

## Recasting Global Governance

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### Introduction

There is no universally accepted definition of ‘governance’, but this term is often used to refer to interpretations of order, stability and politico-economic management. The Commission on Global Governance has, for instance, defined governance as ‘the sum of the many ways individuals and institutions, public and private, manage their common affairs’. It has posited that governance is ‘a continuing process through which conflicting and diverse interests may be accommodated and co-operative action may be taken’.<sup>2</sup> The World Bank and the International Monetary Fund, on the other hand, use ‘good governance’ to refer to a particular type of political and economic order. For them, ‘good governance’ is associated with the spread of democracy and transparency in governments and free markets. ‘Good governance’ is the opposite of arbitrary and self-seeking rule, corruption and cronyism, which have been endemic in some Third World societies. However, the World Bank and IMF’s version of ‘good governance’ has been costly to Third World peoples. Although the World Bank and the IMF started to emphasise different priorities following the crises in East Asia in the late 1990s, their ‘good governance’ is still associated with reduction in public expenditures, emphasis on exports and charges in hospitals and schools.

The concept of global governance, as distinct from ‘good governance’, refers to formal and informal sets of arrangements in global politics.<sup>3</sup> It implies that states alone cannot manage global affairs, and therefore it accords roles to international governmental organisations (IGOs), non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and multinational corporations (MNCs). Global governance refers to transnational networks, institution building, norm entrepreneurship, regime creation and the management

of global change. It covers many issues, such as women's rights, human rights, development, democratisation, the environment, security and investments. Its recent achievements include the treaty banning landmines, the Kyoto climate convention, the international criminal court, the World Trade Organisation, and the 'new generation' UN peacekeeping operations. In a nutshell, global governance describes regimes or systems of rule, embracing both formal and informal regulatory mechanisms.<sup>4</sup>

Underlying global governance is tolerance and a willingness to manage differences and reconcile self/other, us/them and inside/outside. This can take place only where there is a common set of values, norms, beliefs, ideas and institutions. As these values evolve, the nature of global governance has necessarily to change. Indeed, global governance 'is a broad, dynamic, complex process... that is constantly evolving and responding to changing circumstances'.<sup>5</sup> However, it is power that determines whose interests, rules and standards become 'global'. Thus, while global governance requires tolerance and accommodation of conflicting interests across national, racial, class, gender and ethnic boundaries, it is often the preferences of the most powerful actors that are accommodated.

The purpose of this essay is to demonstrate that global governance can be understood from several perspectives. I will do so by focusing on three themes: state sovereignty, globalisation and Western hegemony. In the next section, I will explain briefly the theoretical approaches that are used in this essay. I will then describe how the global 'interpretive community' has sought to influence perceptions of global governance. This will be followed by an analysis of how sovereignty has evolved. In the penultimate section I will discuss the impact of globalisation. I will conclude that the UN can help to shape global governance.

## Theoretical Context

Explaining and understanding global governance requires interpretation. Interpretation, in turn, takes place within a theoretical framework. As global governance is a multifaceted process, studying it behooves a theoretical framework that goes beyond a single paradigm. I will, therefore, employ a pluralist approach that is informed by insights mainly, but not exclusively, from realist, liberal and constructivist research programmes.<sup>6</sup> My task is complicated by the fact that there are several variants of realism, liberalism and constructivism. Moreover, even when taken together, these three paradigms cannot shed light on every facet of global life. I have chosen them because they go a long way in explaining power, order, norms and change. As Stephen Walt has argued: ‘The “complete diplomat” of the future should remain cognizant of realism’s emphasis on the inescapable role of power, keep liberalism’s awareness of domestic forces in mind, and occasionally reflect on constructivism’s vision of change’.<sup>7</sup>

Realist accounts of global politics tend to emphasise how states use power to maximise their national interests. They posit that the most important international actors are sovereign states, which are rational and operate in an inherently competitive, anarchic and self-help environment.<sup>8</sup> Realists assume that sovereignty makes states functionally similar.<sup>9</sup> They also emphasise strategies that states devise in efforts to improve their standing in international economic competition, influence weaker states or compete for international prestige. Thus, realists focus on military balancing and ‘positional competition’ in economic, technological and other non-military matters.<sup>10</sup> They acknowledge the existence of globalisation, civil society and transnational forces, but they make no room for them in their analyses. While realism may be helpful in highlighting the role of power and self-interest in global governance, it discounts the function of ideas, culture, institutions and norms, except as instruments in power politics.

At a glance, liberalism would appear to be the most appropriate approach to use in the study of global governance because, as Michael Doyle has observed, it is identified ‘with an essential principle, the importance of the freedom of the individual’.<sup>11</sup> Liberalism would adequately explain the interactions

of states, civil society, MNCs and IGOs in global governance. The liberal perspective on global politics posits that there 'is at the minimum a heterogeneous state of peace and war' which could 'become a state of global peace, in which the expectation of war disappears'.<sup>12</sup> Liberals believe that IGOs, such as the UN, play a vital role in world politics. They acknowledge that 'states live under international anarchy', but they argue that 'states are inherently respectful of international law' and that 'they do not experience a general state of war'.<sup>13</sup> Liberals reject the realist claim that states are functionally similar units. Doyle, for example, has argued that states 'are inherently different "units", differentiated by how they relate to individual human rights'.<sup>14</sup> In general, liberals believe that the interests of states extend beyond security and include the protection of human rights.

