



INTERACTION COUNCIL

Established in 1983

InterAction Council

18th Plenary Session

Final Communiqué

17-20 June 2000

Helsinki, Finland

The InterAction Council convened its 18th Plenary Session in Helsinki, an appropriate venue considering the significant and unique role Finland has played in the quest for regional peace and global stability. Globalization has become one of the undeniable realities of the political and economic existence of all nations. This development, bringing undoubted gains and unique opportunities to many, also creates new and complex challenges.

The State of the World

1. One of the most striking aspects of globalization has been the growing income disparity, both between states and within them. This trend is accentuated, ironically, by the increasing importance of information technology, which concentrates greater power and economic rewards in the hands of the wealthy and the well educated.
2. As the European Union prepares for the entry of some Central and Eastern European states, it faces both economic and cultural challenges. A new concept of Europe's long-term aims must accompany reform of EU policies and institutions. In conjunction with its expansion, it is important that the EU work to develop deep and fruitful relationships with all its neighbors, especially Russia and the states of Central Asia. The Council appreciates the distinctive northern dimension that Finland has added to the EU's vision.
3. The InterAction Council welcomes the recent and historic summit between the leaders of North and South Korea, and feels that this meeting presents a very encouraging prospect for future engagement, reconciliation, and easing of tension in a critical region.
4. After lengthy recession in Japan and financial crisis in much of South East Asia, recovery has begun. From this troubled period, however, the feeling has arisen that much of our conventional economic wisdom is in need of serious reappraisal.
5. China's entry to the World Trade Organization is an encouraging indicator of global integration, and China continues to move toward domestic economic liberalization.
6. The InterAction Council welcomes the reaffirmation of United States policy as expressed by President Clinton in Shanghai recently concerning the 'one China' policy. The Council views the formal integrity of China as a fundamental tenet of Asian security, and notes that departures from this policy would lead to serious dangers for the region.
7. Latin America has witnessed the improvement of democracy, as well as increased economic recovery. Yet this progress is not spread evenly across the region: poverty, violence, corruption, and social inequalities retard economic development and the process of democracy in many states.

8. Africa demonstrates the pernicious combination of endemic civil wars and ineffective multilateral economic prescriptions. The solutions to Africa's problems, including both an end to violence and the creation of sustainable economic growth, will depend primarily on domestic African leaders.
9. The InterAction Council emphasizes, however, the continued need for generous cooperation and support from rich, developed nations and international organizations. In particular, the industrialized world could make an important impact by supporting relief from international debt for Latin America and Africa.
10. If the world is to move peacefully into the new millennium, there is a need not only for strong international rules and the resolution to abide by them – even by the most powerful states – but also for stronger institutions, most importantly the United Nations, that can act effectively on the world scene. The United States' readiness to take unilateral military action has destabilizing consequences for the world.
11. The war in Kosovo, prompted by ethnic cleansing on a massive scale, presented troubling questions for the international community. NATO action against Serbia, without the approval of the UN Security Council, raised the specter of a less predictable future. There is a manifest need for the international community to develop agreed rules and capabilities for crisis prevention as well as post-crisis management.
12. The acquisition of nuclear weapons by India and Pakistan, and the correspondingly heightened danger in South Asia, illustrates the threat posed by nuclear proliferation. Avoiding the further spread of nuclear weapons capability requires a stronger and more credible commitment to nuclear disarmament from the existing nuclear powers, and the InterAction Council hopes for the expedient return to democracy in Pakistan.
13. The effort by the United States to construct a missile defense system represents a challenge to the global nuclear balance. This program, if put into effect, would further strain important strategic relationships in many parts of the world, especially China and Russia, and increase the potential for renewed military confrontation.
14. The Middle East peace process must be made more rapid, moving toward a viable resolution of the Arab-Israeli conflict with firm support from both the United States and Europe. As part of this process, the Council urges that the UN sanctions on Iraq, which have inflicted intense suffering on the Iraqi people without achieving any strategic gains, be lifted.

