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Supporting or Resisting Global Public Goods? The Policy Dimension of a Contested Concept

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Following the publication of a seminal book by the UN Development Programme in 1999, the concept of global public goods has become a key theme in the debate on international development. Supporters argue that an adequate provision of GPGs can help manage the negative consequences of globalization; moreover, considering that these goods provide benefits to both developed and developing countries, resources should be additional to foreign aid. Resistance has come both from developed countries, which question the issue of additionality, and from developing countries, which raise the issues of diversion of resources and the international decisionmaking process. This article shows how this concept has emerged and has been dealt with by policymakers in the Financing for Development Conference in March 2002 and the World Summit on Sustainable Development in August 2002. It also analyzes the work and final report of the International Task Force on Global Public Goods established by France and Sweden in April 2003. KEYWORDS: global public goods, international organizations, United Nations Development Programme, Financing for Development, World Summit on Sustainable Development, norms.

The concept of global public goods (GPGs) is not new, but in the past few years it has been widely discussed in international development. The driving force behind it was initially the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), but this "discourse" has progressively integrated international organizations (e.g., World Bank, Organization for Economic Coordination and Development), states (e.g., France, Sweden), and foundations and philanthropists (e.g., Gates Foundation, Rockefeller Foundation, Soros Foundations).[1] The object of this article is to show how the concept of GPGs has (re)emerged, who has supported and resisted it, and how the international community has addressed it. In the first section, following a brief preamble on the role of international organizations in international development, I examine how the UNDP has built this discourse. I then analyze how the concept has been received by states and by the academic community. In the second part, I focus on the international policymaking process. In particular, I discuss two recent international conferences—the Financing for

Development Conference (FfD), held in Monterrey in March 2002, and the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD), held in Johannesburg in August/September 2002—and the work of the International Task Force on Global Public Goods, which was established by France and Sweden in April 2003.

International Organizations and International Development

The past ten years have witnessed a constructivist turn in international relations theory, which has also given rise to new interpretations in international politics. Initially, most of the constructivist literature focused on showing that norms—defined as collective understandings that make behavioral claims on actors—matter and in some cases may prevail over powerful states. While one strand of this literature emphasizes how human rights, gender, and environmental norms shape the interests of states, another strand is more skeptical about the autonomy of ideas from power, arguing that certain powerful groups have a privileged role in the process of social construction.[2] However, once the notion that norms matter was established, studies began to investigate how norms arise at a particular time. Some scholars focus on the role of "norm entrepreneurs," others on the role of international organizations. Norm entrepreneurs are committed people who are in the right place at the right time calling attention to issues or even creating them in order to instill their beliefs into larger global social structures.[3] International organizations (IOs) have become central actors in international politics, working in areas that used to be the prerogative of states and acting as agents of global change.[4]

Despite relying on member states for funds and support, IOs often play an autonomous role. Their ability to be autonomous depends on the authority that constitutes them. This authority is delegated by states, which set IOs to perform certain tasks, but increasingly IOs claim both moral and expertise authority. Moral authority is linked to the fact that they are supposed to protect the community's interest vis-à-vis states, which defend their national interests. Expertise authority refers to their specialized knowledge, but with an added moral dimension: experts in IOs often believe that as "guardians of knowledge" they act in the name of the common good. Therefore, they use this authority to orient actions and create social reality, introducing new policy ideas and setting priorities for shared activities that would not otherwise exist. The autonomy of IOs, though, does not mean that they are omnipotent: their attempts to coerce and/or persuade may encounter varying degrees of resistance from various actors, especially countries.[5]

Two international organizations—the World Bank and the UNDP—have dominated development thinking in the past decades. Although there have been many signs of convergence, these two organizations have produced two rival approaches to international development: growth-centered versus people-centered. The growth-centered development, pursued by the World Bank with its *World Development Report* (WDR), argues that economic growth, measured through macroeconomic indicators (mainly GDP), leads to a reduction in poverty levels. Supported by mainstream economists, this approach favors removal of trade barriers and the retrenchment of the state and argues that technology and the use of market-based policy instruments will advance sufficiently to keep pace with any potential risks to the global environment. The people-centered approach, pursued by UNDP with its *Human Development Report* (HDR), emphasizes improving quality of life through economic as well as social betterment. Supported by the whole spectrum of social scientists, this approach is wary of the adverse consequences of neoliberal policies and of globalization, and at the same time it is strongly sensitive to environmental risks and supportive of sustainable development.[6]

The UNDP has been praised for its progressive approach to international development, including its innovative analyses on issues like participation, gender, poverty, and HIV/AIDS, and for its emphasis on the principle of ownership. Developing countries are free to plan and implement programs and policies. Moreover, the UNDP has also been charged with coordinating global and national efforts to reach the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).[7] Nevertheless, its (over)reliance on choices made by recipient countries and its critical approach to the globalization process have attracted criticism from some developed countries.

Introducing the Concept of GPGs

Counting on expertise and moral authority, the UNDP published a seminal book on global public goods in 1999.[8] While earlier contributions had focused mainly on national public goods, the UNDP brought the concept of GPGs from the realm of microeconomics into the realm of international policy analysis. To be classified as a GPG a good must meet two criteria: degree of "publicness" and spatial range of benefits. As for degree of publicness, to be considered public a good must be nonexcludable (i.e., once the good is produced, no one can be excluded from enjoying it) and nonrival in consumption (i.e., the consumption of a good does not affect the amount available to other people). As for the spatial range, to have a global dimension a public good must extend its impact beyond a group of contiguous countries—otherwise it would be a regional public good (RPG)[9]—and must not discriminate against any set of populations or generations.[10]

The UNDP offered a definition and a list of key GPGs based on this premise. GPGs are defined as goods whose benefits are strongly universal in terms of countries (i.e., covering more than one group of countries), people (i.e., accruing to several, preferably all, population groups), and generations (i.e., extending to both current and future generations, or at least meeting the needs of the current generation without foreclosing development options for future generations). A list of key GPGs, divided by category, was proposed: (1) natural global commons, such as the ozone layer or climate stability; (2) human-made global commons, such as scientific and practical knowledge, principles and norms, the world's common heritage, and transnational infrastructures (Internet); (3) global conditions, such as peace, health, and financial stability (see Table 1).

