

# Taking Sides: Clashing View on Global Issues

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#### Clashing Views on Global Issues, Seventh Edition, Expanded

#### Unit 1 Global Population

Issue 1. Should the International Community Continue to Focus on Programs to Help Developing Countries Curb Population Growth?

**YES: Terry M. Redding**, from "The Population Challenge: Key to Global Survival," *The 21st Century Papers* (The Population Institute, 2007)

**NO: Michael J. Miller**, from "The Under-Population Problem: An Interview with Steven W. Mosher on the Demographic Consequences of Birth Control Policies," *The Catholic World Report* (August–September 2008)

Terry M. Redding, a communications consultant to The Population Institute, suggests that population *growth* is being unfortunately neglected in international development discussions, as the latter's focus has been on other aspects of population such as reproductive health and women's empowerment. Steven W. Mosher, president of the Population Research Institute, an organization devoted to debunking the idea that the world is overpopulated, argues in an interview with Michael J. Miller of *The Catholic World Report* that self-interest was the motivation for past efforts on the part of international funding agencies, including the World Bank, to curb population by pressuring developing countries to adopt fertility reduction programs.

Issue 2. Is Global Aging a Major Problem?

**YES: Neil Howe and Richard Jackson**, from "Global Aging and the Crisis of the 2020s," *Current History* (January 2011)

**NO: Mark L. Haas**, from "Pax Americana Geriatrica," *Miller-McCune* (July 14, 2008)

Neil Howe and Richard Jackson of the Center for Strategic and International Studies argue that global population aging is likely to have a profound and negative effect on global economic growth, living standards and conditions, and "the shape of the world order," particularly affecting China, Russia, Pakistan, Iran, and countries of the West. Mark L. Haas, Duquesne University professor, suggests that global aging will likely have a positive effect on the United States as its chief competitors will have a far more difficult time coping with their aging populations.

Issue 3. Does Global Urbanization Lead Primarily to Undesirable Consequences?

**YES: Divya Abhat, Shauna Dineen, Tamsyn Jones, Jim Motavalli, Rebecca Sanborn, and Kate Slomkowski**, from "Cities of the Future: Today's 'Mega-Cities' Are Overcrowded and Environmentally Stressed," *E/The Environmental Magazine* (September/October 2005)

**NO: UNFPA**, from "People in Cities: Hope Countering Desolation," *UNFPA State of the World Population 2007: Unleashing the Potential of Urban Growth* (2007)

Divya Abhat, editor of *E/The Environmental Magazine*, and colleagues suggest that the world's cities suffer from environmental ills, among them pollution, poverty, fresh water shortages, and disease. The UNFPA 2007 Report suggests that cities, in fact, facilitate a number of desirable conditions, such as gender-equitable change, more diverse employment possibilities, more economic well-being and security for women, women's empowerment, and access to better health care, among other positive changes.

## Unit 2 Global Resources and the Environment

### Issue 4. Should Environmentalists Continue to Be Alarmists?

**YES: Paul B. Farrell**, from "The Coming Population Wars: A 12-Bomb Equation," *MarketWatch* (September 29, 2009)

**NO: Ronald Bailey**, from "Our Uncrowded Planet," *The American* (October 1, 2009)

Paul B. Farrell, an investing and personal finance columnist for *CBS MarketWatch*, describes 12 global time-bombs put forth by Jared Diamond, an environmental biologist. The two biggest are the overpopulation multiplier (population will increase 23 percent before it peaks) and the population impact monitor (third-world citizens will adopt much higher first-world consumption patterns). Ronald Bailey, *Reason* magazine's science correspondent, takes Farrell to task on each of his 12 time-bombs, arguing that current trends do not "portend a looming population apocalypse."

