

# All-human social, humanitarian, cultural and security problems of the world

## *Globální všelidský problém sociální, humanitární, kulturní a bezpečnostní*

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**Abstract:** The common denominator of all rather different names and understandings of it (the problem of the “model of man and society development”, problem of the “lack of the civilisation concept” etc.) is that there is no clear understanding regarding the question of the perspective approach (or approaches), the relevant basic development trends of humankind in the material as well as non-material sphere, i.e. in the basic question of many philosophers “Who are we, whence and where are we going”. We mention only some of the problems, which are at present directly connected to the “problem of the future of man”. These are the problems from the sphere of all-human social, ethical, humanitarian and cultural aspects of the human civilisation development, which are today (but need not be already in the near future) in the centre of attention: the problem of social inequality extension, the problem of spreading epidemics and drug abuse, the problem of the uncontrollable migration and city agglomerations growth, the problem of terrorism.

**Key words:** problem of the future of man, social inequality, spreading epidemics, drug abuse, uncontrollable migration, terrorism

**Abstrakt:** Společným jmenovatelem všech poněkud rozdílných pojmenování a chápání (problém „modelu rozvoje člověka a společnosti“, problém „nedostatku civilizační koncepce“ atd.) je to, že není jasno v základní otázce perspektivního přístupu (či přístupů), relevantního k základním vývojovým trendům lidstva v materiální i nemateriální sféře, tj. v otázce mnoha filozofů: „Kdo jsme, odkud a kam kráčíme“. Zabýváme se jen některými otázkami, které dnes přímo na problém budoucnosti člověka navazují. V oblasti všelidských sociálních, eticko-humanitárních a kulturních aspektů rozvoje lidské civilizace, které jsou dnes (ale v blízké budoucnosti již nemusí být) v popředí pozornosti, se jedná o následující problémy: šíření sociální nerovnosti, šíření epidemií a drogových závislostí, nekontrolovatelná migrace a růst městských aglomerací, terorismus.

**Klíčová slova:** problém budoucnosti člověka, sociální nerovnost, šíření epidemií a drogových závislostí, nekontrolovatelná migrace, terorismus

Most of the global problems introduction formed by the so-called basic and elementary problems and the extension of their scope are determined above all by the self-establishing of the social, ethic, humanitarian and cultural dimension, which were of course included in every of the original “big” global problems even before. However, their all-human character, global scope and impacts have gradually started to form into new,

individually profiling global problems. It is an objective process since human societies are, on one side, rooted in their cultural, ethical and other historically given contexts and, on the other side, in the need to satisfy the material needs of the growing population and the accelerated scientific and technological development with a growing number of interactions with this social, ethical and cultural environment (Tichá 2008).

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Simultaneously, it is also a subjectively gnoseological process connected with the growth of human knowledge regarding these interrelationships and impacts.

Because the absolute majority of these problems (now already of the all-human global character) originates from breaking of the ethical values, the problem is – rather paradoxically – regarded by many authors (Robertson 1992) as a dominant “problem of the future of man” in this group of problems. This problem is sometimes labelled even differently but the common denominator of all these rather different names and understandings of it (the problem of the “model of man and society development”, problem of the “lack of the civilisation concept” etc.) is that there is no clear understanding regarding the question of the perspective approach (or approaches), the relevant basic development trends of humankind in the material as well as non-material sphere, i.e. in the basic question of many philosophers “Who are we, whence and where are we going”. Humankind becomes to feel serious doubts on the rightness and rationality of its own development concept, which are, anyway, still numerous, and it seems that, notwithstanding the homogenising influence of technics, technology and scientific research, this problem is not diminishing but growing.

The concepts regarding, explicite or implicite, the “progress” almost as the synonym of the material goods production and their mass consumption have many supporters as well as enemies. Many ethnical societies as well as individuals began to push forward their own identity, to refuse the seemingly universal concept of development. Still stronger are the voices proclaiming that all cultures should contribute to the more holistic and less limited perceiving of the world (Khor 2000). They lead to many forms, starting from the “anti-culture” up to pushing forward of the ideas that the further development of the world should rather concentrate on man than on economic results. At the same time, there does not exist any criterion of the optimum and adequate choice. Humankind will have to cope with this problem gradually, if other global problems are not to worsen further.

We will mention only some of the problems, which are at present directly connected to the “problem of the future of man”. These are the problems from the sphere of all-human social, ethical, humanitarian and cultural aspects of the human civilisation development, which are today (but need not be in the near future) in the centre of attention (Jeníček 2004).

- (a) the problem of social inequality extension
- (b) the problem of spreading epidemics and drug abuse

- (c) the problem of the uncontrollable migration and city agglomerations growth
- (d) the problem of terrorism.

