



REIMAGINING GOVERNANCE IN A MULTIPOLAR WORLD

DOHA FORUM 2019

report produced in partnership with

STIMSON

ABOUT THE DOHA FORUM

The Doha Forum is a global platform for dialogue, bringing together leaders in policy to build innovative and action driven networks. Established in 2000, the Doha Forum promotes the interchange of ideas, discourse, policy-making, and action-oriented recommendations. In a world where borders are porous, our challenges and solutions are also interlinked.

ABOUT STIMSON

The Stimson Center is a nonpartisan policy research center working to protect people, preserve the planet, and promote security & prosperity. Stimson's award-winning research serves as a roadmap to address borderless threats through concerted action. Our formula is simple: we gather the brightest people to think beyond soundbites, create solutions, and make those solutions reality. We follow the credo of one of history's leading statesmen, Henry L. Stimson, in taking "pragmatic steps toward ideal objectives."

FOREWORD

We are honored to introduce this inaugural Doha Forum Report on the theme Reimagining Governance in a Multipolar World, which considers current trends—both ominous and optimistic—in governance worldwide and the core principles to which world leaders will need to recommit if humanity is to continue to move forward in the 21st century. The chief purpose of this report, which we believe the authors fulfill admirably, is to provoke debate and better inform discussions among the influential participants from governments, civil society, the media, academia, think tanks, and the private sector attending the 2019 Doha Forum—thereby contributing to its mission of promoting the exchange of ideas, policy-making, and action-oriented networks.

Next year, the United Nations will commemorate the 75th anniversary of the signing and ratification of the Charter under the banner “The future we want, the United Nations we need: reaffirming our collective commitment to multilateralism.” Whether the challenge is preventing the spread of ruinous weapons, delivering on the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, or coping better with disruptive new technologies and the calamitous effects of climate change, the world needs more effective tools and approaches for collective action. No one state or small group of states can afford to go it alone in a world where new risks and opportunities span borders and even regions.

We wish to express our appreciation to the participants of the 2019 Doha Forum for their open interchange of ideas and commitment to achieving a more peaceful, just, and sustainable world. We must all continue to work tirelessly to ensure that “the future we want” becomes a reality for today’s younger generation and all future generations.



H.E. Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman bin Jassim Al-Thani,

Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs of the State of Qatar



H.E. Ban Ki-moon,

President & Chair, Global Green Growth Institute, Eighth Secretary-General of the United Nations

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY: “TEN GUIDING PRINCIPLES FOR BETTER GOVERNANCE IN A MULTIPOLAR WORLD”

Adopted on 14 June 2019, UN General Assembly Resolution 73/299 initiates preparations for a political declaration under the banner “The future we want, the United Nations we need: reaffirming our collective commitment to multilateralism” for the **United Nations 75th Anniversary Leaders Summit**, planned for 21 September 2020 in New York. Under the related theme of “Reimagining Governance in a Multipolar World”, the nineteenth edition of the **Doha Forum**, planned for 14-15 December 2019, aims to contribute to this significant conversation and policy dialogue on the future of global governance.

The present era’s shift from unipolarity to multipolarity is characterized, first and foremost, by a diffusion of power, challenges to the international legal order, changing notions of sovereignty and identity, and the urgent need to harness better state and non-state capabilities for collective action. When no one state (or small grouping of states) is capable to deal with present and emerging global challenges—from the climate and refugee crises and the effects of automation on the future of work to averting deadly conflicts, cultural threats, cyber-attacks, and cross-border economic shocks—new risks and opportunities abound.

To reimagine and better prepare our system of governance to keep pace with fast changing trends, we must comprehend its many facets in today’s multipolar world. Among its most important dimensions are:

- **Global and Regional Governance Dimensions** (the crisis of multilateralism; challenges to the international legal order; and the growing reach of regional organizations)
- **Population Movements and Social Dimensions** (refugees and migration; and human capital and global inequality)

- **Gender and Youth Dimensions** (assessing women’s progress; “youth peace and security” and inclusive multilateralism; and inclusive governance in a multipolar world)

- **Political and Security Dimensions** (diffusion of power globally; new interpretations of sovereignty and identity; changing nature of conflict; and cyber and other emerging technologies)

- **Economic and Technological Dimensions** (cross-border economic shocks; illicit financial flows; and technology, cybersecurity, and blockchain in the hyperconnected global economy)

- **Environmental Dimensions** (the climate crisis intensifies; and the looming threat of water scarcity)

Learning from the hard-fought successes and failures to address these dimensions of multipolar governance, the following ten principles—expanded upon in this report—aim to strengthen governance and collective action across borders:

1. Resolve Conflicts Peacefully through Dialogue: Conflicts between two or more parties internationally should, first and foremost, be resolved through discussion and compromise. The lawful use of force should only be entertained when all peaceful measures have been exhausted.

2. Ensure Inclusive, Open, and Fair Decision-Making: Decision-making at all levels of governance should be inclusive of all relevant stakeholders and reflect a common understanding of the universality of human dignity and equality.

3. Uphold International Law: All states have an interest in upholding the international legal order and developing it further in order to resolve differences and to address the global challenges of our time.

4. Respect the Sovereign Equality of All States:

In a multipolar world, emerging centers of power must respect the sovereign rights of smaller countries and work together with them in a spirit of solidarity and cooperation.

5. Strengthen International Institutions:

States should invest in the capabilities, accountability, and overall effectiveness of international institutions to deliver global public goods, in partnership with global civil society and the business community.

6. Advance Human Rights and a Global Civic Ethic:

States and their partners in global civil society and the business community should work to promote basic human rights and develop a more universal sense of ownership of these rights, including by forging a common global civic ethic.

7. Safeguard Inter-Generational Rights and Responsibilities:

The highest moral and ethical considerations should factor into political, economic, social, environmental, and other kinds of decision-making that may impact the health, security, and livelihoods of future generations.

8. Embrace Diversity and Tolerate Dissent:

States should work to foster a culture of respect for cultural, ethnic, religious, and regional diversity and strive for the broadest possible representativeness within global governance institutions, while also affirming other core international values.

9. Invest in Human Capital:

In order to truly boost people-centered and humane global governance, both the public and private sectors need to invest significantly in human capital.

10. Conserve and Regenerate Natural Resources:

Through multilateral and multi-stakeholder cooperation that engages states, international organizations, global civil society, and the business community, humanity needs to redouble its efforts to manage natural resources responsibly and move to a sustainable economic model.

The upcoming UN 75th Anniversary Leaders Summit,

planned for September 2020 in New York, provides a unique opportunity to improve multipolar and multi-stakeholder governance by both recommitting to these principles and better harnessing the ideas, networks, and capabilities of governments, international organizations, and myriad transnational actors from the business community and civil society. Though every effort should be made to focus this historic gathering on strengthening the international system, given the limited time remaining and need to engage diverse voices worldwide, next year's world leaders forum may serve better as more of a launch pad—than a landing pad—for a broader conversation on the future of governance in a multipolar world. Specifically, it could build support for and initiate a preparatory process toward a proposed **UN Conference on Multipolar Governance and Global Institutions**, convened by April of 2023, for forging "The United Nations We Need" to keep pace with the growing global economic, political, technological, and environmental challenges detailed in this report.

"... the Doha Forum ... aims to contribute to this conversation and policy dialogue on the future of global governance"

I. Introduction: A World In Peril, A World Of Opportunity

Since 2000, the Doha Forum has served as a premier platform for global dialogue on critical issues facing the world, bringing together thought leaders from governments, civil society, the media, academia, think tanks, and the private sector to promote the exchange of ideas, mutual understanding, policy-making, and action-oriented networks.

On 14 June 2019, the UN General Assembly adopted resolution 73/299 to initiate preparations for a political declaration on the theme “The future we want, the United Nations we need” for the United Nations 75th Anniversary Leaders Summit to be held, on 21 September 2020, in New York. As these preparations take shape, the Doha Forum provides a formidable gathering place, where influential thought-leaders, policy-makers, practitioners, and activists can contribute innovative ideas and action-driven networks to make global governance fit for purpose in a rapidly changing world order.

The United Nations’ efforts paving the way to the 75th anniversary were led initially by H.E. María Fernanda Espinosa Garcés, President of the 73rd session of the UN General Assembly, and now by H.E. Professor Tijjani Muhammad-Bande, President of the 74th Session of the General Assembly. Secretary-General António Guterres is lending his support through a new “UN@75” team led

by his Special Adviser and Under-Secretary-General, H.E. Fabrizio Hochschild.

For the 2019 edition of the Doha Forum, participants will examine the overarching theme of “Reimagining Governance in a Multipolar World.” Governance refers to questions of power, legitimacy, how public goods are provided in a society, and the mix of public and private action needed for effective problem-solving. Applied to our current multipolar era where power is increasingly diffused and no one nation-state, international institution, or other actor dominates, governance of global affairs has become more complex and multi-faceted and, on some issues, more financially costly. To address today’s transnational challenges—whether, for example, climate change, violent conflict, cyber-attacks, or devastating cross-border economic shocks—multilateral governance for a multipolar world must harness effectively the ideas, networks, and capabilities of national governmental actors, international organizations, the business community, and civil society.

This document presents the overarching theme, an array of issue areas, and questions for further exploration at this year’s Doha Forum. It also offers senior international and national policy-makers from governments and international organizations, civil society and business leaders, journalists, scholars, and young innovators a range of guiding principles for improving the global governance architecture.



Reimagining Governance In A Multipolar World

The worldwide transition from unipolarity to multipolarity creates both new risks and opportunities to tackle hardship and inequality resulting from war and poverty. With the expansion of rising powers on the global stage, this shift is expected to dominate international affairs for the foreseeable future. For those states and non-state actors committed to global justice, the rule of law, greater equity, and peace, multiple dimensions to this paradigm-shift abound that extend beyond adopting a basic new political framework for understanding and organizing the world. Comprehending the full significance of the transition to multipolarity will enable the international community to reimagine and better design a more dynamic and inclusive global governance system commensurate to current and over-the-horizon challenges, threats, and opportunities.

No one state or “mini-lateral” forum can manage present and emerging global challenges on their own. Moreover, successful governance strategies stem from inclusive, coalition-building efforts to increasingly tap the expertise and resources of both rising powers (in economic, political, environmental, and even cultural terms) and industrious actors within the business community and global civil society. In short, forging a more holistic and cooperative governance system worldwide—with strong, reinforcing global, regional, national, and sub-national connections and a firm grasp of the chief characteristics of multipolarity—has become a practical and moral imperative.

