INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS AND GLOBAL GOVERNANCE

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ABSTRACT

Global governance is the political interaction of transnational actors aimed at solving problems that affect more than one region. International governance is largely accomplished by means of international organizations. International organizations are expected to have a positive influence on global development. There are the practical problems associated with achieving the accountability for ensuring legitimate and effective global institutions. The paper situates the emergence of governance, global governance and good governance, as well as the United Nation's role in the conceptual process. It focuses on the roots of International Organization success or failure to factors that are internal to the strategies that they employ. It addresses the organization of international politics, how international affairs are governed, and how variations in international forms influence international relations. The paper features the contemporary issues like how international organizations function and how they impact on policy development with special reference to the European Union. It concludes with how International organizations are useful to powerful and weak states alike, analyzing the effectiveness of international organizations at the global level. International organizations continue to play a greater role than they ever had.

KEYWORDS: International Organization, Global Governance, United Nations, European

Union, Globalization.

INTRODUCTION

International governance is largely accomplished by means of international organizations. International organizations are a central component of global governance which has a positive influence on global development. Their precise role in international politics is however debated. The dominant theoretical approaches in international relations explain the role of international organizations in different ways. The Realist school of thought emphasized the importance of state sovereignty, military power, and national interests in world politics and was less likely to expect states to delegate important powers to international organizations (Carr, 1939; Herz, 1951; Morgenthau, 1948). Realists argue that the system of alliances and the balance of power would maintain order. The international organizations play a coordinating role in international

relations and states can choose to ignore international organizations whenever they conflict with the pursuit of national self-advancement (Krasner, 1991; Mearsheimer, 1994). The idealist notion is that international organizations are destined to solve common human problems. Liberalists argue that international organizations provide an arena in which states can interact, develop shared norms, and cooperate to solve common problems. International organizations also coordinate action by providing information, monitoring behavior, punishing defectors, and facilitating transparency at a reduced cost to states (Keohane and Martin, 1995). To other approaches, international organizations can have a deep impact on domestic policy making.

International organizations such as the United Nations system have emerged as crucial actors in the system of global governance. International Organization and Global Governance cover a broad range of crucially important aspects of international affairs and contemporary issues, including international economic relations, international security, the global environment, international law etc. The paper addresses the organization of international politics, how international affairs are governed, and how variations in international forms influence international relations. After discussing the meaning of global governance, the paper features some of the contemporary issues of international organizations and their impact on policy development with special reference to the United Nations and European Union as an important player in the global governance. The study focuses on the roots of International Organization success or failure as well as dilemma and challenges of global governance. Finally, the paper concludes with how international organizations are useful to powerful and weak states alike, analyzing the effectiveness of international organizations and the good governance at the global level.

International organizations in retrospect and prospect: understanding global governance

In 1995 the Commission on Global Governance (1995: 2), defined governance as "the sum of the many ways individuals and institutions, public and private, manage their common affairs. It is a continuing process through which conflicting or diverse interests may be accommodated and cooperative action may be taken. It includes formal as well as informal arrangements that people and institutions have agreed to or perceive to be in their interest".

The politics of global governance reflects "struggles over wealth, power, and knowledge" in the world. The study of international organizations during the Cold War attempted to conceptualize global governance and tried to identify the role that international organizations played in that process. The end of the Cold War signaled a new era for the international organizations as the superpower rivalry had established many barriers that had prevented UN action. The Cold War's demise thus brought about greater prospects for expanding the roles, functions, and powers of international organizations in global governance. Today's world requires both states and non-state actors to coordinate action through international organizations to address different issues. While international organizations continue to play a greater role than they ever had, state sovereignty and lack of political will continue to inhibit the long-term prospects of those organizations for creating effective structures of global governance.

Exercising power and decision-making for a group of people is called governance. Due to the diversity of organizational structures across the world, different actors are granted the power

to govern. Global governance is the political interaction of transnational actors aimed at solving problems that affect more than one region. It consists of international rules or laws, norms or "soft law" including human rights. Its structure may be formal or informal. It may be formed at the regional or global level. Global bodies are present in different institutional forms through which public power is exercised at the global level. For instance, there is administration by formal intergovernmental organizations such as the UN High Commissioner for Refugees; the World Bank sets "good governance" standards for specific developing countries as a condition for financial aid; and the role played by bodies such as the International Organization for Migration. Administration is also based on collective action by transnational networks of cooperative arrangements between national regulatory officials such as the Basel Committee on Banking Supervision. A number of functions are carried out by hybrid inter-governmental-private arrangements, such as the Internet Corporation for Assigned Names. There are also a wide range of formally private bodies that perform public governance functions, such as the International Olympic Committee, and the Forest Stewardship Council. Global conferences are organized by global organizations including UN, WTO, WHO. Different NGOs provide humanitarian relief, development aid and human rights monitoring.

