
Approaches to International Peace and Security and Its Prospects

Samaila Liman Gamba
School of General Studies
Abubakar Tatari Ali
Polytechnic, Bauchi
gambasamaila@yahoo.com

Abstract

This paper discusses five of the major approaches to international peace and security and its prospects, i.e. the institutional, functional curative, the step by step, the many fronts approaches and their prospects.

Key words: *North Atlantic treaty, Organization, World Government, Constitution institution, Politics, etc.*

Introduction

The increasing destructiveness of war, together with its social and economic costs, have been responsible for a profusion of efforts to establish and render obligatory a number of generally acceptable alternatives for the resolution of international disputes. The Hague Peace Conferences of 1899 and 1907 produced the first large scale multilateral efforts to establish obligatory peaceful settlement procedures. These efforts and procedures have been supplemented in such treaties as the covenant of the League of Nations, the Statute of the Permanent Court of Justice, the General Act of Geneva (1928), the Kellogg – Briand Pact (Treaty for the Renunciation of War 1928), and the Charter of the United Nations. Development in the field of pacific settlement has been augmented by efforts in related fields such as disarmament, international organisational activity, economic development and educational and cultural changes. The alternative to pacific settlement is limited war or the increasing possibility of thermonuclear holocaust.

Approaches to Peace

The archives and libraries of the world contain many thousands of proposals of alternatives to war and of approaches to peace. (Wyner and Lloyd 1994). A few of these "have been tested by time and experience; most of them are no more than paper plans. Some emphasize an attack on the underlying causes of war; others stress methods of peaceful settlement of international disputes; still others concentrate on the development of various types of security systems, with the object of making aggression unprofitable through the concerted action of peace-loving states. Some are based on relatively simple formulas or panaceas; others call for a many-sided approach. Some seek to improve the existing state system; others seek to replace this system with some form of world government or other supranational institutions. Some represent a unilateral, others a regional, and still others a nearly universal approach. Some call for the creation of new institutions or the strengthening of existing ones; others stress the need for changes in the minds or hearts of men, especially of those in the seats of power. Some give priority to disarmament, others to security. Some place heavy reliance on methods of moral suasion, others on the organization of force. Some are based on the development of international law, others on laying the foundations of a true international community, still others on upholding concepts of international morality. Some place faith in treaties for the outlawry of war, for nonaggression, for neutralization, for cooling-off periods, for conciliation, for arbitration, for the nonproliferation of nuclear weapons; others place no

trust in such treaties, unless they are of the self-executing variety, and emphasize performance rather than promise.

Five of the many general approaches to peace may be called (1) the institutional, (2) the functional, (3) the curative, (4) the step-by-step, and (5) the many-fronts approaches. These are not exclusive of each other, but the terms suggest the line of greatest emphasis. We shall note here some of the merits and the limitation of each.

The Institutional Approach

The number of international organizations in existence at the present time is truly staggering. We have already observed some of the deficiencies of many of them, as well as the difficulties of coordination that have arisen. There is probably excessive confidence in the efficacy and potentialities of institutions in dealing with problems of war and peace. On the slightest provocation, whether on the national, regional, or universal level, a new institution or organization is created. The most outstanding and comprehensive of these today is, of course, the United Nations. Others of especial importance, which are basically political but are also comprehensive in character, are the North Atlantic Treaty Organization and the Organization of American States. There are no truly supranational institutions in existence at the present time; the three functioning West European communities — the European Coal and Steel Community, the European Economic Community, and Euratom — are probably the closest approximations. Institutions of many types are obviously needed, and they serve a highly useful purpose. Without them the world's work could not be done. They also provide invaluable experience " in international cooperation. They supplement the normal channels of diplomacy and of contact between nations in an important way. But for all their merits, they are, after all, merely instruments,' and their value depends upon the way in which they are used. Something more than instruments is needed if peace is to be preserved. If a multiplicity of organizations could achieve this goal, war would be as dead as the dodo.

