

Abstract

New Paradigm of Sustainable Human Development

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The New Paradigm Thinking Behind the Global Rule of Law and Fundamental Human Rights

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This paper briefly explores the evolution of both the rule of law idea as well as the idea of universal human rights. In particular, it explores the importance of these ideas to the crisis of governance that humanity confronts at global and national levels as well as at the level of intersection between the public and the private spheres of human interaction. The paper takes us to the point recognized by serious thinkers that humanity is at an evolutionary crossroad. In one direction, there is the prospect of a perfect storm of ever worsening crises. In the other direction, there lies the prospect of the exponential expansion of human potential providing humanity with unprecedented future opportunities. The challenge for the rule of law/human rights perspective is how human energy can be directed towards a promising future with great prospects and how to avoid a dismal future with progressively worse prospects. The critical question for the rule of law and human rights is that the “business as usual” approach which is in effect the old paradigm, is largely responsible for crises such as global unemployment, global food scarcity, global financial abuses, global economic mismanagement and global ecological disasters. These crises require the rule of law in human rights to be an active component of a rethinking that requires a significant and deeply rooted change in the values that guide humanity. They require us to re-imagine the role of the individual in the system of global public order as a resource and repository of the capital necessary to transform humanity. The role of human rights and the rule of law is to ensure that we have a philosophical and juridical basis of global reach that is unyielding in its defense of the individual human being, and the right to experience the security necessary for capacity development as well as the fairness of opportunity for development. The paper suggests that the rule of law human rights perspective can more firmly ground and defend the utter salience of the importance of human and social capital and more importantly, its real value in the measure of economic and social performance of society from the local to the global level.