertheim 2017: SR1&2). Note the tenor of the language which this mindset helped produce: others “kill” – we “take away”; others “commit aggression” -- we “engage” in “regime change” followed by “nation-building.” Others resort to torture; we stealthily engage in “enhanced interrogation techniques.”

We need to think in history and think out of the box. A certain lack of rigour, as well as force of habit account for the resilience, persistence and popularity of stereotypes, whose origins are traceable to ages past, but whose continued use not only is meant to exclude large segments of humanity but also to legitimate dubious practices and goals. Applied quite arbitrarily, they serve to sanctify or demonize selectively groups, individuals, practices or ideas. It is so with the expression “Judeo- Christian civilization” and the perceived antinomy between “Eastern” and “Western”. To be sure, the former is novel and its currency, arguably, limited to the North American sub-continent. The latter, by contrast, is rampant.

Though ostensibly geographical, it has broader connotations, which have less to do with geography and more with “likes” and “dislikes”. Thus, “West” has come to include countries of Eastern Europe which, until the 1990’s, formed part of the “Eastern bloc” and the corresponding region for United Nations purposes. But how do States like India, Australia, Turkey, Greece, Israel, Japan, China, Korea, Malaysia or Singapore fit into this perceived East-West divide? Do they properly belong to what a former close adviser of US President Trump, Mr. Stephen K. Bannon, called “the Judeo-Christian West”? (Wertheim 2017: SR2).

We commonly refer to “Western democracies” as if they all belonged to a homogeneous group and virtuous category, but to “oriental despots” or “oligarchs”, meaning to disparage them. It is seldom the other way around. We intend to applaud the former and denigrate the latter, oblivious of the fact that geographical location is hardly an indicator, let alone the prime determinant of the type or form of government and administration. We also overlook that this perceived antinomy is not of recent date. In fact, it goes far back, beyond the Cold War era and the Crimean War (1854-1856), to the Schism or the division of Christianity into the Roman West and the Eastern Orthodox Branches (1054). The split, which still persists,

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in both religion and politics (Huntington 1996:28-47) has, since the 11th century, served to legitimate questionable enterprises, including some crusades and other warlike ventures. Forgetting that “crusades” have left unhappy memories to peoples in the Balkans, as well as the Near East, prominent “Western” leaders used the term, though briefly, at the start of the war on Iraq. Such is the force of language and tenacity of stereotypes that this East-West divide continues to provide the doctrinal scaffoldings for a “not-so-liberal order” which ostensibly seeks to “protect the spiritual foundations of Western civilization”, but in reality, serves to both perpetuate and exacerbate tensions and conflicts world-wide (Wertheim 2017: 2; Mazarr 2017: 26-27). The challenges evinced by SDG16 but even more conspicuously wars leading to instability, fragmentation, fragility and failure of States are largely the result of attitudes and mindsets borne and perpetuated by such erroneous stereotypes.

### **THE MODEL AND THE FALLOUT**

We have been warned before to “beware of false prophets” (Matthew 7: 15). The Market Model of Governance was proclaimed to the world with fanfare, promising peace and prosperity with individual liberty and riddance from “big government”. What large swaths of the world have been witnessing instead is a retreat of government from areas of activity that matter to the citizenry and, matching this retreat, an escalation of violence and the proliferation of means to pursue it mostly abroad. As might have been expected attempts to introduce a new international order contrary to the Charter and multi-lateral governance could not go unopposed (Wood 2017: 10). Inevitably, however, they have necessitated forays to distant lands and also a drastic reordering of budgetary allocations aligned to changed priorities. A combination of factors resulting from this change, both home and abroad, produced the huge disparities of income, power and clout, which put democracy in jeopardy (Blyth 2016: 172-179; Bourguignon 2016: 11-15; Inglehart 2016: 2-10; Rosanvallon 2017: 16-22; Picketty 2014; Stiglitz 2012). It is hardly an overstatement that, in the Market Model, the voter is reduced to second place; the foremost players, actors, stakeholders or “shareholders” are lobbies, pressure groups and super-PACs, many of which have stakes in national defence. They finance campaigns and candidates at general elections. Even before the crash brought by the Great Recession, it was manifest to most that:

“soaring incomes at the top were achieved, in large part, by squeezing those below, by cutting wages, slashing benefits, crushing unions and diverting a rising share of national resources to financial wheeling and dealing. Perhaps more important still ... elite priorities  
–obsessive concerns with budget deficits, with the supposed need to slash social programs  
–have done a lot to deepen the valley of despondency.” (Krugman 2015: A21)



