An Inclusive World

In which the West, Islam and the Rest have a stake

An Inclusive World

In which the West, Islam and the Rest have a stake

We are pleased to offer you a free download of this document. Also, we wish to invite you to purchase the printed copies of this paper (US$ 15 per copy) and distribute them in large numbers to form a global community to create an inclusive world. Please write to **info@strategicforesight**.com for more details.

Strategic Foresight Group

Author: Sundeep Waslekar
Key Concepts: Graham Watson, Ilmas Futehally, John Alderdice

Research Advice: Amr Abdalla (Costa Rica), Assia Bensalah Alaoui (Morroco), Azza El-Kholy (Egypt), Cecilia Ruthstrom-Ruin (Sweden), Fidel Valdez Ramos (Philippines), Jennifer Jeffs (Mexico), Kamel Abu Jaber (Jordan), Laila Bokhari (Norway), Lou Marinoff (U.S.A), Niccolo Rinaldi (Italy), Rene Klaff (Germany), Sadi Cayci (Turkey), Saud Al Sati (Saudi Arabia), Shlomo Ben-Ami (Israel), Sean Cleary (South Africa), Sedat Laciner (Turkey)

Researchers: Devika Mistry, Kumud-Pallavi Hebbar, Rami Desai, Venetia Ansell
Research Intern: Anisa Virji
Cover design: Sumedha Vaidya

Preface

In December 2005, the Dubai Consortium invited Adel Imam, Sir Bob Geldof and I to address the Nelson Mandela Benefit Dinner in Dubai. On that occasion, I presented the concept of 'an inclusive world'. I argued that exclusion caused by comprehensive relative deprivation fostered terrorism and extremism and therefore that it was necessary to create inclusive structures to dissuade young people from taking up violence. My concept of inclusion extended from local communities to the global power structure. As I was speaking in Dubai, I particularly focussed on the Middle East.

The speech attracted significant interest from different parts of the world, including leaders such as former President William Clinton of the United States and Her Highness Sheikha Moza of Qatar. Her Highness very warmly and generously invited me to Qatar where my interaction with Arab scientists and young women students in their veils convinced me that a positive future was possible for the Middle East. Similarly, Suzanne Mubarak, First Lady of Egypt, arranged for me to visit the slums of Cairo where I observed that it was possible to change the context of despair into a context of hope.

As discussion on 'an inclusive world' gathered momentum, my good friend Graham Watson, Leader of the Alliance of Liberals and Democrats in the European Parliament, suggested that we needed to broaden the concept to a vision of future that was politically feasible, shared by the Western and Islamic countries and shaped with clear milestones and building blocks. He invited me to co-host the Third International Roundtable on Constructing Peace, Deconstructing Terror at the European Parliament on 26-27 November 2006. Dr Amre Moussa, Secretary General of the League of Arab States, immediately agreed to endorse the Roundtable.

In the ensuing months we, at Strategic Foresight Group, undertook in-house research. We also engaged in detailed consultations with cabinet ministers, parliamentarians, scholars, and business leaders from all parts of the world; officials of intelligence and security agencies of several Western countries; sympathisers of extremist groups in Asia and the Middle East; and members of the United States Special Forces in Iraq. I compared notes from my own conversations with groups engaged in acts of terror (although they would like to describe themselves as freedom fighters) some years ago.

Some of the input in our research process came through public dialogues on platforms provided by institutions with which Strategic Foresight Group enjoys cordial relationships. The World Economic Forum invited me to chair an interface between Dr Amre Moussa, Arab League Secretary General, and Robert Zoellick, who was then Deputy Secretary of State of the United States. This dialogue revealed that while the United States was not willing to consider a strategic shift in its relations with the Middle East, it was possible to find specific cases to build cooperation between the US and the Arab world.

Besides research and consultations by us at Strategic Foresight Group, we collaborated with SMWIPM Institute of Peace Studies at the Bibliotheca Alexandrina to organise an international workshop on terrorism and extremism at the Alexandria Library in August. We convened a group of 20 experts from Latin America, the Middle East, Europe and parts of Asia. They provided in-depth input on their respective regions, before proceeding to develop common solutions. I must particularly mention the contribution of Ambassador Hesham Youssef, who came despite the fact that he was preparing for the Arab League Foreign

Ministers meeting in Beirut the next day. Our workshop took place on the backdrop of missile exchange between Israel and Hezbollah.

In my discussion on solutions, I had several consultations in person and by phone with Lord Alderdice, former Speaker of the Northern Ireland Parliament; Graham Watson of the European Parliament; HRH Prince Turki al Faisal, Ambassador of Saudi Arabia; and Ms Ilmas Futehally, Executive Director of Strategic Foresight Group. I must emphasise that the ideas in Part II and Part IV which provide building blocks for an inclusive world have been developed by these four esteemed colleagues. My interaction with Shafiq Gabr of the Arab Business Council, Dr Abdulla Al- Kubaisi of Qatar Foundation and Dr Ismail Serageldin of Bibliotheca Alexandrina provided crucial input in developing the concept of Arab Islamic Renaissance presented in Part III.

In September, the first draft of this essay was circulated among 16 experts and leaders. They have been listed under the Research Advice heading on the credit page. Their comments and suggestions improved my analytical understanding tremendously and made a strategic difference to the final outcome.

In the last week of November, Strategic Foresight Group presented key findings from research at the Third International Roundtable at the European Parliament in Brussels. The participants commended most of the observations and recommendations, and modified some. A report of the Roundtable has been separately published. In December 2006, I finalised this essay reflecting the valuable advice we had received at the Roundtable.

Friedrich Naumann Stiftung supported research and the Roundtable. I am grateful to Dr Juergen Wickert and Dr Rene Klaff of the Stiftung. The Royal Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs provided vital cooperation, particularly for the workshop at Bibliotheca Alexandrina, but also beyond it. I had the benefit of a very able research team from Strategic Foresight Group. I must especially mention Ms Devika Mistry, who in addition to providing research input, coordinated the workshop in Alexandria and the Third International Roundtable in Brussels.

This is the long story of a short essay – how a brief speech at the Nelson Mandela Benefit Event in Dubai transformed into a detailed concept of *an inclusive world*. I have written the following pages assuming that readers are familiar with the background of many of the issues and case studies discussed here. As it is clear from the above narrative, it is not one person's work. It is the result of interaction with a large number of scholars and practitioners around the world. It is our inclusive endeavour to envisage an inclusive world.

Sundeep Waslekar

Mumbai   President
January 2007   Strategic Foresight Group

Contents

Summary

This essay intends to provide a fresh analysis of some of the critical issues dividing humanity today and to explore politically feasible concepts to build an alternative future. Part I of this essay defines the problem while the subsequent parts provide solutions. We argue that religion, ideology, and other belief systems are used by protagonists in most conflicts to justify the use of force. It is important to recognise the underlying desire to expand power, rather than merely concentrating on external expressions of violence. We have surveyed the incidence of terrorism and conflict across the world in present times - from Latin America and Africa to the Middle East and Asia – to test our proposition.

We make a distinction between terrorism and extremism. The former implies violence causing bodily harm, with political or ideological motives, while the latter may not involve violent or criminal acts. Yet the latter might be more dangerous than the former as it may involve mobilising an entire society and reshaping policies of a state to conform to an absolutist vision. If many societies and states are governed by extremist forces, an international military confrontation can not be ruled out. While terrorism pervades the developing world, there are signs of forces of extremism rising in the developing world as well as Europe and North America. Our analysis reveals that certain common factors drive terrorism and extremism alike – comprehensive political and socio-economic deprivation, which must be distinguished from absolute poverty. Such a phenomenon exists around the world. This applies as much to the conflict between Western and Islamic countries, as to regional conflicts. We have analysed Western and Islamic discourse and identified contradictions on each side.

In Part I of this essay, we have also examined some of the historical roots of the growing deficit of trust between Western and Islamic countries. About a thousand years ago, the Arab world excelled in science, technology and public services. This was possible due to the emphasis on plurality, freedom of critical enquiry and state support for science and rationality. Over the centuries, these conditions have disappeared. The Arab region today faces a crisis of knowledge. However, there is a tendency in Western discourse to claim a monopoly on the advancement of human civilisation and ignore contribution made by the Arab society in the past. We have examined how the project of human civilisation is a joint venture and how due recognition of this basic truth can heal wounds and improve relations between societies in the future.

Our failure to recognise our shared past and address relative deprivation in present times can promote extremist and isolationist attitudes. In fact, we may be entering an age of competitive fundamentalism. If we want to reverse this trend, we need to construct an alternative vision of the global society based on serious introspection, reform and cooperation. Such a vision of an inclusive world should not be a mere statement about the ideal world. We need building blocks to translate such a vision into a reality. We set out to do this in the subsequent parts of this essay.

In Part II, we propose three ideas for restructuring relations between Western and Islamic countries. First, we propose the installation of an inclusive semi-permanent conference on the Middle East to resolve the Palestinian conflict and other regional security issues. We recall the Madrid Conference of the early 1990s and propose that it is necessary to instil dynamism and innovation in the peace process, this time with a semi-permanent multiple stakeholder conference table.

Secondly, we propose a Western-Islamic Dialogue and Engagement (WIDE) Initiative for a group of inspired and effective leaders to come together to develop proposals for conceptual clarity and to build political cooperation between Western and Islamic countries. The group may primarily comprise of credible leaders from Europe, Asia and the Middle East. It may devise ways to engage with the United States at various levels through informal channels. It may also interact with key political actors in the Middle East that have communication problems with the United States. The objective of the interaction would be to pursue the idea of the inclusive semi-permanent conference on the Middle East and to seek conceptual agreement on difficult issues such as the rule of law, difference between terrorism and resistance, and core human values.

Thirdly, we propose the establishment of an International Historical Study Group on our common human civilisation to examine the experience of mutual learning between civilisations and the evolution of mankind through joint efforts.

In Part III of this essay we propose the Arab Islamic Renaissance (AIR) Initiative. Our proposal is based on the premise that the failure of present governance models and the rejection of foreign ideas provide scope for preachers of absolutist visions to tempt young people with their own vision of society. It is necessary to develop an alternative vision of Arab society that is based on successful periods in Islamic history. There are already many institutions that are committed to promote education, science, technology and rationality. The existing capacity in a few countries needs to be harnessed and expanded for the benefit of the entire Arab region. We provide a plan of action that would include the following elements: spreading the message of Renaissance, strategies to make Arab unity operational, establishing houses of wisdom in the 21ˢᵗ century, ensuring freedom for critical inquiry and seeking influence through global engagement.

Whereas Parts II and III deal with problems of Western-Islamic relations and the internal dynamics of the Islamic world, in Part IV we offer a compact of the 3Ds to deal with the problems of alienation in the world at large. It is necessary for each society to tackle relative deprivation with specific models of democracy, development and dialogue that are appropriate to its own circumstance.

In Part V, we have identified steps for leaders and citizens to make some of the ideas work. We need to shift from the use of force to a collaborative problem-solving approach in the conduct of international relations. We realise that those who have a monopoly on power may consider such a strategic shift naïve and idealistic. We have cited historical examples to review what has happened to empires that refused to consider the consequences of arrogance of power. We conclude with our firm belief in human resilience to uphold the core values of freedom, justice, tolerance and trust.

Part I

The Challenge of the 21st Century

Clash of the Uncivilised

The period since the end of the Cold War has been characterised by some scholars as the Clash of Civilisations. This term has been used to describe the nature of the predominant conflict in the world since the end of ideological conflict between capitalism and communism. A distinguished statesman once explained to me how the term 'clash of civilisations' is a contradiction in terms. By definition, those who are civilised do not clash; they reason it out. Those who clash are not civilised. Thus, the clash is always between the uncivilised.

If global politics is guided by a term that is conceptually confused, it is to disguise the fact that the two main protagonists in the global theatre of conflict appear to make the same value proposition to the world: that force, not law, should govern international relations.

Force has always been used to determine relations between states and societies. However, it is often justified using a belief system that might be most capable of attracting the imagination of people at the given time. At the turn of the previous millennium the Crusaders annihilated not only Muslims, but also Jews and Christians of the Orthodox Church. It was the fourth Crusade led by the Roman Catholic Church, with logistics provided by merchants of Venice that destroyed Constantinople, the capital of Christendom. It was an attack by Mongols, who were soon to embrace Islam that ruined Baghdad, the centre of Islamic civilisation.

Since the destruction of Constantinople and Baghdad in the 13th century, Christians fought among themselves, from Catholic and Protestant camps, while Sunni and Shia Muslims turned on each other, as did

Persians, Turks and Arabs. The Treaty of Westphalia separated Church from State in the West. Instead of religious rivalries, conflict was conducted in the name of fascism and liberalism, colonialism and liberation, different brands of nationalism, and communism and capitalism.

Underlying the rivalries between belief systems is a tension between power and principles. It is in the nature of states to expand their power. It is in the nature of human beings to co-exist with one another on the basis of formal or informal principles.

When rulers, who are entrusted with managing human affairs on behalf of society, maintain a balance between power and principles, there is by and large relative stability. But when this basic balance is disturbed, with power superseding principles, human nature tends to react – and the result is generally explosive.

The world that was shocked by more than 100 million deaths, caused directly or indirectly by the two wars of the 20th century, tried to institute the rule of law in the conduct of international relations. It was embodied in the Charter of the United Nations. Even though the United Nations often failed to regulate the use of force in practice, at least it provides a theoretical basis for the conduct of international relations. When the former Soviet Union changed from one ideological system to another without bloodshed, it rekindled hope that it was possible to transform the world without the use of force. It inspired some scholars to recall Hegel's proclamation that history had ended.

Hegel announced the end of history when the forces of French revolution defeated the Prussian empire in 1806. Within a decade these forces lost to the league of empires. Since then colonialism, fascism

and crude authoritarianism have succeeded in subjugating liberty, equality and fraternity.

It is now argued by some scholars that the conflict between ideologies has been replaced by a conflict between those want to promote democracy and those who want to shape the world with an absolutist vision of Islam. In another semantic twist, the meaning of democracy in this context includes military occupation and the advocacy of a religion of peace includes suicide bombing and the killing of innocent people.

While the United States wants to use force to promote democracy and freedom, in reality it tends to deploy it against those whose power is vastly inferior to its own. For instance, it attacks Afghanistan and Iraq, whose defence capacity is emasculated, while it offers economic and military aid to the nuclear-armed dictatorship of Pakistan and imposes economic sanctions to another nuclear-armed dictatorship, North Korea. In combating states that are weak and attempting to negotiate with those states with a degree of strength, the United States sends out the message that force matters more than freedom.

Extremist Islamist groups do not recognise sovereignty of states; they seek to establish divine sovereignty. And they pray that the kingdom of God in their absolutist vision is to be realised by using force. They justify a rule based on religion in the name of justice since the rule of men is corrupt and repressive. They do not reveal that only it is only in such a rule they can become the governing elite, a role which the modern technocratic society cannot offer them.

A Problem of Humanity

While the conflict between those engaged in the pursuit of power, in the name of freedom and justice, between Western and Islamist protagonists has dominated the global discourse in the 21st century, the real tragedy is taking place somewhere else. About 5000 people have died in the terrorist attacks launched by Al Qaeda and its affiliates in New York, Washington DC, Madrid, London, Casablanca, Bali, Jakarta, Riyadh, and other places. It is estimated that about 50,000 people have died in the US-led war in Afghanistan and Iraq. Some observers believe that the figure is closer to 500,000 but such estimates are disputed. In comparison, over 5 million people died in the genocide in Congo, Sudan and Rwanda in the 1990s. Almost 50 million children have died of hunger and lack of access to basic healthcare in the five years since 9/11.

Even if we leave aside the deaths caused by genocide and poverty, it would be wrong to suggest that terrorism is only associated with Al Qaeda or its affiliates. The terrorism in Nepal associated with the Maoists is almost as old as Al Qaeda and has resulted in at least twice as many deaths. Terrorism in Chechnya, Georgia, Uzbekistan, Dagestan and other parts of the former Soviet Union started around the birth of Al Qaeda after the break-up of the former Soviet Union. Otherwise there is little direct correlation between the two phenomena, though some groups involved in acts of terror in the former Soviet Union might have received their training in Al Qaeda camps. Terrorism in Sri Lanka, Jammu & Kashmir, Uganda, Sudan, the Philippines, Colombia, Turkey, Algeria, and many other places predates Al Qaeda by a few decades and accounts for about 100 times the deaths caused by Al Qaeda and its affiliates. There were several types of anarchists and terrorist groups in Europe from the 1970s to 1990s. They seem to have become defunct now. However, there is no guarantee that such groups will not rise again. There is no universally accepted definition of terrorism. What some might describe as terrorism might be interpreted as insurgency, conflict, freedom struggle, or mere violence by others. In the absence of definition, an influential component of global discourse on terrorism tends to equate it primarily with Al Qaeda while using different terms to describe deaths resulting from other acts of terror not associated with Al Qaeda. Such a tendency does not reflect the real situation in the world.

In the absence of a universally accepted definition of terrorism, it is best to be guided by the unanimous resolution of the United Nations. While adopting the Global Counter Terrorism Strategy on September 8, 2006, the United Nations General Assembly has reiterated its strong condemnation of terrorism in *all its forms and manifestations, committed by whomever, wherever, and for whatever purposes*. This resolution builds on the UN Security Council Resolution 1566 (2004), which categorically rejected all acts of violence with objectives to influence politics or policies against civilians and non-combatants.