Constructivism is concerned with the way norms, rules and institutions constitute the identities and interests of states and other international actors. It claims that the structures of human association, including the international society, are determined primarily by shared ideas and culture rather than material forces. While realists claim that it is the distribution of capabilities that determines the nature of the international system, constructivists argue that those capabilities have meaning only because of the ideas we attach to them. Constructivists claim that it is the distribution of ideas and culture that determines the shape of the international system.<sup>15</sup> As constructivism focuses on the roles of norms, ideas and culture in constructing international structures, it would have plenty to say about how global governance is constituted.

As already indicated, global governance is about norms and power. It is constituted by ideas, culture and material forces. It also helps generate norms, ideas and culture. Global governance involves states and non-state actors, and it affects life from the local to the global levels. However, it is the theoretical frameworks utilised to understand it that determine the way norms and power are interpreted. It is for this reason that I have elected to employ a pluralist theoretical approach.

## The Interpretive Community and Global Governance

Global governance, which is essentially a product of liberal thinking, concerns so-called global values, norms, standards and rules. The majority of values that are considered global are Western and so global governance basically facilitates, and reflects, Western hegemony. Western hegemony here refers to the dominance of Western institutions, interests, standards and NGOs. The 'global civil society' is based on Western mores. In global governance, non-Western states and NGOs have had to redefine their interests and identities in relation to Western norms and power. Severe socio-economic problems have delivered Third World political leaders and NGOs into the hands of the West, thereby making Western hegemony appear like an 'empire by invitation'.

The dominance of Western institutions is partly due to the function of an 'interpretive community' that constantly explains, promotes, advocates and justifies global governance. The 'interpretive community' has been extremely successful in portraying Western ideas, values and preferences as global. The term 'interpretive community' is used in this essay to refer to any group of people who are committed to providing justification and legitimating principles for particular institutions, values or practices. Members of an 'interpretive community' may come from different professional backgrounds, such as scholars, journalists, international civil servants and NGO workers. They may also be recruited from different countries and might not even be aware that they operate as a part of a global 'interpretive community'. What they have in common is a conviction that they are interpreting reality, when in fact they may be only expressing aspirations. Sometimes the ideas of an 'interpretive community' may influence practice.

In the post-Cold War era, members of a global 'interpretive community' have converged on several themes, including a new world order, globalisation and new forms of sovereignty and security. For example, in December 1988, Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev used the phrase 'new world

order' in his address to the UN to underline the new strategic thinking and the global restructuring which he envisaged, but the 'world' simply ignored it. However, when US President George Bush used the same phrase two years later, the 'world' took notice. In condemning Iraq's invasion of Kuwait in August 1990, Bush talked of a new world order 'where the rule of law supplants the rule of the jungle, a world in which nations recognize the shared responsibility for freedom and justice'. This liberal aspiration contrasted sharply with the realist logic of power politics, in which war between states is always considered a possibility. It was no more than a wish for a different type of international system in the post-Cold War era, but other world leaders, scholars and journalists subsequently started talking of a new world order as if it was a reality. Bush's aspiration did not spell an end to power politics; instead it gave impetus to a re-thinking of norms in world politics, and this, in turn, energised efforts to portray Western values, standards and institutions as global norms.

It was in this intellectual climate that the Commission on Global Governance issued a report which defined sovereignty as an institution that is ultimately derived from the people: 'It is a power to be exercised by, for, and on behalf of the people of a state'.<sup>16</sup> This report implies that sovereignty should be respected only if the people of a state have had an opportunity to exercise their political, economic and cultural rights. The report also argues that 'the principle of sovereignty and the norms that derive from it must be further adapted to recognize changing realities'.<sup>17</sup> Furthermore, 'global security extends beyond the protection of borders, ruling elites and exclusive state interests to include the protection of people'.<sup>18</sup> The Commission was simply expressing aspirations that may become practice one day.

At about the same time, a former Australian Foreign Minister Gareth Evans argued that the concept of security, 'as it appears in the [UN] Charter, is as much about the protection of individuals as it is about the defence of the territorial integrity of states'.<sup>19</sup> Earlier in April 1991, a former UN Secretary-General Javier Pérez de Cuéllar had argued that state sovereignty needed to be reassessed in response to 'the shift in public attitudes towards the belief that the defence of the

oppressed in the name of morality should prevail over frontiers and legal documents'. Similarly, his successor, Boutros Boutros-Ghali, argued that the time of absolute and exclusive sovereignty had passed.<sup>20</sup> The current UN Secretary-General, Kofi Annan, went further in redefining sovereignty, when he told the General Assembly in September 1999 that his interpretation of the UN charter was that it aims 'to protect individual human beings, not to protect those who abuse them'. Annan argued, in his speech to the General Assembly in 1999, that sovereignty had been 'redefined by the forces of globalisation and international cooperation', and that the state was the 'servant of its people, and not vice versa'.