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In Europe, inequality escalated both within and between borders. “Since 2007, the German economy has grown by almost seven percent, whereas the economies of Belgium, France and the Netherlands have remained stagnant, and those of Finland, Greece, Ireland, Italy and Portugal have all contracted more than they did during the Great Depression” (Moravcsik 2016: 139). Europe and North America are those parts of the world where Public Administration was first reformed, in recent times most certainly; where the Administrative State made most significant strides during the late 19th and early 20th centuries to address legitimate grievances, bridge gaping chasms and reduce inequalities, thus making democracy meaningful to citizens at large. Remarkably, the backlash, that set in during the eighties and triumphed in the nineties, declared this to be an error and the Social Welfare State a step on the road to bureaucracy and serfdom (Friedman 1993; Hayek 1944). Administrative reform, which, through the 1960s, had mostly sought to embed professionalism and merit into the Public Service, now beat a hasty retreat.

With bureaucracy in the crosshairs, De-bureaucratization, Downsizing and De-regulation became the principal ways of promoting those 3Es (economy, efficiency and effectiveness), which the Market Model of Governance proclaimed to be the goals of sound new public management. Downsizing was pursued in several ways but largely through outsourcing and privatization (Stanger 2009). They very seldom met their stated goal of producing an administration which cost less and performed better (Hood and Dixon 2015). Mostly, they have resulted in variously “de-privileging”, demoralizing and de-institutionalizing a needed great profession. No wonder that, increasingly, voices are being raised making “the case for bureaucracy” on the grounds that, to promote sustainable development with democratic governance, “we need more professionals, not fewer” (Verkuil 2016: A23).

To be sure, attacks on bureaucracy and the attempted dismantlement of the Administrative State have hardly been the same or uniformly successful in different parts of the world. Drawing their inspiration from a market model of governance and management, “closely related to that of the private sector”, they have posited “a transformation of relationships between market and government, government and the bureaucracy ... bureaucracy and the citizenry” (Hughes 1988: 242).

Marked in varying degrees by utilitarian logic and related models of Man, it has had all the signs of a conscious and deliberate “ideological project” (Kim and Argyriades 2015: 425). Where its inroads have been deepest, the government’s retreat on the domestic front has, as already mentioned, been matched by a surge of activism and foreign interventions in distant parts of the world. A document prepared in 1991 under the aegis of Paul Wolfowitz, US Undersecretary of Defence and briefly later President of the World Bank, provided the underpinnings for this novel approach to “Defence Planning Guidance.” Simply put, “defend and deter” or “mere avoidance of war” were no longer considered sufficient. Giving shape to

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the future environment through “quick decisive victory ... anywhere in the world and under ... any conditions” became the way to go (Bacevich 2016: 36).

With wars proliferating from the 1990s onwards, arms expenditures escalated, weapons trafficking developed into a major growth industry and, barely in a few years after the hopeful conclusion of the Cold War, a new arms race developed, as country after country among those who felt targeted decided to divert attention and resources from socio-economic growth and infrastructure projects to bolstering defence.

Was this shift necessary? The jury is still out. There can be little doubt that, for years now, the world has been treated to narratives portraying military ventures in West Asia and parts of Africa as indispensable moves forced on reluctant warriors by evildoers. Though there may be a germ of truth in some, at any rate, of these assertions, what few would deny is the fact that, hardly in any case, have the nations that were targeted emerged as the real winners from “liberal interventions”. More often, they became “collateral damage” or victims of proxy wars, over which they had no say and very little control. Additionally, of course, as often is the case, the casualties of war have also included: freedom of information and the respect for truth, as well as – one might argue - an international order painstakingly created in 1945 and maintained through the U.N. (Mazower 2012:194-311; Langrod 1963: 156-248).

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To be sure, progressively, voices are being raised that forcefully call into question not only the wars being waged and the crises which they engender but, on a more fundamental level, the “exceptionalist” principle, which undergirds these ventures and seeks to legitimate them. As pointed out quite recently, the principle “has slid from justified pride into one’s country’s accomplishments” ... “into the belief that [one country] is exempt from the rules that everyone else must follow” (Kaine 2017: 46; Newland 2007: 24).

