



Multilateralism, Global Fair Order and Consolidations

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The theme of this event is intriguing: post-security geopolitics. It raises some very important questions from when do we dubbed this post security era, so called. And is there really such a phenomenon? Has there really been an end of this security centric geopolitics in to the world today. If you look at the post bipolar world, and I always prefer to use the word “bipolar” rather than “the end of the Cold War” as the Western analysis refer to it, but at the end of bipolarity conflicts not only continued in traditional forms but have been more and more acute and exasperated. This is under the light that we are living in an age of change, we are living in an age of change, but the change is multi-dimensional and it encompasses all aspects of our existence as individuals and the states. Rather than supplementing, or supplanting rather, security-based geopolitics the change has added and compounded the existing paradigms, making them even more complex.

We have seen strong Muslim states destabilized, we have seen the UN Security Council role under the chapter seven of the charter undermined by the notion of so called “Coalitions of the Willing”. We have seen extension of out of area operations of NATO resulting in aggravation of regional conflicts as reflected in the recent Afghanistan crisis. We have seen the rising tide of islamophobia to compensate for the old capitalist-communist ideological divide. We have seen the rise of the ultra-right in some parts of the world with a growing intolerance of the other. And we have seen a rise in the development of even more lethal weapon systems that also now are bring outer space into their domain. All these negative trends are developing at the time when the world is confronting common social problems of climate change, poverty, pandemics and lastly population displacements partially because of conflicts and partially because of poverty.

The need for global cooperation to resolve common problems has never been greater than today. But the polarization and conflicts have never been more acute. The stress on the global order is increasing. Conflicts and violence have not ended. Illegal occupations continue. The commitment to democracy has been selective and sporadic. Since 1990, democracies has been responsible for more deaths globally, ironically, in the promotion of the so called democracy than any other dispensation. The self-proclaimed flag bearers of democracy are responsible for some of the most extreme violations of basic international laws. Not only that, they have become more brazen in their use of force, legislative and constitutional fraud, disinformation to not only perpetuate their illegal occupation but throw the onus on the occupied people and spread by considerations of security-based geopolitics. Other democracies who should know better, either ignore these situations or silently and sometimes not so silently encourage this behavior.

Most of the indicators that would illustrate a shift away from security based geopolitics in my view in fact suggests the other, that we have still very much rooted in the old world why we are confronted with major



new problems. Multilateralism sadly is on the retreat, international organizations are losing their relevance and are being side-stepped, even undermined. Unilateralism is being maintained and mainstreamed in the international discourse or given a veneer of multilateralism outside of the framework of recognized multilateral forums like the UN. Specially the UN Security Council whose resolutions are either ignored or questioned or selectively implemented.

There are different rules for different countries in the same organizations. Goals pose a shift without regard to legitimacy or transparency. A recent case in point being the increasing politicization of artive and the violations of Article 41 of the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations by states in the West who think they are above the law. All this is done to promote narrow national and strategic interests.

Great power rivalries on the rise reflected in the increasing defense budgets and new strategic blocs resulting in greater militarization of different regions. The US, India, Japan, Australia accord is one such example and opposite of course is another such example. All these are being created as to supposedly counter what is perceived as a strategic threat from China. But they themselves are becoming threat to China, these organizations. Especially with the provision of US Nuclear Submarines to Australia. This deal itself as a final nail in the coffin of the nonproliferation treaty the demise of which began with the 1, 2, 3 nuclear agreement signed within India and the US, in clear violation of the US obligations under the articles 1 and 2 of the nonproliferation treaty.

Global concerns for human rights have been put on the back burner with a growing centrality political strategic interest while economic issues are also increasingly being brought under the geopolitical umbrellas of the strategic blocs. It is ironic that those who speak the loudest about the rules-based order are the ones most in violations of such rules. Rules based now means my rules and my will. In this new emerging world order, refugees in desperate need are being turned away from the shores promising safety in clear violation of the refugee convention. The rich world is displacing its responsibility towards the refugees onto the poorer countries.

Terrorism remains a threat. Similarly, state terrorism against people living under foreign occupation not only continues unevaded but has increased in intensity. Instead of coming together to resolve common doable threats we are witnessing global resurgence in intolerance, discrimination, racism and violence against minorities and other vulnerable groups in many countries, accompanied by extreme nationalism, xenophobia and aggression. In some countries, Islamophobia has become a political strategy for electoral and political gains and combatting falling approval ratings. Disinformation and fake news are also being used as tools of state craft. For instance, EU DisinfoLab, an NGO working to combat disinformation against the EU, unearthed a fifteen-year-old operation run by an Indian entity that used hundreds of fake media outlets and various persons including the identity of a dead professor to target Pakistan at various multilateral forums and in different European capitals. Similarly, Turkey has also often been targeted by disinformation and propaganda campaigns.



