

# Hegemony and Multipolarity

## World Orders in the 21st Century

**5th Foreign Policy Conference of the Rosa Luxemburg Foundation  
in cooperation with the foreign policy journal *WeltTrends* at the University of Potsdam**

**11 – 12 October 2012**

What is to be the world order of tomorrow? What tectonic shifts in world politics are to be expected in the 21st century? What concepts of world order are contending at the beginning of the new millennium and what old and new players will be taking part in the Great Game?

The USA is losing global influence, although it had seen itself, after the end of the Cold War, as the new hegemon in a unipolar world. Asia, especially China, is seen as a keen contender for the position of a hegemon. The European Union, despite its current crises, sees itself as a global player; the Eurasian land mass is taking on a new shape; Brazil and India have joined in the game. The hegemons seem to have had their day in global relations and been succeeded by a multipolarity. This raises the question of how the new and the old powers are going to conduct their conflicts from now on. Will arms races and economic warfare continue to dominate international relations, or will we manage to create, within the framework of the United Nations, a multipolar world order based on peace and justice?

The subject of the Fifth Foreign Policy Conference of the Rosa Luxemburg Foundation is the correlation between hegemony and multipolarity in the globalized world of the 21st century. It will take up the conceptual challenge of how a world order might look like in which peace and social justice as well as economic and ecological sustainability were assured. The conference will focus on conceptual reflections on power and influence in international relations and alternative reflections on the order(s) of the world of tomorrow. With a critical review of the history of international relations the expected power shifts will be discussed by scholars and foreign-policy experts from four continents.

In addition to analytical input from Europe and the USA the perspectives of the “new powers” – China, Russia, India and Brazil – will be considered. At the same time Germany will play an important role in the debates on future world orders. To what extent does Germany have the global interests of a “geo-economic power”? Is it doomed by politics and history to play the role of a “reluctant hegemon” within the EU? Has Germany, twenty years after its unification, assumed a new international role, and will this mean the return of the “German question”?

The two-day specialist conference, organized in association with the foreign policy journal *WeltTrends* at the University of Potsdam, is addressed to a broad public of those who take an interest in foreign relations.

**11 October 2012**

*Thursday*

9.00 Registration

10.00 **Welcoming ceremony**

10.15 **Panel 1**

**Hegemony versus Equality in International Politics.  
Conceptual reflections and historical experience**

The old, traditional concepts of order, power and hegemony in international relations will have to be discussed anew and subjected to critical scrutiny. Can they also be of help in analysing international relations in the 21st century? What possibilities are offered by the concept of the sovereign equality of states in effectively opposing hegemonic schemes?

**World Orders. A historical overview**

Prof. Dr. Ulrich Menzel (Technische Universität Braunschweig, Germany)

**Commentaries**

Prof. Dr. Karin Kulow (Berlin)

Dr. David Salomon (Goethe-Universität, Frankfurt a.M.)

11.15-11.45 **Debate**

12.00 **Panel 2**

**After Bipolarity.**

**Power shifts in the 21st century**

Various concepts for analysing international relations are aimed at understanding the power shifts in the 21st century and deriving foreign-policy guidelines from them. In order to understand the world, we must shed the blinkers of a Eurocentric or Western-oriented approach. Both the analytical approaches of Europe and the USA, as well as the perspectives of the "new powers" – China, Russia, India and Brazil – will be discussed.

**A World Order without Superpowers: Decentred Globalism**

Prof. Dr. Barry Buzan (London School of Economics)

12.30 **Commentaries**

Ali Fathollah-Nejad (University of London)

Peter Linke (Berlin)

Azadeh Zamirirad (WeltTrends, Potsdam)

13.00 – 14.00 **Debate**

15.00

**After Bipolarity.**

**(2) Old and New Powers**

**USA – Decline of Hegemony?**

Prof. Dr. Roland Benedikter (Stanford University, USA)

**China – Old Power and New Hegemony?**

Zhai Dequan (Foreign Ministry, Peoples Republic of China, Beijing)

### **Russia – Comeback as Great Power?**

Dr. Vladislav Savin (Russian Academy of Sciences, Moscow)

### **Brazil and the Emerging Powers**

Audo Araujo Faleiro (Office of the President, Brazil)

### **Hegemonic Stability? The New Quintet and Other Powers**

Prof. Achin Vanaik (University of Delhi, India)

17.15 – 19.00 **Debate**

**12 October 2012**

*Friday*

9.00 **Panel 3**

#### **Great power or partnership in Europe?**

#### **The new role of Germany in the 21st century**

Does Germany have the global interests of a “geo-economic power”? Should its role within the EU be that of a “reluctant hegemon”? This Panel will discuss whether and to what extent Germany, twenty years after unification, has assumed a new role and whether this means the return of the “German question”. Views of this problem from Germany, Poland and the Czech Republic will be discussed.

#### **Germany in Europe. Returning of the “German Question”?**

Dr. Erhard Crome (Rosa-Luxemburg-Stiftung)

9.30 **Commentaries**

Sevim Dagdelen (MP, DIE LINKE)

Prof. Dr. Bogdan Koszel (Adam-Mickiewicz-University, Poznan)

Dr. Vladimir Handl (Institut of International Relations, Prague)

Theodoros Paraskevopoulos (SYRIZA, Athens)

10.15 – 11.45 **Debate**

12.00 **Panel 4**

#### **Hegemony, Multipolarity or Non-polarity in the 21st century?**

#### **Closing debate**

With regard to the prospects for international politics and the possibilities of a peaceful world order a conclusion will be drawn from the debate on the concepts of world orders. Hegemonic orders imposed by great or globally operating powers always carry within them the threat of war, especially when power rivalries degenerate into arms races and military conflicts. What might the outlines of a peaceful world order look like?

Wolfgang Gehrcke (MP, DIE LINKE)

Claudia Haydt (Tübingen)

Dr. Peter Strutynski (University of Kassel)

Prof. Dr. Diethelm Weidemann (Berlin)

14.00 Closing of the conference