

GLOBAL GOVERNANCE

towards the end of multilateralism?

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WHAT IS GLOBAL GOVERNANCE?

- climate change
- international trade and supply chains
- global financial stability
- pandemics
- terrorism and security challenges
- migration and refugee flows
- digitalisation and cyber governance



WHY DID GLOBAL GOVERNANCE EMERGE?

Global governance took shape mainly after the Second World War, when leaders realised that economic and political instability could lead to global conflict.

Three major historical phases explain its development

01. Post-WWII Reconstruction (1945–1980s)
02. Globalisation Era (1990s–2008)
03. Crisis of Global Governance (2008–today)



THE MAIN ACTORS OF GLOBAL GOVERNANCE

Civil Society and NGOs

- Greenpeace, Amnesty International, the global climate movement humanitarian NGOs

Informal “clubs”

- G7, G20, BRICS+

International Organisations

- United Nations (UN)
- World Trade Organization (WTO)
- International Monetary Fund (IMF)
- World Bank

Regional Organisations

- European Union (EU)
- African Union (AU)
- ASEAN, Mercosur, USMCA

Multinational Corporations (TNCs)

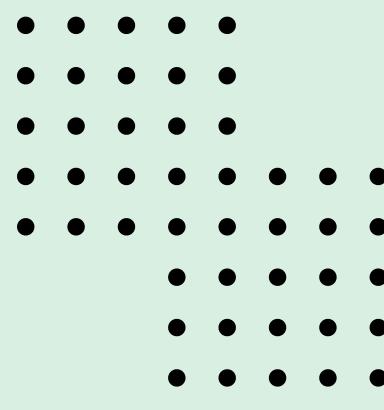
- Apple, Amazon, BP, Toyota or Tencen

LIMITATIONS AND FAILURES OF GLOBAL GOVERNANCE

Although global governance is essential in an interconnected world, it faces deep structural limitations that often prevent international cooperation from working effectively. These limitations explain why global governance is constantly under pressure and why many global crises remain unsolved.

- No enforcement mechanisms
- Power politics dominate
- Lack of representation
- Bureaucratic slow-motion





WHY GLOBAL GOVERNANCE MATTERS TODAY



- Problems are increasingly transnational.
- No country can regulate global markets or digital platforms alone.
- Without cooperation, crises spread faster (financial, health, ecological).
- Interdependence makes coordination essential.

MULTILATERALISM

- Cooperation among several countries
- Shared rules & collective decisions
- Solving shared challenges

- Inclusiveness
- Reciprocity
- Predictability
- Legitimacy



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WHY MULTILATERALISM ?

- Problems are global
- Countries interdependent
- Rules reduce conflict & uncertainty

◦ If countries acted alone, problems would only get worse.

◦ With this cooperation becomes possible and predictable.



EXAMPLES

1. **United Nations** – peacekeeping, human rights, humanitarian aid.
2. **World Trade Organization** – rules for global trade; it prevents trade wars.
3. **Paris Climate Agreement** – 196 countries cooperate on climate change.
4. **Pandemic cooperation** – WHO coordination, vaccine distribution.
5. **G20** – global responses to the 2008 financial crisis.



UNITED NATIONS



HISTORY

- Multilateralism expanded after World War II.
- They created institutions such as the United Nations, the IMF, the World Bank, and the GATT.
- In the 1990s, after the Cold War, multilateralism grew even more.
- Globalisation, free markets, expansion of cooperation.

IMPORTANCE

- Reduces conflict
- Stabilises global economy
- Manages global crises
- Protects smaller countries
- Maintains rules-based order



WHY IS MULTILATERALISM IN CRISIS?

- Power shifts
- Geopolitical conflicts
- Institutional paralysis
- Rise of nationalism and protectionism

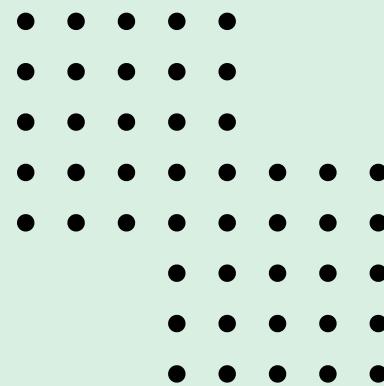


“THE END” OF MULTILATERALISM?

- Erosion of old multilateralism: Traditional institutions lose relevance but do not disappear.
- “Mini-lateralism” emerges: Small groups of like-minded states cooperate (G7, Quad, AUKUS, EU alliances)
- Reform and renewal: WTO reforms, UN restructuring,



CONLUSION



In summary, global governance, multilateralism, and their current crisis show how much the international system is changing. Today, however, rising geopolitical tensions, power shifts, institutional paralysis, and growing nationalism are challenging this model. The traditional Western-led, rules-based order is weakening, and global cooperation is becoming more fragmented. This does not mean that multilateralism is ending, but rather that it is transforming.

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THANK YOU