Ladies and gentlemen, the picture I have painted does not suggest the end of security centric geopolitics. In this day and age, the interplay of geography and politics, that is geopolitics, continues to play an important role. All countries of course are constrained by their geography, some less others more so. They all try to overcome these constraints using political means. Regional cooperation is one tool to achieve mutually beneficial objectives. For instance, Pakistan, being the next door neighbor of the Afghanistan never had the luxury to disengage, regardless of who has been ruling in Afghanistan. For forty years Afghanistan has seen nothing but conflict and occupation by one superpower or another. Despite billions being spent, no stable governance infrastructure or strong security setup was established. So today, we are seeing a major humanitarian crisis in Afghanistan. Any instability and chaos in Afghanistan has always of course impacted Pakistan. Similarly, Pakistan has the most to gain from peace and stability in Afghanistan. That is why Pakistan is among those countries today which are calling attention to the developing humanitarian situation in Afghanistan and advocating engagement for the benefit of the people in Afghanistan.

Ladies and gentlemen, the challenge for us is to come to this growing trend away from multilateralism and cooperation. Pakistan for its part is trying to break out of this geostrategic and geopolitical paradigm and we are ready to partner with all those who share a similar desire. Our government has placed a special emphasis on geoeconomics, expanding regional activity to bring about economic prosperity and development to our region. However, for this to happen we realize the centrality of regional peace. So, we see geoeconomics link to geopolitics through an alternate paradigm of peace and cooperation. We want to position Pakistan as an economic hub and melting pot for positive regional and global interests, centered economic security, built on three interconnected pillars: reflecting connectivity, for example to CPEK; development of economic basis as part of development strategy; and more strategically peace in our region and beyond.

Ladies and gentlemen, we must also realize that Asia is where there are number of rising state powers. Specially those challenging the Atlantic status quo. Asia has half of the world's population. Of the World's 30 largest cities, 21 are in Asia. This is why the most dynamic economic growth, social change, technological advances and human development have taken place during the last 50 years. This is where the course of history will be shaped in the 21st century. At the same time though, the Asian continent has been inflicted by armed conflict and instability in many sub regions.

Take South Asia for example, where you have one big country with revisionist designs in the region and currently ruled by an extremist ideology with deep routed antagonism towards Pakistan. Indian's actions in illegally occupying Jammu and Kashmir have risen tensions in South Asia, threatening peace and stability in the entire region. Indian's violations of international and humanitarian laws including the 4. Geneva Convention, resulting in war crimes committed in occupied Jammu-Kashmir as well it attempts to revoke the citizenships of its Muslims citizens in India itself, are all part of a fascist agenda of the BJP government.



For peace to come to a region outstanding conflicts like Kashmir need to be resolved in accordance to UN Security Council resolutions. We have to move beyond conflict management to conflict resolution. Especially in the prevailing nuclear security environment, as far as Pakistan is concerned, we will always support an inclusive, rules-based and just global order for advancing the shared objectives of peace progress and prosperity for all. There is ample room in Asia for all nations to thrive peacefully and building economic trade and investment linkages. Asia must not become a theatre of tensions induced from within or without.

Ladies and gentleman hopefully this conference will help in brainstorming of ideas how best to navigate in this turbulent world where geopolitics continues to play a leading role in shaping the global order. I would like to propose the following for consideration of the participants of this conference. First, we need to strengthen multilateralism that promotes collective security of everyone rather than pushing for a zero-sum approach. Second, we must hold all those uncountable who violate international law, UN Security Council's resolutions and carry out human rights violations, without discrimination. You cannot apply human rights standards to one country but ignore them when they are being abused in another country. Third, in order to promote a just global order some yardsticks and benchmarks should be promoted across organizations and in emerging technologies in strategic areas. Counting out exemptions should be avoided. Fourth, sustainable development needs to be pursued with equality, mutual collaboration and burden-sharing to reduce disparity. Fifth, global consolidations on pressing challenges such as climate change must move forward in terms of sustainable actions.

Ladies and gentleman, I believe that a new consensus on peace and security can and should be developed to deal with the complexity of challenges confronting us today. A new paradigm on substantive peace and stabilities practical and achievable. Pakistan will always be a willing partner in such an endeavor. The challenges maybe daunting, the road maybe uncharted but in various moments of history the human race has shown the potential to rise above the divisions in the interest of global welfare and prosperity. The world has changed, old systems and old methods are not relevant anymore. People normally said the more things change the more it remains the same but things have changed we cannot remain the same, if the system is to survive. I conclude by wishing the 7. Istanbul Security Conference a huge success and once again comment to some for taking part this important initiative. Thank you.

(Dr. Shireen M. MAZARI, Pakistan Minister of Human Rights | Opening Speech Transcript, 7th Istanbul Security Conference, 04 November 2021)