



Interactivity Foundation

Special Report

The Future of Governance In Transitional Societies

Policy Possibilities for Public Discussion

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The discussions that were the basis for this report were cooperative and exploratory. No statement herein can or should be attributed to any single participant. The policy possibilities that we present are not intended to reflect the opinions or preferences of the participants about governance in their countries. They are presented simply as ideas that might be useful for a broad exploration of contrasting approaches to the future of governance in transitional societies. There are policy possibilities in this report that none of our participants would endorse, but which they nonetheless think are useful for public discussion.

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CONCEPTUAL POLICY POSSIBILITIES

FOR PUBLIC DISCUSSION

A. Preserve Your Values and Identity—But Build a Nation Too

This possibility would encourage transitional societies to preserve their traditional values and identities through the process of building and rebuilding their nations.

B. Build Your Own Democracy

This possibility would encourage transitional societies to build democracies that suit their own needs and cultures. Some of these democracies may be more democratic than others. But they would all promote free and fair elections, respect for opposing views in the political process, protection of human rights, better communication, and checks and balances that prevent any one individual, group, or branch of government from acquiring too much power.

C. Protect Your National Sovereignty

This possibility would push transitional societies to clarify their concept of national sovereignty—and especially how it relates to human rights and democracy—and to assert and defend their national sovereignty whenever necessary in an effort to ensure their independence and their good relations with the rest of the international community.

D. Aim at Equality

This possibility would aim at eliminating the income gap between the rich and poor in transitional societies. It would also promote equality before the law, equal opportunities, equal rights, gender equality, equal pay for equal work, and equal conditions for self-expression and self-development.

E. Embrace Freedom

This possibility would encourage transitional societies to adopt the governance principles of free market open society democracies in an attempt to maximize freedom, choice, wealth, happiness, and opportunity for everyone.

F. Ensure Legitimacy

This possibility would take whatever steps are necessary to ensure both the legitimacy of the government and the widespread perception that it is legitimate.

G. Forge a Consensus

This possibility would support a transitional society's efforts to forge a national consensus among its members regarding their national priorities in an effort to maintain domestic peace and stability.

H. Nurture Integrity To Fight Corruption

This possibility would try to inculcate and develop a sense of integrity in citizens and groups so that they would regard corruption as a stain on their honor. It would aim at justice, equality, and the eradication of bribery, nepotism, and other corrupt practices. And it would also institute processes that ensure merit-based governance at all levels.

I. Just Do It

This possibility recognizes political, economic, and social change as a necessary part of any society's growth and development. It would thus encourage transitional societies to change their political, economic, and social systems to ensure that their societies do not stagnate.

THE INTERACTIVITY FOUNDATION & THIS REPORT

The Interactivity Foundation (IF) aims to improve public policy by encouraging citizens to participate in democratic discussions about their governance concerns and the different policy possibilities for addressing them. Our reports can help such discussions by providing a conceptual springboard for citizens who want to explore the different policy possibilities and ends we might want to achieve as a society.

Public policy discussions too often focus upon specific actions that governments might take to address a problem instead of the broader conceptual possibilities that might inspire them. This is unfortunate, since the wise choice of a public policy requires an exploration of a wide range of conceptual possibilities—including the different concerns, questions, beliefs, values, goals, and interests that might motivate them. IF believes that governments are too often elected and public policies are too often enacted without the consideration of a wide range of contrasting conceptual policy possibilities pertaining to what we might want to achieve. We thus support projects designed to explore, develop, articulate, and test contrasting conceptual possibilities for public policy in selected areas of concern. We believe that our projects and the conceptual policy possibilities that we develop in them can help people to explore an area of concern with their neighbors and to make individual choices about the public policy possibilities they want our society to pursue.

With the support of IF, a small group of university teachers from Eastern Europe and Asia met for three months in 2012 for a special IF project designed both to teach them how to use our discussion process to teach ‘student-centered discussion courses’ at their universities, and to explore the concerns that people may have about the future of governance in transitional societies and the conceptual possibilities for public policy pertaining to it.

The participants in this special project were university professors, teachers, and graduate students from China, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Serbia, and Tajikistan. Most of them had come to Washington DC under the auspices of the Open Society Institute and the State Department to expand their studies in economics, political theory, and law; and to learn about new teaching methods that they could use in their classrooms back home. They met with us, both as a group and individually, for fifty hours over a three-month period. They learned how to facilitate group discussions, how to explore governance concerns, and how to develop conceptual and practical policy possibilities for addressing them. They also facilitated most of the discussions that produced this report.

This ‘special report’ describes nine conceptual possibilities for public policy pertaining to the future of governance in transitional societies that the teachers explored, developed, articulated, and tested during the course of their discussions. It also describes concerns that people might have about the future of governance in transitional societies; the reasoning behind each of the policy possibilities that it presents; actions that might be taken to implement it; and the effects that those actions might have upon individuals, groups, institutions, and society at large. It does not, however, advocate any of the possibilities—or any of the specific actions that might be taken to implement them—for anything other than public discussion. There are possibilities in this report that none of the participants endorse, but which they think should be part of the discussion about the future of governance in transitional societies. This *special* IF report differs from our regular IF reports in several ways: the possibilities in it were developed by one group of discussants instead of two; the discussions that produced them were facilitated by trainees learning about our process; they were much shorter in length; and we have published the names of some, but not all, of their participants.

THE FUTURE OF GOVERNANCE IN TRANSITIONAL SOCIETIES AS AN AREA OF CONCERN

Governance is a perennial area of concern for the members of established democratic societies, who are periodically called upon to elect their leaders and to evaluate competing ideas—or public policy possibilities—about how they can and should govern themselves. But governance in transitional societies is a more pressing area of concern, both for the members of such societies—who generally want more democracy, but have not had much experience governing themselves, let alone evaluating public policy possibilities—and for an international community that would generally like to see transitional societies make smooth, peaceful, and successful social changes. Today, many people in transitional societies and the international community seem to believe that such social changes should involve a change from authoritarian forms of governance to more democratic and egalitarian forms of governance. But others believe that some forms of governance may not be suited for their societies. And still others believe that different forms of governance are causal factors in the development of different kinds of societies, that some forms of governance lead to authoritarian ‘closed’ societies in which people take orders without question from above, and that others are catalysts for the development of democratic ‘open’ societies in which people play an active role in making the policy decisions in their societies, and hold their political leaders accountable for what they say and do. The participants in this project are all members of societies undergoing social, political, or economic transition. This is the context in which the future of governance in transitional societies emerged as an area of concern for them.

But what is governance? What are some of its different dimensions? What beliefs, values, goals, and interests might people associate with it? What concerns might people in transitional societies have about the future of governance in their societies? And what are some of the different conceptual possibilities for addressing them?

These questions reflect broad concerns that are relevant to any society that is making a change from one form of governance to another. The teachers used them as springboards for their discussions. They did not define ‘governance’ or ‘transitional societies’, or any of their key terms. They instead worked with different concepts, which helped them to develop a wide range of conceptually contrasting policy possibilities. They discussed many different concerns about the future of governance in transitional societies, but eventually selected the following as the most useful for public discussion:

- A society may lose its traditional values and identity as a result of the transition
- Transitional societies might blindly copy governance systems of other countries, importing models that are ill-suited for their own values, histories, traditions, cultures, and people
- A nation may lose its sovereignty and perhaps even cease to exist as a result of the transition
- The transition may lead to greater social inequality, including greater inequality in the distribution of wealth
- Transitional societies may have to choose between the freedom of an open society free market democracy and the security and equality of a social welfare state
- It may be difficult for a new government to establish its legitimacy
- People may not agree about priorities
- The transition could lead to even greater corruption
- People are afraid to change.

