

SCUSA 60 THEME:
“MEASURING PROGRESS AND DEFINING NEW CHALLENGES”

GLOBAL SOCIAL CONCERNS

Although the tragic events of September 11th forever changed the world from the perspective of U.S. citizens and policy-makers, the world’s social concerns existed long before September 11th and will exist long after the focus on terrorism ends. In fact, many regions of the world are home to populations suffering from the unintended consequences of ongoing hostilities following the terror attacks of 2001. The high cost of petroleum, global food shortages, and the looming threat of global warming only exacerbate problems in some of the most troubled regions of the world. It is in this context that delegates should address the fundamental question, “What role should global social concerns play with respect to the many other competing policy options the U.S. faces at home and abroad?” How should the United States address the problems associated with the changing landscape of the global community, which is increasingly interconnected and interdependent yet leaves some groups isolated and lacking a support structure? Should the United States play a leading role in determining and implementing policies to deal with some of the world’s most pressing social issues, such as the AIDS and other epidemics, child labor, immigration, and human rights? Should the United States seek international support and cooperation when dealing with global social issues or should we “go it alone”? Do governmental and nongovernmental agencies and organizations (like the military and non-governmental organizations) work towards common goals with respect to global social concerns or do these agencies work at cross purposes? How do we measure progress? Are there effective “early warning” mechanisms for natural and manmade disasters? What responsibility do developed nations have during humanitarian crises, genocide, ethnic cleansing and natural disasters? Does U.S. security ultimately depend on peace everywhere or only in certain places? Should the U.S. work to prevent nations from failing? If harsh choices must be made due to the limits of American power, which social concerns deserve priority? Is it only those that are directly related to other U.S. interests?

Goals and interests

What social concerns should warrant U.S. involvement? Clearly, there are several areas in which American intervention and action could significantly improve the health, education, and welfare of a region. However, some regions of the world are more significant than others in terms of American interests and security. Should the U.S. only focus on areas that might give refuge to terrorists groups or are there other reasons for the U.S. to get involved in a given region? Should U.S. foreign policy prioritize the intensity of America’s interests or the intensity of need? What are the consequences of temporary American concern for certain global social issues if our attention and resources suddenly shift elsewhere? How can we determine whether we are making things better for those we are trying to help? How should we go about choosing between a set of seemingly equally undesirable “evils”?

The nature of the questions raised at this roundtable will undoubtedly result in divergent opinions. Delegates should anticipate and respect these differences; it is only by grappling with these tough issues and choices that we recognize the complexity of the foreign policy choices that America faces. As a point of departure, the round table should examine the issue areas of foreign aid, health concerns, and human rights.

Foreign aid

The SCUSA roundtable on global social concerns must also address the thorny question of whether international aid actually helps alleviate poverty and other problems of human security that afflict so many developing nations. Given the scope and wide-ranging problems associated with global social concerns, it would stand to reason that the U.S. should increase foreign aid to those who need it the most. Yet a growing number of thoughtful critics challenge the effectiveness of simply throwing money at the problem without building local capacity to sustain economic growth at the local level. Scholars and practitioners who study the effectiveness of foreign aid argue that rather than simply giving developing nations unrestricted access to aid, it is more important to provide people with access to clean drinking water, to distribute mosquito nets in malaria-prone areas, and to provide instruction on how to increase crop yields. Critics of traditional foreign aid highlight the significant achievements of nations like China, Malaysia and Singapore who escaped the “poverty trap” with very little external assistance challenging the notion that a developing country needs external resources to stimulate economic growth. Furthermore, several critics suggest that in most instances, foreign aid should be reduced, not increased, because unrestricted aid can produce a number of unintended consequences including strengthening governmental corruption, theft, and mismanagement, creating criminal networks, and bolstering a country’s exchange rate, leading to a decline in economic competitiveness. These pathologies are only exacerbated in states coping with the constant threat of violence and insurgency where some of the most robust aid projects and efforts become a target for groups who want to destabilize fragile nations.

To what extent are these provocative arguments useful? How can we tell which nations will be able to effectively use and build on U.S. foreign aid and which ones will simply waste the opportunity to improve social welfare in their states? To what extent does violence and chaos impede aid efforts? Can aid projects succeed without a basic level of security? How can we improve and measure the efficacy of foreign aid so that it bolsters the recipient’s ability to increase trade and investment, and works toward economic development and self-sufficiency? Are the U.S. Millennium Challenge Accounts promoting good governance where it is needed the most? Is it a sensible model for NGOs and IGOs to follow or do the criteria exclude vulnerable populations who need assistance the most?