### Issue 5. Should the World Continue to Rely on Oil as the Major Source of Energy?

**YES: Nansen G. Saleri**, from "The World Has Plenty of Oil," *Wall Street Journal Sunday* (March 4, 2008)

**NO: Lester R. Brown**, from "Is World Oil Production Peaking?" *Eco-Economy Update* (November 15, 2007)

Nansen G. Saleri, president and CEO of Quantum Reservoir Input and the oil industry's preeminent authority on the issue, suggests that the world is "nowhere close to reaching a peak in global oil supplies." He argues that the future transition to oil alternatives will be the result of their superiority rather than the diminishing supply of oil. Lester R. Brown, founder and president of Earth Policy Institute, suggests that there has been a "pronounced loss of momentum" in the growth of oil production, a likely result of demand outpacing discoveries, leading to declining oil production prospects.

### Issue 6. Will the World Be Able to Feed Itself in the Foreseeable Future?

**YES: Stephen Lendman**, from "Global Food Crisis: Hunger Plagues Haiti and the World," *Global Research* (April 21, 2008)

**NO: Lester Brown**, from "The Great Food Crisis of 2011: It's Real and It's Not Going Away Anytime Soon," *Foreign Policy* (January 10, 2011)

Stephen Lendman, a research associate of the Centre for Research on Globalization in Montreal, argues that the global food crisis is related to rising prices in an economically troubled time rather than to a lack of food production. Lester Brown, founder and president of Earth Policy Institute, argues that unlike in the past when weather was the culprit, the spike in food prices is now caused by trends on both sides of the food supply/demand equation that are causing higher food prices.

### Issue 7. Is the Threat of Global Warming Real?

**YES: Bill McKibben**, from "Think Again: Climate Change," *Foreign Policy* (January/February 2009)

**NO: Richard Lindzen**, from "A Case Against Precipitous Climate Action," *Global Warming Foundation* (January 15, 2011)

Bill McKibben, author of numerous books on ecological issues,

addresses seven myths about climate change, arguing that the global community must act now if it is to save the earth from a climate catastrophe. Richard Lindzen, Alfred P. Sloan professor of meteorology at MIT, cautions us not to act too hastily in addressing assumed climate change as the evidence does not support such a conclusion or the need for hysteria.

Issue 8. Can the Global Community Successfully Confront the Global Water Shortage?

**YES: Peter Rogers**, from “Facing the Freshwater Crisis,” *Scientific American* (August 2008)

**NO: Mark Clayton**, from “Is Water Becoming ‘the New Oil’?” *Christian Science Monitor* (May 29, 2008)

Peter Rogers, professor of environmental engineering at Harvard University, suggests that existing technologies exist for averting a global water crisis, but the global community must act soon. Mark Clayton, staff writer for *The Christian Science Monitor*, suggests that changes in population, pollution, and climate are creating water shortages around the globe, leading private companies to take advantage of the increased demand for clean water while governments are slow to act.

### Unit 3 Expanding Global Forces and Movements

Issue 9. Can the Global Community “Win” the Drug War?

**YES: United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime**, from *World Drug Report 2010* (United Nations Publications, 2010)

**NO: Mike Trace**, from *Drug Policy—Lessons Learnt, and Options for the Future* (Global Commission on Drug Policies, 2010)

This 2010 report by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime suggests that “drug control has matured” and efforts are paying off as the world’s supply of the two main problem drugs, opiates and cocaine, has been declining over the past 2 years since the previous UN report. According to Mike Trace, Chairman of the International Drug Policy Consortium and former British drug czar, the objective of a drug-free world is “as far away as ever,” suggesting the effects of badly conceived and implemented drug policies as well as political and institutional barriers.

Issue 10. Is the International Community Adequately Prepared to Address Global Health Pandemics?