The main claim of the book, however, is that, in addition to some positive effects, globalization also has negative consequences, which are often rooted in the underprovision or malprovision of GPGs. The book identifies three gaps in the arrangements for providing GPGs: (1) jurisdictional gap, which refers to the discrepancy between the global scope of GPGs and the predominantly national scope of policymaking; (2) participation gap, which refers to the fact that many people and actors are excluded from the international governance system; and (3) incentive gap, which implies that, in the absence of incentives, resources for GPGs would come from foreign aid.[11]

Within a relatively short time, academic papers were written and seminars held, while international and bilateral agencies started to integrate GPGs into their development policies.[12] In 2003, in response to criticism about the

Table 1 Sample of Global Public Goods as Identified by the UNDP, 1999

	Benefits	Benefits	Nature of the Problem	Costs	Costs
GPG	Non-excludable	Non-rival		Non-excludable	Non-rival
Natural global commons					
Ozone layer	Yes	No	Overuse	Yes	Yes
Atmosphere (climate)	Yes	No	Overuse	Yes	Yes
Human-made global commons					
Universal norms	Partly	Yes	Underuse	Partly	Yes
Knowledge	Partly	Yes	Underuse	Partly	Yes
Internet	Partly	Yes	Underuse	Partly	Yes
Global conditions					
Peace	Yes	Yes	Undersupply	Partly	Yes
Health	Yes	Yes	Undersupply	Yes	Yes
Financial stability	Partly	Yes	Undersupply	Yes	Yes
Free trade	Partly	Yes	Undersupply	Yes	Yes
Freedom from poverty	No	No	Undersupply	Yes	Yes
Environmental sustainability	Yes	Yes	Undersupply	Yes	Yes
Equity and justice	Partly	Yes	Undersupply	Yes	Yes

Source: Inge Kaul, Isabelle Grunberg, and Marc A. Stern, eds., *Global Public Goods: International Cooperation in the 21st Century* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999).

fuzziness of the concept and to clarify some issues related to financing, the UNDP published a second book.[13] This new contribution proposed a broader definition, which integrated three elements—the so-called "triangle of publicness": (1) publicness in consumption, which implies that individuals and groups must have access to the good; (2) publicness in the distribution of benefits, which implies a fair and meaningful deal for all; (3) publicness of decisionmaking, which implies an involvement of all major actors and stakeholders, including developing countries and nonstate actors. Because policy choices determine what is and what is not a GPG, there cannot be a fixed list of such goods; some always have the property of global publicness, while others have over time changed from being local or national to being global in terms of benefits and costs. GPGs are thus redefined as goods that are in the global public domain. This definition differs greatly from more traditional definitions, which, according to the UNDP, failed to capture the fact that public goods are largely a matter of policy choices.

As for the financing aspect, the UNDP recommended a clear split between foreign aid and GPGs. Financing GPGs does not mean raising additional resources but necessitates a better allocation of existing resources: GPGs can be provided if appropriate systems, such as new markets and appropriate codes and standards, are created and/or made effective. If additional resources are needed, they should come from the budget of ministries or government agencies that are responsible for the domestic component of the GPG in question (e.g., health, environment, energy ministries).

Supporting the Concept of GPGs

While the role of the UNDP in popularizing the concept of GPGs, especially among policymakers, cannot be denied, a series of scholars had already analyzed the effects of increased international interdependence throughout the 1990s. Joseph Stiglitz, for example, in the mid-1990s, had already extended the concept of local public goods to the international arena and had identified many interrelations among various international public goods (i.e., peace, international economic stability, global environment, knowledge).[14] Todd Sandler, who has worked extensively on this issue, argued that to tackle global challenges (e.g., environmental threats, terrorism, nuclear proliferation, communicable diseases), actions at the national or regional level were no longer sufficient.[15] However, to motivate nations to act collectively there needed to be sufficient gains for each of them. Thus, he applied the concept of technology of aggregation—that is, the relationship between individual contributions and the overall supply of the individual GPG[16]—to show how best to provide different GPGs. Similarly, Wolfgang Reinicke maintained that with increased interdependence, the separation between national and international realms had become blurred. Nationally oriented public policy should be supplemented with "global public policy," which included states, international organizations, civil society, and the private sector.[17] Sandler and Ravi Kanbur argued that GPGs could offer a new rationale to make development assistance more effective. Moreover, this form of development assistance was more palatable for donors because they would also benefit from it. Yet, traditional forms of assistance (to be implemented through a "common pool") were also essential.[18]

The foreign aid–GPG link was also examined by the World Bank in the 2001 edition of its *Global Development Finance,*[19] where it was shown that more financial resources were needed to compensate the downward trends in foreign aid of the 1990s and to avoid resources devoted to GPGs being diverted from low-income to middle-income and even high-income countries.[20] A new argument, which was not necessarily backed up by the UNDP, started to emerge among supporters of GPGs: that financing of GPGs should be additional to resources geared to traditional development assistance programs. Various kinds of taxes, levies, and user fees have been suggested over the years. The most controversial is the currency transaction tax (also known as the Tobin tax), which imposes a small international tax on all spot conversions of one currency to another. Other proposals include a carbon tax on the consumption of fossil fuels, a tax on fuel emissions, a tax on arms production and sales, the allocation of current or new special drawing rights (SDRs) by the IMF to deal with shortages of liquidity in developing countries, and a global lottery. All these proposals have been widely discussed in international negotiating forums, but for different reasons none of them has yet been implemented, at least at a global level.[21]

