

NOVEMBER 2021

N°04

THE PERSPECTIVE

SINCE 1963



**Yesterday's
Politics,
Today's Challenges**

THE PERSPECTIVE EDITORIAL TEAM

EDITORS-IN-CHIEF

Bahadir Sirin
Nicolas Jendi

SUB-EDITORS

Annika Johansson
Matt Langdon
Marko Malling

LAYOUT

Bahadir Sirin
Kseniia Sharnina

REPORTERS

Alina Ruprecht
Alice Abbas
Alfred Hjelmhammar
Alfred Willows
Anders Åkerblom
August Hendestierna Johnson
Eric Teller
Felicitas Schuze-Steinen
Fabio Cavaliere
Marlies Vlam
Manuel Neumayer
Saga Edwards
Sanna Hoanie
Siran Cheng

LEGAL PUBLISHER

Bahadir Sirin

PRINT

Trydells Tryckeri AB

EDITION

1000

The Perspective Magazine is the member magazine of the Association of Foreign Affairs at Lund University, published quarterly each year. The magazine has no affiliations with any political parties. Opinions presented are the writers' own.

Denna tidningsupplaga har beviljats medel från FBA:s stöd till civilsamhället för fred och säkerhet. läs mer på www.fba.se/stod. Det är UPF Lund som ansvarar för innehållet.

CONTACT

Utrikespolitiska
Föreningen
Sandgatan 2
223 50 Lund
magazine@upflund.se



Cover
[lush/Shutterstock.com](https://www.shutterstock.com/user/lush)
[gdproject/Shutterstock.com](https://www.shutterstock.com/project/gdproject)

Dear reader,

It has been said that the world of foreign affairs is rife with uncertainty. The dynamics of geopolitics are changing faster and more dramatically than since the end of the second world war, with conflicts increasingly driven by the existential threat of climate change. On top of this, we are taking our first, tentative steps out of the shadow of a pandemic, the likes of which have not been seen for 100 years. Uncertainty is all around us, and solutions are all but apparent.

In order to combat the virus, many free societies have had to sacrifice cherished values and practices, from the freedom to travel and associate to the rights of demonstration. As gatherings of people and the effective sharing of experiences have been restricted and forbidden, many of the aspects that define a free society have been curtailed.

Meanwhile, the world's autocracies have gotten stronger and more assertive. The newfound confidence of the autocrat can be seen from migrant conflicts on Europe's eastern border to confrontations over the Taiwan Strait.

In many ways, the institutions and practices that define our world have been weakened by the pandemic. International institutions hollowed out by empty words and ulterior motives are evidence of a neglected system.

As we move slowly forward from the pandemic, we face a world that is harsher and more dangerous than before. We face challenges both to our way of life and to humanity as a whole.

Everything from climate change and human rights to securing our interests and ensuring effective democracy is ultimately a question of human security. Though these problems are urgent, complex and even daunting, they are not a cause for dejectedness but rather a call to action.

As the pandemic abates in our part of the world, we have the opportunity and the duty to make up for lost time. We must engage actively in democracy, debate, and enterprise to capitalize on the strengths inherent to our way of life.

Lund is, in many ways, a city that embodies the strengths and advantages of a free and open society. A city of entrepreneurs, scholars, and inventors, it is a place of debate, enterprise, and innovation. The university is a shining example of the robust civil society and commitment to excellence that has allowed the free world to enjoy such peace and prosperity. It is this spirit of inquiry and of industry that makes free societies dynamic and strong.

As students, we are both the products and engines of the free society, and now, after a long hiatus, we can begin to re-engage with the student life that makes Lund what it is. So we, the editors, encourage you to begin here. Read these works written by fellow students and engage in the debate! As we slowly but surely step out from the shadow of restrictions, mandates, and disease, it is every citizen's duty and privilege to truly make the most of living in liberty and to work to ensure the strength and resilience of the free and open society!

***Bahadir & Nicolas
Editors-in-Chief***

CONTENT

FEATURE

Undercooked Diplomacy in Overheated World 8

Do the Climate COPs Still Matter?

Eric Teller & Sanna Honkaniemi

No Rainbow Without Rain? 12

Worrying Conflict Clouds over Brussels

Alina Ruprecht

No Justice for LGBTQ+ 15

Japan Turns Blind Eye to Sexual Assault Victims

Marlies Vlam

More Food, Yet More Hunger? 18

How Large Scale Land Acquisitions Cause Food Insecurity in Africa

Felicitas Schulze-Steinen

"We Have Experienced the Consequences of Climate Change First-Hand" 21

Heavy Floods Hit Germany

Anna Ledro

A Heartbeat Away 24

Texas Women Fight for Abortion Rights

Saga Edwards

The Cost of Activism 27

Two Years of Iraq's October Revolution

Alice Abbas

The 1970s, A Role Model in Climate Action 32

Manuel Neumayer

Surfers Protest Beach-bans as Families Plead For Food 36

South Africa Remains a Divided Nation

Fabio Cavaliere

OPINION

Are You Ready to Leave Everything Behind? 40

August Hendestierna Johnson

(Deliberative) Practice Makes Perfect 43

Citizens' Assemblies are the Cure to Democratic Disarray

Alfred Hjelmhammar

ANALYSIS

NextGenerationEU is the First of its' Kind 47

Anders Åkerblom

Wolf Warriors in Sheep's Clothing 50

China's Civilian Army

Siran Cheng

A Shadow over Indian Democracy 53

Kashmir Suffers Under Arbitrary Rule

Alfred Willows

PRESIDENTS' ADDRESS

Dear members,

The past year has been extraordinary in many ways. Student organizations, UPF included, struggled with producing the same quality and quantity of content as before the pandemic and faced difficulties with keeping members engaged. Yet, in spite of these challenging times, we are so happy and thankful that many of our members continued being active and came up with creative solutions and ideas for events during the pandemic. So, a big thank you to all of you out there!

Entering this operational year and especially this fall semester, we were not sure what to expect for the upcoming year. Uncertainty has definitely characterized many lives in the past year, and we were afraid that for UPF the uncertainty would continue this semester. But as it turned out, it seems that the darkest days are finally moving behind us and we can start to plan the future with more certainty. In terms of our operations, this means that we have been able to shift more and more to in-person events, lectures, seminars, and meetings. Something we have been looking forward to, as we are sure many of you have as well! It is very exciting to be able to finally offer our members the full experience of UPF again!

Even though we are very excited to bring our operations back to normal and get people to socialize again, this also brings along new challenges. We want to make sure that the transition back to normal operations will happen in a way that is sustainable and respectful to our members' health. This means that we will continue to take care of each other at social events and gatherings by using hand sanitizer and taking other measures if necessary. Above all, we want to make sure that UPF is a community where everyone feels that they are welcome to join just as they are. We know that sometimes UPF might seem like an organization where everyone knows everything there is to know about foreign affairs and politics, but this is not the case. UPF is a student organization, and we are all here to learn and experience new things. We want to welcome you too, to come along and learn more about the things we do in UPF by becoming an active member. All you need is an interest and willingness to learn!

With all this said, we are very much looking forward to what our talented members will produce this upcoming year, from magazines, webzine articles, podcasts, radio shows, events, seminars, lectures and much more! We in turn look forward to ensuring that our operations run as smoothly as possible, so that everyone can have the best possible experience of UPF!

Henrietta Kulleborn & Miljaemilia Wala
President & Vice President

UPF COMMITTEES 21/22



Activity Committee

Chunchu Song
Rebecca Majewski
activity@upflund.se

Career Committee

Eveline Verhaar
Johan Schneider
career@upflund.se

PR Committee

Camilla Castelanelli
Jette Strohschneider
pr@upflund.se

Lecture Committee

Annie Anderek
Magda Andersson
Sofia Gierow
lecture@upflund.se

President

Henrietta Kulleborn
president@upflund.se

Vicepresident

Miljaemilia Wala
vice.president@upflund.se

Treasurer

Jan Trudrung
treasurer@upflund.se

Secretary

Christopher Fletcher-Sandersjö
secretary@upflund.se

UFS Representative

Karolina Boyoli
lund@ufsverige.org

Magazine Committee

Bahadir Sirin
Nicolas Jendi
magazine@upflund.se

Pod&Radio Committee

Emma Rohman
Ismar Didic
radio@upflund.com

Webzine Committee

Ellen Löfgren
Ondrej Gomola
career@upflund.se

Travel Committee

Caroline Danielsson
Linnea Svensson-Rotberg
travel@upflund.se

Undercooked Diplomacy in an Overheated World

Do the Climate COPs Still Matter?



“It’s a fraud, really. A fake...it’s just worthless words.” Many activists calling for urgent action on climate change have been dissatisfied with the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) for years, as exemplified by former NASA climate scientist James Hansen’s 2015 statement to *The Guardian* on the talks held in Paris that year. The Paris Conference of Parties (COP), widely regarded at the time as a successful conference that established the framework for global emissions cuts, was the high water mark of media attention for the UNFCCC.

The body has continued to meet annually, most recently in Glasgow, Scotland. However with each passing year, fossil fuel emissions climb and the scientific consensus on climate change portends an increasingly apocalyptic future. At this moment, it is pertinent to ask: how does the UNFCCC work, and is a voluntary framework our last, best hope for tackling the climate crisis?

Although scientists first identified carbon dioxide as a greenhouse gas in 1896, concerted action against climate change did not begin until 1992. The Earth Summit, held that year in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, saw the global community endorse the notion of sustainable

development for the first time and establish dedicated institutions under international law to combat environmental crises, including the UNFCCC. The UNFCCC’s ill-fated first attempt at a resolution was the Kyoto Protocol, negotiated in 1997. The protocol was based on mandatory emissions reductions, to which countries committed by treaty.

The guiding principle of the Kyoto Protocol was that states had “common but differentiated responsibilities” to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. This meant that developed countries, responsible for the majority of historical emissions, had to bear the burden of future emissions cuts. However, the United States (the world’s largest emitter at the time) criticized this approach and refused to ratify the treaty. Furthermore, the UN quickly found that these mandatory commitments were practically unenforceable. While the Kyoto Protocol officially remains in force for the countries that have ratified it, the UNFCCC spent nearly two decades spinning the wheels of an inadequate vehicle for emissions reductions.

A new hope rises in Paris

After decades of limbo, the 2015 Paris COP revolutionized international climate policy. Under an unprecedented wave of media

attention devoted to the climate emergency, the UNFCCC brokered a new, voluntary system for encouraging national emissions cuts. The primary motive for voluntarism was political and yet mundane; the United States Senate was unwilling to codify any treaty mandating reduced greenhouse gas emissions into its national laws. Furthermore, the crisis had escalated to the point that cuts from wealthy countries alone were not enough. The principle of “common but differentiated responsibilities” was still in place, but perhaps more emphasis was placed on the word “common.” The system established in Paris, and carried forward through Glasgow, is as follows: Each country submits a Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC), constituting their commitment to reduce emissions by a certain amount, along with a rough plan to reach the goal. Countries then report on progress towards their NDCs each year. After five years, each country submits an (ideally more ambitious) updated NDC.

In Glasgow, the agenda was rich with items, but the overarching imperative of the UNFCCC is to increase ambition, explains Markku Rummukainen, a climatologist at Lund University and expert advisor to the Swedish Meteorological and Hydrological Institute: “The current collective efforts of the world’s countries are not in line with the Paris Agreement’s global goals of limiting warming to well below 2 degrees centigrade.”

The stakes are high and time is running short. Though many countries agree on the principle that deeper emissions cuts should be pledged, many controversies within the Paris framework imperil this consensus. For instance, the principle of “loss and damage,” which holds that rich, high-emitting countries should pay for the climate chaos that less-developed countries are already facing, places some member states at odds with one another.