**YES: Global Influenza Programme**, from “Responding to the Avian Influenza Pandemic Threat,” *Communicable Disease Surveillance and Response* (World Health Organization, 2005)

**NO: Heath A. Kelly et al.**, from “We Should Not Be Complacent About Our Population-Based Public Health Response to the First Influenza Pandemic of the 21st Century,” *BMC Public Health* (vol. 11, no. 78, 2011)

The document from the World Health Organization lays out a comprehensive program of action for individual countries, the international community, and WHO to address the next influenza pandemic. Heath Kelly and colleagues, at the Victorian Infectious Diseases Reference Laboratory in Melbourne, suggest that the lessons of the global community’s dealing with the H1N1 virus in 2009 show that its strategies “could not control the spread” of the virus.

Issue 11. Do Adequate Strategies Exist to Combat Human Trafficking?

**YES: Luis CdeBaca**, from “A Decade in Review, A Decade Before Us: Celebrating Successes and Developing New Strategies at the 10th Anniversary of the Trafficking Victims Protection Act,” speech at 2010 Freedom Network Conference, Washington, DC (U.S. Department of State, March 18, 2008)

**NO: United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime**, from *Human Trafficking: An Overview* (United Nations Publications, 2008)

Luis CdeBaca, ambassador-at-large for the U.S. Department of State, reported in a speech at the Freedom Network Conference that “appreciable progress” has been made in understanding the issue of human trafficking and thus the global community is in “the early stages of positive change” in addressing the issue. This 2008 UN report suggests that despite increased international attention and national responses to the problem of human trafficking, it is still “a very tragic reality” as even if traffickers come under investigation, they still face little risk of convictions.

Issue 12. Is the International Community Making Progress in Addressing Natural Disasters?

**YES: United Nations**, from “Risk and Poverty in a Changing Climate: Invest Today for a Safer Tomorrow,” *Summary and Recommendations: 2009 Global Assessment Report on Disaster Risk Reduction* (United Nations Publications, 2009)

**NO: David Rothkopf**, from “Averting Disaster: Calamities Like the Haiti Quake Aren’t Just Predictable—They’re Preventable,” *Newsweek* (January 25, 2010)

The International Strategy for Disaster Reduction Secretariat, a unit within the United Nations, suggests that countries are making “significant progress” in strengthening their capacities to address past deficiencies and gaps in their disaster preparedness and response. At the center of progress is the plan, *Hyogo Framework for Action 2005–2015*, which is aimed at reducing human and nonhuman disaster losses. David Rothkopf, president of Garten Rothkopf (an international consulting agency) and a member of former president Bill Clinton’s international trade team, argues that the efforts of international organizations to prevent natural disasters from escalating into megadisasters “have fallen short of what is required.”

Issue 13. Is the Global Economic Crisis a Failure of Capitalism?

**YES: Katsuhito Iwai**, from “Global Financial Crisis Shows Inherent Instability of Capitalism,” *The Tokyo Foundation* (December 8, 2008)

**NO: Dani Rodrik**, from “Coming Soon: Capitalism 3.0,” *The Taipei Times* (February 11, 2009)

Katsuhito Iwai, professor of economics at the University of Tokyo, argues that the current economic collapse is a sign of the inherent instability of global capitalism. He argues that capitalism’s failure in this crisis is inherent because capitalism is based on speculation and therefore belief or faith in the strength of the system and its various parts. Dani Rodrik, professor of international political economy at Harvard University’s John F. Kennedy School of Government, contends that the current economic downturn is not a sign of capitalism’s failure but rather its need for reinvention and adaptation. Rodrik argues that this is precisely why capitalism will survive and thrive because it is so changeable based on new trends and conditions.

Issue 14. Is Social Media Becoming the Most Powerful Force in Global Politics?

