

## Global Governance Futures

### Curated Session

The main aim of this session is to discuss futures of global governance and anticipatory approaches thereto, generating interdisciplinary dialogue and fostering a network of scholars interested to further research the topic.

Currently, the Western-led international order based on the core-periphery power gap is being replaced by a decentred order in which no single power – or cluster of powers – is pre-eminent. The Great Divergence, which characterised the explosive growth of a gap in per capita incomes between the West and the rest of the world starting the nineteenth century until the early 1970s, has been gradually replaced since the 1980s by its opposite, the Great Convergence. Several scholarly formulae try to capture the ongoing transition from an American-led Western world towards a post-American and post-Western world, including “nonpolarity”, “apolarity”, “de facto zero-polarity”, “interpolarity” or “decentred globalism”. Recent developments challenge the relative stability the system of multilateral institutions had represented for several decades. Accelerated globalization, the fragmentation of “the West” in economic, political and cultural terms, as well the rise of new powers (i.e. the BRICS) and regional power centres (China) address the occurrence of diverging interests and strategies vis-à-vis the globally institutionalized order. Throughout the most serious global economic and financial crisis since the Great Depression, international financial institutions and other international organizations have tried to adapt to this power shift as to better reflect the emerging powers’ role and place in the global economic power architecture. However, this process has been lately put to a halt, which has prompted some of the emerging powers, particularly China, to forge alternative financial institutions. Important is moreover that the normative consensus among actors to take jointly responsibility for global problems is fading in several areas. National interests and protectionist policies are in some countries instead put to the forefront. This goes together with an increase of authoritarian and populist politics, favouring unilateralist strategies. Of particular concern are the multifaceted crisis with which the European Union is confronted with, including the effects of Brexit, the rise of nationalistic movements across Europe, and the mounting issues of mass migration throughout Europe, particularly from refugees. Multilateralism seems to be falling apart in some areas such as free trade, migration/refugees and common security and defence policies.

There are also beacons of hope, however, for multilateralism. The adoption of the Paris Agreement on Climate Change and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in 2015 captured the engagement of virtually every member state of the United Nations as well as a multitude of concerned civil society organizations and other stakeholders. These agreements were manifestations of the capacity of the international community to formulate visions of a brighter future. At the same time these agreements could be a hidden Trojan horse for global governance - if states do not commit sufficiently to achieving the goals set out in these agreements, suboptimal implementation could deal a very damaging blow to the legitimacy of global governance in the eyes of people across the world. The pattern of internationally agreed upon aspirational goals that remain un-achieved is only too familiar for seasoned observers of multilateral cooperation of the past decades.

Although there is an increasing wealth of scholarly literature devoted to emerging powers, insufficient systematic research has been devoted to the implications for the emergent world

order of the gradual moving of these countries to the forefront of international stage. As the world is undergoing a paradigmatic power shift from a globalism centred in the West to a decentred globalism and non-liberal states are likely to have an increasing say in international affairs, at least five core questions need to be answered by scholars: How to manage relations between diverse modes of capitalist governance, including liberal democratic, social democratic, competitive authoritarian and state bureaucratic capitalisms? Will the emerging configuration regenerate the geopolitical conflict on the basis of political differences, or will it foster a more integrated geo-economics of peaceful competition under a new Bretton Woods system and/or a concert of capitalist powers? To what extent liberal and non-liberal peoples can work together in order to advance the global governance's public goods? What are the real consequences of "deglobalization", mainly promoted by populist nationalist? What would be the citizens' role in the future global decision-making system?

The session will have the format of a traditional symposium of five papers and a discussant.

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The panellists will primarily focus on reviewing the main challenges the liberal international order is confronted with, evaluating the prospects for inter-capitalist conflict and cooperation in financial-economic, political-diplomatic and security terms, and building an anticipatory global governance (AGG) framework of analysis.

The conference participants are invited to a dialogue on these and other related issues. By discussing them and debating the panellists' perceptions of them, the assembled group hopes for putting forward the stepping stones of a tentative anticipatory global governance (AGG) framework of analysis.