The Liberal Media Team

1

The Daily Voice

State Sovereignty vs. Natural Resources

No later than yesterday, Russia, through Vladimir Putin’s voice, threatened to tremendously reduce gas deliveries to Europe if Ukraine (through which 80% of Russian gas passes through) did not stop to illegally debit some of this gas. Obviously, such a disagreement does not contribute to a peaceful relation between Ukraine and Russia, but besides that put European gas consumption in jeopardy. This case embodies the tensions natural resources can trigger off, and therefore links the environment and natural resources not only to climate change, but also to strategic and geopolitical disturbances.

Moreover, the fact that climate change and natural resources shortages mostly strike the poorest countries is not unknown: according to a study published by the British think tank Maplecroft, among the twenty-eight countries subject to “extreme risks”, twenty-two belong to Sub-Saharan Africa.

But many people may not be aware that all these tensions will likely to provoke geopolitical troubles in the next years. Indeed, such issues are the most representative of the global interdependence in which all States are trapped. First and foremost, because the management of natural resources in a country can unleash several consequences in another country - the most quoted example being the one of rivers: its use by a country can dramatically interfere upon another country’s water consumption. But what is more, when a country is subject to such a shortage, the consequences within its borders may imperil other countries’ security, since misery and political unrest can be the first steps towards terrorism, failed states, mass migrations, etc.

A way to handle this problem could be to ask for every country to make its best so as to avoid it. But would it be sufficient - and responsible? Indeed, if the sacrosanct notion of national sovereignty should be the highest priority, progress is bound to be meaningless. (read the rest of the article p. 2)
Instead, regional cooperation is to be praised, to the extent that it has the ability to strengthen links between nations, thus to foster more peaceful diplomatic relations.

Similarly, regional cooperation would be the way for countries to pool means and energies. A simple example can be found in China. Indeed, when the latter strives to divert water from its southern rivers to the drier parts of the country, the unavoidable consequence is a decrease of the Mekong’s water. Thus, there is no shadow of a doubt that strengthened links between China and ASEAN countries, for instance, would be the beginning of sustainable solutions. Of course, States may loose some of their selfish prerogatives, nevertheless, one knows how much it’s worthy and necessary.

“Deliberation and debate is the way you stir the soul of our democracy.”

Jesse James

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**Question Session:**

*Today we interviewed Mehrbano Raja, originally from Pakistan and who represents Austria during this week.*

**The Daily Voice** : How was your first pillar session?

Mehrbano RAJA : Very productive, except that everybody ended up siding against me! And then I went head-to-head against this other guy, from the Philippines, so basically the room was divided in two, and we were fighting against each other.

But it was very exciting, since where I come from we get much more aggressive than this, and I think I transmitted that to the other delegates!

D.V : So which position did you defend in your statement?

M.R : We suggested that an organization should be created, with equal representation for all countries, so as to maintain cultures, whereas the other people had no idea of what they were talking about.

D.V : And what was the main difficulty in finding an agreement?

M.R : Well, some people are not willing to compromise, although we compromised a lot, and after the second session some people still had not decided what they wanted from the meeting, that was the only problem.

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**Gossip Corner**

This “gossip corner” is the place where all readers and participants can post what they have heard, seen or experienced and would like to share with the rest of us.

Spill the beans and give us all the juicy details at:

robin.fordcoron@sciences-po.org

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Did you know that last night, in the Youth Hostel, several people chatted all night long? And from what we’ve heard through the door, they were not talking about the next Pillar sessions...

Had you noticed? All the food offered today at lunch was entirely cooked and prepared by Sciences-po students. A great cheers to all of them!