## SOCIAL INEQUALITY EXTENSION

The methodology of ascertaining absolute poverty is, also according to the UNO and the World Bank, not yet sufficiently consolidated. Some organisations (e.g. the International Labour Organisation – ILO) use their own methodology, moreover divide it into “very poor” and “poor” (for Latin America, it is in the first case the margin of 180 USD and in the second case 560 USD per year, in the mid80s prices). Nevertheless, it is obvious that, defining or numbering the level of absolute poverty in whichever way, some 0.5 to 0.8 billion people in the world are living in these conditions. By the end of the 70s (1978), the UNO declared through the World Bank the project of the absolute poverty liquidation. By the year 2000, the number of the absolutely poor should have decreased from approx. 770 million, according to the basic scenario, down to 270 million according to the alternative scenario, and that notwithstanding the world population growth. It is already obvious, that this program was not successful. The number of the absolutely poor is not decreasing; it is rather stagnating or mildly growing. Nevertheless, even so it is regarded as a relative success, because it at least managed to stop the accelerated growth of the absolute poverty from the 60s and 70s.

Even if Africa is today the most economically backwards and less developing area of the world, the major part of absolute poverty is concentrated in the much more populated (even if economically more dynamic) Asia (India, Bangladesh, Pakistan, partially Indonesia), where, according to the estimates of the WB, there lives about one half of the absolutely poor people. Another 20% lives in Africa, 15% in Latin America and 10% in the Near East. Only 5% lives in the developed countries, it is probable, however, that this share has increased after the fall of the Soviet block. The “absolute poverty margin” is today for the poor developing countries set at 120–150 USD of the yearly income (at the present USD exchange rate) (Human Development Report 2006). For the more developed and newly industrialised countries, it is understandably even ten times higher. From the basic tendencies connected to the absolute poverty, it is necessary to mention the growth of children and young people in absolute numbers (connected with the ongoing population explosion) and the worsening situation in literacy (about four fifths of the absolute

poor parents' children do not attend school for more than two years and naturally a considerable part of this percent does never attend school). These are the tendencies which do not offer a very optimistic forecast for this global problem.

Often connected with this problem (as well as with other problems, e.g. of nutrition, migration and housing) is the program concept of the "basic needs" presented in the second half of the 70s by the ILO. Its core is the support of the economic strategy aimed at covering of the "basic needs" of the population (food, basic education and basic housing) (Hron 2008).

## SPREADING EPIDEMICS AND DRUG ABUSE

The global problem of spreading epidemics and drug abuse is another of the problems of the social-ethical kind. It is connected to the problem of absolute poverty (these people are naturally more apt to the epidemic diseases), but it enters also the quite wealthy strata (for example in the case of AIDS). Also the drug abuse problem does not by far regard only the socially weak strata (even if these strata are more inclined to it). It is spreading both in the economically underdeveloped and poor countries and in the wealthy countries, sometimes even in the extreme extent. It then regards again the global problem with global consequences as well as with the possibilities to manage it only by the powers of all human civilisation (Human Development Report 2006).

The avalanche of the AIDS spreading is a good example of this. Even in 1988, the WHO statistics stated only 8,693 cases in Africa, while today it is estimated that as much as 20% of the Black Africa population is HIV-positive, what represents tens of millions. At the same time, three quarters of the diseased are in the most productive age of 20–40 years, what has already begun to endanger both the state of economy and the performance of state administration in many African countries. In the U. S., the number of cases grew from 200 in 1981 up to one million. However, the official WHO statistics are underestimated everywhere in the world, so that the real state of the affair is estimated at ten times the official numbers. Economic consequences are also frightening. In the U. S., the costs for treating one person amount to 146 000 USD, which prolongs the life of the person in question, but he/she still dies (until there is not very quickly developed an effective remedy, which is not very probable, because the present research is rather concentrated at seeking the protective vaccine). The AIDS case also shows very well the relations between the problematics of drug abuse and spreading of

epidemics (needle-using drug-abusers are the most risky group besides homosexuals).

However, the problem of spreading the epidemics does not regard AIDS only, even if it stands in the centre of attention. At present, there are also spreading again the diseases which were regarded as extinct or suppressed even 10–15 years ago. It regards tuberculosis, which increases everywhere in the world dramatically during the last years. At present, the number of people dying because of it reaches 2.5 million persons per year (4.5% of all death reasons). It is supposed that during the 90s, 90 million of people in the world got ill by it, about one third of which will probably also die at the present level of treatment. This disease is closely connected with the phenomenon of poverty: 95% of the infected people live and 98% dies just in the poorest countries, namely those of Africa and Asia. Further, this problem regards also malaria, typhus and cholera. Cholera impacted more than 100 million people in developing countries in 1993, and the problem still worsened in 1994/95 by the great African epidemics connected with the civil war in Rwanda. At present, the death rate caused by malaria is again more than 2 million persons per year. A certain increase is visible also regarding the rare tropical diseases (yellow fever, black plague); also bilharzias and other parasitic diseases are spreading. As the main reason, there is regarded namely pollution and other environmental factors, but also the life style, increase of the absolute numbers of poor people and eventually also the insufficient measures regarding military research can play their role. Necrotic fasciitis (the invasive *A streptococcus*) is said to have its origin there.