One hardly needs reminding that claiming exceptional rights, that few are willing to countenance or to concede, is a sure invitation to trouble. The practice of “exceptionalism” in world affairs flies in the face of the Charter of the United Nations and international law. Though, as one might expect, views on this matter differ depending on their source, the practice of exceptionalism, entailing interventions, invasions, occupation and proxy wars in various parts of the globe, has been a major irritant in world affairs and, since the turn of the century, a progenitor of perils and instability in vulnerable States (The New York Times, 2017: A1; Kaine 2017: 46; Abrams 2017: 11-14; Niblett 2017: 18; Mazarr 2017: 25-28; Bacevich 2016: 38-42).

Of course, it is to blame for the proliferation of fragile and failed States. Over time, it has compounded more humanitarian disasters than it has stanchd. It is time to rediscover the wisdom of Westphalia and the virtue of multilateralism over the dubious merits of unilateral

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ventures in “liberal interventionism” (Mazarr 2017: 26; Slaughter 2016: 89). Whatever the temptations to sidestep institutions and rules, when opportunity beckons, we ought to bear in mind that mostly “pyrrhic victories” are born of rash decisions and yielding to the promises of fleeting opportunities. Both on the national level and in global affairs, rules, laws and institutions, the comity of nations and the practice of civility and moderation are clearly for the long haul (Brooks 2017: A21).

In democratic governance, they also serve the objective of protecting the average citizen from abuse in the hands of the mighty. These are the lessons of history which we forget to our peril. It is an additional reason why the serious study of history and reading of the classics ought to regain the foothold in public service training and public administration, which they seem to have lost. Quite apart from the lessons of history which the Great Recession and wars brought into glaring light, there is yet another trend which must not be overlooked: that progress in technology, while greatly beneficial to humankind as a whole, has also spread the scope for mischief very widely.

As recent experience has shown, hacking, subversion, snooping, cyberwarfare and other underhand technology – based ploys are no longer the monopoly of the few. Both state and non-state actors are trying to take advantage frequently using tools that one State has developed to use against another, mostly undermining order and stability all around. Recent events in Britain, Russia, Ukraine and elsewhere are telling in this regard. Clearly, “what goes around comes around” (The New York Times 2017: A1 & A9; The New York Times 2017: A1 & 5). Perhaps the time has come for multilateral action to establish stricter rules and controls on such recourse to practices so harmful to our privacy, our freedoms and democratic governance, as well as to peace and security. “Not everything, which is technically doable, should be done” (Kim and Argyriades 2015: 454; Cohen 2013: A27; Roberts 2006).

Bereft of firm foundations in either the study of history or ethics, the Market Model of Governance has thrived on opportunism. It has also cultivated a tunnel-vision, “beggar thy neighbour attitudes”, as well as lack of civility, measure and responsibility in all of public life. Euphoric in its promises, the Market Model of Governance and the New Public Management have clearly not produced what they set out to offer: lower costs and better services (Tholen 2016: 23; Hood and Dixon 2015).

Increasingly, by contrast, they have been held accountable, in one way or another, for a pronounced malaise and disarray, nationally and internationally. Rampant violence, disorder and lawlessness in large swaths of the world where the Market Model of Governance and the N.P.M. prevailed, should prompt us all to fathom their deeper causes (*rerum cognoscere causas*), instead of merely venting frustration or outrage at discrete epiphenomena. Central

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to the predicament of many imperilled countries is a slip in public trust with potentially grave consequences for democratic governance and public administration (Newland 2015b). One of the commonest facets and visible manifestations of this loss of public trust is declining civic virtue and popular participation in public life. That even in France, at the general elections of June 2017, only 43 per cent of registered citizens voted, should be an issue of grave concern. Significantly, the conclusion that was drawn from this result by France's premier daily, *Le Monde*, was waning public confidence and the pressing need to rebuild it (Fenoglio 2017: 1).

Failure to tackle corruption, or somehow bridge the gap between euphoric promises prior to general elections and lack of follow up or the poor delivery of services largely account for the frustration, deep cynicism and alienation which citizens – taxpayers experience and express in exceptionally large numbers, in several parts of the world. The staggering disconnect between reality and rhetoric, which false claims generate, is one of the numerous facets of the collateral damage sustained by government systems. It has led to a loss of prestige and a credibility deficit, which affect political leaders and swiftly percolate to the public sector at large (Blyth 2016: 172-179).