Sweden and France were the first states to embrace the GPG approach. Sweden's interest should be seen as part of the broader objectives of its development policy, which promotes multilateralism in international development. Its involvement culminated in the publication of a study on financing GPGs conducted by two leading scholars in international development.[22] This study was presented at a seminar organized in October 2001 in Stockholm, which, as it involved representatives from all European Union (EU) member states and from the European Commission, represented an important occasion to discuss whether a shared EU vision on the issue was possible. France saw in GPGs a way to harness the negative consequences of globalization. Moreover, it argued that the involvement of developing countries was a key element in the effort to bridge the "institutional gap" in the production and provision of GPGs.[23] The concept of GPGs was also supported by other European states: Denmark allocated extra financial resources under a separate budget line to promote GPGs; Germany sponsored studies on new sources of development finance such as public-private partnerships and the Tobin tax; and Norway stressed the principle of additionality.

Resisting the Concept of GPGs

The attempts by the UNDP to promote the concept of GPGs has met with resistance from a variety of actors, such as academics, key developed states (e.g., the United States and Japan), and the vast majority of countries in the developing world, which respectively questioned the nature of the concept, the issue of additionality, and the political process relating to which good to produce.

Several scholars have questioned the scientific foundation of the concept of GPGs.[24] The urgency to demonstrate the importance of GPGs, confirmed by the fact that presentation and papers are often structured to persuade, has transformed a rigorous and restrictive concept into a slogan, a mixture of pure economic rationality and wishful thinking. The popularity of GPGs has been achieved by fusing four diverse theories into one concept: (1) theory of public goods, to differentiate public and private goods; (2) theory of market failure, to introduce the issue of positive and negative externalities; (3) theory of basic needs, to justify the notion of free access to resources; and (4) elements of political economy, to define groups, collective preferences, and collective goods. This has created confusion in the field, which has been further alimented by the most recent proposal by the UNDP to broaden the original definition. While the intention was to make the concept of GPGs more attractive and understandable, the risk is to create a *catch-all* to which people can attach anything they want.[25] Another strand of criticisms sees in this increasing focus on GPGs a new ideology constructed by international organizations to reinforce their endangered legitimacy. Every decade is characterized by a buzzword: New International Economic Order (NIEO) in the 1970s; good governance in the 1980s; sustainable development in the 1990s. These concepts, generally formulated by an international organization, are soon embraced by various actors for various reasons: states for their national interest; NGOs for tactical opportunities; corporations for "public relations" purposes; academics for the scientific aura they can provide.[26] The creation of a GPG approach to international development, some claim, is nothing more than another imposition by the North on the South in the name of rules of behavior—common interest, collective action, future generations—that the North sees as relevant for the South, thus representing a soft alternative to neoliberal development.[27]

The principle of additionality has been resisted by a few industrialized countries. While the UNDP has insisted that innovative mechanisms do not necessarily imply global taxation, supporters, including some donors because of the constraints in their foreign aid budgets, have emphasized that global taxes are a possible solution. This met with strong opposition from the United States and Japan, which maintain that opening up trade opportunities between countries and promoting foreign direct investment (FDI) are the best ways to promote economic growth in developing countries. The hostility of the United States should also be seen in the context of a pessimistic attitude toward any kind of multilateral initiative, especially by the Bush administration (e.g., Kyoto Protocol, International Criminal Court).[28] With regard to the UK, despite being deeply committed to global action, it was initially extremely cautious, arguing that investing significantly in GPGs was against the poverty focus of its development policy and would actually adversely affect the distribution of resources between low- and middle-income countries. This position, as shown later, has changed.

As for developing countries, reservations were raised about the potential diversion of resources from traditional development assistance activities as well as the political process on how to prioritize GPGs.[29] The introduction of any innovative source of finance that would yield significant additional resources was perceived as highly uncertain, as initially no additional resources were promised, either by the United States and Japan or by the EU. Another important element of concern was related to international politics, whose agenda is often set by Northern donors rather than recipient needs. A GPG approach to international development risked being turned into a new subtle form of conditionality, thus implying a shift of ownership from the national to the international arena.[30] Considering these asymmetries in world politics, developing countries wanted to be reassured that their needs would be taken into account in deciding which GPG to produce and finance. In fact, while some goods may be relevant for developed countries, they may not be so important for developing countries.

The battle between supporters and opponents of GPGs was fought at two recent international conferences. It was first widely debated during the preparatory process of the FfD Conference, but because of the negative approach of the United States and Japan and the suspicions of the G-77, any reference to GPGs was dropped from the final Monterrey Consensus. The issue was reproposed in the context of the WSSD, but again no substantial progress was made. As a result, the UNDP, France, and Sweden decided to establish an informal task force on GPGs. The remainder of this chapter thus deals with the way international policymakers have dealt with GPGs.

The Financing for Development Conference

The FfD Conference was held in Monterrey, Mexico, on 19–22 March 2002. Launched by the UN General Assembly in 1997 to respond to G-77 calls for reforming the international financial architecture, it also focused on the mobilization of financial resources to meet the Millennium Development Goals. The conference was preceded by a long preparatory process, which saw the active involvement of many international organizations—not only the UN but also the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund (IMF), and the World Trade Organization (WTO)—and the participation of a diverse range of nonstate actors (e.g., nongovernmental organizations [NGOs], trade unions, the private sector, and foundations). At the fourth and final Preparatory Committee (PrepCom) held in New York in January 2002, delegates agreed on the Monterrey Consensus, which was later endorsed by heads of state in Monterrey. The Monterrey Consensus emphasized the importance of mobilizing domestic resources, supporting foreign direct investment, and promoting international trade, and recommended dismantling trade-distorting measures in developed countries. It acknowledged that poor countries receive only a meager share of trade and investment and, as a consequence, foreign aid plays a central role in their development. The most visible outcomes of the FfD Conference were the two pledges made by the European Union and by the United States to boost their volume of aid. EU member states committed to collectively reach an EU average of 0.39 percent of their gross national income (GNI) by 2006 (it was 0.33 percent in 2001), whereas the United States pledged to raise its volume of aid by 50 percent by 2006.[31]