The Future of Russia

15. The Council endorses the report of the High Level Expert Group on the Future of Russia.
16. Russia faces questions of identity at several levels: the need to develop an internal rule of law, to foster a stable and growing economy, to create political and administrative structures capable of effective governance while respecting fundamental freedoms, and to forge a foreign policy which engages Russia's many neighbors constructively.
17. In this context, the election of Vladimir Putin to succeed Boris Yeltsin as President of Russia marks an important milestone in Russia's evolution, and has been seen as a signal of the Russian people's desire for stability.
18. President Putin will be faced with the very basic task of nation building. Historically, Russia has lacked stable institutions for protecting the rule of law and democracy, and has discouraged free enterprise. It is now hoped that President Putin will embark on reforms touching not only the functioning of the state, but the operation of society and the economy as a whole.
19. The InterAction Council expects the Russian government to end the war in Chechnya as soon as possible and urges that a political solution to the conflict is found.
20. Control over governmental policy is distorted by the power of organized crime and by the so-called 'oligarchs'. It is important to ensure the success of democracy and the supremacy of civilian leadership.
21. Russia's recent economic growth is still only a thin veneer over a weak foundation. President Putin has now only a breathing space in which to address serious underlying problems, not least of which is Russia's high level of poverty – an issue that requires specific, targeted action.
22. Nations dealing with Russia will need to show sensitivity to the unique challenges Russia is facing, including its current search for a new international identity in the post-Cold War environment. Perceived Western intrusiveness could easily fuel Russian nationalism and possibly retard the process of reform.
23. The international community should continue to encourage Russian integration, politically, economically and technologically, into the regional and global community. Technical assistance should be concentrated on well-defined, concrete projects with proper control over follow-up, including support for Internet connectivity. Fostering Russia's relationship with the EU, in particular, is of greatest importance. For example, the Arctic Council, soon to be chaired by Finland, also affords a good means to encourage environmental and scientific cooperation between Russia and its neighbors.

Enlightened Leadership and Responsibility

24. The InterAction Council remains committed to the concept of human responsibility, and is convinced that responsible leadership is critical to a peaceful and productive world. The Plenary Session endorses the High Level Expert Group report on Responsible Leadership. The Council wishes to reinvigorate the debate over the meaning and application of universal human responsibility in the context of enlightened leadership.
25. In this context, the Council applauds the Global Ethics Committee of the Finnish legislature, and urges other nations to create a similar organ to address problems arising from the degeneration of moral and ethical standards.
26. An enlightened leader is one who employs an ethical standard pertinent to the community that they represent. Integrity, honesty, and trust are crucial components of a responsible leader's interaction with his or her constituency. In our time, an enlightened leader should be judged not only by results but also by the means used to achieve these results.
27. In a world increasingly divided between secular and spiritual spheres, it is important that sufficient attention be paid to meaningful interactions between the two, and that secular and religious leaders be well educated in each other's sphere of activity and responsibility within the framework of their common concern for humanity.
28. The increasingly rapid and thorough distribution of information in modern societies creates new possibilities and questions for emerging leaders. Manipulation of constituents has become more difficult as the ideal of a free and robust mass media has spread throughout the world. The power of the media to inform and educate constituents, and the ability of leaders to focus the media's influence for beneficial purposes, have become crucial aspects of leadership.
29. Young people across the world need and seek ethical values. In the global community, consciously educating future leaders is increasingly important. This task requires exposure of promising individuals to the culture and religion of foreign countries; to the culture of organizations of different types from their own; and to senior leaders who have the ability to lend advice based on seasoned experience. In this connection, the InterAction Council applauds the establishment of the World Leadership Academy of the United Nations University in Jordan. An element of this education should be programs that foster global links between the world's leaders in all fields. In pursuing this project, the Council urges that the program's sponsor engage in active discussions with other similar forums.

PARTICIPANTS IN THE IAC 18TH PLENARY SESSION

IAC Members:

H.E.Mr. Helmut Schmidt	Chancellor of the Federal Republic of Germany, 1974-1982
H.E.Mr. Malcom Fraser	Prime Minister of the Commonwealth of Australia, 1975-1983
H.E.Dr. Kalevi Sorsa	Prime Minister of the Republic of Finland, 1972-1975, 1977-1979, 1982-1983, 1983-1987
H.E.Mr. Andries van Agt	Prime Minister of the Kingdom of the Netherlands, 1977-1982
H.E.Dr. Oscar Arias Sanchez	President of the Republic of Costa Rica, 1986-1990
H.E.Mr. Ingvar Carlsson	Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Sweden, 1986-1991, 1994-1996
H.E.Mr. Miguel de la Madrid Hurtado	President of the United Mexican States, 1982-1989
H.E.Mrs. Vigdís Finnbogadóttir	President of the Republic of Iceland, 1980-1996
H.E.Dr. Kurt Furgler	President of the Swiss Confederation, 1977, 1981, 1985
H.E.Dr. Kenneth Kaunda	President of the Republic of Zambia, 1964-1991
H.E.Mr. Abdul Salam Majali	Prime Minister of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan 1993-1995, 1997-1998
H.E.Mr. José Sarney	President of the Federative Republic of Brazil, 1985-1990
H.E.Mrs. Hanna Suchocka	Prime Minister of the Republic of Poland, 1992-1993
Secretary-General:	
Dr. Isamu Miyazaki	Minister of the Economic Planning Agency, Japan, 1997- 1998

