

Moving Forward Step by Step and Leap by Leap

Lucy Law Webster

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World Federalist Movement (WFM) Council Vice Chair **Lucy Law Webster**, a retired UN Political Affairs Officer, is a Steering Committee member of Citizens for Global Solutions' World Federalist Institute, a Board member of Economists for Peace and Security (www.epsusa.org), and Executive Director of the Center for War/Peace Studies (www.wfm-igp.org).

WFM is a global movement dedicated to the realization of global justice, peace and sustainable prosperity through the development of democratic international institutions and the global application of international law. WFM believes that federalism applied on an international level, inspired by the experiences of the federal political systems worldwide that represent 40% of the world's citizens, is the best way to accomplish these goals. "Our vision is of a world where people have a sense of citizenship beyond national borders, to include their region and the global community."



Lucy Law Webster, center, seated between two other members of the World Federalist Movement Executive Committee, James Aputharaj and Takahiro Katsumi, at the October 2009 meeting in New York City of the Campaign for the Establishment of a UN Parliamentary Assembly (www.unpacampaign.org)

The challenges facing humanity threaten the goal of world peace through law with justice. These challenges also offer opportunities for real global solutions. Here are some major challenges and some proposed solutions:

Can nuclear weapons be eliminated or will more and more countries acquire them?

Because many analysts believe there is no in-between option, there is a real chance to obtain a nuclear weapon-free world. This would be a leap forward and would realize the first goal from 1947 of the World Movement for World Federal Government and its US component, the United World Federalists. World federalists should work more closely than now with the most effective groups that work for this goal. The fact that President Obama has made a commitment to seek a nuclear weapon-free world creates new momentum. Both the United States and Russia have about 10,000 nuclear warheads each, while all the other known warheads that are held by China, France, the UK, Israel, India and Pakistan add up to approximately 1,000. As one of the two nations with most of the nukes, it is important that the United States take the lead. Until there is serious movement to rid the world of its existing nuclear weapons as called for in Article VI of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, it is not realistic to expect other countries that can make or buy such weapons to refrain from doing so, especially when some of these countries fear that if they do not have a second strike retaliation capacity they are at risk of attack by one (or more) existing nuclear weapon state(s).

Can the International Criminal Court be strengthened?

Holding the line on ICC support in Africa is essential in spite of the resistance to the arrest of President al-Bashir, as is the addition of the crime of aggression to the scope of the ICC's jurisdiction. The World Federalist Movement/Institute for Global Policy and its partner networks that work for the ICC need to hold steady and educate widely. If the act of aggression can be added to the list of crimes within the jurisdiction of the International Criminal Court, the world community will have taken a major step toward the elimination of war. Collective security as defined by the UN Charter can at best only lead to enforcement action against nation-states and to extensive collateral damage. This is wrong even when it is legal after being endorsed by the Security Council under Chapter VII of the UN Charter. Adding the crime of aggression to the prohibitions — genocide, war crimes and crimes against humanity — covered by the ICC will make it possible to apprehend the individual perpetrators of aggression without destroying a nation and thousands of lives.

Can the Afghan War be transformed into broadly supported work for peace and prosperity?

No one should abandon Afghanistan and no one should think military force will be the answer. In fact any country that wants to help the Afghan people build their nation and its regions must use very little force with great care. Large numbers of troops and missile strikes with drones put people on the defensive and lead to more recruitment to the Taliban forces and to Al Qaeda. The main task is to quietly help the Afghan people build schools and hospitals and sanitation systems and viable nourishing agricultural

production for local use and export. Any military force should also be used quietly to protect villages and projects. When there are jobs and schools and signs of productive economic activity, neither Al Qaeda nor the Taliban will be able to gain much traction or many recruits.

Can the World Community learn to act sooner?

If the International Criminal Court had come into force a few years earlier than it did, it would have been possible to use its authority to try to apprehend Osama Bin Laden for the 9/11 crimes. The UN Security Council resolution that wisely called for blocking the funding of terrorist activity could also have sent a Special Representative of the Secretary General to Afghanistan to arrange for the extradition of Mr Bin Laden; and when, probably, the Taliban government would have refused, there would have been a basis for military intervention that would have been supported by many Afghan people, and the scale of the subsequent action could have been proportionate to police action, with very little collateral damage to people and property. The world community and the people of Afghanistan would be far ahead of where we are now.

Can the UN do more to prevent conflicts and to keep peace before violence escalates?

As the UN pays tribute to 61 years of peacekeeping, it is recognized that more is needed to prevent conflict and stop violence sooner. Recent work to set up Special Political Missions by the Security Council and by the good offices of the Secretary General provides a valuable step forward. At the same time there is growing demand for strengthening inter-

national standby forces for peacekeeping operations and for establishing a directly recruited UN Emergency Peace Service (UNEPS) that could act quickly at an early stage in an impending conflict situation.

Can the General Assembly and Security Council be given more legitimacy for real authority?

The legitimacy of the Security Council is at greatest risk. Many people and nations see it as a club of the P5 powers (the five permanent members of the Council, the victors in World War II, that are also the five nuclear weapon states recognized as legitimate by the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty). These five countries (China, France, Russia, the UK and the USA), which have veto rights in the Security Council, are seen as having unfair power while not being in touch with the human security needs of most of the people of the world. Factoring in the population and economic power of countries to calibrate the influence they should have in decision-making provides one handle for addressing this problem, and regional representation to include all UN member states in the Council would greatly improve its legitimacy. The proposals of Professor Joseph Schwartzberg for universal regional representation on the Security Council [see page 57] have excited the imagination of a number of officials in important countries. The need to empower the General Assembly to act as the world's legislature on selected global issues is another way to democratize decision-making in the UN, as is the proposal for a UN Parliamentary Assembly. World federalists need a deeper understanding of the potential value of such plans. We also need allies in the academic and NGO communities. Above all, the policy-makers in UN

member states should think about these issues and discuss them with each other, especially within their regional groups. It is likely that progress on universal regional representation in the Security Council will go hand in hand with greater regional cohesion in many parts of the world.

Could fair weighted voting make the IMF and World Bank work better?

True proportionality could really help the International Financial Institutions and give more power to the less developed countries. As the ideas on weighted voting for the General Assembly and Security Council being promoted by the Center for War/Peace Studies come to be more fully studied, it will be important to develop increasingly clear ideas of fairness and to extend these concepts to the International Financial Institutions.

Could a currency transfer tax provide critical help to the Millennium Development Goals?

It is clear that the Millennium Development Goals need more support than they have now to be reached and to move forward beyond the initial commitments. One way to help such action would be to institute a currency transfer tax that would automatically take a very small part of each international currency exchange transaction to invest in these programs. To move ahead to have one or several methods of global financial support for development and the elimination of poverty is both an essential immediate need of the world community and an essential major step toward a global governance system that would work for all the people worldwide.