In Colombia, in Latin America, FARC was born essentially as a peasant movement at a time when landed oligarchies made life difficult for landless peasants. So long as the peasants suffered economic deprivation alone they did not take up arms. However, they discovered that they did not have any political space either. The Conservatives and Liberals, the two main political parties in Colombia, formed the National Front to institutionalise elitist power-sharing. The main outcome of National Front policies was that rural poverty increased to cover 70 per cent of the households. As the landless peasants did not have a legitimate political vehicle to challenge the status quo, they formed militant groups that eventually came together under the umbrella of FARC. Initially their violence was aimed at landed interests, appropriation of land and extortion. Eventually they discovered the drug trade. ELN, an urban-based group, also arose as a violent protest movement against the elitist state under the influence of Che and Castro. It took up kidnapping, at times taking 4000 persons a year for ransom. ELN and FARC have now developed a vested interest in their criminal activities. However, it was socio-economic as well as political deprivation that was responsible for driving them onto the path of terrorism in the first place.

Africa has seen different kinds of violence. If we do not address genocide in Congo, Rwanda and Darfur, and concentrate on terrorism *per se*, Southern Sudan and Northern Uganda qualify for close analysis.

During the colonial era, the British concentrated on the development of North-east Sudan and South and South-west Uganda. The indigenous rulers continued with the same policies. As a result, Southern Sudan and Northern Uganda have experienced relative economic deprivation. Moreover, since these areas are rich in natural resources, the people there see their exploitation as internal colonisation. Southern Sudan has hydrocarbon resources but until the recent agreement for sharing oil revenue on an equal basis between the North and the South, it has not received the benefits of it. Moreover, the Northern elite have ruled the country since 1956, depriving the South of fair political representation. Initially the objective of the SPLM was revolution and transformation of Southern Sudan as well as other backward areas. When they found that the political space was closed, they turned to violent separatism. When a political and

economic sharing of power and resources was offered, they agreed to lay down their weapons. There is now a risk that instead of the Northern elite ruling Sudan, power sharing between Northern and Southern elite may exclude the West and East. The late leader of the SPLM, John Garang had envisioned the peace process in two phases. The first phase was to address discrimination against the South. The second phase was to address discrimination against other backward areas. With his death, it seems that the scope of peace-building is limited to South. Terror and genocide in other parts of the country may yet happen. Darfur serves as a sad example.

Northern Uganda has historically been neglected in terms of economic development. In the 1970s, there were mass movements against discrimination. However, the Lord's Resistance Army, a group dominated by Acholi people, was formed in 1986, only after Musevini came to power and made his hostility towards the Acholis evident. Prior to this, even though Acholis were economically deprived, their presence in the national armed forces diluted their sense of grievances. As the Lord's Resistance Army resorted to abduction and forcing children to commit brutal acts against their own family members, Musevini's government forced Acholis to be confined to camps to prevent them from fleeing to Kampala. Now the LRA has developed a vested interest in unaccountable power and crime. Its offer of a ceasefire in August 2006 is suspect and is in any case being negotiated by the Acholi expatriates in the West. Many of the foot soldiers do not want to leave despite living a life of danger. Some have no option because they have been completely alienated from their community through forced acts of violence and murder against their kith and kin. If economic and political exclusion drove Acholis to terror, the LRA has brutally perfected the process of alienation by forcing social exclusion.

The phenomenon of relative economic and political deprivation in Latin America and parts of Africa leading to crime and greed is also seen in several countries in Asia. In the case of the Philippines, it can be observed with regards to terrorism perpetrated by the New People's Army, operating in the relatively wealthy Central Luzon province, as well as various Moro groups at the Southern tip of Mindanao.

The poverty ratio in Muslim Mindanao is

45 per cent, as compared to the national average of 25 per cent. If this is driving youth into groups like Moro National Liberation Front, Moro Islamic Liberation Front and Abu Sayyaf Group, why should there be terror in Central Luzon where the poverty ratio is below the national average of 25 per cent? Here the disparities are sharper as land-owning wealth is concentrated in the hands of a few families. There are landless peasants who are exploited by their landed neighbours. Both Central Luzon and Muslim Mindanao are resource rich. Many multinationals and settlers from other parts of the Philippines have benefited from Mindanao's natural resources. They adopt members of the local Christian population as junior partners in their commercial enterprises because of their cultural familiarity. As a result, Muslims are out of the marketplace. Thus, in the case of rich Central Luzon and poor Muslim Mindanao, specific groups of landless peasants are exploited or neglected by landed families, settlers and large corporations in their own neighbourhood.

The state has not been able to readjust the socio-economic development process. There are no political parties representing their interests. For a long time, Marcos concentrated power in his own hands. The heads of governments since his exit have so far come from eminent families or defence forces. Where the state has made efforts to encourage food processing industries and farmers' cooperatives, there is no insurgency. In rural peasant families in the affected areas, only 10 per cent of children complete their secondary school education. A large pool of drop-outs is available for recruitment into the New People's Army and Moro liberation movements. Here they are given guns, which provide them a sense of empowerment, and more cash than they could earn in the mainstream economy. The leaders of the New People's Army and Moro groups use cadres for extortion and other crimes. Abu Sayyaf Group is now only involved in crime. There are also reports of linkages between Muslim groups in Mindanao and external forces like Al Qaeda.

Just as in the Philippines terrorism is concentrated in certain provinces, in neighbouring Indonesia also four regions supply most of young people engaged in acts of terror. These are Aceh, central and Southern Sulavesi, Papua and Maluku, besides pockets of West Jawa. These also happen to be the poorest provinces of the country. In 1948, Darul Islam, a movement advocating a theocratic state was born. Initially it was not concerned about religion. It was basically opposed to the Indonesian government's concessions to the Dutch interests. Religion was used only as a binding force by groups that surfaced in different parts of the country. In 1953, Darul Islam formally demanded the creation of Indonesia Negara Islam or the formation of an Islamic state. Since then many offshoots of Darul Islam movement have come up. Since 9/11, several Western observers have focused on Jemmaih Islamiya, one of the spin-offs of Darul Islam. The Indonesian authorities deny the existence of a terrorist movement with this name since the name only means Islamic community. Semantics aside, there have been terrorist attacks in the country and the government has arrested people associated with such attacks. The ring leaders of such attacks have been educated professionals but the foot soldiers are unemployed young men.

The Indonesian authorities are willing to accept the existence of terrorist organisations like Mujahideen Kopak and Lashker Jihad. The former is based in central and Southern Sulavesi and the latter in Maluku. These two are four of the poorest provinces in Indonesia. They also have the highest unemployment and drop-out rates. Out of the 100 million labour force of Indonesia, 10 million are directly unemployed, officially. The unemployment rate for young men in the age group of 15-24 is 22 per cent. In central and South Sulavesi and Maluku it is suspected to be even higher. The national high school drop-out rate is 10 per cent. In central and Southern Sulavesi and Maluku it approaches 20 per cent. These two provinces also have a Christian and Muslim population in sizeable numbers, providing a religious basis on which people can organise. In Aceh, there is also the ethnic dimension. Thus, the movement that began with opposition to Dutch concessions in 1948 has now given birth to several groups that have come up in four of the most deprived regions of the country. The relatively educated leaders of these groups have been able to establish contacts with terrorist groups outside the country and arrange training for their men in Afghanistan and Pakistan. They are thus now involved in an international game. It is argued by Indonesian experts that these leaders have been able to mobilise sympathy of the Indonesian masses by directing their attention on Palestine and Iraq and thus highlighting

the inequities of the international system. Though local disparities have helped create or sustain such organisations, there is now interest in self perpetuation which is sought by focussing on international issues.

The same pattern is repeated in nearby Sri Lanka. When Sri Lanka became independent in 1948, Tamils were known to be an enterprising community. They secured jobs in the private sector due to their command over English and their education. The Sri Lankan state introduced a language policy to discriminate the Tamils and gradually drive them out of the economy. Similarly, land distribution policies were introduced to the disadvantage of the Tamil population. Industrial development was concentrated in Colombo and the Western region. Currently this region accounts for 50 per cent of GDP and 80 per cent of national manufacturing output. In comparison, Northern and Eastern provinces, where Tamils predominantly live, account for less than 3 per cent of GDP and almost no manufacturing output. The per capita income of the North and East is $400, as compared to the national average of over $1000. There is segregation in employment and education. The Sinhalese people join the state sector whereas the Tamils join the private sector. Only 3 per cent of schools have common medium of instruction. The remaining 97 per cent of schools have either Tamil or Sinhalese medium. Thus, children are separated from their early childhood.

Nevertheless, Tamils were not the first people to take up arms. Due to the disparities between the West and the rest of the country, JVP (Janatha Vimukti Peramuna), a leftist group from the Southern part of the country had launched the first wave of terror in the country. This group was annihilated by physically eliminating its leaders. The remaining members have joined electoral politics. Even though the Tamils were socio-economically discriminated against, they had political leverage. In the parliamentary system, the Tamils provided a balance of power and were able to secure positions in the cabinet. This provided opportunities for patronage and some concessions for the Tamil people. With the introduction of the presidential system, the Tamils lost this leverage. With economic, social and political deprivation, they took up arms. Initially, many groups were involved including some more moderate than LTTE. If the state had compromised with them, LTTE might not have gained strength. A ceasefire sponsored by Norway created

opportunity for dialogue in the early part of this century but the parties were not quick to find sustainable solutions. As LTTE monopolised the opposition space, it strengthened itself by engaging in arms procurement which is normally concomitant of drug trade and other criminal activities. At present, LTTE and extremist forces in the government have developed a stake in conflict as it helps expand the power of each player at the cost of peace and the nation's progress.

The story of India's Naxalites is very similar to that of NPA in the Philippines, Maoists in Nepal and JVP in Sri Lanka. The experience of Assamese and Bodo terror groups can be compared to the Moro groups in the Philippines and LTTE in Sri Lanka. The neglect of rural areas in central and Northern Indian states such as Telangana in Andhra Pradesh, Eastern parts of Maharashtra, Chattisgarh, Jharkhand and parts of Bihar have given rise to agrarian terrorism aimed at landlords and government officials. Currently, 150 districts of India, out of a total of 600 districts, have a Naxalite presence. This compares to 50 districts about 10 years ago. Thus, precisely in the decade when India enjoyed a consistent GDP growth rate of 6 per cent, Naxalism spread its tentacles in the country. The process of globalisation was focussed on cities and towns, which experienced real growth, but ignored the rural areas. Since the 1980s, Indian policy making has been increasingly influenced by a coalition of upper and middle class interests such as big business, the media and the bureaucracy. In the last decade, transnational interests have joined this coalition. It is difficult for purely rural-based parties to influence policies in this structure. At the operational level, the corruption of district bureaucracy and the high-handed business practices of contractors have resulted in exploitation of rural labour.

In the North-east of India, the local people have felt a sense of alienation over the years. Their resources are controlled by outsiders – petroleum by the state, tea and the timber trade by commercial interests in Kolkatta, and local trade by settlers from Northern and Western India. In addition, the influx of migrants from Bangladesh has added to the competition for labour. Their exclusion from the economic process is further accentuated by weak transport and communication links to the national market. The central government does transfer disproportionately high share of resources to the North-east but they are managed

by a bureaucracy comprising officials from outside the region. The North-east has had representation in the power structure including the presidency, the speaker's position in the Parliament, the leadership of the Congress party and positions in the cabinet but the benefits of office have not percolated down to large segments of the population. As a result, groups resort to terror. At some stage they compromise with the state in return for financial or political gains, and new groups come up. Some groups such as those representing Mizos and Gorkhas and some representing Assamese and Bodo interests have given up violence whenever the state has entered into political power-sharing arrangements with them. Sikkim has eschewed violence altogether due to its emphasis on balanced development, despite a high poverty ratio, and Meghalaya has experienced a relatively limited degree of violence, as compared to the neighbouring states, for the same reason.

The Naxalites of central and Northern India and the myriad groups in the North-east have now taken to extortion and crime. They disrupt development of infrastructure, aimed at benefiting their constituents, in order to maintain their monopoly on power and to force their supporters to be de-linked from development. In the case of the United Liberation Front of Assam, there is evidence of external linkages, with the military leader of the organisation possessing assets in neighbouring countries. Like LTTE of Sri Lanka, ULFA has developed a vested interest in perpetuating terror for its own sake so that it can retain its criminal enterprises without any accountability.

The pattern in Bangladesh is no different. The growth of extremism in Bangladesh since 2000 has coincided with the period when Bangladesh enjoyed 6 per cent GDP growth rate. Much of the economic growth is concentrated in Dhaka and the central region, which accounts for almost all of the manufacturing output. The Northern and Southern parts of the country live in abject poverty. The following districts account for almost half of poor people in the country – Bogra, Rangpur, Dinajpur in Rajshahi; Faridpur near Kulna; Tangil, Jamalpur, Sylhet, and Comilla near Chittgong. These areas happen to be precisely where extremist parties tend to get elected and where terrorist groups like JMB and JMJB have bases. Bangla Bhai, a key terrorist leader, operates from Rajshahi and Jangi Bhai, another terrorist leader, is based in the Chittgong

area. A leftist extremist group, Purba Bangla Communist Party, is strong in the South and the Eastern parts of the country.

Thus, Bangladesh has terrorist groups belonging to Islamist as well as leftist ideologies. They gathered strength in the late 1990s in a political vacuum created by constant infighting between the principal leaders of the democratic politics. The situation in Bangladesh is similar to that in Nepal, which had autocratic rule in one form or another until 1991. With the induction of democracy in 1991, it was hoped that the voiceless would now have a space to press for their priorities. However, those in power, in partnership with their capitalist cronies, concentrated on the development of the capital region. They also engaged in such a bitter fight with one another that democracy was discredited as a reliable institution, creating a void that was quickly filled by extremists. In the case of Nepal, the Maoists stepped in. In the case of Bangladesh, it was the extremists of the left and the religious right. Having tested popular support, they have developed a vested interest in their own perpetuation. The result is that the Nepali political parties have had to accept an arrangement with the Maoists while the Bangladeshi political parties are courting Islamic extremists.

The story of Afghanistan is too well known to be repeated here. Decades of development focussed on Kabul, combined with the utter neglect of the rest of the country created regional satraps backed by militias in the country. The United States used them to evict the former Soviet Union. In the anarchy that followed, Pakistan created its own force, the Taliban, trained in its madrassas and backed by its own security agencies. The installation of the Hamid Karzai government in Kabul has weakened but not completely destroyed the satraps or the Talibans. With their bases in Queta, Peshawar, and Waziristan, the Taliban continue to attack Southern and South-eastern districts of Afghanistan. It garnered support from the ranks of alienated, humiliated, orphaned youth, and has developed a vested interest in its own perpetuation, thanks to its sponsors and supporters.

Afghanistan's terror has found its way to the neighbouring Tajikistan and other countries in Central Asia. It is most evident in Ferghana Valley, a densely populated region between Uzbekistan and Tajikistan. The per capita income of all Central Asian countries

declined by 30 to 50 per cent since the early 1990s when they became independent from the former Soviet Union to 1996. It has increased since then but the living conditions are very difficult in Ferghana Valley. There are no leisure centres, cinemas, sports clubs or even coffee shops. In the autumn and winter months, seasonal peasants and craftsmen are not employed. During these months Hizb-ut-Tehrir, a global extremist organisation with an aspiration to establish universal Muslim community, recruits youth. Earlier the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan grew up in precisely the same area. Extremism has not come to an end with the death of the top leaders of the IMU; it has simply taken a different form under the auspices of Hizb-ut-Tehrir.

Turkey has faced several different kind of terrorism in the last three decades. Initially the Marxist groups emerged from the Eastern part of the country. Lately the Kurdish groups, led by PKK, have been engaged in terrorism. Turkey has traditionally been ruled by a coalition of interests including armed forces, Istanbul business elite, and increasingly the representatives of the middle classes. In this coalition, South-east Anatolia's rural folks have hardly had any effective voice.

The lopsided power structure has resulted in lopsided development. The per capita income of South-east Anatolia is less than half of the national average. Conversely, the official unemployment rate of 20 per cent is double that of the national rate. There is very little penetration of business. For instance, Istanbul accounts for more than 20 per cent of business units in the country, and most of them of a large size. Gaziantep, the largest city in South-east Anatolia, accounts for 2 per cent of business units, most of them of a small size. Employment generation and prospects for the future are bleak for young South-east Anatolians, be they Kurdish or Islamists or Marxists. Their best option is to join a criminal group to acquire a gun and a livelihood with some ideological justification. The government has consciously made considerable investment in the region. There are also several parliamentarians of Kurdish origin. However, now PKK has developed stakes in continuation of the underdevelopment of the region. It obstructs developmental work, in order to keep its constituents backward and loyal. It has been associated with smuggling and gun running, with Syria and the

Northern Iraqi administration turning a blind eye to its criminal activities.

In the main strategic theatre of the Middle East, a large number of suicide bombers have come from the Palestinian territories, either formally or effectively occupied by Israel. The Arabs consider the creation of Israel on their land as the culmination of humiliation suffered by them at the hands of Western powers for centuries. The details of the economic and political disparities between Israel and the Palestinian territories and the large scale humiliation of the Palestinian people by Israel's defence forces are known. The causes for the deprivation of the Palestinian people are complex. They range from the policies of Israel to the method of governance of their own leaders and strategies of their supporters. But the fact remains that the economic, social and political conditions of the Palestinian people give rise to serious grievances. In the eyes of the Arab leaders, the United States has always condoned the excesses of the Israeli defence forces. In the eyes of the Israeli leaders, the world at times ignores attacks by the Palestinian groups on their civilian population. Thus, both feel a sense of discrimination and injustice and engage in violence against one another to restore justice from their own perspective.

It is in Lebanon that the condition of the Palestinian refugees has been worst. They are confined to refugee camps, often without electricity, water and sanitation. They do not enjoy any political rights. In 1982, Israel forced PLO to leave Lebanon. As PLO was the primary employer for the refugees, most of them lost their jobs. The peace process since the 1990s has engaged PLO with West Bank and Gaza, neglecting refugees in Lebanon.

