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# FACTS & FINDINGS

PROSPECTS FOR GERMAN FOREIGN POLICY

## Global Megatrends (I): Global Power Shifts

The Working Group of Young Foreign Policy Experts

The economic and political rise of new powers is putting pressure on the established architecture of international institutions.

As a result, informal, issue-driven forums and regional organisations are taking on an increasingly significant role. They are particularly important in their function as instruments of cooperative conflict resolution in which they contribute to safeguarding global and regional stability. It is therefore in Germany's interest to make the most of the opportunities available through close ties with regional stakeholders and strong positioning within international forums, both old and new.

For more information on the Working Group of Young Foreign Policy Experts, go to: <http://www.kas.de/wf/en/71.6391/>

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## THE SIGNIFICANCE OF GLOBAL MEGATRENDS FOR GERMANY'S FOREIGN POLICY

International politics is increasingly determined by long-term developments that can be bundled together under the buzz phrase "Global Megatrends". The most significant of these trends include demographic change, the advance of urbanisation and the supply and demand of certain resources. The much-debated issue of global power shifts is a part of this, and indeed to some extent it can be viewed as a combination of all these trends.

Germany is an influential player on the world political stage, and as an export-oriented economic power which heavily relies on raw materials, it is – at least indirectly – affected by all these trends. Whether Germany experiences them as an opportunity or as a problem depends largely on its political approach.

The Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung's Working Group of Young Foreign Policy Experts has produced three interrelated reports that it hopes will stimulate discussion on how Germany's foreign policy should approach some of these megatrends and their effects: Global Power Shifts (I), Demographic Change (II) and Global Demand for Raw Materials (III). These papers identify priorities for German foreign policy and make concrete proposals on how our country can be equipped for the future in the legislative period that is now underway.

## THE CHALLENGE OF GLOBAL POWER SHIFTS FOR INSTITUTION-BASED MULTILATERALISM

The institution-based multilateralism that has largely been initiated by the traditional Western countries over the course of the 20<sup>th</sup> century will continue to fade in significance in the face of new global power shifts. The composition of the UN Security Council in particular, but also of the World Bank, the World Trade Organisation and other institutions, has become less and less representative of global reality. They are increasingly being replaced by "mini-lateral" formats such as the G20 that include the emerging nations. As a result, the UN is starting to lose its central remit, that of dealing with global challenges; instead it is being replaced by informal, issue-driven forums in which non-governmental and supra-national actors play an important role. In addition to this, problem resolution is increasingly being treated as a regional issue. This concomitant fragmentation and diversification of international relations must be taken into account when Germany makes its decisions on foreign policy.

The West is experiencing a crisis of legitimacy and credibility. In light of the current economic difficulties faced by Europe and the USA, there is widespread doubt about the effective-

ness of the Western social and economic model as an example for other nations to follow. The West's reputation in terms of security policy has also been damaged by the ongoing difficulties in Afghanistan, the West's differing interpretations of the UN mandate in Libya and the Iraq war's lack of legitimacy.

These factors, combined with the financial and debt crises, are threatening to leave the West incapable of action. The EU is largely busy with its own issues, and Europe lacks the power and political will to develop its own initiatives to adequately tackle global problems. If Europe continues to retreat into its shell it will end up playing a subordinate role in the creation of the new world order.

As an exporting nation, Germany in particular benefits from global and regional stability and unrestricted access to global commons. The maintenance and expansion of this global order is therefore both a duty and an end in itself. So it must be a priority of German foreign and security policy to ensure Germany and the EU avoid falling victim to the aforementioned inability to act. In view of its current economic situation, Germany has an opportunity not only to consolidate but also to expand its global influence.

