



E-ISSN: 2664-603X
P-ISSN: 2664-6021
IJPSG 2022; 4(1): 79-81
www.journalofpoliticalscience.com
Received: 05-10-2021
Accepted: 03-12-2021

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Global securities: Time for new beginning after COVID 19

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DOI: <https://doi.org/10.33545/26646021.2022.v4.i1b.137>

Abstract

Covid-19 has put human civilization at a crossroads and is a global threat more precisely a threat without border that cannot be solved by a nation alone rather it demands a global response to ensure global security. Many countries around the world have begun to vaccinate after COVID-19 vaccines became available in December 2020; aiming to save lives of their respective populations as well as ensuring global security. Presently Covid-19 is shaping the contours of global securities which is moving towards a new form of asymmetric security threats and urges for fresh reflections on the issues of global securities. Global security includes military and diplomatic measures that nations and international organizations take to ensure mutual safety and security and assesses the sources of potential regional conflict; and emerging threats to the global security environment and studies. How a range of different security agents interact, cooperate and compete, to produce new institutions, practices and forms of security governance and global studies. In post-cold war era some Neo-Realist, Pluralist and Social Constructivist in I.R. shifted not only the focus from military to non-military nature of global security threats but also security of State to Human Security and brought appraisal of Realist paradigm of I.R. which focused only on Military Security & Inter State Relations. To make global security more meaningful, there is a need to review the current scope and operation of global security and to identifying new threats with a renewed focus on non-military nature of global security threats. Hence, this chapter aims at understanding the current mechanism of global governance and to analyze the effective safeguards to deal with non-traditional security threats such as pandemics as well as analysis of multilateral mechanisms that facilitate the kind of cooperation that will be needed to mitigate the worst impacts of future global crises.

Keywords: Military security, global crisis, pandemic

Introduction

Global Governance and Security Concerns

Covid-19 provides a preliminary overview of the current configuration of the global governance and has categorically underlines the need for the comprehensive security arrangements for the future. Global governance brings together diverse actors to coordinate collective action at the level of the planet. The goal of global governance, roughly defined, is to provide global public goods, particularly peace and security, justice and mediation systems for conflict, functioning markets and unified standards for trade and industry. One crucial global public good is catastrophic risk management – putting appropriate mechanisms in place to maximally reduce the likelihood and impact of any event that could cause the death of people across the globe, or damage of equivalent magnitude. The leading institution in charge of global governance today is the United Nations; other institutions that play an important role in global governance are the so-called Bretton Woods institutions: the World Bank and the IMF, whose function is to regulate the global economy and credit markets. Global governance is more generally affected through a range of organizations acting as intermediary bodies. Those include bodies in charge of regional coordination, such as the EU or ASEAN, which coordinate the policies of their members in a certain geographical zone. These also include strategic or economic initiatives under the leadership of one country – NATO for the US or China's Belt and Road Initiative for instance – or more generally coordinating defense or economic integration, such as APEC or ANZUS. Finally, global governance relies on looser norm-setting forums, such as the G20, the G7, and the World Economic Forum: those do not to support the Secretary-General's global ceasefire appeal to combat COVID-19.

Under-Secretary-General for Political and Peace building Affairs Rosemary DiCarlo recalled these wide-ranging impacts of COVID-19, which she said “highlight the magnitude of the challenge of conflict prevention that lies before us”. In another meeting of 24 September, the Security Council held a summit-level debate on “global governance after COVID-19” via videoconference. This pandemic may trigger instability, particularly in conflict-affected or post conflict countries, exacerbate security, social and economic crises, and in turn heighten socio-political unrest and pandemic’s aggravation of political and human rights drivers of conflict and the risks posed by its socio-economic disruption. Hence, the current pandemic has exposed the weaknesses of the multilateral system. The pandemic “reinforces the notion that collective action is vital” and that after the crisis there will be a need for a “renewed commitment to true and inclusive multilateralism” to address global problems. Addressing the General Assembly yesterday, Secretary-General Guterres echoed this sentiment, underscoring that current challenges and fragilities require more international cooperation while appealing “for a stepped-up international effort—led by the Security Council” to achieve a global ceasefire by the end of the year. Presently nation states are in collective security arrangements and League of Nation and U.N. are its example, collective security arrangement works on the principle of ‘your threat is my threat’? Mechanism of collective security was established by victor states in the end of first world war, A league of Nation was established which played important role till 1939, however world war - II failed it. After Second World War, the victor states again got to-gather to form collective security arrangement under United Nations to prevent wars. Pandemic has highlighted the failed roles of international organization like W.H.O and U.N. was unsuccessful to bring all the nations to a common platform, thus failing to do its primary role.