"Good governance" is a relatively new term that is often used to describe the desired objective of a nation-state's political development. Since the early 1990s many international institutions have been urging governments to confirm to standards of 'good governance'. In "good governance", authority and its institutions are accountable, effective and efficient, participatory, transparent, responsive, and equitable as outlined by the United Nations. The Leaders at the 2005 World Summit concluded that good governance is integral to economic growth, the eradication of poverty and hunger, and sustainable development. The views of all oppressed groups, including women, youth and the poor, must be heard and considered by governing bodies because they will be the ones most negatively affected if good governance is not achieved. For good governance to exist, citizens must be empowered to participate in meaningful ways in decision-making processes. They have a right to information and to access. Although widespread accessibility remains a barrier for many countries, one of those ways is through Information and Communication Technology applications such as the Internet.

The United Nations: focal point of global governance

The study of international organizations began with the creation of the League of Nations. After the breakdown of the League, the dream of global governance was realized with the creation of the Institute of International Affairs. In Europe, it was called the Royal Institute of International Affairs, and in America, it was called the Council on Foreign Relations. The creation of an Atlantic Charter (August 14, 1941), The Moscow Declaration (October 30, 1943), The Dumbarton Oaks Conversations (August, 1944), and the Yalta Summit (February, 1945) set the stage for the emergence of another effort to achieve global governance. At the San Francisco Conference the United Nations was created. Julian Huxley created UNESCO - the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization. The United Nations Environment Program was created in 1973 as the result of the first Earth Summit conducted in Stockholm in 1972. The UN Conference on Human Settlements adopted the UN's policy on land use control at HABITAT I, in 1976. Three major UN World Commissions met during the 1980s, one of which, the Brundtland Commission, produced the concept of "sustainable development." It is

often said that the UN is incapable of functioning with a coherent identity. It was not until the end of the Cold War in 1990 that the UN emerged, toward global governance.

The operations of the UN include peaceful settlement of disputes, collective security and peacekeeping, the search for justice under law, the instruments of war, varieties of regionalism, globalization, transnational relations and international organization, promotes economic welfare, manages global resources, promotes social progress, and protects human rights, international administration, and the environment, promotes Human Development and economic well-being. The post-Cold War world of the 1990s saw a new paradigm based on a number of issues including the growing idea of globalization and the subsequent weakening of nation-states. The national-security model, gradually gave way to an emerging collective conscience. Until 1990s, the term "interdependence" had been used to designate the relations among states.

During the 1990s, the United Nations convened nine global conferences on economic and social matters. Each successive conference exhorted the UN itself and member states to give priority to another set of issues such as environmental protection and sustainable development, women's rights, the rights of the girl child, human settlements, food supply, or the elimination of poverty. Beginning in 1990 when the Convention on the Rights of the Child was adopted in New York, to the 1992 Earth Summit II in Rio de Janeiro, which produced Agenda 21, the Convention on Biological Diversity, and the Framework Convention on Climate Change, the UN gradually moved toward its goal of global governance. In fact, a Commission on Global Governance was formed in 1993, funded largely by the United Nations Development Program. The UN Conference on Human Rights was held in 1993. In 1994, the World Trade Organization Charter was negotiated and the UN Conference on Population and Development took place. The UN's World Summit on Social Development was held in 1995 and the UN Commission on Sustainable Development held its third World Meeting. The UN-funded Commission on Global Governance produced report, entitled *Our Global Neighborhood.* Many UN conferences advance the notion of global governance. UN's contribution is evaluated on the basis of its functioning in areas like, diffusing regional conflicts, assisting decolonization, protecting human rights, providing socio-economic improvements. In the new millennium, the UN Democracy Fund (2005) is promoting democracy.

The role of states and regional organizations in global governance

The comprehensive analyses of the development of contemporary international organizations include regional organizations and non-governmental organizations, as well as multinational corporations representing global governance. Intergovernmental Organisations (IGOs) are organizations whose members are held together by a formal intergovernmental agreement. Most IGOs are regional where a commonality of interest motivates states to cooperate on issues directly affecting them, including collecting information and monitoring trends through UNEP, delivering services and aid through UNHCR, providing forums for inter-governmental bargaining through European Union, and settles disputes through International Court of Justice and World Trade Organization. Regional organizations include ASEAN, SAARC, EU, AU etc. Sub-regional organizations include Mekong Group and Gulf Cooperative Council. NGOs, the private voluntary organizations are increasingly active today playing an ever-increasing role at all levels of governance, from local or grassroots communities to national and international politics. They deliver disaster relief; run refugee camps; provide micro credit loans to poor

citizens in countries. In the areas of social and economic welfare and humanitarianism in particular, non-state actors have become integral and essential components of multilateral action.