Most of the plans for world government, whether limited or universal in scope, call for the creation of institutions of a supra-national character. (UN Report). In fact, the institutional approach to peace relies mostly on structure and form, on the establishment of a wide variety of political institutions, some of a far-reaching character, to deal with the problems that beset the world. Some "institutionalists" would revise the United Nations Charter in such a way as to transform that organization into a United States of the world. Others would leave the UN more or less as it is, but would have as many of its members as possible join in establishing a separate federal structure with real power. The Atlantic Union Committee would form a federal union of the democracies of the Atlantic Community; conceivably this might be a first big step toward a larger federation, but the Atlantic Union itself would be the nucleus of the Western world. Federal Union, Inc. — the organization headed by one of the true pioneers in the world government movement, Clarence Streit — is at present devoting most of its efforts to supporting the Atlantic Union proposal, although it advocates a larger and larger union as conditions permit. The United World Federalists take a more universal approach; they would include even Russia and other Communist states in their original union. One organization, centered at the University of Chicago, drafted a proposed constitution for a world federal union, and another, with offices in Washington and elsewhere, made plans for a convention to draft-a world constitution. World government associations of a similar sort exist in Britain, the Commonwealth countries, Western Europe, and many other places.

Proponents of world government render a genuine service by calling attention to distant objectives and by acting as gadflies to those who have the responsibility for the relations of states. They are, of course, vulnerable to charges of impracticality and of oversimplification of international issues. They tend to place too much hope in new institutions and

constitutions, and to overlook the fact that before these instruments can be effective "there are foundations to be fortified and sturdier foundations to be laid (Edwin D. 1951:134).

The Functional Approach

The so-called functional approach also gives considerable emphasis to institutions and organizations, but, as the term suggests, it is concerned more with the encouragement of international functional agencies, particularly those having primary economic or social objectives, or both, rather than political ones. The premise on which this approach seems to rest may be stated as follows: Cooperation between nations is extremely difficult to achieve on the political level, for on this level matters of national pride and prestige, of balance of power and power politics in general, are of first importance; on the other hand, nations are willing to work together in the wide area of economic, social, and technical activities, and such cooperation is not only valuable in itself but also helps to create the atmosphere and to forge the ties that bind nations and peoples together. The argument here is that it is more important to create common interests and interdependence than it is to establish security organizations or federal parliaments. As one exponent of this point of view put it, "The only means through which political cooperation can ultimately be achieved is through gradual expansion of the existing areas of cooperation until the circles overlap and common national interests render closer political cooperation essential." (Philip E. (1950:60).

Though in a different sense, the "functionalists" are open to charges of ostrichism. The political field is the main area of international conflicts, and precisely for this reason it is the vineyard in which the serious student of international politics must labor. He cannot eliminate political problems by trying to ignore them. It is all very well to promote health and sanitary measures, better agricultural methods, respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, and the like; but these steps by themselves will not resolve serious international disputes or build a peaceful world order. DDT and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights are fine and worthwhile, but they are not substitutes for security.

The institutional and functional approaches are not incompatible. Both would operate to a great extent through organizations. One stresses political, the other economic, social, cultural, humanitarian and other nonpolitical aspects. Organizations like the United Nations, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, and the Organization of American States have agencies that are concerned with all phases of international life. The European Communities seem to represent an attempt to fuse the political and the functional; or perhaps it would be more accurate to say that they seek to achieve political ends through agencies which are essentially functional but which provide a base for further political development in the form of federation.

The Curative Approach

Nor is the so-called curative approach wholly divorced from the institutional and functional approaches. It, too, usually envisions the creation of organizations to fulfill its objectives. Many of these objectives are political, but more are nonpolitical and seem particularly adapted to a functional treatment. This approach is essentially a long-term one. It calls for the eradication of — or at least a frontal attack upon — basic economic and social and political evils or handicaps, such as poverty, hunger, famine, disease, illiteracy, racial and caste discrimination, and human oppression and misery, wherever they may be found. This is the purpose of many of the activities of the United Nations and of technical assistance and economic development programs of a bilateral and multilateral nature.