The Shias of Southern Lebanon mostly comprise the poor agrarian families. This part of the country was neglected while Beirut and nearby areas experienced development in the 1960s and early 1970s until the outbreak of civil war. Since the 1990s there has been an emphasis on making Beirut an attractive centre for global capital. The city is being modernised, resulting in the eviction of refugees and the neglect of poor Shia communities in the South. In such circumstances, Hezbollah, taking advantage of the vacuum created by the departure of the PLO in 1980, established itself between 1982 and 1985. The Iranian

revolution of 1979 was helpful as the revolutionary regime has reportedly despatched weapons as well as fighters from Iran to Southern Lebanon. However, even if Iran had not played this role, Hezbollah would have survived with the help from Syria or some other power, as relative deprivation of the Shias in the South and the Palestinian refugees after the departure of PLO would have given rise to some groups engaging in acts of terror. Ironically in 2006, just when Syria was forced to disengage from Lebanon and Hezbollah demonstrated an inclination to give up its ambition of establishing an Iran-style regime in Lebanon, slowly assimilating into democratic politics, Israel attacked it. Israel argues that this was done in response to the violation of international borders when Hezbollah crossed into its territory to kidnap its soldiers. Hezbollah argues that this was done to force Israel to release Palestinian prisoners. Israel and Hezbollah offer their own logic for the conflict but it is not our intention to examine this specific case here.

While Hezbollah was born as a conglomeration of militias which came up amidst grievances of the Palestinian and Southern Lebanon Shia population, it has now developed an interest in perpetuating itself. It is believed to be providing training to Hamas. While it has created a strong social organisation to deliver public goods and entered Parliament, it has not given up its militarised arm. With its success in counteringIsrael's attacks in 2006, its popularity has soared in the Arab streets. It is now positioning itself as the main vehicle for economically and politically deprived youth not only in Southern Lebanon, but also across the Arab world.

Algeria did not have refugees from Palestine, but most of Algeria has been neglected like Southern Lebanon. In the colonial period, the French and their local allies, comprising 5 per cent population, owned 60 per cent land. The post-colonial governments ignored agricultural development driving people to cities and the Gulf countries for jobs. In the 1980s, with the shrinking of the Arab economies due to the decline in oil prices, many of the Algerian youth found themselves jobless. They rallied around the Islamic Salvation Frnot (FIS), to challenge the status quo. However, when the military foresaw an FIS victory in the elections in 1991, it annulled the elections, banned FIS and arrested its leaders. As a result, angry young men joined Al-Gama'a-al-Islamiyya, which committed acts of terror in the 1990s. The government indirectly

helped SGPC, another extremist organisation, to flourish in order to dilute the monopoly of Al-Gama'a-al-Islamiyya. Eventually, Al-Gama'a-al-Islamiyya decided to give up violence in response to President Bouteflika's amnesty programme under a Charter of Peace and National Reconciliation initiative. Improvement in the economy has also created jobs and hope. In the meanwhile, SGPC has acquired a life of its own, with a significant presence in Europe.

Egypt also follows the same pattern whereby grievances give birth to extremism and greed develops an interest in perpetuating it. In Egypt, groups such as the Muslim Brotherhood, Al-Gama'a-al-Islamiyya and Egyptian Islamic Jihad gathered strength in the 1970s, initially encouraged by Sadat to counter Nasser's communism. Later on they grew in strength as Sadat developed a lavish lifestyle, visited Jerusalem and aligned himself with global interests. At the same time young people graduating from universities found it difficult to make a living. The affluent areas in Cairo, Alexandria and Sharm el Sheikh co-exist with vast slums in large cities and the impoverished farmers in Upper Egypt. The Islamic groups came up in the 1970s to provide training for college students preparing for examinations. They also provided quiet spaces in mosques to enable them to study. Thus, initially the desire to perform better in examinations, with a view to finding good jobs, attracted people. Young women were attracted by the Islamic dress and separation of sexes in buses as these measures helped to prevent harassment by frustrated and unemployed young men. As the ranks of unemployed grew, the extremist religious groups providing social goods continued to expand. The closed political space did not allow them to enter the electoral fray. Some of the groups took to terror in the absence of political representation and legitimate means of communication within a constitutional framework.

In the late 1990s, Al-Gama'a-al-Islamiyya and Egyptian Islamic Jihad, the groups that realised the futility of armed tactics, gave up weapons, following the example of their counterparts in Algeria. However, since then a new breed of terrorists has grown up in Sinai. These are persons of tribal origin who find it difficult to assimilate themselves into the modern economy despite heavy government investments in the region. They tend to be conservative, illiterate and feel isolated in the deserts and mountains. They are

jealous of the upmarket resorts coming up in the region, into which they believe most of the investment goes, rather than into their development. They have attacked tourist destinations like Taba and Sharm el Sheikh. According to some analysts, the attacks are the handiwork of Al Qaeda operatives, with local people providing logistical support.

In Lebanon, Algeria and Egypt, terrorist groups gathered strength in the second half of the1980s. This was a period when the Gulf economies contracted due to a drop in oil revenue and the migrant workers returned home without jobs. At the same time, the democratic deficit was accentuated with authoritarian regimes controlling their hold on power and declining space to political opposition. The only open space for free expression was the mosque, which was used by leaders of ambitious radical groups to mobilise young and other deprived people.

Iraq and Saudi Arabia had escaped terrorism until the US invasion of Iraq in 2003, with the exception of one incident in Saudi Arabia in 1996. Prior to 2003, the only significant terrorist group that was active in Iraq was Ansar-ul-Islam. It was based in the Kurdish region, where socio-economic and political deprivation is well documented. In this region there were already some Kurdish nationalist groups, at times engaging in acts of terror. Ansar-ul-Islam came into being after the war in Afghanistan drove some of the extremists out of that country. The US attack on Iraq in 2003 considerably weakened it.

However, since 2003, almost 50 groups that have committed and claimed acts of terror have taken birth in Iraq. They belong to Baathist as well as extremist Islamic ideologies, Shia and Sunni sects as well as Iraqi and other nationalities. Thus, ideology, sect and religion are all used as vehicles by respective groups. The fact that they were born in 2003 suggests that they are direct results of the US occupation. Some young men take up terrorism as livelihood, indicating the dire socio-economic conditions created by the occupation. Some are loyalists to the Saddam regime. Some act at the behest of those engaged in a sectarian power game. The fact that many new terrorist groups have come up since January 2005 and that the old ones have grown in strength, despite elections, the arrest of Saddam Hussein and the death of Al-Zaraqawi proves that there is a continuous supply of young men willing to give up their life. In the intense power struggle to control Iraq, competing groups deploy competitive terror tactics to tighten their control on society.

Saudi Arabia witnessed a spate of terrorist attacks from May 2003 until the end of 2005. The incidence of terrorism declined but did not disappear in the country in 2006. The biographical details of most deadly terrorists in the list issued by the Saudi authorities indicates that many young men who were dismissed or suddenly resigned from services have taken up terrorism. The experience of Iraq and Saudi Arabia since 2003 demonstrates that the feeling of collective humiliation caused by foreign occupation in a society where unemployment and alternative job opportunities are limited, strengthens terrorism. In 2006, the Saudi per capita income increased to $15000 from less than $10000 half a decade earlier. The private sector growth was projected at 9 per cent. This might be a partial explanation for significant decline in the incidence of terrorism that year.

Al Qaeda and the West

Much of the discussion above has focussed on groups committing acts of terror with a view to changing territorial or political dispensation or structures of state within certain countries. Many scholars are not comfortable to bracket such national or regional phenomena of terror with what is described as a global threat by Al Qaeda and its affiliates.

Al Qaeda wants to change the world order. So far it has specifically targeted the United States, its allies, the governments supported by it and the destinations frequented by its nationals or the nationals of its allied countries. It has not threatened China, India, Scandinavia, Eastern Europe, Africa and Latin America. Ironically, Al Qaeda came into being as an unintended consequence of a project jointly launched by the United States and some of its allies.

The genesis of Al Qaeda can be traced to a joint project of the American and Pakistani intelligence agencies in the 1980s to build cadres of mujahideens or freedom fighters against the Soviet rule in Afghanistan. In this task, the services of Abdullah Azam, known for his use of religion to mobilise young men from the Arab world to fight in Afghanistan,

were used. Osama bin Laden was one of his star recruits. Whether Osama bin Laden was supported by the CIA or not is a subject of endless speculation, without any definitive conclusion. However, the CIA and Pakistan's Inter-Services Intelligence Agency were certainly beneficiaries of his resources and organising skills during the operations against the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan.

After the Soviet withdrawal from Afghanistan, Osama bin Laden established Al Qaeda to mobilise his force of recruits to protect the interests of the Muslim people on a global basis. This happened around 1990. Originally the objective of Al Qaeda was to bring down the governments supported by the West in the Middle East. Therefore, during 1991-96, from its base in Sudan, it launched several terrorist attacks to destabilise states and societies in the Middle East.

When Sudan was forced to evict Al Qaeda under American pressure, Al Qaeda decided to attack the United States itself. In 1996, Osama bin Laden shifted his base to Afghanistan under the patronage of Taliban leader Mullah Umar and issued a declaration of war against the United States and its allies. He espoused a vision of a global Caliphate to attract other like-minded groups that predated Al Qaeda. In 1998 he launched the International Islamic Front for Jihad against Jews and Crusaders. The co-founders of the Front were primarily the leaders of radical movements in Egypt, Pakistan and Bangladesh. Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan and groups in South-east Asia have also been associated with the Front. Al Qaeda is essentially a product of the mujahideen force created by the intelligence agencies of the United States and Pakistan, later on nurtured by Sudan and Afghanistan. Such consistent state support has enabled it to acquire an autonomous life of its own. At present, it benefits from bases in Iraq and parts of Pakistan due to the political vacuum existing in those regions. Since the advent of internet in the late 1990s, it has also been able to use the new technology to strengthen its cadres and supporters.

In its operations against Western targets, Al Qaeda has used Muslim migrants living in the West. It is argued by some scholars that these young men tend to be graduates, belonging to middle class families, and therefore terrorism does not have anything to do with socio-economic factors. Such an argument reflects a lack of understanding of realities in the developing world, including North Africa and West Asia. In the developing countries, college education is inexpensive. A college degree does not mean much. Middle class life means living above the poverty line but it does not necessarily mean access to basic comforts. Those who go abroad for further education do so either by selling whatever few assets the family might have or with the help of friends and relatives abroad, unless they have managed to secure a scholarship. When they find themselves alienated in their host countries, they tend to depend more and more on those belonging to their own communities. In the process, some of them get recruited to organisations promoting the cause of Al Qaeda to create a global Caliphate. The sense of alienation tends to be stronger in the second generation migrants.

There are 15 million Muslims in Europe. A vast majority of them belong to the working classes, although some have climbed the social and economic ladder. Some occupy significant slots in civil service and business. However, their presence in representative institutions is marginal. The Hindu and Chinese migrants often have a professional background before they come to Europe and are thus able to find professional employment in their new homeland. Some of them have strong social networks back home, which they use to launch careers in business. The Muslim migrants belong to the traditional and deprived economic background at home, without professional qualifications or business networks. Their option is to find a manual or clerical job or to establish a local business, such as a shop or a restaurant, dependent on the local population. In either case, it is a very tough task. The problem is further accentuated with every passing generation. As the first generation Hindus and Chinese tend to be professionals and businessmen, their progeny inherit their social assets. The children of Muslim parents who live a difficult life inherit a very narrow asset base. As it is difficult to find jobs without social networks, the frustration of the educated unemployed is much greater.

There are no channels to transmit migrant concerns into the central political arena. This creates a sense of alienation, anger, and lack of self worth. Youth feeling such a deprivation of dignity are easy prey for the masters of extremist propaganda. The only business that flourishes in such a situation is

that of propaganda. Thus, Europe is estimated to have 15000 imams. Considering that Muslim population is 15 million, there is one imam for each group of 1000 people. While most imams cater to the psychological and theological needs of common people, some find competitive propaganda a good tool for expanding their circle of influence.

Europe has liberal political laws for refugees. However, Europe does not have effective strategies for economic and political inclusion of the alienated migrants. Europe's own growing unemployment in recent years places further constraints on the continent's ability to absorb migrants into the mainstream. As the migrants feel a sense of insecurity, they form ghettos or social networks in search of camaraderie, security and an inexpensive lifestyle. These circumstances transform the feeling of alienation from the individual to a collective level. It is easy for militant groups claiming to establish justice in the world to tap groups of such young men feeling a sense of alienation. Eventually the organisations develop their own vested interest in self preservation and aggrandisement. Many of them seek training and expertise from terror groups in Asia and the Middle East and seek their franchise. The process finally leads to the creation of trans-continental extremist networks.

The recruitment of alienated Muslim youth in the West to the cause of Al Qaeda is not as automatic as it appears. The internet is a tool that is used by those who want to use it for whatever purpose they choose. Also, there are groups that actively recruit Muslim youth on streets and campuses, and not only online. Those who feel frustrated with their life may search the internet looking for websites that may tempt them into terrorism. It is important to bear in mind that there is somebody out there who is creating these websites, supplying videos of combat scenes, writing provocative messages, generating secure password software, monitoring registration, determining when to upgrade general visitors to full membership and access to armed training. Investigations by investigative agencies have traced the commissioning of at least some of the websites to the new Al Qaeda leadership in Iraq.

Also, like Al Qaeda there are about half a dozen other organisations that have ambitions to create a global Islamist Caliphate. These are very specific organisations and members of the International Islamic Front. They are based in South or Central Asia and have now created recruitment cells in Europe. They proactively tap vulnerable young people such as first term university students and second generation immigrants. Together, these groups may cooperate to pursue their objectives to create an international order in their vision, while competing with each other at the same time. The linkages between these groups are of crucial importance. They ensure that a crack down on one group will not undermine their collective influence and ability to recruit Muslim youth in the West and to use them to promote terrorism.

These groups include *Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT)*, a Pakistan-based organisation, which predates Al Qaeda. It has now emerged as the new linchpin of the International Islamic Front (IIF), actively spreading the pan-Islamic ideas of bin Laden across the world. It has been focusing its attention on the Pakistani Diasporas in West Europe in general and in the UK in particular for this purpose. It is alleged to have sleeper cells in the UK, Spain, Portugal, and France. These sleeper cells are generally believed to comprise of second generation Muslims who are disgruntled with what they perceive as the West's hostile treatment of their community.

Another important outfit is *Hizb ut-Tehrir (HT)*. Its creation also predates Al Qaeda. It has shifted bases and has now set up its headquarters in London. It has also successfully drawn on second-generation immigrants of the UK as well as continental Europe. Earlier HT used to rely on recruitment of new members from the streets. Lately it has been using various front organisations at more than a dozen universities in the UK. These university groups include Ideological Society, the Millennium Forum, 1924 Society, Pakistan Society (sometimes) and the New World Society.

Another organisation, *Harkat-ul-Jihad-al-Islami (HUJI)*, now based in Bangladesh, also predates Al Qaeda. Its leader, Showkat Osman, was one of the key signatories to Osama bin Laden's call for jihad against the Jews and Crusaders in 1998. Before 9/11, the IIF had made HUJI-Bangladesh responsible for training jihadi Rohingyas from Myanmar in camps in Bangladesh. Post 9/11, its responsibilities were extended further, and, it was given the charge of

training jihadists from Southern Thailand, Cambodia, Indonesia and Brunei. HUJI was the first organization to gather mujahideen from India, Bangladesh, Burma, Iran, Philippines, Malaysia, Africa, UK, Ireland, Fiji, USA, various Arab countries and the Central Asian States under the green flag. Thus its international pull is very strong. HUJI is believed to have some UK-based supporters.

Some of the other groups came into existence after the formation of the International Islamic Front. For instance, *Jama'atul Mujahideen Bangladesh (JMB),* a Bangladesh based terrorist outfit, was formed by Sheikh Abdur Rahman in 1998 and *Jaish-e-Mohammed (JeM)* was founded by Maulana Masood Azhar in Pakistan in early 2000.

Besides these organisations, there are some indications that SGPC of Algeria is now trying to seek a global role. It may have been weakened back home in Algeria, but it is reportedly trying to recruit North African Muslim youth in Europe to the cause of Islamic International Front. We have already indicated that some organisations may not have as great a physical presence as the ones mentioned here but they may use the internet to recruit alienated Muslim youth in the West.

From Terrorism to Extremism

While Al Qaeda and its affiliates recruit young people to take up arms, many other organisations are not confined to acts of terror aimed at causing bodily harm. Their objectives are much larger, focussed on arming the minds of the youth in their own countries as well as migrants in the West. They depend more on vehement propaganda, delivery of social goods and recruitment than on violent acts. They may engage in or inspire acts of violence, but their main objective is to influence policies and the nature of society by persuasion and propaganda. They have absolutist visions of the society. Besides Muslim dominated countries they also target the Muslim Diaspora in the West.

In Egypt, the Islamic Jihad and Al-Gama'a-al-Islamiyya have given up violence. The Muslim Brotherhood in its new form does not subscribe to violence but it is engaged in promoting an absolutist vision of the society. In the Parliamentary elections held in December 2005 candidates associated with the Muslim Brotherhood won almost one fourth of the seats. In Bangladesh, parties promoting an extremist vision of the society based on religion are in the coalition government and likely to be part of any conceivable coalition in the future. In Iran the theocratic regime has gained strength. In Central Asia, extremist groups that are not necessarily violent have a strong base, particularly in Uzbekistan and Tajikistan.

