

GLOBAL POLITICS

The President of the Republic of Belarus A. Lukashenko has on a number of occasions clearly stated that Belarus is not a global power and, thus, harbors no global ambitions. Notwithstanding, Belarus has always sought to make positive contribution to the evolution of global politics. Up to date, our key input in that field is still associated with the President's initiative, which he unveiled in his statement at the United Nations summit in New York in September 2005. The initiative came to be known under the title of recognition of the diversity of ways towards progressive development.

What was the initiative about? In a nutshell, the President's initiative provided a response to the negative dynamics that began to dominate world politics since the late 1990s. It was the time when the United States of America along with its allies, apparently emboldened by a "victory" in the Cold War, embarked on an ambitious policy, which, by the way, ran in violation of international law, of regime change in some countries that were not to the US' liking.

By means of his initiative the President essentially said that a Western-style uniformity around the globe that the United States with its allies sought to achieve was not a way forward for the world, because the world has always been diverse and people in various countries would resist any attempt to impose on them any form of uniformity that has been alien to their historically constructed ways of life. Therefore, the way for the world to progress in its development was through its diversity, through recognition and promotion of that diversity.

Unlike some other international initiatives of Belarus, this one was not limited to a set of specific targets or timeframes. As conceived, it was a conceptual initiative that provided an overarching timeless guidance to the foreign service of Belarus. Since its promulgation Belarusian diplomats did their best to advance the initiative internationally, mainly by reflecting it in some outcome documents adopted at major international events. However, it fell to V. Makei to furnish an elaborate narrative of the initiative, which the Minister presented in his very large academic essay titled "Emerging global system: embracing Diversity-Politik and partnerships"² that was published in the "European Journal of Management and Public Policy" in 2012.

What strikes most people once they look at the article is a catchy play of words in the title. Indeed, many readers surely wonder about the meaning the author imputes to his term of "Diversity-Politik", which very much reminds everyone of the famous term of "Realpolitik" used by practitioners in international relations since the times of O. von Bismarck. It should become clear to everyone who finished reading the piece that the play of words was deliberate. What V. Makei surely wanted thus

to hint at was that Realpolitik defined global politics in the past, whereas Diversity-Politik must steer world politics in the future.

The article is both a historical and theoretical study, as it presents a journey into history through the lens of theories of international relations. The author contends that it was primarily the two theories of international relations – realism and liberalism – that helped to account for much of what happened in global politics over a past few centuries. V. Makei's point of departure is the Westphalian treaties of 1648 that essentially established the modern system of states.

The minister then proceeds to meticulously demonstrate that world politics from mid-17th century right up to the end of the Cold War was driven by policies associated with the realist theoretical school, whereas in a far shorter period of a couple of decades at the turn of the current millennium it was guided by policies inspired by the liberal theory with its key component of a democratic peace.

V. Makei's next key point is that the Westphalian system was a concentrated system with concentrated actors and threats, whereas today's world is in the process of becoming a "diffused" system with "diffused" actors and threats. In his view, both realism and liberalism in their ongoing discourse overlooked this paradigm shift in international relations. As a result, the policies that both theories recommend are wrong. In this regard, he states the following vital argument: "The "diffused" threats clearly indicate one thing. If states continue with their traditional foreign policy tools like balancing, wars, sanctions, regime change, "democracy" promotion and the like, mankind is likely to be ultimately overrun by multiple threats and modern "barbarians" (by whom he means non-state actors)"³.

According to V. Makei, the emerging world needs a different set of instruments. He thinks the system of diverse actors, values, and threats demands policies that recognise and respond to its increasingly diverse nature. Hence comes his suggestion to call such a set of policies as Diversity-Politik. He explains that in contrast to Realpolitik that sought to pursue national interests at the expense of others in a zero-sum game, Diversity-Politik should be geared towards the pursuit of such interests in a win-win manner.

The Minister goes on to suggest that the concept should be realised through the instrument of global partnerships. He specifies that a partnership is a new form of co-operation in terms of both its purpose and its membership. It is a particular form best suited for managing the "diffused" world. Partnerships are structures that, in most cases, should include all positive stakeholders of today's world – countries, international

²Makei V. V. Emerging global system: embracing Diversity-Politik and partnerships // J. Manag. Public Policy. 2012. Vol. 12, No. 2. P. 49–70.

