

**RESTRUCTURING OF THE WORLD ORDER IN CONTEMPORARY INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS**

Goran Zendelovski

Faculty of Philosophy – Institute for Security, Defense and Peace

[goranz@fzf.ukim.edu.mk](mailto:goranz@fzf.ukim.edu.mk)**Abstract**

*In the past decade a series of viewpoints and scenarios about the existing international order have appeared. The dilemma arises over the question which model explains the best the new constellation of international relations. Disintegration of the bipolar structure has left a number of potential crisis areas with undefined lines of delineation. Imbalance has created a strategic gap so even a small local tremor may create unforeseeable global consequences. The complexity arises from the various types and the intensity of the transnational challenges and threats that have impact on the role and activities of the international actors. Intensification of some issues, such as climate change, regulation of global financial markets, migration, disintegration of states, terrorism, proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, has additionally complicated the global state of affairs. Globalization has increased the impact and power of international organizations, transnational corporations, non-state actors and sub-state actors. There is an unequal distribution of power in international relations.*

**Keywords:** world order, power, unipolarity, multipolarity, security.

**Introduction**

Fast and dynamic changes in the world are accompanied by new security threats. In addition, there is deep diffusion of authority and power, which additionally worsens the global situation. The international problems have intensified with the appearance of new global elites, raising inefficiency of the international institutions, the incensement of the regional blocks and the non-state actors (*Global Trends 2025: A Transformed world*, 2008). The inability of states and international organizations to deal with the threats by themselves has produced climate of fear. Many wonder if the world faces a new period of

transformation which may endanger the global security and stability. Thus, a question arises: is it possible to create a global world community in the face of so many tensions among the countries and peoples and if the current world order is able to guarantee peace and prosperity? (Micovic 2001).

The end of the bipolar world order led to essential changes in the international system. Many scholars have been trying ever since to define new world order. The very phrase "*order*" is an object of different interpretations. The realists claim that it refers to the structure and distribution of the power among the states in the international system. The liberal theorists emphasize the role of the international organizations. For some the meaning of 'new world order' has negative connotation. For instance, Jean-Marie Le Pen argues that it entails conspiracy made by the financial and political elites with aim to dominate the world (Soborski 2013). Also certain anti-Western groups argue that the term is but a Western concept of domination over non-western states. For Kissinger this term means balance of forces, while Chomsky claims that it represents a form of a domination of individuals over the majority, some individual states over the majority to other countries, the rich over the poor (Kissinger 1994; Chomsky 1996). However, new world order is not a new term: it has been used for more than 20 years mostly as a synonym for globalization. Its meaning usually relates to economic integration, information technology and communication, technological progress and even establishment of a global security system.

The main idea of this section is to present the features of a few generally accepted models of world order. The first one, the model of global leadership, refers to the role of the US as the only the only remained superpower, that is unipolar leader in terms of economic, political, cultural and military power (Huntington 1999). The other model is Henry Kissinger's one: in the 70's he was arguing in favor of a pentagonal leadership of USA, Europe, China, Japan and Russia that would establish balance on a global level (Kissinger 1994). In addition one should mention the concept of world government and global governance which assumes inclusion of numerous and diverse actors in decision-making process on a global level with a sole aim - creation of a better world (Turek 1999). Giddens (1998, 168) proposes world government that would integrate the World Trade Organization, the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank, while the UN could be restructured in a way to represent a parliament and a council. Other proposals assumed UN reform by inclusion of more states in the UN Security Council. The idea is stability in the world by careful representation of each world region. Such a composition of the UNSC would guarantee legitimacy of the institution, while the member states may play a role of a

“centers of power” in the process of building peace and prosperity in that part of the world they represent.

### **Dispersion of Power in Modern International Relations**

The series of economic and political processes have contributed to bigger diffusion i.e. appearance of new centers of political, economic and military power. Globalization system (Friedman 2003) not only results in numerous important trends that come as waves but also fulfils vacuum left by the end of the Cold War. The system of the Cold War was a static system with a structure and rules established and abided by the super powers. It rarely happened some of them to cross in the other’s sphere of influence. The world was divided into three spheres: communist, capitalistic and non-aligned, and each state had a place in just one of them. The ideological conflict produced constant tensions, anxiety and even possibility for mutual nuclear destruction. Globalization, on the other hand, is rather dynamic process with constant development and acceleration, and with ability to induce integration in all spheres (Friedman 2003, 20-21). Every state is involved in some globalization network. This system has far more complex structure and is built around three balances that overlap and influence each other. The first one is the traditional balance between nations-states, the second one is between nations-states and the global market, while the third refers to the relations between nations-states and super powerful groups and individuals (Friedman 1999, 20-25).

