Part III:
International Development and Human Rights
Democracy, Development and Violence

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This paper focuses on the interconnections between democracy, development and violence. In many ways, its scope goes beyond The Bottom Billion,¹ which was written largely in 2005 and tells the story from the 1960s to the millennium. This paper starts with a very brief account of one of the key themes of this story and then moves on to developments during the present decade, which have created new opportunities and challenges.

In a nutshell, the story of The Bottom Billion is that there was a class of countries – about sixty countries around the world – that had missed out on the economic development process. Those sixty countries had between them a population of about a billion people, so the typical country was very small. They were unusual in being very small, and they were unusual in having been stagnant during a period of four decades in which most developing countries were transforming themselves through accelerated development. They had missed out on global development, and so were gradually diverging from the rest of mankind. Societies that are poor, stagnant and small generally have a much higher incidence of large-scale violence than other societies. Thus, the background is that during the 1960-2000 period there was a rise in large-scale violence in the countries of the bottom billion and, generally, a fall in large-scale violence elsewhere in the world. International war did not disappear but became very rare, and violent conflict on any large scale thus became overwhelmingly a matter of internal conflict and civil war in these countries.

How has this story developed since? In the first decade of this millennium, there have been three important developments that need to be considered in

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