Endless wars on dubious grounds have damaged public trust and the tenor of public pronouncements. Resources and attention have been diverted with military objectives serving as justifications for slashing or postponing expenditures on projects to improve the social services or public infrastructure. Support for such reductions are very frequently couched in “patriotic” rhetoric. This has risen to a high pitch in recent years. Across the Northern Hemisphere, and arguably beyond, chauvinism and xenophobia are on the rise. They often resonate with segments of the population, the less well-educated especially. They form part of a syndrome, which is described as “populism” (Zakaria, 2016:9-15; Mounk, 2014: 27-36).

A problematic concept, used loosely and imprecisely, it makes a sharp distinction between the *populus* at large and the elites. Viewed from the vantage point of the elites, “populism” means demagoguery for promising all things to all people and eschewing tough decisions. By the same token, however, populism gives expression to disbelief in the virtues of the elites and the wisdom of their policies or actions. Worse still, in today's world, it stealthily promotes the “Google-fuelled collapse of any division between professionals and lay people ...” (Nichols, 2017: 60). Rampant populism in Europe, North America and elsewhere represents a “Revolt of the Masses” (Ortega y Gasset) and a challenge to the “Establishment”, or its presumed authority. To be sure, some scepticism is healthy. A danger zone is reached when the sources of authority and the fundamentals of governance fall into disrespect (Gerth and Mills, 1957: 196-301).

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Such, clearly, is the fallout from the Market Model of Governance and the New Public Management. Some of the many challenges they have produced are structural and endemic – the galloping disparities in wealth and education, power and clout, being foremost among them. Others flow from inconsistencies between the public claims and overarching goals of the system in place; its rhetoric and slogans, on the one hand, and “facts on the ground” on the other. These are policies and practices of leaders which flagrantly belie what they pretend to accomplish. If public trust is waning and democratic governance is in deep crisis, that may be due to the fact that, for close to thirty years under the dominant aegis of the New Public Management and the Market Model of Values, we have dumped all self-restraint, priming short-term advantage and the “self” over the long-term good of all (Tholen 2016: 237-253).

## CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

### A: Conclusions

It has been said before: “Ye shall know them by their fruits” (Matthew 7: 16). For close to thirty years, but certainly in our days, we have tasted them. The tree that bore them all is the Market Model of Governance and Values; a vector of fragility, instability, dysfunction and disarray. Its roots go very deep. At the source of our conundrum is a profound antinomy between two rival systems and ideas of Man. The oldest, more traditional, creative and constructive is the idea of Man as social animal. Originally articulated in Aristotle’s Politics, it posited the view that an innate potential in all of us could best be realized and self-fulfilment reached in a well-ordered polity or Politeia. Stress, accordingly, was laid on institutions, norms, solidarity, equilibrium, harmony and moderation; values central to Confucius (Peerenboom 1998: 234-260) and to subsequent systems of thought. They underpinned the Enlightenment’s deep faith in Reason and Progress and provided the foundations for such historic documents as the U.S. Declaration of Independence (1776) and the French Declaration on Human Rights of 1789 (Hauriou 1968: 169). The United Nations Charter (1945), the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948) and the latest Declaration of the Millennium Summit (2000) and SDG16 all belong to this category.

Diametrically opposed to this hopeful view of Man, is another, which has furnished the intellectual underpinnings for the Market Model of Governance and the New Public Management. Of far more recent origins, it is more narrowly based, having found expression chiefly in the works of Thomas Hobbes (1588-1679) and the British Utilitarians, notably Jeremy Bentham (1748-1832).

According to the former, it was to escape the fate of a life brutish and short that Man surrendered his rights and individual freedom to an all-powerful government. Put succinctly, men and women are truly on their own and government, is a necessary evil at best. As for the

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latter, Bentham, he “dismissed human rights with admirable swiftness and breath-taking simplicity”. “The substantive right”, he wrote, “is the child of the law” (Sen 2009: 361-363).

For from being the parents of laws, human rights are treated by Bentham as artefacts and products of legal enactments (ibid.). It can be seen, accordingly that, though kindred in some ways, these two ideas of Man differ sharply with regards to their approach to government, society and the compatibility of freedom, on the one hand, with equality and fraternity or social solidarity, on the other.