Climate justice on the docket

Although climate change is a global problem, its effects are not felt equally. A study published in *The Lancet Planetary Health* last year, states that the Global North is responsible for 92% of global carbon emissions in excess of the planetary boundary between 1850 and 2015. Despite this, it is the Global South and especially indigenous communities that face the worst consequences of the climate crisis, while largely lacking the resources required to cope. For these groups, COP outcomes are the most crucial. Yet many see the process behind it as exclusionary.

*“It’s a fraud, really.
A fake... it’s just
worthless words.”*

Delegations from the Global South often lack the resources to travel to the conferences and recently, global vaccine inequality has exacerbated this barrier. In addition to this, Glasgow, host of the COP26, quickly ran out of affordable accommodation options, with critics citing a failure of the government to address this. After the COP25 in Madrid, the Director of the International Centre for Climate Change and Development, Saleemul Huq, criticized the COP process for deliberately excluding delegates from the most vulnerable developing countries. Writing in *Climate Home News*, Huq states that the 2019 climate negotiations unnecessarily went over the planned time by two days. Delegates from poor countries could not afford to stay and according to Huq, once they arrived home, their requests were nowhere to be seen in the final decisions.

In response to these criticisms, the Scottish government, together with Scottish civil society, hosted the Glasgow Climate Dialogues ahead of the COP26 in an effort to platform

voices from the Global South. The Dialogues were a series of online sessions with experts from the Global South expressing the key issues they wish to see addressed in international climate talks. A prevalent theme throughout the sessions was the topic of climate finance. Climate finance and technology transfer are indeed major topics on the agenda this year. However, the consensus-based deliberations of the COP, in which all member states must agree to adopt new provisions, make it difficult to drum up increased ambition.

“The current collective efforts of the world’s countries are not in line with the Paris Agreement’s global goals of limiting warming to well below 2 degrees centigrade.”

At the 2009 COP held in Copenhagen, developed countries pledged to provide \$100 billion in annual climate finance to developing countries by the year 2020. This goal has not been met even by 2021, with Oxfam reporting that the pledged figure is already too low and, in real terms, even lower as donors largely overstate their contributions. The same report also showed that 80% of reported climate finance was in the form of loans rather than grants. Loan-based climate finance does not help poor countries in the long run, as they are pushed further into debt simply for tackling the climate crisis.

Social movements have coined the term “climate debt” to symbolize the emissions debt that developed nations owe their Global South

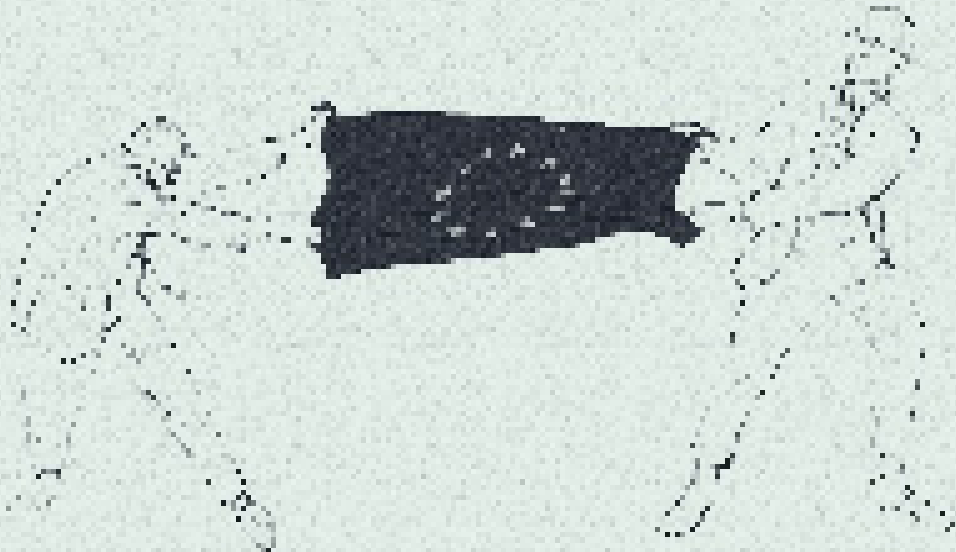
counterparts. From this standpoint, climate finance should be provided as reparations by those who have caused and financially benefited from climate change. This point of view was largely present at the Glasgow Climate Dialogues. Ineza Umuhoza Grace from the Loss and Damage Youth Coalition emphasized that climate finance provided by those who have caused climate change should not be viewed as charity, rather “it is our right and we should have full access to it.” This was reiterated by Saleemul Huq, who asked for solidarity instead of charity, and said that polluters should take responsibility for their actions.

In addition to official delegates from the Global South, indigenous groups and civil society face exclusion at COPs. They are largely excluded from the main negotiations and the platforms that they are given are constrained in time and space. Furthermore, the Paris framework is criticized by these groups for focusing too much on market-based solutions that largely harm indigenous societies and fail to address the root causes of climate change.

Six years after the Paris COP, is the UNFCCC really so toothless?” Time is indeed running out for taking decisive action to keep the planet from heating up by more than two degrees. The consequences of inaction are catastrophic, however countries’ short-term political interests often collide with the imperative to slash carbon emissions and ensure that vulnerable communities in the Global South are supported. However flawed the UNFCCC may be, it is our most important forum for climate action. As Rummukainen says “Glasgow will not be the last climate meeting, but it can be a significant milestone for keeping the Paris Agreement’s goals in sight.”

No Rainbow Without Rain?

Worrying Conflicts Cloud Over Brussels



It's 2021 and two member states of the European Union still struggle to become a safe space for the LGBTQ+ community. Recently, Hungary and Poland adopted measures that endanger the safety of non-heterosexual people. Their rights have become a political plaything, as they are used to pressure European decision-making into supporting Hungarian and Polish interests. The PERSPECTIVE discussed the instrumentalization of LGBTQ+ rights with Morten Kjærum, Director of the Raoul Wallenberg Institute of Human Rights and Humanitarian Law.

"I think a lot has happened within the European Union in a broad sense. The past 15 to 20 years, the Union has always paid a lot of attention to non-discrimination, equality. That's sort of in the DNA of the European Union", says Mr. Kjaerum. However this positive view is clouded by some serious negative developments, as he goes on to explain: "We have seen in some countries where it's going backwards. There are two dimensions in what we see here, the one is the populist agenda, which is quite obvious, and that it is being used in a political discourse. And then there is the other that a populist discourse can only work if there's a resonance in part of the population."

He continues by "And that's the second part where we need to consider how we can

actually bring people on board in a wiser way than we may have done before, as I said, a lot has happened in the past 20 years." As several socio-political changes take place, some people refuse to accept 'new' ways of life and lack understanding of them. These insecurities and resentments are then picked up by populists to attract voters and political power.

Against this background it becomes clear that Hungary and Poland fail to live up to the European Union's ambition to be a 'LGBTQ+ freedom space', a title first established in contrast to LGBTQ+ free zones' in Poland. These zones are municipalities and regions that have declared themselves unwelcoming of openly LGBTQ+ individuals. Almost 100 towns, making up a third of the country, have adopted the discriminatory policy since 2019. The laws passed in Poland state that they aim to defend children and family tradition against so-called 'homopropaganda', as well as to promote Christian values.

Similar actions discriminating against people on the basis of their sexual orientation have taken place in Hungary. In June 2021, the Hungarian parliament passed a law that forbids sharing information promoting homosexuality or gender transition with children and teenagers younger than 18 years old. The ban includes educational material in schools and TV-shows that deal with LGBTQ+ issues. By banning "homosexual" content,

Hungary's government (Fidesz) is intentionally alienating LGBTQ+ youth and invalidating the hard-won progress of the community.

But what is behind these discriminatory actions against LGBTQ+ individuals? "We have two illiberal governments, self-declared illiberal, which is sort of a front runner of being authoritarian, and we know that authoritarianism always comes in with hate", explains Mr. Kjaerum. "And you can always create your own power platform based on hate against others. Because if you just can speak about it, so you can create the perception that this is a problem if you can get people to believe that."

"We know that authoritarianism always comes in with hate. You can always create your own power platform based on hate against others."


How far this conflict extends and what it can do was shown in November 2020 during negotiations on the European budget. In the context of the Covid-19 pandemic, the member states wanted to adopt an aid package to help countries that were particularly hard hit. All 27 member states? No, because Hungary and Poland vetoed the plans. The reason for this was that the European Commission had announced earlier that financial aid should, in future, be linked to compliance with European law. This means that states receive no money from the fund if they violate European law. Hungary and Poland would leave the negotiations empty-handed, as their discriminatory actions display a clear human rights violation.

After no solution could be found in the conflict between Brussels, Warsaw and Budapest the dispute entered another phase in October 2021. During the Covid-19 budget talks, Hungary and Poland were given the option of receiving Corona aid in November, with a total value of 31.2 billion Euros for both countries. However, the European Commission insists on the money being spent only if the European Law, which entails human rights violation, is followed. Hungary and Poland are now to present detailed plans by November on how they can end and reverse their previous legal violations, requiring them to withdraw the acts without a substitution. If this doesn't happen, there won't be any early payments for the two Member States.

"I think it comes from the heart. And that heart has become bigger."

When thinking about the future of LGBTQ+ rights in Europe, Mr. Kjaerum sees a mixed picture. When asked if the personal security of LGBTQ+ people is on the verge of being further threatened, he assesses that this will depend on populist trends, especially those in Hungary and Poland, in the overall political agenda in Europe. If Hungarian and Polish populism spreads and gains more supporters, more discrimination and hate will follow.

On the basis of this realistic forecast, one might ask if the EU's self-declaration as an LGBTQ+ freedom space was just an act to keep up its image as a Human Rights defender. Or did it really come from the heart? "No, no, no, no, no", says Mr. Kjaerum firmly. "I think it comes from the heart. And that heart has become bigger." It remains to be seen if this heart will keep beating in Hungary and Poland.



o0hyperblaster/Shutterstock.com

No Justice for LGBTQ⁺

*Japan Turns Blind Eye to Sexual Assault
Victims*

A mere five years ago, in 2016, males couldn't legally be classified as victims of rape in Japan. The law was clear: rape means forced vaginal intercourse and only females could be considered victims. Despite revising that law in 2017, The Japanese government still has a long way to go in protecting minorities.

In the Japanese daily newspaper The Mainichi, Shoko Usami shares her story and expresses her concern about the current interpretation of the law. Usami became a victim of rape through the acts of a transgender man who was assigned female at birth. When Usami confronted her then-boyfriend to end the relationship, he abused and raped her with his fingers and fist. "It was a horrible choice for me, either the knife or the fist," she said. Considering the perpetrator was a transgender man, she didn't feel comfortable filing a report on the incident. Usami thought the police would probably treat it as a problem between "women", rather than taking it seriously like any other same-sex couple. Because of the current Japanese law system, Usami was convinced that it's not going to be recognized as rape because the damage was caused by something other than male genitalia. She expresses in The Mainichi that she strongly felt that the current legal system, which does not recognize the damage caused by anything other than male genitalia as rape, does not acknowledge the diversity of sexuality and covers up the reality of damage caused to LGBTQ+ victims.

Shoko's story is just one of the many. The lack of real solutions to sexual harassment in a country considered to be as safe and modern as Japan is disappointing. Japan is the only G7 country without laws to prohibit discrimination on the

grounds of sexual orientation, let alone laws permitting same-sex marriage. In 2017, the penal code was amended to change the name of the "crime of rape" to the "crime of forcible sexual intercourse," and to define the crime as having involuntary vaginal, anal, or oral intercourse with a person aged at least 13. At the same time, the gender of the victim, which had been limited to women, was removed, so that males can be recognized as victims. It is a step in the right direction, however, LGBTQ+ individuals and activists have pointed out that the current law still fails to address the full damage that sexual assault causes, especially to sexual minorities. "Japan from the outside looks like such a happy, fun, and LGBTQ+-friendly country. There are many manga and anime stories about same-sex relationships, however, there is this huge backstage that people don't get to see" tells Tiger Shigetake, an LGBTQ+ activist in Japan. "I have never seen another country that is this bi-polar with regards to the media and society."