**YES: Clay Shirky**, “The Net Advantage,” *Prospect* (December 11, 2009)

**NO: Evgeny Morozov**, “How Dictators Watch Us on the Web” *Prospect* (November 18, 2009)

Clay Shirky argues that social media has and will empower individuals and groups in profound ways giving political movements power, reach, and access. He contends that it will change the power dynamic between these groups and the state (often the object if not adversary of political action) and make insurrection and revolution more likely to occur and potentially to succeed. Evgeny Morozov contends that the social media revolution cuts both ways. He argues that rather than social media being

a tool for overcoming oppression and empowering groups, it has and will be a mechanism for regimes to exercise greater control and dominance. He argues that rather than a panacea, it is a multiedged sword whose full impact, wielded by whom, is yet to be determined.

## Unit 4 The New Global Security Dilemma

### Issue 15. Are We Headed for a Nuclear 9/11?

**YES: Brian Michael Jenkins**, from "Terrorists Can Think Strategically: Lessons Learned from the Mumbai Attacks," Rand Corporation (January 2009)

**NO: Graham Allison**, from "Time to Bury a Dangerous Legacy—Part I," *Yale Global Online* (March 14, 2008)

Brian Michael Jenkins, senior advisor to the President of the Rand Corporation, in testimony before the U.S. Senate Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs, posited that a team of terrorists could be inserted into the United States and carry out a Mumbai-style attack as terrorism has "increasingly become an effective strategic weapon." Graham Allison, Harvard professor and director of the Belfer Center for Science and International Affairs, affirms that we are not likely to experience a nuclear 9/11 because "nuclear terrorism is preventable by a feasible, affordable agenda of actions that ... would shrink the risk of nuclear terrorism to nearly zero."

### Issue 16. Is Religious and Cultural Extremism a Global Security Threat?

**YES: Hussein Solomon**, from "Global Security in the Age of Religious Extremism," *PRISM* (August 2006)

**NO: Shibley Telhami**, from "Testimony Before the House Armed Services Committee: Between Terrorism and Religious Extremism" (November 3, 2005)

Hussein Solomon argues that when religious extremism, which is a security threat in and of itself, is merged with state power, the threat to global security is potentially catastrophic and must be met with clear and uncompromising policies. He contends that this is present across all religions, and he uses both a born-again George Bush and a fundamentalist Mahmoud Ahmadinejad as his examples. Shibley Telhami, on the other hand, does not argue that religious extremism is the threat, but rather that global security threats are from political groups with political agendas and not extremism as such.

### Issue 17. Is a Nuclear Iran a Global Security Threat?

**YES: Dore Gold**, from "The Rise of Nuclear Iran: How Tehran Defies the West," *The Henry Jackson Society* (October 12, 2009)

**NO: Scott Horton**, from "Reality Check: Iran Is Not a Nuclear Threat," *The Christian Science Monitor* (September 17, 2010)

Dore Gold contends that a nuclear Iran is a global security threat because of the nature of the fundamentalist regime, its antipathy for both Israel and the United States, and its clear support for international terrorism. He argues that evidence clearly indicates that it is developing a bomb and its past behavior means it will be likely to use it. Scott Horton contends that through media misrepresentation, governmental propaganda, and outright falsehoods, the myth has been created that a nuclear Iran is a global security threat. Horton argues that Iran has acted within its rights and treaty obligations and as such presents no more a threat than any other country that may or may not develop nuclear weapons.

### Issue 18. Will China Be the Next Superpower?

**YES: Shujie Yao**, from "Can China Really Become the Next Superpower?" *China Policy Institute* (April 2007)

**NO: Minxin Pei**, from "China's Not a Superpower," *The Diplomat* (2010)

Shujie Yao analyzes the current state of the Chinese economy and policy and postulates several possible scenarios for development. Ultimately, he surmises that China will develop as the next superpower by the mid-twenty-first century. Minxin Pei argues that the political and economic situation in China is not as stable and robust as we believe. He contends that there are structural economic concerns and growing political unrest that will mitigate China's ascension to superpower status and for the foreseeable future.

Issue 19. Have Al-Qaeda and Its Jihad Against the United States Been Defeated?