The Market Model of Governance, looks askance at “big government”, which it views as a threat to us all, or as a nuisance at best. Indeed, for Mrs. Thatcher, who wasted little sympathy on either top officialdom or the social welfare state, “Society [did] not exist.” We should all be on our own; left to our own devices. Indeed, for people sharing these very negative views on government and society, any norms placing restrictions on individual freedom are seen as undesirable or even outright wrong. Though widely dismissed as extreme, this general idea held sway at the turn of the century. It offered inspiration to policies and programmes that really fly in the face of the U.N. Charter and Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948), as well as basic principles of democratic governance. On all levels, it induced a tunnel vision, lack of strategic thinking and a “pragmatist” approach to complex political issues that could best be described as mostly opportunistic and lacking in true statesmanship.

On the domestic level, the Model found expression in systematic efforts to dismantle the foundations of democratic governance but mostly deconstruct the Administrative State, which has often been seen as the source of dysfunction and “bureaucracy” (Henninger 2017: A17). Sharply dividing society between a small minority of the very rich and powerful and the bulk that seldom count, it strikes at the root of equality and fraternity which underpin democracy. Dismissing solidarity and the Social Welfare State as “paternalism” at best, it has downplayed the importance and service orientation of public administration, with negative effects on the public service profession. In the words of H.G. Frederickson “service became the enemy to be defeated by empowered citizens making choices ...” (Frederickson 1996:265).

Equally grave and damaging were the inroads of this model into the very core of the public service profession. By dint of privatization and outsourcing, the public space, so central to the theory and practice of democracy has lost much of its relevance (Tholen 2016: 237-253). With lines between the public and private sectors blurred values, that are considered as normal in business practice, invaded public life. What is good for the goose was seen as good for the gander. While this may have produced some benefits to a few, it has engendered dysfunction in a large number of cases, mostly in vulnerable States, where it has been a cause of fragility and decay. Even in stable societies and in intelligent States, confusion of the two

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has eased the way of corruption, which has invaded government and public life (Fukuyama 2014: 5-26). Some degrees of separation are needed to sustain the professionalism, identity and prestige in public service and to safeguard the values on which it rests. Conflating all the fields, as if they were one and the same – health, education, banking, political activity – and all simply about efficiency, expediency and effectiveness flies in the face of history, lessons of two millennia and civilization itself.

Changing what needs to be changed, the potent counter-culture that battered the defences of democratic governance on the domestic front also surged in an attempt to undo a *modus vivendi* painstakingly worked out in the international sphere, during the twentieth century, arguably even earlier. Now, the Treaty of Westphalia (1648) was said to be obsolete, (Niblett 2017: 18; Slaughter 2016: 89). Provisions in the Charter (Art.2) notwithstanding, it was declared acceptable to invade another country, to engage in regime change and nation-building. Often on false pretences, as with WMD which, furnished an excuse for waging war on Iraq, a string of “endless wars” erupted in West Asia, North Africa and elsewhere (Fisher and Taub 2017: A4).

Many are still ongoing and some have taken on a predatory aspect, suggesting an entitlement to exploit the mineral wealth or oil resources of the invaded countries (Landler and Risen 2017: A1 & A6). An international system, enshrined in Article 2, could not withstand the onslaught of this new counter-culture. “The sovereign equality of ... Members” and related obligation “to settle international disputes by peaceful means” gave way to the proclivity of certain Member States to form ad hoc coalitions with a view to imposing their will on recalcitrant countries and advancing their “national interests” by waging war. Some Member States indeed took it upon themselves to venture rewriting the rules, so as to suit their purpose. They foray in foreign lands often laying them to waste but also “punish” others, who follow their example. This has been called exceptionalism (Kaine 2017). It offers risky precedents, which could unravel the fabric of supranational governance, though its sustenance is needed now more than ever before.

Mostly in the name of values, which may well have a place in private enterprise but hardly in the public sphere, national or international, a surging counter-culture has, since the 1990s, sought to undo the progress towards a peaceful world and democratic societies. It tried to arrest a trend, indeed reverse a process which promised greater freedom in tandem with equality, because the rich and powerful would need to show restraint in the name of the general interest and with an eye to the future. Sound democratic governance rests on laws and institutions and the practice of self-discipline (Haass 2017: A19). They try to buffer the weak, include the marginalized, give everybody a chance, advancing the national interest but always within limits. Limits, boundaries and ceilings to the pursuit of power are the fruit of bitter lessons that history has taught. They represent the bounty of centuries of progress and

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civilization. Ignoring them may bring short-lived success to a few but long-term pain and suffering to many. Most certainly, this pattern has hastened the proliferation of fragile and failed States.