When the Penal Code on sex crimes was revised in 2017, it was stipulated that a review would be conducted in about three years, and discussions have been held since June last year at an expert panel of the Ministry of Justice. One of the issues under consideration is whether to include assaults with objects other than male genitalia in the scope of the crime of forcible sexual intercourse, however,

the Japanese government has still not taken a step towards amending the laws despite the discussions going on for three years. “I know someone who had been sexually assaulted on the train before, however, the staff at the train station would say ‘that’s a pity or that sucks’ and wouldn’t pursue anything further. Despite seeing a lot of posters saying that sexual assault on trains isn’t accepted, it is weird to see that no one cares when it happens.” Tiger continues by saying, “Because of this, sexual assault is not taken seriously anymore in society and no one bothers addressing this issue. Sexual assault is almost normalized.”



Tiger Shigetake was featured on a United Nations panel focused on bullying of LGBTQ+ students in Japan and is working with Human Rights Watch.

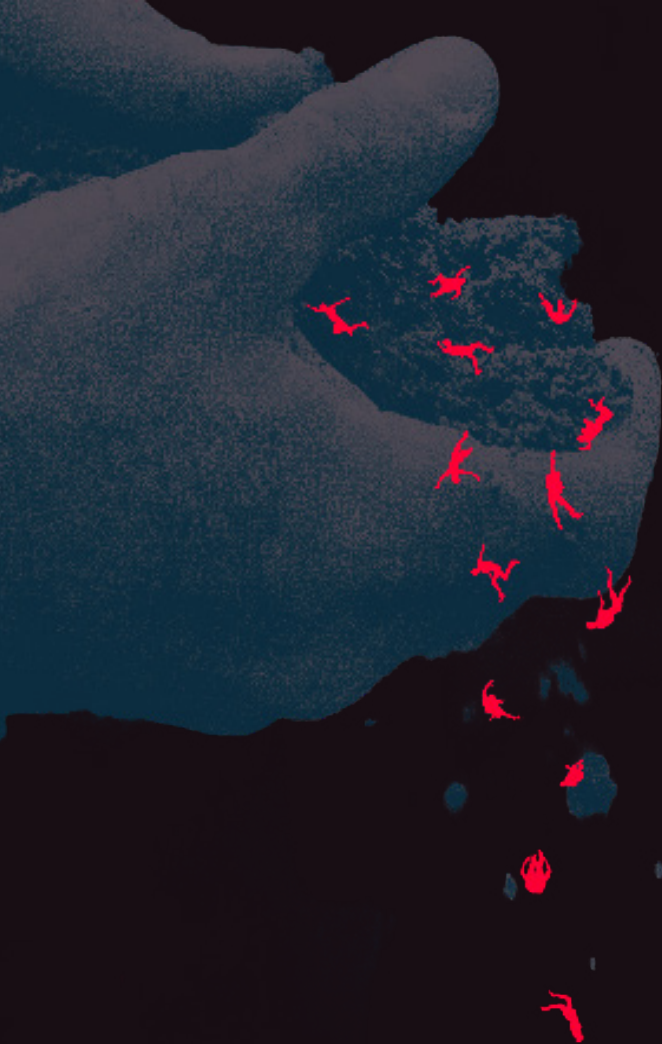
This discrepancy shows when looking at the statistics published on Statista; Japan’s incidences of rape are seen as to be astonishingly low— 1 incidence per 100,000 people, in contrast to the almost 38 per 100,000 in the US. At first glance, this low rate paints Japan as a country of harmonious gender and sexual relations. However, according to

government figures, less than five percent of sexual assaults are even reported; for children and LGBTQ+ victims, this rate is likely lower.

“Japan from the outside looks like such a happy, fun, and LGBTQ+-friendly country. There are many manga and anime stories about same-sex relationships, however, there is this huge backstage that people don’t get to see”

Tiger shares that his experience corroborates this wide gap between official statistics and the actual prevalence of sexual assaults in Japan. “What I learned from working with the United Nations is that the number of sexual assault cases within the Japanese LGBTQ+ community isn’t even accurate. The number of cases of sexual minority groups is much lower than women because Japan is still a very discrete country, and LGBTQ+ is still something that is not fully accepted even today. I believe the numbers of victims shown in the media can be doubled, if not tripled,” Tiger says. “I don’t tell people (that I am gay) in Japan unless they ask me directly, but they never do”.

Revising the penal code for sexual assault was a positive step by the Japanese government, but major problems remain with the law and how it is carried out. Countries around the world are updating the legal definition of rape that is based on the lack of consent, not the use of force. When Tiger was asked about his thoughts for the future of Japan, he said: “Because of the fast globalization, internet, and the increase of mixed-race children in Japan, I could see the Japanese mentality changing in the future. However, at the same time, the traditional mindset is so deeply rooted that it’s difficult to do so anytime soon”.



More Food, Yet More Hunger?

*How Large Scale Land Acquisitions Cause Food
Insecurity in Africa*

FELICITAS SCHULZE-STEINEN \ FEATURE

The world is hungry. Ensuring food security becomes a global challenge – the fight for resources has begun. It is a fight that attracts money: Large Scale Land Acquisitions (LSLA) have become large in number and size. Investors exercise power over the acquired land and local communities. In Africa, a major destination for LSLAs, this affects the most vulnerable people: Around 5.3 million people are deprived of their land and resources. Despite some of the most fertile agricultural land on earth, many Africans lack access to food. What role do LSLAs play in this paradox?

LSLAs are land deals that usually comprise more than 200 hectares of land. Either private companies and individuals, or investment banks or funds from all over the world are involved in them. Critics claim that LSLAs are merely a modern form of land grabbing with large amounts of land changing owners with little or no compensation for those who live on the land. On the other hand, investors advertise their actions as encouraging economic development, touting their ability to enhance productivity. In fact, the combined land area managed under LSLAs, in Africa alone, could feed an estimated 21.7 million to 89 million additional people. This is a promising figure, however reality shows that it remains a theoretical one: Since 2015, rates of undernourishment in Sub-Saharan Africa have increased.

Naturally, LSLAs are not the only reasons for this. Depending on the interplay of many factors, some LSLAs even show a positive

impact on food security. Nonetheless, there are countless cases where adverse effects are predominant. The potential of LSLAs to increase crop production while at the same time threatening food security is a “perverse contradiction,” as Marc Müller and fellow researchers from universities from all over the world phrased it in a study from 2021. However, which circumstances and mechanisms make local communities prone to hunger and malnutrition?

“We lived in paradise, in peace.”

Officially up to about four fifths of the land included in LSLAs globally, was previously uninhabited, however this is only true in a technical sense. When LSLAs acquire land that smallholder farmers or pastoralists dwell on, the latter fear for their livelihood. Often these communities have relied on customary

laws, meaning they cannot invoke any land tenure rights. "If the rights are not formally recognized, the investors do not directly break the law," says Christoph Kubitz, co-author of the latest analytical report of Land Matrix, a public database on land deals.

Ali Saidi Kichei was one of the 96,000 people living in the Tana river delta in Kenya. In 2011, he suffered from the legal vacuum first hand. Despite high poverty and unemployment rates, in an interview with The Guardian he stated: "We lived in paradise, in peace." Smallholders and pastoralists like him sustained their herds of cattle and grew crops by relying on the land and water from the Tana river. Then, primarily foreign companies from Canada, the UK and Italy initiated negotiations on land acquisitions and leases to extract resources or grow crops for consumption and biofuel production. Indigenous communities could not refer to their land tenure rights since they have not officially held them. Omar Bocha, a local pastoralist, recalled in a report conducted by Environmental Justice Organizations, Liabilities and Trade: "People thought they owned the land. We have been here for hundreds of years. Now we will fight; we are ready to die, for what else is there?" The interference of investors brought along devastating consequences for the locals. Kichei showed himself desperate: "Now what? No water, only salty water, land thieves and water thieves, and children with empty stomachs."

After locals are excluded from their land, they often get the chance to work at the respective LSLA as wage employees or contract farmers. The latter case obliges the farmer to supply the investor at set conditions. Often, investors take advantage of the weak position of their employees: according to Kubitz, "many of the contracts are exploitative. The farmers do not really understand what they

are signing." The dependency on the investors' goodwill can manifest in a lower-than-expected job creation effect, an inadequate level of income and an unequal income distribution. Moreover, many crops require little manual labor due to a high degree of mechanization, which makes a large share of the labor force redundant, further reducing the number of people who can make a living off the land. Whenever income is too small to balance out the loss of livelihood in the wake of LSLAs, food security is at stake. This suggests that not only food availability, but access to food is a crucial factor which is primarily determined by income.

In 28 out of 40 African countries where undernourishment prevails, food availability is not the problem. At the same time however, food availability is increasingly threatened by the large share of food destined for export. The production of versatile flex and cash crops now amounts to about two thirds of the land acquisitions' area. The transition from local staples towards nutrient poor crops intended for export tends to degrade the quality of local diets.

Future developments depend on the demand for land and the returns that LSLAs yield. Driving factors are population growth, urbanization and rising demand, but also the negative side of agricultural and environmental policy and speculation. Consequently, the pressure on land is unlikely to decline. The actions of foreign multinationals and powerful local actors determine the well-being of people all over Africa. "It must be ensured that due diligence obligations are established, which means that companies are obliged to prevent the violation of human rights along their value chains," Kubitz emphasizes. "They must be held accountable!"

“We have experienced the consequences of climate change first-hand”

Heavy Floods Hit Germany

ANNA LEDRO / FEATURE

CDU & CSU
Fraktion im Deutschen Bundestag

Climate change is an increasingly threatening aspect of human security. July's flood catastrophe in Germany is one of the many examples of the growing impact of climate change. Do climate disasters have the power to shape public opinion and political elections?

“It's gone. That's where my future once stood. 127 years of family history have been razed to the ground”. These words form the caption of an instagram post from the account “Koelnerhof”. Pictured in the post is a destroyed, almost unrecognizable building. It used to be a hotel and a restaurant. Now, it's merely a memory.

This is a fate shared by hundreds of inhabitants in North Rhine-Westphalia and Rhineland-Palatinate, two federal states in Western Germany that were heavily affected by floods this summer. From the 14th of July till the 15th, between 100 and 150 liters of rain per square meter fell on these two states, surpassing the average rainfall of all July. The heavy rainfalls caused floods that destroyed homes, businesses and public infrastructure, leading to over 180 deaths.

There are multiple reasons for this catastrophe. The German Meteorological Service published a report describing how heavy rainfall in the months prior to July had left the ground soaked and unable to absorb more water. Heavy rainfalls and floods have generally increased in Germany during the last years. What does this have to do with climate change?

Scientific reports show that climate change increases the probability and intensity of extreme weather conditions. In the case of heavy rainfall, it is due to the increasing warmth of the Earth's atmosphere. The warmer the atmosphere, the more water it can absorb. This leads to more water pouring down in a shorter amount of time. According to researchers from the Karlsruher Institute of Technology, the probability of such heavy rains will increase in the future. “Now

we have experienced the consequences of climate change first-hand”, Rebecca Arnoldy-Heimansfeld tells THE PERSPECTIVE. Her whole family was affected by the floods, with four houses completely devastated.

Shortly after the floods happened, various German politicians visited the affected areas. Natural disasters can determine electoral outcomes, a lesson learned from the federal elections in 2002 when chancellor candidate Gerhard Schröder visited the victims of the river Elbe floods before his rival candidate had even reacted. It played an important role in his later victory. For this reason, it was a common thought that this year's floods also had the potential to influence election results.