Brzezinski (1997, 87) has pointed out that after the fall of the Berlin wall the Eastern bloc “disappeared” which disrupted the old global balance in geopolitical and security terms. It created a strategic gap and a situation in which a number of states became “black holes” and later on even crisis flashpoints. Carl Schmitt argued that the Cold War was a world of friends and enemies, while the world of globalization has a tendency to transform them into competitors (in: Friedman 1999). Unlike the Cold War when the enemy was known, the new era of globalization brings uncertainty because of the fear from a rapid transformation of the enemy that cannot be seen and foreseen since it may vary from one extreme to another; also, its power may get different forms (economic, technological, etc.). Globalization gives unequal chances; because of that it is equated with a situation named “*nautonomy*”. It refers to the unequal production and distribution of life chances, where the political participation is disrupted or limited (Held 1997, 202).

Unequal power distribution is a product of the economic and political globalization, and its consequences are not equally distributed on classes, nations, gender groups and

regions. It affects both the developed and undeveloped states, but is surely worse for the states that are at the bottom of the global hierarchy and that are most exposed to the effects of global inequality (Held 1997, 102-103). Thus the current global order is far from state of balance; to the contrary, it enters a phase of systemic transition that may produce chaos and disorder. The effects differ on a macro and micro level. Most of the arguments are in favor of the system on a macro level because of the free trade in which states may have different shares (depending on their capacity and power) in the global system (Show 2008, 148).

Globalization has led to radical changes of the international relations, such as: reduction of state sovereignty, flexible economic and trade rules, decrease of cultural autonomy and endangering of the national identities. It displays image of a world in a chaotic and unpredictable transformation. In fact, it is a period of a transition, with no clearly defined new norms and rules. According Wallerstein (2003) this long-term transition resembles political fight between two camps: one of them consists of those who want to keep their privileges of the existing system of inequality, while the other consists of those who seek birth of a new more democratic system.

It is very difficult to set precise criteria for evaluation of certain new world. Yet, the standards for progressiveness, where the economic indicators are considered which are standards for an efficient development and stress the capacity of the production forces, then the political indicators, which show whether there is a bigger progress in achievement of human rights and freedom and the third indicator for that how much the social system enables completely an encouragement of a bigger degree of the social-economic equality, i.e. contributes for decreasing of the class differences, are those that allow a certain comparison (Ikenberry 2000). For the time being new rules of a game are not set, and because of that it is difficult to answer the question whether the structure of the "old" world order can be changed with a new structure, and which should be approved by a bigger number of international participants. At the moment the world is somewhere in between the old order based on sovereign nation-states and the new order of a world community or citizens of the world. In addition, the international actors differ a lot in terms of their politics, economy, civilization norms etc. Such asymmetry leads to confrontation or to vacuum that involves unpredictability and disturbances of the regional and global balance (Beck 2004, 163-164). The degree of uncertainty is increased in the regions and states that are at the strategic lines of separation.

### Security Implications of New World (Dis)Order

The evolution of the new global and regional actors indicates the requirement of creating a new paradigm of international relations that will reduce the factors which cause instability. As already said globalization has increased tensions in international relations and has relocated the power centers. It gives opportunities for certain states and organizations to play significant role in the new international structure. Globalization has thus created conditions for the new actors to join international scene, and has made possible certain leveling of the existing relations among the states.

Global politics is based on complex relations between numerous actors with a different power and influence. The actors belong to several categories, such as: (1) states (200), (2) transnational corporations (77200 mostly from highly developed states) that accomplish 70% of the world economy, (3) international governmental and non-governmental organizations (Gidens 2007, 62; Solte 2009, 183; Кикеркова 2003, 5 and 154). Also there are numerous no-state subjects that use violence against the state monopoly of power (Al Qaeda, Islamic State, private military companies, drug-dealers, triads etc.).

Obviously globalization has decreased the role of the West in the global context and transferred some "weight" and responsibilities on non-Western states. The international order has never been neutral, which could be identified in the dominant Western brand "*Made in USA*". But the hegemony and continuous military interventions require serious financial means that weakens current hegemony. The indicators for this situation relate to: instability of the national currency; increasing of military expenses; weakening of the authority of worlds financial institutions; fiscal crisis and hegemonic state; weakening of the power of influence; organizing and stabilization of worlds political scene; increasing of military interventions, clashes and armed conflicts in the world (Wallerstein,1995).