### **B: Recommendations**

Our closing recommendations follow this train of thought ... and SDG16. For close to thirty years, our field and our profession have been held hostage to the New Public Management and the Market Model of Governance. Between them, they reduced administration and governance to the single-minded quest of expediency and effectiveness, deconstructing a complex phenomenon and the notion of general interest to a rather simple model drawn from private enterprise (Dwivedi, et al. 2007: 121). The damage has been grave across the board but most acutely felt in vulnerable States among developing countries, frequently fighting the odds as they struggle to establish or to consolidate the structures and capacity for democratic governance. After a Great Recession, several other crises and a string of “endless wars”, which were vectors of fragility in large swaths of the globe, perhaps the time has come to go back to basics and to the drawing board. That reform and capacity-building are urgently required in response to pressing challenges, the General Assembly of the United Nations has pointedly reminded us in a range of SDGs (Sustainable Development Goals) of which, arguably, the weightiest is SDG16, for it really conditions all the other and sustainability itself.

- One may view sustainability as a state of homeostasis, a dynamic equilibrium, which represents the antithesis of fragility and decay. Talking of sustainability draws attention to the need to build for the long haul, not content with fleeting gains to which the Market Model and the New Public Management show a distinct proclivity. For the long haul, we need an institutional framework inspiring public trust. We need institutions of governance that seek to address concerns and equitably foster the welfare of all, certainly those in need; not, as has been the pattern in recent years, a very small percentage of any particular nation or of humanity at large (Cohen 2016: B1 & B5). Other than rampant corruption to which they have contributed, vast concentrations of wealth and disparities of income, opportunities and clout have mostly sapped the strength of the institutions of government and correspondingly weakened the civic disposition of people to participate in democratic processes. The huge abstention rates at general elections represent a warning sign that something is seriously wrong.
- In the words of SDG16, we need institutions promoting peaceful, just and inclusive societies. We need equitable governance based on the rule of law to advance sustainable growth and also address disparities that have grown out of hand, putting at risk the gains of fifty years of progress after World War II, but also peace, stability, human rights, effective governance and democracy itself. There can be little doubt that a spate of “endless wars” has hardly furthered peace or stability all around. On



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the contrary, it has damaged the very human rights in the name of which, ostensibly, these wars had been declared. The waves of refugees washing on distant shores represent a major part – though still only a part of the huge collateral damage inflicted on targeted countries but also well beyond. Collateral damage includes two lethal forms of trade – arms and human trafficking - which profit from these wars and help perpetuate them. It also includes the rhetoric – populist, chauvinistic, xenophobic and extremist – that thrives on foreign wars, undermining social capital, civility and harmony.

- Putting an end to wars and significantly reducing all forms of armed violence are clearly predicated on:
  1. Stanching lethal forms of trade, chiefly arms and human trafficking and de-escalating conflicts, which take away resources, as well as human lives needed for sustainable growth;
  2. Significantly expanding expenditures on projects of infrastructure and socio-economic development on the ground through a trickle-up approach, that has been sorely missing; but to these very ends;
  3. Rebuilding and reinforcing public space and institutions, on the national, sub-national, global and regional levels, for these alone can bring sustainable development with democratic governance on an equitable basis.
- Reclaiming public space must be high on our priorities. Of the damage caused to politics and public administration by the New Public Management and the Market Model of Governance, none has been more severe than that inflicted on values. With a truly “admirable swiftness and breath-taking simplicity (Sen 2009: 361) these two reduced them all to one: the bottom line; and the “business of government” to the pursuit of expediency, efficiency and effectiveness, with little consideration for the average end- user, the “man in the street”. In the reform of governance and public administration, we need to start with values - the values we wish to promote and to highlight. Though Public- Private-Partnerships (PPP) certainly have a place, some degrees of separation are also necessary in order to preserve propriety and integrity in public life. Specifically, we must establish boundaries and a ceiling to the pursuit of gain at public expense. For instance, what is a proper reward for the communication – or dispensation of knowledge, information or valuable experience secured in public office; is it what “the market will bear”? And while the service industry and public works are rightfully domains where private enterprise should play a part, are we content to extend this very valid principle to the conduct of war? True, mercenaries and privateers have been prominent in warfare since the beginnings of history. However, their re-emergence in the ongoing “endless wars” is rightly a cause for concern. We lose sight of the long-term and of the common good when our sights are simply set on getting or perpetuating lucrative contracts in the business of warfare. (The New York Times 2017: A9)