The following pages present the conceptual policy possibilities that the teachers developed to address these concerns, along with the reasoning behind them, the actions that might implement them, and the effects they may have.

PRESERVE YOUR VALUES AND IDENTITY— BUT BUILD A NATION TOO

This possibility would encourage transitional societies to preserve their traditional values and identities through the process of building and rebuilding their nations.

Do you believe that the traditional values and identity of a society and its various sub-groups are essential for forming its national values and identity? Do you worry that transitional societies can lose their traditional values and identities? And do you think that the best way for a society to build a new nation is to preserve its traditional values and identity?

This possibility flows from the belief that transitional societies should try to preserve their traditional values and identities instead of losing themselves in their attempt to build new nations. But it also flows from a concern that there are many forces that might lead societies that are trying to build or rebuild their nations to abandon their traditional values and identities. The mere fact that a society is in a state of change can jeopardize its traditional values and identity. But it is easy to see how a transitional society may be tempted to sacrifice its traditional values and identity in order to forge a nation out of its various ethnic, tribal, and religious sub-groups. This possibility maintains that a nation's identity is more complex and important than the various sub-identities that may be involved in forming it. It would thus regard the values and identities of its sub-groups not as posing a threat to the values and identity of the nation, but as an integral part of what makes a nation's national values and identity what they are. Transitional societies that consist of different ethnic, tribal, and religious sub-groups should thus preserve the values and identities of those groups as well as the values and identity of the nation. For doing so can help to unify those different groups into a nation by honoring the role their cultures play in forming the nation's identity. This, in turn, can also help people of different ethnic, tribal, and religious groups feel that they all belong to a much larger group, the nation, that consists of people who are simultaneously both different from them and yet somehow 'the same'.

Far from trying to suppress the values and identities of its sub-groups, this possibility would encourage a transitional society to preserve the different values, identities, languages, traditions, and cultural legacies that belong to its members. But it would put the values and identity of the whole *nation* ahead of those of its sub-groups. It would thus preserve the different values and identities of its members, while trying to build a nation out of them.

This possibility maintains that a nation's identity is more complex and important than the various sub-identities that may be involved in forming it. It would thus regard the values and identities of its sub-groups not as posing a threat to the values and identity of the nation, but as an integral part of what makes a nation's national values and identity what they are.

Other Perspectives

But even if you agree that a society should try to preserve its traditional values and identity under normal circumstances, you may think that this should be the last thing that a transitional society should want to do. You may think that a society in transition is a society in the process of change, that change is somehow at odds with preserving traditional values and identities, that the question that transitional societies face is how their values and identities will evolve through the process of change, and that it is impossible for a society's identity to change in any significant way so long as it tries to preserve its traditional values and identity. If you think this way, then you may also think that transitional societies should not try to preserve the values and identities of their ethnic, tribal, and religious sub-groups, but should forge ahead by experimenting with all the new values, ideas, and identities that may come their way, and choosing those that best fit what they want to become in the future.

Possible Implementations

We could—

- Hold a Constitutional Value Convention that includes representatives from all of the society’s ethnic, tribal, and religious sub-groups to construct the nation’s ‘traditional’ national values
- Declare the majority’s language and values the national language and values, and require everyone to learn them
- Support TV and radio broadcasts that promote the values and traditions of the majority group as the values and traditions of the nation
- Fund educational programs that emphasize the traditional languages, values, and cultures of a nation’s ethnic, tribal, and religious sub-groups in primary and secondary schools
- Suppress trends that challenge your values
- Celebrate national holidays with festivals that emphasize national values and traditions
- Create and subsidize national language and history programs in the primary schools
- Support educational and cultural centers for different sub-groups within the nation
- Propagate literature about the great ideas that the sub-groups have contributed to the nation
- Teach the traditional literature of the ancestors in schools

Possible Effects of These Actions

These actions could—

- Clarify what we are talking about when we talk about the nation’s ‘traditional’ values; give members of different ethnic, tribal, and religious sub-groups the sense that they belong to the same nation
- Make everyone in the country speak the majority group’s language and respect its values and traditions
- Build a sense of common national values and national identity; result in indoctrination; lead to conflicts and a fragmented society
- Preserve traditional values, identity, and pride; encourage people to be interested in promoting traditional values, cultures, and traditions; result in the continuation of barbaric practices
- Lead to a closed society
- Increase cultural awareness; strengthen the feeling that we are all one nation
- Build awareness in people about national values and identity from an early age
- Preserve traditional cultures; lead to possible conflicts and struggles for resources
- Create conditions for peaceful co-existence of the various sub-groups in the nation
- Preserve the traditional values and culture of the ancestors in the new generation

For Further Discussion...

- Do you worry that transitional societies are losing their traditional values and identities during the process of transition? If so, why so? If not, why not?
- Do you believe that it is necessary, or even desirable, for a transitional society to forge all of its different ethnic, tribal, and religious sub-groups into one nation? If so, why so? If not, why not? And if so, what is it necessary and desirable for?
- Why do you think a society might want to forge a nation out of the traditional values and identities of people who have traditionally hated each other?
- Do you think that it is possible for a society to build one nation out of the conflicting values and identities of its various sub-groups? If so, why so? If not, why not? And if not, how else might you do it?
- Do you think that transitional societies are in greater danger of forgetting their traditional values and identities, or in greater danger of remembering them? And why?

BUILD YOUR OWN DEMOCRACY

This possibility would encourage transitional societies to build democracies that suit their own needs and cultures. Some of these democracies may be more democratic than others. But they would all promote free and fair elections, respect for opposing views in the political process, protection of human rights, better communication, and checks and balances that prevent any one individual, group, or branch of government from acquiring too much power.

Do you believe that there is no ‘one-size-fits-all’ system of democracy? Are you worried about foreigners who want to tell you how you should govern yourselves? And do you fear that you could easily trade your values and identity for a system of governance that does not suit your needs, your culture, and your traditions if you follow their advice?

This possibility flows from a belief that people in transitional societies want a more democratic form of governance that would give them a real voice in the political process. But it also flows from a concern that the adoption of a democratic system of governance might force them to adopt new beliefs, values, and ways of life that are neither useful for their society nor consistent with their history, culture, values, and traditions—and might even lead to a more authoritarian form of governance in the name of ‘democracy’. This possibility recognizes that there are many different forms of democracy and that no system of governance is perfect. But it maintains that government should help people to achieve their own goals, and would urge transitional societies to develop and adopt a system of democratic governance that suits their own particular needs. This possibility also maintains that democracy essentially involves sharing political power, and that it thus requires effective communication systems that enable individuals, groups, and different branches of government to interact with each other—and systems of checks and balances to prevent any one individual, group, or branch of government from acquiring too much power. It is good to know about communication systems and checks and balances that other democracies have developed. But this possibility would urge transitional societies to build their own systems to suit their own needs instead of importing them from abroad.

Democracy needs the right conditions for it to flourish. Transitional societies should thus take the time to develop basic security in their environments, a level of economic development that enables people to participate in democratic governance, and education systems that are free of ideology, so that people can be both open to new ideas and able to consider them critically. Trying to force democracy on a society that lacks these conditions may only lead to a corruption of its values and practices that will ultimately undermine its legitimacy.