In the long run the curative approach should be the most fruitful of all, but in more immediate terms it cannot be concentrated upon to the exclusion of the others. It is one of the anomalies of our age that a great country like the United States spends many billions on military preparedness and on military assistance programs and only a few hundred millions on

technical assistance and economic development projects; that the total United States financial contribution to the United Nations since the inception of the world organization has been less than the cost of two months' operations in Vietnam in 1967 or 1968; that a great but underdeveloped country like India, faced with the vast problem of making her newly won independence meaningful for the mass of her people, devotes between one-fourth and one-third of her total budget to military purposes; that the total costs of the economic and social activities of the United Nations to date have been less than the cost of one modern aircraft carrier. Yet these anomalies exist because every state feels compelled to give first priority to national security and other immediate concerns. Perhaps this is as it should be; for peace must be safeguarded in order to allow time and opportunity for the curative approach to make itself felt. The waiting time is bound to be a long and dangerous one.

The Step-by-Step Approach

Perhaps the most hopeful of all approaches to peace, although a less exciting and imaginative one than blueprints for a new World Order, is the gradualist approach, working from where we are to where we would like to be. There is much wisdom in the following observations by a seasoned British diplomat: Lord W, (1961: 18 - 19).

...it is well to recognize the limits of human endeavor; to realize that the business of government is not an academic exercise; to reconcile oneself to the fact that there are no neat and final solutions, that international affairs are a fabric without much of a pattern, and that diplomacy is most often, as von Moltke said of strategy, a succession of expedients; to suspect that bold initiatives, imaginative gestures, stirring leads and elaborate blueprints of policy, so beloved of those who are free of responsibilities of government, are seldom of the stuff of practical statesmanship in international relations.

The advantage of the step-by-step approach is that it works within the limits of the possible, without losing sight of the ultimate objective; the great drawback is that it may be too unplanned, that it may in fact not be an approach at all but rather a resigned acceptance of various trends, which may be leading in the wrong direction, that it may be too halting and ineffective, and that it may be overwhelmed by time and events. It is the approach to "peace by pieces," which may in time lay the foundations for a stronger world order. "The effort to build a-cooperative world order," Senator J. William Fulbright once said, "must consist not in the drafting of blueprints and grand designs but rather in the advancement of a great many projects of practical cooperation— projects which, taken by themselves, may be of little importance, but which, taken together, may have the effect of shaping revolutionary new attitudes. William J. -Such an approach has the virtue of practicality and feasibility, but there is a real question whether it will achieve the larger results to which Senator Fulbright referred.

The Many-Fronts Approach

Obviously the approaches to peace are many. There is no single key, and possibly all of them together cannot unlock the door to a peaceful world. Reinhold Niebuhr has said that "the trustful acceptance of false solutions for our perplexing problems adds a touch of pathos to the tragedy of our age"; yet Professor W. Friedmann holds that "one of the few fortunate developments of recent international politics is a healthy distrust of panaceas. Reinhold N. (1951:56) Report of ECOSOC. In approaching the problem of war and peace there is much to be said for concentrating on a few of the major issues and approaches, but without losing sight of the others. Even some of those who seem to put all their eggs in one basket are by no means unmindful that other baskets may be useful too. Thus a conference on world government in 1951 went on record in support of this view: "The approach to peace must, therefore, consist of two major parallel actions: the cooperative planning and building of a

structure in which mankind could live at peace; and the cooperative planning and carrying out of an effective war upon those social and economic evils which arouse men to a sense of injustice and move them to violence."²² The foremost living historian of civilizations past and present has raised two great issues for question and comment:

Can we find a middle way in international affairs between the old anarchy of independent states jostling against each other — an anarchy which, I believe, cannot go on much longer in its old form — and the extreme opposite regime of a world peace imposed by some single Power on all the rest? . . . And can we find some middle course not only in the arena of international politics, but also in the social field, between the old Inequality of classes, leading to subterranean class warfare, and a social revolution leading to the forcible abolition of class, which is the programme for which Communism stands? ... I believe that the discovery of middle ways of negotiating these two great questions of war and class is the supreme. Peed of the world at present. Arnold T. (1948:564).