³Ibid.

organisations, civil society, academic community, private sector, etc. The ordering principle of partnerships goes beyond shared ideas and interests to embrace also the recognition of the world's growing diversity.

Surely, in anticipating a question on how partnerships can be established and put into operation, V. Makei proposes to contemplate the process as evolutionary. He advances the point that it would be harder to establish global partnerships on security issues insofar as states far too often think in terms of parochial national interests, but much easier to set up partnerships in non-security areas providing a specific example of the Global partnership against trafficking in persons as an effectively functioning entity in which Belarus assumes a great deal of leadership.

What is also striking about this article is V. Makei's own realism and foresight, which he displayed there. Indeed, he sounds very realistic about his ambitious vision saying in effect that "implementing the ideas of Diversity-Politik and partnerships certainly requires a revolution in the minds of today's politicians"⁴. Likewise, with the benefit of hindsight we can say today that some of his musings proved truly prophetic indeed: "Diversity in itself is not a cause for conflict, but may result in one under certain circumstances. The real culprit in that case would be those who ignore the diversity and its importance, and continue to believe that only they possess the truth of governance and try to foist it on others"⁵.

The Minister's article triggered a host of activities by the foreign service of Belarus to advance the idea of Diversity-Politik by means of establishing thematic global partnerships. As mentioned above, Belarus has already been in the vanguard of a partnership against human trafficking, but we came up with proposals to set up partnerships in other areas like, among others, energy, youth, traditional family values, middle-income countries, Chernobyl. What is more, during the negotiations of the future 2030 sustainable development agenda Belarus consistently promoted the line that the future agenda should be implemented by means of thematic global partnerships.

That is exactly how the 2030 agenda has been implemented since 2015 worldwide. Yet, a global partnership was not established in one particular and the most vital area, which V. Makei foresaw as the most problematic – the realm of international security. As a result, since the mid-past decade global politics entered a downward spiral that ultimately brought about a conflict in Ukraine.

It was in the context of that conflict that V. Makei wrote another comprehensive piece on global politics titled "Liberal international order (LIO): can it be saved in today's non-hegemonic world?"⁶, which was published in "Russia in Global Affairs" in November 2022, just a few days before the author's sudden death.

In the article's introductory chapter the Minister makes it clear why he decided to undertake the effort at all. It was because the conflict in Ukraine, even more so than some previous events, raised in the global discourse the issue of the current international order's sustainability. Like in his article on the topic of diversity, in the latest one V. Makei demonstrates the same level of historical conceptualisation through which he seeks to arrive at conclusions and recommendations that would be pertinent for today.

Curiously, the author approaches the work lying ahead of him with some degree of sarcasm when he notes that as the debate about the LIO pits the so-called democracies against autocracies, he makes a humble attempt to contribute to the debate from the perspective of an "autocratic" state insofar as Belarus, which Minister of foreign affairs the author is, has the "honour" of being assigned to this group by the West.

V. Makei begins by challenging the conventional wisdom about the LIO's origin. His point is that in "technical" terms the order indeed was launched in the wake of World War II, but in "functional" terms it traces its roots to deeper times in the past. He supports this argument with a reference to the concept of the dual revolution invented by British critical historian E. Hobsbawm in his "The age of revolution" (1962), by which the British writer meant the British Industrial Revolution that occurred at the end of the 18th century and the French Revolution of 1789.

V. Makei's main point is that the key elements that define today's LIO – liberalism, free trade and democracy – have been produced by the dual revolution at the turn of the 18th and 19th centuries. The Minister argues further that the dual revolution produced the two separate tracks – economic and political – which a century and a half later found their reflection in the LIO. V. Makei contends that the problem with the LIO lies precisely in its dual nature, which current political commentators scrutinising the LIO topic overlook.

The Minister goes on that the LIO's real problem is with its "democratic" track, because Western countries seek to impose their specific political domestic form of governance, that is, "democracy", on the rest of the world. V. Makei explains this trend by the West's adherence to the democratic peace theory.

V. Makei had previously touched on the theory in his essay on diversity. In the current piece he provides a more comprehensive narrative on how the theory is realised in practice. In particular, he contends that the democratic peace became a key tool in the US foreign policy arsenal, while its implementation serves only to polarise the world.

Interestingly, in an effort to form his own conclusions about the future prospects for the LIO the author

⁴Makei V. V. Emerging global system: embracing Diversity-Politik and partnerships // J. Manag. Public Policy. 2012. Vol. 12, No. 2. P. 70.