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- Dysfunction and decay have surely been the outcomes of principles and values invading public life that really have no place or only a minor place in public space. Discerning what is needed in terms of values, knowledge, methods or skills; defining them precisely and differentiating among the various attributes required for varied tasks, in widely varying fields, have been points of departure in drawing out the boundaries of all known great professions; also prescribing curricula and career paths for those that want to join them. Among the serious drawbacks of the New Public Management is the practice of conflating all into one; reducing all to competencies that can be measured, and venturing the view that management – all management - is basically competency and technique. It is hardly an overstatement that, for New Public Management, vision, wisdom, judgement, ethos, knowledge, experience, rigour, professional integrity and dedication to duty are imprecise at best unless expressed in terms of competencies and duly quantified.
- The impoverishment resulting from this approach must now be redressed. Back to the drawing board, we need to focus attention on rebuilding and reinforcing curricula and careers for public service. Shuttling between the private and public sectors for stints of brief “consultancies” can hardly be the way to democratic governance, public administration or service of the long-term public good. It encourages complicities which run counter to professionalism. Investing in the prospect of lucrative ventures exposes public servants to serious conflicts of interest. In building a profession for public service, we need to think in terms of the integrity of public space (*res publica*) and, therefore, institutions for the long haul. Accordingly, curricula and public service careers ought to aim at fostering the following three priorities:
  1. A public sector ethos;
  2. Sound critical judgement, commitment, dedication and moderation;
  3. Continuity, consistency and institutional memory.All of the above have suffered from neglect, tunnel-vision and a focus on technique. What is required instead, by senior public servants, is a broad and varied background, highlighting the complexities and ethical dilemmas that frequently are involved in critical decisions in both policy-making and policy implementation.
- With this in view, mobility should be considered a “must”. Additionally, however, periodic training courses but more than anything else, the pluri-disciplinary approach, that was present at the creation of the public service profession, should be required. It includes exposure to law, political science, history, economics, philosophy and ethics. This is obviously demanding but we scale it down to our peril. Rightly, Yehezkel Dror decried the penny-wise, pounds-foolish attitude which has prevailed: “captive to fashions, genuflections before the idols of the market and passive in the face of the declining quality of much of politics or public life” (Dror 2001: 31). Professor Dror concluded:

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“A first task ... is, therefore, to reassert the primacy of politics and governance as in charge of collective choice; and to provide a normative grounding enabling them to fulfil their calling under the demanding conditions of the twenty-first century” (Dror 2001: 31, Kim and Argyriades 2015: 448).

Looking ahead, after a bumpy start of the 21st century, we need to reconstruct the public service profession on solid foundations of knowledge, expertise but also values and merit. Capacity- development is urgently required. This, in turn, entails investment in needed human resources and institution-building for democratic governance and public administration. Priming the general interest, we need to restore competence, commitment, professionalism, prestige and relevance to the public service profession, its senior ranks especially. A small core is sufficient to catalyse improvements throughout the public space. To meet this goal, however, we must reform institutions for the long haul. On both the global level, at the United Nations, on the domestic level in every Member State, as well as regional structures where these exist (e.g. ASEAN, EU), concerted efforts are needed to rebuild public trust and public space. On all levels, throughout the world, after many years of crisis, concerted efforts are needed to develop institutions for inclusive, democratic and equitable governance, in line with the provisions of SDG16. Our Planet and Humanity have issued calls for change; arguably, some would say, for a new Marshall Plan, through the United Nations, on a truly global scale.

This should avoid the exclusions of past attempts, let alone the egregious practices that recent interventions in foreign lands brought into sharp relief for, in the name of freedom and human rights, they brought mostly “untold sorrow” and devastation to humankind. The products of a mindset shaped by the Market Model of Governance and Values, they carried in their trail mostly decay, dysfunction and disarray, as well as state fragility in vulnerable countries. Mercifully, fragile States are still in the minority. Fragility, however, the menace of our days, is contagious. Time has come for a paradigm shift. To enhance sustainability and escape the many perils that fragility and state failure bring in their trail, we need to invest in governance and public institutions, national and supra-national, and in public service professionalism.

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