In Europe and North America, the growth of an extremist mindset is not confined to the Muslims or other minorities. There is also the rise of intolerance in sections of the majority communities. Some of the election results and opinion polls clearly demonstrate the rising popularity of xenophobia as a political ideology. As compared to the 1970s, the growth rate of the Euro zone has declined from over 3 per cent to less than 1.5 per cent. Unemployment has more than trebled during the same period. Currently there are more than 20 million unemployed people in Europe. While some Europeans believe in integration and expansion of the continent, others seek refuge in ultra-nationalism.

Many European countries have signed Cordon Sanitaire, banning propaganda of extremist groups. Proportional representation systems make it difficult for extremists to find space in Parliament. The memories of the Nazi experience have also created a social deterrence against extremist groups. Nevertheless, in electoral politics as well as outside, extremist groups have shown a tendency to grow. In France, National Front, an ultra-nationalist group, has secured around 15 per cent of the vote in the first round of presidential elections since 1988 and more than 10 per cent in the National Assembly since then. In Austria Freedom Party won 27 per cent of the vote in the 1999 elections, enabling it to join the government amidst protests from all over Europe. Its share of the vote polled in subsequent elections declined to about 10 per cent, while its splinter group, Alliance for the Future of Austria, joined a subsequent government. Belgium and the Netherlands have also seen the rise of extremist parties. In Denmark, People's Party won 13 per cent of the vote in the elections in 2005. It is so opposed to multi-cultural policies and immigration that it has attracted rebuke from the United Nations and Council of Europe.

In Europe, right wing extremism is racist, ultra-nationalist and xenophobic, but not religious. In the United States, racism is not comparatively strong, but Evangelical and fundamentalist Christianity is on the rise.

Even though the United States is the largest economy in the world, out of its 112 million households, 30 million (28 per cent) households have per household income of less than $25000 per annum. The following states have a disproportionate amount of households living below the national average: West Virginia, Louisiana, Mississippi, Kentucky, Alabama, Oklahoma, New Mexico, Arkansas, Montana, North Dakota, South Carolina, Tennessee, District of Columbia, North Carolina, Oregon, Florida, Texas, South Dakota, Idaho, Maine, Ohio, Kansas, Missouri, Arizona, Nebraska, Pennsylvania, Iowa, Georgia, and New York. About 63 per cent of the total households in the United States, earning less than $25000 per year, live in these 29 states. Some of these states also account for most of the Hispanic population, besides California, which accounts for 10 per cent of the American households living below the average $25000 household income level.

The states mentioned above have seen the maximum growth of Evangelical Christianity since the 1990s. In the last 15 years, population of the United States has increased from 250 million to 300 million. During this period, adults subscribing to Pentecostal and other forms of Evangelical Christianity have increased from 25 per cent to 35 per cent, while non-believers have increased from 10 per cent to 15 per cent. The Pentecostal branch has its origins in the poorest segments of African-Americans at the beginning of the 20th century. Later, it attracted other sections of the population. But to date it is considered to be an attractive religion for the poorest of the poor. It is also believed to be a highly democratic religion from a theological perspective as anyone can become a preacher without the rigours of training that the traditional church demands. About 10 per cent subscribe to fundamental Christianity, which is more right wing than Evangelical Christianity. Thus, the middle ground made of liberal Protestants and Roman Catholics has declined from 55 per cent to 40 per cent. During the same period, politics has been polarised. The states mentioned above have mostly voted for Republicans and are known as the Red States.

The other states, where the proportion of prosperous households is much higher, tend to vote for Democrats and are known as the Blue States. These include Massachusetts, Virginia, New Hampshire, Connecticut, New Jersey, and Maryland.

The growth of Evangelical Christianity has been particularly noticeable among Hispanics and other migrant communities. By extension, it has also been growing in parts of Latin America, Africa and East Asia. According to some estimates, Pentecostal Christianity is the fastest growing fundamentalist religion in the world.

There are many reasons for the growth of Evangelical Christianity - the charisma of Billy Graham, the highly organised nature of Evangelical churches with strong propaganda machinery, disapproval of social changes in American society such as same sex marriages, lack of tolerance of Conservative thinking on campuses, astute use of Church networks by Republican leadership, and strong religious beliefs of recent US Presidents, particularly Ronald Reagan and George Bush, Junior. Several rich American families and foundations have contributed to the financial strength of the Evangelical movement. Nevertheless, it is noticeable that in terms of the number of followers, it is growing much faster where more than one third of the households are surviving on an income of less than $25000 while it has found limited appeal in the states and pockets where technocratic, middle class professionals live.

The rise of religious fundamentalism in the United States is currently limited to a non-violent social agenda, including a ban on same sex marriage, a ban on abortion and access to emergency contraception and the promotion of intelligent design in schools. There are early signs of enforcing creationism in the schools. In the first half of this decade, Blount County Board of Education in Tennessee, Roseville Joint Union High School District in California, Cobb County School District in Georgia and Oklahoma school boards favoured one way or another the teaching of creationism over evolution. Both Evangelical and fundamentalists have a growing influence on the foreign policy. They support aid to Africa in the spirit of Christian charity. They also insist on strong support to Israel without any compromise with the Arabs and Palestinians. They do not do so under the influence of

the Jewish lobbies but more so under the influence of the Bible. They believe that it is essential for all the Jews to return to Israel to make the second coming of Christ possible. They believe that the creation of the Israeli state is a proof of the validity of the prophecy made in the Bible.

As distinct from Evangelical Christianity, several of the same 29 states mentioned above have also witnessed the rise of violent racist organisations such as Aryan Nation, National Alliance and WCOTC. These organisations were born in prisons. They have mostly attracted unemployed White youth and they have articulated their ideologies in power terms. The leaders and activists of these groups have been found guilty of plots and attempts to attack various targets but they have not succeeded in causing violence. (The perpetrator of the Oklahoma bombing was proved to be a psychopath and not representative of a terrorist organisation). At present these organisation have been decimated through lawsuits and bankruptcies. However, if a charismatic leader capable of galvanising resources emerges, it is possible for these or similar organisations to rise again. The underlying psychology is present in parts of the United States. There are also remnants of Ku Klux Klan, and several other hate groups of the extreme right as well as the extreme left. The exact number of such hate groups is difficult to ascertain but it is in the range of a few hundred with a few thousand members. These groups have bases in exactly the same states where Evangelical and fundamental Christianity is growing – Texas, Florida, Georgia, Alabama, Louisiana, Arkansas, etc. These are also the states where there is high incidence of relative deprivation.

As of now, Evangelical Christian movement as well as the latent White supremacist groups represent extremism, a force aiming to change the mindset of people and character of the society by using aggressive propaganda and persuasion strategies. They do not represent terrorism, a force aiming to cause bodily harm to civilians with a view to enforce specific changes in policies and state behaviour. Similarly in Europe, much of the radicalisation of the Muslim minorities as well as xenophobic and ultra-nationalist groups represents extremism and not terrorism, although there have been incidents of some of the radicalised youth committing violent acts either individually or by forming small groups.

In the last ten years, the world has witnessed occasional outburst of Jewish, Hindu and Buddhist extremism in countries where these religions are dominant. A former Prime Minister of Israel was killed by a Jewish extremist. There were reports of Jewish extremists performing cemetery rites appealing to God to kill Ariel Sharon after he announced the pull-out from Gaza. The Israeli police have apprehended Jewish extremists either for plotting or executing attacks on the Palestinian places or people.

In India, Hindu extremists demolished a mosque in the early 1990s, resulting in communal riots. The Hindu extremists also engineered mass killings of Muslims in the Gujarat state in 2002. The graph of their strength rises and declines from time to time. However, there is an underlying sentiment of extremism in segments of the Hindu population. Similarly, in Sri Lanka, the Buddhist extremists have been active both inside and outside Parliamentary politics.

It is important to bear in mind that the forces of extremism can be more dangerous than the forces of terrorism. Terrorism involves committing acts of violence that are considered criminal under the United Nations conventions as well as the jurisprudence of most countries. As they tend to be illegal, it is conceivable for the state machinery to deal with them. Extremism may not involve any illegal acts. In fact, extremism may surface using democratic means.

In the late 19th century, the Propaganda by Deed movement came up in Europe, advocating acts of violence to change the structure of states. Those belonging to the movement killed at least six heads of states, unsuccessfully planned to kill a few others and bombed the Parliament and cafes in France. The movement evaporated soon after it killed the Queen of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. However, the reaction to the movement resulted in states developing a tough stand against dissidents. In such an atmosphere of social dislocation and the growing insecurity of rulers, an extremist version of nationalism grew popular. Within two decades of an anarchist killing the Queen of the Austro-Hungarian Empire without any direct impact, the killing of the Austro-Hungarian Archduke by a Serbian ultra-nationalist ignited a series of events that led to the First World War. If we wish to learn from history, it is important to bear in mind that any study of terrorism should not neglect the analysis and implications of extremism.

Relative Deprivation

The examples of terrorism and extremism, discussed above, are by no means exhaustive. Our study can be expanded to cover more societies. On the other hand, it may be argued that the case studies in the previous section are far too many when an argument could be presented tersely about the demand and supply sides of terrorism as discussed below. These myriad examples from around the world prove that terrorism and extremism are problems of humanity, not of any particular religion or region. It is necessary to remind ourselves of this simple fact with concrete examples from almost all regions of the world since the global discourse ignores or sidesteps them. It must be reiterated that terrorism has many different forms and manifestations and it must be rejected in all its forms and manifestations. This is precisely the message of the United Nations General Assembly resolution of September 8, 2006 when the world body adopted a Global Counter Terrorism Strategy. The same observation must apply to extremism.

As the forms of terrorism and extremism are varied, it might be tempting to conclude that there are no common underlying factors that produce these phenomena. Each case is specific and needs a specific response. However, a closer look at the patterns of terrorism and extremism around the world reveals that there are some common drivers – grievances and greed leading to supply and demand.

In all the cases discussed above, and even in the cases that might not have been included in this essay, there is clear evidence that young people are drawn to the terrorist or extremist mindset because they feel excluded by the society around them or by the policy framework of the state. Such a feeling of exclusion results from relative economic, social and political deprivation, combining to create a feeling of the deprivation of dignity. It is this process that ensures a constant supply of young minds for terrorist and extremist groups. At the same time, such groups develop a vested interest in their self perpetuation and aggrandisement and recruit vulnerable young people using various strategies of persuasion, peer pressure or force. In other words, they create demand for terrorism out of their greed for power.

It is necessary to differentiate relative deprivation from absolute poverty. Those living below the poverty line are so involved in the struggle for existence that they may not have the leisure to think about their grievances or injustice unless they are aggressively recruited as in the case of the Lord's Resistance Army in Uganda, Maoists in South Asian countries, to some extent FARC in Colombia and the New People's Army in the Philippines.

Those experiencing relative deprivation compare their own condition to other constituents of their society or state. All around the world, terrorism and extremism prevails where socio-economic indicators of certain regions are poorer than those of other parts of the country, political space is closed and human dignity is undermined. The United States has the world's largest economy but 29 of its states have a significant proportion of households with per household income of less than $25000, which in some cases may mean per capita income of $10-15000. In Africa, $10000 or $15000 income would be considered very high. But in the United States those who belong to this income bracket can feel the sense of deprivation relative to the rest of the American society. It is precisely in the states where such pockets of low income earners are abundant that Pentecostal Christianity and white supremacist groups have grown. There is also a demand for such people generated through the propaganda machines of Evangelical preachers. Similarly in Europe, the Muslim migrants might be better off than their relations back home but as compared to the other members of European society they feel relative deprivation in terms of employment opportunities and the prospects of upward social mobility. It is this feeling of exclusion that makes them seek to bond with others who also feel excluded in a similar way. At the same time, there are groups that use religious propaganda to attract them.

In Africa, Asia, the Middle East, Maghreb and Turkey we have seen how state policies have resulted in the neglect of certain provinces within each affected country. In each case, when economic neglect is combined with political marginalisation, we have observed that grievances create the supply of youth to extremist organisations and later these organisations become greedy and try to recruit more people to serve their ends. Sometimes, such organisations are created as instruments of state policy as in the case of the

mujahideens of Afghanistan - a joint venture of the American and Pakistani intelligence agencies - who were eventually tempted to join Al Qaeda by an ambitious leader.

It is necessary to note that relative deprivation creating exclusion is a comprehensive phenomenon. It is not merely a socio-economic driver. In fact, relative deprivation in terms of political space and human dignity is often even more significant than socio-economic factors. The Palestinians in Israel-occupied territories, whose mobility is curtailed by the Israeli defence forces, feel deprived of dignity. The Tamils in Sri Lanka, who have to give up their linguistic advantage and political balance of power because of constitutional changes, feel deprived. The Acholis were socio-economically deprived for years but it wasn't until the Musevini government began to target them specifically that they took up arms. The Moros of the Philippines who see migrants from other parts of the country dominating their economy feel relatively deprived not just in an economic sense but also in a political and cultural context. The Iraqis who see their country overtaken by an external force feel relatively deprived irrespective of the economic condition of any particular citizen.

The theory of relative deprivation applies to the early phase of a group or community embarking on terrorism. The situation is further complicated over time as other factors play their part. The Northern Ireland conflict is seen in the context of its violent phase from 1969 to 1998. However, it has a complex history from the early 17th century when Protestant settlers migrated to Ulster. In the last four centuries, the demographic composition of the region has altered. During this period, many decisions of the government have led to violent protests, particularly in 1920-22. Even when 'the troubles' began, the immediate provocation was relative deprivation in the structure of electoral methods for local bodies. Catholic civil rights groups had launched protests in 1968, demanding changes in the process of local elections, since the outcome of local elections had implications for the distribution of jobs and housing. At some stage, the peaceful protest movement took a violent form, institutionalised by the formation of Provisional Irish Republican Army. Many observers would argue that those involved in violence had a comfortable standard of living. However, they did feel politically and socially deprived, bearing in mind the economic implication of the distribution of political power. It is important to note that 'the troubles' that began with a demand for change in political dispensation in 1968 ended with Belfast Agreement that provided for change in political dispensation at the provincial level in 1998. In fact, the agreement provided for much more, including choice of citizenship. Nevertheless, it is difficult to capture a 400-year old conflict within one analytical framework.

We can make similar observation about the Palestinian issue which has been discussed elsewhere in this essay. This problem is rooted in complex historical circumstances and powerful external factors. It would be simplistic to ascribe the motivation behind some of the young people taking up arms to relative deprivation in the current period, although several indicators of the relative deprivation the Palestinian people vis-à-vis their Israeli neighbours strengthen this theory.

India's conflict over Jammu & Kashmir with Pakistan began with the independence of the two countries in 1947. However, the incidence of terror has been witnessed only since 1989. It can be directly linked to the sense of political deprivation created by a widespread feeling among Kashmiri youth that the provincial elections of 1987 were not freely and fairly conducted; increase in joblessness due to the pressure on agricultural land; failure of industry to take off in the province; and overdependence on the public sector for jobs. At the same time demand for terrorism was generated by a number of groups that emerged with support from Pakistan. Since then, huge infrastructure of terror has spread in Pakistan. It employs somewhere between quarter and half million young people. It involves several legitimate and illegitimate business enterprises. It enables Pakistani military to deepen its control over economic assets of the country. Thus, the situation is now seized by large economic complexities.

At the other end of the spectrum is the example of India's Punjab, where Sikh, Hindu and Muslim communities have coexisted for over five centuries. The Sikhs have been integrated with Hindus through economic and social interaction, including marriages. The Sikh farmers have been primary beneficiaries of India's Green Revolution. In the 1980s, Sikh youth

took up to terrorism demanding a separate state from India. In economic terms, they were much better off than their counterparts in other parts of India. They claimed to be relatively deprived in terms of access to water and the international market for their crop. They also claimed cultural deprivation. However, their claims of relative deprivation were very thin, especially when compared to other people in the country. There were clear indications that groups provoking Sikh youth to resort to violence were creating a demand for extremism. The genesis of such groups could be traced to fault lines in India's own politics and actions of certain external elements. Thus, extremism in Punjab was driven by demand created by vested interests. It did not last long. It evaporated with a combination of concessions and tough measures by the government within a decade.

Similarly, Canada experienced a phase of violence and terror from groups demanding independence of Quebec in the 1960s. While they presented a socio-economic and cultural case for a separate state, the French speaking Canadians did not experience relative deprivation to a very high degree. The violent movement dissipated by the early 1970s. Both in the case of India's Punjab and Canada's Quebec, it can be argued that there were sentiments favouring autonomy before the violent phase and some of these sentiments continue to exist to date. However, the transformation of such a sentiment into a desire for violence and terror has been short-lived. This is because both supply and demand factors for terrorism have been weak and transient.

It is important to reiterate that terrorism and extremism have both supply and demand sides. Ideology plays a critical role in linking supply to demand. Without ideology it would be difficult for recruiting organisations to persuade many young people to take up arms. It is in the name of ideology that violence is justified, rather than desired. The ideology may change from place to place and time to time. In Uganda, a fundamentalist Christian group, the Lord's Resistance Army, wants to establish a Biblical state. In Sri Lanka, many Buddhist groups and parties would like to establish a Buddhist state. In the United States, Evangelical Christian groups would like to dilute the separation of Church and State. In Europe, xenophobic groups want to establish states based on the monopoly of certain races or ultra-nationalism. In many Muslim countries and the Muslim communities of Europe, extremist Islamist groups want to establish states based on an orthodox interpretation of Sunni Islam. In Iran, Shia dominated Iraq and Southern Lebanon; they would like to create a Shia state. In parts of India, Nepal, the Philippines and Colombia, terrorist groups aim to create communist regimes. Thus, political Islam is not the only popular ideology of the day. Evangelical Christianity, Hinduism, Buddhism, ultra-nationalism and other ideologies have extremist dimensions as well. Communism is very much alive in many parts of the world, not as a governing philosophy of the state but as a belief system of the excluded.