The changing world situation seems to require the many-fronts approach, both to deal with a vast range of current problems, many of which seem to offer no hope for immediate solution, and to build eventually a sounder international system. As one student has observed, "We must maintain a pluralist approach so as to be able to adapt to the unexpected; we must have several possible alternatives and 'keep our options open. Bruce M. R, (1967:3).

The Future of the World Community

It seems hardly necessary to emphasize the role of idealism in the lives of men. It is "the light on the horizon," "the dream of tomorrow,"¹ "the promises men live by." It is faith and hope and courage. It supplies the drive in the efforts toward a better world. Yet fifty centuries of recorded history have shown the limits within which idealism must operate; "experience," marking the possible as against the impossible, the practicable as against the impracticable, provides an equally necessary realism. He who has read history cannot avoid the conclusion that the rule of slow and uneven change will prevail in international relations as it has done for so long in all concerns of political life. "Peace by mechanism" is impossible. The answer is not that simple. The Bok Peace Award contest of 1923 drew out 22,165 plans. There must be quite a gap between making plans and making peace. Moreover, the problem is not just to preserve the peace, important as this undoubtedly is; it is to build the kind of world which will make the peace worth preserving, a world in which the many, and not just the privileged few, will have a real and vital stake. If a better world is not to be reached by some ingenious scheme of international organization, what then? Are we never to attain it, or are we to await some super-ingenious scheme? The answer, as we have given it before, is that we may hope for progress on many fronts, but we must expect and prepare for disappointments and setbacks too. As for a magic formula, we shall here at least avoid the inconsistency of offering one. Instead, we shall offer some speculations about the probable course of international relations for the foreseeable future.

1. The nation-state system will continue to be the dominant pattern of international relations, and states will continue to be the main actors on the world stage. As in the past, there will be frequent changes in power relationships among states and groups of states. Other actors, including sub-national and supranational groupings, unofficial as well as official, will play an increasingly active and influential role. The conflicting trends toward the independence and the interdependence of states will become more and more apparent. The prospect is for increased change and instability within the system as the political patterns of the world fail to keep pace with technological progress and economic needs. As has been noted, some observers believe that we are experiencing a period of systemic change which will eventuate in the supersession of the nation-state system by another more adequate for modern times. There is nothing sacrosanct about the nation-state system, which has flourished in the

Western world for only a few centuries, and which has become worldwide only in recent decades; but for the immediate future there is no ready substitute for it, and in all probability it will prevail, in one form or another.

2. International relations will broaden and deepen and become more meaningful to larger numbers of people, as contacts increase and horizons expand. They have already expanded far beyond the confines of: the Western state system to become international in fact as well as in name. While continuing to focus on political relations, especially the political relations of nation-states and of regional groupings, they have embraced economic, cultural, and other mutual concerns, and unofficial as well as official relations across national borders — in fact, they now encompass the whole gamut of international life. Through new techniques of analysis, ranging all the way from systems theory to content analysis and simulation techniques, their expanding dimensions are being subjected to more precise and more searching exploration. Indeed, the revolution in the study of international relations is hardly less startling than the radical changes that have occurred in the international situation in recent years.

3. Within the framework of the present system all states will continue to regard as their ultimate defense their own strength and that of their trusted allies. Only there can they find full loyalty to their own special interests. And there, protected by sovereignty, they will cultivate their strength until and unless a new order of affairs makes it abundantly clear- that their destinies are secure in other hands. No such assurance has yet appeared.

4. States will continue to pursue security through military establishments, defensive alliances, and collective security arrangements. Many such power alignments will be ad hoc in nature. Others, based upon a fundamental community of interests, will achieve a relatively permanent character. Those which prove to be most enduring will have-to be based on something more than Security considerations.

5. For a long time to come states will aspire to a position where they can mobilize more power than their prospective enemies. In other words, they will remain conscious of the balance of power and seek to tip the balance in their own favor. They will do this in spite of international organizations and the elaboration of techniques for the peaceful settlement of disputes.