The issue of GPGs was one of the most controversial issues of the preparatory process. The Zedillo Panel, appointed by the UN secretary-general in December 2000, published a major report in June 2001, which was widely appreciated for its progressive approach to various issues, including domestic resources, private capital flows, trade, aid, and the global governance architecture. In particular, the Zedillo Report pointed out that an additional $20 billion—four times the level estimated by the World Bank—was required for an adequate financing of GPGs. It thus examined a series of global taxes, concluding that the most practicable options were the imposition of a global carbon tax, to be agreed by all states, and the allocations of SDRs by the IMF; however, the feasibility of the Tobin tax required more rigorous research.[32]

During the fourth PrepCom, the United States, which had questioned the economic and political foundation of GPGs, asked that any reference to GPGs be eliminated from the final consensus. Similar arguments were made by Japan, which argued that it was premature to discuss GPGs because the concept was unclear. The European Union, under Spain's presidency, supported further discussions, although it was very cautious about the additionality issue. The G-77 was initially in favor of a GPG approach, but, fearing a possible diversion of resources and because of the lack of clarity on the decisionmaking process on how to prioritize GPGs, eventually changed its position. The EU failed to convince the G-77, which is generally one of its allies, for more multilateralist actions. For some member states, this was due to the fact that Spain misrepresented the EU position.[33]

Following intense negotiations, the position of those who opposed GPGs prevailed, and the final Monterrey Consensus contained no reference to GPGs. However, the rhetoric during the summit in Monterrey was different. Both Spain's premier, José María Aznar, speaking on behalf of the European Union, and Poul Nielson, EU commissioner for development, stated that additional financial resources needed to be devoted to GPGs. These last-minute commitments did not convince the UNDP, which in a major "side event," in collaboration with France and Sweden, discussed the possibility of establishing a task force.[34]

The World Summit on Sustainable Development

The World Summit on Sustainable Development was held in Johannesburg on 26 August–6 September 2002. Its mandate was to hold a ten-year review of progress made in the implementation of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED), which took place in Rio de Janeiro in 1992, aiming to reinvigorate the global commitment to sustainable development. The process leading to the summit in Johannesburg was preceded by four PrepCom meetings, the most important of which—the fourth PrepCom, held in Bali, Indonesia, in May/June 2002—produced a draft Plan of Implementation, which was eventually approved in Johannesburg.

The WSSD concluded with two types of outcomes: Type I outcomes, which included a Political Declaration and a Plan of Implementation; and Type II outcomes, which consisted of a series of partnerships for concrete action. The Plan of Implementation is a detailed program of action covering various aspects of sustainable development, such as poverty eradication, patterns of consumption and production, natural resources, globalization, health, regional initiatives, means of implementation (finance and trade), and institutional frameworks. The Political Declaration, prepared by the South African government and briefly discussed in the last week of the Johannesburg summit, is a broad statement of objectives for implementing sustainable development. The partnerships are voluntary, non-negotiated, nonbinding projects between governments, international organizations, and civil society.[35]

The issue of GPGs was discussed at the PrepCom in Bali, where policymakers faced a deadlock similar to the one they faced during the FfD process. An initial proposal came from the EU, which on the basis of the Conclusions of the Development Council in May 2002, suggested "the establishment of an open, transparent, and inclusive participatory process at the global level, including the formation of a representative task force, to examine issues related to the definition, identification and effective and adequate provision of GPGs."[36] The United States, which once again refused to deal with this issue, called for a complete deletion of this reference. The G-77 initially opposed the United States but, as happened during the FfD Conference, eventually aligned its position with the opponents of GPGs because progress on additionality stalled (see Table 2).

An alternative proposal on "issues of global public interest," including the provision of GPGs, was submitted by Switzerland. The proposal made by the EU was discussed again in Johannesburg, where the positions of the various actors remained unchanged. A paragraph was included in the Plan of Implementation in which it was stated that "[the international community committed] to examine issues of global public interest through open, transparent and inclusive workshops to promote a better understanding of such questions."[37] This compromise—which did not mention GPGs but only "issues of global public interest"—and the rejection of a last-minute EU proposal to create a formal task force are the rationale behind the initiative of the UNDP, France, and Sweden, which in the margins of the WSSD launched the "informal" International Task Force on Global Public Goods.

The International Task Force on Global Public Goods

The International Task Force on Global Public Goods was officially established on 9 April 2003 by the governments of France and Sweden. Its objectives were the following: (1) to agree on a definition of GPGs; (2) to identify and prioritize a list of GPGs that are crucial for poverty eradication and sustainable development; (3) to identify the necessary management mechanisms for the provision of GPGs, taking into account the existing

Table 2 Support by Countries and Groupings for GPGs at the FfD Conference and WSSD

Country or Grouping	Concept of GPG	Additionality
United States	Weak	Weak
Japan	Weak	Weak
G-77	Medium/Weak	Strong
European Union		
France and Sweden	Strong	Strong
Germany	Strong	Medium/Strong
United Kingdom	Weak/Medium	Strong
Mediterranean states	Weak	Weak

Source: Maurizio Carbone, *The European Union and International Development: The Politics of Foreign Aid* (London: Routledge, 2007).

institutional frameworks, but also suggesting changes to the international system; (4) to make recommendations on financing mechanisms, including innovative sources; and (5) to propose means of monitoring effectiveness and results. The task force was composed of fifteen people and was co-chaired by Ernesto Zedillo, former president of Mexico and author of the Zedillo Report, and Tidjane Thiam, former minister of planning and cooperation of Côte d'Ivoire. Though the work of the task force proceeded without much publicity, it relied on a participatory process involving a wide range of stakeholders. A Group of Friends, comprised of representatives of governments, international organizations, and nonstate actors, provided both intellectual and financial support (particularly Germany, the United Kingdom, Norway, and Austria). A series of regional consultations was held to exchange views with various stakeholders and communicate the findings of the task force. A secretariat, based in Stockholm, was set up to carry out analyses and commission background studies.