Four major features of governance in this still emerging multipolar era stand out:

Diffusion of Power: The ongoing shift toward multipolarity has two major

elements—geopolitical and multi-stakeholder. First, a growing number of developing countries are increasing their geopolitical clout, in both the economic and security arenas. Second, the influence of non-state actors, including in the business community and civil society, over fundamental global governance questions continues to grow. The “unipolar moment” has truly given way to a “multi-actors century.”

Challenges to the International Legal Order: The rules-based international system is under considerable strain. From the International Court of Justice, International Criminal Court, and UN Security Council to the Appellate Body of the World Trade Organization, the record of upholding and enforcing international laws and norms through international dispute settlement mechanisms is, at best, mixed today.

Changing Notions of Sovereignty and Identity: In a multipolar, multi-stakeholder, and globalized world, the importance of global community and sovereign equality are not mutually exclusive. On the contrary, sovereignty remains a relevant principle that shapes twenty-first century international relations that both legitimizes and encourages nation-states to commit to the values of multilateralism in the first place. This, in turn, creates the conditions for citizens of a country to adopt, simultaneously, mutually reinforcing and healthy national, regional, and global identities.

The Urgent Need to Harness Better State and Non-State Capabilities for Collective Action: Effective transnational problem-solving is only achieved by applying the right mix of engagement and resources from governments, international organizations, the business community, and non-governmental organizations, whether the issue is, for example, confronting

environmental crises, ending extreme poverty, preventing deadly wars, ensuring economic stability and the ethical use of new technologies, or safeguarding human rights—with States still serving as the central actor in multipolar global governance (see Figure 1).

Though a more exhaustive list of features could be listed here, we arrived at these four chief characteristics after an examination of common threads, challenges, and opportunities manifested in the six dimensions of multipolar governance detailed below. This combined a careful reading of both qualitative and quantitative data trends, literature and peer reviews, and multiple consultations. Offering clear and defined parameters to the report's conception of governance in a multipolar world is important to ensuring the term's analytic and policy utility, to making comparisons to earlier periods, and to helping the reader to better comprehend the developments surveyed in this report.

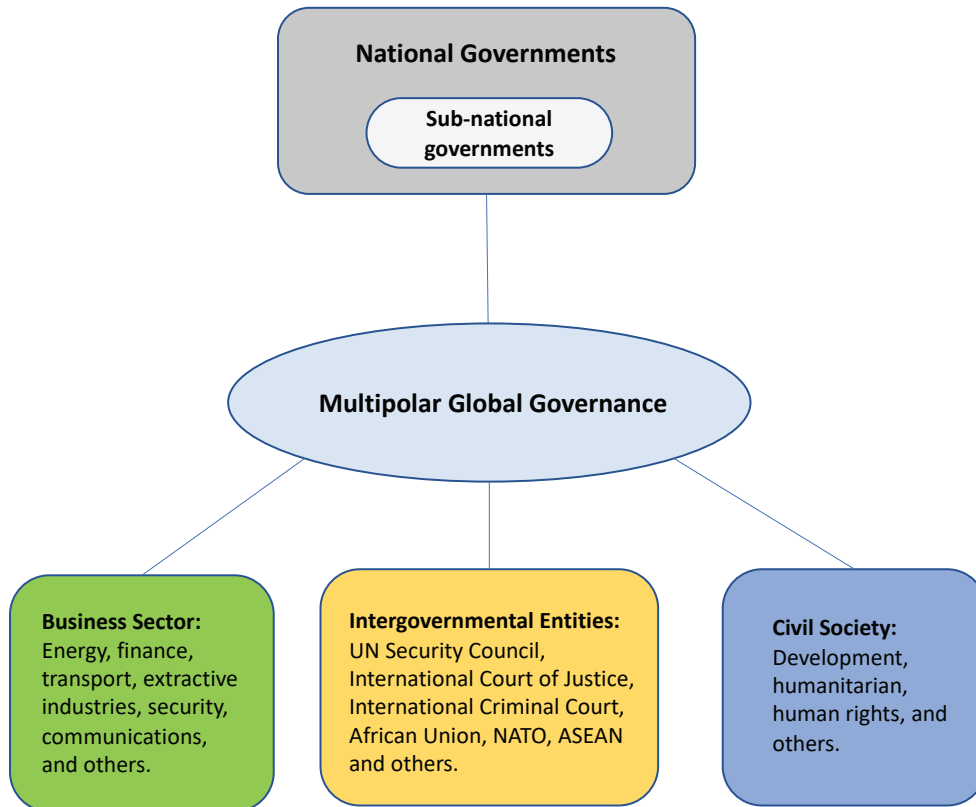
Our "new normal" is the competition between nation-states (public) and non-state (private)

actors for political, military, economic, social, and cultural influence. Countries range in their reach and relevance across the international landscape. Non-state actors, including non-governmental organizations, socio-political and religious movements, transnational private companies, and virtual-world agents play key transformative roles.

We face an unusual paradox today: despite the economic, social, and cultural benefits from growing interconnectivity worldwide, tensions have deepened within societies over perceived transnational values and identities associated with these drivers of globalization that are seen by some as undermining national values or culture. Many global issues affect all of us and have a direct impact at all levels of governance. For example, climate change threatens all peoples, their livelihoods, and global and local economies alike. Migration too is an international policy challenge that merits collective management and action, while placing a premium on ensuring the rights of vulnerable refugees and displaced people.



Figure 1: Multiple Actors and Levels in Multipolar Global Governance



To reimagine and better prepare our system of governance to keep pace with emerging challenges, risks, and opportunities, we must comprehend its many facets in today’s multipolar world. Among its most important dimensions—detailed in this report—are: 1) Global and Regional Governance Dimensions; 2) Population Movements and Social Dimensions; 3) Gender and Youth Dimensions; 4) Political and Security Dimensions; 5) Economic and Technological Dimensions; and 6) Environmental Dimensions.

What should be the way forward for these and other dimensions of governance in a multipolar world? Global governance leadership, ingenuity, and inclusive coalition-building are vital to the sustainability of our ecological, political, and economic systems and overall standard of life. International laws and institutions are being challenged

and questioned precisely at a time when they are most needed to help the international community better grapple with major policy conundrums at the intersection of global security and justice. There is an urgent need for alternative, holistic, and more cooperative approaches to governance worldwide that can, in particular, accommodate diversity, diplomacy, and dialogue.

Building on last year’s many substantive contributions, the 2019 Doha Forum will bring together a distinguished group of leaders, thinkers, and policy-makers to tackle such questions. At this critical juncture in world history, participants will be asked to come prepared to question conventional wisdom and orthodoxies and to reimagine a more inclusive and resilient global governance system capable of addressing our collective needs and priorities on the Road to 2020 (UN@75) and beyond.

II. Different Dimensions Of Governance In A Multipolar World: Confronting Today's Major Global Challenges, Risks, And Opportunities

1. Global and Regional Governance Dimensions

This section examines the global and regional dimensions of governance in a multipolar world. With a focus on the crisis of multilateralism, challenges to the international legal order, and the growing reach of regional organizations, it considers the multiple obstacles facing global and regional bodies and the current international responses toward strengthening these central vehicles for improving collective action across borders.

The Crisis of Multilateralism

As the world confronts myriad and interconnected challenges—from ending

civil wars and extreme poverty to the threats posed by climate change, cyber-attacks, and economic shocks—the very concept of global collective action faces strong headwinds. Precisely when the urgent demands for effective multilateral action are greatest, some major countries have embarked on an anti-multilateralist turn and withdrawn (or plan to withdraw) from major UN bodies, the Paris Climate Agreement, and the European Union. These policy reversals have diminished international cooperation norms and institutions and further strained the multilateral system. UN Secretary-General António Guterres calls this the “paradox” of contemporary global governance. We live in “a time when multilateral efforts are under pressure from unresolved conflicts, runaway climate change, widening inequalities and other threats ... global challenges [that] are more connected, but our responses are growing more fragmented.”¹

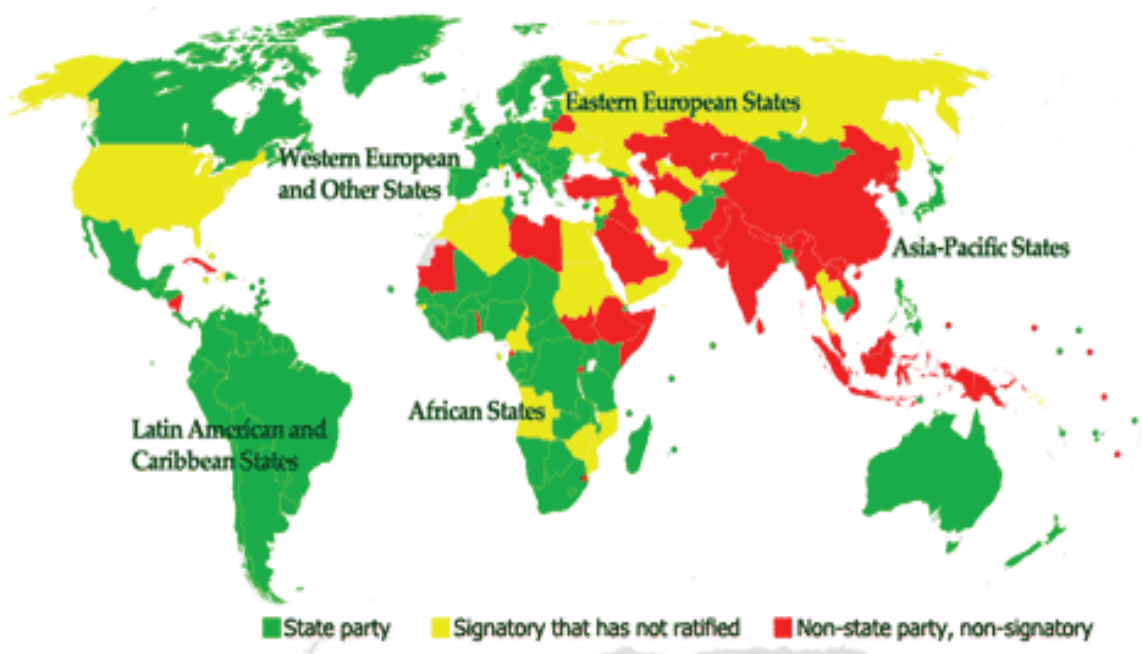
Many people feel left behind by economic globalization, technological advancement, and worry that their cultures are being lost to “globalism,” fueling suspicions and even hostility to forms of international



cooperation. At the macro level, many injustices, real or perceived—and between or within states—are sources of increasing insecurity in the world. Consequently, a

backlash has emerged in several influential countries to global norms and institutions that aspire to better manage globalization in a manner that, in effect, benefits all

Figure 2: Status of ratifications and signatures of the Rome Statute establishing the International Criminal Court



(Source: International Criminal Court website. "[The States Parties to the Rome Statute.](#)" Accessed July 17, 2019.)

nations and peoples.