⁵Ibid.

⁶Makei V. V. Liberal international order: can it be saved in today's non-hegemonic world [Electronic resource]. URL: <https://eng.globalaffairs.ru/articles/liberal-international-order/> (date of access: 14.06.2023).

makes reference to A. Gramsci's hegemony theory. He states that the problem with the LIO is structural, because, as history shows, world orders (or rather regional orders if viewed in the historical perspective) thrived when they were underpinned by hegemonic states.

V. Makei's point is that today's discourse on the order takes place at a post-hegemonic time. Thus, those who keep insisting on the possibility of saving the order, which was relevant for a short-lived liberal hegemonic era in the 1990s and the first decade of the 21st century, miss the point that a diverse world requires a new kind of international order. Therefore, he answers the question he himself posed in the title of his essay with the following sentence: "The liberal international order as a whole phenomenon cannot be saved for the simple reason that it does not reflect the fact of the world's diversity"⁷.

In accordance with his usual way of writing essays V. Makei cannot do without suggestions. So, he argues that two options are possible. First, the world can be structured along regional orders as used to be the case throughout much of history. Second, a truly global order, even in the absence of a global hegemon, is also possible. The way to proceed is to cultivate such an order, not to impose it. V. Makei wraps up with the idea to draft in the United Nations "a Charter for the World's Diversity in the XXI Century whereby all Member States in a concerted manner would be able to set out some key principles for governing international life in a non-hegemonic and very diverse world"⁸.

All in all, V. Makei's last essay can be fairly viewed as another major contribution to the elaboration and implementation of the President's 2005 initiative on the diversity of ways towards progressive development.

It was not just by means of his academic articles that Minister Makei expressed his views on developments in global politics. This topic has always been paramount in his consideration when the Minister addressed the United Nations General Assembly every year during his tenure. In his last such statement in September 2022, the Minister once again dwelt much on global politics, but admitted that establishing a fair multipolar world requires a "Copernican" paradigm shift in the minds of the West's political mainstream.

Summing up, Minister Makei took the President's initiative on diversity as a "guiding star" for the Belarusian foreign service in all its approaches to global politics. The Minister provided a sophisticated narrative for the initiative in his two large essays on diversity and the LIO. Furthermore, V. Makei came up with many specific proposals which realisation would make the world "safe for diversity", as he himself put in the very end of his article on diversity.

These proposals are bound to be in great demand sooner or later if the world is to steer away from the current turmoil. This specific intellectual legacy of V. Makei will then be properly credited by everyone involved in international relations.

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HUMAN RIGHTS

Minister Makei used to say that when he became Minister of foreign affairs of the Republic Belarus in 2012 he had at once grasped that few issues on the global agenda had been as divisive as human rights while at the same time few matters were growing so much in importance worldwide as human rights. Naturally, he was keen to get to the bottom of this purported paradox, especially given the fact that since 2011 the United Nations Human Rights Council began adopting on an annual basis a resolution on the situation of human rights in Belarus.

Like to many other people, the situation with this resolution appeared extremely odd to the Minister. Indeed, on the one hand, anti-Belarus resolutions on human rights were not something new, as the United Nations Human Rights Commission used to adopt such documents in the first half of the previous decade. On the other hand, as part of the reform package in the context of the forthcoming United Nations summit in September 2005, the UN Human Rights Commission was closed down on the grounds that it

was perceived by an overwhelming majority of UN member states as a highly polarised and politicised entity. Therefore, the UN Human Rights Council, which replaced the mentioned commission and came into being in 2006, ostensibly abandoned the practice of politicised country-specific resolutions in favour of relying on the mechanism of the Universal periodic reviews that should be applied to all countries.

Armed with this background knowledge, V. Makei asked a natural question: "What had happened in Belarus in terms of human rights over the past 6–7 years that forced the UN Human Rights Council to revert to the discredited practice of country-specific resolutions of the now defunct commission". The answer was: "Nothing had happened". On the contrary, Belarus has been making steady progress in all dimensions of its internal development. So, the issue of human rights has been clearly politicised by Western countries. But what explained that inclination towards politicisation and what could be done to stop the practice?

⁷ Makei V. V. Liberal international order: can it be saved in today's non-hegemonic world [Electronic resource]. URL: <https://eng.globalaffairs.ru/articles/liberal-international-order/> (date of access: 14.06.2023).