So, a paradigm shift will be visible in thinking about the collective security system and international organization. There will be shift from a Collective Security Arrangement to a more Individualistic approach in post-Covid times. The global geopolitical transition, the US hegemony is over to some extent, instead, the world is shifting to a new multi-polar order with the US and China at its center as such there is need to restore and rebuild stable institutions and rules that acknowledge the changed context. There is a need to be more inclusive, representative and legitimate. The role of international mechanisms of cooperation (such as the G20), regional organizations, non-state actors – especially financial and philanthropic actors – will also need to be revised and elevated. The increasing dependency on the state for set up treaties, but offer spaces for gathering, discussing ideas, aligning policy and setting norms. This last category could be extended to multi-stakeholder institutions that aim to align global standards, for instance the Internet Engineering Taskforce (IETF) and the World Wide Web Consortium (W3C).

Covid-19 has exposed the treachery of our unequal and unsurprisingly divided world. Social Scientists have hurried to highlight, which is that world’s global and national institutions are increasingly incapable of managing stresses to the system. In security council, on 9 September, 2020 a meeting on pandemic was held which laid emphasis on implementation of Resolution 2532 of security council which demanded a cessation of hostilities in all situations on

its agenda pandemic and people management; economic and social control and decision-making of what “normalcy” post-COVID-19 should look like, presents a new set of enquiries for analysts. While international best practices garner due credit, consistent efforts must also be made to monitor and identify destabilizing patterns of concerns for the international system^[4].

New Threats: Strategic Implications

COVID-19 has put additional stress on international relationships, especially those that were already strained before the pandemic hit, such as the US-China relationship. The way EU struggled to create a united front to combat this crisis is emerging as another basis for the future crisis in times ahead. In the current scenario, new threats are likely to appear in form of restrictive measures and tools which will be used both to fight Covid as well be continued to be used in post Covid times as well. These restrictive measures will challenge the traditional values such as freedom, democracy and religious practice, which when added to strong populist movements can increase pre-existing fractures of states. Hence, there will be an intensification of actions towards political exploitation of post-COVID crisis that will be legitimized through military and non-military means. The heightened China-US tensions, amid US criticism; pronouncements blaming China for the pandemic and announcement of its withdrawal from the World Health Organization (WHO) created a tensed environment, on the occasion of 9 September VTC, the US statement was particularly pointed, focusing on China’s responsibility and on holding those responsible “accountable for their actions”, and criticizing the WHO’s “failures” including its lack of independence, transparency and accountability. Hence, in this current era of strategic geopolitical competition, a redistribution of military and political means of power will affect both Europe and the USA, quite possibly leading to a review of the global supply chains currently dominated by China. Some moves to attribute the causes of this crisis to China may increase tensions between major powers and may create rivalry and confrontation between them particularly when China has emerged as a common enemy. On 1 July 2020 – 111 days after the World Health Organization declared Covid-19 to be a global pandemic – the UN Security Council unanimously passed Resolution 2532. This is the first time that the Security Council has called for a general ceasefire and humanitarian pause in armed conflicts across the globe, recognizing that the unprecedented extent of the novel coronavirus pandemic and danger to maintenance of international peace and security”, the Security Council demanded a general and immediate cessation of hostilities in all situations on its agenda, and supported the appeal of UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres for a global ceasefire⁵ The pandemic has challenged the current notions of power. This challenge to power may lead to several internal conflict and regional instability. Traditional centers of power are showing signs of weakness as most of the great powers are likely to experience slower economic growth and this can diminish their level of ambition and military footprint in zones of their interest as well as reduce their power projection to zones of their influence.