Once young people who feel excluded from the world around them subscribe to a particular ideology or religion, they genuinely believe in it. It is in such an ideology and the groups created around it that they feel included or even empowered. There is a difference between leaders and followers. The leaders generally tend to be aware of the power dynamics of their strategies. The followers are smitten by the ideology. Leaders by definition have something more than the cadres: finance, education or other properties. Therefore they are on the demand side of the process. They don't tend to be relatively deprived. But the leaders would not be leaders unless they have certain endowments. Leaders need cadres and relative deprivation plays a critical role in driving young people into their fold. However, a sense of grievance is not enough for even those deprived to give up what they have. They need an alternative vision of the society. The leaders provide such a vision with an ideology that the cadres must genuinely believe in. This is as true of the Maoists in Nepal as of the followers of Al Qaeda in the Middle East and Europe.

There are parts of the world where acute socio-economic and political deprivation persists but there is no evidence of terror and extremism – for instance, Turkmenistan, Burma and North Korea. This is because there might be sufficient conditions on the supply side but there is an absence of leaders generating demand for those who might be feeling aggrieved. The emergence of such leaders is prevented by the regimes by using repression. These are time bombs waiting to explode whenever the current regimes with their tight control on the society disappear due to the death of the present leaders. Turkmenistan is an urgent issue since its ruler Niyazov died when this document

was being printed. The societies there are likely to discover new ideologies to channel their frustration. It remains to be seen whether these ideologies turn out to be democracy, religion, ethnic nationalism or anarchy. In the case of Burma, there is a strong democractic leader and also evidence of people's preference for democracy in the past. Otherwise, we have examples of Yugoslavia and Iraq. Also Afghanistan has not yet seen the end of its story.

Lies, Damn Lies and Definitions

It is possible for any ideology, delivered by determined and able leaders, anywhere in the world, to transform those feeling excluded from their society into terrorists or extremists. In public discourse, however, there is an unfortunate effort made to emphasise certain forms of terrorism. As the global power structure is dominated by the West, attacks on Western interests are defined as terrorism. The attacks that do not target the United States and its allies are defined as acts of ethnic conflict, freedom struggle, or mere violence. If Hezbollah attacks Israeli civilians, it is considered to be an act of terror. If PKK kills Turkish citizens and advocates vehemence through its radio, these are projected as indicators of a liberation struggle and freedom of expression. There are three kinds of lies in politics: lies, damn lies and definitions. It is fashionable to craft a definition of convenience and then use it to shape the priorities of the preferred policy agenda.

In particular, since 2001, Western discourse has focussed on Al Qaeda and Islamist extremism, sometimes extending the scope of discussion to cover the European experience with regards to IRA and ETA.

Western discourse does not mix discussion on the Al Qaeda type of terrorism with expressions of terrorism in other countries around the world. Moreover, the discourse on Islamist extremism focuses on Hamas, Hezbollah and Muslim Brotherhood – all three organisations based in the Middle East – and not on the real members of the International Islamic Front established by Osama bin Laden, from Central and South Asia, which have been listed earlier. The agenda of Muslim Brotherhood has always been confined to Egypt. Hamas and Hezbollah have been completely committed to the Palestinian cause. There is no indication of Hamas and Hezbollah having any global ambition. On the other hand, Lashker-e-Taiba, Hizbut-ut-Tehrir, Jaish-e-Mohamad and Harkat-ul-Jihadi Islami have through their proclamations and actions demonstrated an intention to establish the global Caliphate.

Western discourse on terrorism, with a focus on Islamist extremism, is therefore neither entirely about terrorism nor about Islamist extremism. It is not entirely about terrorism because it does not include terrorism practised by several national, sub-national groups, labelling some of them as liberation movements. It is not entirely about terrorism because it hardly considers rural-based revolutionary organisations, responsible for killing thousands of people in Asia and Latin America. It is not entirely about Islamist extremism because it blames the groups in the Middle East that have no ambition to alter the international order, while giving inadequate attention to the specific organisations that want to establish a Caliphate by violent means and that are positioning themselves to succeed Al Qaeda in the International Islamic Front for Jihad against Jews and Crusaders. In ignoring the threats of terrorism around the world from nationalist, sub-nationalist and revolutionary groups that commit violent acts and ignoring the threats posed by Central and South Asian Islamist organisations to the global security, Western discourse is selectively focussed on the Middle East. It is more about the strategic interests of the West in a particular region than the threats to humanity emanating from the ideologies of mass destruction.

Western discourse makes a distinction between nationalist, sub-nationalist and revolutionary terrorism on the one hand and Islamist extremism on the other on the ground that the former is local while the latter is considered international terrorism. As already pointed out, the Islamist organisations primarily aim at the United States and its allies, particularly Israel. To say that their objectives are international is to assume that Eastern Europe, Latin America, and large parts of Asia and Africa are not parts of the international community. In trying to depict the Islamist threat global, Western discourse holds the entire Muslim community in suspicion, ignoring the fact that there are only a half a dozen specific organisations including Al Qaeda and its Central and

South Asian soul mates that propose to use violence to establish a global Caliphate.

Western discourse ignores threats from within. Evangelical Christianity is an expression of domestic extremism and therefore does not constitute a subject of debate on international dimensions of extremism, even though Evangelical churches, particularly of the Pentecostal school, very actively recruit followers outside the United States. Western discourse does not compare the rise of Evangelical Christianity in the United States, Hindu and Buddhist militancy in Asia, and organisations like Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt. White supremacist groups are considered local menaces, even though there are indications of linkages between such groups in the United States, Europe and Russia through the underground music trade. The issue based groups like Earth Liberation Front and Animal Liberal Front are simply ignored as lunatics.

While Western discourse is selectively focussed on the strategic concerns of the West in the Middle East, ignoring threats of terrorism and extremism to the humanity, Arab discourse is heavily focussed on the policies of the United States, its allies, and particularly Israel. Arab discourse holds that the situation in the Palestine and Iraq since 2003 is primarily responsible for the use of violence by Arab youth. The Arab discourse condemns terrorism but treats several groups in the Middle East resorting to acts of terror as resistance groups. With such dualism, there is clearly no defining line between resistance and terrorism. The Arab discourse emphasises 'state terrorism', a concept that does not have legal standing. However, since many acts of the state of Israel can not be exactly described as acts of war either, there is confusion about how to characterise the violence engineered by the state.

In its obsession with the American and Israeli policies, the Arab discourse ignores ground realities within the Arab world.

▼ The behaviour of repressive regimes, inequities and stolen elections have directly resulted in the rise of groups advocating faith-based absolutist versions of the society or the use of violence, in situations which did not have anything to do with the Palestinian issue or foreign occupation;

▼ The failure of delivery of public goods by states

has forced people to seek alternative mechanisms, including groups that may provide such goods and simultaneously advocate extremist visions of the society;

▼ Rejection of local governance and foreign ideas have created a vacuum, which is filled by a variety of groups based on religion in an environment of political deficit where only religion has been allowed space to exist;

▼ Certain ruling structures have played an unofficial role in supporting terrorist or extremist groups to serve their domestic or external objectives.

Both the Western and Arab discourse ignore the realities of terrorism in Africa, Asia and Latin America. In their mutual obsession, the two societies have developed a mutual mistrust. The result is Islamophobia in the West and anti-American attitudes in the Arab world. The widening chasm of mistrust is no longer confined to American foreign policy or the Palestine issue. A newspaper in Denmark publishes cartoons of the Prophet of Islam in the name of freedom of expression. The Islamic world reacts with strong demonstration against the missions and businesses of Denmark and other countries where such cartoons appeared. The UK and France find that the women's veil is a sensitive issue to which there are no easy answers.

The mutually obsessive discourse in Western and Islamic societies is manipulated by the media, either by design or otherwise. If North Korea tests a nuclear weapon the news disappears from the front page of most newspapers within a couple of days. If Iraq or Iran is suspected to have even the most elementary capacity to develop such a weapon, this is major news for months after months. If Lord's Resistance Army forces children to kill their siblings in thousands, it is a human interest story that appears only occasionally in the inside pages. If Iran's President threatens Israel, it is major news and the subject of endless op-ed analysis. If the Maoists in Nepal kill thousands of people, it is a local tragedy that is hardly mentioned. If terrorists in London kill a hundred people, it is an international tragedy that is continuously discussed. If Israeli missiles kill innocent children in Lebanon, it is an unfortunate tragedy that disappears from the front pages within a week. If

Hezbollah kidnaps two Israeli soldiers, it is consistently highlighted as a violation of the international law.

If the Western media distorts facts, the Arab media simply ignores them under censorship of the state or the self. For much of the Arab media, flawed governance of their own leaders is hardly an issue to discuss. In their eyes the only wrong government policies are those of the United States and Israel; never mind the fact that some of their own governments live under the security umbrella provided by the United States. For much of the Arab media, human rights are only violated by Israel and poverty exists in Africa and Asia. As the front pages are adorned by the photographs of the heads of states attending ceremonies or receiving foreign ambassadors, there is no space to discuss unemployment of youth or women's conditions.

The arrival of blogs has to some extent corrected the situation distorted by the media. There are anti-war blogs in the West. There are blogs severely questioning the government policies in the Arab region. The information provided in the blogs is often unreliable and biased. But the blogs do provide a breath of fresh air in the suffocated atmosphere controlled by the mainstream newspapers and television channels.

Nevertheless whether it is the mainstream media or the blogs, the analysis of the global security environment revolves around the mutual love-hate relationship between Western and Islamic countries. The fact that there are more serious patterns of terrorism elsewhere in the world is ignored by both sides. The fact that there are issues bigger than the growing mutual hatred between Western and Islamic countries is forgotten. In the eyes of the Western elite and its media, the death of 5000 odd people in terrorist attacks launched by Al Qaeda and its affiliates in the last five years is the ultimate threat to global security. In the eyes of Arab public opinion, the death of 50,000 to 500,000 innocent people in Iraq, Afghanistan, Lebanon and the Palestine is the real tragedy. Both sides forget that their woes are serious but that some 50 million children lost their lives in the last five years since 9/11 due to policy neglect by a world that is overly obsessed with one issue.

Human Civilisation, a Joint Venture

Western and Arab discourses not only ignore the rest of the world but they also forget that human civilisation as it exists today is a product of a joint venture between Western, Islamic, Indian and Chinese thinkers and innovators. The nature of the current discourse is a complete negation of each other and total neglect of others. It is true that the Arab world is presently facing multiple internal crises, including the crisis of governance and the crisis of knowledge. But Europe faced similar crises at one stage. At that time, the Arab world provided refuge to Christian and Jewish thinkers. It did not negate Europe's previous history. In fact, Arab rulers went out of their way to recognise, preserve and translate the best of European knowledge, combining it with input from China and India. They did not say that the best of civilisation was Eastern merely because Europe was passing through dark ages. They treated learning as a common property of humanity and proceeded to create a human civilisation.

At present, Western scholars tend to forget history and the contribution made by Arab rulers to make knowledge a joint venture of humanity. All that symbolises science, technology, rationality and progress is projected as Western civilisation, as if Western civilisation came out of nowhere or as if the Greek literature that was lost after the collapse of the Roman Empire suddenly reappeared a thousand years later in the hands of Europeans. It is argued that all scientific discoveries were made possible after the separation of Church and State in Europe in the 17th century. China, India and the Arab world had achieved much more when Europeans were living in the dark ages without going through the debate on the Church and the State. Some anthropologists argue that Africa had made significant scientific and mathematical inventions 20,000 years ago, before the current human civilisation is believed to have been born. It is nothing but arrogance to believe that all historical progress has been achieved by the people of one continent on the basis of one theory of societal relations. Much of the conflict that we see today between Western and Islamic societies has its roots in rejecting the historical realities of one another and neglecting the rest of the world. It is indeed a matter of serious historical investigation as to whether

the civilisation that we have inherited today is Western civilization or whether it is human civilisation.

An honest understanding of our history is essential because the forces of extremism that seem to be gaining ground all over the world today can present a false interpretation to strengthen their own ideologies and recruitment drives. Western extremists represent civilisation as a Western project. Islamist extremists recall the historical period when Islamic societies led the world, wrongly emphasising factors that have more relevance to the propaganda of today's extremists than the success of societies a thousand years ago. Similarly, extremist Hindu, Buddhist, Evangelical and other selective interpreters of human experience ignore some parts of the history to suit their current and future political needs.

In reality, a thousand years ago the Abbasids from their capital in Baghdad, the Ummayads from their base in Cordoba, and the Fatimids from their capital in Cairo created an Age of Enlightenment across the Middle East. It spanned from today's Iran in the East to Spain in the West and Egypt in the South. During this period with active encouragement from the rulers, Arab thinkers learnt Aristotle's philosophy and Greek reflections on natural and human sciences from ancient manuscripts. They interacted with Indian and Chinese traders and learnt mathematics from India and a range of technologies from paper-making to metallurgy from China. They provided patronage and succour to Jewish and Christian scientists who were harassed in the dark ages of Europe. The Arab and Persian scientists assimilated knowledge from different parts of the world, improved on experiments made elsewhere or produced their own innovations. These included optics, the pulmonary circulation of blood, treatment of contagious diseases, algorithms, sulphuric acid, ethanol, the engineering of new crops including sugar, canal irrigation and modern agriculture. Their inventions in the field of astronomy included the calculation of the circumference of earth, the calculation of the length of the solar year, an assessment of the effect of the moon on tidal waves, and theories of stellar movements. They translated their works into Latin and circulated them to Europe, thus building the foundation of Europe's modernisation. Thus, the Arab and Islamic rule around 1000 years ago served as the main vehicle of the advancement of common human civilisation by absorbing knowledge from Greek, Indian and Chinese sources through trade and translation and patronage of Jewish and Christian scholars and then passing it on to the next generation of Europeans through translation of their works into Latin.

The Arab and Islamic rulers also built institutions that made the cross-fertilisation of ideas and innovations from different civilisations feasible. The most significant of these institutions were the following:

- Mamun, son of Harun al-Rashid, established the House of Wisdom (Bayt al-Hikma) in 832 AD consisting of an observatory, a library and a translation and research bureau;

- Abd-al-Rahman III founded the University of Cordoba in the 10th century;

- Caliph al-Aziz founded Al-Azhar University in Cairo also in the 10th century;

- Hakim bi Amr-Allah founded the House of Knowledge in Cairo at the beginning of the 11th century, with a public library. He possessed a personal collection of 1,60,000 books;

- The Abbasid rulers set up translation bureaus to translate from Greek to Arabic and the Ummayad rulers set up facilities to translate from Arabic to Latin, thus facilitating great transfer of knowledge across civilisations.

Unlike the 18th century European experience when the separation of the Church and the State laid the foundation of scientific and technological development, during the Arab era of enlightenment the predominance of religion played a key role in promoting knowledge and innovation. Islam stressed reading and learning. The very first words that the Qur'an revealed were:

"Read in the name of thy Lord, the Cherisher, Who creates; Creates man, out of a mere clot of congealed blood; Read! And thy Lord is most Bountiful; He who teaches (the use of) the pen; teaches man that which he knows not (96:1-5)".

Thus, the Qur'an distinguishes a human being from any other body of blood and flesh by the ability of the human being to read and learn. The Muslims of two

or three generations after the Prophet believed that through revelation and creation, Allah has given them a way of expanding their knowledge. Accordingly, studying the universe and pursuing scientific and research endeavours were considered a duty instructed by the holy Qur'an. This knowledge was then to be used for the betterment of the society.

"High above all is Allah, the King, the truth. Do not be in haste with the Qur'an before its revelation to you is completed but say – Oh my Sustainer; increase my knowledge (20:114)".

There are many other verses in the Qur'an that emphasise the pursuit of knowledge. Of course, the Qur'an contains a large pool of wisdom and inspirational thoughts. It is for the followers to understand and integrate them in their life. The Muslim rulers of the 9th to 12th century reminded the followers of Islam of the significance of reading and knowledge. They reminded people of the pursuit of knowledge as the very first words of revelation and therefore the primary duty of Muslims. They established 36 libraries in Baghdad and 70 in Cordoba to make the acquisition of knowledge feasible. The Caliphs led the way by building private libraries with hundreds of thousands of books.

The rulers did not confine the pursuit of knowledge to their interpretation of the Qur'an. They exhorted Muslims to acquire knowledge from wherever possible. They were aware that Islam was preceded by other faiths. They considered Christians, Jews and Zoroastrians as the people of the book, ahl-al-kitab, because the scriptures of these other religions were also based on revelations from the same God. Islam respected Moses and Christ as the prophets and wanted to learn from the traditions of Christians and Jews. The only people Muslims did not think of very highly were pagans, people without any scriptures. At times when Muslims conquered other lands, they found among their subjects Christians and Jews. The rulers encouraged Muslims to use debate to argue the merits of Islam to encourage people belonging to other faiths to convert voluntarily. At the same time Muslims learnt from the established systems of governance in Syria, Iraq and Persia. They assimilated knowledge of medicine, science and philosophy from the other cultures and translated local knowledge into Arabic to spread it across the Muslim world.

Thus, emphasis on plurality, co-existence and learning from other cultures was the hallmark of the early Islamic civilisation. The Abbasid ruler, Mamum, appointed Khalid al-Brmaki, a Persian ruler as the vazir or the prime minister. Mamun, of the Abbasids, ordered the translation of books from other cultures and offered very high salaries to the translators. He maintained relations with the Byzantine rulers and used diplomacy and rich gifts to acquire books written by Aristotle, Plato, Galen, Hippocrates, Ptolemy, Euclid and Pythagoras, among others. While the Europeans themselves ignored Greek scholarship, the Islamic rulers translated and preserved it. The rulers of Cordoba, like the Abbasids of Baghdad and the Fatimids of Cairo, attracted scholars from across the Middle East to their universities and translation centres.