The European Union is an important player in the global governance. Over the last six decades, European countries have moved a slow and steady path toward closer cooperation. The EU is an example of an organization with a relatively large number of leading states, which facilitates common investment in some issue areas by legalizing cooperation and making informal influence difficult to exercise (Stone, 2008). In the World Trade Organization, the European Union is already represented as a single entity. Europe's transformation into a peaceful continent, a constructive neighbour and an international donor is a perfect example to be followed. Europeans see Europe as a harmonious community of diverse nations with a preference for compromise and soft power. There have been calls for a reduced representation of Europe in the major global institutions and a reallocation of its voting shares and governance arrangements that is more closely aligned with its current global economic and political weight.

Success or failure of the International Organizations

International organizations are expected to serve as a mechanism to mitigate conflicts among different countries. However, these organizations have so far achieved very limited success in such a role. The more they succeed, the more they become agents of their own failure. International institutions lose effectiveness and legitimacy. The roots of International Organization's success or failure remains in the factors that are internal to the strategies that they employ. Some cases where these organizations have either succeeded or failed in dealing with different issues must be reviewed. These organizations achieved success in: creating a global economy and a global market, these led to the growth of European Community into the European Union, helped in the emergence of free trade area in different regions, led to the establishment of collective security and dispute resolution mechanisms. There has been development in the capacity of the UN Security Council and the General Assembly as well as in other security mechanisms. The United Nations peace keeping forces received the Nobel Peace Prize on 15 May 1988. The World Trade Organization became the successor to the General Agreements on Tariffs and Trade on 01 January 1995. China joined WTO on 11 December 2001 after 15 years of negotiations, the longest negotiation in the history of WTO. As of 2010, there are 153 member-states in the WTO. WTO/World Bank success was reflected on 22 February 2006 as United Sates donated US$ 100,000 to help developing countries analyze and implement international standards on food safety and animal and plant health. This donation was set up jointly by World Trade Organization, the World Health Organization, the World Bank, the World Organization for Animal Health, and the Food and Agriculture Organization.

Nevertheless, a series of events underscored the limitations of international organizations in the contemporary era. Even though international organizations have made many efforts to destroy barriers among people all around the world, the progress they have so far is not enough, because cleavages have appeared in nations today more than ever. The limitations and failings of international organizations are attributable to the states that compose them. United Nations faced failure in Rwanda Genocide on 06 April 1994 as it intervened to prevent civil war, sending 4,000 US troops to help fix the political system in Somalia. The UN lost credibility, and the US as well as other countries refused to provide help in fear of lost of the nation's reputation.

Greece's ongoing financial crisis illustrates the challenges that Europe faces in creating a strong and cohesive union. Moreover, the debates about IMF and World Bank governance reform are a reminder of Europe's continual inability to create a coherent geopolitical presence, which is now becoming a major obstacle to effective global governance. The Europeans are unwilling to give up on excessive individual country representation and voting shares in the governing boards of the international organizations. They keep out other key players and prevent a recalibration of voting structures that reflect today's changing global realities. With only limited EU constitutional reforms agreed under the Lisbon Treaty, stalemate prevails in EU reform of its foreign policy process. This perpetuates the EU's inability to speak with one voice, to cast a singular vote, and to occupy one in international organizations. The European Union stumbled badly in its peace efforts toward Bosnia. Europe over time is increasingly marginalized in global decision making. This outcome serves neither global nor European interests. The consequence is that global governance reform faces gridlock. Until the Europeans are ready to address their own governance challenge, there is little hope for effective reform of global governance structures.

The tools used by international organizations to promote quality of government interaction with transnational actors and the mechanisms themselves have a number of shortcomings that reduce their effectiveness. The UN has often demonstrated a failure to tackle urgent collective action problems due to institutionalized inability, incapacity or unwillingness. This has become a major stumbling block for global governance reform. Yet the world body remains the embodiment of the international community and the focus of international expectations.