Of global character are also the milder diseases which are, however, of a wide economic impact. The from-time-to-time repeated mutations of influenza viruses evoke world-wide epidemics (the Hong-Kong influenza of 1968/69 and other waves of the "Asian" fever diseases already after 7–8 years), which fell down even half of the population for at least one week and thus accounted for the losses of billions working hours in the given country or area. Newly, this regards also the SARS virus and the "avian (bird) influenza" – the WHO statistics.

More serious is, however, spreading of the drug abuse. It does not regard only the "hard" drugs (heroin, cocaine), but also the "soft" drugs (marihuana) and, in the widest sense of the word, also alcoholism and smoking. Also this problem is of serious economic dimension. Not even the richest countries of the world (e.g. USA) have enough means to fight drug abuse, e.g. the president Bush program from 1989 calculated at 2.2 bill. USD. All this, however, represents only

the top of the iceberg – there are not included “soft” drugs nor the costs of health care. At present, the main danger is represented by the mass invasion of drugs (namely cocaine) to Europe, which is doubled yearly for the last five years and which originates in the increased production in South America, namely in Columbia (the well-known Medellin cartel).

## **UNCONTROLLABLE MIGRATION AND CITY AGGLOMERATIONS GROWTH**

The global problems include the non-controllable international migration and the growth of city agglomerations. The uncontrollable international migration is usually divided into two big groups as follows:

- connected with military conflicts (the problem of refugees)
- not connected with military conflicts (economic migration).

The first group is less numerous, but the situation of refugees is often dramatic. During the last decade, it is connected with the increase of nationalism in developing countries and the transforming economies. The flows of refugees are leaving their homes in a hurry and usually without any property to save bare lives or to avoid very cruel forms of persecution (Bosnia, Rwanda, Kurdish areas, during the last time Kosovo).

The second group of the so-called economic migrants is more numerous, but it usually has a certain background for the first time, even if their situation is of course not easy. The increase of this group is connected to the economic differentiation in world economy and the deepening abyss between the “rich” and “poor” nations and states (World Development Report 2005).

The problem of the world migration of both groups is framed by a series of international agreements (the so-called Geneva Convention from 1951, the New York Protocol from 1967, the Caracas Convention from 1954 and many regional agreements). Since 1951, there exists also the U.N. Office of the High Commissary for Refugees (UNHCR), which should control that these people are granted a certain minimum standard. This functions namely for the first group (refugees), since granting shelter to the people who left their homes because of the reasoned danger of life or persecution is a highly ethical claim and attribute of every free and democratic society as well as a legal state. More complicated is the problematic of the international economic migration. The difficulty of getting new jobs in the sphere of the accelerated scientific and

technological progress and also the obligations of the free flow of labour in the international integration groupings are complicating the immigration processes. Even if there is valid on the European territory the Declaration on the Territorial Asylum accepted by the Board of Ministers of the Council of Europe in November 1977, which includes among the reasons of granting an asylum, besides the reasons of the fear of persecution because of the racial, religious, national and political opinion reasons, also belonging to a certain social group, almost all European countries grant the asylum to economic migrants only in a very selective way because of the historical, political, economic or other reasons. Generally, there is pushed forward the trend of decreasing the migration quotas, and that not only in Europe, but also in the traditional immigrant countries like the USA, Australia or Canada. This situation is solved by the immigrants still more often by the illegal means. The majority of such migrants ends in big cities, where the possibility of identification is more difficult. The deepening social differences inside the new country are then leading to the analogical de-population of rural areas and the uncontrollable growth of the centres and the big city agglomerations. The agglomerations of 10–15 million inhabitants, which were unthinkable even 25 years ago, are now common. According to the U.N. estimate, by the end of the century 60% of the world population lived in cities and minimally 30 cities had more than 5 million inhabitants, while the most quickly growing agglomeration, Mexico City, reached the population of 24–26 million. Managing of such mega-cities is already today extremely difficult regarding hygiene and health care, education system, city transport etc. Many cities in the developing world are changing into huge slums, which present a “timed bombs” in the sense of environment, but also life style and massing up of the economic and psychological tension.

All the above mentioned global problems of the ethical, cultural and humanitarian kind are connected to the global security problem.