Authoritarianism versus Democracy: Global Concerns

Coronavirus pandemic has not only disrupted democracy

but has also reset the terms of the global debate on the merits of authoritarianism versus democracy and the relative desirability of authoritarian and democratic governance. The issues of regime e.g. Democracy v/s Dictatorship was very intense in cold war era but Covid-19 pandemic has once again ignited the mad race for such debates. In pandemic times respective sitting regimes across the world are justifying their actions and are using the crisis to grant themselves more expansive powers than warranted by the health crisis and tighten their grip on power. America and China have intensified their actions to build global perceptions about democratic and authoritarian regimes, thus both China and the United States are fighting to control over global perceptions, and with U.S. glorifying democracies the Chinese government is defending its authoritarian approach. Some scholars have projected this development as one of the potential threat to global security in post Covid times. These debates can be understood, firstly in terms of handling of corona crisis; secondly how the pandemic is leading to a rapid expansion of executive power around the world and how democratic structures are facing additional challenges of democratic governance particularly electoral processes, civilian control of militaries, civic mobilization.

During pandemic democracy was criticized for popularity-seeking instead of pursuing technically sound policies and autocracy has been criticized for repression e.g. Sweden with far less of a lockdown early on has ended up with a much higher death rate similarly, Wuhan authorities played down news of the virus and went ahead with their baibuting mass banquet on 9 February, to disastrous effect. National leaders in the U.S. and Brazil were slow to take the pandemic seriously but in china, the crisis exposed the overly politicized accountability of local government officials in Wuhan. In Italy, mayors have stepped in to enforce what they describe as slightly confusing national messages.

The U.K. government was slow to mobilize an existing network of local environmental health officers to trace contacts. Some authoritarian regimes have done relatively well so far, like Singapore and Vietnam, while others, like Iran, have done poorly. Among democracies, South Korea and Taiwan have performed admirably, while others, like Italy and the United States, have not. Carnegie scholar Rachel Klein Feld highlighted the fact such as lessons learned from past health crises and a country's levels of state capacity, legitimacy, and citizen trust have been more important than its specific regime type in determining the quality of responses thus far. Yet the idea that a firm authoritarian hand is needed for dealing with the crisis may nevertheless gain wider ground, especially China have been successful so far in keeping the virus under control as compared to United States and other western democracies. Democracies lack the incentive systems to address higher-order and longer-term imperatives. There is surging opposition to liberal governance due to rising inequalities and frustration with the perceived failures of the liberal order. Francis Fukuyama and Jan-Werner Muller view populism and the rise of parochial economic nationalism as among the gravest threats to future stability. The risk of a disorderly collapse of the system is more real than ever. Indeed, in times of crises, leaders find themselves facing difficult and limited choices, and their decisions can often damage their electoral standing ^[6].

The pandemic will almost certainly usher in broader effects on governance by overburdening countries' basic governance functions, taxing their sociopolitical cohesion, exacerbating corruption, unsettling relations between national and local governments, and transforming the role of non-state actors ^[7]. Political regimes must work together in the world after covid-19. Victory either for autocracy or democracy depends upon politicians as any system can be tempted to take popular rather than necessary decisions. However, poor leadership results in bad outcomes, whatever the political system.

Conclusion

Covid -19 has set the new stage for global securities concerns particularly in the third decade of 21st century. These new realities are re- shaping the global securities challenges and these challenges are more likely to be China centric than ever before. A shift from collective security arrangement to more individualistic approach is likely to shape news security paradigms. The new power game will accelerate the mad race for strategically important next generation technology making the espionage on smart technology more intense as compared to the espionage in the areas of nuclear, space or information. The new realities of covid-19 demand the effectiveness of the global security architecture to respond to these newer challenges especially to the issues of global governance. The uncertainty as to the precise nature of these changes is the biggest global security dilemma which the international order is facing at the moment.

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