⁸ Ibid.

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Minister Makei provided crystal-clear answers to these and other similar questions in his large academic essay titled "Human rights: what and who made them divide the world?"¹⁰ that appeared in a Moscow-based "Russia in Global Affairs" in May 2013. It was indeed an epic essay worthy both of a distinguished historian and a renowned political scientist, neither of which the Minister as a matter of fact was.

As V. Makei used to tell us, his colleagues, what he wanted to do in the article was to delve deeper – into the very origins of some societies and countries that most diverged on human rights with the hope of finding something that would explain their present opposite stances on human rights. So, with this in mind, he decided to analyse China, Russia, Turkey, European countries, and the United States of America.

The choice of sources for the research was really extraordinary. These included, among others, F. Fukuyama's "The origins of political order" (2011), N. Ferguson's "Civilisation: the West and the rest" (2011), S. P. Huntington's "The clash of civilisations and the remaking of world order" (1996), A. M. Schlesinger's "The cycles of American history" (1985), R. Niebuhr's "The irony of American history" (1952), F. Zakaria's "The post-American world and the rise of the rest" (2009).

Looking at this list of sources one cannot help avoiding the conclusion that V. Makei made a deliberate choice in favour of some renowned Western historians and political scientists. It means that from the time he conceived the idea of an article he saw the West as his primary audience. He certainly wanted to demonstrate that his work was not biased against the West. What is even more, he was keen to say to his audience in the West that they may dislike his article's conclusions, but these conclusions were entirely based on the findings of some of the West's most renowned academic figures.

The article itself is a well structured piece consisting of an introduction, a concise historical overview and a number of chapters devoted to the abovementioned countries and regions. In the beginning V. Makei clearly sets out the problem: "No other issue on the international agenda appears currently to be as much divisive and politicised as human rights. Indeed, international relations have been increasingly viewed and conducted through the prism of human rights. Some countries, more than others, have come to assume the mantle of human rights "defenders", and make political and economic relationships with other states contingent on the latter's observance of those human rights "standards", in which the former group allegedly excels"¹¹.

The author argues that it is an "ideological" approach, because some countries try to prove that they are better and more worthy in something than others. At the same time, this "human rights bickering" presents

a dangerous phenomenon, not least because it distracts the world's attention from ever-rising transnational challenges like, among others, climate change.

The Minister states that the human rights debate is mainly about the primacy of specific categories of human rights. While in rhetoric all countries support the equality of all human rights categories, the practice, however, is different, as the industrially advanced nations traditionally put a very high premium on individual civil and political rights, whereas developing states advocate the supreme nature of collective economic, social and cultural rights.

Building on his sources, V. Makei convincingly demonstrates that the above division traces its origin far back to the specific historical development of particular societies, which, in turn, came to shape their contemporary governance structures and attitudes on human rights. So, diverse ultimate and proximate factors like, among others, geography, climate, resource and human endowment, historically served to forge China and Russia as centralised and collectivist societies, while the same, similar or other factors, however, when at play in Western Europe and North America, produced in the latter two parts of the world a kind of societies that put a premium on the opposites – on individualism and power decentralisation.

This point, in turn, allows V. Makei to make a key conclusion, which is: "If we can just better appreciate each other's historical circumstances of development, we will certainly be able to better understand each other's current approaches to human rights, and, hopefully, find ways to bridge the differences stemming from the human rights discourse that at present seem irreconcilable"¹².

Indeed, if countries' attitudes have been historically constructed, they certainly cannot be easily changed. Therefore, the practice with human rights debate over the past two decades proves that an exercise of that kind was absolutely futile, because it is impossible to force some countries to change what has acquired over centuries strong indigenous cultural, religious, and other foundations.

Importantly, arguing against the West's human-rights crusade V. Makei never says that some countries are better than others. His point rather is that there are no ideal countries and that each can learn something from others. Therefore, the way to move the global human rights agenda forward is through cooperation, which can best be organised in the framework of the abovementioned Universal periodic review.

The article received a wide international acclaim. While some Western diplomats and policymakers provided some brief comments either in agreement or disagreement with the findings, no one dared challenge the

¹⁰Makei V. V. Human rights: what and who made them divide the world [Electronic resource]. URL: <https://eng.globalaffairs.ru/articles/human-rights-what-and-who-made-them-divide-the-world/> (date of access: 14.06.2023).