The dilemma and the challenges of global governance

Critical to insuring accountability and effectiveness is transparency. There are the practical problems associated with achieving the accountability for ensuring legitimate and effective global institutions. The global institutions created after Second World War does not reflect the economic and political realities of the contemporary world. The end of colonialism, the rise of global markets, the growing inter-dependence, the global financial instability and global warming require representative and effective global institutions. This has put a spotlight on existing international organizations, including the G8, UN Security Council, IMF, World Bank, and their governance structures. All of them reflect the past dominance of Europe and the United States and must be reformed to represent the new balance of world structure. The world is witnessing a geopolitical transition. Countries such as China, India, Indonesia and Brazil are rising powers. Core international institutions have not yet adapted to accommodate these shifts. Peaceful rise alone can not deal with global problems such as climate, energy, nuclear proliferation, population growth and financial stability. The basic challenge of global governance is to deal with the geopolitical changes while addressing trans-border problems. There is no connection between the distribution of decision-making authority in international institutions and the distribution of power in the world.

Developing countries, having entered the global economy, find it hard to accept that industrialized countries share power and give preference to their own interests. The challenge also comes from civil society, which considers that the international governance system has become the real seat of power. There is a wide variety of international policy problems that require global governance i.e., the threat posed by terrorism and network of terrorists, weapons of mass destruction including nuclear weapons, global financial markets, fuel scarcity, the

persistence of poverty, the problems related to food and water, environmental problems, climate change, ethnic conflicts etc. are global in scope and require global solutions. The authority should not remain vested in some states. All the states require cooperation of some sort among governments and the increasing number of non-state actors. The evolution of international organizations to facilitate global responses lags behind the emergence of collective action problems. There is a mutually undermining gap between legitimacy and efficiency. The United Nations becomes an inefficient body for making, implementing and enforcing collective decisions. Yet, the crucial issues in world politics cannot be solved without international organizations. Security interdependence, in short, requires global governance.

Conclusions: innovations and reforms in global governance

International organizations are useful to powerful and weak states alike. Moving global governance forward requires a new level of socio-economic, political and cultural thinking between the developed and rising powers. Even the most powerful states cannot achieve security in isolation. All states, as well as some non-state actors, face mutual vulnerabilities and benefit from global public goods. The effectiveness of international organizations that constitutes good governance at the global and regional level includes the evolving roles of the IGOs, NGOs, state and non-state actors, norms, rules, and other components of global governance. There is hope that the European political leadership will change the way in which Europe acts on the global stage. UN Security Council decision-making procedures may be flawed and defective, but they are regulated and subject to international oversight and are therefore preferable to unilateral action. A state does not even consider withdrawing its membership from the UN even when its actions appear contrary to its national interests.

1. There is need for global governance because there is need for peace and security. Areas such as maintaining international peace and security, economic development and international trade, human rights, functional and technical cooperation, the protection of the environment and sustainability of resources, to tackle current global economic crisis, and combat human trafficking require joint action to bring order and regularity to international relations. Such problems cannot be addressed unilaterally with optimum effectiveness. Such challenges will necessitate new forms of institutionalized cooperation.

2. For multilateral enforcement action to be effective, it must be based on a commonality of purpose and action in the international community. For collective enforcement action to be effective, it must balance the competing national interests among many states that make up the international community and avoid privileging the interests of one over the others.

3. The survival and vitality of international organizations depend on the capacity to change and adapt as well as the quality of their governance.

4. Multilateral institutions must recognize and involve non-state actors on the basis of criteria that ensure their legitimacy and effectiveness.

5. The most important factor determining the future of global governance will be the attitude of the United States. America has done much to create the institutional infrastructure of world order, including the institutions such as the United Nations, the Bretton Woods Institutions, and NATO. The United States has benefited tremendously from this architecture, which has helped to legitimate US global leadership in world affairs (Council on Foreign Relations, 1 May 2008, 4).

In practice, "good performance" is hard to achieve as there are limitations of international organizations in the contemporary era. The task of assessing effectiveness is one of the central challenges in public policy making, whether at local, national, regional, or global levels of politics and governance. There is need for improved international mechanisms to guide the globalized system toward more equitable and sustainable ends. International Organizations must be reconstituted in line with 21st century principles of governance and legitimacy. They must be capable of addressing contemporary challenges effectively. They should recognize that contemporary and prospective challenges call for more flexibility, adaptability solutions. E-governance has emerged as a viable means to address development issues and challenges because citizens find empowerment through access to information. These are some prerequisites for international organizations to be successful in their involvement in human development, in the questions of legitimacy, accountability, and effectiveness of global governance. Then the international organizations could act flawlessly as a mediator on different issues. Global governance is not an event that will occur by force at any point of time. Global governance is a process that has been underway for many years, gaining new definition and momentum. The international community is secure enough in its establishment of global governance that the movement cannot be reversed.

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