This possibility recognizes that there are many different forms of democracy and that no system of governance is perfect.

Other Perspectives

But even if you believe in democratic ideals, you may still think that transitional societies should consolidate political power in a strong central government, even if it means putting power in the hands of a dictator or monarch. You may think that even the best democracies tend to be unstable, unpredictable, and inefficient; that they often rely upon people who are uneducated and unprincipled; and that they are liable to devolve into tyrannies, especially with the election of a charismatic leader. You may believe that people are happier when governmental changes occur in a certain and predictable way, that a strong central government can implement its decisions more quickly and with less waste of valuable resources, and that the centralization of political power can thus lead to a much more efficient and stable society. Or you may simply believe that too many cooks will inevitably spoil the soup. But if you share these beliefs, then you may think that most transitional societies would be better off with strong central governments, even if they call them ‘democracy’.

Possible Implementations	Possible Effects of These Actions
<p><i>We could—</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop clear rules about changing the system of governance • Hold periodic elections, but do not force people to vote • Strengthen communications between citizens and elected officials • Create a legal mechanism to influence political elites in their decision making • Give equal access and time on TV channels to political opposition groups and parties • Explain why and how authoritarianism is harmful • Remove all political censorship in online social networks • Create a legal mechanism to hold political accountable for their actions • Let the people decide what institutions they should have and who should check whom • Allow human rights organizations to observe how human rights are protected 	<p><i>These actions could—</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lead to greater stability and peaceful changes in the society • Allow more efficient elections with less corruption • Make people better aware of the work and the effectiveness of their elected officials • Make elites more accountable to people; slow down the decision-making process • Enable people to choose between different parties; lead to freer and fairer elections • Curtail the authoritarian culture; lead to better relations in families, corporations, and the state • Enhance free speech and communications; lead people to broadcast a lot of false information • Strengthen checks and balances; prevent people from getting too much power • Strengthen democracy, if the people can agree; cripple democracy, if the people cannot agree • Prevent government abuse of power; lead to greater respect for people and human rights

For Further Discussion...

- What do you think people in transitional societies really want when they say that they want democracy? And why do you think they want it?
- Do you think that democracy is ‘rule by the people’, as the literal meaning of the word suggests; or that democracy is ‘rule of law’, as we so often hear it said; or that ‘rule by the people’ and ‘rule of law’ are one and the same thing? And what do you think democracy should be?
- Do you believe that there are some things that are common to all democracies and definitive of democracy itself? And if so, what are they? And if not, what do you think differentiates democratic governance from other forms of governance that are not democratic?
- Do you think that democracy, as it is currently practiced by most Western democracies, is really government of the people, by the people, and for the people? If so, why so? If not, why not? And if not, what do you think democracy really is today?
- What do you think a system of democratic governance that is tailored to fit your society’s values, traditions, history, and culture would look like? And how do you think it might differ from the typical textbook descriptions of democracy?

Protect Your National Sovereignty

This possibility would push transitional societies to clarify their concept of national sovereignty—and especially how it relates to human rights and democracy—and to assert and defend their national sovereignty whenever necessary in an effort to ensure their independence and their good relations with the rest of the international community.

Do you believe that national sovereignty is essential for the freedom of any modern state? Do you feel that your national sovereignty is under attack from foreign countries that presume to tell you how you should govern yourselves? And do you think that it is necessary for societies in transition to clarify, assert, and defend their national sovereignty in order to ensure both their own independence and their good relationships with the rest of the international community?

This possibility flows from a belief that people in transitional societies have a strong wish for national sovereignty so they can be independent and organize their lives and societies in the way that they think is most suitable for their needs. But it also flows from a concern that transitional societies do not always understand the concept of national sovereignty or how a society’s claim to national sovereignty can cause tensions in the international community—especially when it is used to defend human rights abuses and other violations of democratic values and practices. This possibility recognizes that many people in transitional societies fear that they will lose their newly claimed autonomy, independence, and freedom to control their own lives in the process of transition, and will instead be forced to adopt new beliefs, values, and ways of life that are neither useful for their society nor consistent with their history, culture, values, and traditions. It thus recognizes their felt need to assert and protect their own national sovereignty. But it also recognizes that the world is now interdependent, that international relations are more important today than ever before, and that it is impossible for any country to develop without having good relationships with others. This possibility would thus push transitional societies to clarify, assert, and defend their claims to national sovereignty in a way that balances those claims with their moral obligations and their responsibilities to the international community.

Good fences make good neighbors, and national sovereignty is like a fence that one country erects on its borders in order to tell other countries where its authority begins and ends. Asserting your national sovereignty with regard to a certain issue is thus a way of declaring your rights and telling other countries not to interfere with them. Far from provoking other countries, clarifying, asserting, and defending your national sovereignty is one of the best ways we have of keeping the peace.

This possibility recognizes that many people in transitional societies fear that they will lose their newly claimed autonomy, independence and freedom to control their own lives in the process of transition, and will instead be forced to adopt new beliefs, values, and ways of life.

Other Perspectives

But even if you agree that transitional societies should be independent and organize themselves in the ways best suited for their own needs, you may think that asserting and defending their national sovereignty is not the best way to do it. You may think that national sovereignty pertains to nations, instead of individuals and societies, and that it is often an obstacle to people who are trying to protect their own freedom, prosperity, justice, and human rights. You may feel that just as no man is an island, no state exists—or can exist—totally isolated from the rest of the world. And you may think that while each state can help and be helped by each other if they are willing to cooperate, actively asserting and defending your national sovereignty can very easily lead to war. If you share these beliefs, then you may think that transitional societies should downplay their national sovereignty, instead of making a point to assert and defend it, in the hope of reaping the benefits from international cooperation that they can attain without it.

Possible Implementations	Possible Effects of These Actions
<p><i>We could—</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct international public discussions to clarify the relationships between human rights, democracy and national sovereignty • Define the territory of the state and seek for its international recognition • Promote the idea of spheres of independence and spheres of influence • Strongly insist upon and defend your nation’s sovereignty • Form effective military alliances with other countries • Create a diversity of industries and productive enterprises • Promote internal legal political competition among different parties • Educate young people about the concept of national sovereignty • Create transparent and effective links with international communities that might impact upon your national sovereignty • Find the degree of participation in global processes that is right for the country 	<p><i>These actions could—</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clarify the relationships between national sovereignty, human rights, and democracy; promote human rights and democracy • Protect the territory of the state from foreign invasion; gain international recognition • Allow the state’s government to defend its sovereignty in relations with other countries • Lead other nations to respect your national sovereignty; lead to war • Enable a country to get help from its allies in protecting its national sovereignty • Lead to self-sustainability, which will bolster a state’s claim to national sovereignty • Reduce the influence of foreign governments on internal politics • Help the young understand what sovereignty means and why we should protect it • Lead to agreement within the country about what kind and degree of national sovereignty and independence it wants • Make the country a responsible and respectful participant of global process

For Further Discussion...

