Global Democracy
The Struggle for Political and Civil Rights in the 21st Century
DIDIER JACOBS

This book positions the idea of global democracy—that every human being ought to have an equal say in public policy decisions that affect all humankind—in the mainstream political debate on globalization. Now that political rights have been secured in many countries for the working class, women, and minorities, it is time for nationals of poor countries to gain political equality in world affairs with Westerners.

To clearly position global democracy as a new and realistic choice, the author contrasts it with four existing approaches to foreign policy:

- benevolent imperialism (the neoconservatives’ agenda)
- nationalism (balance-of-power politics)
- multilateralism (support to the United Nations system)
- liberalism (the agenda of part of the global movement for social justice).

Contrary to what other authors on global governance would lead us to believe, Jacobs argues that participatory democracy should be considered a complement to, not a substitute for, representative democracy.

The author combines a critical review of political theory with a practitioner’s analysis of what works in international affairs. Jacobs takes up issues like the crisis at the World Trade Organization, the development of the European Union, reform of the UN, climate change, the debate on “humanitarian wars,” nuclear proliferation in Iran, the growth of global activism, and the power of NGOs.

Didier Jacobs, Special Advisor to the President at Oxfam America, was formerly a researcher at the London School of Economics and Catholic University of Louvain, as well as an aid worker for Médecins Sans Frontières in Liberia during the civil war. He holds a Masters in Public Policy from the Kennedy School of Government at Harvard.