## EFFECTIVE MULTILATERALISM AS A RESPONSE TO GLOBAL POWER SHIFTS

Effective multilateralism is in itself beneficial for Germany. Firstly, Germany simply does not have the capacity to promote its interests and exert global influence all on its own. And secondly, multilateral forums can act as tools for cooperative conflict resolution. German politics is faced with the task of improving its ties to regional actors and to new forums such as the G20, and it also needs to test out the practicability of more informal governmental alliances. We cannot allow fragmentation and diversification to become the precursors of a power vacuum in international politics. If this were the case, it would no longer be possible to deal with global challenges. With regard to Germany's foreign policy, we would like to make six practical recommendations:

**1. Europe must recognise the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP) as a political and strategic project.** Its failure would bring major disadvantages to both Germany and the EU because it would throw further doubt on the West's unity and capacity for action. In contrast, negotiating an agreement would send a political signal to the emerging powers. It would also underline the West's ability to drive forward its own interests and ideas about the market and to set internationally-binding norms and standards. The TTIP also offers a historic opportunity to establish another transatlantic organisation alongside NATO. With regard to foreign trade capabilities, it is important to involve every



government department and improve coordination between them. It is essential to avoid creating more national reservations about the Partnership. German politics must also continue to promote the Partnership amongst its European partners and thereby win broad support for the European Commission, which is carrying out the negotiations. Existing reservations about the agreement should be countered by a high degree of transparency during the negotiations.

**2. The EU must build partnerships with other regional organisations and promote their further integration and institutionalisation.** This will help to counteract the weakening European position in emerging regions such as Latin America and Africa. In order to speak with a single and powerful voice internationally, the EU needs joint representations at these organisations. In light of the growing importance of Asia, this particularly applies to ASEAN, but also to the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC). Partnerships based on values also need to be built within the G20. Together with these partners, we need to exert our influence in the resolution of global problems and the creation of a new world order. These areas are increasingly dominated by powers that do not follow the Western democratic model in terms of their standards and aims. As part of a dual strategy, Germany should at the same time expand its national partnerships with regional powers in Asia (China, India and Indonesia); the African Union (Egypt, Nigeria and South Africa); and CELAC (Brazil and Mexico).

**3. Germany and Europe must play a greater role in maintaining security in their own backyard. This applies particularly to the Mediterranean region and is a direct result of the USA's turn towards the Pacific and the likelihood of American energy self-sufficiency. In the medium-term, the USA will not play a dominant security role in Europe, Africa and the Middle East.** So stopping the erosion of Europe's military capability must be a top priority. The EU and NATO have introduced the "Pooling and Sharing" and "Smart Defense" initiatives, but they are difficult to dovetail with the German approach of "Breadth before Depth". Germany should not only be a "supporting partner" for smaller nations but should also be prepared to rely on the aid of other countries in certain areas. In any case, much closer coordination is needed between EU Member States when it comes to national military planning. To contribute, the Bundestag should decide on an anticipatory resolution to generally support the deployment of German soldiers in integrated alliances, integrated forces and common assets for use within the EU and NATO framework. In these cases parliament would nonetheless retain its right to call back German forces at any time.

**4. Along with increasing the Bundeswehr's fighting capabilities, the focus should also be on maintaining security and crisis prevention as part of an effectiveness-boosting initiative.** In this respect, we need to prioritise improving our partners' abilities to handle their own regional security problems and crises. We would like to make two specific proposals:

- a) Germany must strengthen its ability to train partner countries and security organisations. Special inspections should be carried out in this respect in the Bundeswehr's training colleges and centres, and particularly in the infantry academy. As part of a train-the-trainer approach, members of the Bundeswehr should be given the tools to provide long-term training for foreign armed forces in line with local conditions.
- b) At the same time, the Bundeswehr should work to encourage civilian control and civic education within these military forces. The Bundeswehr's Leadership Development and Civic Education Centre [*Zentrum Innere Führung*], the General Staff College [*Führungsakademie*], the universities and the Marshall Center have particular roles to play in this respect.

**5. Germany's quest for a permanent seat on the UN Security Council should be abandoned, even as an interim measure before the EU is allocated a seat.** Instead, Germany should devote its energies to acquiring a seat for the EU. Reform of the Security Council and other UN institutions needs to provide a basis for re-establishing the UN as the primary forum for global cooperation.

**6. In order to expand its influence, Germany needs to be more strategic in the way it approaches personnel policies in international organisations.** The goal must be to achieve a balanced representation of German officials in these institutions in line with Germany's size and financial contributions. This cannot be left solely to the Foreign Office but should be part of the remit of every government department. Only in this way will it be possible to build up a reserve of trained personnel – particularly in the European External Action Service (EEAS) and for NATO – that is in a position to stand up for European and German values and interests.