## **PROBLEM OF TERRORISM**

The global security problem is at present the most often represented by the problem of terrorism. Its scope testifies that it is really a global problem: in total 74 states were impacted by the terrorist attacks towards citizens of property and other incidents occurred in another 60 countries. Terrorism is usually defined as the planned violence, motivated politically or otherwise, performed against the non-fighting

targets by the non-official groups or agents aimed at influencing the public opinion. A specific group of terrorism is international terrorism: it is terrorism touching the inhabitants or area of more than one country. No country or social system is immune against terrorism; it regards even the totalitarian systems. In the whole world economy, considerable means are spent at fighting terrorism. This fight regards extensive security, legislation as well as training measures. More or less, the generally shared opinion is that of the U.S. administration that terrorism will sustain in the present world for the time being, because it can reach strategic results and immeasurable harm of the opponent with relatively very cheap means and the use of tactic. It was e.g. calculated that the terrorists spent about 500 000 ths USD during the September 11, 2001 attack, but the damages accounted to more than 1 billion USD, what means about 2 mill. USD damage per each dollar spent (USA statistics).

Terrorism is fed above all by the political national conflicts. Some authors (Jeníček 2004) point out at the paradox of the world political trends: on one side the trend of creating bigger supra-national units and global approaches, but on the other side the trend of the spreading distaste towards the excessive centralisation, the faceless bureaucratic apparatus indifferent to the specifics of national minorities and social groups. Some ethnics are solving this situation by violent terrorist activities (Basks, part of the Palestinians, Corsicans, Irish people etc.). Some governments are even supporting the international terrorism in an active way. On the present American list of such supporters, there are included for example Iran, Syria, Cuba, North Korea, and Sudan. The newest impulse was created by the dissolution of Yugoslavia and the Soviet Union. However, the same authors are also at the same time stressing that both these seemingly opposite trends can be basically merged together, it is only necessary to accommodate the decisive level so that the decisions are participated in by those who are impacted by them both in the positive as well as negative sense.

Therefore, it is necessary to apply at solving the problem of terrorism both the power repressive and intimidation methods and the non-violent methods seeking an adequate reply to the state of the national and social-economic aspirations of the different ethnics and groups of population. The all-human social, humanitarian and cultural problems should not be underestimated in the whole complex of global problems. Even if perceived not individually (the present tendency) but under the common denominator of the global problem of the "future of the man" (or better said, of the lack of this future concept) as it

were earlier, it is obvious that there really occurs the loss of values which formerly used to secure the belonging of the individualities to the frame of certain societies. As was already stated at the beginning, it regards partially an objective process issuing from the "whirlwind of changes" generated above all (but not completely) from the process of the enormously accelerated scientific and technological innovations. At the same time, these are, however, the processes recognisable and able to be influenced by human knowledge, where a great responsibility will lay namely on the humanities and social sciences for the analysis, proposing alternative ways and tools of solution, or at least a mitigation and consequently the choice of the alternative way which would be optimal regarding the existing time and space conditions.

With regard to the growing importance of terrorism after the September 11, 2001, it is necessary to add few more things. First of all, it is necessary to state that terrorism as a method of "persuasion through fear" is not a kind of war (not even a partisan war). Even if it exists from the ancient times, its basic paradigm have now changed with the change of the century (the so-called new terrorism). Inside it, there are strengthened such phenomena as the willingness to self-sacrifice, the endeavour to reach a mass destroying impact, transcendent goals of attacks and new form of organisation (the Al-Queida). Compared to the traditional forms, the concrete political agenda is now getting to the second place while there is pushed forward the extreme understanding of the given (usually religious) belief, a totally black-and-white perceiving of the surrounding reality and the world as such and the Messianic persuasion connected with total fanaticism. There grows the scope and brutality of the attacks, the endeavour to acquire the mass destroyal weapons, namely chemical and bacteriological, the "efficiency" of which is the highest (compared to the means used).

## CONCLUSION

Since terrorism cannot be regarded as a kind or way of war (the precise definition does not exist, but there exists a high level of agreement in this), many commentators regard the term "war against the terrorism" as a not very lucky one. Also the USA, who declared the "war against terrorism" after the September 2001, are now ceasing to use this terminology. A "war" against terrorism cannot be won, terrorism can only be faced by the means of active and passive defence (suppressing of the organised structures, their financial resources, sanctions, secu-

rity measures, but also by building civil societies and cultivating of the democratic forms of the social and political systems). The notion of “war” also hints at the low military approach to the whole problem, what might in the marginal case endanger the democratic institutions and human rights, thus to help just what the terrorism endeavours at. Therefore, even the fight against poverty and the eventual development aid can be understood as anti-terrorist means.

The thesis that terrorism will persist here for a long time should not be necessarily regarded as a defensive one. It is necessary to seek, as with regard to every global problem, solutions to it and resist it by both the passive as well as active means of the whole mankind, in the frame of which no nation or state should claim any natural monopoly or mission.

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