Health Concerns

New amorphous challenges to national and international security have emerged in the form of new varieties of highly contagious and infectious diseases. The threat of infectious disease does not stem from the actions of a clearly defined state but from

diffuse issues that transcend sovereign boundaries and result from the effects of increasing globalization. Such “gray area” phenomena are redefining our understanding of global stability, challenging policymakers to develop new, “non-state” paradigms of security. The threat of new and reemerging infectious diseases is a challenge that will require cooperation from several actors in our interconnected world.

AIDS continues to be a serious epidemic in many parts of Africa; where between 40 to 60 percent of some countries’ populations are infected with HIV. South and East Asia have the potential for an AIDS crisis similar to Africa, but governments in these regions have yet to fully acknowledge the problem. The majority of the world’s infected individuals do not have access to the expensive antiretroviral medication that helps reduce the mortality and morbidity caused by the disease. There is also concern for the spread of the relatively new form of avian influenza and its potential to spread all over the world. Although the avian flu is limited to birds, its rapid spread among several other species suggests that bird flu may soon evolve to produce a human pandemic that proves resistant to medication. Another example is the 2003 Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) outbreak started in Asia and quickly spread, by travelers, to over two dozen countries all over the world. At times, the cure can be worse than the disease in places where counterfeit medications are making people worse off than the illness the medications were intended to cure. While there is significant concern for our ability to cope with new diseases, there is a resurgence of common diseases like tuberculosis and cholera around the world. In an era of increased levels of international travel, Americans at home and abroad will likely face increased chances of exposure to infectious diseases in a “globalized” world. This is not to say that Americans traveling abroad are the only individuals exposed to health hazards. The recent safety issues with several consumer products (both imported and locally manufactured) prove that health hazards can show up on store shelves at any given time.

What are the responsibilities of the United States in controlling the global spread of infectious disease? What are the long term consequences of widespread disease in certain areas of the world, and how does it affect U.S. interests? Where should the U.S. concentrate its finite resources to improve the lives of those suffering from a lack of access to basic health care facilities? How does a high rate of AIDS infection in foreign militaries impact our ability to conduct joint operations? Who should be responsible for reversing observed trends? Should the U.S. support organizations specifically founded to work on global health issues (like the World Health Organization) or should the U.S. work on its own initiatives? Who should bear the costs of treating and preventing infectious diseases around the world? How should the costs of research, development, and distribution of medicines to fight infectious disease be apportioned? Should the U.S. government encourage or subsidize American pharmaceutical companies willing to offer their medicines to developing nations at a reduced cost?

Human rights

Globalization has increased the international community’s awareness that many people in the world do not have the same rights that many take for granted. Under international law, governments are supposed to respect individuals’ civil and political rights, but many governments are unable or unwilling to protect their own people, and

some governments actively persecute certain groups within or outside of their own borders. If these governments are not complicit in human rights violations, their law enforcement and judicial organizations often turn a blind eye to what many would consider serious human rights violations. Human trafficking, alien smuggling, slavery, child labor and soldiers, and discrimination against minorities and women are just a few of the human rights issues that the international community must address. Additionally, human rights issues are linked to flows of refugees and migrants across borders—often as a result of international or internal conflicts. Clearly, many of the internally displaced persons (IDPs) who roam the world are in precarious situations due to ongoing ethno-sectarian and internal conflict. Human rights issues have become acute as the world struggles to understand and dismantle the global terrorist networks, many of which prey upon refugee camps for recruits to their cause. Human rights issues have also come into conflict with security concerns as evidenced in the ongoing torture debate in the United States. Is this a legitimate trade off?

The global traffic in humans has become the fastest growing criminal business in the world moving people voluntarily, for forced labor, commercial sexual exploitation, and for other reasons. The U.S. Government estimates that 500,000 illegal migrants in search of work are brought into the U.S. annually by organized alien-smuggling networks; another estimated half a million enter without the assistance of these networks. There is also another group of individuals who have helped with the U.S. in efforts to combat terrorism who are seeking asylum and citizenship in the U.S. based on their willingness to support American efforts overseas. Often these people are forced from their homes by armed conflict, political unrest and human rights abuses. These refugees and asylum seekers throughout the world continue their painful search for safety, often looking to the U.S. for support. According to the 2008 World Refugee Survey, refugees now number approximately 14 million people worldwide, up from 12 million people in 2006. It is important to note that countries that host refugees frequently place onerous restrictions on their movement outside camps and settlements and limit their right to earn a livelihood. In fact, several generations of families are born, live and die in refugee camps all over the world. Since September 11th, many nations have enacted legislation that curtails the rights of refugees.

