

UPF UK Global South Perspectives on the Russia-Ukraine War and Consequent Geopolitical Tensions

Robin Marsh
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'Global South Perspectives on the Russia-Ukraine War and Consequent Geopolitical Tensions'
Universal Peace Federation UK's International Media Association for Peace
43 Lancaster Gate, London, W2 3NA
September 26th 2023

www.youtube.com/live/THUyQVYLIgo - Event Video

bit.ly/3PV9FYZ Event Photos



Is the rules-based order, promoted by the 'Global West' after World War II, dead as Humphrey Hawksley

suggested last night, as a distinguished panel considered the 'Global South Perspectives on the Russia-Ukraine War and Consequent Geopolitical Tensions' convened by the Universal Peace Federation UK under its branch of the International Media Association for Peace.

Panellist Mr P. Unnikrishnan, Chairman of the Bahrain Daily Tribune and media pioneer, was participating online, while the former BBC World Correspondent and award-winning author, Mr Humphrey Hawksley, and Mr Muhammad Hussein, Staff Writer and Political Analyst for the Middle East Monitor, were speaking from Universal Peace Federation-UK's London HQ.



Moderator Mr Keith Best, Chair of Universal Peace Federation UK, decried the poor level of understanding of the 'West' for the perspectives of 'the Global South'. In a common theme for the evening's discussion, he said the West had a tendency to not listen but to lecture the Global South.

Humphrey Hawksley reflected on the comfortable life of UK citizens living in an orderly, reasonably well-governed society, that are the envy of many nations in the global south. He commented that he felt a reluctance to speak because this comfort denied him the credibility to speak for the Global South on this panel. He perceives that the 'Global West', who he speaks with on a daily basis as a journalist, does not listen when a family in the Sahael does not have a road on which to send their child to school but will lecture that Government that the road will be built only if the nation has free and fair elections.

He spoke of the paralysis of the United Nations Security Council over the Russian-Ukrainian war. He also commented on a list of failures of the rules-based order to respond to violations of international law in Georgia in 2008, Crimea in 2014 as well as the South China sea, the Chagos Islands, including the US base on Diego Garcia and the invasion of Iraq.

Hawksley sees a new rival system to the Global West's rules-based order being established that is a result of the lecturing not listening approach. He concluded by saying that unless we reversed this practice he has a feeling that 'we are going to lose this one'.

Mr Muhammad Hussein commented on 100 years of the nation-state initiated by the West. Whenever the nation-state borders were threatened the west came down on it with great force. They sustained the national borders while trying to dominate the Government. However, Russia is now trying to change those borders by integrating new territories into Russia from Ukraine. Russia is not a saviour to balance the United States. The real challenge for nations of the Global South is to navigate between those superpowers. Middle powers such as Saudia Arabia, India and Turkey are key victors in this effort.

The emergence of these middle powers such as Saudi Arabia and Turkey is a geopolitical shift that challenges the western global order. The expansion of BRICs and the multi-aligned world is another aspect of the challenge to the global west. Saudi Arabia will have a key role in this as it now accepts the Chinese Yuan in payment for its oil. The dust has not settled yet in these shifts. When the shifts have settled we will see the emergence of new powers. He concluded saying that he could not predict what will happen but he has a sense that by 2030 a new geopolitical order will be formed.

Mr P. Unnikrishnan's well-researched talk repeated Hawkley's admonition on the West to listen more and not lecture the poorer nations of the Global South. He viewed far-reaching changes as a result of the conflict as the world is divided into two ideologically separated power blocks.

He asked who benefitted from the war. He pointed to reports that China stockpiled Liquefied Natural Gas and Wheat prior to the war which could suggest a foreknowledge of the invasion. He also commented on the explosion of the Nord Stream gas pipeline that could have benefitted the United States gas exports to Europe.

His sympathy for the poorer nations of the Global South in this changing world was clear. The war has altered trade supply patterns and resource availability which have affected poorer nations with rising prices and poverty levels much more than the developed ones.