**YES: Fareed Zakaria**, from "The Jihad Against the Jihadis: How Moderate Muslim Leaders Waged War on Extremists—and Won," *Newsweek* (February 22, 2010)

**NO: Scott Stewart**, from "Jihadism in 2010: The Threat Continues," *STRATFOR* (January 6, 2010)

Fareed Zakaria argues through the acts of moderate Muslims across the Islamic world, "We have turned the corner on the war between extremism and the West and ... now we are in a new phase of clean up and rebuilding of relationships." His argument rests on the actions of Muslim regimes in Saudi Arabia, Pakistan, and Indonesia who are fighting back against jihadism, engaging in military and political policies that are marginalizing extremists and consequently winning the war. Scott Stewart contends that despite Western victories against Al-Qaeda based in the Afghan–Pakistan border region, regional groups and cells have taken up the slack and the threat of extremism and jihad is still strong and ominous. He focuses on the work of these groups in Somalia, Yemen, and North Africa to illustrate this continued fight.

Issue 20. Is the Middle East Undergoing a Democratic Revolution?

**YES: Fareed Zakaria**, from "How Democracy Can Work in the Middle East," *TIME* (February 3, 2011)

**NO: Adam Shatz**, from "After Mubarak," *The London Review of Books* (February 17, 2011)

Fareed Zakaria argues that there are strong strands within the Egyptian polity and around other parts of the Middle East to indicate that the Arab Spring is truly a democratic revolution. Although he cautions that democracy results are dependent on a host of complex factors, he sees several reasons for optimism, including a strong and secular military and an independent judiciary system. Adam Shatz argues that it is far too early to determine whether the Arab Spring, as some are calling it, will lead to democracy of the type and form the west would favor. He contends that the revolt against autocratic rule may indeed lead to the exchange of one form of authoritarianism with another and that worries in parts of the United States and Israel about authoritarian, anti-Western regimes replacing governments in Egypt, Tunisia, and other places are quite justified.

## Unit 5 Bonus Issues

Issue 21. Is the International Community Making Effective Progress in Securing Global Human Rights?

**YES: Council on Foreign Relations**, from "The Global Human Rights Regime," *Issue Brief* (May 11, 2012)

**NO: Amnesty International**, from *Amnesty International Report 2012: The State of the World's Human Rights* (Amnesty International, London, 2012)

The Council on Foreign Relations, an independent nonpartisan and essentially American think tank, in *Issue Brief* summarizes the development of an elaborate global system of governmental and nongovernmental organizations developed primarily over the past few decades to promote human rights throughout the world, while recognizing that the task is still far from complete. Amnesty

International's annual report on the state of human rights around the world suggests major failures in all regions ("Failed leadership has gone global in the last year . . ."), with specific restrictions on free speech in at least 91 countries and cases of torture and other ill-treatment in over 101 countries.

Issue 22. Should Israel Preempt Against Iran's Nuclear Program?

**YES: Elliott Abrams**, from "Israel and Iran: The Grounds for an Israeli Attack," *World Affairs Journal* (May/June 2012)

**NO: Colin H. Kahl**, from "Before Attacking Iran, Israel Should Learn from Its 1981 Strike on Iraq," *The Washington Post* (March 2, 2012)

Elliott Abrams argues that a nuclear-armed Iran represents a unique and existential threat to the survival of the state of Israel and therefore is unacceptable. He contends that some states when faced with such a threat should act to prevent destruction since the approach and policy of the Iranian regime is clear and unequivocal in its hostility to Israel's very existence. Colin H. Kahl argues that Israel's attack on the Osirak reactor in Iraq had the reverse impact it wished. Saddam Hussein became even more determined to acquire nuclear weapons. Given the greater strength and resiliency of the Iranian regime, its geographic position, and its resources, an Israeli preemption on Iran would merely galvanize hard liners to regroup and continue the work toward nuclear weapons. And this is something that Israel or the United States cannot ultimately stop.