Some of the scholars brought the numerical system from India and refined it to produce algebra and algorithm. Some scholars brought the technique of making paper from China and refined it to make paper from linen instead of bark as the Chinese did. Paper mills flourished in the Islamic world before the first one appeared in the West. The advent of paper led to the production of books and preservation and spreading of knowledge.

The emphasis on plurality and co-existence also led to vibrant trade. The Muslim communities had an inclination for and expertise in trade. The marketplace (bazaar) was an important institution in Muslim life. There was competition to offer the best and the most novel items in the bazaar, motivating traders to look as far as China and India to search for new ideas and goods. Some of the local businessmen improved upon products and technologies imported from abroad. When some traders imported ceramics from China and steel from India, local businessmen developed metallurgy and ceramic gazes to produce superior quality products. Muslim traders also learned the use of cheques for financial transactions.

Of course, it would not have been possible to encourage plurality and co-existence without freedom of critical inquiry. Rulers and their peoples encouraged philosophers of different thought. Al-Farabi placed reason above revelation and was not castigated for it. Instead, he sparked vibrant debates. Al-Kindi, Ibn Sina and Ibn Rushd wrote a few hundred books between them, some of them popularising Greek philosophy.

The rulers tried to institutionalise freedom of inquiry by channelling their funds through waqf, an independent endowment, rather than direct patronage. They did not interfere in the day to day management of these endowments. They did not dictate the beliefs and religious or racial origins of the scholars benefiting from the endowments. When on certain occasions, they did try to dictate such things; they discovered that the interest in acquiring and spreading knowledge would shrink. Emperor Mamun, who took many progressive initiatives to obtain and spread knowledge, himself once tried to promote his pet theory that the Qur'an was created and not revealed and persecuted those who did not subscribe to his theory. He found people's interest in learning decreasing very quickly. A few scholars like Ibn Hanbal, a jurist, stood up to him. They forced him to abandon the Inquisition and reinstate the freedom of critical inquiry.

Thus, three factors led to the creation of knowledge in the early Islamic period. First, people appreciated that the most significant teaching of the Qur'an was to learn and that that is what made a human being different from an ordinary body of flesh and blood. Second, Muslims made learning a passion and looked far and wide for knowledge and ideas. In this pursuit, they emphasised plurality in their own societies and trade and exchange with other societies ranging from Byzantium in the West to China and India in the East. Third, the rulers provided an atmosphere of freedom and invested in independent endowments to foster knowledge. To some extent, the rulers realised that plurality and trade were a well paying proposition through taxes on non-believers and imports. They also realised that having Christians, Jews, Persians and others improved the efficiency and delivery capacity of their administrations.

The downside of the state driven pursuit of knowledge was that when certain rulers disappeared, the traditions they created also slowly evaporated. The acts of foreign aggression played a very destructive role. At the end of the 11th century, Pope Urban launched Crusades against the Muslims. But they did not succeed in dampening the Muslim spirit. In fact, after the temporary loss of Jerusalem, the Muslims seized it again under the leadership of Salahuddin and held it until the beginning of the 20th century. The Crusaders of the Roman Catholic Church actually destroyed Constantinople, a great centre of civilisation under the Greek Orthodox Church. The Mongols destroyed Baghdad, and later on converted to Islam. When they destroyed Baghdad, they did not spare anything at all – including hospitals, pharmacies, irrigation networks, and libraries. Most significantly, they massacred all scholars. The developments of over 300 years were brought down in a matter of months. It is important to realise that this destruction was not a result of war between religions. The religious zealots of Christianity destroyed one of their own treasures. Those who were to be converts to Islam destroyed Islamic culture.

It is not clear why the Islamic world did not attempt to revive of the scientific spirit to the level at which it had flourished under the three dynasties mentioned above. Some Arab scholars blame the Ottoman rule, which neglected provinces. However, the Turkish scholars dispute this theory. It would be a subject of critical inquiry as to why the era of cross-fertilisation of ideas between cultures could not be revived. The weakening of the Ottoman Empire in the later part of the millennium and the installation of the French and British rule, when Europeans had intellectually and technologically strengthened themselves with their own Renaissance, contributed to the destabilisation of the Muslim world. The people of the region slowly developed an aversion to foreign rule and everything that Westerners represented, including science and rationality. Unlike contemporary India, where a middle class grew from the end of the 19th century, benefiting from the British education while the same educated class used some of the techniques learnt in the West to fight the British, the Arab world sulked and went into a cocoon.

After the First World War, President Wilson introduced the principle of self-determination. However, this was applied only to Central and East European nations in the aftermath of the break-up of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. For the remnants of the Ottoman Empire, there was no self-determination. The British and the French divided the Middle East, with American blessing, as if it were their private property. Moreover, the Western powers facilitated the creation of a homeland for the Jews, the same Jews whom the Christians had persecuted from time to time in history and whom Hitler wanted to annihilate completely. For centuries, the Jews and Muslims had co-existed together. As the Western powers shared the

spoils of the war, they helped create Israel without properly consulting the Arabs. In turn, the Arabs saw this as their ultimate humiliation by the Western powers and never really accepted the existence of Israel amidst them. To this date, the Arab masses believe that the land where Israel was created belongs to the Palestinians who were forced to become refugees in other countries. The Palestinian conflict is therefore central to the Arab identity. On the one hand, it represents a very practical problem of statehood for the Palestinian people. On the other hand, it holds tremendous symbolic importance for the Arab people at large, where not only Israel but also its Western supporters are perceived as symbols of injustice and asymmetry of power. The awe for and the hatred of the West has created a dichotomy in the Arab mindset. The elite are keen on copying, engaging and being protected by the West. The masses that can not relate to the Western culture reject it and in the process also defy the rationalist and pluralist foundation of early Islamic culture.

The American intelligence apparatus, with the help of Pakistan's military, took advantage of this dichotomy in the Arab mindset when they recruited radical Arab youth to fight against the Soviet Union in Afghanistan in the 1980s. The Arab rulers made no effort to oppose the US-Pakistani collaboration in Afghanistan to lure their youth. In fact, some books accuse Arab rulers of active collaboration in this project. It was this venture that proved to be the genesis of a force that would eventually form Al Qaeda. How Al Qaeda proved to be the harbinger of Islamist extremism that Western rulers now consider their primary security concern is too well known to repeat here.

Age of Competitive Fundamentalism

The project of collaborative development of human knowledge and culture that began under the sponsorship of Arab and Islamic rulers a thousand years ago eventually became subject to the West. The Palestinian issue has been a symbol of the continuation of the Western monopoly on power through the last century. Since the beginning of this century, Iraq has been added as another symbol not only of this Western power and arrogance, but also of Western callousness. The rhetoric about Syria and Iran pose the risk of more such symbols arising.

As the Arab elite have failed to provide an effective response to the Western stratagem, Islamic preachers have come up with an alternative vision. However, this vision is not in harmony with Islam's core message of peace, learning, and coexistence. On the contrary, it presents an absolutist idea of the society. On the other hand, the Christian Evangelical preachers and European xenophobic politicians present visions of a closed society to their followers. It seems that the world is entering an age of competitive fundamentalism.

Islamic and Christian Evangelicals can engage in a contest of competitive fundamentalism because there are a large number of young people in both societies who feel excluded from the world around them and who are looking to belong in some way. Such an exclusionist society is not restricted to the West and the Middle East. There are 89 million unemployed young people in the world. They form a potential pool of recruits to the forces of terrorism, extremism and xenophobia, depending on how effectively those placing a demand on them communicate with them. Therefore, we can predict the growth of more and more extremist ideologies and groups in the foreseeable future.

Moreover, those outside the Middle Eastern theatre take advantage of the situation. In fact, the groups using violence in the Middle East concentrate on Palestine and Iraq, the two local symbols of their perceived sense of injustice. It is the groups from Central and South Asia that are selling the dreams of a global Caliphate, with informal backing of powerful state structures. Further more, the states in North-east Asia and Latin America that are outside the periphery of the conflict between Western and Islamic societies are using this time to build their own stockpile of weapons.

While the West is obsessed with the Middle East, forces of extremism and nationalism in Asia and Latin America pose the real challenge to its monopoly and arrogance. Western discourse on terrorism and extremism is focussed on the Arab region at its own peril. As we have seen from numerous case studies around the world, exclusion produced by relative deprivation, resulting from social structures and state policies, feeds extremism. The conditions for relative deprivation prevail all over the world, from Muslim

migrants in Western Europe, the poor in the American mid-west to farmers in Colombia and the Philippines. The intellectual project to define terrorism only in relation to the groups in the Middle East turns a blind eye to the growth of terrorism and extremism not only outside the Middle East, in Asia and Latin America, but also in the American and European homelands.

In the age of competitive fundamentalisms, human rights and liberties are compromised. The states may place limits on trade and transit, and restrict world commerce. They may indulge in human rights violations. And at times they may use terrorism as an excuse to punish legitimate opposition. Several people are more afraid of anti-terrorist measures than acts of terror. Thus, terrorism abets authoritarianism and undermines freedom. Since many of the states today engaged in counter terrorism campaigns claim to be champions of freedom, terrorist groups defeat them philosophically by forcing them to undermine the freedom of innocent civilians. Terrorism wins when powerful security agencies forbid mothers from freely carrying milk and medicine for their infants on aeroplanes. Terrorism wins when democratically elected representatives cannot allow their constituents to move about freely around them. Terrorism wins when states use it as an excuse to kill their enemies, giving birth to a thousand suicide bombers.

Competitive fundamentalism threatens trust between individuals and societies. If it extends beyond a certain level, human society could collapse since all interactions are based on mutual trust. There is a risk that nations may form competing blocks and people may find rival groups within nations. The big question for the 21st century is whether we will restore the basic human instinct of socialisation or whether we will promote the law of jungle where every animal distrusts another. In the age of competitive fundamentalism, all sides can claim to win but in reality all are losing. This is a contest that humanity is losing as the core human values of justice, liberty and trust are eroded day by day. The contest between fundamentalisms will finally be settled by force and in the age of weapons of mass destruction, it could pose the risk of human extinction.

Power and Principles

As we are still in the early phase of the age of competitive fundamentalism, it is still possible to reverse the trajectory that is leading the world onto this path. As the Western and Arab discourses have placed themselves at the centre of the global security architecture, it would be helpful to begin with the resolution of the Palestinian conflict and exploration of measures to resolve the broader conflict between Western and Islamic societies. However, the attention to the Middle East and the dynamics between Western and Islamic societies are not enough to ensure the sustainability of global security. It is necessary to address the demand and supply side of extremism in all parts of the world. As we have explained earlier, terrorism and extremism are problems of humanity, and not merely of any particular religion and region. We need solutions to address this problem on a genuinely global basis, though we may emphasise or initiate our efforts in the Middle East.

We would like to propose a set of measures comprising the following:

◥ Initiatives for peace in the Middle East and confidence-building between Western and Islamic countries,

◥ Initiatives for reform and Renaissance in the Arab and Islamic countries,

◥ Initiatives to address the problems of relative deprivation around the world.

We have elaborated on these ideas in the subsequent sections. These are essentially building blocs of a new structure of relations between Western and Islamic countries, majorities and minorities, relatively deprived and relatively privileged. It is possible to find better alternatives to some of the specific and practical aspects of our proposals. However, it is important to emphasise the theoretical framework underpinning them, as explained below.

The age of competitive fundamentalism is essentially a threat to the core human values of justice, liberty and trust, as has been already mentioned. Extremism takes its believers away from the shared

premise of humanity to extreme corners. The differences between Sunnis and Shia's in the 7th century, Catholics and Protestants of the 17th century, republicans and imperialists of the early 19th century, nationalists of various brands of the early 20th century reached such an extreme proportion that they resulted in confrontation. The wars of the 17th and 20th centuries destroyed millions of people. It would be impossible to predict what would have happened to humanity had nuclear weapons been invented at the beginning of the First World War, instead of the end of the Second World War. There are no guarantees that humanity will be lucky next time around.

What is at stake is not merely another 9/11 type attack, however devastating that would be. If extremism – whether of a religious, ideological, nationalist or racist variety – seizes a few countries of the East and the West, and if they engage in military confrontation, the consequences will be unpredictable. In such a scenario, the forces of extremism may use terrorism as a tool to fire the first salvo as the Serbian nationalists did igniting the First World War. Some scholars would like us to believe that human security has actually improved since the Second World War with the shift in the focus of conflict from dynamics between nations to within nations. The 9/11 attacks, the US response in Afghanistan, the war in Iraq, the exchange of missiles between Israel and Hezbollah, Iran's rhetoric about Israel at the highest political level, North Korea's testing of nuclear weapons, strategic rivalry between China and Japan, continuing conflict between India and Pakistan, and tensions between Russia and Georgia are not examples of internal conflicts. The phenomenon of inter-state wars might be in recess. We can not rule out that it could visit humanity again in the future. If extremism deepens, it could cause the hardening of attitudes that could lead to a catastrophic confrontation.

Our proposition is not that a catastrophic confrontation driven by extremism is likely in the next decade or two. Yet we can not completely deny such a risk. Moreover, the issue is not merely of survival of humanity. What is at stake is also whether we are able to harness the human spirit in the common interest of humankind. As far as we know, the human species is unique not only on this planet but also in the known universe. It would be such a waste not to make the optimum use of this opportunity, driving ourselves away from each other on the basis of religion, race or ideology, as forces of extremism and terrorism would like us to do.

The greatest challenge of the 21st century is for us to come together to discover our common identity, to reaffirm and restore core human values, to appreciate our common history and to create a shared future. In order to shape an inclusive world in which the West, Islam and the Rest have a stake, it is necessary to shift from the centuries old model based on the doctrine of force to a model based on the collaborative harnessing of the spirit of humanity. The use of force in the name of religion, ideology, race or other belief systems underpins the pursuit of power. It is in the essential nature of states to seek and expand power. It is in the essential nature of human beings to explore principles of co-existence. We need to achieve a basic balance between power and principles.

Obviously we can not create an inclusive world merely with good intentions. We need building blocks to resolve outstanding conflicts, particularly the issue of Palestine, create trust between Western, Islamic and other societies, implement internal reforms, introduce fair rules for the conduct of international relations, and revisit institutions of global governance. We are fast creating a global economy and a global civil society thanks to the power of technology. But we do not have global politics. We need to come out of our parochial political perspectives to create processes and institutions that can respond to global problems.

The human spirit has shown again and again that it can respond to challenges thrown down by those who want to dissipate it. If some thought about Crusades, others built houses of wisdom to provide a common home to the best of Christian, Jewish, Persian and Arab minds. If some attacked trains and towers, others came together from across continents to provide a solution to a new disease. If some bombed innocent people of other countries, others went rushing to help cyclone victims. We must harness the spirit of humanity not only because the alternative is the risk of a catastrophic confrontation. We must harness the spirit of humanity because it beckons us to create an inclusive world.

Part II

Collaborative Initiatives

Inclusive Semi-permanent Conference on Peace in the Middle East

It is necessary to find an urgent solution to the Palestinian problem based on a two-state reality, the dignity of all people, the resolution of the status of Jerusalem and refugee issues, cooperation in the management of water resources and economic engagement. Whatever course history might have taken, it is now essential to craft an arrangement that is aimed at providing a secure future. The issue of Palestine has both real and symbolic significance. It evokes strong emotions around the world as a proof of injustice and neglect of Arab concerns by Western powers. It is at times used by groups committing acts of terror, who might not be otherwise constructively engaged in ameliorating the situation of the Palestinian people. Whatever perspective you take, there is an absolute urgency to find a sustainable solution to this problem.

About 15 years ago, the Madrid Conference made a good start at launching the Middle East Peace Process. The observers of the Middle East situation are familiar with the moments of hope and despair since then. It is now time to instil dynamism and innovation in the Middle East Peace Process. One approach would be to convene a conference under the auspices of the United Nations. Another approach would be to install an inclusive semi-permanent conference or uninterrupted long term talks that take place despite disruptions and violence in the short run. Eventually they could move in the direction of creating a Conference on Security and Cooperation in the Middle East to address not only the Palestinian conflict, but also other aspects of security and cooperation in the region.

The semi-permanent conference could begin as a forum for dialogue between states that have a stake in peace and security of the region. An important element must be to provide a place at the table for various shades of representatives of the Palestinian people, on the lines of talks in the Northern Ireland. This would be following the successful example of the rules used by the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE).

Also, following the CSCE example, it would be useful to engage at multiple levels – at the level of senior officials appointed by the states and other interested institutions on a semi-permanent basis for talks on certain days every week or every month; cabinet ministers meeting from time to time; and the heads of government meeting initially once a year. In addition, expert committees may be convened as and when required.

While an inclusive semi-permanent conference may begin with the Palestinian issue, it needs to address other regional questions of security and cooperation in the long run. There is not much to gain if the resolution of the Palestinian issue is followed by the unexpected surfacing of some other – as yet unforeseen – issue. It is essential to find ways and means for the people of Israel and Arab world to live in peaceful co-existence and if possible active cooperation. It is also essential to ensure that the region is not destabilised by outside powers.

Western-Islamic Dialogue and Engagement (WIDE) Initiative

While the semi-permanent conference on the Middle East Peace can address regional issues, it is necessary to have a mechanism to address wider security and cooperation issues between the Western and Islamic countries. We would like to propose the

establishment of a Contact Group of credible leaders from the Western and Islamic countries to deliberate over an agreed period of time ideas for political cooperation between Western and Islamic countries and to communicate a common understanding reached through such discussion to the international community for support and implementation. Such a group may comprise of individuals from Europe, Asia and the Middle East, who would be acceptable to various stakeholders in the United States and key political actors in the Middle East for informal dialogue.