What role should the United States play in enforcing human rights? Does the U.S. have a moral responsibility to halt human trafficking, slavery, child labor, child soldiers, and discrimination against women and minorities? What should U.S. policy be towards refugees and migrants who want to come to America for a better life, when they do not have the same human rights guarantees in their home countries? How can the U.S. help to permanently resettle refugees in the U.S. and abroad? How should the U.S. treat those who served alongside American forces in Afghanistan and Iraq? How can the U.S. and other states control and best handle international migration? Will international migration fundamentally change the identity of the United States? How could the U.S. help developing nations with their refugee problems? Should the United States have special policies when dealing with countries that violate generally recognized human rights? Should the U.S. pursue its own human rights agenda or should it coordinate its policy with other nations? What is the role of international organizations and non-governmental organizations? Should America strive to be a “role model” for the rest of the world on such issues even though the U.S. is grappling with the complex issue of how

to treat those who could have information that if brought to light, could save American lives? Is this domestic debate one that the international community needs to address for future conflicts and circumstances?

Formulating a strategy

Clearly, the U.S. with the world's largest economy, though under stress at this point, the most powerful military force, and enormous diplomatic and cultural influence, could attempt to unilaterally develop and enforce any policy in its national interests. But is unilateral action the best policy given the myriad threats and issues confronting the international community? Clearly, our traditional allies, and some new ones, share the same long term concerns for social problems that afflict all people. But for some nations, social problems are not their top priorities, even within their own territory. What is the U.S. to do in this situation? How should the U.S. treat those populations coping with the devastation of "collateral damage" resulting from U.S. military operations? Can we implement an effective policy of collective action among countries with different interests and goals? Will nations stand with the U.S. to work on some of these problems if the U.S. is unwilling or unable to foot the bill?

Should America define the goal, or should the affected region coping with specific problems, specify the request and type of aid desired? What are the costs and benefits of reaching a consensus about the goals of the policy? Will a policy of consensus really meet the needs of the afflicted? If the U.S. and the affected region can agree on a policy goal, how can we measure progress? What strategic resources can the United States use to achieve our desired outcome?

This short paper outlined a few of the global social issues facing U.S. policy-makers and the international community at large. There are other internal crises the U.S. faces, such as the economic downturn, problems with education, the housing crisis, and the increasing wage gap. The goal of this roundtable is to generate a productive dialogue about these important issues and to motivate SCUSA delegates to formulate policies that might better address the social, educational, and living standards of the world while remaining cognizant of the domestic and international trade-offs. As future leaders, SCUSA delegates may someday be in a position to develop the policies that actually address these concerns. This conference and the discussions among roundtable participants hopefully will inspire SCUSA delegates to someday act effectively to meet these significant challenges.

RECOMMENDED READINGS

General Overview

- Ewan, Pauline, "Deepening the Human Security Debate: Beyond the Politics of Conceptual Clarification." *Politics* 27: 3 (2007): 182-189.
- Mapping the Global Future. Report of the National Intelligence Council's 2020 Project. NIC 2004-13, December 2004. http://www.dni.gov/nic/NIC_globaltrend2020.html.
- Monshipouri, Mahmood. "Identity and Human Rights in the Age of Globalization: Emerging Challenges in the Muslim World." *Zaman Online*. (2005). <http://www.globalpolicy.org/globaliz/cultural/2005/0502identity.htm>.
- Siegel, Joseph T., Michael M. Weinstein, and Morton H. Halperin, "Why Democracies Excel," *Foreign Affairs* 83: 5 (2004): 57-71.

Foreign Aid

- Africa Aid Overview: Trends in U.S. Assistance to the Region. Congressional Digest, September 2007.
- Brookings Institution, *Transforming Foreign Aid for the 21st Century: New Recommendations from the Brookings-CSIS Task Force* (June 2006) <http://www.brookings.edu/comm/events/20060622.htm>.
- Easterly, William. *The White Man's Burden: Why the West's Efforts to Aid the Rest have Done So Much Ill and So Little Good*. New York: Penguin, 2006.
- Easterly, William. "Why the Millennium Development Goals are Unfair." Available on the Internet at http://www.nyu.edu/fas/institute/dri/Easterly/File/Millennium_Dev_Goals_Unfair.pdf
- Feinstein, Lee, "Darfur and Beyond, What is Needed to Present Mass Atrocities." CSR. No. 22, January 2007. Available at: <http://www.cfr.org/content/publications/attachments/Darfur%20and%20Beyond.pdf>.
- Sachs, Jeffrey. *The End of Poverty: Economic Possibilities for Our Time*. New York: Penguin, 2006.
- Ward, Thomas J. "The Political Economy of NGO and Human Security." *International Journal on World Peace* XXIV: 1 (2007): 43-64.