- Do you believe that national sovereignty is essential for the freedom of any modern state? If so, why so? If not, why not? And if not, what do you think the freedom of a state that lacks national sovereignty consists of?
- Do you feel that your country’s national sovereignty is under attack from foreign countries that try to tell you how you should govern yourselves? If so, why so? If not, why not?
- Do you agree that it is necessary for societies in transition to clarify, assert, and defend their national sovereignty in order to have good relationships with the rest of the international community? If so, why so? If not, why not?
- Do you think that people in transitional societies do not always understand the concept of national sovereignty in the modern world? If so, why so? If not, why not? And if so, what do you think the concept of national sovereignty means today?
- Do you agree that claims to national sovereignty cause tensions in the international community when they are used to defend non-democratic values and practices? If so, why so? If not, why not? And if so, do you think it is an indication that the states that defend themselves in this way do not really have national sovereignty?

AIM AT EQUALITY

This possibility would aim at eliminating the income gap between the rich and poor in transitional societies. It would also promote equality before the law, equal opportunities, equal rights, gender equality, equal pay for equal work, and equal conditions for self-expression and self-development.

Do you believe that all people are born with equal rights, and that a society has no right to treat them unequally? Do you think that the fact that all people are born with equal rights is somehow at odds with the fact that they do not all have equal opportunities, especially when it comes to jobs and the distribution of wealth? And do you feel that the government has an obligation to correct these inequalities, even if it means placing unequal obligations and burdens on some of its citizens?

This possibility flows from a belief that all people are born with equal rights, and that the economic opportunities of the poor are limited and skewed by the economic power of the rich. It also flows from a concern that the escalating gap between the incomes of the rich and poor is an undesirable and dangerous phenomenon that may ultimately destabilize society and even lead to violence in the streets. It thus maintains that inequality creates problems in every society and that it is the duty of government to solve these problems, when necessary, by making people more equal. This possibility recognizes that most people generate their income through their jobs; that many people in transitional societies are either unemployed or underemployed; and that this is the main reason why they fall into poverty. It thus maintains that the government should ensure that the poor have well-paying jobs; that it should also ensure that they have basic medical, unemployment, and retirement security; and that it should collect whatever taxes it needs from the rich to do so. Here, making people more equal means providing them with more opportunities. It means rewarding them with equal pay for equal work. It means treating men and women equally. And it means giving us all an equal opportunity to express ourselves. This is what makes us free. And government should intervene whenever necessary to ensure that we are all equals among equals.

One can aim at equality and still recognize that different people may have different abilities. But human potential is often locked in unequal societies, and we should always try to unlock it. We should thus encourage everyone to do the best that they can to achieve the best results that they can achieve. By aiming at equality, we will create more favourable conditions for everyone to realize their potential in a harmonious society with fewer conflicts and less anger.

This possibility maintains that all people are born with equal rights, and that society has no right to discriminate against them.

Other Perspectives

But even if you agree that we should generally aim at equality, you may think that aiming at equality of *incomes* and *wealth* is not the right way to go. You may think that equity means fairness and impartiality, and that we should thus aim at providing equal opportunity, equality before the law, and equal *pay* for equal work—but not at an equal distribution of jobs, income, and wealth. You may think that equality and prosperity are actually at odds with each other, that a society needs to be prosperous in order to progress, that it needs wealthy individuals in order to prosper, and that trying to narrow the gap between rich and poor will impoverish the society as a whole. And you may worry that the poor and middle-class do not understand that they will generally be materially worse off in a society in which there is an equal distribution of wealth than in one in which some people have much more than others. If you share any or all of these beliefs, then you may think that instead of aiming at equality of incomes, we should educate the public to pursue wealth instead of envying it—and to understand that while some people may be wealthier than others in a prosperous society, the poor will generally be better off than they would be otherwise.

Possible Implementations	Possible Effects of These Actions
<p><i>We could—</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Treat all citizens equally regardless of gender, age, ethnicity, economic and social background • Establish minimum life insurance for households under the poverty line • Implement the best practices of the most developed social democracies, such as Sweden • Support the poor who want to develop small businesses • Provide public lawyers for people who are unable to pay for legal services • Regulate the pay scales in all industries so that all workers receive equal pay for equal work within their job descriptions • Create consultation and support centers for the poor and discriminated • Create conditions and institutions for developing a community-based economy • Require primary and secondary school education for everyone • Introduce quotas for women and national minorities in government and public institutions 	<p><i>These actions could—</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make society more equal; create equal opportunities for all; eliminate discrimination • Increase the security of the poor; reduce poverty; stabilize society • Make people happy because they will feel more equal and secure; eventually bankrupt the state • Lead to a flourishing of small businesses; increase prosperity • Provide people with a more equal access to the justice system • Compensate people in the way they deserve; reduce competition among workers; reduce the quality of their work • Protect people; provide the poor with jobs; give people a chance to change their situations • Give people more opportunities to organize joint-enterprises • Provide more opportunities for education and social mobility • Provide opportunities to women and national minorities; promote gender equality; reduce tensions among ethnic groups

For Further Discussion...

- Do you agree that all people are born with equal rights? If so, why so? If not, why not? And if so, do you think that the idea that all people are born with equal rights means that they should all retain equal rights after they are born?
- Do you believe that equality means that a society has no right to discriminate against people *in any way at all*? If so, why so? If not, why not? And if not, what are some of the acceptable reasons for a society to discriminate against people?
- Do you think that opportunity is a right, and that the idea that people are born with equal rights means that they should also have equal opportunities? If so, why so? If not, why not? And if not, is there some other reason why all people should have equal opportunities?
- Do you believe that in order for people to have equal opportunities, they must also have equal distribution of jobs, income, and wealth? If so, why so? If not, why not? And if not, is there some other reason why all people should have equal distribution of jobs, income, and wealth?
- Do you feel people in the real world are really equal with regard to their abilities, skills, energy, and success? And if not, do you believe that governments have an obligation to correct their inequalities, even if it means placing unequal obligations and burdens on those with greater abilities, skills, energy, and success?

EMBRACE FREEDOM

This possibility would encourage transitional societies to adopt the governance principles of free market open society democracies in an attempt to maximize freedom, choice, wealth, happiness, and opportunity for everyone.

Do you think that transitional societies today must choose between becoming free market open society democracies and becoming welfare states? Do you fear that many transitional societies may become welfare states because their governments value power and their citizens value equality and economic security ‘from cradle to grave’ more than they value their freedom? And do you worry that societies that value economic security and equality over freedom may well end up losing them all?

This possibility flows from the beliefs that good governance maximizes the freedom, wealth, and opportunities of individual citizens and their societies instead of the power of the government; that free market open society democracy is the kind of governance that does this best; and that it has produced the freest, the wealthiest, and the most innovative societies the world has ever seen. But this possibility also flows from a concern that transitional societies that must choose between becoming free market open society democracies and becoming welfare states may ultimately choose to become welfare states because welfare states offer people greater personal security while demanding less personal responsibility. There can be very little doubt that there is greater risk, uncertainty, and insecurity in a free market open society democracy than there is in a welfare state. There can also be little doubt that there will be winners and losers whenever people compete. But this possibility maintains that people living in free market open society democracies are better off than people living in welfare states because they are free. It also maintains that welfare states are never free societies, since they are able to provide security and equality for the poor only by forcing the industrious, talented, productive, and creative members of society to support them. Welfare may be comforting to the mediocre, and to those who are unable or unwilling to compete, but it inevitably enslaves people and bankrupts their societies.