But how did people living in the affected areas perceive these visits? Arnoldy-Heimansfeld remembers Angela Merkel visiting her village in the Ahrtal: “For many people, it was a great feeling to be heard. Merkel took the time to walk through the whole village and talk to everyone”. At the same time, the visits raised many questions. As the catastrophe

dominated the news, state disaster relief arrived to help. But soon thereafter, the valley was no longer categorized as an area of risk and state support was withdrawn. It was then up to the people to provide for themselves with the support of volunteers. "The politicians left us alone at that point. Without the volunteers, it would have been a complete mess", Arnoldy-Heimansfeld states.

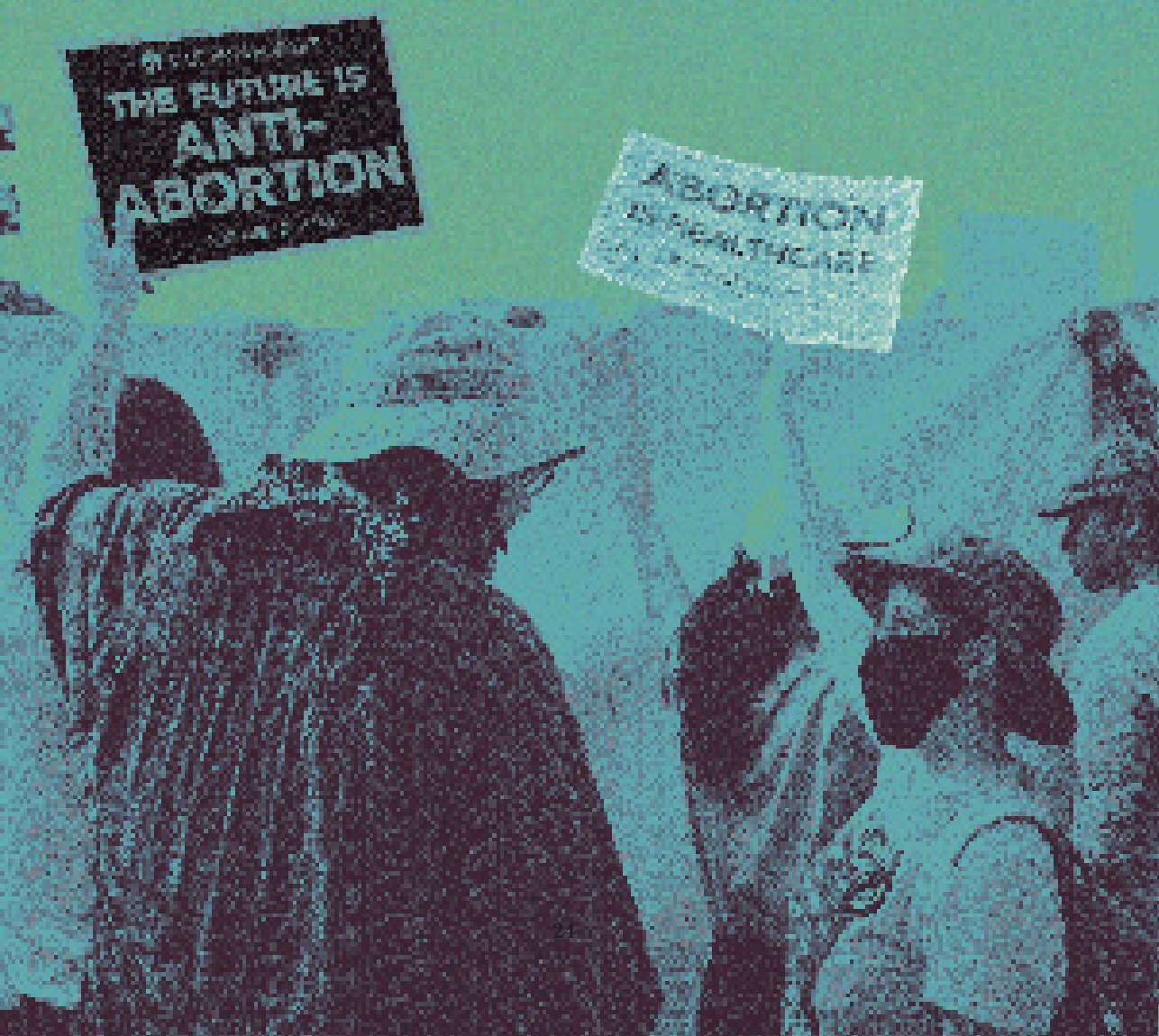


Two months after the floods, the election results have been published and negotiations between parties to form a government for the next four years are in full swing. However, for Arnoldy-Heimansfeld, the federal elections are happening far away. "I was in the bubble of my own valley. Of course, there was the possibility to vote, but following the elections, in general, was very overwhelming with everything else happening", she explains. In many municipalities affected by the floods, the Christian Democrats are still the strongest party despite their relatively mild emphasis on climate change. It seems like the floods did

not have the effect on public opinion that some had speculated. How can that be explained?

Political scientists Manfred Güllner and Matthias Jung anticipated that the floods would have insignificant influence on election results in an article published by the German newspaper *Handelsblatt* in July. According to them, the only party that could potentially gain votes due to the floods was the Green Party, since their platform most prominently addresses environmental issues. Nevertheless, this party gained far fewer votes than the winning Social Democratic Party and the Christian Democratic Party that came in second. Güllner and Jung explain that for the floods to help the Green Party gain votes, people must associate the floods with the climate crisis—which is still not a common thought. "One notices that many people still do not believe in climate change, despite this catastrophe having happened", Arnoldy-Heimansfeld observes.

Ultimately, the electoral debate moved on to other issues in the months between the floods and election day. "What mainly bothers me is that we have been forgotten about", Arnoldy-Heimansfeld complains. This is representative of how humanity has been dealing with the climate crisis so far: always with a focus on short-term problems and solutions and with a lacking emphasis on the long-term. The existence of the climate crisis and its consequences on our lives are still denied by many. For these reasons, it was perhaps naive to think that these floods had the power to turn the narrative around. People affected were, understandably enough, more concerned with trying to save their shattered lives than with engaging in climate activism. For our own futures to not be flooded with problems, politics and media should take responsibility for changing the narrative.



A Heartbeat Away

Texas Women Fight for Abortion Rights

SAGA EDWARDS / FEATURE

On October 2, 2021, thousands of people marched in support of reproductive rights at the fifth annual Women's March, with demonstrations held in every U.S. state. The debate on abortion rights has been refuelled by a new law; the Texas Heartbeat Act, which limits abortion rights in the state and is spreading fear among pro-choice activists. Women's march - a women's rights movement based in the U.S.- published a call to action, stating: "we're going to send the Supreme Court and lawmakers across the country a clear, unified message. The attack on our reproductive rights will not be tolerated."

The Texas Heartbeat Act, a state law which went into effect last September, is one of the strictest in the country. The law bans abortions from the moment that a "fetal heartbeat" can be detected by ultrasound, which occurs at around six weeks of pregnancy. Critics have pointed out that the use of the word "heartbeat" is misleading in this case, since the embryo hasn't developed a heart by then. On the other hand, a common argument among anti-abortion activists is that a baby should be considered a sentient being from the very moment impregnation occurs. However, at six weeks of pregnancy, few women have even had a chance to realize that they're pregnant but will no longer have access to legal abortion from that point. No

exceptions will be made in cases when the pregnancy is the result of incest or rape.

The law is designed not to penalize the person seeking help, and therefore doesn't strictly ban people from getting an abortion. Instead, it is abortion providers that are criminalized. However it's not just the providers; anyone who assists an individual in gaining access to abortion can be sued under the new law.

Several other U.S. states have tried to introduce such restrictive abortion laws. In Georgia, a similar "heartbeat bill" was passed in 2019 but was eventually declared unconstitutional. The Texas Heartbeat Act contains a significant difference. Instead of the state enforcing the law, it is the citizens who are asked to sue abortion providers. This mechanism is what makes the law different and more difficult to challenge in court. It would usually be possible to sue the state in order to oppose an overly restrictive law, but since civilians are the ones upholding the law instead of the government, you would have to sue each civilian who makes use of the law.

What would prompt regular citizens to report each other in this way? Many dedicated anti-abortion activists might voluntarily engage in this task. But there is also a financial incentive: whoever successfully sues an abortion provider will be given at least \$10,000. In

other words, surveilling and reporting your neighbors is encouraged by the state.

This legal mechanism can have severe consequences on relations between citizens, seeing as how it fosters an atmosphere of mutual suspicion and fear. However, Texas Right To Life, the largest anti-abortion organization in Texas, created a website where people can give anonymous tips, further encouraging people to report abortion providers. Through the organization's website, the act of reporting abortion providers is presented as a way of protecting women and children since the organization believes that they are both the victims of abortions.

“If you can’t get rid of the baby, what’s the next thing you’re going to do?”

For Planned Parenthood, the largest abortion provider in the US, the Heartbeat Act has had instant consequences. The organization has been forced to reduce abortion access dramatically, due to its immediate legal implications. As Melaney A. Linton (President of PPFA Gulf Coast) comments: “While the legal strategy may be new, the intent is not: Planned Parenthood has been on the frontlines for more than a decade of concerted attacks on abortion, and SB 8 (Texas Heartbeat Act) could decimate what little access remains in Texas. Our patients deserve so much better.”

The effects of decreasing access on people who get abortions in Texas are already showing in other states. They are desperately traveling from Texas to surrounding states in order to get the procedure done. According to an abortion clinic in Shreveport, Louisiana, there has been a significant increase in

clients from Texas since the Heartbeat Act went into effect. While before the law had passed 20% of their clients were from Texas, this percentage is now as high as 60%.

But what happens to those who can't afford the expense of going out of state? Many citizens may face the unenviable choice of either carrying an unwanted pregnancy to term or risking a dangerous, illegal abortion.

According to The Guttmacher Institute, some groups are disproportionately affected by limitations on abortion access. Black women, for example, are several times more likely to have an abortion than white women, making them even more vulnerable in this situation.

Since other states are reportedly considering legislation inspired by this one, the consequences of the Heartbeat Act aren't limited to Texas alone. The Biden administration has asked the Supreme Court to block the law, and hope remains among the pro-choice movement that it will finally be declared unconstitutional. Regardless of what happens in the future, it is undeniable that the Texas Heartbeat Act has energized the anti-abortion movement and is in violation of women's bodily autonomy.

Back at the abortion clinic in Shreveport, Louisiana, the impact of the Texas Heartbeat Act is already being felt. Many argue that abortion bans will not actually stop all abortions, but only safe and legal procedures.

A patient at the clinic told AP News: “If you can’t get rid of the baby, what’s the next thing you’re going to do? So I’m thinking: ‘What could I do? What are some home remedies that I could do to get rid of this baby, to have miscarriage, to abort it?’ And it shouldn’t be like that. I shouldn’t have to do that. I shouldn’t have to think like that, feel like that, none of that.”



The Cost of Activism:

Two Years of Iraq's October Revolution

ALICE ABBAS \ FEATURE

Hayder Mohsin/Shutterstock.com

October 1st, 2021 marked the second anniversary of the largest socio-political mobilization seen in Iraq since the American invasion in 2003: a series of mass protests that have become known as Thoret Tishreen, or The October Revolution. Taking place in 10 of 18 provinces, the peaceful uprisings demanded thorough reform of the political establishment. With only limited success, protesters have paid a high price for their activism. Two years after the uprisings started, activists

are back on the streets. October 1st did not only mark the two-year anniversary of the month-long movement but was also mere days from the national elections, which were set a year ahead of schedule to meet one of the demands of the protesters. Still, many activists have called for a boycott and turnout is expected to be record-low. On the eve of the elections, the Guardian reports that about 25 percent of eligible voters are estimated to have voted. Iraqis say they have lost faith in the electoral process and question the legitimacy

of elections in a state where militias operate with impunity, especially against protesters.