¹¹Ibid.

¹²Ibid.

Minister's piece in a similar academic style. It indicates only one thing – that V. Makei has driven his point about human rights discourse absolutely right.

Surely, it was with this logic in mind that the Columbian University in the United States invited V. Makei to deliver a lecture based on his article in September 2013 in New York. The Minister drafted a lengthy text, preparing to give some interesting details in his research that did not find their way in the article. The lecture, regrettably, was not destined to be delivered as the Minister's schedule changed making it impossible for him to be in New York on the arranged day.

Generally, the article served to produce two follow-up developments. First, it reinforced the drive of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Belarus to draft reports on violations of human rights in some Western countries. The Ministry began this practice in 2012 as a response to the West's initiative to sponsor a resolution on the situation of human rights in Belarus at the UN Human Rights Council. But, with the clear message from V. Makei that there were no ideal countries on human rights, we, the Ministry's human rights experts were eager to provide sufficient evidence in support of it. Needless to say that V. Makei took a lively interest in all these reports by writing a foreword to each.

Second, it appeared that the Minister's appeal for human rights cooperation has gained some traction in the West, because in 2015 Belarus launched bilateral dialogues on human rights with both the United States of America and the European Union. In the course of the next few years we held a number of such dialogues, which featured frank exchanges and interesting discussions.

We were even discussing with Western counterparts how to wind down the practice of resolutions on the situation of human rights in Belarus at the UN Human Rights Council and arrived at some understanding on how that could be realised. The Minister always provided clear instructions to the delegations of Belarus for these dialogues. His points have consistently been the same: "Belarus always stands ready for dialogue

and cooperation on human rights. But we do not accept any preconditions for dialogue and cooperation. And we have nothing to prove on human rights to the West or justify ourselves"¹³.

To be sure, that nascent human rights cooperation with the West abruptly came to an end in the context of the events surrounding the Presidential election in Belarus, held in August 2020. As it is clear today, the West saw a strategic opportunity through a blitzkrieg-style colour revolution to force both a "regime change" in our country and its geopolitical reorientation towards the West. When it failed in its design, absolutely predictably, the West unleashed a veritable "human rights" storm against Belarus. Indeed, since 2020 the so-called Belarus' case on violations of human rights has been considered at virtually every session of the UN Human Rights Council. Thus, the West once again showed that the issue of human rights was nothing for it but a political instrument.

What comes to mind in this regard is the excellent quotation of American political scientist S. P. Huntington, which V. Makei used in his article: "The West won the world not by the superiority of its ideas or values or religion but rather by its superiority in applying organised violence. Westerners often forget this fact, non-Westerners never do"¹⁴. Unfortunately, this trend continues in today's tumultuous world. The West is bent on remaking the world in its own image using the issue of human rights as a tool to this end.

Human rights should not be an instrument in the West's geopolitical "great game", which may bring about a global catastrophe. Human rights should serve the purpose of guiding action by the world's countries that seek to improve the lives of their people. Heeding the comprehensive and compelling narrative that Minister Makei has presented in his seminal article on human rights a decade ago may surely help in steering the global human rights discourse in the right direction.

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COMBATING HUMAN TRAFFICKING

Perhaps, no other issue on the international agenda has been so much associated with Belarus than the topic of fighting trafficking in persons. Foreign diplomats often used to ask their Belarusian colleagues about what had motivated Belarus to play such a notable role in that area. We answered that undoubtedly it was our recognition of the problem in the late 1990s and the subsequent successful domestic campaign that virtually

eliminated the crime of human trafficking as an issue of serious concern to the public. Importantly, international organisations praised Belarus' achievements back then.

These factors much inspired us to try to do something useful against human trafficking at the international level. So, in his statement at the United Nations summit in 2005 the President of Belarus A. Lukashenko sent a powerful message to the international community

¹³Makei V. V. Human rights: what and who made them divide the world [Electronic resource]. URL: <https://eng.globalaffairs.ru/articles/human-rights-what-and-who-made-them-divide-the-world/> (date of access: 14.06.2023).

¹⁴Ibid.

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to significantly step up its efforts against the crime. That statement, essentially, marked the beginning of Belarus' subsequent vigorous global work against human trafficking.