The task force met on a limited number of occasions, but it achieved a provisional consensus on a definition and a list of key GPGs by the second meeting, held in March 2004. GPGs were defined as issues that are deemed to be important to the international community and that, because they cannot or will not be adequately addressed by individual countries acting alone, must be addressed collectively on a multilateral basis by both developed and developing countries. Six priority areas were identified: peace and security, trade regimes, financial stability, control of communicable diseases, sustainable management of natural commons, and knowledge, which was also considered a cross-cutting issue.[38]

Meanwhile, following the failures in Monterrey and Johannesburg, the preferences of various actors had changed. The United Kingdom started to explore how allocations for GPGs could complement country-based development assistance for the achievement of the MDGs. Germany decided to integrate GPGs into its development policy. The European Commission became very supportive of the task force, even attempting to play a coordinating role with EU member states. In this sense, the result of an official questionnaire sent by the European Commission in late 2004 and published in early 2005 showed that a majority of EU member states accepted the preliminary definition and the list of GPGs as identified by the task force in early 2004, but stipulated that their provision should not be financed through official development assistance (ODA).[39] The United States, on the contrary, still showed very little interest in GPGs and in the work of the task force. A more open attitude was manifested by a number of developing countries, but to have their full support, the work of the task force needed to (1) be different from previous international initiatives, which committed to the objectives of sustainable development without concrete deliverables; (2) promote international solidarity with a view to mobilizing new financial resources;

and (3) support regional integration. In sum, developing countries wanted to be reassured that this new emphasis on GPGs, which followed various buzzwords in international development, would contribute to achieving a more equitable distribution of resources and a reform of the global governance architecture.[40]

Finally, the UNDP published a third book, in early 2006, in which it addressed how public finance is adjusting to the challenges of globalization. In contrast with traditional public finance, which was largely state centered, the new public finance not only integrates both private and public sectors in achieving a wider range of policy goals using a large range of instruments (new public finance 1), but it also deals with concerns that are beyond the national borders (new public finance 2). Building on its two predecessors, this new book examines a number of new and innovative policies and financing instruments that governments use to manage the unintended negative effects of globalization.[41]

The task force took much longer than anticipated to complete its work. It had to compete for attention in a development agenda crowded by other significant events, such as the World Summit in New York in 2005, the debate on the reform of the UN Security Council, and the negotiation of the Doha Development Agenda. In early 2006, the European Commission published the results of another questionnaire, sent to EU member states in 2005, in which it regretted the delay in the publication of the task force final report and also pointed to the changing positions of various EU member states: "The new ambitious commitments for development, in particular those made by the EU . . . have been accompanied by a decreasing interest in an IPG approach, especially its financing dimension."[42] The General Affairs and External Relations Council (GAERC), in its April 2006 meeting, decided to "tame" the European Commission invitation to the task force "for a prompt release of its final report" and stated that member states "look forward to the pending release of the final report from the Task Force and the contribution it can make to the discussion on International Public Goods."[43]

The report, released in September 2006, broadly confirmed the six priorities already identified in early 2004 (see Table 3).[44] Some important elements of the report concern the provision and financing of GPGs. In order to generate the catalytic leadership necessary for an adequate provision of GPGs, the task force recommended the establishment of a new and informal forum. The proposed Global 25 forum would bring together heads of state and government from developed and developing countries, representative of all regions. Moreover, the report called for a structural reform of the current system of global governance to better represent developing countries, reinforce existing coordinating and compliance mechanisms, and improve the legitimacy and accountability of existing organizations, particularly the three

Table 3 GPGs and Strategies for Their Achievement as Identified by the International Task Force on GPGs

GPG	Proposed strategy
Preventing the emergence and spread of infectious diseases	• Improving global preparedness-to-response chain • Strengthening capacity of public health systems in developing countries • Increasing knowledge for vaccines and treatment
Tackling climate change	• Adopting targets, timetables, and cap-and-trade scheme to control emissions • Encouraging clean energy technologies • Strengthening adaptation capacities in developing countries • Supporting capacity building in developing countries
Enhancing international financial stability	• Preventing crises through stricter multilateral surveillance • Enhancing crisis management • Combating money laundering • Strengthening the IMF
Strengthening the international trading system	• Committing to agricultural reform in the Quad (Canada, European Union, Japan, United States) • Establishing "aid for trade" fund to compensate developing countries for their loss of trade preferences
Achieving peace and security	• Combating international terrorism • Preventing the spread and use of nuclear weapons • Agreeing on when the use of military force is legitimate
Generating knowledge (cross-cutting good)	• Enhancing common knowledge platform through international partnerships • Endorsing initiatives aimed at balancing the effects of TRIPs on developing countries

Source: International Task Force on Global Public Goods. *Meeting Global Challenges: International Cooperation in the National Interest,* Final report, 2006, Stockholm.

key international organizations—the IMF, World Bank, and UN Security Council. The Global 25 forum would help initiate and monitor such reforms. As for the financing aspect, the task force recommended that resources for GPGs be additional to ODA and proposed a five-part strategy: make better use of existing resources; improve resource mobilization by applying emerging best practices for fund-raising; improve national financing by revising national budget mechanisms for spending on international activities, adopting a dual-track national budgeting system, and introducing a line item for GPGs in the OECD statistics; work with the private sector, civil society, and markets to take advantage of their specialized knowledge; and adopt innovative arrangements for financing, such as the airline ticket tax, the International Finance Facility, and the carbon tax. The Global 25 forum would also play a key role in initiating and monitoring this plan.