Equally alarming, the feeling of not benefitting (enough) from globalization is coupled with a desire to redefine national identities as incompatible with global citizenship. Globalization is felt, by some, to contribute to a decline of national identities in favor of a new, transnational culture, which can feel alien to many and breed resentment among those who are deeply attached to national traditional customs, rites, folklore, and beliefs. Notwithstanding these concerns, some countries are still aligning behind efforts to strengthen multilateralism and build a stronger sense of global community and responsibility. For example, France and Germany recently formed a new Alliance for Multilateralism to counter the growing tide against globalization and other integrative

processes.²

Challenges to the International Legal Order

The current multilateral system is buttressed by shared rules and norms, which are at times adjudicated by international judicial institutions. Institutions, such as the International Court of Justice (ICJ), the International Criminal Court (ICC), and the dispute settlement mechanism of the World Trade Organization (WTO), make important contributions to upholding peace, human rights, ensuring human security, and providing a fair system of international trade. However, these international justice providers are not without critics. The ICC, for example, has been criticized for focusing on prosecuting African leaders and failing to hold great powers accountable (many are

not state parties; see Figure 2). In addition, limitations related to its ability to enforce arrest warrants have resulted in diminished perception of legitimacy, a common problem among many global justice institutions. As a result, certain countries have left or are considering withdrawing from the ICC, while others hesitate to join it. Meanwhile, the ICJ remains inhibited by the fact that only seventy-three states (38 percent of the UN's membership) have accepted the "World Court's" general compulsory jurisdiction.³ Moreover, the implementation and enforcement of important multilateral agreements, including the Paris Climate Agreement and the Iran Nuclear Deal, face considerable obstacles. Lack of effective and equitable enforcement authority undermines the legitimacy of these multilateral institutions and agreements, weakening their influence in global governance.

In the economic domain, the rules of international trade should be upheld by the WTO through its panels and Appellate Body. The U.S. has blocked the appointment of an appellate judge of the WTO, hampering its ability to resolve disputes effectively.⁴ Without an effective way to resolve conflicts, the international community can fall into a cycle where states feel that there is no valid multilateral institution for dispute resolution, so they make unilateral decisions that then lead other states to make similar decisions.

The Growing Reach of Regional Organizations

As power diffuses toward a multipolar system of global governance, regional organizations are contributing political support, financial resources, and technical expertise to global problem-solving. H.E. María Fernanda Espinosa Garcés, President of the 73rd session of the UN General Assembly, recently referred to UN cooperation with regional and sub-regional organizations as a "cornerstone of the work of the United Nations."⁵ Diverse and numerous regional and sub-regional organizations worldwide are exerting influence and capabilities in helping, for example, to tackle the climate crisis, transnational and local conflicts, and

the obstacles to greater cross-border trade and investment.

In support of global climate mitigation and adaptation efforts, for instance, the European Union coordinates the largest emissions-trading system in the world among its member countries, which is estimated to contribute to a 43 percent reduction in emissions, by 2030, in the EU space.⁶ At the same time, to facilitate better conflict prevention and management, the Economic Community of West African States mediated the successful election and placement of a transitional government in Burkina Faso after a mass uprising against the previous government.⁷ Similarly, The African Union continues to participate actively in a "hybrid" peace operation with the United Nations in Darfur, which works to promote peace, gender equity, political inclusion, and sustainable systems for clean water.⁸ Furthermore, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) has made strides in recent years toward the negotiation and now implementation of a new free trade area for its ten member nations and other Asian countries, with several other ASEAN regional cooperation agreements under development.⁹ But despite demonstrated progress worldwide, regional organizations continue to face systemic challenges, such as chronic underfunding, lack of effective cooperation and coordination with other regional and international institutions, overlapping and unclear authorities within an organization or region, weak enforcement capabilities, and sometimes unrealistic mandates for risky field operations.¹⁰

Current International Responses

In response to the present "crisis of multilateralism," UN Secretary-General António Guterres initiated, at the start of his tenure in early 2017, a three-track reform plan dealing with the Secretariat's peace and security architecture, the UN development system, and management reforms to deliver a "21st-century United Nations focused more on people and less on process, more on delivery and less on

bureaucracy.”¹¹ Member State-driven efforts are now underway—following the UN General Assembly’s passage, in June of this year, of Resolution 73/299—to potentially consider broader structural reforms that reflect the diffusion of power and the need to overcome challenges to the international legal order, among other general characteristics of governance in a multipolar world. Next year’s (September 2020) 75th anniversary of the United Nations (UN 75) has the potential to advance several long-overdue changes in the institutions of the

global governance. The new government-led Alliance for Multilateralism, and civil society-led initiatives such as the UN 2020 Initiative and Together First campaigns, are well placed to help advance a renewal and innovation agenda at the United Nations, learning from recent successful campaigns such as “1 for 7 Billion” (see Box 1). And as further detailed in the final section of this overview report, whatever unfinished business remains after next September could become the business of a proposed early 2023 UN Summit-level meeting on the

Box 1: 1 for 7 billion ... a profile in how civil society and like-minded states can change global governance for the better

Throughout the history of the UN, the selection of the Secretary-General was in the hands of the permanent five members of the Security Council. This process was known for zero transparency and backroom deals that undermined the needed perception of the Secretary General as impartial. To change the selection process, a coalition formed by the Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung, United Nations Association U.K, World Federalist Movement, and Avaaz lobbied UN Member States to reform the process. They would eventually form the 1 for 7 Billion campaign, which received support from 750 organizations and more than 170 million people worldwide. On September 11, 2015, their efforts culminated with the passage of Resolution 69/321, mandating transparency in the Secretary-General’s selecting process, setting new transparent criteria, establishing informal dialogues under the auspices of the President of the General Assembly, and encouraging Member States to propose female candidates. Secretary-General António Guterres was the first to be nominated and elected as the Secretary-General of the United Nations under this more open and transparent process.

(Source: 1 for 7 Billion. “[General Assembly Adopts Historic Resolution on Improving Sec-Gen Selection](#).” 2015. Accessed July 31, 2019.)



future of multipolar governance and global institutions.

2. Population Movements and Social Dimensions of Governance

This section highlights the transformative nature of “people on the move”, social and economic inequality, and their respective impact on changing political dynamics and fostering cooperation both globally and within regions. Learning from current international efforts, it stresses that addressing global challenges in a multipolar world, such as refugees, better migration management, and promoting more equality within and between societies, requires both greater solidarity and a more equitable sharing of responsibility.

Refugees and Migration

There were an estimated 244 million international migrants¹² worldwide in 2015, an increase of 71 million since 2000.¹³ The factors underpinning migration include economic needs, inequality, geography, violence, and environmental threats.¹⁴ Meanwhile, the

number of refugees and internally displaced people reached a record 70.8 million in 2018,¹⁵ with 67 percent of refugees worldwide originating in five countries: the Syrian Arab Republic, Afghanistan, South Sudan, Myanmar, and Somalia.¹⁶ This trend has become unsustainable, particularly for the developing countries that host 85 percent of refugees worldwide and have borne a large proportion of the associated economic and human costs.¹⁷ Economic push factors, such as poverty, labor shortages, and overpopulation, have also had a substantial impact on increased migration from low-income to high-income countries. In 2016, an estimated U.S. \$413 billion in remittances was sent home by migrant workers from developing countries. This further influenced the political dynamics between developed and developing countries, and within regions and regional organizations.¹⁸

Forcibly displaced populations fleeing their states and communities, as a result of persecution, violence, or human rights violations, are extremely vulnerable and exposed to immense personal hardships. In the face of political, demographic, environmental, and socioeconomic drivers of migration, the need to enhance global



cooperation is essential, as movements of people across borders cannot be managed effectively by a single state acting alone.¹⁹ At the same time, the global migration governance system—and its accompanying laws and norms—is under immense strain. Countries such as Turkey, Jordan, Greece, and Italy are under acute pressure, and more solidarity and equitable responsibility-sharing is urgently required. In Europe, for instance, the increased number of migrants has added pressure on political systems, with some countries voting against or failing to participate in finalizing, in December 2018, the United Nations’ Global Compact on Migration, which sets forward several consent-based guidelines intended to strengthen international cooperation on migration. This new framework was accompanied, in May 2019, by a UN pooled financing mechanism (the Migration Multi-Partner Trust Fund) to support new projects “and foster greater cooperation in pursuit of well-managed migration policies.”²⁰

Human Capital and Global Inequality

Over the past decade, the links between economic growth, inequality, and poverty have pervaded policy discussions worldwide. Growing inequality can also affect the full realization of human rights. Greater income

inequality, for instance, is associated with lower educational achievement, smaller availability of housing for low income families, and limited resources for the progressive realization of rights.²¹ The 2019 Sustainable Development Goals evaluation report further recognizes that, despite progress in reducing inequalities within and among countries—Goal 10—“greater focus is needed to reduce income and other inequalities.”²²

Since 1980, the richest 1 percent of humanity has captured twice as much of global income growth as the bottom 50 percent (see Box 2 for more trends).²³ Inequality has direct implications for economic growth and poverty reduction efforts, with the World Bank projecting that if economic growth is more inclusive, the global poverty ratio could decrease from 9.9 percent in 2015²⁴ to less than 3 percent in 2030 (the World Bank’s goal).²⁵ Despite repeatedly voiced concerns about the threat of extreme inequality at high-level meetings of the Group of 20 (G20), the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund, the United Nations, and the World Economic Forum, progress remains slow and any positive results are both limited and dispersed.

Box 2: Global Inequality at a glance

- Between 2006 and 2015, billionaire wealth rose by nearly 13 percent while average workers saw just a 3 percent increase—a nearly six-fold difference.
- Women contribute \$10 trillion in unpaid care annually.
- While the bottom half of adults collectively owns less than 1 percent of total wealth, the richest decile (top 10 percent of adults) owns 85 percent of global wealth.
- Median wealth in North America is currently nearly 200 times the median wealth of Africa.
- Women’s share of global wealth rose in the 20th century in both absolute terms and relative to men, but some groups, particularly single mothers and divorcees, continue to lag behind economically. Further, this rise is not distributed across all regions—some parts of the world still have large wealth gaps.

(Sources: Oxfam. “[Reward Work, Not Wealth](#).” January, 2018. 10. Accessed July 30, 2019; and Credit Suisse Research Institute. [Global Wealth Report 2018](#). October, 2018. 9, 17, 31. Accessed July 30, 2019”.