Obviously, the world will not always have the colors of the West: future does not belong only to some privileged states, nations or organizations. Other actors may impose new rules of the game that differ to the ones established by the West. These include the group BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa), South Korea, Japan and Indonesia, Saudi Arab and UAE (*Global trends 2025: A transformed world* 2008, 8). The West is neither a leading economic, financial, nor demographic force anymore; its leading position in the global order has become questionable. It has brought changes in the leadership and insignia to other non-Western countries too. For the time being, potential

candidates that may mark global order are Russia, China and India, so accordingly this could become a century of Asian prominence (*Mapping the Global Future 2020*, 2004). The category "WEST" slowly fades away, and the first position is taken by the countries from the category "REST". Most likely the "new managers" will create new rules in order to increase their influence in reforming the international political and financial institutions. The reforms will depend on the intensity, growth, the interests and the goals of the "new owners". It is expected the new global leadership to be accompanied by numerous international implications, such as:

- change of the geopolitical and geo-economical landscape;
- new challenges for states, international organizations and non-state subjects and
- Increased feeling of insecurity (*Mapping and Global Future 2020* 2004, 25).

Which indicators show that changes have taken place and have threatened the peace and the stability? In that context one may point out a few global crises that have caused radical change in geopolitical, security and economic terms, such as:

- (1) Terrorist attacks on the US on 9/11 have caused a general military march, they contributed for a revolution in the military power in the technology achievements and a bigger presence of the military power in the international happenings;
- (2) Global financial crises of 2008 has left deep traces such as increase of unemployment rate, usability of the markets and trade, loss of property, indebtedness of people, enterprises, banks and the states, the general instability of the financial sector and the increased risk of instability and the disturbances in society (Evans et al. 2010, 9);
- (3) The Arab spring of 2011 has caused wider regional destabilization of the Near East and North Africa;
- (4) The Ukraine crises got an enormous dimension when Russia annexed the peninsula Crimea. For the first time after the Cold War, a greater tension appeared between the great forces (USA-Russia-EU), which tended to promote their political and military power in this part of the world and
- (5) Islamic State (IS) controls parts of the territories of Iraq, Syria, Yemen, Libya, Nigeria etc. Its extreme actions caused mass migrations towards the EU. It has increased the risk of tensions among those affected.

Most likely next decade will be marked by numerous turbulences and transformation of the world order. In the past there were *periphery crises* (during the World War I) and *crises in the center* (during the Cold War). Today the world faces *complex crises* characterized by political, economic, social, security-military elements, whose intensity and flow are easily dispersed. Each crisis in the periphery or in the core has strong impact on the world.

Radical redefinition of international relations is necessity. It supposes mutual vision, revitalization of security alliances and global economic institutions for the benefit of all participants. In that context, the Foreign Minister of Russia, Sergey Lavrov recently proposed to the UN General Assembly formation of a new system of collective security in Europe. If the current European security architecture yields to unipolarity, it will bring serious security consequences for the world.

International institutions have main role in dealing with the security challenges, because the role of states has been drastically reduced. Thus the current model of international system should be redefined in this respect too, especially having in mind that some organizations are 70 years old. The reforms should include the following: (1) Reforms of the UN (Security Council), IMF, World Bank, World Trade Organization; (2) Expansion and strengthening the role of NATO; (3) Capacity building in the other regional security organizations; (4) Improvement of the relations among NATO-UN-EU and (5) Expanding and increasing of the activities of the groups G-7 (participates about 50% in the global economy) and G-20 (constitutes 85.2% of the world gross domestic product) (The National Security Strategy of the United Kingdom 2009).

*But, will these alternatives for a new order will bring us to a world with a bigger rivalry among the actors or in a world without violence, peace and prosperity?* The idea of world government is not realistic because of the dominant role of the US that will hardly agree to pass its authority and power to any form of world government. The best way is the world to be reformed according the multilateral principles. Deutsch and Singer (1964, 390) argued that the world moves toward multipolar system (or better, security community) which would reduce occurrence of wars and conflicts. Certain data show that the future progress of the US and the West to a large extent will depend on the economic potential of the Asian states. In the next 5 years the US expects almost half of the total economic increase to come from Asia (*National Security Strategy of USA*, 2015). The states from BRICS (with more than 3 billion people or about 42% of the world population, more than 1/4 of the world territory on three continents, and more than 25% of the world gross domestic

product) are the foundation for any new world order. They will try through economic and military power to get an advantage at the international scene, through formation of a parallel security and economic systems.

