

India and Global Governance: From Interests to Strategy

Date & Time: **Thursday, 12 January 5:00-6:30 PM (IST)**
Location: **WWF Auditorium, WWF-India, 172- B, Lodhi Estate, New Delhi 110003**



Some of India's most distinguished diplomats and foremost policy makers were members of a *Working Group on India and Global Governance*, a group that had been convened by the Council on Energy, Environment and Water (CEEW) to discuss India's role, as an emerging power, in the complex landscape of global governance. The group submitted a report, *"Understanding Complexity, Anticipating Change: From Interests to Strategy on Global Governance"*, to the National Security Adviser in December 2011. The report recommends that Indian policymaking on global governance could benefit from breaking out of the silos of single-issues and understand how developments in one area affect our interests in other domains. In order to engage in a continuing conversation on the topic, CEEW in collaboration with Aspen Institute India (All) conducted a panel discussion on "India and Global Governance: From Interests to Strategy" Dr. Arunabha Ghosh, CEO of CEEW and the moderator for this discussion, introduced the topic by remarking that India had an innate ability to adapt to complex situations. At the same time, it is important for India to undertake long term thinking in various policy issues. Dr. Ghosh further highlighted the 'four chaotic transitions' in global governance that emerging powers like India had to navigate. First, the transition from being rule-takers to rule-makers; secondly, the transition from framing rules to developing new sets of global arrangements in which 'regime design' figures prominently; thirdly, from single regimes to recognizing 'regime complexes' or the multiplicity of institutions with overlapping but often incoherent rules in each area (whether climate change, trade, energy, etc.); and fourthly, the transition from formal institutions towards informal networks, where small groups

of states or even non-state actors are framing the rules that would govern emerging issues, like cyber security, outer space, geo engineering, and so forth. Accordingly, it is these transitions that form one of the important themes of the global governance debate, hence the need to anticipate changes in today's world.

Ambassador Arundhati Ghose –Former Ambassador to the UN Conference on Disarmament and Chief Negotiator on the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty and currently Vice President of Global India Forum, Kolkata and Adjunct Fellow, National Institute of Advanced Studies, Bangalore – took the discussion forward by observing the inter linkages between various organizations on diverse issue areas. It is important to take into account the tradeoffs taking place within regimes and contemplate potential tradeoffs *across* regimes that could deliver outcomes in India's interest. New regimes like that of the nuclear safety regime affect India's economic, environment, political and foreign policies. Thus, a cross-sectoral approach is essential to deal with such regimes. She also made a call to the distinguished audience present to contribute their ideas and suggestions that could inform and structure the work agenda of the Working Group for the future.

Ambassador Shyam Saran –Former Foreign Secretary and currently Chairman of Research and Information Systems for Developing Countries and Senior Fellow, Centre for Policy Research – emphasized that it was important for India to safeguard its interests in the context of global development trends. As a transitional emerging power India is expected to contribute to global public goods, while itself being a recipient of global public goods. The Indian strategy in global governance should comprise an intensive engagement with the rest of the world and flexible management of the various coalition powers on a number of issues. This means aligning with different sets of countries as the circumstances demand. Regarding the infrastructure for global governance, India has a role to play in the designing of new institutions. It must also make use of the opportunities that a changing global economic and political environment offers, rather than simply reacting to developments as they occur.

Mr. Suman Bery, Former Director-General (Chief Executive) of the National Council of Applied Economic Research (NCAER) and currently Country Director – India, International Growth Centre, London, highlighted the fact that the basic approach in Indian foreign policy is to create an environment where India can continue to grow and shape the global environment. Accordingly, there is a need to focus on 'change in the global narrative'. Further, with regard to global institutional reforms like reform of the international monetary system, it is important to figure out whether Indian interests are best served by either a rule regime or an anarchy regime. The vital question is: how do we choose the arena for playing out of our interests?

Mr. Kiran Karnik, Trustee, NASSCOM and Chairman of Board of Satyam Computers, observed that while India was at the bottom in most socioeconomic issue areas, there are a few areas like the Internet, cyber technology, space, pharmaceuticals, etc. where India has a presence and can assume a leadership role in the future. Making a comparison between democratic and chaotic countries like India and authoritarian and orderly countries like Singapore, Mr Karnik commented that in times of a spontaneous crisis, orderly countries are relatively less adept at dealing with unfolding situations. This shows India's inherent ability to deal with anarchy.

Dr. Arunabha Ghosh concluded the discussion by stating that it is an error to think of global governance as an abstract term. The norms, rules and procedures that shape relations between

states, markets and society at the international level have a direct impact on India's development prospects, its commercial opportunities and its political ambitions. Therefore, it is important to examine the inter-linkages across issues. Moreover, it is important to ensure proper articulation and protection of India's interests in any emerging regime.

In order to know more about this discussion, please click on the video link:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AlrEM1oDtBA>