Current International Responses

Despite an increased push-back against multilateral institutions and cooperation, collective efforts of the international community, often with limited resources, continue to alleviate the most extreme hardships facing migrants and refugees, and to reduce extreme forms of inequality. At the political framework level, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the 2015 Addis Ababa Action Agenda on Financing for Development, and the 2018 Global Compact for Migration represent important expressions of global collective action. At the technical level, global institutions, such as the International Monetary Fund, have increased support to countries on tax collection and reducing income inequality through strengthening tax policies. But global issues, such as migration, refugee flows, and inequality, are also regional and local challenges that must be tackled in partnership with regional and sub-regional organizations, as well as governments. At the beginning of 2018, for example, the

European Union, the African Union, and the United Nations together repatriated and relocated 16,000 migrants from Libyan camps.²⁶ Notwithstanding this kind of initiative, collaboration between global and regional organizations is, in general, limited and should be strengthened to counter threats that require simultaneous global and regional action.

3. Gender and Youth Dimensions of Governance

This section presents challenges to shaping a fair and inclusive global governance system by looking at the status, level of participation, and new engagement tools provided to women and youth worldwide. With a focus on challenges and opportunities for women's equality and empowerment; "Youth, Peace and Security" as a catalyst for youth inclusion in governance; and an evaluation of inclusive governance in a multipolar world, it highlights the imperative for the further meaningful participation of women and youth in all levels of governance.



**Nearly 25 years after the 1995
Beijing Women's Conference:
Assessing women's progress**

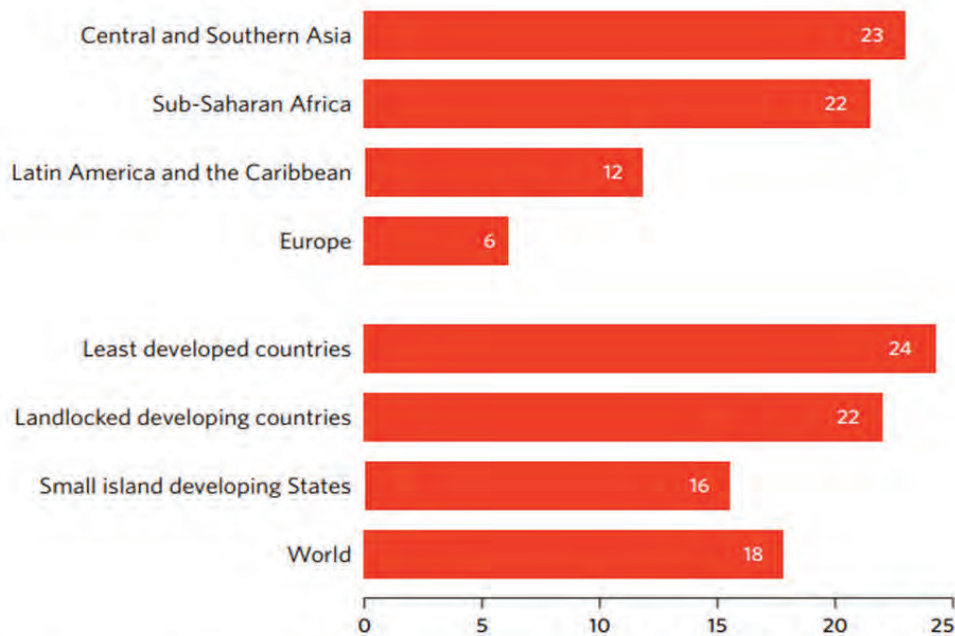
Significant milestones for the gender equality global agenda, the Beijing Declaration and the Platform for Action, adopted in 1995, and UN Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 1325 on Women Peace and Security, in 2000, helped to advance women's empowerment and gender equality worldwide. Globally, since their adoption, the gender gap in primary education has closed significantly, the rate of maternal mortality has been halved, myriad national and international policies and laws were adopted to prohibit discrimination and violence against women, and a broader recognition of the relationship between women's empowerment and prosperity was achieved.²⁷ In further support of this agenda, the Canadian government, in 2019, announced a significant investment of CAD \$1.4 billion in sexual reproductive health by 2023.²⁸ With a confluence of anniversaries—25 years since the Beijing Declaration, 20 years since the adoption of UNSCR 1325, and 10 years since the establishment of UN Women—2020 represents an opportunity for stocktaking and for strengthening the implementation of global commitments to empower women.²⁹

However, challenges to achieving gender equality still abound. Based on available data from 106 countries, the 2019 Sustainable Development Goals report found that: (i) 18 percent of ever-partnered women³⁰ and girls aged 15 to 49 years old experienced physical and/or sexual violence by a current or former intimate partner in the last 12 months (see Figure 3); (ii) women spend roughly triple the amount of time that men do each day on unpaid care and domestic work; and (iii) men's median hourly pay is 12 percent higher than that of women.³¹ Women human rights defenders further "encounter the restrictions, objectification, silencing, exploitation and oppression that prevent women from exercising their fundamental human rights."³² In addition, in April 2019, a backlash against women's rights was acknowledged in negotiations of a new Security Council Resolution on sexual violence in conflict.³³

At the same time, public awareness and advocacy efforts in the past decade have magnified. Fueled by this increased momentum, new social movements for women's empowerment and accountability, such as Me Too and the Women's Marches, have taken-off in many countries and regions worldwide. These people-led initiatives have been successful not only in promoting global solidarity for gender equality, but also attracting more support for women's empowerment from the business community.



Figure 3: Proportion of ever-partnered women and girls aged 15 to 49 years old subject to physical and/or sexual violence by a current or former intimate partner in the previous 12 months, latest available data, 2005–2007 (percentage)



Note: Only regions where available data cover at least 50 per cent of the population are displayed in this figure.

(Source: United Nations. The Sustainable Development Goals Report 2019, 32.)

“Youth, Peace & Security” and inclusive multilateralism

Generally portrayed as a vulnerable group—as both beneficiaries and threats to peace and security—young people’s contribution to confronting today’s most complex global threats is frequently overlooked. The adoption of Security Council Resolution (SCR) on Youth Peace and Security (YPS) 2250 (2015) and its follow-on resolution, 2419 (2018), represent major wins, facilitating both a paradigm shift and heightened commitment to the peacebuilding efforts of youth. Given their comprehension of the underlying causes of violence and their ability to help reduce tensions, young people need to be engaged as equal partners to shape their communities’ future, including by: monitoring the implementation of ceasefire agreements, mediating intra-ethnic

disputes, promoting a shared understanding of peace negotiations, supporting former ex-combatants to reintegrate in their communities, and using social platforms to promote peace and reconciliation (see Box 3).³⁴ In addition, young people are more inclined to embrace the modernization processes accompanying globalization and adopt a global identity that allows them to assimilate practices, lifestyles, and new cultural elements that are distinguished from their original culture. More exposure to different cultures can also further trigger a sense of cultural and social cohesion, which are key elements for sustaining peace.

SCR 2250 and 2419 continue to serve as catalysts for youth inclusion in local and global governance. Among the most noteworthy results are: progress on discussions regarding the development

of YPS National Action Plans, national youth policies, a comprehensive UN Youth Strategy (Youth 2030), the convening of robust global dialogues with youth on issues ranging from violent extremism to economic empowerment, the Independent Progress Study on Youth, Peace and Security—an “agenda-setting document” for the implementation of SCR 2250—and increased research and data collection on youth.

Nevertheless, stigmatization, marginalization, mistrust, political exclusion, and limited access to meaningful and reliable employment remain factors that inhibit or prevent young

people from contributing fully to building peace in their communities. The success of the YPS agenda is dependent on (and mutually reinforcing with) the full realization of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, especially Goals 4,5,8,16, and 17. The “unfinished agenda” for the next eleven years remains massive: 142 million youth of upper secondary age are out-of-school, almost 30 percent of the poorest 12- to 14-year olds have never attended school, 71 million young people are unemployed, and 156 million youth in low- and middle-income countries are living in poverty, despite being employed.³⁵

Box 3: Key messages for realizing youth inclusion and participation in peace processes

A joint civil society and youth-led United Nations initiative, the independent paper “We Are Here: An integrated approach to youth-inclusive peace processes” offers six key messages for realizing youth inclusion and participation in peace processes:

1. The agenda of youth inclusion must be implemented from a conflict-sensitive and do-no-harm approach.
2. The inclusion of young people during all phases of peace processes likely increases the sustainability of the agreements.
3. Youth inclusion and participation in peace processes should not be considered a new agenda in competition with other inclusion agendas.
4. Young people’s proximity to the table matters because young people are distinctively impacted by the results of decisions made at the formal peace negotiation table.
5. Ensuring the representation of diverse youth constituencies matters in peace negotiations.
6. Enabling youth political participation during peace negotiations will contribute to more inclusive and representative governance structures that build the basis for more peaceful societies.

(Source: Altiok, Ali and Irena Grizelj. “[We Are Here: An integrated approach to youth-inclusive peace processes](#)”. United Nations Office of the Secretary-General’s Envoy on Youth. July, 2019. Accessed August 1, 2019.)

Inclusive governance in a multipolar world

Strengthening global, regional, national, and local institutions to deliver for all people depends on inclusive approaches to governance, including the active

participation of women and youth. But from the local to the global level, women and young people’s political participation is either denied or restricted. Young people under 30 make up less than 2 percent of the world’s members of parliament,³⁶ while women, on average, account for only 24



percent of the membership of national parliaments worldwide.³⁷ As of June 2019, only 11 women serve as heads of state, 12 as heads of government, and only 20.7 percent of government ministers were women.³⁸ Youth engagement in multilateral institutions is also challenging due to limited communication channels, lack of formal spaces for participation, bureaucratic language, and the reality that current youth programs are largely accessible only to the most privileged.³⁹

In general, women in leadership positions confront national crises without resorting to violence and are more inclined to make larger investments in education, health, and other social services that promote the well-being of all.⁴⁰ Similarly, globalization creates conditions for youth to contribute more to economic and social progress through empowering information and mass communication technologies.⁴¹ Promoting women and youth participation in multipolar and multi-stakeholder governance can happen in different forms but, first and foremost, it could be advanced by applying, in full, agreed international frameworks, such as the

Beijing Declaration, the Women Peace and Security Agenda, and the Youth Peace and Security Agenda. Special attention should be given to those who lack opportunities participate in governance and decision-making processes that impact their lives.⁴²

Current International Responses

The Beijing Declaration, the Youth Peace and Security Agenda, and Women Peace and Security Agenda represent major achievements for recognizing women and young people's contribution to peacebuilding and development. Building on their momentum, Secretary-General António Guterres has committed to reach gender parity at the United Nations, as part of his broader reform program, by implementing a system-wide strategy on gender parity.⁴³ Young people have also gained more space in global policy fora: in September 2020, for example, youth representatives are invited to address the UN 75 Leaders Summit of the General Assembly in New York. However, despite these notable advances, more progress is needed to address gaps in women and youth participation at all levels of governance. Women's groups, such

as the recently formed Group of Women Leaders for Change and Inclusion (initiated by three former UN female leaders), and dynamic global youth networks, such as the Global Coalition on Youth Peace and Security, alongside other civil society groups, are poised to confront the present crisis of multilateralism and achieve more inclusive multipolar governance.