First, the group may explore the feasibility and appropriate alternative models of inclusive semi-permanent conference on peace in the Middle East. This concept has been outlined earlier.

Second, the group may engage with administration officials, legislators and opinion makers in the United States. There is currently a serious communication gap between the United States and significant forces in the Islamic world. It is dangerous to allow such a gap to widen year by year. It is necessary to have an informal mechanism for non-committal dialogue to explain the perspectives and concerns of the Islamic countries to American policy makers and to understand the concerns of the United States as a global power. It is also necessary for such an informal mechanism to engage with key political players in the Islamic world. Such a group respected by the US policy leaders can help de-escalate tensions. In order for such a Contact Group to be effective, it is essential that it establishes communication lines with the religious right and pro-Israeli groups in the American political spectrum. It may be difficult to envisage the ability of such a group to prevent conflicts arising from conflicting interests but it should be possible for it to mitigate discord resulting from conflicting misperceptions.

Third, it is important for such an initiative to explore common ground on some critical conceptual issues. It is particularly necessary to develop a common global ethic. While the world economy is integrating, the fabric of core human values is eroding. Such a disjunction between economy and human values is not sustainable. There are instruments such as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights that can

provide the basis for the beginning of such a dialogue. There are important issues including the use of force in the conduct of international relations and the definition of terrorism that evade universal agreements. The Contact Group may develop quiet processes, in consultation with experts, to try to minimise the gap in positions of various groups of countries on such issues that divide humanity.

Fourth, many experts have recommended large scale student exchange between Western and Islamic countries. Even in the days of the internet, personal interface has no substitute. However, in reality, students from Asia and the Middle East encounter entry barriers in the form of Visa denial. The Contact Group may use its political capital to facilitate free flow in the field of education, without artificial barriers.

Such an initiative may eventually deal with some long term issues. It is essential to have media cooperation between Western, Islamic and other societies to promote understanding and co-existence. The media can play a vital role in building trust. It is important to bear in mind that the media is merely a tool. It can be used in a constructive way, if those concerned about creating a better world facilitate the production of movies, television programmes, and internet blogs that build a vibrant dialogue between cultures and societies.

In the long run, the global economy needs innovation and fair representation in global political management and discourse. The question of the United Nations Security Council reform is already being debated. Currently, the G-8 plays a critical role in influencing global economic, and also increasingly, security agenda. Originally it was the G-5, extended to the industrial G-7, which was slowly expanded to include Russia to mirror changing global realities. Currently, it is effectively the G-12 as India, China, Brazil and South Africa are invited to G-8 summits as observers and can be expected to be made full members in the future. It is necessary to expand this group to include Saudi Arabia, since it is the largest oil exporting country and energy has significant impact on geopolitics and security; as well as Indonesia/Malaysia, Egypt and Turkey because of their geo-strategic significance and growing economic dynamism. A G-16 will better represent the new geopolitical and geo-economic balance. It can consult

regional groupings – European Union, African Union, Gulf Cooperation Council and Asean – just as the G-8 presently consults the World Bank. In any case, the G-8 is not a formal institution. Similarly, a G-16 need not be a formal institution. It can be a forum for discussion, exchange of perspectives on global economic and security dynamics, and the exploration of new ways of cooperation. Its decisions cannot be binding but could help leaders gauge realities in different parts of the world. It could also guide formulation of sustainable policies.

International Historical Study Group on Common Human Civilisation

It is generally believed that much of modern Western thought has its origins in Greek philosophy. In the post-Roman Empire period, many important Greek works were destroyed. It was largely to the credit of the Islamic rulers of the 9th to 12th century that some of these works were recovered, translated and analysed. The Arab, Persian and Jewish scholars of the time built upon the knowledge they had

gathered. Trade with China and India provided access to the knowledge developed in the Eastern societies for centuries. The scholars in the Middle East further created their own ideas and innovations. The experience of the Cordoba period is particularly relevant in this context. In a historical twist, their works were destroyed by Mongol invaders and others but Western universities secured and preserved some of them. Critical and independent enquiry is needed to ascertain to what extent the evolution of knowledge is a result of cross-fertilisation of ideas between people from different parts of the world.

At a time when the world is focussing on differences and discord, it is necessary to set up a joint historical study group, with respected historians from the Arab, Persian, Jewish, European, Asian and American traditions to explore jointly the development of human thought and the advancement of human civilization in the last 2000 years. Such a group may re-examine some of the critical historical issues from the perspective of inter-dependence and mutual cooperation in the development of humanity. The findings of such a body should be publicised through various forms of scholarly publications, as well as popular media.

Arab Islamic Renaissaance (AIR) Initiative

Of all the regions in the world, the Middle East needs particular attention at this juncture in history, since it is at the centre of many inconclusive wars. This region is subject to a conflict of visions. Foreign powers want to dictate how the people of this region should govern themselves. It is proposed that the Arab world should embrace democracy, even if it is established through military occupation and the rejection of election results. As people feel disenchanted with decrepit regimes and the fear of foreign occupation, extremist groups provide an absolutist vision of the Arab society derived from an orthodox religious perspective. Some of them complement it with the efficient delivery of social goods. In the contest between political and religious absolutism, and the shadow of foreign occupation, the Arab spirit is being suppressed.

It is possible to revive the Arab spirit by drawing constructive lessons from the region's own history. The Islamic cultural tradition can supply such a vision, leading to the resurgence of science, technology, rationality and progress across the Middle East. About a thousand years ago, the Arab world made dramatic breakthroughs in medicine, mathematics, optics, astronomy and literature. This was made possible because of the emphasis on plurality, freedom for critical enquiry, and state patronage of science, technology and rationality. Currently, the region has financial resources as Arab oil exporting countries generate a surplus of $300 billion per year (based on the oil price remaining in the region of $60 per barrel). It has the human resources of the many Arab scientists who currently work in laboratories in the West. It is essential to launch pan-Arab initiatives to create a Renaissance in the Arab world again, which can serve as the basis of a new and positive relationship between Arab nations and the rest of the world.

Spreading the Message

The plan to launch a Renaissance initiative first of all needs collective leadership. It has to be an inspired effort. Therefore, a group of inspired and inspiring leaders need to come together on the basis of their passion and dedication. Such a group needs to establish a network of leaders of business, popular culture, religion and the media. It needs to encourage the creation of Renaissance forums in all major Arab cities and towns. These would be voluntary groups of professionals, academics, students and concerned citizens. The first task must be to spread the message of Renaissance and identify priorities for action. The core elements of the message should be:

- The teachings of Islam and Islamic history place an extraordinary emphasis on knowledge creation and dissemination. If the Arab people want to obtain a certain status in the comity of nations in the 21st century, they must acquire strength through the pursuit of knowledge above everything else.

- The Renaissance is only possible with plurality, vibrant cultural interface within society and with the outside world, and active co-existence of civilisations. This was the essence of the Alexandria Statement. It must not only be confined to the elite who formulate it, but must spread all citizens.

- The Renaissance requires freedom for critical inquiry. The Tunis Declaration, the Alexandria Statement and the successive Arab Human Development Reports emphasise this. They have proposed specific steps to obtain and sustain a

state of freedom. The Arab Human Development Report calls for the readjustment of power distribution, while other statements call for ratification of various human rights instruments *de jure* and *de facto*.

▼ The states must expand their commitment to education, the promotion of rationality and the promotion of science and technology. Each country must set high targets for investments in education. In addition to this, the target for investments in science and technology must rise to 1 per cent of GDP as proposed by various expert groups and the OIC Science Committee. More importantly, the state must provide an enabling environment for the private sector and civil society to spread education and build institutions of science, technology and innovation. It must do away with all archaic laws, which could be obstacles to rationality and technology development.

While the Renaissance initiative needs to launch aggressive campaigns to promote this message, it can also ask local Renaissance groups to identify specific sectors as local priorities for investments in education, science and technology. The purpose of technological development cannot and should not be limited to satisfy the elite. It must be to solve the problems of the society. The Renaissance initiative will become popular if it is seen as serving the population in general.

Making Unity Work

Once an inspired and inspiring collective leadership emerges to drive the Renaissance initiative, it will need to design a practical framework for collaboration across the Arab world. They can consider various institutional models.

▼ *Arab Renaissance Foundation*: One option could be to create a massive foundation with voluntary contributions from governments, foundations, and individuals with at least $1 billion capital base. The core group may provide inspirational political leadership for such an endeavour. However, a group of Arab scientists and management experts may be appointed to look after its research priorities and management. The

foundation can model itself as a venture capital enterprise, investing in research, helping the output to be patented and commercialised, and then assisting with selling the output in the global marketplace. As some of the products succeed, they will begin to earn royalty for the foundation. Thus, in the long run, the foundation need not depend on the largesse of governments and individuals. The foundation may also set up several training institutions for support staff. The establishment of laboratories and training institutions can be done in different countries, following the principle of comparative natural advantage in geographical, demographic and economic terms, depending on where national leaders are willing to provide a nurturing environment.

▼ *Private Sector Venture Capital Funds*: Another option, which could be an additional option or an alternative, would be to encourage the private sector investment companies to set up venture capital funds for the long term development of science and technology in the region. Currently, many investment banks and funds mobilise billions of dollars to invest in the United States and Europe. Of late, some investment companies have also been scouting for investment opportunities in India, China and other Asian countries. Thus, they are essentially financing business development and product innovation in Western and Asian countries. This is natural since the private sector looks for the highest possible returns with minimum risks. It should be possible for the inspirational leaders of the Arab world to persuade some of the private sector players to take a long term perspective. The leaders can in turn facilitate government concessions for such investors in the form of free long term lease of real estate and tax exemptions.

Houses of Wisdom and Capacity Building

Besides the collective efforts at the pan-Arab level, it is necessary to convert some of the present universities, institutes and science and technology parks into Houses of Wisdom, where research, translation and innovation takes place on a large scale. At present

some of the Arab states have created very sophisticated state of the art facilities. The establishment of hardware in the form of facilities should be considered only as the first step. It is necessary to create software in the form of trained professionals. In this context, it must be emphasised that there are state of the art facilities and programmes in the Arab world that should be harnessed and expanded for the benefit of entire region. Such institutions exist in Qatar, Saudi Arabia, UAE, Jordan, Egypt and Lebanon. (Our research team did not study the situation in the Maghreb countries due to lack of time.) Islamic Development Bank has introduced programmes to foster scientific spirit. Arab scientists and intellectuals have mentioned some possibilities in their discussions.

- There is a tremendous need to develop the Arabic language. The language is increasingly turning into a colloquial medium. It is imperative to further develop the written form of Arabic. The English language elite constitute only a small proportion of the population. If the Arabic language is developed, it would be possible to spread scientific knowledge to all people.

- As the Arabic language is developed, it is also necessary to develop talent in creating an Arabic interface to translate internet material, which is mostly in English.

- It is necessary to create bilingual and multilingual experts, to undertake the translation of books and science journals from English, French, German and other languages. This function alone can create thousands of jobs for linguists and hundreds of jobs to train students to acquire such skills. As the translated books will eventually be sold in large numbers, a market driven economic cycle can be created.

- Several Arab countries have set up training in computer programming and information technology. The private sector can take up business driven initiatives with low cost training centres in these sectors. Initially governments can help with short term free lease of real estate and tax exemptions.

- The Arab world has very few institutes of technology and managers to train engineers and business managers. It is possible for the industry to come together to pool resources to create institutes of technology, or modernise existing faculties of engineering to bring them to the level of institutes of technology and management. Here cooperation with other advanced developing economies like Turkey, India and Malaysia can be productive and cost-effective.

- At the highest level of the Renaissance initiative, the Arab world should focus on creating centres of excellence committed to research and development, with a very conscious objective of exploring major technological breakthroughs. This will require establishing laboratories aspiring to produce long term scientific results, or acquiring small technology companies abroad with a hope of returns in the short run, or a combination of both long term and short term approaches. If such a strategy succeeds in facilitating technological breakthroughs, it will have a large psychological impact on the mindset of the masses.

Enterprise and Social Development

Most technological breakthroughs do not get far without market and social acceptance. Therefore, a process of scientific and technological development must be concomitant of efforts to promote entrepreneurship.

- Some countries are developing local models. Bahrain has developed a business incubator, which is completely determined by merit. The focus is on management advice for market success and very strategic use of investments. In this sense, the Bahrain model is more sophisticated than that of Silicon Valley during the initial internet boom of the 1990s. Qatar plans to launch a $100 million fund to convert technologies emanating from its Science and Technology Park into commercial products. This is a visionary initiative that would launch the Renaissance in the 21st century.

- Enterprise development and employment generation also needs to attract foreign capital.

Currently, the Middle East accounts for barely 1 per cent of global FDI flows, most of it in hydrocarbons. Lately some countries have made concentrated efforts to tap FDI in the hospitality industry and banking. It is absolutely essential for the Middle East entrepreneurs to attract investors not only from traditional Western MNC's but also from new sources such as India, China, Korea and Malaysia. The companies in these four countries have recently invested in approximately 200-500 companies outside their own shores.

◤ The biggest source of finance that is most suited to the region is Islamic banking. Since Islam does not approve of interest, Islamic banking essentially functions like the private equity funding mechanism. Accordingly, capital surplus individuals share profit and loss with entrepreneurs. It is the most entrepreneur-friendly school of banking as it can function without collateral. However, it needs to be modernised in tune with the realities of the 21st century economy. It has the potential to launch a massive entrepreneurial revolution in the Islamic world.

◤ Finally, a successful economy depends on a healthy society. There is a significant deficit of trade unions, NGOs, professional associations, grass-root level civic action groups in most Arab countries. Arab countries need to change their laws to promote a vibrant civic culture, and allow civil society to criticise governance. If the rulers don't do so voluntarily, revolutions will either depose them or force them to modify their behaviour. It is in their interest to promote non-violent activism.

Freedom for Critical Inquiry

The agenda outlined above needs freedom for critical inquiry. Such freedom must be obtained from the state as well as religious zealots with an absolutist vision of the society and all other forces that may create obstacles in a free society and market. Leading institutions with Arab involvement have already applied their minds to this issue. It would be best to summarise well known Arab proposals rather than making new recommendations.

The Tunis Declaration of the League of Arab States 2004 states the following:

"We reaffirm our states' commitment

◤ *to the humanitarian principles and the noble values of human rights in their comprehensive and interdependent dimensions, to the provisions of the various international conventions and charters,*

◤ *and to the Arab Human Rights Charter adopted by the Tunis Summit, as well as*

◤ *to the reinforcement of the freedom of expression, thought and belief and*

◤ *to the guarantee of independence of judiciary."*

The Arab Human Development Report 2004 and the Alexandria Statement emphasise freedom as a paramount value, political pluralism, legitimate means of transfer of power, freedom of thought and expression, freedom of association, an independent judiciary, accountability and transparency in governance. Genuine freedom must also provide for gender and cultural plurality. Special efforts must be made to include women as fully participating members of the economy and society. It is not enough to end discrimination against people of different cultures. It is necessary to explore how religious and ethnic plurality can enrich society by cross-fertilisation of ideas from different traditions. A plural society can also produce various cultural projects to attract investments in tourism and media. However, creative plurality has a bottom line – it depends on a genuine freedom for critical inquiry.

Global Engagement

One of the hallmarks of the golden phase in Islamic history was a vibrant engagement of the Arab region with the outside world. The Arab Business Council, in its articulation of the Arab Renaissance concept, places significant emphasis on external engagement through trade, foreign direct investment and ICT technologies. It regrets the fact that the Arab region today hardly participates in world trade, except in the hydrocarbon sector. The Arab Competitiveness Report 2005 has estimated that

non-oil exports have a potential to be three times what they are now and that FDI has the potential to increase by a factor of five or six.

Institutions such as the Arab Business Council, the World Economic Forum, the World Bank and others have spelt out strategies for better integration of the Arab countries in the global trade and investment regimes. Some countries have taken steps to integrate well in the global financial markets. We do not see any advantage in repeating them here as readers can easily find them on the internet.

In the spirit of Renaissance, we would like to make two propositions.

First, the Arab world could take the initiative to conceive and advocate a new architecture of global security and cooperation. Such a new architecture would involve a lot of give and take. Arab nations could offer to liberalise trade and investment policies; Western nations could offer special trade concessions in industries with significant employment potential. Western nations could introduce sound integration policies for humane and fair treatment and productive integration of immigrants; Arab and other Islamic countries should forbid any alienated immigrants in the West to use their territories for planning hostile acts in their host countries. Western, Arab and other Islamic countries could form new North-South security arrangements, promote media and academic exchanges and discuss commitment to universal principles such as adherence to human rights, and rule of law in the conduct of international relations.

In addition to such give and take with the West, the Arab countries could benefit by economic, technical and cultural interface with countries in Asia – particularly China, India, Japan, Malaysia and Turkey – as well as Africa and Latin America.

Secondly, the Arab world can participate in global affairs not only with a view to taking but also to giving. It can contribute substantially to the mitigation of global poverty, the development of alternative energy resources, the stabilisation of the global financial system, and the efforts of international regimes to deconstruct terror and extremism. With such a role, Arab countries can rightfully press for the fabric of global governance to be woven afresh.

Once the Arab world launches such collective initiatives for progress, it should be feasible for it to persuade Western public opinion to persuade their governments to stop destabilising the Arab region. Currently, some intrusive Western policies have public support because the Arab world is projected as a decrepit and divided region in the need of reform. Once a group of Arab leaders take their future in their own hands, they can attempt to win over public opinion in the West. It is true that some elements in the West believe in the philosophies advocating destabilisation projects and they may prove to be too intransigent to change their mindset. But there are large constituencies in the West that favour reason, progress and constructive partnership with the Islamic world. There are leaders in the Arab world who enjoy direct communication and credibility with such constituencies.