He saw that commentators in the West have been highly critical of Global South nations because of their failure to support the West's position on Ukraine. Mr Unnikrishnan felt that the decisions of the poorer nations of the global south, while they attempt to deal with their difficult economic situations, should be respected. Collaboration and diplomacy are crucial as we navigate the crisis.

The evening concluded with an extended question and answer session. For more please view the video of the evening's programme through the link www.youtube.com/live/THUyQVYLIgo



Panellists:

Mr P. Unnikrishnan

Unnikrishnan Puravangara, a resident of Bahrain since 1994, is an entrepreneur by mission writer by passion and a sociopreneur by vision.

Unnikrishnan, an architect building successful media brands across the G.C.C., is an acclaimed multilingual writer and orator. Through his entrepreneurial initiatives, Mr Unni's philosophy is to 'inspire' people, businesses, and society. He hails from a family of talented writers and media personalities, and his inclination toward the media business was almost by default.

He is the first Indian businessman to start the operations of a foreign media (Asianet Television) in the Kingdom of Bahrain and Saudi Arabia, a private Radio station (Radio Voice 104.2) in Bahrain, an Evening newspaper in Malayalam (FOUR PM News) and the first Indian to decorate the position of chairman and Managing director of an English National daily(The Daily Tribune) outside India.

He is the chairman and managing director of Strategic Publicity and advertising company Update Media, Laurels Center for Global Education, The Daily Tribune, and 4 PM News. He is also the advisory member and director for K.H.K. Consultancy and A.P.J Abdul Kalam Centre. He is also the chairman of UNISAKI AGRO FOOD company in Hebbal Mysore, India.

Humphrey Hawksley

Humphrey is an award-winning author and foreign correspondent whose assignments with the BBC have taken him to crises all over the world. His [Rake Ozenna series](#) originated when reporting from the US-Russian border during heightened tension

He has been guest lecturer at universities and think tanks such as the RAND Corporation, The Center for Strategic and International Studies and MENZA Cambridge. He moderates the monthly Democracy Forum debates on international issues and is a host on the weekly [Goldster Book Club](#) where he discusses books and talks to authors.

He has presented numerous BBC documentaries and his latest non-fiction work is [Asian Waters: The Struggle Over the Indo-Pacific and the Challenge to American Power](#).



Muhammad Hussein

Muhammad Hussein is a political analyst on Middle Eastern affairs, primarily focusing on the regions of the Gulf, Syria and Turkey, as well as their relation to Western foreign policy. He is a political analyst and journalist with publications in 3 languages in a variety of news organisations as well as a martial arts practitioner, international politics graduate and visionary.

Moderator: Keith Best TD, MA, Chairman of the Universal Peace Federation - UK Board of Trustees

Currently also Chair and CEO Wyndham Place Charlemagne Trust, Chair Charity 2020, Executive Chair World Federalist Movement (WFM/IGP), Secretary Parliamentary Outreach Trust, European Movement; Patron of The European-Atlantic Movement (TEAM); media appearances on migration and other matters; Freeman City of London.

Author several books and articles (latest, chapter in *Religious Soft Diplomacy and the United Nations* [2021]); keynote speeches both in the UK and abroad; visiting lecturer various universities.

Formerly CEO of national charities SurvivorsUK, Freedom from Torture, IAS (Immigration Advisory Service), Prisoners Abroad; Vice Chair of the European Council on Refugees and Exiles; served on Foreign Secretary's Advisory Panel on Torture Prevention; practising barrister and Member of Parliament (Anglesey/Ynys Môn); Parliamentary Private Secretary to Secretary of State for Wales; named in the Society Guardian as one of the 100 most influential people in public services in the UK; Major in airborne and commando forces.

Speaks French and Welsh; married, two daughters. Ran London Marathon and abseiled down the highest hospital tower in the world (Guy's) for charity.



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