Special Guests:

Former Heads of State or Government

H.E.Dr. Bacharuddin Jusuf Habibie	Former President of the Republic of Indonesia
H.E.Mr. Harri Holkeri	Councillor of State, Finland
H.E.Mr. Manuo Koivisto	Former President of the Republic of Finland
H.E.Dr. Jamil Mahuad	Former President of the Republic of Ecuador
H.E.Mr. Johannes Virolainen	Councillor of State, Finland
H.E.Mr. Tiit Vähi	Former Prime Minister of the Republic of Estonia
H.E.Mr. Valdis Birkavs	Former Prime Minister of the Republic of Latvia
H.E.Mrs. Kazimira Danute Prunskiene	Former Prime Minister of Republic of Lithuania

High-level Experts

Prof. Thomas Axworthy	Executive Director, Historica Foundation of Canada
Mr. Jaakko Blomberg	Under Secretary of State, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Finland
Mr. Yoshimasa Hayashi	Parliamentary Vice Ministry of Finance, Japan (Representing H.E. Finance Minister Kiichi Miyazawa)
Prof. Reijo E. Heinonen	Professor of Historical Theology and Religious Education, State University of Joensuu, Finland
H.E.Mr. Max Jakobson	Minister, Finland

Dr. Song Jian	Vice-Chairman, National Committee of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference
Mr. Jaakko Kalela	Secretary- General, Office of the President of the Republic of Finland
Prof. Markku Kivinen	Director, Finnish Center for Russian and East European Studies, University of Helsinki and Professor of Sociology, University of Lapland
Dr. Seung-yun Lee	Former Deputy Prime Minister, Korea
Mr. Fenglin Li	Member of the Foreign Affairs Committee, National Committee of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference
Mr. Robert McNamara	Former President, World Bank
Prof. Richard Pipes	Harvard University
Dr. Seung Keun Rhee	President of Hansung University
Prof. Amin Saikal	Director of the Arab and Islamic Studies, Australian National University
Dr. Teizo Taya	Member of the Policy Board, Bank of Japan
Ms. Paula Tiihonen	Committee Counsellor, Committee for Future Parliament of Finland
Dr. Dmitri Trenin	Deputy Director, Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, Russia
Mr. Alexander Yakovlev	President, International Democracy Foundation
Dr. Vadim Zagladin	Director, Gorbachev Foundation
Invited Journalists	
Ms. Flora Lewis	International Herald Tribune
Ms. Riitta Korhonen	Foreign Editor, Demari
Mr. Olli Kivinen	Editor, Helsingin Sanomat



INTERACTION COUNCIL

Tokyo Secretariat

3-16-13-609 Roppongi,
Minato-ku, Tokyo 106-0032, Japan
Tel: 81-3-5549-2950 Fax: 81-3-5549-2955
E-mail: interact@estate.ocn.ne.jp
Website: <http://www.interactioncouncil.org>

Vienna Secretariat

Anton Baumgartnerstraße.44B/8/011,
A-1232 Vienna, Austria
Tel. & Fax No. 43-1-667-3101
E-mail: mburanich@hotmail.com

Berlin Secretariat

Büro BK a. D. Helmut Schmidt,
Deutscher Bundestag,
Platz der Republik 1, 11011 Berlin,
Federal Republic of Germany
Tel: 49-30-227-71580 Fax: 49-30-227-70571
E-mail: masiarik@spdfraktion.de

Melbourne Secretariat

Level 32, 101 Collins Street
Melbourne , Victoria 3000, Australia
Tel: 61-3-9654-1822 Fax:61-3-9654-1301
E-mail: heather.barwick@aph.gov.au