

The Age of Terror: New World “Order”

Dr Shireen M. Mazari

The genocide that is being perpetrated by the rogue entity Israel on Palestinians in legally-recognised Occupation territories of Gaza and the West Bank have brought to the fore the erosion of international law, powerful States commitment to international law and human rights and the much-touted R2P – the Responsibility to Protect. R2P was a global commitment endorsed by the UN General Assembly at the 2005 World Summit after massive campaigning by the Western states especially the Scandinavian States. The principle was to prevent genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity. Now that we have seen overtly the US, Canada, the UK, EU and many other of their allies actively supporting, and some even assisting through weapons transfers and intel sharing as well as opposing a ceasefire, Israel’s genocide of the Palestinians, the entire façade of a global commitment to humanitarian values stands in ruins. With this, the adherence by the powerful to international law, laws of war and humanitarian laws has also ended. All of this clearly shows how there is no international order premised on justice, human rights and a commitment to democracy.

However, this reality has not happened overnight just as Israel’s abuse of Palestinians in the Occupied territories has not happened overnight. What has happened is the stark overt manifestation has become clear globally during the present slaughter of Palestinians in the Occupied territories. Otherwise, the world order began reshaping after 9/11 and has now come to clear fruition for the entire world to see and deal with. In many ways this has created a political unity across States of the world, with the divide between dictatorships and democracies, and between States seen as upholders of international law and human rights and States who violate the same all having ended. With a few laudable exceptions, the States of the world now stand united in what is clearly the Age of Terror by the powerful and Fear of the powerful.

As the militarisation of the world grows through the expansion of strategic military-centric alliances, the erosion of democracy and democratic norms continues to see a growing acceptability in the global and regional power centres – what is commonly referred to as the “West”. We now have an expanded NATO on Russia’s doorstep and it sees its mission as arming Ukraine incessantly in the hope that it continues to give Russia a nosebleed – even as it continues to suffer military defeat. Countries like France have even threatened to send its own troops into Ukraine to ensure it keeps fighting Russia. Germany has been caught advising Ukraine on war fighting! Nor is it just NATO that is spreading its geographical military parameters.

We have seen the establishment of the Quad – comprising the USA, Australia, India and Japan – which began as a Quadrilateral Security Dialogue in 2007 lasting till 2008 and then became more permanent in 2017 as a strategic grouping targeting China effectively. In addition there is AUKUS – comprising Australia, UK and the USA – set up in September 2021 as a trilateral security partnership. In early March 2024 it was revealed that Japan is also seeking membership of AUKUS as it continues to move towards greater militarisation.

India has also been expanding its military presence not only by bolstering its naval base in the Andaman and Nicobar Islands but also establishing a new base in the south-west Afro Asian Ocean on Minicoy, the southernmost island in the Lakshadweep archipelago. India already has naval facilities in Oman’s Duqm Port. There is also the very covert I2U2 grouping comprising India, Israel, the UAE and the USA that was

formed in the fall of 2021. Very little is known about the agenda of this grouping and not much has been heard about the group since its creation.

Given this new militarisation, it is not surprising that even the fig leaf of a democratic agenda has been removed from the priorities of the self-proclaimed champions of democracy. With the erosion of the democracy agenda, the centrality of human rights has also all but disappeared. This is most apparent in the support given by the US, UK, Canada and the EU to Israel’s policy of Palestinian genocide and in the virtual inaction to stop the same by the Arab states in particular and the Muslim world in general. In fact it has been the non-Muslim states of the global south, and a few European states, that have taken the lead in taking substantive positions against Israel – led by South Africa and many Latin American states alongside Ireland. The UN and its multiple organisations have been reduced to a helplessness that bodes ill for international law and human rights.

Ironically, in the “West” it is the people who have exposed their government’s democratic and human rights credentials as they have seen their governments not only act repressively against the massive pro-Palestine demonstrations – some governments making it illegal to protest against Israel’s genocide of Palestinians while others arresting protestors repeatedly. Some states like the United Kingdom have brought into play new policies whereby it can strip its citizens of British nationality on the bizarre notion of nationality by descent – that you have another nationality if your parents, grandparents or great grandparents and beyond migrated to the UK from another country even if you never claimed that other nationality and were never held dual nationality! In addition now the UK is also seeking to send off “illegal” migrants to Rwanda!

In this new global environment, people struggling for democracy and human rights are on their own if their country has a strategic-military usefulness for the powerful. The “West’s” self-proclaimed democracy agenda has been exposed for the farce that it was – although one should never have been fooled by it. The US with its Monroe Doctrine, its brutal wars in Vietnam and beyond, the UK-US removal of the democratic Iranian government of Mossadegh, the US removal and abetment in the murder of Allende in Chile, the covert war in Nicaragua against the Sandinistas, the absurd US invasion of Grenada, the shame of Guantanamo Bay, the renditions policy, the Abu Ghraib scandal – the list is endless and should have been lesson for people in the struggling global south.

The new global “order” we saw evolving even before 9/11 has gone through a period of chaotic transitions and pulls in conflicting directions, but now it seems to have settled into a system where military power and authoritarianism are the global and regional defining factors in play. Challenges to this order are already in play as well, from within the powerful countries and from the states of the peripheral south. New states are also emerging in alternative leadership roles challenging the powerful – as we have seen with South Africa. But for many where ruling elites have thrown their lot in with the “West” the struggle for democracy and human rights begins at home first.

The article was originally published at <https://shireenmazari0.wordpress.com/2024/03/11/the-age-of-terror-new-world-order/>