Far from pretending that everyone is equal, this possibility recognizes that some people are more industrious, productive, talented, and creative than others—and it maintains that people who work hard and are successful should reap greater rewards than those who are incompetent, unimaginative, lazy, or wasteful. This possibility thus maintains that transitional societies should allow their members to take responsibility for their own lives by giving them the freedom, the right, and the opportunity to profit from the fruits of their own labor instead of forcing them to support the less successful and less responsible members of their society.

This possibility maintains that welfare states are never free societies, since their attempt to provide economic security for the poor only forces the industrious, talented, productive, and creative members of society to support them. Welfare may be comforting for the mediocre, or for those who are unable or unwilling to compete, but it ultimately bankrupts citizens and their societies.

Other Perspectives

But even if you value a free society, you may feel that the market is not always the right way to go. You may think that every society is unique; that adopting a certain economic system does not matter as much to transitional societies as making a smooth and successful transition; and that transitional societies should thus take into account the peculiar features of their countries, including their histories, cultures, traditions, and size when deciding which kind of model to adopt. If you think this way, then you may also think that some societies are better suited for becoming free market open societies, that others would be better off balancing the market with social welfare programs, and that still others would be best off becoming thoroughgoing welfare states—but that they should all try to ensure minimum disruption and smooth transitions whichever model they might choose.

Possible Implementations	Possible Effects of These Actions
<p><i>We could—</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduce governmental laws and regulations restricting business and social activities • Repeal progressive taxation and impose an equal percentage of taxes on everyone • Privatize public firms • Cut the bureaucracy and make it easier for new businesses to enter the market • Impose only the necessary minimum rules on economic and business activities • Institute laws that maximize conditions for individual freedom, choice, and opportunity • Teach in the schools that freedom is the society’s primary value • Make reforms one step at a time • Monitor market conditions to ensure that there is competition • Create institutes to teach lower income people how to implement their business ideas 	<p><i>These actions could—</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Give more freedom to entrepreneurs, the market, and civil society • Increase the money that the middle class and the wealthy have to invest in growth • Result in more efficient firms • Encourage entrepreneurs to invest in new businesses • Create maximum total wealth in society and minimum deadweight loss • Maximize freedom, choice, and opportunity in the society; maximize responsibility too • Help to make freedom the society’s primary value • Give society time to adjust to freedom • Combat monopolization in markets and unfair competition • Give lower income people a chance to realize their business ideas

For Further Discussion...

- Do you think that transitional societies today must choose between adopting the governance principles of free market open society democracies and adopting the governance principles of socialist welfare states? If so, why so? If not, why not? And if not, what are some of the other governance models that transitional societies might choose?
- Do you agree that free market open society democracies offer more freedom to the individual members of their societies than socialist welfare states do? If so, why so? If not, why not?
- Do you think that the fact (assuming that it is a fact) that individuals have more freedom in a free market open society democracy means that the society as a whole has more freedom too? If so, why so? If not, why not? And if not, do you think that forcing the wealthier members of a society to support the poor is actually a necessary condition for a free society?
- Do you believe that people should have the freedom, the right, and the opportunity to profit from the fruits of their own labor instead of being forced by the state to support the less successful members of their society? If so, why so? If not, why not?
- Do you agree that the fact that welfare states must force the wealthier members of their societies to support the poorer members means that they are never free societies? If so, why so? If not, why not? And if so, would you choose economic security and equality over economic freedom if you had to choose between them? If so, why so, if not why not?

ENSURE LEGITIMACY

This possibility would take whatever steps are necessary to ensure both the legitimacy of the government and the widespread perception that it is legitimate.

Do you believe that a government’s legitimacy, or at least the perception of its legitimacy, is a necessary condition for its success? Do you feel that the perception that a government’s power is lawful, and that the government acts lawfully, is essential for its legitimacy? And do you think that governments in transitional societies should do whatever is necessary to ensure the perception that they are legitimate?

This possibility flows from a belief that the general perception that a governmental regime is legitimate is a necessary condition for its success, and from a concern that the legitimacy of regimes in transitional societies is often very questionable. It would thus take whatever steps are necessary to ensure that the governments of transitional societies are both legitimate and perceived to be legitimate. This possibility recognizes that the legality of a government’s power and the actions it takes may play a crucial role in creating the perception of its legitimacy, especially in societies whose laws may suddenly change, and it would try to ensure that governments conduct all of their business according to well known laws and rules. It also recognizes that the political, economic, and social conditions within a society can change any moment, and that the society’s perception that its government is legitimate can change with them. Finally, it recognizes that only governments that are elected through transparent processes that are accepted by the people will be seen as legitimate; that transparent and fair elections can give people the chance to elect the governments they desire; that people will generally accept a government as legitimate, no matter how poorly it may perform, if they believe that they had a voice in selecting it; and that the need for legitimacy may require governments to be transparent and accountable. This possibility would thus direct governments to take every precaution to never violate the law. Government cannot be legitimate if it is not legal. And if a government acts according to law, and does nothing to violate the rule of law, we can believe in its legitimacy.

Ensuring legitimacy and the rule of law can unite people and foster international relations. But it will require the governments of transitional societies to clarify what is and is not lawful in those societies, and to do so in a way that does not lead their citizens to question their legitimacy. This, in turn, will probably require them to pass laws balancing the competing beliefs, interests, goals, and rights of the different political groups within the society, and to create meaningful opportunities for all minority groups to be heard. Balancing the beliefs, interests, goals, and rights of the majority and minority groups in a society is important for the legitimacy of its government, because a society can legitimately allow political majorities to govern according to their will only if it simultaneously prevents them from oppressing minority groups.

This possibility recognizes that the political, economic, and social conditions within a society can change any moment, and that the society’s perception that its government is legitimate can change with them.

Other Perspectives

But even if you agree that a government must be lawful in order to be legitimate, you may think that it will not be enough to ensure its legitimacy. You may feel that questions about a government’s legitimacy become important only when people begin to raise them, that people will generally not question the legitimacy of their government if things are going well, and that the primary reason why people typically question their government’s legitimacy is that it is doing something that threatens their peace, prosperity, and happiness. If you think this way, then you may also think that, in addition to being lawful, governments that want to be regarded as legitimate should also act in the interests of their societies as a whole, which may not always coincide to the interests of any specific individual or group, and beware of actions that threaten the peace, prosperity, and happiness of their members.

Possible Implementations

We could—

- Create clear rules to monitor governments, and follow them
- Conduct free, fair, and transparent elections on a regular basis according to the rule of law
- Create and enforce a system of checks and balances
- Encourage the development of a free, fair, and responsible mass media
- Give local political opposition groups and international non-governmental organizations access to whatever government information they want
- Have government officials repeat as often as possible that their fundamental priority is to follow the rule of law
- Regularly broadcast news reports in the mass media about how and why the government is legitimate
- Monitor and measure public opinion about the government’s legitimacy
- Explain to the people, and especially to the young, why the existing political system is the best for their society
- Focus on providing good government services and making the big reforms that transitional societies need to make

Possible Effects of These Actions

These actions could—

- Make governments more accountable to the people; increase trust in the government
- Strengthen the legitimacy of government at home and in the international community
- Help to ensure that no person or branch of government assumes too much power
- Result in more accurate news coverage, and more accountable governments
- Persuade the world that the government has nothing to hide; build trust in the legitimacy of the government; persuade people that the government is illegitimate after all
- Help convince people that their government is legitimate; help create a culture of legitimacy among civil servants and politicians
- Lead people to believe that their government is legitimate; lead to better informed citizens; undermine their ability to think critically
- Give us a better understanding of the public’s perception of legitimacy
- Help to develop the perception that the government is legitimate; make some citizens more skeptical of the government’s legitimacy
- Keep citizens satisfied with the government’s performance; give no reason to citizens to question their government’s legitimacy

For Further Discussion...