According to Iraq's human rights commission, about 669 civilians were killed by security forces and militias in 4 months, with over 25,000 injured. THE PERSPECTIVE spoke to two protesters from Basra in Southern Iraq, a city considered to be one of the capitals of the protest. The journalist Hutham Yuosif Tahir, and Wathiq Gazie, a mechanical engineer and poet. Hutham explains that many reasons were behind her participation in the protests, among others the lack of basic services such as water and electricity, but also unemployment, which she describes as having become a "nightmare for Iraqi families". The unemployment rate in Iraq hit a staggering 13.7% in 2020 according to the World Bank, the highest among the oil economies of the Middle East. In a country with the world's fifth-largest oil reserves, one in four youths are unemployed and one in five of its people live in poverty.

Muhassasa: Division and Corruption

Another reason for Hutham's engagement in the protests is the political muhassasa system, where governmental positions are allocated based on ethnic quotas instead of merits. Established by the United States after the invasion in 2003, the system has been criticized for encouraging corruption and adding fuel to sectarian divisions between Shia and Sunni Muslims. Suspending this system was an official demand of the protesters. The reform movement also rallied against high levels of corruption within the government and Iran's influence over Iraqi internal affairs. In the power vacuum left after the ousting of the dictator Saddam Hussein, Iran's influence has been growing throughout

the Middle East. Among other avenues, its authority in Iraq is exercised through its support of the Popular Mobilisation Forces (PMF), a state-sponsored militia dominated by Shia Muslims. Different forces of this paramilitary network have been responsible for kidnapping and murdering activists and journalists involved in the protests

"The protesters in my hometown have faced all kinds of abuses. One evening, the protests escalated and men from the militia were chasing us down small alleys close to the protest arena. Strangers suddenly opened their doors and let us in. The following day, the security forces seized the tapes from the surveillance cameras that had captured the chase."

Status: Disappeared

For many protesters, the struggle for their freedom of expression and their desire for change have been met with brutal arrests, imprisonment and torture. In May 2020, the United Nations revealed close to 100 abduction cases. There were 123 victims, of which 25

remained missing at the time. Behind the numbers we find among others, Sajjad Al Mishrifawi, a 25-year-old activist from the Dhi Qar governorate. Sajjad regularly received threats due to his activism. In September 2020, a month after surviving an attempted car bomb assassination, he was allegedly abducted by members of an organization linked to the PMF, the Badr Organisation. Another case concerned the disappearance of human rights lawyer Ali Al-Heliji (29), who provided legal representation for arrested protesters. In October 2019, Ali was arrested by the PMF. His case went viral after his father, Jaseb Al-Heliji, published videos demanding accountability from the government. In March 2021, Jaseb fell victim to a targeted killing, which once again sparked country-wide rallies. The movement demanded the resignation of the Governor and the Director of Maysan Governorate Police, without success. Both Sajjad and Ali remain missing.

Silencing Activists

Parallel to the abductions, close to 80 activists have been murdered in waves of targeted assassinations. Among them Reham Yacoub (29), a fitness instructor who was killed in August 2020, when armed men opened fire at her car in Basra. Reham had organised and led women's marches in the October movement and had received several death threats for her work. Civil society was shaken again in July 2021, when Ali Kareem (26), son of the well-known peace activist Fatima Al-Bahadli, was found dead 50 kilometers outside Basra. Prior to the murder, he was engaged in the Iraqi Al-Firdaws Association. Founded by his mother, the association focuses on promoting women's role in peacebuilding and combating recruitment of youth into armed groups. About

the violence in Basra, Wathiq Gazie shares:

"The protesters in my hometown have faced all kinds of abuses. One evening, the protests escalated and men from the militia were chasing us down small alleys close to the protest arena. Strangers suddenly opened their doors and let us in. The following day, the security forces seized the tapes from the surveillance cameras that had captured the chase."

The legacy of the October Revolution

The direct achievements of the Tishreen movement were the resignation of Prime Minister Abdul-Mahdi and the approval of a new electoral law. The law favours political independents in parliamentary elections by turning the country's 18 provinces into 83 electoral districts. Sally Bachori, one of the founders of End Impunity In Iraq, an NGO born out of the uprisings, argued that the spirit of the protests is still here two years later. The movement has given rise to new grassroots movements: activists have turned repression into fuel, continuing to fight even after the protests.

Discussing the future and if things will change, Hutham refers to May's suicide bombing in Sadr City, one of the deadliest attacks in Baghdad in 2021, as an example of the price of change. Wathiq reflects: "Change happened when the masses took to the street without fear and said no to the current government." Whether the seeds for change planted by the uprisings will find soil to grow remains to be seen. Regardless of this, the October revolutionaries did write a new chapter in the history of Iraqi civil society: through peaceful mass-mobilizations superseding class and ethnicity and the building and strengthening of grassroots movements.

THE SWEDISH
**HUMAN
RIGHTS
FILM FESTIVAL**

**RAOUL
WALLENBERG
INSTITUTE**

FOR HUMAN RIGHTS AND HUMANITARIAN LAW

COMING SOON

NEWSLETTER



10TH OF DECEMBER: **HUMAN RIGHTS DAY**

What is the most pressing human rights issue of our time? Win 3 tickets to the Swedish Human Rights Film Festival by sending in one sentence about a human rights issue that is closest to your heart to us on social media. The winner will be selected on December 1st.

Throughout 2021, the Swedish Human Rights Film Festival takes place in relation to the UN world days.

Human Rights Day is celebrated annually across the world on 10th of December every year. On this day, the Raoul Wallenberg Institute and Kino in Lund will be highlighting the importance of human rights.

Save the date in your calendar and follow our newsletter and our social media channels for the latest news and events! Stay tuned for more info: humanrightsfilmfestival.se/



[Raoulwallenberginstitutet](https://www.raoulwallenberginstitutet.se/)



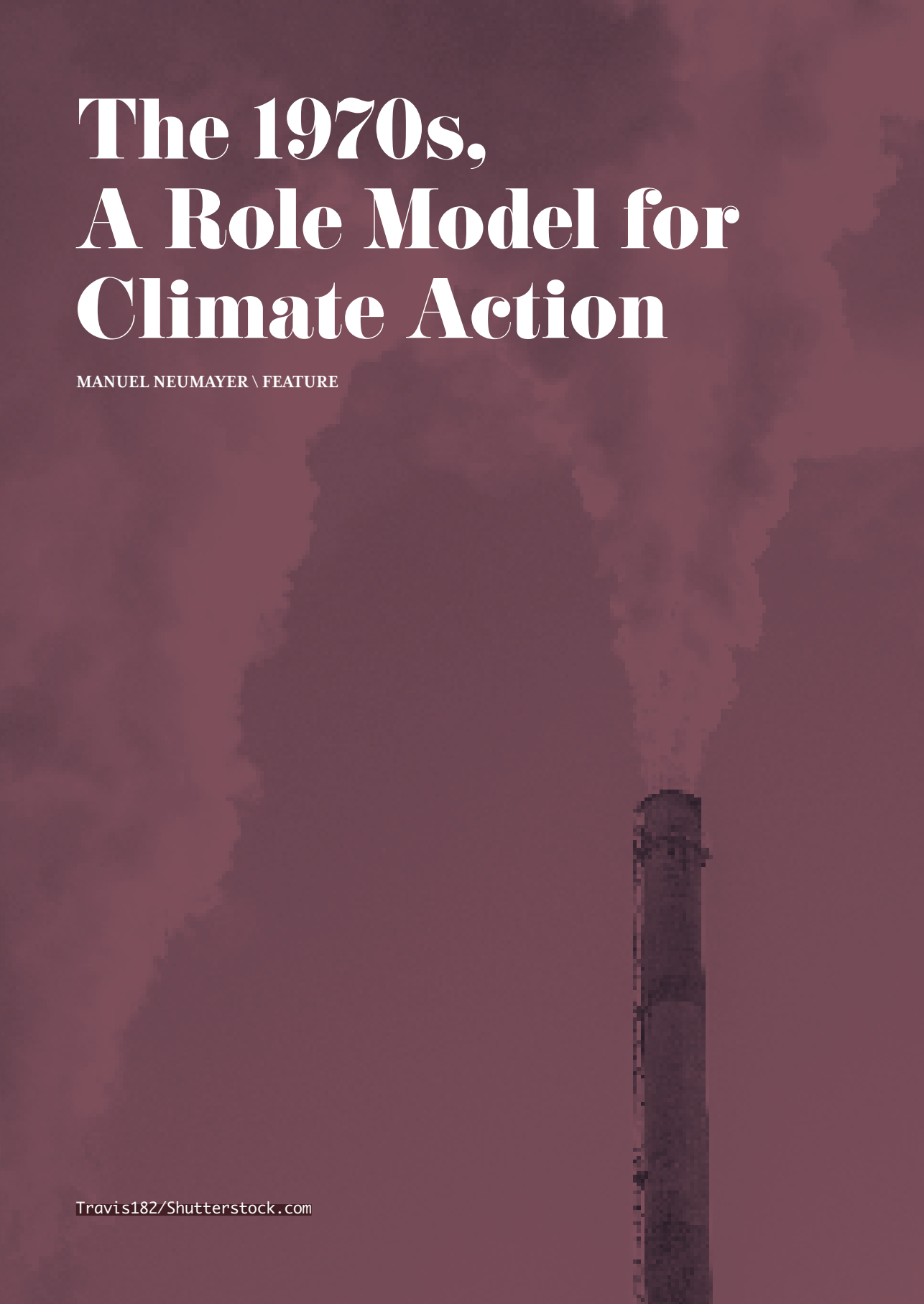
[raoulwallenberginst](https://www.instagram.com/raoulwallenberginst)



[@RWallenbergInst](https://twitter.com/RWallenbergInst)



The Raoul Wallenberg Institute of
Human Rights and Humanitarian Law



The 1970s, A Role Model for Climate Action

MANUEL NEUMAYER \ FEATURE

The last bridge between humanity and survival is brittle. Chants of “Listen to the science!” hint at the cracks. But is the connection between science and policy necessarily fraught? The track record shows: through cooperation, politicians and scientists can overcome many things. The U.S. EPA is a standout success story, having achieved momentous reductions in air pollution since its inception. If the momentum keeps up, it all depends on one question: Will the warnings be heeded?

Developing technologies pump more and more pollutants into the air. Lead, an additive to petrol, can cause brain damage and chronic illness. The inventors of leaded gasoline campaigned to convince the world of its safety and succeeded: for some fifty years, effectively all cars around the world pumped aerosolized lead into the air. Then science came to set things right.

By the 1970s, research made clear that even low blood-lead levels impair reading ability and balance in children. The scientific evidence was enough to serve as a legal basis for change. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency’s (EPA) first lead regulation saw cases of elevated blood-lead levels drop from 95 per cent in 1972 to 5 per cent by 1995. On August 30 this year, as a petrol station in Algeria sold its last drops, the United Nations announced a public health milestone: the end of the global era of leaded gasoline.

THE PERSPECTIVE talked to Michael T. Kleinman, co-director of the Air Pollution Health Effects Laboratory at the University of California, Irvine, about current issues in air pollution. Among the “soup of

pollutants” around us, he is particularly interested in ultrafine particulates (UFP), found in large numbers in ambient air.

UFP can penetrate deep into the lungs, and reach most organs via the circulatory system. As early as 2005, the research conducted by Kleinman and his colleagues suggested that UFP can contribute to heart disease and neurodevelopmental disorders. It took a long time until scientific evidence was strong enough for the EPA to consider new regulations. In 2020, Andrew Wheeler, then head of the EPA, faced a decision: should finer particle sizes be regulated?

When it comes to political decisions like these, scientific staff at the EPA prepare research summaries with pages often running into the thousands. “[In 2020,] the weighted evidence was now strong enough that they could say that air pollution not only exacerbates heart disease but actually is a causal agent,” reports Kleinman. He currently serves on the EPA Clean Air Scientific Advisory Board Panel for Particulate Matter (CASAC PM). “That is a critical change in how we think about this. Now it’s not just something that

amplifies an effect that is there. Air pollution by weight of evidence creates new cases of cardiovascular disease.” In the U.S., one in four deaths is related to heart disease. “That is remarkably important from a public health standpoint,” Kleinman highlights.