Compact of 3 Ds

The response strategies discussed above specifically apply to Islamic countries and the relations between the Western and Islamic countries. Our observations at the beginning of the essay reveal that the problems of terrorism and extremism result from relative deprivation, combined with specific situational factors in almost all parts of the world. It is necessary to introduce measures to eliminate exclusionist policies from society and to empower young people, particularly those who feel alienated.

Development

It is necessary to meet the UN Millennium Development Goals to create hope and opportunity. It is also necessary to introduce specific measures in the fields of education and employment that can deter young people from extremism.

▼ In rural areas, there is simply a problem of lack of availability of schools and high drop-out ratios. There is also the problem of providing education that is relevant to the local environment. It is not possible to expect tribal children in Southern Saudi Arabia, North-central India, Northern Uganda and South-eastern Egypt to understand modern concepts easily. It is important that they have access to education that they can relate to and which can prepare them for a productive life in their own economic context.

▼ It is necessary to create livelihood packages in especially difficult areas so that children and young people have incentives to learn. It is essential to provide training to equip them to address the demands of the changing economy. In post-conflict situations, the government can make

special efforts to attract teachers from the Diaspora. It is also necessary to assess the specific needs of the economies of backward areas and encourage economic activities that are harmonious with local economic realities. For instance, land reforms, promotion of agricultural cooperatives, irrigation, rural infrastructure, food processing units, handicrafts and eco-tourism can help backward areas.

▼ It is also important that education is reformed to promote core human values. In Sri Lanka, literacy ratios are high. But children are segregated from early childhood. It is important to have bilingual schools where different ethnic communities learn together and from each other. In many Islamic countries it is necessary to have bilingual schools so that children can be exposed to their own culture as well as be equipped with skills required to succeed in the global economy. In fact, they can develop ideas by blending the best elements from both worlds. As far back as 1000 years ago, Islamic textbooks promoted Greek and Indian scientific knowledge, while Harvard used Islamic medicine textbooks until recently. Today in the multi-ethnic suburbs of Europe, bilingual schools for migrants, as well as local pupils can perhaps provide a platform for plurality.

▼ It is necessary to undertake in-depth exercises, perhaps with assistance from UNESCO, to turn textbooks into enabling tools that would help discover scientific truth. Sometimes textbooks are written to distort facts, religious teachings and history to serve political purposes. It is necessary to find means to correct such distortions to promote open thought processes.

◥ As many communities are not familiar with modern production methods, it would be useful to undertake massive training in work culture, productivity, industrial processes and information technology.

◥ It is particularly necessary to promote small enterprises through the promotion of enterprise training, micro-finance and assistance for marketing.

◥ European economists need to rethink the economic integration of minorities at a time of great demographic shifts, which should release certain job openings.

◥ Educational and employment needs of refugees require special attention, be it the Acholi camps in Uganda or the Palestinian camps in Lebanon.

◥ In brief, the objective of an education strategy should be to include those who are outside the circle of learning, not only to enable them to achieve basic literacy but also to enable them to deal with the needs of the modern market economy and to learn to appreciate other cultures and thought processes which would make society more inclusive.

Democracy

The history of groups engaging in acts of terror demonstrates that closed political spaces force young people to take up arms in many parts of the world. It is necessary to have democratic structures and practices but democracy is not about holding periodic elections alone. It is necessary to have inclusive political structures.

◥ In a world of increasingly middle class politics and advertising, it is necessary to find ways to incorporate poor, marginal and rural segments of society in legitimate politics.

◥ The world must learn to accept election results and encourage dialogue processes with the advocates of absolutist visions to give up such visions. Hezbollah in Lebanon began with a totalitarian vision of the state based on the

Iranian system, but has accepted to live within Lebanon's power-sharing model. Islamic parties in Jordan and Turkey have accepted democratic norms. The Maoists in Nepal have accepted power-sharing with other democratic forces. Except for Iran, where a Supreme Leader is superior to the presidency and the legislature, and Central Asian dictatorships, most ideological and religious parties have accepted a plural democratic framework. Malaysia has created a coalition model, which deliberately provides space to different communities in the government.

◥ It is necessary to promote accountability and transparency in governance even in democracies, so that those who feel neglected in development processes can question the authorities.

◥ Where there are military dictatorships, the international community should demand urgent and immediate democratisation. The international community should boycott regimes that steal elections and usurp power through military coups.

◥ Where there are single party states and monarchies, it is necessary to introduce political reforms to allow various schools of thought to have representation through the legislative processes, a free media, and eventually government structures.

◥ Where there are democracies working on the majority principle, special efforts must be made to allow the minorities to express their views. In some countries, not only representative politics, but also representative bureaucracies would be useful.

◥ In brief, modern democracy is not merely about the consent of the governed and the existence of civil liberties. It must also include special measures for legitimate representation and communication with the marginalised groups who cannot win the middle class electoral games and we must accept the results when they do so. In such a world, there is no place for military regimes and dictatorships under any guise.

Dialogue

The empirical evidence shows that dialogue with alienated groups helps to include them in economic and political structures and reduces their motivation for violent criminal acts. In 1996 in the Philippines, President Ramos succeeded in turning Moro groups away from a violent track through dialogue, demobilisation, and the integration of combatants into armed forces, autonomy and the establishment of a local developmental body. In Colombia, President Uribe persuaded ELN to give up violence in exchange for partial or full amnesty as well as measures to integrate them into the economy. In Uganda, the West Nile conflict ended through dialogue. Sudan entered into a dialogue with SPLM and brought an end to terror and conflict through an agreement on power sharing and revenue sharing. The UK persuaded the IRA to give up arms through dialogue, leading to the establishment of various institutions of governance, amnesty, demobilisation and measures for economic revival of the region. On the other hand, Turkey is investing heavily in South-east Anatolia through the GAP project to construct 22 dams, 19 power plants and two irrigation tunnels. However, this has not reduced violence. There are several examples around the world of how dialogue has persuaded groups engaged in acts of terror to give up violence and, conversely, how well meaning development projects have not reduced terror and conflict.

◤ It is feasible to have a dialogue with groups that have defined territorial or nationalist objectives. It is not possible to have a dialogue with groups that have ambitions of establishing a new world order based on their preferred ideology or religious doctrine. In this case, it should be possible to reduce the support base of such groups by holding result-oriented dialogues with their supporting constituents who often have their own agendas.

◤ It is not possible to have dialogue with groups that do not want to give up violence at all. Norway brought about a ceasefire between the Sri Lankan government and LTTE for three years. However, LTTE influenced electoral behaviour in such a way that the hard-line Sinhalese government would come to power

and the conflict would resume despite a tremendous amount of international political and financial capital supporting the peace process.

◤ It would be useful to assess the experience of amnesty schemes around the world. It is important to determine where to draw a line since amnesty schemes should not promote violent behaviour as a negotiating tactic.

◤ The crafting of the amnesty scheme must be done in such a way that justice is not ignored. As the LRA declares amnesty, it will be essential to determine how it can be punished for some of its most inhuman crimes. At the same time, there is no point in providing an incentive to return to arms and continue perpetuating the same crimes. This dilemma is commonplace around the world. South Africa's Truth and Reconciliation Commission provides one mechanism to deal with past injustice, without creating a cycle of revenge.

◤ Wherever possible, demobilised youth could be employed in ceasefire monitoring and deactivating land mines. Thus, yesterday's militants can be given a sense of purpose and turned into peace builders.

◤ When dialogue leads to peace, it is useful to market it internationally to instil pride in the local population as an internationally respected peace making society. The example of Northern Ireland exemplifies how people taking pride in being known as peace-makers can forget about their chauvinist claims and develop a vested interest in peace.

◤ In brief, dialogue is helpful if it provides an incentive to give up arms but it should not provide an incentive to engage in violence with a view to striking a deal at a later stage.

Is the compact of 3Ds old wine in a new bottle? What is the common stream that would bring all the three Ds together? What is that single factor that can facilitate the implementation of all three Ds in an inter-dependent fashion?

Our answer to this question is distance education using modern technology. It is beyond argument that education can enable people, especially young people to develop themselves, participate in social and political life of a town or country effectively and engage in dialogue with others in the society. However, traditional education often tends to be ineffective due to both supply and demand side constraints. Massive amount of time and resources are required to build schools, train teachers, and encourage the enrolment of children and youth. With new wireless technologies, internet and modern standards such as Wi-Max it should be possible to extend the reach of education to those who are isolated. Such education can be flexible, without huge physical investments and need for teachers and children to travel several miles a day to attend schools. The new technologies can take education to remote areas and mitigate the sense of alienation, empower the youth, accelerate development, democratise societies in a real sense and be instruments of dialogue. We urgently need public-private partnership initiatives all over the world to make this happen and together we can make such a transformation possible.

Part V

The Next Steps

This essay presents an outline of the revision of the global security architecture and a specific proposal for the revival of the Arab spirit. It demonstrates how such a revision will be in the common interest of humanity and peacefully end the wars that presently appear inconclusive. It explains how the world can transform the current model of unilateral enforcement to one of collaborative problem-solving. Such a transformation in the conduct of international relations requires concrete steps. We propose that the following small steps by a few enlightened leaders from the West and East, North and South can lead to big changes in the future of humanity. These ideas have been mentioned elsewhere in this essay. It is necessary to conclude the essay by revisiting them for planning the next steps in collaborative and transformative actions.

◥ *Inclusive Semi-permanent Conference on Peace in the Middle East*: It is essential to institute a mechanism of formal, inter-governmental talks on a permanent basis until a solution to the Palestinian conflict that is acceptable to all parties is found. The Madrid conference of the early 1990s aimed to do this and led to the Oslo process. The Barcelona process excludes important countries of the Gulf region, including Saudi Arabia, Iran and Iraq. The Greater Middle East project of the United States is perceived to be a unilateral enterprise, more a problem than a solution. We need talks that are regular, that will not be affected by the vicissitudes of daily developments. We need talks that are multilateral. We also need talks that are inclusive in which all parties having a bearing on the ground have a stake. It is for the governments of great powers and the Middle East region to examine this proposal.

◥ *Western-Islamic Dialogue and Engagement (WIDE) Initiative*: We need the formation of an informal Contact Group of inspired and inspiring leaders from all parts of the world, particularly Western and Islamic nations, to discuss, formulate and pursue specific collaborative actions to address critical issues dividing the world. This essay presents several elements of bargain, cooperation and reforms that the leaders can use as a platform to initiate the discussion. It must be emphasised that any such initiative will only bear fruit if it engages policy makers and opinion makers in the United States at various levels through informal channels and opens communication lines with key political actors in the Islamic countries. However, the members of Contact Group will have several ideas of their own. It is important that the leaders not only provide moral direction but also use their political capital to push for changes that they collectively believe in. It is not enough to create a talk shop; there are several of those already. It is important to have leaders who are willing to find collective answers and concurrently pursue implementation in concrete ways.

◥ *Arab Islamic Renaissance Initiative*: It is essential to have a group of enlightened Arab experts coming together to launch the initiative and to mobilise public opinion and financial resources. We have presented a plan of action as a preliminary agenda for discussion. The experts will have ideas of their own to build on it. While there is an emphasis on science and technology in the conceptual note incorporated in this essay, the Renaissance is about a change in mindset. Science and technology are merely tools of change; they are not change itself. The

establishment of a committed and collaborative group of experts, under the patronage of enlightened leaders, is already long overdue. Any enlightened leader can take the next step to convene it.

◤ *Compact of 3Ds*: We have presented a compact of 3Ds: Development, Democracy and Dialogue, crafted in a specific way that can address the problem of extremism. It is for various governments, non-governmental actors and think tanks to initiate discussion on specific strategies that are relevant to their respective countries and regions. One common strategy to bring about change with respect to all of three Ds would be worldwide public-private sector initiatives to promote distance education using modern technologies. New wireless telecommunication technologies can extend the reach of education to remote areas accelerating development, democratising opportunities for youth and establishing linkages between alienated and mainstream sections of the society.

While these First Steps outlined above are directed at leaders, it is ultimately in the hands of citizens to push for change. Citizen groups from NATO and the Warsaw Treaty countries once came together to mobilise public opinion against the arms race during the Cold War. Some of them were quite imaginative as they involved personal physicians of rulers and retired army generals. There are at present citizen movements involving the Israelis and Palestinians that are working for peace between the two peoples. It is necessary for the concerned citizens of the Western and Islamic countries to explore similar initiatives that build a culture of co-existence and push for the required political change.

In November 2006, the United Nations Secretary General's initiative on Alliance of Civilizations released its report. Its key finding that terrorism and extremism are fostered by power politics, where cultural constructs are used as vehicles, is borne by the analysis in Part I of this paper. The Alliance of Civilizations has recommended the appointment of a High Representative mandated by the United Nations. It has also recommended several steps to being about positive change on the ground. Our recommendations in Part II, III and IV of this paper share the spirit of proposals made by the Alliance of Civilizations. We do realise that there might be other ideas that may make a positive change possible much earlier than what we have proposed here.

On the other hand, the underlying hypotheses of some of the proposed changes might not be palatable to some political thinkers. It is difficult to see the need for change for those who have the world on their terms. It is easy to blame others for their flaws and demand that it is only the other that needs to reform. It is also convenient to dismiss those who propose collaborative problem-solving as naïve and idealistic.

History shows that in reality those who cover their eyes with blankets of power prove to be naïve. The Romans of the fourth century, the Arabs of the twelfth century, the Chinese of the fifteenth century and the British of the twentieth century are all testament to the naiveté and arrogance of those who have too much power. Luckily for humanity, technology was much less advanced then. The empires collapsed, killing several millions but sparing the earth.

At the same time, the human spirit has shown tremendous capacity for resilience throughout history. It has bounced back after every crisis to create a better world. The world possesses a vast pool of wisdom. The world also has a large reservoir of people who can commit themselves to change the future. Time and again we have proved ourselves capable of reason. We have abolished slavery, gender discrimination, and apartheid. We have outlawed piracy and drug trafficking. We must deconstruct terrorism and extremism so that we can go ahead and solve the real problems of humanity such as poverty, disease and climate change. We are capable of dreaming of a utopia and making it a reality. We can and must create an inclusive world, a world where the human spirit of co-existence triumphs over discord and hope wins over fear.

ANTICIPATING AND INFLUENCING GLOBAL FUTURE

Strategic Foresight Group is a think tank engaged in anticipating and influencing the future in uncertain times. It produces scenarios, creates policy concepts and facilitates political processes. It advises government and business leaders and informs public on future trends as well as discontinuities.

Since its inception in 2002,

▼ Strategic Foresight Group has worked closely with important institutions such as the Alliance of Liberals and Democrats in the European Parliament, League of Arab States, World Economic Forum, Bibliotheca Alexandrina, among others.

▼ It has advised governments in Asia, Europe and North America.

▼ It has deposed before committees of the House of Commons and the Indian Parliament.

▼ Its research findings and views have been covered by the world media including BBC World Television, CNN, International Herald Tribune, Financial Times, New York Times, The Straits Times, Gulf News, Khaleej Times, The Peninsula, Asahi Shimbun, and almost all major newspapers in India and Pakistan.

Strategic Foresight Group has been able to build a global reputation because

▼ It has developed a new methodology to project alternative futures of countries and regions, which can enable business and government leaders to map options.

▼ It has constructed creative analytical tools to assess the impact of geopolitical and macro-economic developments, particularly including globalisation, extremism and conflicts.

▼ It has emerged as a voice of reason and pragmatism in the global debate on relations between Western and Islamic countries.

Strategic Foresight Group takes action to translate its ideas into policy realities. In geopolitics, it negotiates solutions to protracted and difficult conflicts and brings together senior political leaders from North America, Europe, Asia and the Middle East in confidence-building measures. In the macro-economic context, it enables business entities from emerging markets to become global companies. As the world of opportunity competes with the world at risk, Strategic Foresight Group is what the policy community needs.

www.strategicforesight.com

An Inclusive World

In which the West, Islam and the Rest have a stake

"*An Inclusive World* is a rare document where Strategic Foresight Group puts forward a comprehensive agenda that combines analysis of the central dilemmas of our troubled times with solutions. *An Inclusive World* is a call to different protagonists to refrain from the manipulation of belief systems to justify the use of force. It is also a courageous document that defines the crisis of Islam, and its deficit of trust with the West, as one of knowledge. That the solution in inclusion and cooperation might be a banal observation. Which is why *An Inclusive World* proposes building blocks and instruments for turning the vision into reality. A semi-permanent conference that would address the Palestinian conflict, Western-Islamic Dialogue and Engagement, as well as the idea of addressing the conflicting narratives of the West and Islam through an International Historical Study Group add up to the most comprehensive approach to the crisis of our time that has ever been proposed. One should hope that decision makers would respond to the challenge of this extraordinary document."

Professor Shlomo Ben-Ami
Former Foreign Minister of Israel

"The thrust of *An Inclusive World* is on expanding whatever common ground exists between the different cultures of the world while rightly focusing on the relationship between Islam and the West, in the hope of creating an inclusive world. The report emphasizes the superiority of wisdom over knowledge. *An Inclusive World* rightly emphasizes that the problems that separate cultures, especially Islam and the West, are primarily political and not religious. Terror, the Report indicates is ugly and wanton, though the more dangerous phenomenon is that of extremism which has the ability to attract the masses for long. It was from this vantage point that *An Inclusive World* takes a global view of this trend. The recommendations that it contains offer hope in what appears to be a hopeless international system if the major world decision makers can develop the capacity to strike a balance between actions and principles."

Professor Kamel Abu Jaber
Former Foreign Minister of Jordan

"I was pleased by your commitment to tolerance and understanding."

President Bill Clinton
Former President of the United States
(Commenting on the *Inclusive World* speech that led to this document.)

Strategic Foresight Group