- Do you believe that a government’s legitimacy, or at least the perception of its legitimacy, is a necessary condition for its success? If so, why so? If not, why not?
- Do you feel that the perception that a government’s power is lawful, and that it acts lawfully, is essential for its legitimacy? If so, why so? If not, why not? And if not, what do you think is essential?
- Do you think that people are generally willing to accept the legitimacy of their government so long as it provides them with the public services that they need and want? If so, why so? If not, why not?
- Do you believe that ensuring the legitimacy of their governments is more important for transitional societies than it is for established societies? If so, why so? If not, why not? And if so, what can a transitional society do to ensure that its government is really legitimate?
- Do you believe that your own government is legitimate? If so, why so? If not, why not? And in either case, what do you think would happen if most people in your society believed that it is illegitimate?

FORGE A CONSENSUS

This possibility would support a transitional society's efforts to forge a national consensus among its members regarding their national priorities in an effort to maintain domestic peace and stability.

Do you believe that it is important for everyone in a society to agree about the society's fundamental national priorities? Do you think that the governments of transitional societies should do whatever they possibly can to forge a consensus about national priorities among their citizens? And do you fear that a failure to do so could result in social unrest and even violence in the streets?

This possibility flows from the beliefs that domestic peace and stability should be a priority for any society, and that a general consensus among its members about their basic national priorities can help to ensure peace and stability. But it also flows from concerns that forging a consensus about an issue is easier said than done, and that transitional societies may find it difficult to maintain domestic peace and stability among their members while they are in the process of making decisions about fundamental priorities. This possibility recognizes that people often have different ideas about the same issue, especially when it pertains to fundamental priorities; and that it is difficult to prioritize any one issue over another without making some group unhappy. Some opinions may be in the majority and others in the minority. But this possibility recognizes that transitional societies need to consider the opinions of all of their members in order to keep peace and stability. It would thus insist that all of their members participate in the decision-making process about their society's national priorities, if only by voting in elections, and that no decision be made unless they reach a consensus about it. This possibility realizes that it may be impossible to reach a consensus in which literally everyone agrees, and that transitional societies may not always have the luxury of not making a decision. But it is ready to base a decision upon the preferences of the broad majority, so long as it does not violate the rights of minorities and human rights.

Far from insisting on universal agreement, this possibility would view agreement among the broad majority of voters as a sufficient indication that there is a consensus of opinion within the society.

This possibility flows from the belief that a general consensus among its members about their basic national priorities can help to ensure peace and stability—and from a concern that forging a consensus about an issue is easier said than done.

Other Perspectives

But even if you want to maintain domestic peace and stability, you may think that trying to form a consensus about national priorities is not the best way to do it. You may think that forging a consensus may take too much time, especially in times of crisis, where action is necessary and every moment is precious. Or you may think that the minorities in a country could block any and every decision, and in that way cause instability, if we require that decisions be made by consensus. Or you may think that people differ not only with regard to national priorities, but also with regard to their capabilities; that some people have more knowledge and experience than others; that they are thus better qualified to make rational policy decisions than others; and that a small group of such people would produce better results for the benefit of the whole society if it delegates its decision-making power to them. If you share any or all of these beliefs, then you may think that instead of trying to forge a national consensus about national priorities, transitional societies should choose a small group of citizens who are more experienced, knowledgeable, and, in a word, qualified than most citizens, to make decisions about their national priorities.

Possible Implementations

We could—

- Revise all procedures for making public policy decisions so that they are consensus based
- Review all rules and regulations that govern public life and revise any of them that were not approved by general consensus
- Give competing political parties and interest groups in a society free and equal access to mass media so they can advocate their views
- Encourage private discussions about the society’s national priorities among leaders of different political parties and interest groups
- Broadcast descriptions of the society’s national priorities on TV as often as possible, using catchy slogans, sentimental music, and patriotic pictures
- Weave the society’s national priorities into the thematic content of different forms of popular entertainment
- Promote a culture of team work, cooperation, and collaboration at all levels of society
- Agree to accept the judgment of the UN to resolve disagreements
- Pay people to agree with your views
- Threaten people who disagree with you with retribution

Possible Effects of These Actions

These actions could—

- Ensure general agreement for all public policy decisions; result in bad policy decisions
- Result in fewer rules and regulations; expand governmental procedures and bureaucracies as people try to get consensus for their views
- Promote a discussion among different political parties and interest groups; help them to reach mutual understanding and agreement
- Promote good will and trust amongst the leaders; eventually lead to general agreement about national priorities among the leaders
- Forge a consensus among the general public about national priorities; reduce the general public’s capacity for critical thinking; result in brainwashing
- Reach a larger audience; strengthen national values and identity; support artists and the arts; result in brainwashing
- Lead to a society that values consensus and is ready and able to reach agreement
- Forfeit the nation’s sovereignty to the international community
- Forge a consensus; foster corruption
- Undermine the harmony and solidarity that is supposed to come from consensus

For Further Discussion...

- Do you think that it is actually desirable for everyone in a society to agree about its national priorities? If so, why so? If not, why not?
- Do you think that the governments of transitional societies, or of any society, should do literally whatever they can to forge a consensus among their citizens about the fundamental priorities of the nation? If so, why so? If not, why not?
- Do you think that delegating a society’s decisions about its national priorities to a small group of people who are more knowledgeable, experienced, and qualified than most citizens is consistent with the aim of forging a consensus? If so, why so? If not, why not?
- Do you believe that a society needs to consider the opinions of all of its members in order to keep peace and stability? If so, why so? If not, why not?
- Do you think that it is more important for the members of a society to agree about its national priorities, or for them to agree to tolerate their disagreement? And why?

NURTURE INTEGRITY TO FIGHT CORRUPTION

This possibility would try to inculcate and develop a sense of integrity in citizens and groups so that they would regard corruption as a stain on their honor. It would aim at justice, equality, and the eradication of bribery, nepotism, and other corrupt practices. And it would institute processes that ensure merit-based governance at all levels.

Do you believe that your society has lost its integrity because it tolerates corrupt practices? Do you fear that corruption is so widespread and tacitly accepted in your society that it permeates every part of it? And do you feel that people in your society do not have a clear idea about what ‘corruption’ even means?

This possibility flows from a belief that corrupt practices will eventually undermine a society, and from a concern that they are more often the rule in transitional societies than the exception. Corruption is dishonesty, and it is dangerous because it breaks down the trust within a society. It also breaks down social interaction so that government and social institutions do not work. It causes social chaos and economic inefficiency. People make fewer investments, fewer economic activities take place, and the economy eventually stops—all because of a lack of trust. Democracy, and indeed society itself, cannot function for very long when there is corruption. Social interaction becomes impossible in corrupt societies because people lack basic honesty and trust. People can no longer trust their government. And their lack of trust eventually causes everything to fall apart. People do not pay their taxes because they do not believe the government will spend their money properly. They instead pay bribes to get things done. And the lack of tax revenues undermines government’s ability to provide social services. Corruption also undermines the morality of all of the people in the country. It directly undermines equality by favoring some people, the corrupt, over others. And it tends to hinder international investments and economic growth as foreign investors who cannot trust the country’s laws and judicial system make investments elsewhere. Since corruption is dishonesty, this possibility maintains that the only way to eradicate it is to develop a sense of integrity, honesty, and justice in the society.