So, how did the EPA react? In December 2020, Wheeler, “who had ties to the coal industry and other industrial groups before,” as Kleinman points out, chose not to change the current standards.

With the Biden administration coming into office, Wheeler was replaced and the CASAC PM Panel established to review the controversial decision of non-action. In Kleinman’s view, economic interests might have been more relevant than science in the EPA’s decision making, which is “certainly an issue of potential conflict of interest”.

The Covid-19 pandemic put a spotlight on mediation between science and politics. Think of Anders Tegnell or Anthony Fauci. Suddenly, politicians and society were in a position where effective, ethical decisions were possible only with novel and solid knowledge. No wonder that the respective governments’ mediators between science and policy—each with their own compromise—rose to prominence.

On environmental issues, we will have to indulge scientists the same way. The lead disaster, which could have been prevented in 1925 had economic interests not taken precedence, took almost 100 years to be fixed. Covid-19 made us act because it was a catastrophe unfolding in plain sight. With climate change, we do not have 100 years to spare, and the alarm bells are ringing more subtly. Scientists hear them clearest.

No greater agent will save humanity—no luck or higher power. Had it not been for diligent scientific work in the 1970s, and politicians and a society willing to listen,

some 1.2 million people would still die each year due to leaded gasoline. The political appointees working at the EPA and their scientific advisors can change millions of lives with just a few thousand words, say a bold



Michael I. Kleinman. University of California

new regulation on ultrafine particulates. At elections and on the streets we can make sure they act. And as a species, we depend on them.

When you press Kleinman on humanity’s future, he is stubbornly optimistic. “That is the way science works. You don’t stop because someone dislikes what you did or disputes what you did; you do it better.” An example is the regulatory process of the EPA. Until 2019, only Canadian and U.S. studies were considered in decision documents. With the reevaluation of the 2020 decision, the outdated restrictions have been relaxed. “So I think that the negative outcome of the last EPA review led to scientific improvement”. You will hardly hear a sentence from Kleinman not tinged with optimism.

STUDY ASIA IN LUND!

APPLICATION
DEADLINE:
17 JANUARY
2022



**APPLY TO OUR
MASTER'S PROGRAMME
IN ASIAN STUDIES!**



LUND UNIVERSITY

www.ace.lu.se



Surfers Protest Beach-bans as Families Plead for Food

South Africa Remains a Divided Nation

FABIO CAVALIERE \ FEATURE

Masses of people storm furiously towards a mall in Durban, South Africa. They manage to break in and soon after, children and adults, men and women come out with their hands full of food, clothes, and various household products. Trolleys emerge filled with electronic appliances that most could not afford even with a year's salary. Roughly half of the population lives below the national poverty line of ZAR 1.227 (South Africa's currency), equivalent to \$82 a month. Meanwhile, police are firing rubber bullets to disperse the crowds and nearby businesses are set ablaze. Millions, or even billions of Rands worth of goods and property are going up in smoke and hundreds of lives are lost during these days. These are

the images shown around the world during the week of unrest in South Africa in July, 2021.

Earlier, during the February peak of summer holidays in South Africa, another type of protest took place on the beaches around Cape Town. Mostly white groups were calling for an end to the 'beach ban' after months of harsh lockdown regulations. In comparison to the July riots, the sit-in didn't call for meeting basic needs or major rights violations but the simple freedom to access the sandy beaches for a swim. This is the vivid image of a "deeply divided" country, Professor Henning Melber of the Nordic Africa Institute explains to THE PERSPECTIVE. "Privileged white people were complaining because they were not



Charles HB Mercer/Shutterstock.com

allowed to go to the beach while for others it [the pandemic] impacted on daily survival.”

The July riots were one of the most deadly and violent moments of unrest in South Africa’s history since the fall of Apartheid in 1994. The catalyst behind the unrest was former president Jacob Zuma’s incarceration for contempt of court. This brought his supporters - mostly of Zulu ethnicity - in the provinces of Kwa-Zulu Natal and Gauteng to call for his release by looting.

These protests gained momentum quickly, gathering thousands and suddenly turning from political to existential. Many attacked shops just because it was a way to quickly

gather food or products they would possibly never be able to buy. Professor Melber warns that this violence shows how, “there is an extremely high degree of willingness to embark on violence” in certain areas of the country. He sees the unrest as a purely political “instigation to create a degree of civil war to topple the current government.”

While all this paints a gloomy picture, there is a silver lining to the protests. Professor Melber notes how, “in other parts of the country, ordinary South Africans protected the shops from further looting”. Also, the unrest was limited to only 2 regions in the eastern part of the country. At first this is just another reminder of how geographically, ethnically,

and socially fragmented the country is, but the isolation of these incidents is also a positive thing- support for looting is rather limited.

South Africa is more divided than ever and the pandemic has only pushed social groups further apart. Unemployment has risen and disparate access to healthcare has revealed the mortal difference between who can afford private care and who cannot. Surfers demand leisure on the one hand and families loot for necessities on the other.

This is not only the image of a social problem but also a democratic one. V-Dem, an institute which measures democracy, states that there have been “major violations of democratic standards in the country” during the pandemic. Restrictions of the media and abusive police are the main causes for what V-Dem names “pandemic backsliding”.

Professor Melber agrees, observing that, “police in South Africa have internalized the Apartheid violence executed by state organs which contributes to insecurity”. The Apartheid system is still very present in society. Police brutality is direct evidence of its perpetuation alongside the persistent economic and social inequalities which constitute a red thread in many of the country’s issues.

The good news is that the “Rainbow Nation”—the name given by the Anglican Archbishop Desmond Tutu as a symbol for the country’s vivid multiculturalism—is still strong and not alone. South Africa is home to one of the most robust democracies on the continent. Freedom House, an independent think tank on democracy, classifies it as “free”. The Johannesburg-based alliance of civil society organizations, CIVICUS, argues that the country’s civic space has merely “narrowed” after COVID. To compare, the U.S.A.’s civic space is classified as having been “obstructed”.

David Kode, Advocacy & Campaign Lead at

CIVICUS told THE PERSPECTIVE that “South Africa doesn’t face the same kind of restrictions [to freedom] that we see in other countries”. He adds that “there are strong institutions that hold decision-makers accountable”, referring to the arrest of former president Jacob Zuma. Indeed, some have framed his arrest as an institutional win for South Africa’s rule of law. However, this win was shadowed by the lootings wrought in his name, sending mixed signals as to the state of the rule of law in the country.

All in all, “South Africans appreciate the degree of democracy and want peace and stability”, Prof. Melber says. He also cautions anyone ready to judge his statement that democratic backsliding after the pandemic “is not a purely African challenge”.. racies, that face even worse challenges.

Many draw quick conclusions between geographical location and the status of democracy. There are other countries around the globe, including some Western democracies, that face even worse challenges.

Whether it is the pandemic, problems of democratic rights, unemployment or any other issue, divisions are ever present throughout South Africa’s institutions and society. Nonetheless, the Rainbow Nation is not unworthy of its moniker. After the lootings, hundreds of communities in Kwa-Zulu Natal and Gauteng rolled up their sleeves. In a common effort, they helped clean, rebuild, and save what has been left after the devastation. Communities of every race, ethnicity and class got together and helped rebuild parts of their country in a spirit of unity. This show of altruism brings hope for the country’s future. As Nelson Mandela put it,

“It always seems impossible, until it is done”.



**Listen to and follow
our podcast series
about the future of
the EU**



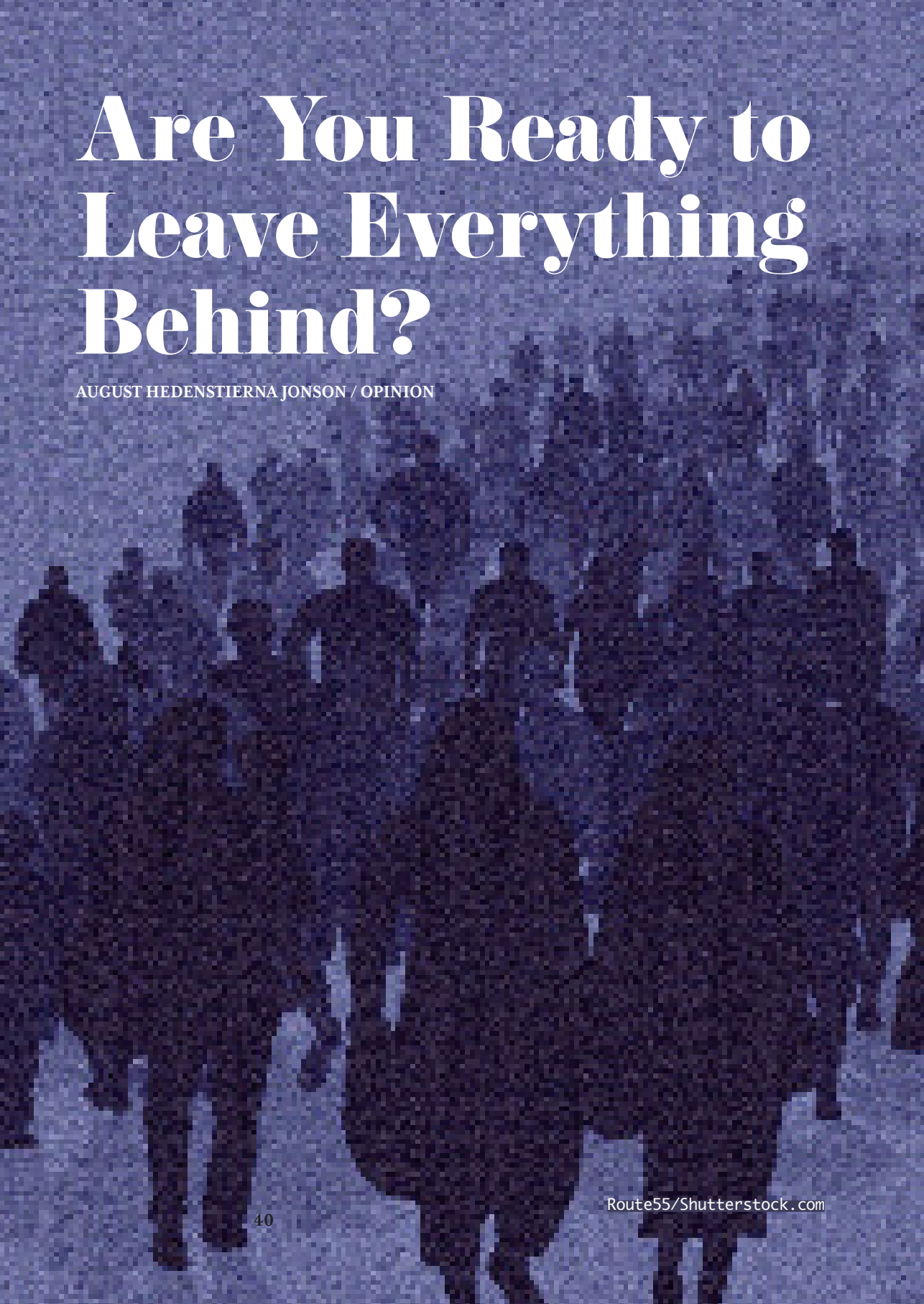
Find links to the podcast on our website, where you'll also find information about activities that may benefit your learning and thesis work, including our blog Europakommentaren, funding opportunities for field studies and a Best thesis award.

Centre for European Studies
www.cfe.lu.se



Are You Ready to Leave Everything Behind?

AUGUST HEDENSTIERNA JONSON / OPINION



“They’re taking our jobs!” “Build that wall!” The animated populist preaches to the crowd on the virtues of restricted immigration. The logic seems so obvious, if there were no borders, people from poorer countries would pack their bags and leave for the rich West. The supposed results? A swarm of migrants arriving at our borders, ready to take the jobs of domestic workers. However this simplistic view of migration ignores one of human nature’s most basic truths: most individuals leave home not because they want to, but because they have to.