Conclusion

Over the past few years, the concept of GPGs has become a key concept in international development. The UNDP started to promote it in 1999 as a strategy to minimize the negative consequences of globalization while providing a new rationale for international cooperation. But ideas and norms developed by international organizations need to be endorsed by states. Sweden and France, eventually followed by other European countries, supported the UNDP approach. On the contrary, resistance came from key developed states (the United States and Japan) and from a majority of developing countries, which, pushing from different angles, blocked discussions in the context of two of the most important global summits of the past decade. The failure of the Financing for Development Conference to include any reference in the final Monterrey Consensus and the demotion of GPGs to "issues of global interest" at the World Summit on Sustainable Development led Sweden and France to search for an alternative venue in which to take this concept forward. The establishment of the International Task Force on Global Public Goods was meant not only to raise awareness, but above all to provide the international community with clear policy recommendations. The growing number of issues associated with the concept of GPGs made it urgent to reach an agreement on how to define and finance them: the more focused the definition, the greater the possibility of deriving useful policy implications and mobilizing financial resources.[45]

Although this was a strategic choice (because of fears that its message could be obscured by other significant international events),[46] the task force took more than three years to complete its work. The initial reactions to the report have been positive, with some minor criticisms. The report contains some straightforward messages and identifies clear strategies to achieve individual GPGs. Its approach to key issues such as peace and security and the reform of the international trading system is to be commended. Among the concerns are that the report has not identified the volume of global financing required to tackle the undersupply of GPGs, has not adequately addressed the issue of innovative financing, and has not effectively investigated the role of the private sector and the possibility of raising private sector funds. Despite these (marginal) criticisms, considering their potential for both developed and developing countries, an adequate provision of GPGs to tackle global challenges is certainly justified. For developed countries, it may lighten the burden they bear in cases of financial or political crisis. For developing countries, with a more inclusive decisionmaking process and additional resources, it could complement their progress toward achieving the Millennium Development Goals. The report of the GPG task force will be important in persuading more states to follow the example set by

France and Sweden and a few other countries. This represents one of the greatest challenges for the international community in the coming years. 🌐

Notes

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1. The World Bank, and some scholars, prefer to talk of "international" public goods (IPGs), which include both global and regional public goods (RPGs). However, considering that in most cases the same types of goods and the same financing mechanisms are mentioned, the terms *IPGs* and *GPGs* are used here interchangeably, whereas *RPGs* are excluded from this discussion.

2. In the past decade, there has been an explosion of constructivist studies. For a good overview, see Martha Finnemore and Kathryn Sikkink, "The Constructivist Research Program in International Relations and Comparative Politics," *Annual Review of Political Science* 4 (June 2001): 391–416; Jeffrey T. Checkel, "The Constructivist Turn in International Relations Theory," *World Politics* 50, no. 2 (1998): 324–348.

3. Martha Finnemore has dealt with this issue widely in the past decade. For instance, she argues that the acceptance of poverty reduction as a goal in international development in the 1970s cannot be explained by the initiative of states or experts in the academic world but rather by the activity of the World Bank and, in particular, its president, Robert McNamara, who was able to sell poverty reduction as an essential component of development policy through a mixture of persuasion and coercion. Martha Finnemore, *National Interests in International Society* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1996). See also Martha Finnemore and Kathryn Sikkink, "International Norm Dynamics and Political Change," *International Organization* 52, no. 4 (Autumn 1998): 887–917.

4. Michael Barnett and Martha Finnemore, *Rules for the World: International Organizations in Global Politics* (Ithaca: Cornell, University Press, 2004). This book is an excellent contribution to understanding the role of international organizations in global politics. On this, see also Bob Reinalda and Bertjan Verbeek, eds., *Autonomous Policy-Making by International Organizations* (London: Routledge, 1999).

5. Barnett and Finnemore, *Rules for the World.*

6. Colin Kirkpatrick, Ron Clarke, and Charles Polidano, eds., *Handbook on Development Policy and Management* (Cheltenham: Edward Elgar, 2002).

7. Peter R. Baehr and Leon Gordenker, *The United Nations at the End of the 1990s* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1999).

8. Inge Kaul, Isabelle Grunberg, and Marc A. Stern, eds., *Global Public Goods: International Cooperation in the 21st Century* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999). Although this study and its sequel in 2003 were sponsored by UNDP, they were published by Oxford University Press.

9. On regional public goods, see Daniel G. Arce and Todd Sandler, *Regional Public Goods: Typologies, Provision, Financing, and Development Assistance*

(Stockholm: Almqvist and Wicksell International, 2002); Antoni Estevadeordal, Brian Frantz, and Tam Robert Nguyen, *Regional Public Goods: From Theory to Practice* (Washington, DC: Inter-American Development Bank, 2004); Marco Ferroni, "Regional Public Goods in Official Development Assistance," in Marco Ferroni and Ashoka Mody, eds., *International Public Goods: Incentives, Measurement, and Financing* (Dordrecht: Kluwer Academic, 2002); Lisa Cook and Jeffrey Sachs, "Regional Public Goods in International Assistance," in Kaul, Grunberg, and Stern, *Global Public Goods.*

10. In contrast, see P. B. Anand, who argues that most public bads involve irreversible consequences for the current generations, whereas some may involve only future generations. P. B. Anand, "Financing the Provision of Global Public Goods," *The World Economy* 27, no. 2 (February 2004): 215–235. For a discussion on intra- and intergenerational issues, see Todd Sandler, "Intergenerational Public Goods: Strategies, Efficiency, and Institutions," in Kaul, Grunberg, and Stern, *Global Public Goods.*

11. Kaul, Grunberg, and Stern, *Global Public Goods.*

12. See, for example, Ferroni and Mody, *International Public Goods;* François Lille and François-Xavier Verschave, *On peut changer le monde; A la recherche des biens publics mondiaux* (Paris: La Découverte, 2003). See also Bjørn Lomborg, *Global Crises, Global Solutions* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004); and Todd Sandler, *Global Collective Action* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2004). For a very detailed bibliography, see www.gpgnet.net.