4. Political and Security Dimensions of Governance

This section explores the intersections between shifting dynamics of power, conflict, and emerging opportunities and challenges presented by technology in a multipolar world. With a focus on the diffusion of power within the international system; new interpretations of sovereignty and identity; the changing nature of conflict; and the emerging trends in technology, it underscores the importance of recognizing the close linkages between these topics and the impact they have on a closely interconnected world.

Diffusion of Power Globally

The increasing importance of developing countries in terms of both economics and security has manifested a shift toward a multipolar power distribution. Whereas the international power was wielded largely by a relatively small number of mainly western states in the past, the emerging BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa) countries, on average, accounted for 56 percent of global GNP growth (in Purchasing Power Parity terms) during the period 2008-2017, and this trend is expected to continue through 2030. These countries contain nearly 40 percent of the world's population, and their combined economic weight in 2015 was roughly equal to the G-7 countries.⁴⁴

The 2008-9 global financial crisis further illustrated the need for more inclusive, multipolar governance structures that also include influential developing countries.

In the wake of the crisis, the G20 was upgraded to a regular heads of state meeting, indicating a "commitment to the G20 as a better global steering committee than the G7/8."⁴⁵

Power and influence has also shifted away from nation-states toward non-state actors in the business community and global civil society, both recognized as "proactive stakeholders."⁴⁶ The United Nations Global Compact is an illustrative example of the relationship between global governance and the private sector, consisting today of some 10,000 companies from 161 different countries. The Compact unites around the promotion of the Sustainable Development Goals milestones and adheres to Ten Principles dealing with human rights, labor, environment, and anti-corruption.⁴⁷

Global civil society is similarly influential. While an accurate number of civil society organizations is hard to pin down, global civil society is estimated to account for an annual budget of U.S. \$2.2 trillion (a figure larger than the GDP of all but six countries), employing 54 million full-time staff, and having a global volunteer workforce of over 350 million.⁴⁸ As global institutions diminish in stature and influence, large civil society groups are poised to help fill the gap. As CIVICUS stated in its 2017-18 Annual Report: "The challenge for civil society is to acknowledge the shortcomings of the international system and work within the current system for greater inclusion and accountability."⁴⁹

New Interpretations of Sovereignty and Identity

The end of World War II represented an opportunity for nation-states to commit to a new world order based on collective security and action, respect for fundamental human rights, and the principle of sovereign equality of all states.⁵⁰ Similar to these first two pillars of the post-war era, respect for sovereignty—whether toward big or small states—remains a central pillar of international order today,

as well as a major factor shaping people's identity. Globalization, regionalization, and associated transnational economic, social, and political changes have led, however, to a reconceptualization of sovereignty and identity. With ever-growing interconnectedness fueled mostly by markets and technology, but also expressed and accelerated by myriad global and regional organizations, the centuries-old notion of sovereignty continues to evolve in ways consistent with the emergence of concurrent national, regional, and global identities.

In the present multipolar and global context, the principles of state sovereignty (seen as "the link between sovereign authority and territoriality") and national sovereignty (the relationship between a sovereign authority and a specific population) are detached from each other.⁵¹ On the one hand, the voluntary collaboration of sovereign states is seen as a powerful tool for legitimizing international organizations and adopting international treaties, but the increased capacity for collective action also, in effect, strengthens respect for state sovereignty.⁵² On the other, modern nationalism seems,

at times, to equate the rise of strong global and regional institutions with an attack on national sovereignty and the cultural identity of a country's citizens. The loss of sovereignty over national customs and traditions imported from and even imposed by external actors, including the phenomenon of "cultural appropriation," are frequently cited by those who feel threatened by globalization.

Moreover, the United Nations and regional bodies are critiqued for not enforcing the principle of sovereign equality in an impartial manner. Outside military interventions (even when authorized under Chapter Seven of the Charter) resulting in regime change are widely criticized, as they are viewed as a violation of sovereignty and, therefore, inconsistent with international law and agreed norms. Similarly, twenty-first century proxy warfare has changed the rules by which both state and non-state actors engage in and exacerbate (through direct interference) intrastate conflicts. Transnational social movements, the proliferation of weapons, the changing nature of alliances, and increased involvement of third-party armed forces are further reshaping the frontlines of



what may have started as more traditional internal disputes and civil wars.⁵³

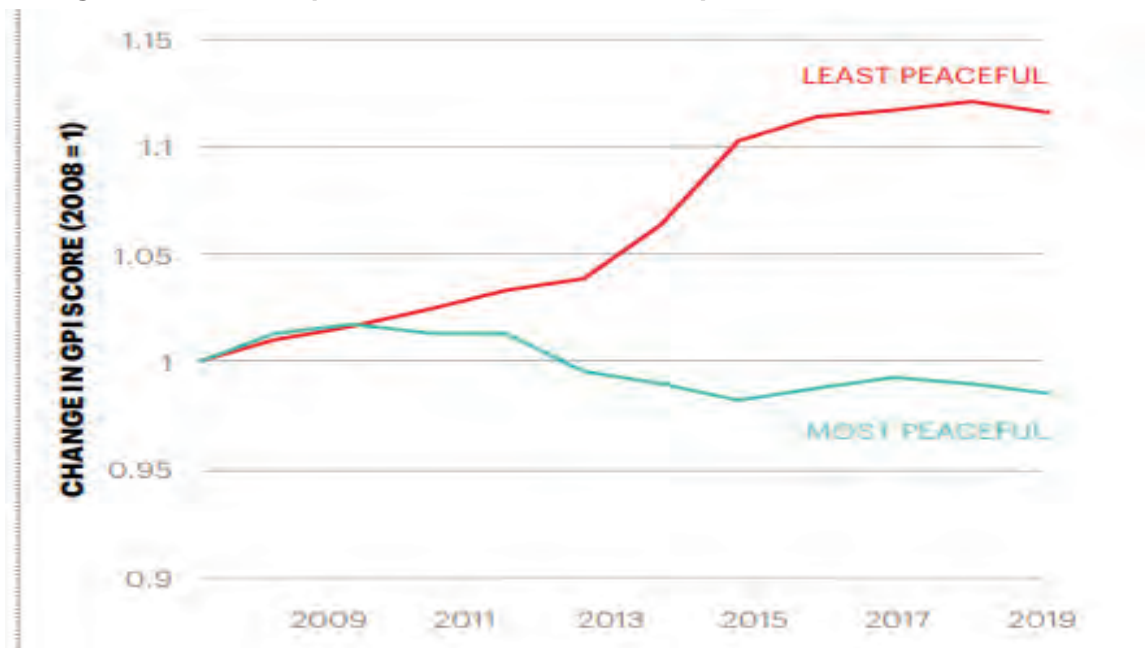
However, when agreed international laws and norms are upheld and global and regional institutions are given the chance to resolve conflicts peacefully through dialogue, they can serve as champions of the sovereign equality of all states. When successful in the provision of peace and other public goods and aspirational goals, these bodies naturally cultivate positive (non-exclusive and healthy) global and regional identities, alongside an inclusive and positive sense of national identity and pride.

Changing Nature of Conflict

While great power war has declined over the past several decades, there has been a parallel rise in intrastate conflict after reaching a record low in 2010.⁵⁴ Battle related deaths increased tenfold from 2005 to 2016, and terrorist attacks and fatalities rose sharply over the past 10

years.⁵⁵ These conflicts are a principal driver of humanitarian crises and impact the global economy, costing nearly U.S. \$1.2 trillion in purchasing power.⁵⁶ Further, the gap between the most peaceful and least peaceful countries has increased between 2008-2019 (see Figure 4).⁵⁷ Because of the increasing interconnectivity of the world's peoples, markets, and cultures, these intrastate conflicts that were once relatively confined to a geographical space are now felt around the world and have the potential to significantly affect international security. Civil conflict is also often tied to organized crime, with warring factions often belonging to drug cartels or criminal gangs, further complicating standard rules of engagement.⁵⁸ The correlation between violence and extreme poverty is one of the principal obstacles to reaching the Sustainable Development Goals. By 2030, "more than 80% of the extreme poor are expected to live in countries affected by violence and conflict."⁵⁹

Figure 4: Trends in peace: 25 most and 25 least peaceful countries, 2008-2019



(Source: Institute for Economics and Peace, "[Global Peace Index 2019](#)". June 2019. Accessed July 14, 2019.)

Increasingly, the linkages are also becoming more acute between international instability and dysfunctional governance at global, regional, and national levels. In short, the collective definition of what constitutes a “threat to international security” is expanding to include issues of domestic governance failure, intrastate conflict, humanitarian crises, refugee movements, and even environmental factors. Record high numbers of forcibly displaced peoples are in desperate need of assistance, with the UN estimating the forcible removal of more than 70 million persons from their homes, including more than 25.9 million refugees, half of whom are under the age of 18.⁶⁰ The resulting shocks to the international system have become a highly contentious issue. Developing countries host 84 percent of world refugee population and are struggling to support them.⁶¹

Cyber and other Emerging Technologies

Exponential growth in cyber and other technologies further impact the political and security dimensions of governance in a multipolar world. A recent report from the UN Secretary General’s High-Level Panel on Digital Cooperation illustrated the importance of strengthening multilateralism to maximize the benefits and minimize the harms of digitalization.⁶² Cyber-attacks and

the dissemination of technology that can be used for ill are of particular concern. The potential for cyber-attacks is widespread in terms of both capabilities and targets. For example, nefarious actors can utilize “bot” technology to undermine inclusive political processes by spreading misinformation and supporting extremist narratives.⁶³ Yet more dangerous is how cyber-attacks increasingly target everything from personal or government computers to city power grids and even nuclear facilities. Another topic of considerable concern is the digital targeting and exploitation of vulnerable populations, particularly children (see Box 4).