Corruption is a special threat to the success of transitional societies because it puts obstacles in the path of the kind of quality work and merit-based progress they need to stand on their own. It discourages people from taking the risks that are necessary for innovation and from investing the effort that it is necessary to do quality work by leading them to believe that their success or failure will almost always have more to do with whom they pay off than how well they perform. It thus impedes any attempt on the part of the state or the private sector to develop new ideas and move them forward.

This possibility flows from a belief that corrupt practices will eventually undermine a society, and from a concern that they are more often the rule in transitional societies than the exception.

Other Perspectives

But even if you do not like corruption, you may think that it is a tolerable cultural phenomenon in certain societies and that it is useful for bypassing frustrating bureaucratic obstacles that waste time and resources. You may think that an employer should always be able to hire his own friends and relatives—and that if somebody wants better or faster services, then he should be allowed to pay more for them than those who do not want them. Or you may think that human beings are not angels, that corruption exists in all societies, that it even permeates established democracies in the West, that you can no more eradicate it than you can eradicate human nature, and that you would be a fool to even try. If you share any or all of these beliefs, then you might think that it would be much better to tolerate petty corruption—or perhaps even to legalize it—so that people can bypass the government’s maze of bureaucratic rules and regulations, get what they need when they need it, and solve their problems quickly and effectively.

Possible Implementations

We could—

- Teach people what corruption is, how it harms their state and society, and why they should regard it as a stain on their honor
- Use cultural and religious values to nurture a sense of integrity among citizens
- Establish and empower independent anti-corruption institutes and agencies to oversee and control government institutions
- Ensure transparency and accountability in anti-corruption policies and state agencies
- Enforce strict laws punishing corruption
- Deregulate economic, political, and social systems
- Give less power to public servants
- Rotate public servants frequently by moving them to new positions and different locations
- Reward integrity
- Legalize practices that people currently regard as corrupt, such as paying extra for faster service, but think are both tolerable and perhaps even necessary for a society to run smoothly

Possible Effects of These Actions

These actions could—

- Help to nurture a sense of integrity and honor within the society; educate people about the harms of corruption; reduce corruption
- Create the moral conditions for a society’s intolerance of corruption
- Enable agencies to better monitor and control government institutions for corruption; reduce corruption in government institutions
- Result in more effective monitoring and evaluation of anti-corruption policy programs
- Decrease corruption; fill the prisons
- Eliminate possibilities for bribing corrupt regulators
- Eliminate incentives for bribing them
- Reduce corruption and the effectiveness of public servants
- Promote legal and political responsibility
- Result in people paying official fees, instead of bribes, for faster service from public servants; create a market in which private agents can compete in providing government services; help government to better serve our needs

For Further Discussion...

- Do you believe that corruption is so prevalent in transitional societies because the members of transitional societies lack integrity, are dishonest, and have no sense of honor? If so, why so? If not, why not? And if not, why do you think it is so prevalent?
- Some people think that, far from undermining trust within a society, corruption actually greases the wheels of economic growth, development, and bureaucracy by eliminating bottlenecks and reducing transaction costs. Do you think that this is true? If so, why so? If not, why not? And if so, why do you think so many people think that corruption is bad?
- Do you believe that giving a small gift to a public servant to show your appreciation for his or her service is a bribe, or just a sign of good upbringing? And if you think that it is just a sign of good upbringing, where do you think corruption begins and ends?
- Some people think that giving a job to a relative or a friend instead of a more qualified stranger is not so much corruption as good business practice. Do you agree? If so, why so? If not, why not? And if so, why do you think so many people regard it as a form of corruption?
- Do you agree that corruption ultimately undermines a society by breaking down trust among its members? If so, why so? If not, why not? And if so, is it the action itself that does the damage, or simply the fact that it breaks the law?

This possibility recognizes political, economic, and social change as a necessary part of any society's growth and development. It would thus encourage transitional societies to change their political, economic, and social systems to ensure that those societies do not stagnate.

Do you believe that change is scary and that people are often reluctant to change their ways unless they are forced to do so? Do you think that it is difficult to foresee, let alone calculate, all of the possible consequences of a change, and that it would be foolish even to try? And do you feel that the one sure way to bring about a transition in your society is to stop talking about what you want to do, and to just do it instead?

This possibility flows from the belief that transitional societies need to make fundamental changes in order to compete in the contemporary world, and from a concern that their reluctance to change may ultimately result in their stagnation. It seems clear that social, political, and economic change can occur in different ways, ranging from small-scale reforms that address a society's most urgent and pressing social needs to major radical reforms that transform the society's entire social, political, and economic system. It also seems clear that different societies may require the kinds of reforms that best suit their own particular values, beliefs, goals, cultures, histories, and traditions. This possibility recognizes that change can be frightening, that 'new' does not necessarily mean 'good', and that not all changes make life better. But it also maintains that transitional societies can no longer choose not to change if they hope to survive. It would thus try to make change as painless as possible by giving the members of their societies a voice in both the direction of the change and the speed at which it takes place, and by compensating any of them who suffer from it. It would, in this way, try to balance the economic, social, and political costs and benefits of change. But it would insist that transitional societies must change if they want to survive and flourish in the modern world—and it would encourage their governments to 'just do it' if the members of their societies cannot agree with each other about what they should do.

Far from pursuing change for its own sake, this possibility sees it as a necessary prerequisite for the success of transitional societies in the 21st century. It thus maintains that the time is past for just talking about it, and that the time has come to just do it.

It seems clear that social, political, and economic change can occur in different ways, ranging from small-scale reforms that address a society's most urgent and pressing social needs to major radical reforms that transform the society's entire social, political, and economic system. It also seems clear that different societies may require the kinds of reforms that best suit their own particular values, beliefs, goals, cultures, histories, and traditions. This possibility recognizes that change can be frightening, that 'new' does not necessarily mean 'good', and that not all changes make life better. But it also maintains that transitional societies can no longer choose not to change if they hope to survive.

Other Perspectives

But even if you agree that change is necessary for development, you still may think that it is not always the right way to go. You may fear that you can easily lose yourself chasing a dream, and that there is no need to sacrifice your whole way of life for the sake of change. You may think that change may always have unintended consequences, and that some of them may be undesirable, costly, and even disastrous. Or you may simply be tired of failed social engineering experiments, and think we should always be careful to look two or three times before we leap in order to achieve the goals we really want. If you share any or all of these concerns, then you may think that we should take a much more cautious approach to change, and that, instead of just doing it, we should always weigh the costs and benefits of any proposed change and not make any change whose costs seem to outweigh its benefits.