By the time V. Makei assumed his ministerial function, Belarus had already been in the forefront of global anti-trafficking efforts. Indeed, since 2006 Belarus was sponsoring on a biennial basis a key General Assembly resolution on improving the coordination of efforts against trafficking in persons. Furthermore, Belarus was chairing the Group of friends united against trafficking in persons, an entity consisting of more than 20 countries with branches operating in New York, Geneva and Vienna.

Most important of all, in July 2010 the United Nations General Assembly adopted a Global plan of action to combat trafficking in persons (hereinafter Global plan). Belarus first proposed the idea of a Global plan in 2006 and its diplomats worked strenuously in Vienna and New York – the world's two largest anti-trafficking hubs – to garner support to the idea, which had initially been rejected by many states.

The first thing that V. Makei asked his subordinates in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Belarus to do with regard to all foreign policy initiatives of Belarus was to draft for him a kind of overviews of all of them. A “human trafficking” overview certainly caught the Minister's attention. Indeed, he asked advice on additional reading, including on negotiations on the Global plan and on the Global forum on human trafficking – the largest ever international event on that issue – held in Vienna in February 2008.

V. Makei soon let us know that he was working on a large article on human trafficking in English. That article titled “Human trafficking in the post-Cold War period: towards a comprehensive approach”¹⁶ appeared in January 2013 in an US-based “Journal of International Affairs”.

Two things are striking about this article. First, it reads as if it had been written by someone with many years of experience behind him or her in tackling human trafficking. This fact alone tells us how deeply V. Makei has grasped this theme. Second, and what is particularly interesting, the narrative on human trafficking has been framed into a broader picture of global politics. Indeed, while multitude of essays have been written on trafficking in persons by distinguished authors over years, hardly is it possible to find one that strove to connect the two phenomena. To his credit, Minister Makei did it.

The article contains five parts. The first chapter provides an overview of what is generally known about the crime of trafficking in persons in terms of the crime's definition, types of trafficking, breakdowns by gender and age, global trends and regional incidence, etc. Clearly, V. Makei has read much on the issue and relies heavily on various sources in supporting his statistics.

In the second chapter the Minister in a very concise manner tracks all major international efforts that in

some or another way related to the fight against either slavery or trafficking in persons since the early 20th century with a particular focus on the 1990s. His key point is that all earlier initiatives were rather fragmented while during the Cold War there was not much interest in transnational issues like human trafficking, because “the world's major players were primarily preoccupied with traditional security issues”¹⁷.

V. Makei argues that the situation began to change with the end of the Cold War, which inaugurated a more open international environment and more opportunities for migration. But the 1990s were the time, as the Minister put it, for “the problem's recognition”, because policymakers far too often confused the two phenomena – trafficking in persons and migration.

In the third chapter the Minister shows that the recognition of the problem found its reflection in the 2000 Human trafficking protocol that supplements the United Nations Convention against transnational organised crime. The interesting point the Minister makes here is that the Human trafficking protocol is strong on prosecution, but not so much on the aspects of prevention and protection. V. Makei explains that the bias was influenced to some extent by domestic policies in the United States adopted in the wake of the 9/11 terrorist attacks.

The deficiencies of the above mentioned protocol were properly addressed at the Vienna Forum on human trafficking, held in February 2008, as the Minister argues in the fourth chapter. The forum, according to the V. Makei, was an important turning point in the fight against trafficking in persons, because it essentially marked the beginning of a new era that would seek comprehensive rather than “reductionist” approaches against the crime.

The first attempt to realise such a comprehensive approach worldwide was associated with the United Nations Global plan, as the Minister demonstrates in the article's final chapter. He explains its comprehensive nature in structural, normative and organisational terms. The Minister ends his piece on a note that the forthcoming High-level meeting of the UN General Assembly on the appraisal of the Global plan scheduled for May 2013 would provide an opportunity to discuss how the comprehensive approach worked in practice.

Thus, it was only natural that Minister Makei personally attended the above High-level meeting in New York. The Minister delivered a powerful statement, with a particular focus on how the specific elements of the Global plan helped reinvigorate the international response against the hideous crime. More than that, V. Makei outlined a new area for action – trafficking in human organs.

Equipped with the Minister's call, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic Belarus began working on a draft resolution on fighting trafficking in human organs. The resolution was presented to the United Nations Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal

¹⁶Makei V. V. Human trafficking in the past-Cold War period: towards a comprehensive approach [Electronic resource]. URL: <https://jia.sipa.columbia.edu/online-articles/human-trafficking-post-cold-war-period-towards-comprehensive-approach> (date of access: 14.06.2023).