As we become more dependent on electronic networks globally, cyber-attacks will likely multiply. Further, the use of cyber technologies, particularly through social media platforms, has played a prominent role in both intrastate conflict and cooperation. And while online platforms, such as Twitter, Facebook, or WhatsApp, allow for people to communicate and coordinate effectively, these technologies are also employed by bad state-based and non-state groups to coordinate attacks and recruit members.⁶⁴ In short, these relatively new technologies do not discriminate between good and bad actors; they can be employed effectively by either.

Box 4: The Dark Side of the Web

- Nearly 1/3 of children have been exposed to “violent or hateful” online content
- Governments directed 188 separate shutdowns of internet access in 2018 alone
- In 2018, cybercriminals stole U.S. \$1.5 trillion—an amount comparable to the national income of Spain
- More than 175,000 children go online for the first time every day—a new child every half second
- 57,335 websites hosted media of sexually exploited children in 2016

(Source: UNICEF. “[Children in a Digital World](#).” 2017. Accessed July 16, 2019; and UN High-level Panel on Digital Cooperation. [The Age of Digital Interdependence](#). Accessed July 16, 2019.)

Technological innovation to weaponry is also a pivotal concern for global security, particularly as access to these advances is increasing. The evolving nature of bioweapons, for example, present a number of unique and new challenges in a hyperconnected world. Utilizing information gained from the Human Genome Project, the ability to design and engineer viruses for which no immunity exists is projected, by 2025, to be in the hands of any well-trained microbiologist, defined simply as a master's degree holder from a major university. This would require only a modest laboratory and a space as minimal as a small basement or garage to accomplish, providing an opportunity for motivated non-state actors, individuals, or criminal organizations to carry out devastating biological attacks at relatively little cost.⁶⁵ Further, the various methods by which a biological weapon can be delivered—for example, simply hidden in an aerosol can or spread through contaminated food—makes deterrence and prevention difficult.

Current International Responses

The international community has made

attempts to respond to these changing dynamics of conflict and security. As the connections between intrastate crises and international security have become clearer, efforts are underway to improve coordination between previously segmented communities. The implications for international security from, for example, climate change, refugee movements, intrastate conflict, and technological advancements are also better understood. The UN, in particular, has undergone some institutional reforms under Secretary General António Guterres directed toward this aim. The Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs was created through a merger of the former Department of Political Affairs and the Peacebuilding Support Office, and it is working closely with the Department of Peace Operations in the areas of preventing and responding to protracted armed conflict at the country and sub-regional levels. Through broader UN system-wide strategies to “sustain peace”, these two major departments are also engaging departments and agencies across the United Nations’ sustainable development and human rights pillars, as well as relevant regional and sub-regional organizations.



5. Economic and Technological Dimensions of Governance

This section outlines fundamental economic and technological challenges and opportunities for multipolar governance stemming from economic shocks across borders, corruption in the global financial system, and the role of technology. Giving attention to preventing and mitigating the impact of international economic shocks; to combatting illicit financial flows, resource exploitation, and tax avoidance; and to improving digital cooperation, including in the cybersecurity space, it demonstrates that a recommitment to effective multilateralism, combined with new approaches that leverage new technologies, are imperative if governing institutions are to keep up with the rapid pace of change globally.

Cross-Border Economic Shocks

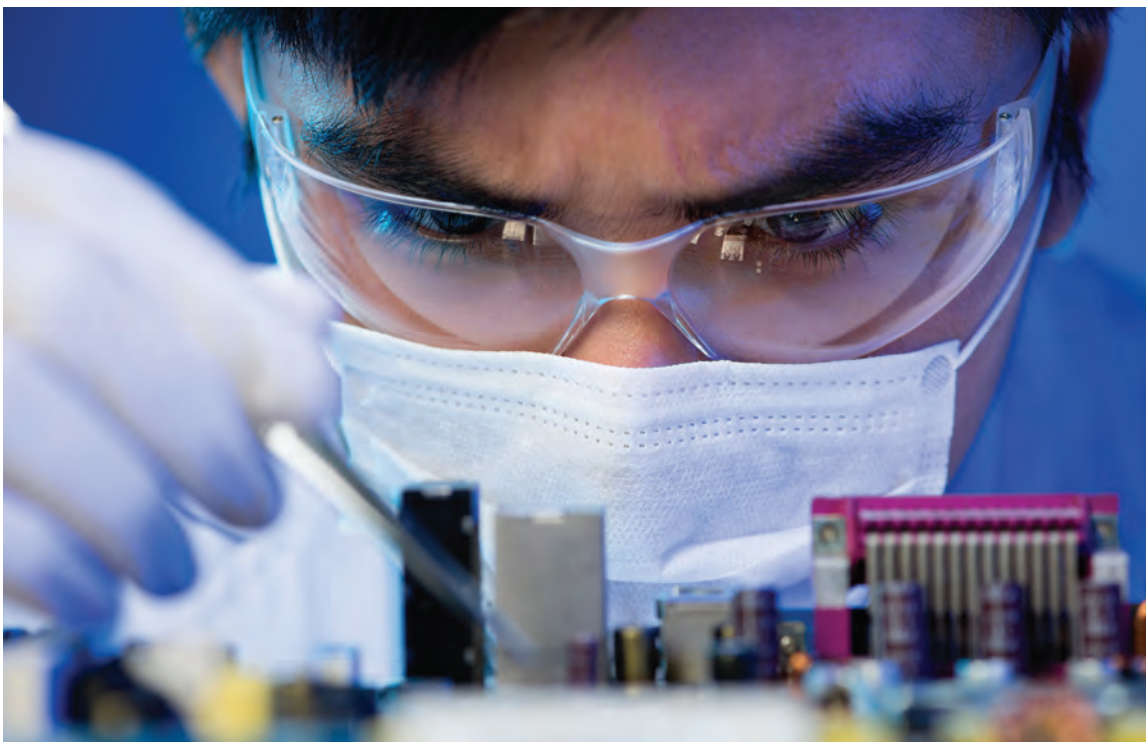
The increasing interconnectivity of the global economy presents innumerable opportunities and challenges for the international community. As the world's markets become more intertwined, shocks in one part of the global economy can quickly ripple across the system. This

was most acute in the aftermath of the 2008–9 global financial crisis, which called into question the effectiveness of global economic governance bodies. The crisis had significant global impact: the International Monetary Fund estimates global bank losses at U.S. \$4.1 trillion.⁶⁶

Despite the upgrade of the G20 to Heads of State level meetings since November 2008 and establishment of the Financial Stability Board, concerns abound that our system of global economic governance is ill-prepared to prevent or mitigate the damage of new shocks to the system. Further, there remains a sharp divide between industrialized and developing countries, with respect to how they benefit from and influence the global economy. Illicit financial flows, tax evasion, and improperly managed resource exploitation have especially deleterious effects in the Global South.

Illicit Financial Flows

Global Financial Integrity estimates that, between 2006 and 2015, upwards of 20 percent of the value of trade between developing countries and advanced economies reflected illicit financial flows.⁶⁷ Hundreds of billions of dollars that could support infrastructure outlays or broader



societal investments are instead diverted illegally from many developing countries, benefiting elite minorities at the expense of most citizens.⁶⁸

The sources of these illicit flows vary from criminal organizations smuggling drugs or money across borders, to corruption, tax evasion, and large (and intentional) “mis-invoicing” by the legitimate import/export industries, a practice that underreports the value of goods coming in and out of the country. A 2017 study by Damgaard and Elkjaer, for example, found that U.S. \$12 trillion—approximately 40 percent of all foreign direct investment positions globally—is “completely artificial,” meaning that the money travels through shell companies and well-known tax havens.⁶⁹ In Africa alone, U.S. \$1.2 to \$1.4 trillion is estimated to have left the continent between 1980 and 2009. This estimate is roughly equal to Africa’s entire gross domestic product in 2013 and greatly outpaces the amount of aid it received during that same period.⁷⁰

Technology, Cybersecurity, and Blockchain in the Hyperconnected Global Economy

Advances in technology pose new opportunities and challenges. Digitalization, broadly classified as “innovative technologies that use digital communication and digital products, such as big data, e-commerce, e-government, cloud computing, [and] social media,” is fundamentally changing the ways in which peoples interact.⁷¹ Previously

unimaginable levels of information are now available literally at our fingertips through omnipresent smartphones. This provides opportunities for social interconnectivity across borders and access to new kinds of training and education. Further, digital technologies are pivotal to the realization of the Sustainable Development Goals, with the 2019 report of the Secretary General’s High-Level panel on Digital Cooperation concluding that, “Of the SDG’s 17 goals and 169 targets, not a single one is detached from the implications and potential of digital technology.”⁷²

But advancing, ubiquitous information technology also comes with downsides. Cybersecurity, for example, is a paramount concern in today’s hyperconnected global economy. The exponential expansion of internet access around the world has created new educational and economic opportunities. But it has also exposed billions of users to the activities of cyber criminals, many of whom reside in countries with a weak cyber defense infrastructure. Furthermore, as hacking technologies have evolved, the ability to carry out both individual-level and more sophisticated institutional-level attacks has grown steadily.⁷³ Recent estimates place the cumulative global cost of cybercrime at U.S. \$600 billion.⁷⁴ Some speculate that new technologies, such as blockchain, can be employed to increase transparency and reduce some of the risks associated with increased cyber connectivity (see Box 5).



Box 5: Some Positive Blockchain Applications in the Global Marketplace

Blockchain is a rising dynamic element of a hyperconnected world. Blockchain systems are “based on a shared universal ledger that records data, transactions, and agreements, allowing anybody to verify them without relying on a central authority.” While still early in its development and varied applications, blockchain has immense potential to make meaningful contributions. First, the United Nations predicts that blockchain may help in combating climate change due, in part, to the greater transparency and accountability that it can be used to promote. Second, because blockchain does not require the user to have a formal bank account, it provides an opportunity for those with restricted access to traditional banking to use “the lack of existing infrastructure as an opportunity to adopt the most advanced methods,” jumping ahead into the digital finance world. A recent International Data Corporation study further estimates that blockchain spending will increase to U.S. \$11.7 billion by 2022, with significant increases across the developing world.

(Sources: David Orban, Global Challenges Foundation, “[Blockchain technology and decentralized governance.](#)”; United Nations, “[How Blockchain Technology Could Boost Climate Action.](#)” June, 2017; Vinay Gupta and Rob Knight, Harvard Business Review, “[How Blockchain Could Help Emerging Markets Leap Ahead.](#)” May 17, 2017; and International Data Corporation, “[Worldwide Semiannual Blockchain Spending Guide.](#)” July 19, 2018. All accessed July 29, 2019)

Current International Responses

Global economic governance actors’ responses to the existing and emerging dysfunctionality include the establishment, in April 2009, of the Financial Stability Board. Composed of representatives from the central banks of 20 member countries, the board is an attempt to facilitate international financial stability and to prevent major cross-border economic shocks by coordinating “strong regulatory, supervisory and other financial sector policies” between national financial authorities and international bodies.⁷⁵ Efforts to address illicit financial flows and resource exploitation are found in the Automatic Exchange of Information standard and the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative, respectively, as well as transnational initiatives such as the UN Global Compact. Finally, recommended new approaches and capacities for countering cyber-related threats were recently put forward by the UN High-level Panel on Digital Cooperation.