6. States will continue to place chief reliance for the settlement of their differences upon conventional diplomacy. Through this means they will foster trade, protect their nationals, and, as in the past, in many ways bring a degree of cooperation among states. They will privately and quietly resolve most disputes before these reach a serious stage,

7. For the time being, at least, and probably for the foreseeable future, the ideological components of international relations have been submerged and to some extent - defused. The main champions of ideological ' universalism today, the Communists, have been weakened by internal rivalries and dissensions, and Communist as well as non-Communist states, with a few possible exceptions (Communist China being the great question mark), seem to have sublimated their ideological drives and preoccupations to more immediate needs and to more pragmatic policies. This situation may not last long — ideological factors are potentially still strong — but while it does, it will give a new look to international relations.

8. The United Nations will continue to provide a forum for the oratory and debates of the spokesmen of national states. It will pursue its vast programs of international cooperation, making some gains that states will be loath to forego. It will do particularly good work in social, cultural, and humanitarian fields, and it will achieve some successes in its economic work. It will be less effective in dealing with 'political problems. Through judicious operation it may establish norms for the relations of states and so enlist a supporting world opinion. It will have to earn respect and authority; it cannot legislate them.

9. Functional organizations will continue to gravitate toward the United Nations. Whether affiliated with the UN or not, they will direct international cooperation in many activities, drawing states closer together, often preventing differences from becoming conflicts, and do much to make cooperation a habit.

10. International law will be expanded and made more systematic. Individuals may be made clear subjects in theory, but states will continue to be the chief "persons" in international law. Some gains may be made in improving the legislative, judicial, and executive functions of international organizations, but powerful states will retain a nullifying power in fact.

11. Regional groupings of states will continue, and the number may increase. With the right kind of leadership; these groupings can be made to serve local and regional interests and at the same time buttress the United Nations. A more powerful United Nations -would not necessarily make them useless.

12. Technical assistance and -economic development programs, however sponsored, will do much to elevate standards of living and rates of literacy. They will contribute to economic interdependence and to the removal of psychological barriers between states.. They may modify the problem of overpopulation. At the same time they will doubtless continue to be too limited in scope to deal with the vast needs of the underdeveloped countries and areas of the world.

13. Individuals and groups will continue the use of pressure devices of all kinds to achieve their own objectives. Some men will persist in subordinating the common good to the selfish ends of profit, power, or personal aggrandizement; we shall always be plagued with warmongers, profiteers, militarists, racists, monarchists, anarchists, Communists, robber barons, would-be messiahs, appeasers, peace-at-any-pricers, and a host of other vultures and crackpots. Some men will always be willing to join forces to sacrifice a larger society to achieve the "self-expression" of a smaller group, with the integrating denominator being race, language, geography, political or economic ideology, or something else. Some of these will be "good" men, others "bad" men, but who is to judge?

14. Other individuals will carry on the fight for the ostensible ends of peace and goodwill. They' will give their time and money for the things they believe in, some giving a lifetime of service to a single cause, others giving momentary ecstasy to a succession of causes du jour. They will continue to band themselves together into innumerable, societies to promote every conceivable and many inconceivable aspects of international relations. Some will act selfishly, others unselfishly; together they will do some harm, but they will do much good. Often they will act with too little information, too little realism, too much theory, too much optimism. Collectively, they will add much to the world's awareness of US great problems and to the resolution of people everywhere to support programs of constructive action.

15. International relations will undoubtedly continue to be characterized by instability, tension, complexity, and paradox. They have not been adjusted to the needs and imperatives of the nuclear and space age

— an age marked by a "revolution in energetics, in communications, in industrial and agricultural productivity, in life expectancy and population growth." "In our time," wrote the editor of the *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists*, "international life proceeds on two separate levels. One is the traditional level

— the interplay of separate and conflicting national interests; the other, the newly important level of international cooperation in the prevention of nuclear war and in full utilization of science and technology for the common benefit of mankind." (Eugene R. 1965:2). There is an urgent need to weaken "the divisive forces operating on the traditional level of power politics" and to strengthen the "cohesive forces" and emphasize "common interests and cooperative efforts." But unhappily "this is not the direction that mankind has been traveling

lately," and one of the all-important questions in contemporary international relations is whether, and how, this direction can be reversed.