¹⁷Ibid.

Justice (CCPCJ) in May 2014 and adopted by consensus while a number of delegations, including Russia and the United States, cosponsored it. Another resolution on combating organ trafficking was tabled by Belarus at the CCPCJ in 2016. Once again it was adopted by consensus by the Commission. These two resolutions served the purpose of significantly raising attention to the crime of organ trafficking worldwide.

It was not surprising then that "Forced Migration Review", a journal published in the United Kingdom showed an interest in having an article on the above topic from the Minister of foreign affairs of the Republic of Belarus. The Minister wrote a piece titled "Trafficking for human organs"¹⁸, which was published in the journal in May 2015. The purpose that V. Makei sought to achieve in that article was to provide a rationale for a new international legally binding instrument to deal with organ trafficking. On the basis of this rationale Belarusian diplomats subsequently organised many thematic events in Vienna, Geneva and New York. While the goal of drafting a new international treaty on organ trafficking has not been attained yet, the discussion has slowly but steadily been making progress.

It needs to be pointed out that V. Makei took a keen interest in everything that related to Belarus' "anti-trafficking child", that is, the UN Global plan. In particular, the Crime Commission launched the biennial Global report on trafficking in persons. So, Minister Makei went to Vienna in November 2014 to attend the launch of the next report. In his remarks to the audience the Minister called the report "Just another effective blow of the hammer at the wall of secrecy that surrounds the crime of human trafficking".

Since 2011 Belarus has been sponsoring at the UN Crime Commission in Vienna a resolution titled "Implementation of the Global plan of action to combat trafficking in persons". During V. Makei's leadership in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Belarus the resolution was adopted by the Commission in 2013, 2015, 2017 and 2021. The Minister always took a keen interest in the preparation and was not avert to discussing details with the Ministry's experts.

Likewise, V. Makei used to attach paramount importance to the quadrennial high-level meetings at the United Nations General Assembly to appraise the Global plan. The Minister attended the meeting in 2013, but was unable to attend one in 2017. Nonetheless, like in 2013 when the Minister voiced the idea of addressing trafficking in organs, his contribution to the 2017 appraisal was also great. In particular, at the Minister's

suggestion Belarusian diplomats worked to include in a Political declaration of the meeting a topic of the role of ICTs in combating trafficking in persons. Our idea was endorsed by others and reflected in that declaration.

Building on this, Belarus sponsored at the CCPCJ in May 2018 a resolution on the above topic, which was unanimously adopted with many co-sponsors from all regions of the world. It was the first-ever resolution on this issue and its adoption virtually sparked a lot of various relevant studies and events around the world. On many occasions Belarusian diplomats stood at such events as keynote speakers.

So, when it comes to the topic of combating trafficking in persons, the following three conclusions can be safely made in answering the question of what legacy V. Makei left to us and to the world.

First, through his personal interest, initiatives, involvement, encouragement and attention, Minister Makei worked tirelessly to strengthen and firmly embed Belarus' anti-trafficking leadership on the international scene, which he inherited from his predecessor. As a result, the past decade will always be remembered as a period during which Belarus demonstrated vigorous global engagement in the fight against human trafficking.

Second, V. Makei triggered a world-wide interest in the topic of trafficking in human organs, which is closely related to trafficking in humans. If the world ever develops in the future a separate international legally binding tool on organ trafficking, much credit for it should undoubtedly go to V. Makei, who first broached the issue, elaborated the rationale for it, and did much to advance the idea around the world.

Finally, in his drive to ensure a comprehensive approach to fighting trafficking in persons, V. Makei has in fact inaugurated the need to cover "all angles" of the problem, in other words, to tackle all "dimensions". Indeed, in addition to sponsoring a biennial omnibus resolution on human trafficking at the UN General Assembly, Belarus began proposing in the past decade resolutions in the Vienna-based Crime Commission on specific aspects of the crime, like trafficking in human organs, human trafficking and ICTs.

This line suggested by V. Makei will surely be followed by Belarusian diplomats in the years to come with such topics for new resolutions, among others, as human trafficking in supply chains, human trafficking of children, trafficking in persons in armed conflict, vulnerability to trafficking in persons.

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¹⁸Makei V. V. Trafficking for human organs [Electronic resource]. URL: <https://www.fmreview.org/climatechange-disasters/makei> (date of access: 14.06.2023).

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