“Migration is a lifelong project”, says Associate Professor of Sociology Dalia Abdelhady of Lund University in her interview with THE PERSPECTIVE. “Emigrating doesn’t immediately improve the experience of the migrant”. Establishing yourself in a new country entails learning the language, culture, navigating the legal system, and so much more. The stereotypical immigrant doctor-turned-taxi driver comes to mind—highly educated professionals who cannot find employment in their fields after migrating.

Just as important however—or perhaps even more important—is what a migrant leaves behind. Friends and family remain in the old country, as does the native culture of the homeland and that sense of belonging that all humans desire and need. Believing that a simple wage increase is enough to offset these sacrifices is at the very least, a bold claim. In most cases, it is also plainly wrong.

World Vision UK, a charity, interviewed 16-year old Samuel, a boy from South Sudan who witnessed the death of his father. Caught in the crossfires of the civil war, he and his siblings travelled alone towards the relative safety

of Uganda. Here, in this poor nation he has found refuge from the chaos of his homeland.

Mohamad, 8, from Syria has a similar story, reported by the research and advocacy group Action on Armed Violence UK. He too was left fatherless by war, and fled to Turkey. Before the war he lived in a two story building, and his parents provided him with a stable life. After fleeing he is under the wing of the Red Crescent, sharing a room with other refugees, living on far less money than before.



Dalia Abdelhady is an associate professor of Sociology at Lund University

Syria is not a wealthy country but it is richer than Uganda despite the devastating war. Yet Mohamad fled from Syria, much for the same reason Samuel fled from South Sudan. They fled not because of gain, but because of loss. There simply was no way for them to stay in their old countries. Samuel and Mohamad’s stories are all too common, and they paint a frightening portrait of the realities of migration. The idea of moving for economic gain is a distant

concept for the young boys. Rather, they left because they simply could not stay.

Dodging Starvation

The cases of Syria and South Sudan could be seen as rather clear-cut examples of refugee migration. However in cases like immigration from Mexico to the US, the exact motivations are less obvious. “No one ever migrates for just one reason”, says Professor Abdelhady. Even terms like “refugee” and “migrant” are not as clear as often assumed in popular debate. In the words of Professor Abdelhady their significance is mostly judicial.

Even in these cases however, security can play just as big a part as in nations ravaged by war. According to the UN Food and Agricultural Organization, there is often a strong correlation between migration and failing harvests. In the wake of fears about food becoming scarce, so-called food insecurity, there is often a rise in emigration. In these cases it is often a calculated family decision to send a family member away for work. Typically, an older sibling sets out in hope of providing remittances as a form of economic security for the family.

Indeed, back in the 19th century roughly 1.5 million Swedes emigrated for this very reason. A study by economist John Michael Quigley found that failing domestic conditions in Sweden, such as poor harvests, likely had a bigger impact on migratory streams than did the conditions in the host country.

No One Reason

Of course, food insecurity is still only a single factor in the complex dynamics of emigration. Truly understanding migration requires investigating and analyzing the individual motivations behind each

person's decisions. A complex web of reasons underlies each decision to migrate, or not to migrate. Economic reasons can indeed be a part of the decision. For instance, after European borders were liberalized through the Schengen Treaty, participating nations did see significant increases in migration. Many people do move in pursuit of a career.

However, viewing all migration as an economic phenomenon is a horrendously incomplete framework. It is to ignore the willingness of people to remain with friends and family, the “soft powers” keeping people at home. It is also to neglect stories by the likes of Samuel and Mohamad, who did not have the luxury to consider future wages when running from a bullet.

Understanding migration is such a deeply complex topic, that people easily gravitate to simplified views and assumptions. However, the general mindset when discussing contemporary migration shouldn't center around economic opportunism. Instead, it must take root in the question of human security. The question needs to be less about what migrants stand to gain, and more about what they stand to lose.

When Would You Leave?

What would it take for you to leave your home? What wage would you want, to place a ten hour flight between you and your family? Maybe you are an adventurous soul, ready to take on the world just for the adventure. Or maybe you are a parent, fighting to maintain the stable upbringing your child needs. At the end of the day the bonds of kinship outweigh the lure of wealth. Security however, tears all other considerations to shreds. In the face of a bomb there is simply no question. You have to leave.

(Deliberative) Democracy Makes Perfect

*Citizens' assemblies are the cure to
democratic disarray*

The democratic covenant in countries worldwide is fraying. In recent years, political scientists have expressed distress about declining support for democracy and citizens' apathy regarding their ability to affect politics. Across the globe, citizens are increasingly showing support for authoritarian leaders and methods. Although Donald Trump is now out of office, his authoritarian presidency, together with that of Brazil's Jair Bolsonaro and Narendra Modi's autocratic government in India, will likely have a long-lasting impact on global democracy. There are other examples too, and they all point towards the same conclusion; it is easier to tear down democratic institutions than to rebuild them. Figures from democracy indices confirm the crisis. The Economist Intelligence Unit 2020 global democracy score was the poorest since the measurement began in 2006.

Democratic decline should, however, not be viewed as the disease itself, but as a symptom of alienated citizens. The fact



President Donald Trump celebrates his counterpart President Bolsonaro.
AlanSantos-PR/Flicker

that citizens do not accept basic democratic principles is a sign of dissatisfaction

with governance. As important as the strengthening of democratic institutions like judiciary independence and voting rights is—the real cure for democracy is the inclusion of citizens. Rescuing democracy must be done by involving citizens' assemblies in the democratic process.



Professor David Farrell. University College Dublin

The practice of a citizens' assembly, or "mini-public", is to gather a random group of roughly 100 citizens, representative of society as a whole. The participants are tasked with discussing a particular political issue during their session, which might span two or more weeks. Throughout the process, the assembly will consult experts on the topic. After deliberation and discussion, the assembly summarizes its conclusions in a report which can serve as a recommendation for formal policy making on the issue addressed.

The appeal of citizens' assemblies is intuitively obvious. In a setting where one has to engage with fellow citizens, some of which will be political antagonists, the hostile approach which saturates modern politics is unsustainable. The



Posters advocating for different abortion stances outside Christ Church Cathedral in Dublin. Sonse/tickr

participants are in the process together, and the interaction with people of different opinions is not only likely to better inform participants but might also increase citizens' understanding of how political opponents reason. Furthermore, the consultation of experts gives participants science based insight about the topic. More than anything, citizens' assemblies are reinvigorating public debate and accountability over the policy making process. It is the people that are creating the policy solutions in citizens' assemblies, rather than just voting on them.

Citizens' assemblies are not just beneficial in theory either; they have historically shown to be helpful in guiding both the greater public and politicians. "Citizens' assemblies can help to inform the debate in the media, but perhaps more importantly, the debate among senior politicians about this particular topic and help to guide them in their job as our elected representatives," notes Dr. David Farrell,

professor at University College Dublin and expert in deliberative mini-publics in discussion with THE PERSPECTIVE. He has been a part of the remarkable work with citizens assemblies in Ireland that in 2015 and 2018 led to referendums on same-sex marriage and abortion. Both times, the assemblies resulted in a changed law. The deliberative process leading to the abortion referendum was especially exceptional.

Dr. Jane Suiter, professor at Dublin City University has analyzed the development. She notes that before the new law was passed, Irish abortion legislation was considered to be among the most conservative in Europe, almost entirely prohibiting the practice. Even as public opinion turned in favor of new legislation, politicians did not act. In 2016, a citizens' assembly was formed to discuss the issue. The deliberation and consultation of experts lead to nearly nine out of ten of the assembly members voting for dismantling the old legislation.

The conclusions prompted a referendum on the issue. A referendum that resulted in almost two-thirds of the voters calling for a dismantling of the old legislation.

The citizen deliberative process did not just convince politicians who were deadlocked in their anti-abortion stance, they also proved to be a source of information to the public. According to exit polls, a significant majority of the voters were aware of the citizens' assembly and how its process had worked. This included voters from both camps, and individuals from every voting demographic.

With that said, there are criticisms against the practice of mini-publics. The influence of experts during consultations is one such. The supposed problem is that when the participants get extensively briefed, the conclusions resulting from the assemblies no longer embodies public opinion. However, it is important to emphasize that the role of the citizens' assembly is counseling rather than directly decision making.

Another alleged deficiency to the deliberative practice is the fact that politicians can "cherry-pick" the proposals they like, ignoring the ones they dislike. This certainly is a deficiency, but it is not an unsolvable problem. By building a "clear architecture" beforehand, such flaws can be prevented, says Dr. Farrell. He suggests that a functioning architecture can be similar to the procedure used in Ireland, where a parliamentary committee—with representation from all parties—reviewed the assembly's conclusions and then was required to produce proposals for the parliament as a whole. If accepted in the parliament, the proposals would become a referendum. And this was what successfully played out.

Although mini-publics are a proven practice, a wide implementation of citizens' assemblies would be a radical attempt for democratic restoration. Such an attempt does, however, seem very popular with citizens.

According to a four country survey from 2020, made by Pew Research Center, citizens' assemblies appear to be a desirable alternative for democratic reform: about 75% of citizens in all four countries believe that it's "somewhat or very important" for governments to form such assemblies. In a similar fashion, people that have been involved with the process emerge very fond of it. "We know from citizens that have been engaged in these things, that they love it, they want more," notes Dr. Farrell, emphasizing that "regardless of their background, if they are not educated, if they are very old, they can engage perfectly effectively."

In this time of democratic backsliding, the need to discuss how we ought to live together as a society is greater than ever. Despite increasingly negative attitudes towards democracy, it is too early to give up on the vision of governing as a collective practice. A democratic system is not inherently defined by conflicts, inefficient legislators or mistrust. It would be a mistake to settle for that. What has become clear is that democracy has to be reformed. The need for a new covenant between citizens is obvious. A covenant that gives a greater role to those forming the collective, and where citizens' assemblies are an integral part. Global democracy needs citizens assemblies, and perhaps a little fairy dust.



NextGenerationEU is the First of its Kind

ANDERS ÅKERBLOM \ ANALYSIS

While Covid-19 wreaked havoc on Europe's economies, Brussels was preparing a trailblazing stimulus package poised to reshape the future of the European project. How well this plan works remains to be seen.

After Covid-19 first emerged in Europe, the ensuing months were characterized first by social and then economic disaster. Cumulative excess mortality in Europe totaled close to 580,000 by the end of 2020. Annual GDP growth dropped roughly 6%, numbers not seen since the financial crisis of 2008. Unemployment across the continent increased from 6.7% to 7.1% from the year before, meaning that roughly 2.6 million people left the labor force in the span of one year. Advocates of Brussels' recovery plan, NextGenerationEU, hope it might be able to address some of the suffering on the continent. Measures previously seen as radical and met with stark resistance by Germany and other fiscal hawks in northern Europe suddenly seemed possible.

Advocates of the recovery plan maintain that it is a way out of the pandemic and beyond, a splendid opportunity to invest heavily in green energy, critical infrastructure and the digital transformation. Critics worry that slow implementation along with past mismanagement and difficulties with spending EU funds might leave the Union in worse shape. While much remains to be seen, reality is likely a bit of both.

The NextGenerationEU Fund, or NGEU for short, is part of a long-term budget consisting of €2.018 trillion in which the NGEU stimulus

package accounts for €807 billion measured in current prices. The latter is equivalent to roughly 5% of the union's (yearly) GDP, however set out to be financed and distributed over several years. Perhaps more importantly, NGEU represents the largest stimulus package ever passed by the European Union and the first time that member states in Europe have collectively issued debt.