Environmental Threats

- Bell, Ruth Greenspan. "What to Do about Climate Change." *Foreign Affairs* 85: 3 (2006): 105-115.
- Birkmann, Jorn. "Climate Change and its Impact for Civil Protection." *Safety and Security International* : IV (2007) 125-126.
- Hearne, Steven R. "Environmental Indicators: Regional Stability and Theater Engagement Planning." AEPI-IFP-1001A. <http://www.aepi.army.mil/internet/env-indicators-reg-stability.pdf>.
- Victor, David G. "Recovering Sustainable Development" *Foreign Affairs* 85: 1 (2006): 91-103.
- World Disasters Report 2008. International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies. <http://www.ifrc.org/publicat/wdr2008/index.asp>.

Health Concerns

- Brower, Jennifer and Peter Chalk. "The global threat of new and reemerging infectious diseases: reconciling U.S. national security and public health policy Santa Monica, CA," Rand, 2003.
- Caballero-Anthony, Mely. "Combating Infectious Diseases in East Asia: Securitization and Global Public Goods for Health and Human Security." *Journal of International Affairs* 59: 2 (2006): 105-127.
- Garrett, Laurie. "The Next Pandemic?" *Foreign Affairs* 84: 4 (2005) 3-23.
- Glass, Robert J., Laura M. Glass, Walter E. Beyeler, and H. Jason Min. "Targeted Social Distancing Design for Pandemic Influenza." *Emerging Infectious Diseases* 12:11 (2006) Available from: <http://www.cdc.gov/ncidod/EID/vol12no11/06-0255.htm>
- Kokjohn, Tyler A. and Kimbal E. Cooper. "In the Shadow of Pandemic", *Futurist* 40:5 (2006): 52-58.
- National Strategy for Pandemic Influenza, Homeland Security Council, November 2005. Available from: <http://www.whitehouse.gov/homeland/nspi.pdf>.
- Osterhold, Michael T. "Preparing for the Next Pandemic." *Foreign Affairs* 84:4 (2005) 24-37.
- Osterhold, Michael T. "Unprepared for a Pandemic." *Foreign Affairs* 86:2 (2007), 47-58.

Human Rights

- A Summary of United Nations Agreements on Human Rights. Available on the Internet at <http://www.hrweb.org/legal/undocs.html>.
- Carothers, Thomas. "The Backlash Against Democracy Promotion." *Foreign Affairs* 85:2 (2006): 55-68.
- Liotta, P. H. and Taylor Owen. "Sense and Symbolism: Europe Takes On Human Security." *Parameters* 36:3. (2006): 85-102.
- Lyman, Princeton N. and Patricia Dorff, eds. "Beyond Humanitarianism What You Need to Know about Africa and Why It Matters," Council on Foreign Relations, 2007.
- Migration and Religion in a Globalized World. Final Report of the Conference. Migration and Religion in a Globalized World. 5-6 December 2005. International Organization for Migration.
- Moore, Will H., and Stephen M. Shellman. "Refugee of Internally Displaced Person? To Where Should One Flee?" *Comparative Political Studies* 39:5 (2006): 599-622.
- "Refugees." *Conflict Trends*, March 2005. <http://www.accord.org.za/ct/2005-3.htm>.
- Rice, Susan E. "The Threat of Global Poverty." *The National Interest* 83(2006): 76-82.
- U.S. Department of State, Trafficking in Persons Report, June 2007. Available from: <http://www.state.gov/g/tip/rls/tiprpt/2007/>.

RECOMMENDED WEB RESOURCES

- <http://www.iyp.oxfam.org/issues/index.asp>.
- <http://www.globalpolicy.org/ngos/docs00/geneva.htm>.
- <http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/Socperspective/>.
- <http://usinfo.state.gov/gi/index.html>.
- http://www.un.org/partners/civil_society/agenda.htm.
- <http://www.cdc.gov/ncidod/EID/index.htm>

<http://www.iom.int>.
<http://www.hrw.org/>.
<http://www.hrweb.org/resource.html>
<http://pandemicflu.gov/>.
<http://www.cdc.gov/ncidod/eid/>.
<http://www.refugees.org/>.
<http://www.who.int/csr/sars/en/>.
<http://www.fundforpeace.org/web/>.
<http://www.unhcr.org/cgi-bin/tehis/vtx/home>.