Possible Implementations

We could—

- Undertake all social, political, and economic changes very rapidly
- Undertake all changes in a deliberate and cautious step by step manner
- Adopt a best practices approach that bases all future changes on what has worked in the past
- Bring more young people into the government and political life
- Run media ads saying that change is good
- Run television shows and movies that portray change makers as brave, courageous, and bold—and those who try to resist it as wimps who never succeed
- Insist that the government is responsible for compensating those who suffer the most from the changes that it introduces
- Give the people a voice and a vote in deciding the direction and level of change, and also the speed at which it takes place
- Base all decisions about economic and political change on the democratic will of the people
- Elect a strong man and give him absolute power to make changes

Possible Effects of These Actions

These actions could—

- Prevent a painful situation from lasting too long; lead to some serious mistakes
- Allow people to accustom themselves to the idea of change before it actually happens
- Help societies to adopt reforms that work; impede change if nothing has actually worked
- Give fresh eyes and a greater chance for social, economic, and political change
- Help to make people desire change
- Help to implant the idea that change is heroic and adventurous, and that trying to resist it is cowardly and futile, in the mind of the general public
- Compensate people for any damages resulting from change; make it easier for society to adopt the changes
- Encourage people to think about how they could have better lives and a better society; lead to more successful reforms
- Lead to no real economic and political change at all if the people cannot agree
- Lead to major changes; result in a major dictatorship

For Further Discussion...

- Do you agree that social, political, and economic change is a necessary prerequisite for the success of transitional societies in the 21st century? If so, why so? If not, why not? And if so, why do you think that so many transitional societies seem reluctant to change?
- Do you think that the fear of change that so many people seem to have is irrational? If so, why so? If not, why not? And if not, why do you think so many people seem to be afraid of it?
- Do you believe that change always brings new opportunities? If so, why so? If not, why not? And if not, where do new opportunities come from?
- Do you agree that transitional societies can no longer choose not to change their social, political, and economic systems? If so, why so? If not, why not? And if so, do you think that they should even change the parts of those systems that seem to be working? And why?
- Do you think that it would be foolish for transitional societies to try to predict all of the possible consequences of the changes that they are thinking about making? If so, why so? If not, why not? And if so, what do you think they should be thinking about when they think about whether and how they should change their social, political, and economic systems?

ON CONTRASTS AND CHOICES

AMONG THE POSSIBILITIES

There are many contrasts among our nine conceptual possibilities, and many choices that you would have to make in order to adopt any of them. Some of these contrasts and choices pertain to the social, political, and economic models that transitional societies might adopt. Others pertain to the relationships between national sovereignty, traditional values, societal identity, freedom, and democracy. Still others pertain to the actions that the governments of transitional societies should take in order to be successful. And still others pertain to the various fears that the members of transitional societies might have about the process of change itself. We will not attempt to describe all of the differences that exist between these nine possibilities and all of the choices that they might call upon you to make. But a few examples of the more salient ones might help you to recognize others, and to better understand the possibilities that we have described and the need to choose among them.

Just Do It and Preserve Your Values and Identity—But Build a Nation Too proceed from diametrically opposed attitudes toward change. **Just Do It** insists that transitional societies have no real option but to change their social, political, and economic systems, as well as their underlying values and identities, if they want to survive and succeed in the modern world. It thus encourages such societies to stop thinking and rethinking the possible ways to change, and to just do it instead. **Preserve Your Values and Identity—But Build a Nation Too**, on the other hand, warns against the many forces that might lead transitional societies to abandon their traditional values and identities in their efforts to build and rebuild their nations, and it advises them to hold on to their traditional values and identities—and also to the traditional values and identities of the different ethnic, tribal, and religious sub-groups in their societies—while trying to build the values and identity of a nation. These two conceptual possibilities are moving in opposite directions, and it is difficult to see how you can consistently follow both of them at once. You must, instead, choose between them.

In a similar way, Aim at Equality and Embrace Freedom give diametrically opposed answers to the question ‘*Should transitional societies aim at becoming welfare states or free market open societies?*’ **Aim at Equality** says that we are all born with equal rights; that the social, political, and economic power of the rich limits the social, political, and economic opportunities of the poor; and that the escalating gap between rich and poor is an undesirable and dangerous phenomenon that may destabilize society and ultimately lead to violence in the streets. This possibility would thus aim at promoting social, political, and economic equality across the board. But **Embrace Freedom** says that some people are more industrious, talented, productive, and creative than others; that people should have the freedom, the right, and the opportunity to profit from the fruits of their own labor instead of being forced by the state to support the less successful members of their society; and that there is no reason why people who work hard and are successful should not reap greater rewards than those who are incompetent, unimaginative, lazy, or wasteful. You may have concepts of freedom and equality—of what they mean, and what they do and do not entail—that differ from the ones that inspire these possibilities. But it is difficult to see how you could consistently adopt *these* two conceptual possibilities about freedom and equality at once. You must, once again, choose between them.

Build Your Own Democracy and Protect Your National Sovereignty are not diametrically opposed to each other. But they address different concerns and offer different ideas about what transitional societies might do to ensure that their national sovereignty, traditional values, identities, and freedom, survive the transition. Both of them recognize that ‘new’ does not mean ‘good’ and that a transitional society may all too easily lose its freedom and its distinctive identity during the transition. And both of them advise transitional societies to take care in making social and political changes in order to prevent this from happening.

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Build Your Own Democracy says that transitional societies should not blindly import governance models from abroad, but should instead develop and adopt a system of democracy that suits their societies' own specific needs—even if it is less democratic than some might like. **Protect Your National Sovereignty**, in the spirit of 'good fences make good neighbors', says that transitional societies should be very clear about where they think their governance boundaries begin and end if they want to ensure their own freedom and independence, and at the same time maintain good relationships with other countries. These possibilities are moving along the same lines and it is possible to adopt them both at once. But they are also saying very different things. People may easily agree with one while opposing the other, or disagree about whether they should adopt them both, or about which of the two should take priority.

The same holds true for **Ensure Legitimacy**, **Nurture Integrity To Fight Corruption**, and **Forge a Consensus**. They each suggest different things that governments of transitional societies might do in order to ensure their own success. **Ensure Legitimacy** says that governments should be careful always to act in ways that are both legal and perceived to be legal if they want to succeed. **Nurture Integrity To Fight Corruption** says that they should try to eliminate all corrupt practices. And **Forge a Consensus** says they should try to get national agreement about national priorities. These possibilities are clearly consistent with each other. But they also clearly emphasize different things.

Finally, we should point out that each of our conceptual possibilities can always be regarded as presenting at least two possible policy choices. For you might choose to accept it *or* to reject it—*or* to modify it in some way to make it acceptable. We have, for this reason, included a section in the description of each conceptual possibility called 'Other Perspectives', which cites reasons why you or other people might oppose it, and suggests some other policy possibilities that you might think are better suited to your own governance concerns if you do.

These are just a few of the ways in which the possibilities in this report contrast with each other. There are, of course, also numerous ways in which they overlap. But we hope that pointing out some of their more salient differences will assure you that they are not planks in a unified political platform for public policy pertaining to the future of governance in transitional societies. We also hope that you will enjoy discussing them with your families, friends, and neighbors. And we hope that thinking about them will enhance your own ideas about the future of governance in transitional societies.

An Open Invitation To Further Discussion & Interactivity

We hope that you will use this report to carry forward the discussion begun by our project participants.

We have developed a citizen discussion process that may be useful for groups interested in discussing the ideas presented in our reports or in discussing matters of public interest more generally. We have also developed facilitation and discussion guidebooks to assist in the planning and conduct of these discussions. These materials, as well as copies of this and other Interactivity Foundation reports, may be downloaded from our website (listed below). You can obtain additional printed copies of any of our publications (at no cost) by sending us a request that briefly indicates their intended use.

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Finally, we welcome your comments, ideas, and other feedback about this report, its possibilities, any of our publications, or our discussion processes.

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