13. Inge Kaul, Pedro Conceição, Katell Le Goulven, and Ronald U. Mendoza, eds., *Providing Global Public Goods: Managing Globalization* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2003).

14. Joseph Stiglitz, "The Theory of International Public Goods and the Architecture of International Organisations," United Nations Background Paper No. 7, Department for Economic and Social Information and Policy Analysis, July 1995.

15. Todd Sandler, *Global Challenges* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997).

16. In some cases, the total equals the sum of everyone's contribution, while in other cases, the total may equal either the smallest or the largest contribution. When the supply level is determined by the largest individual contribution (best-shot goods), because of their technological advantages, developed countries usually produce these goods largely on their own. When the level of a good is determined by the smallest individual contribution (weakest-link goods), developing countries will not always be able to pay for these goods and will often require assistance. Todd Sandler, "Global and Regional Public Goods: A Prognosis for Collective Action," *Fiscal Studies* 19, no. 3 (1998): 221–247.

17. Wolfgang H. Reinicke, *Global Public Policy: Governing Without Government?* (Washington, DC: Brookings Institution Press, 1998).

18. Ravi Kanbur, Todd Sandler, with Kevin Morrison, *The Future of Development Assistance: Common Pools and International Public Goods* (Washington, DC: Johns Hopkins University Press, for Overseas Development Council, 1999).

19. In addition to the financing aspect (see note 20), the World Bank introduced the distinction between "core" and "complementary" activities, which has important operational and financial implications. Core activities include actions generated in a country whose benefits spill over to other countries; complementary activities refer to actions that prepare countries to consume the GPGs that core activities make available, while at the same time creating valuable national public goods. The World Bank proposed also the following IPGs: communicable diseases;

trade integration; financial stability; knowledge, and global commons. World Bank, "The Effective Use of Development Finance for International Public Goods," in *Global Development Finance 2001* (Washington, DC: World Bank, 2001).

20. As for the amount of foreign aid allocated for GPGs, figures range from 10 percent to 30 percent, depending on the type of good included. According to World Bank estimates, the level of funding achieved for GPGs and supporting activities is about $16 billion a year. For all developing countries, it was estimated that transfers of $5 billion a year finance programs that generate multicountry benefits in the areas of health, environment, knowledge creation and dissemination, and peacekeeping. In addition, official finance also provided funds to national capacity and infrastructure in the amount of about $11 billion a year, which is directed at facilitating the absorption of GPGs. On the foreign aid–GPG link, see Kunibert Raffer, "Official Development Assistance and Global Public Goods: A Trend Analysis of Past and Present Spending Patterns," *Background Paper for the Office of Development Studies, United Nations Development Programme* (New York: UNDP, 1999); Dirk Willem Te Velde, Oliver Morrissey, and Adrian Hewitt, "Allocating Aid to International Public Goods," in Ferroni and Mody, *International Public Goods;* and Anand, "Financing the Provision of Global Public Goods." On this, see also Marco Ferroni, "Reforming Foreign Aid: The Role of International Public Goods," *Operations Evaluation Department Working Paper Series No. 4* (Washington, DC: World Bank, 2000); and Rajshri Jayaraman and Ravi Kanbur, "International Public Goods and the Case for Foreign Aid," in Kaul, Grunberg, and Stern, *Global Public Goods.*

21. Additional funding may come from private sources, such as corporations, nonprofit organizations, and individual persons, but these funds are relatively modest if compared with the other sources. For a comprehensive treatment, see Anthony B. Atkinson, *New Sources of Development Finance* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005). See also Raghbendra Jha, "Innovative Sources of Development Finance: Global Cooperation in the Twenty-first Century," *World Economy* 27, no. 2 (February 2004): 193–214; and Anthony Clunies-Ross, "Alternative Ways of Paying for Global Public Goods," *Journal of International Development* 16, no. 7 (September 2004): 971–982.

22. Francisco Sagasti and Keith Bezanson, *Financing and Providing Global Public Goods: Expectations and Prospects* (Stockholm: Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2001).

23. Haut Conseil de la Coopération Internationale, *Biens publics mondiaux et coopération internationale: Nouvelle stratégie pour de nouveaux enjeux* (Paris: Khartala/Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Ministry of the Economy, Finance and Industry, 2002), available online at www.diplomatie.gouv.fr. To discuss these themes, France, together with UNDP, organized a seminar during the fourth PrepCom of the FfD Conference, held in New York in January 2002. The speeches can be found in Inge Kaul, Katell Le Goulven, and Mirjam Schnupf, *Global Public Goods Financing: New Tools for New Challenges* (New York: United Nations Development Programme, 2002).

24. François Constantin, ed., *Les biens publics mondiaux: Un mythe légitimateur pour l'action collective?* (Paris: L'Harmattan, 2002). In this book, see contributions by Yves Schemeil, "Les biens publics premiers: Babel, côté tour et côté jardin"; Jean Coussy, "Les biens publics mondiaux: Théories scientifique, réalité, émergente et instrument rhétorique"; and Marie-Cluade Smouts, "Une notion molle pour des causes incertaines."

25. Jean Coussy, "The Adventures of a Concept: Is Neo-classical Theory Suitable for Defining Global Public Goods?" *Review of International Political Economy* 12, no. 1 (February 2005): 177–194.

26. For a historical overview of how various concepts in international development have been "constructed" by international organizations, see David Moore and Gerald Schmitz, eds., *Debating Development Discourse: Institutional and Popular Perspectives* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1995).