6. Environmental Dimensions of Governance

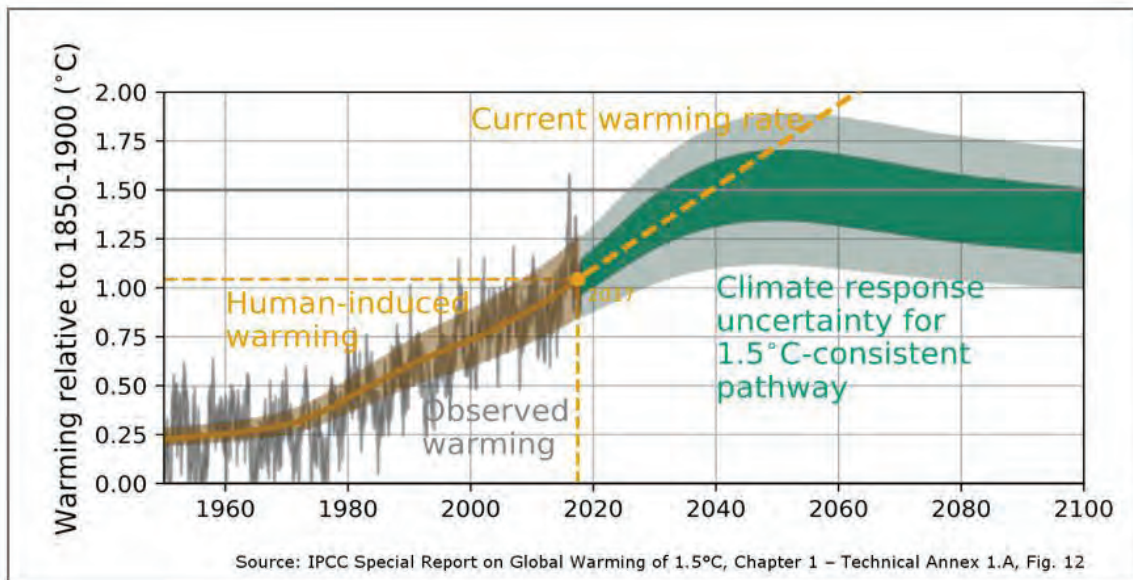
The purpose of this section is to examine the environmental dimensions of governance in a multipolar world. From the intensification

of the climate crisis to the closely related looming water crisis, current international responses demonstrate that new and innovative approaches—that mobilize political support and resources from a diverse range of governments, international organizations, and non-state actors—are imperative to achieve effective collective action and avert major calamities.

The Climate Crisis Intensifies

The growing threat of runaway climate change places the world on the verge of a grave and catastrophic global disaster. The latest International Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) report found that if current trends continue and the world fails to limit average global warming to less than 1.5 degrees Celsius (a threshold that looms as soon as 2030; see Figure 5), further severe and potentially irreversible consequences are anticipated, including sea-level rise of up to one meter by 2100.⁷⁶ From unusually powerful and numerous wildfires in the western United States, massive typhoons in South Asia, seasonal atmospheric phenomena such as the “polar vortex,” and other environmental disasters around the world, climate change’s devastating effects are already widespread and affect the lives of millions of people.⁷⁷

Figure 5: IPCC Projections for Global Warming



(Source: IPCC. Special Report on Global Warming of 1.5 °C Chapter 1 - Technical Annex 1.A, Fig 12.)

The Intergovernmental Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services reported, in May 2019, on rapidly increasing rates of species extinction, noting human action and climate change as a significant factor contributing to the spike in losses.⁷⁸ The Fourth National U.S. Climate Assessment acknowledged that the climate is changing faster than at any other point in human history as a result of human activity.⁷⁹ Despite the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development’s emphasis on environmental security, the 2019 Sustainable Development Goals Report indicates that climate change threatens to undo progress towards ending poverty and hunger.⁸⁰

Climate change is already upending the lives of millions of people, affecting their immediate means of survival. In 2008, two-thirds of Bangladesh’s land was less than five meters above sea level, and millions of its citizens could be displaced as (widely projected) sea levels continue to rise.⁸¹ While gang violence in Central America has received the bulk of the attention as a driver of migration to the U.S., a severe drought in Central America is starving thousands, forcing many to make the dangerous trek to the United States.⁸² The consequences of climate change are also heavily felt in

Africa’s Sahel region, driving many herders into farming land and exacerbating tensions or creating new conflicts over land and resources with sedentary groups.⁸³ Since the 1960s, Lake Chad, described by the UN Environment Program as “a lifeline to nearly 40 million people” in the Sahel, has shrunk by 90 percent, destroying local fisheries and leaving more than 4.5 million people in the Lake Chad Basin “severely food insecure.”⁸⁴

The Looming Threat of Water Scarcity

Though in many ways exacerbated by climate change, pervasive water crises worldwide are fueled by multiple factors, including agriculture and human consumption. Deserts and already arid regions in the Greater Middle East are perhaps most affected (see Box 6). Several innovative technical solutions have been put forward to combat the problem, including water de-salinization and the purification of wastewater, which can yield safe water for drinking and agriculture. However, both of these systems are energy-intensive and costly. Meanwhile, the groundwater reserves continue to diminish rapidly in many countries.⁸⁵ Additionally, anticipated water scarcity has led some states to secure

critical water resources upstream with dams and aqueducts, which can effectively deny water resources to downstream countries. Consequently, growing numbers

of countries are forming commissions to manage transnational rivers and other sources of freshwater, such as the Mekong River Commission.⁸⁶

Box 6: The Greater Middle East's Climate and Water-related Dilemmas

The Greater Middle East, one of the driest regions in the world, was identified by the IPCC as particularly vulnerable to climate change. The IPCC has predicted that the Middle East will warm five times faster than the rest of the world, further straining the region's already limited supply of fresh water. These difficult trends are compounding already simmering conflicts and creating new humanitarian crises. One of the countries anticipated to be affected the most, but by too much of the wrong kind of water, is Egypt. If current trends persist, rising sea levels could put its second-largest city of Alexandria underwater by the end of the century and increase the salinization of the Nile River Delta, placing the country's farmland under immense pressure. At the same time, prolonged drought has afflicted Afghanistan, making large swaths of land uninhabitable and forcing large numbers of people into already overcrowded cities. Furthermore, severe drought was also a contributing factor to the start of the Syrian conflict, worsening existing tensions with the ruling Alawite regime as drought-induced rural to urban migration combined with multiple other factors to trigger and sustain large-scale violence over the past eight years, with high levels of civilian casualties.

(Sources: World Bank. "[Beyond Scarcity Water Security in the Middle East and North Africa.](#)" 2018.; Broom, Douglass. "[How the Middle East Is Suffering on the Front Lines of Climate Change.](#)"; World Economic Forum: MENA Development Group, 2019.; Reliefweb. "[Afghanistan: Drought - April 2018.](#)"; and Werrell, Catilin and Francesco Femia. "[Climate Change Before and After the Arab Awakening: The Cases of Syria and Libya.](#)" February 2013. All accessed July 29, 2019.)



Current International Responses

While the problems associated with climate change are many and massive, there are multiple intergovernmental political frameworks and action programs to address this quintessential global governance challenge. At the forefront of the list, the Paris Climate Accord was signed, in December 2015, to bring countries together to limit the effects of climate change.⁸⁷ In December 2018, the 24th Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP24) met in Katowice, Poland, where the Katowice Rulebook was developed outlining procedures to help states implement the Paris Agreement.⁸⁸ Among the main rules, states agreed to start reporting their limits on carbon emissions, against their “Nationally Determined Contributions” (NDC). Their initial findings will be presented in December 2019 at COP25.⁸⁹ While the Paris Agreement is a step forward, many scientists believe it does not go far enough to keep global warming under two degrees Celsius, let alone 1.5 degrees, and pledges from UN Member States thus far will not limit cooling to manageable levels.⁹⁰ Moreover, the agreement is voluntary, so

NDC commitments are self-enforced and subject to change.⁹¹ And while voluntary commitments to internationally-agreed frameworks succeed in achieving broader buy-in from countries, the absence of an effective enforcement mechanism surrounding NDCs remains a significant barrier to effectively managing emissions and climate change.

In addition to the Paris Agreement, there are several other ongoing initiatives and ground-level actions to preserve the global environment. For instance, the United Nations initiated recently the “Global Pact for the Environment,” which seeks to find gaps within and identify synergies between more than three hundred environmental laws. In January, policymakers and civil society counterparts convened in Nairobi, Kenya for the first time, to set the process of developing the Global Pact in motion with key representatives of the international community.⁹² In September 2019, the UN is further hosting a major climate action summit, with discussions centered on climate financing, nature-based solutions, industry transition further away from fossil fuels, and reforming cities to take local action and operate in a greener manner.



III. Guiding Principles for Better Governance in a Multipolar World

Learning from hard-fought successes, as well as past weaknesses and failures of international and national actors—including governments, international organizations, global civil society, and the business community—to address the aforementioned dimensions of governance in a multipolar world, the following ten principles aim to strengthen governance and collective action across borders:

- 1. Resolve Conflicts Peacefully through Dialogue:** Conflicts between two or more parties internationally should, first and foremost, be resolved through discussion and compromise. Only after all peaceful measures have been exhausted should the use of force, in accordance with Chapter VII of the UN Charter, be entertained to resolve an international dispute.
- 2. Ensure Inclusive, Open, and Fair Decision-Making:** Decision-making at all levels of governance should be inclusive of all relevant stakeholders, marked by transparency, accountability, and

frequent dialogue, and reflect a common understanding of the universality of human dignity and equality.

3. Uphold International Law: All states have an interest in upholding the international legal order and developing it further in order to address the global challenges of our time. This includes abiding by legal obligations incumbent upon each state, peacefully resolving disputes, and making use of international dispute settlement mechanisms when necessary.

4. Respect the Sovereign Equality of All States: The sovereign equality of all states is a fundamental principle of international law enshrined in the UN Charter. In a multipolar world, emerging centers of power must respect the rights of smaller countries and to work together with them in a spirit of solidarity and cooperation.