If this preview of the world of tomorrow seems to mean that we and our descendants will still confront grave problems in the relationships of peoples, that we shall have little more to blame than the nature of man and his physical world and the institutions he has created, that new factors will certainly enter to modify or accentuate our difficulties, and that the road to peace is tortuous and altogether uncertain, then we must recognize that we have been given the lot of man in all ages. The history of mankind is a story of trial and error, and the most inspiring part of it is the persistence of good men in good causes. The outlook is gloomy, but by no means hopeless.

A basic assumption of all these speculations is that there will be no thermonuclear war. This assumption may unhappily prove to be incorrect. If so, all predictions will be erroneous, for no one can possibly foresee the kind of situation which would exist after World War III. In all probability the present international system would be completely shattered, and new forces and circumstances would shape the new order that emerged from the ashes.

For the present "top priority must . . . be given to the transitional problem of keeping the future open until men can make the fundamental adaptation necessary to civilized life in the atomic era." The problem is one that will tax the abilities of men and the vitality of political institutions. It means that the future holds in store challenges and anxieties, opportunities and perils, such as men have seldom if ever experienced in other "times of trouble."

In helping to meet "the challenge to man's future" the student of international relations needs all of the technical skills and methodological competence, on the one hand, and all the wisdom and insights, on the other, that he can muster. His teacher is the entire world, in all its bewildering multiplicity. As he broadens his approach to the world scene he must also be conscious of the other worlds beyond — the worlds that, for example, lie hidden in the power of the atom and in the vastness of interplanetary and interstellar space. In this unfolding and expanding Universe international relations have come of age, or at least have taken on new and more challenging dimensions.

REFERENCES

- Approaches to International Community, "(1965), March 6th address at Pennsylvania State University.
- Arnold T. (1948) "The Study of History in the Light of Current Developments International Affairs, XXIV, October, 1948).
- Bruce M. R, (1967). "The Ecology of Future International Relations". International Studies quarterly.
- Eugene R. (1965), "New York thought" Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists, XXI.
- From the Preamble of Report of the Economic and Social Commission of the Fourth Annual Congress of the World Movement for World Federal Government, held in Rome in April, 1951, quoted in Freedom and Union, Vol.1 (June, 28 1951),.
- For an analysis of peace plans, see Edith Wyner and Georgia Lloyd: *Searchlight on peace plans* (New York E.P Dutton & co).
- Lord William S. (1961), "Britain in World Affairs (New York: Fredrick A Praeger).
- Reinhold N. (1951), An Introduction to World Politics, Toronto.
- See Revision of the United Nations Charter, Report of the committee on Foreign Relations on Resolution Relative to Revision of the United Nations Charter, Atlantic Union, World Federation and Similar Proposals.
- Senate Report No. 2501, 81st Cong, 2nd session, September 1st 1950, Washington Dc., Government printing Office 1950. See also Granville Clark and Louis John, World Peace through World Law (Cambridge Mass, Harvard university press, 1960).

Edwin D. (1951) *Law and Peace* (Philadelphia: University of Philadelphia Press).

Phillip E. J. (1950) "The United Nations and the struggle for world welfare". A functional approach to international relations has been strongly championed by David Mitrany, especially in his book. *A working peace system*, first published in 1943. This study is indispensable for anyone who wishes to explore the possibilities of the functional approach. Carr E.H. also see more hope in the growth of international functional agencies than in those of a basically political nature. His views on this subject are developed most fully in *Conditions of Peace* (New York: the Macmillan Company. 1945), see also "The functional Approach to Peace". Chapter 17 in Inis L.C., Jr (1964)... *swords into Ploughshares; the problems and progress of international organization*, 3rd edition (New York): Random House,