



GLOBAL DEMOCRACY

**INAUGURAL INTERNATIONAL
ESSAY COMPETITION
2007**

**ORGANIZED BY
SOCIETY FOR GLOBAL DEMOCRACY
W.B. NATIONAL UNIVERSITY OF JURIDICAL SCIENCES**

THE MOVEMENT

Globalization and democratization have been persistent themes post World War II. Ironically, democratization within the global order has rarely been sought in this era of global unity. In fact an increased estrangement with globalization is strongly felt in light of the hierarchies and divisions, which naturally accompany such efforts. When one speaks of equality, be it at any level, it is inevitably tinged with a level of cynicism, for some are always more equal than others. How then do we enshrine 'democracy' and 'equality' as hallowed legal precepts? The 'global' conscience condemns nations governed by undemocratic governments, but who may condemn the 'global' conscience for failing its own standards? Is law, but a tool for the powerful to express and enforce their views? Or is the rule of law above the dictates of such power equations? It is to examine such debates that we embark on this venture.

Scholars acknowledge the division of nations on lines of power, with the powerful North commandeering the world order. The United Nations and its veto-vested Security Council are the symbols of global order. However can, or has global order assured global democracy? The invasion of Iraq, the bombings in Lebanon would provide us answers in the negative. Is the global order today positioned to enrich a select



few states?

Is empowerment of the less powerful nations an impossibility within this framework? Further ought empowerment and equality be demanded as a right or accepted as a token of charity? Is the entire gamut of 'law' phrased as 'international law' a system driven by brute force and coercion? Is legality propelled or legitimized by the power balance?

The demand for global democracy to increase participation of the world's people in the global institutions that shape the course of millions of lives has oft been demanded. Further many have raised the prospect of a world parliament and a system of equality sans preferential powers like vetoes. Is such a desire for decentralization of power a viable, can we actually make the shift from a world that is uni-polar or bipolar at best, to one based on the spirit of democracy. Is democratization of global governance actually possible? Are such thoughts politically viable or mere flights of fantasy?

We, the participants of a democracy labeled as a part of the 'South' need to ask such questions and demand answers. As students of law, our search for answers becomes even more relevant. Is a global democracy a feasible alternative to the present international system, which is undoubtedly a 'primitive system' bereft of legality or morality – much like Hobbes' conception of the state of nature – nasty and brutish. It is to generate discourse on the true meaning of equality; democracy and legality that we seek to create a platform. Beyond the textual definitions of these legal precepts, well known to all is a reality unknown to most. It is reality that fills color into legalisms, but only when viewed in perspective. We seek to achieve such a critical perspective and view the law and reality in a manner, which is contextually relevant. We further seek not to limit ourselves to criticism but also seek alternatives and proposals so that democracy and global democracy do not remain relegated as unachievable ideals.

OUR INSTITUTE

Our Institute is well renowned for its pursuit of academics with an emphasis on issues of contemporary relevance. The university has organized a number of national level events including moot court competitions; the K.C. Basu Lecture Series on Law & Economics, the inaugural lecture of which was

delivered by Nobel Prize winning Economist Amartya Sen in 2003; The D.D. Basu Memorial Lecture Series, with eminent constitutional law jurist Fali S. Nariman delivering the inaugural lecture. Most recently we organized the Inaugural Ford Foundation Lecture on Human Rights, which was delivered by the first Ford Foundation Chair Professor of Human Rights Law, Dr. (Prof.) Upendra Baxi. Keeping with this trend of pursuing academics with zest and fervor, we have started this Society and this competition is the first in a series of events to promote a free, fair and democratic understanding of democracy at the international level.





THE COMPETITION

The purpose of this competition is to raise consciousness about global democracy by revisiting notions of equality and democracy with special emphasis on the Global South. The objective is to increase participation of the youth in this nascent movement. The Society has consciously chosen to initiate its endeavors with an essay competition for the purpose of encouraging constructive dialogue and adding to the corpus of literature already existing on the subject. To this end, the Society desires to publish a Yearbook collating all writing produced by the Society in or through its activities. The winning entries may be eligible for

publication in the Yearbook, contingent on the quality of the essays.

The Society in this effort seeks to reach out to the youth worldwide. We desire to involve people who belong to backgrounds that are diverse and thereby provide us with different perspectives that are unique to their consciousness. The purpose is not to attain homogeneity but encourage multiplicity of thought woven to form a stream of knowledge, wherein no one voice is dominant and no perspective considered alternate.

We hence invite all students world-over to join us in our efforts and share with us their thoughts and views on issues pertaining to democracy at the global level.

THE TOPICS

- i. Democracy Deficit in International Institutions.**
- ii. A World Parliament without the Veto.**
- iii. Funding Sustainable Development: An Alternative to the 'Aid' Model.**

THE JUDGES

The competition is benefited by the assistance of two eminent academicians. Professor Andrew L. Strauss, one of the pioneers of the global democracy movement and Professor (Dr.) B.S. Chimni, an

authority on third world issues have kindly assented to judge the entries.

A. Professor Andrew L. Strauss

Professor Strauss teaches international law at the Widener University School of Law. His area of specialization is public international law, international economic law, international transactions and international organizations. He is co-author of the fourth edition of *International Law and World Order*. Several of his works have appeared in renowned journals such as *Foreign Affairs*, *The Harvard Journal of International Law*, and *The Stanford Journal of International Law*. His articles with Professor Richard Falk on democratizing the international systems have provided this global movement with momentum and direction.

B. Professor (Dr.) B.S. Chimni

Professor (Dr.) B.S. Chimni is the Founder-Patron of the Society for Global Democracy. He has taught international law in the School of International Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi for nearly two decades. He has been a Visiting Professor at the International Center for Comparative Law and Politics, Tokyo University, a Fulbright Visiting Scholar at Harvard Law School, Visiting Fellow at Max Planck Institute for Comparative and Public International Law,

Heidelberg, a Visiting Scholar at York University, Canada and a Visiting Fellow, Centre for Research in the Arts, Social Sciences and Humanities (CRASSH), University of Cambridge. His most recent publications include 'Alternative Visions of Just World Order: Six Tales from India', *Harvard International Law Journal*, Vol.46 (2005) and 'The World Trade Organization, Democracy and Development: A View from the South', *Journal of World Trade*, Vol.40 (2006).

THE DATES

Last Date of Submission: February 5, 2007.

Declaration of Results: April 2007.

THE RULES

The Rules can be downloaded from the website <http://www.nujs.edu/global-democracy>.



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