5. Strengthen International Institutions: In a multipolar world, global governance needs to be an edifice that rests on many pillars. Therefore, states should invest in the capabilities, accountability, and overall effectiveness of international institutions to deliver global public goods, in close



collaboration with partners from global civil society and the business community.

6. Advance Human Rights and a Global Civic Ethic: In support of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and core international and regional human rights instruments, states and their partners in global civil society and the business community should work to promote basic human rights and develop a more universal sense of ownership of these rights, including by forging a common global civic ethic.

7. Safeguard Inter-Generational Rights and Responsibilities: The highest moral and ethical considerations should factor into political, economic, social, environmental, and other kinds of decision-making that may impact the health, security, and livelihoods of future generations, particularly regarding climate change and sustainable development.

8. Embrace Diversity and Tolerate Dissent: A multipolar world is also a multicultural world with many voices. States should work to foster a culture of respect for cultural, ethnic, religious, and regional diversity and strive for the broadest possible representativeness within global governance

institutions, while also affirming other core international values. Diverse multi-stakeholder dialogues that reveal different standpoints and interests are a virtue, as they help to understand each other's positions, address perceived cultural threats, and are the first step to reconciliation, compromise, cooperation, and shared enterprises.

9. Invest in Human Capital: In order to truly boost people-centered and humane global governance, both the public and private sectors need to invest significantly in human capital. Education is especially key to human development, human security, and resilient societies.

10. Conserve and Regenerate Natural Resources: In view of climate change and other pressing environmental challenges, humanity is over-stepping Earth's "planetary boundaries." Through multilateral and multi-stakeholder cooperation that engages states, international organizations, global civil society, and the business community, humanity needs to redouble its efforts to manage natural resources responsibly and move to a sustainable economic model.



IV. A Strategy for Global Governance Renewal and Innovation

Upgrading global governance for tackling 21st century problems requires more than simply a shared, comprehensive analysis of institutional and normative gaps, common guiding principles (including a powerful, ethical vision for a more just and peaceful world order), or even carefully designed global governance reform proposals. Rather, successfully “Getting-from-Here-to-There” needs a concrete strategy for inclusive global change, ingenuity, and garnering political support for a higher level of enlightened global leadership or, more succinctly, statesmanship.

Fortunately, the upcoming **UN 75th Anniversary Leaders Summit**, planned for 21 September 2020 in New York, provides a unique opportunity to better harness the ideas, networks, and capabilities of governments, international organizations, and myriad transnational actors from the business community and global civil society. Effective leadership capable of reimagining and then shepherding a new kind of governance in a multipolar and multi-stakeholder world depends upon the emergence of a new kind of multilateral diplomacy. In short, multilateral policy discussions must begin to move increasingly from a competitive zero-sum or lowest common denominator framework toward more collaborative negotiations.

Under the banner “The future we want, the United Nations we need: reaffirming our collective commitment to multilateralism,” the 2020 UN Leaders Summit will reach consensus on a “concise, substantive, forward-looking and unifying declaration that captures the collective commitment of Member States to multilateralism and to the United Nations and their shared vision for a common future ...”⁹³ Soon, H.E. Professor Tijjani Muhammad-Bande, the President of the 74th Session of the General Assembly (from September 2019 until September 2020), will appoint two co-facilitators to

lead intergovernmental negotiations on the declaration. Though every effort should be made to focus the declaration on revitalizing and strengthening the global governance architecture (including by a recommitment to the above guiding principles), given the limited time remaining and need to engage diverse voices worldwide, next year’s world leaders gathering may better serve as more of a launch pad—than a landing pad—for a broader, multi-year conversation on the future of governance in a multipolar world.

To advance the legacy and further develop any commitments made at the UN 75th Anniversary Leaders Summit, next year’s commemoration, including ceremonies marking UN Charter Day (26 June) and UN Day (24 October), could build support for and initiate officially a two and one-half year preparatory process toward a **proposed UN Conference on Multipolar Governance and Global Institutions** convened by March or April of 2023 (see Figure 6 below).⁹⁴ This global governance renewal and innovation effort stems from the recognition that: i) many developing countries and non-state actors, including in the business community and civil society, are steadily increasing their influence in world affairs—the transition to multipolar and multi-stakeholder governance; and ii) the world’s institutions of governance at all levels need to keep pace with growing global economic, political, technological, and environmental challenges.

A preparatory process, beginning in late 2020 in connection with UN@75 commemorations, could establish a conference secretariat at United Nations Headquarters led by a Director-General, who reports directly to the Secretary-General. The President of the General Assembly could, simultaneously, appoint teams of co-facilitators (consisting of one Permanent Representative from the Global North and one from the Global South) to lead four manageably-sized working groups organized according to the UN system’s main pillars: peace and security, sustainable development, human rights,

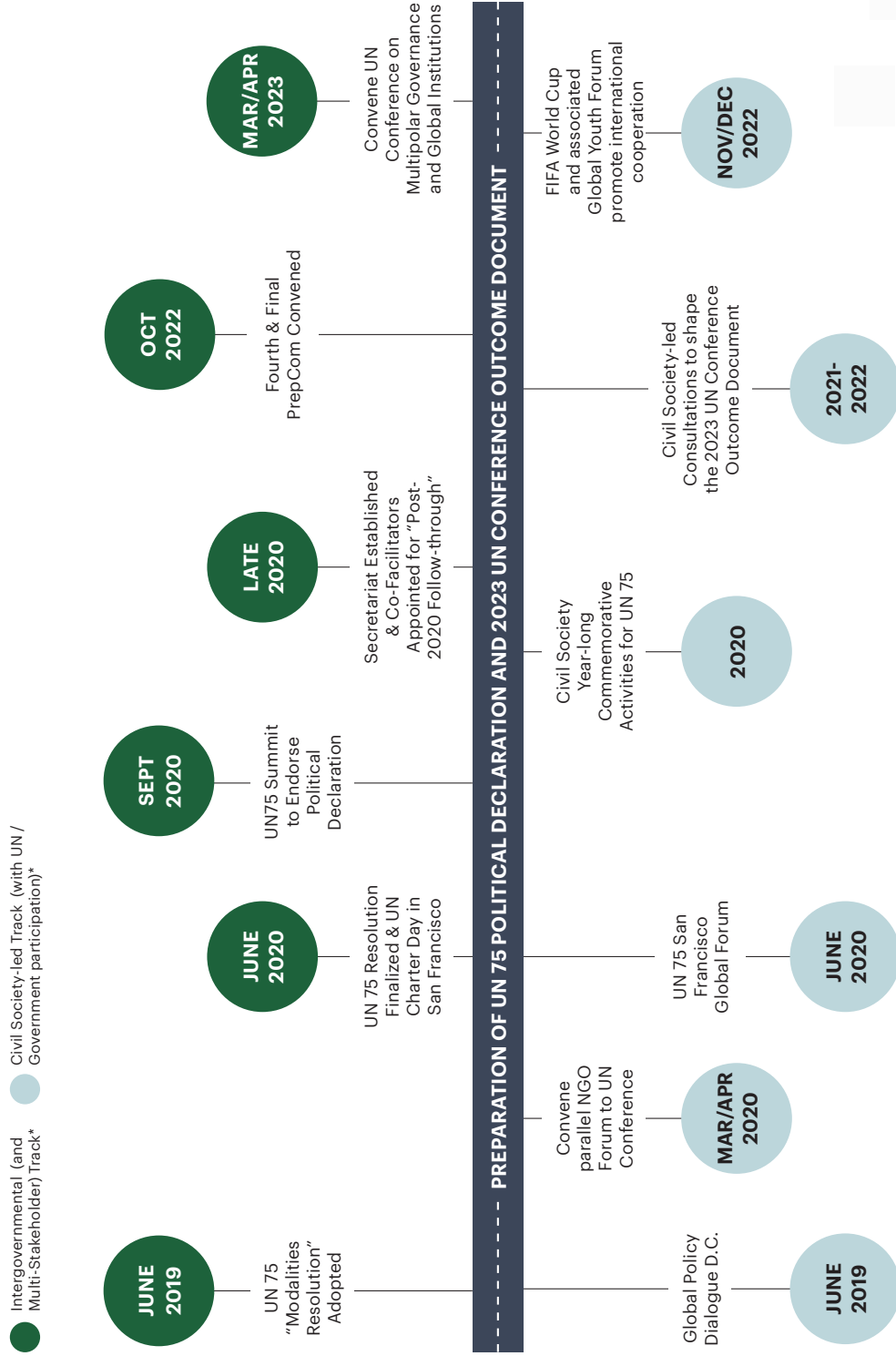
and climate governance. Spaced out around six months apart, four inclusive and separately organized Preparatory Committee (PrepComs) meetings could be held in different regions to review progress made in the four working groups, to promote important synergies between the working groups and maximize the voices and ideas of civil society at the most local level. Here, government-led coalition-building initiatives, such as the Alliance for Multilateralism, and civil society-led efforts, such as UN 2020 and the Together First campaign, could mobilize political support, raise the level of ambition, and ensure that the most innovative and timely proposals are deliberated upon and, then, possibly adopted in the final outcome document.

In part to build on the positive momentum and international goodwill generated from hosting the 2022 World Cup (21 November until 18 December 2022; at which time a Global Youth Forum could be convened to also promote greater international

cooperation), the State of Qatar is pleased to be considered as a possible host country for this proposed culminating summit-level gathering in early 2023. Given its partial emphasis on upgrading the global machinery needed to better support countries and communities in meeting their Sustainable Development Goals, the proposed United Nations Conference on Multipolar Governance and Global Institutions would be timed immediately to precede the mid-point (High-Level Political Forum) review of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, planned for July 2023 at UN Headquarters in New York. At the same time, this Summit on the future of our global governance system would seek to improve 21st century multilateral approaches to the wider United Nations agenda, including promoting international peace and security, combatting climate change, and safeguarding human rights, through an enhanced, across-the-board focus on diversity, diplomacy, and dialogue.



Figure 6: Roadmap to 2020 ... and 2023



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"I congratulate the Doha Forum and its mission to serve as a platform for global dialogue on critical challenges facing our world. Perhaps the most precious – and increasingly scarce – resource in our world today is dialogue: places to broaden understanding, share ideas, think out of the box and find common ground. We need more such platforms to respond to our collective challenges. I thank you for the space you have created through the Doha Forum "

António Guterres Secretary

General of the United Nations

"The main theme of the Forum, "Shaping Policy in an interconnected World," focuses on a number of major issues that require the urgent attention of global leaders. I really appreciate the efforts by the Qatari government and its partners to draw the world's attention to these important topics "

Tarō Kōno

Minister for Foreign Affairs of Japan Doha Forum 2018

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