This presents both significant opportunities and considerable challenges. €780 billion is a hefty sum, and some states that have been most affected by the downturn can expect grants and loans of real economic significance. Greece and Croatia for example are poised to receive funds amounting to 10% of their GDP, while Germany, Europe's engine, will receive less than 1%. In absolute terms Spain and Italy are the largest beneficiaries, standing to receive just under €72 billion each measured in 2021 prices.

Some argue that this is not enough. Not necessarily in terms of available funds but rather the way in which the EU demands they are spent. For national proposals to gain approval they have to meet certain criteria, the most scrutinized and lauded of which have been the 37% devoted towards addressing climate change and another 20% towards digital transition. In the words of Ursula von der Leyen, President of the European Commission, NGEU's purpose is "to not only repair and recover for the here and now, but to shape a better way of living for the world of tomorrow." These spending plans may well

help address some of the headaches leaders in Europe have experienced in recent years, such as European firms lagging behind their American peers in regards to digitalization. But for people and business owners throughout Europe, especially in countries where the recovery has been more muted, this might be inadequate consolation. In an interview with the Economist, Angel de la Fuente of Fedea, an economics research institute in Madrid, asserts that businesses in Spain “don’t need solar panels or windmills, they have to survive until the tourists come back”. For many businesses and employees in still stricken industries, the promises of a green future seem far off, while economic hardship is immediate.

NGEU funds consist of loans and grants amounting to €360 billion and €312.5 billion respectively, as part of the Recovery and Resilience Facility. The remaining €77.5 billion will go towards EU-wide projects. For EU countries with high debt this is good news, at least in part. Given that a significant part of the funds are distributed as grants, they will not increase national debt. However Mujtaba Rahman of Eurasia Group, a consultancy firm specializing in political risk research, maintains that one very real hurdle are the laws governing the Stability and Growth Pact (SGP). The aim of SGP is to make sure that member states maintain solid finances, and under current statutes those with excessive deficits and debt must decrease their debt under excessive deficit procedures (EDP). A general escape clause was enacted last year, putting a pin in potential EU retribution for non-compliance. But seeing as the SGP is set to come back in 2023, member states must

decide on a common way forward, and by April 2022, member states will have to submit spending plans for the coming three years under the stability and convergence program.

This puts the future of the NGEU in hot water, as the SGP in large part advocates for austerity while much of the NGEU focuses on expansion and growth. Without meaningful changes to the current laws governing the SGP, states might find it difficult to borrow considering that a majority of the funds will be in the form of loans. The usual resistance might be expected from countries that practice fiscal restraint.

Hence, without reform, European economies are in danger of contracting instead of expanding. Highly anticipated funds, the bulk of which will come 2023 and onward, have already played an important role in many governments discourse. If it turns out that funds will not be available in the way they were expected, ambitious spending plans that would be a source of job and wealth creation might come to a halt. While the NextGeneration EU Fund in large part is intent on building towards the future, the aim of any stimulus package is mainly to mitigate the troubles of the day.

In the wake of this historic feat, few hope against NGEU. Initial resistance in many cases has morphed into cautious approval, but seeing as the first tranches of bonds have already been released, expected to amount to more than €80 billion by the end of 2021, there is hardly any going back. Successful use of the money will be instrumental in building back from the toll Covid-19 posed on the continent, here is to hoping it is well spent.

China's Civilian Army

*Wolf Warriors in
Sheep's clothing*

SIRAN CHENG \ ANALYSIS



[photomaster/Shutterstock.com](#)

[Viktory Viktor/ Shutterstock.com](#)

On September 24th 2021, Huawei's CFO Meng Wanzhou was freed from house arrest in Vancouver. A few hours later she was on a flight, bound for Shenzhen. The flight plan was carefully calculated to avoid American airspace, and proud Chinese patriots were awaiting her return at Shenzhen Airport. Ms. Meng is suspected of holding at least seven passports, including three issued by Hong Kong and four by China. She was detained in Canada over allegations of fraud and conspiracy while en route to Mexico to meet Stanford physics professor Shoucheng Zhang. Shortly after her arrest, the professor committed suicide and two Canadians were detained in China. These seemingly disparate events form the narrative of a recent drama in China's relations with the wider world.

Involving powerful companies, international banks, and multiple passports, this story could very well be the backdrop for the next blockbuster spy movie. But no, it is the Chinese method of foreign relations.

Let's rewind to December 1st, 2018. Meng Wanzhou was flying to Mexico City with a layover in Vancouver, where she was detained due to an arrest warrant issued earlier that year by the US Eastern District Court of New York. Prosecutors claimed that she had misled HSBC, a British bank, by falsely stating that a

subsidiary company of Huawei was in fact separate, in order to do business with sanctioned Iranian entities.

At the airport Canadian authorities were able to make the arrest and the Supreme Court of British Columbia was planning to prosecute her before extradition to the US. However things moved slowly and almost three years went by. The only punishment Ms. Meng faced was being held under house arrest in her multimillion-dollar residence in Vancouver. Last month, Ms. Meng admitted to having misled HSBC and was discharged when she reached an agreement with the US government. Canada freed her after the US withdrew its extradition request.

Michael Spavor and Michael Kovrig—"the two Michaels"—were detained in China just days after Ms. Meng's arrest. The two Canadian citizens were both charged with espionage. China and Canada's relationship immediately deteriorated. Canada claimed that China was detaining civilians for bargaining leverage and accused it of conducting hostage diplomacy. This seems to have been China's intent, for as Meng Wanzhou was freed from house arrest, the two Michaels, who should never have been arbitrarily detained, were also immediately released.

Meanwhile, Chinese ambassadors around the world are defending China's image and attacking individuals who

criticize the Chinese regime. China's previous ambassador to Sweden, Gui Congyou, hastily left office on the Chinese government's orders in September after causing local controversy. Among other things he has commented on the case of Gui Minhai, a Swedish publisher arrested in China, no longer being a "consular matter between Sweden and China", although Gui Minhai is a Swedish citizen. Gui Minhai has been detained in China since 2016 after publishing anti-government books and has not received any legal help or consular access. Gui Congyou had also threatened to refuse entry into China to the Swedish minister of culture, Amanda Lind, because she attended a prize ceremony for Gui Minhai. Swedish parties on different sides of the political spectrum, were united in their desire for Gui Congyou's expulsion. His departure was warmly welcomed in Sweden.

Gui Congyou's style of diplomacy is not unique. Counsel General Li Yang in Brazil said that Justin Trudeau is America's "running dog". China's ambassador to Britain, Zheng Zeguang, was banned from attending an event in the British Parliament because China has imposed sanctions on lawmakers who talked about alleged human rights abuses in Xinjiang. Mr. Zheng's response was that Britain was acting "despicable and cowardly". These statements are just the rhetorical extension of Beijing's aggressive defense of Chinese interests.

Officially, the death of the Stanford professor Zhang Shoucheng—Meng Wanzhou's contact in Mexico—was determined to be a suicide, but the circumstances are questionable. Quantum physics professor and possible Nobel

Physics Prize laureate, Zhang Shoucheng helped develop a new branch of material physics. His company - Digital Horizon Capital (DHVC) - had close contacts with China. Allegedly, this was China's effort to infiltrate the lucrative Silicon Valley.

The US trade Representative Richard Lightizer published a report days before his death, stating that China is conducting unfair trade practices and stealing technology. DHVC is part of China's scheme, providing the state-owned Zhongguancun Development Corporation with access to American technology.

Perhaps unsurprisingly, DHVC also has ties to Huawei. In Arthur Herman's *Forbes* article, he explains that the technology of using knuckles to activate a Huawei mobile was provided by a company that DHVC helped fund. Zhang Shoucheng was a key player in Chinese activities in Silicon Valley, and whether or not the allegations of misconduct are true, the passing of a great scholar is a tragedy.

China's global image continues to deteriorate, but few legal actions have been taken. The extradition case of Meng Wanzhou can perhaps be the catalyst for more judicial actions against China's behavior. Otherwise there is a possibility China will continue to take hostages and use aggressive rhetoric to defend its interests. The international community has to stand up to China, or risk the possibility of China continuing to use human lives to promote its strategic aims. Peculiarly, "Wolf warrior diplomacy" is named after the movie "The Wolf Warrior". Perhaps China's style of diplomacy is so unorthodox that the best analogy comes from fiction.

A Shadow Over Indian Democracy:

Kashmir Suffers Under Arbitrary Rule

ALFRED WILLOWS \ ANALYSIS

Today, the streets of Kashmir defy imagination. Citizens live in fear of arbitrary violence and persecution, and should they choose to protest, they do so under the threat of deadly violence. All this is taking place in one of the largest democracies in the world.

Kashmir, a rugged mountainous area in the northernmost region of the Indian subcontinent, has been a flashpoint since

the modern states of India and Pakistan gained independence in 1947. Since then, many wars have taken place, and a solution for the contested border is yet to be found. Today, India administers two-thirds of the region, Pakistan one third and China a small part. However, during this conflict over land, the people within have been forgotten.

In August 2019, the Prime Minister of India, Narendra Modi, revoked Article 370 of the

Constitution. The article granted special autonomy to the former princely state of Jammu and Kashmir until a permanent decision could be reached on the status of the region. Revoking article 370 meant that the state lost its autonomous status and was downgraded to a federal territory. Likewise, the state's constitution, flag, and penal code have been abolished, with no Kashmiri representatives consulted beforehand. However this is considered illegal by various politicians who have signed petitions for the Supreme Court of India to deliver a verdict. Further, it is considered a method of making the natives a minority in their land by the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights (UN OHCHR). Indian officials deny this and claim that this status will make it easier for non-Kashmiris to buy land.

At least 50,000 people have lost their lives during the decades-long conflict between India and Pakistan, while human rights groups believe the actual number to be far higher. According to the Kashmir Media Service, more than 10,000 women have been raped, while BBC reports higher numbers for those who have been harassed, tortured, and jailed. Since Article 370 was revoked the number has increased suddenly. Many have been detained without charges, including activists, local politicians, businessmen as well as students. Freedom of assembly and Internet access are periodically restricted with broadband being slower than the rest of India when available. Those who protest live in fear of imprisonment, and avoid legal recourse under threat of violence. Repression rules to the extent that Zahra Masrat, a photojournalist, tells the BBC, "Nobody dares to speak now".

In 2018, the UN OHCHR published its first-ever report on Kashmir, revealing numerous human rights violations by Indian security

forces. It highlighted the continued freedom of action enjoyed by perpetrators, protected by special legislation. The report has been furiously criticized by the Indian government while insignificant progress has been made into investigations of past human rights abuses. These allegations of abuse involve sexual assaults and murders leading to possible mass graves in the Kashmir Valley and Jammu region.

The well-known Kunan-Pospora mass rape case, which took place three decades ago is highlighted by the UN OHCHR as an example of this. The survivors witnessed Indian soldiers gang-raping 27 women. However, attempts to seek justice have remained blocked by the authorities. Another example concerns a 19-month old girl hit in her right eye with metal shotgun pellets in November 2018. She was one of 1,253 people being treated between 2016 and 2018 in one regional hospital. These are merely some examples of how people in Kashmir live. According to Minority Rights Group, other forms of discrimination against the people of Kashmir include Urdu, the language of the locals not being recognized in India. Education investment is the lowest in the country which creates inequality while a negligible amount of investment goes towards local industry.

Ultimately, during the conflict over this region the people within have been forgotten. Until this day, no steps have been taken to end the human rights violations presented in the report. Article 370 gave the Kashmiris special rights and autonomy to make their own rules on permanent residency, owning property, among other fundamental rights. How long the situation stays like this for the forgotten people is unknown, but as Rabia Khursheed reveals to the BBC, "There is no democracy in Kashmir".

Returadress:
Utrikespolitiska Föreningen
Sandgatan 2
223 50 Lund



ASSOCIATION OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS

LUND EST. 1935

**COMPELLING CONTENT BROUGHT TO YOU
BY UPF LUND**

WWW.THEPERSPECTIVE.SE