The global turbulences (armed conflicts, failed states, environmental degradation, organized crime, AIDS, terrorism, refugee crises and migrations, etc.) have increased the connections among the organizations, states and individuals. They have created possibilities for joint engagement for the sake of prosperity and safer world. Mutual dependence has contributed for increase of cooperation. We presume that the multilateral concept is real and appropriate: it gives representation of the voices and interests of more states from different parts of the world within the international institutions. Cooperation of states and international organizations will push toward rationalism in solving complex problems, and after that it will lead toward stable order and spreading of the peace zones in the world.

It is logically to expect new international order with multipolar features since five or six great powers may already compete (Jacquelyn and Sweeney 1999, 238). This model may lead to more balanced distribution of the benefits among the states but it could also create difficulties. Namely, there is covered competition among three types of regimes: (1) *autocratic economies*, (Russia and China); (2) *Islamic traditional countries*, (Iran and Saudi Arabia) and (3) *liberal democracies* (USA and the EU) (*Global Strategic Assessment 2009: America's Security Role in a Changing World* 2009, 44).

In addition to states and global intergovernmental organizations there are also some regional ones (such as EU, ASEAN, MERCOSUR, the African Union, the Arab League), transnational (civil society, business nets, corporations etc.), NGOs, sub-societal actors, as well as elite groups and individuals (Solte 2009). Undoubtedly there is certain degree of rivalry but some of them also share some common values. It is difficult to create "colorful coalition".

The skeptics stress that today's world is unpolar rather than multipolar: there is no great power able to mobilize and unite the other powers around its agenda. The US analysts argue that the world is "nonpolar in that most powers are reluctant to assume the role of global leader or security guarantor outside their borders" (*Global Strategic Assessment 2009: America's security role in a changing world* 2009, 36). The optimistic viewpoint envisages a world based on international cooperation, coordination among the states and the international and regional organizations. Therefore the dilemma with regard to the national supervision will be between *global-unilateral* (for ex. USA) or *cooperative-*

*multilateral* (for ex. EU, BRICS); or the third option would be recognition and enabling appearance of *cosmopolitan community*, which is still unrealistic option (Beck 2004, 334).

### **Conclusion**

Current international order is diversified: it holds together states with different values and levels of development. The global order also includes other actors with different interests and goals. Rivalries, even among the states and/or organizations that belong to a same sphere of influence, may make them more distant and vulnerable. Security is essential category in international relations. It is of crucial importance to acknowledge legitimate interests of all states and peoples as well as their equality in the institutions of the international system, regardless of their size, development or power. Therefore is a need for a balance of interests in international relations or the opposite option would be entropy of the entire global order. Geopolitical changes lead to new uncertainties and challenges, due to the change of power in international relations and misbalance among the key actors.

One can hardly talk of any fixed and clear courses of action in international relations. Neither there are schemes of international order, according to which the actors would surely find their place "under the sun". The term New World Order refers to a new system of international relations. It is a complex process which is underway. Obviously it is difficult to impose global parameters for stability or economic development. But international order is neither static nor unchangeable. Due to the difficulty in prediction of future events and processes, there are serious doubts about any desirable model of international order. Bipolar order was replaced by uni-multipolar one for certain period of time. However, today's distribution of power resembles so called "mixture" of bipolar and multipolar order. That is, a model of bi-multipolarity that consists of two centers of power (USA and Russia) and several powers weaker than them (e.g. EU, China, India, Saudi Arabia and Iran). The main centers of power stay in a rather rigid relationship, while remaining weaker forces, which are approximately equal to each other in the political, security, economic and technological power, gravitate around them.

The role of international organizations in the new world order may be in increase. The UN remains the most prominent one but only in case of radical reform. Due to the conflicting relations between East-West, it is likely that new international organizations may appear in order to promote more equal relationships and inclusion of the other states. Particularly the BRICS states insist on creation of parallel security and economic institutions as an alternative to the existing international organizations that are under

Western influence (NATO, IMF and the World Bank). The current events indicate fluctuations in the international order. The ability to form new *ad hoc* coalitions or informal alliances in case of urgent need may enable change of the structure of the international system. In sum international order may change depending on the dynamic and currents on the international scene, moving from multipolar to bipolar system - or to a system with different balance of powers.

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