27. In this case, despite their active involvement in international development and the fact that they sometimes serve as "catalyzing" actors for themes initiated elsewhere, civil society organizations were left out of the initial discourse on GPGs. Eventually they were integrated into the debate, but only with the purpose of further legitimizing the dominant discourse. This exclusion has worked against raising public awareness on this issue: a study of some public campaigns carried out by NGOs on issues of global concerns over the period 1999–2001 shows that no reference was made to the concept of GPGs. Philippe Ryfman, "Les campagnes 'globalisées' des ONG: Les biens publics mondiaux au service de la société civile?" in Constantin, *Les biens publics mondiaux.* For a discussion on the role of civil society and NGOs in the provision of GPGs, see Inge Kaul, "Global Public Goods: What Role for Civil Society?" *Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly* 30, no. 3 (2001): 588–602; and Michael Edwards and Simon Zadek, "Governing the Provision of Global Public Goods: The Role and Legitimacy of Nonstate Actors," in Kaul, Conceição, Le Goulven, and Mendoza, *Providing Global Public Goods.*

28. It should be noted that former US treasury secretary Lawrence Summers, member of the Clinton administration, stated in various speeches in 2000 that GPGs needed a much more prominent place in the US development agenda than they had. Joseph S. Nye, "The American National Interest and Global Public Goods," *International Affairs* 78, no. 2 (April 2002): 233–244.

29. Marianna Williams, "Developing Countries' Loss of Faith in Multilateral Politics," *D+C,* no. 3 (2004), available online at www.inwent.org/E+Z.

30. David Moore argues that "if one is exposed to constant reiterations that the private sector or 'public-private partnership' can supply public goods, or that public provision of public goods should be restricted to the establishment of 'efficient markets' (possibly with strong defense added on), one would be warranted in assuming that neoliberalism holds sway." David Moore, "The Second Age of the Third World: From Primitive Accumulation to Global Public Goods?" *Third World Quarterly* 25, no. 1 (2004): 87–109. A similar point is made by Constantin, who argues that while at the origin the intention of the propagators of the concept of GPGs was to react to the abuses of neoliberalism, paradoxically the discourse on GPGs has soon become an attempt to update and legitimize the search for a new governance by international organizations, mixing capitalist elements—because it gives an increasing role to private corporations—and democratic aspects—because it wants to further involve civil society. Constantin, *Les biens publics mondiaux.*

31. On these announcements, see Maurizio Carbone, *The European Union and Intermational Development: The Politics of Foreign Aid* (London: Routledge, 2007); and Maurizio Carbone, "The Millennium Challenge Account: A Marginal Revolution in US Foreign Aid Policy?" *Review of African Political Economy* 31, no. 101 (September 2004): 536–542.

32. *Report of the High-Level Panel on Financing for Development* (New York: United Nations, 2001), available at www.un.org/reports/financing.

33. Interviews by the author in March 2002 and November 2003.

34. Jan Karlsson, Swedish minister for development cooperation, stated that GPGs "must be given more attention than has been the case in the Monterrey process. We need to analyze achievements and gaps in the provision of essential public goods. The Task Force should also address how we institutionally need to

manage these common interests, and how to finance them" (author's personal notes from a press release, 19 March 2002).

35. For a review of the WSSD process, see Luc Hens and Bhaskar Nath, "The Johannesburg Conference," *Environment, Development and Sustainability* 5 (2003): 7–39; and Thomas N. Hale and Denise L. Mauzerall, "Thinking Globally and Acting Locally: Can the Johannesburg Partnerships Coordinate Action on Sustainable Development?" *Journal of Environment and Development* 13, no. 3 (2004): 220–239.

36. For a review of the EU's role at the WSSD, see Simon Lightfoot and Jon Burchel, "The European Union and the World Summit on Sustainable Development: Normative Power Europe in Action?" *Journal of Common Market Studies,* 43, no. 1 (March 2005): 75–95.

37. Johannesburg Plan of Implementation of the World Summit on Sustainable Development, par. 108.

38. The task force met six times: in New Haven (September 2003), Istanbul (March 2004), Washington (October 2004), New York City (January 2006), Paris (May 2006), and Stockholm (June 2006). The Group of Friends met four times: Paris (July 2003), Stockholm (May 2004), Berlin (January 2005), and London (June 2006). Regional consultations were held in Addis Ababa (January 2005), in Brussels, hosted by the European Commission (February 2005), Manila (February 2005), and Santiago (March 2005). Summaries of all these meetings as well as a number of background studies can be found on the Web page of the task force, at www.gpg taskforce.org.

39. Commission of the European Communities, "Accelerating Progress Towards Achieving the Millennium Development Goals," COM (2005) 133, 12 April 2005.

40. Farncisco Mabjaia, "Expectations upon the Work of the International Task Force on Global Public Goods from the Perspective of Developing Countries," speech presented at the International Policy Workshop, "Global Public Goods Concepts, Experience, Financing," Berlin, 4–5 November 2002. Mabjaia was at the time Mozambique's vice-minister for coordination of environmental affairs. It should be noted that the majority of task force members came from newly industrialized and developing countries, which, however, were underrepresented in the Group of Friends of the task force.

41. Ingle Kaul and Pedro Conceição, *The New Public Finance: Responding to Global Challenges* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006).

42. Commission of the European Communities, "Financing for Development and Aid Effectiveness: The Challenges to Scaling up EU Aid 2006–2010," COM (2006) 85, 2 March 2006, p.14.

43. Council of the European Union, 2723rd External Relations Council meeting, Luxembourg, 10–11 April 2006, Press release 95, No. 7939/06.

44. International Task Force on Global Public Goods, *Meeting Global Challenges: International Cooperation in the National Interest,* final report, Stockholm, 2006.

45. Francisco Sagasti and Keith Bezanson, "Global Public Goods: Opportunities and Threats," *ACP-EU Courier,* no. 202 (January 2004): 15–16.

46. Interview by the author, December 2006.