The conclusions of the Commission on Global Governance and those of UN secretaries-general and other analysts in recent years suggest that the re-thinking of norms has given rise to an interpretive community which is ready to argue for changes in the practices of sovereignty. By arguing for liberal interpretations of the UN charter, they have promoted a particular view of global governance. However, the views of an 'interpretive community', without changes in the practices of the majority of international actors, cannot constitute a shift in the meaning of sovereignty. According to some analysts, it was not possible in the 1990s to see a clear-cut turn in state practices. As Adam Roberts has observed, while idealists have hoped that 'the sovereignty of states would take second place to human rights', humanitarian action in the 1990s 'owed much to political considerations that were often tinged with an element of *realpolitik*'.<sup>21</sup>

It is such interpretations that set the stage on which 'NGOs and... IGOs grope, sometimes cooperatively, sometimes competitively, sometimes in parallel towards a modicum of global governance'.<sup>22</sup> What these interpretations do not say is that global governance links together 'global civil society', individuals, the state and market forces. It is also about the generation of, and the response to, 'shared' values and institutions, which give rise to a process to identify issues, form an agenda, arrive at

outcomes and make arrangements to implement them.<sup>23</sup> However, as the preceding paragraphs show, global governance has definite implications for interpretations of sovereignty.

## Sovereignty and Global Governance

State sovereignty is like a living organism; it casts off its meanings as it evolves in response to the demands of global governance. In simple terms, sovereignty can be described as a principle that legitimizes internal political organisation and serves as a mechanism for enhancing international order. It is, therefore, linked to both internal and global governance. As Thomas Biersteker and Cynthia Weber have argued, state sovereignty is ‘a political entity’s externally recognized right to exercise final authority over its affairs’.<sup>24</sup> With regard to internal political control, sovereignty revolves around population, territory and recognised authority. To this Alan James has added a constitutional dimension, claiming that ‘sovereign states are those territorially-based entities which are independent in terms of their constitutional arrangements’.<sup>25</sup>

For purposes of this essay, I distinguish between three types of sovereignty. The first is external or juridical sovereignty, which is based on the notion that theoretically ‘the state has over it no other authority than that of international law’.<sup>26</sup> The second is internal or empirical sovereignty, which is based on the view that states have the right (and capacity) to control the people, resources and institutions within their territories. The third is individual or popular sovereignty, which is predicated on the claim that all people are entitled to fundamental freedoms and that states exercise control over them only with their consent. Empirical sovereignty and juridical sovereignty accord states rights and responsibilities that other international actors do not have.

The concept of global governance implicitly questions some understandings of sovereignty because it is based on the assumption that states and non-state actors are partners in the management of

global affairs. Realists, who claim that states are the most important international actors, would regard global governance as a diminution of sovereignty. The realist view of sovereignty is that theoretically each state is free to pursue its domestic and external affairs without outside interference. Hence Hans Morgenthau's definition of sovereignty as 'a centralized power that exercised its law-making and law-enforcing authority within a certain territory'.<sup>27</sup> On the other hand, liberals, who subscribe to the view that transnational forces play important roles in world politics, regard global governance as a necessary process of addressing anarchy in the absence of central authority. Liberals believe that sovereignty gives states the right to exercise control within their territories, but that this control is to be exercised with some degree of consent and legitimacy from society. For this reason, liberals associate empirical sovereignty with popular sovereignty. Constructivists, who consider sovereignty to be socially constructed, regard global governance as a part of the social construction and reconstruction of international society.

A closer examination of the different perceptions of sovereignty will shed more light. The realist perspective of sovereignty, which is state-centric and absolutist, is often traced back to Jean Bodin in the fifteenth century. Bodin defined sovereignty as 'the absolute and perpetual power' of the ruler.<sup>28</sup> A little later, Thomas Hobbes elaborated similar views in the *Leviathan*. Their perceptions of sovereignty reflected the overriding concern for order and security in France and England respectively. As Alexander Murphy has argued, Bodin's main concern was to promote peace.<sup>29</sup> Endorsing Bodin and Hobbes, Hinsley has argued that sovereignty refers to 'a final and absolute political authority in the political community'.<sup>30</sup> Some writers have continued to view sovereignty from this perspective alone, thereby entrenching the realist viewpoint. However, Hinsley, and many others have argued that in practice there have been limitations to the exercise of sovereignty, with Hinsley observing that sovereignty is not a fact but a concept about how political power is exercised. This state-centric perspective is a normative position that originated from absolutist Europe. Indeed, Reus-Smit has

argued that the moral purpose of the state in absolutist Europe was to preserve a 'divinely ordained' and hierarchical order, and this gave rise to an authoritative norm of procedural justice.<sup>31</sup>

The liberal view of sovereignty may be traced back to John Locke and Thomas Paine. Paine, for example, associated popular sovereignty with international peace. In reference to the American Revolution in 1791, he argued: 'Monarchical sovereignty, the enemy of mankind, and the source of misery, is abolished; and sovereignty is restored to its natural and original place, the nation... Were this the case throughout Europe, the cause of war would be taken away'.<sup>32</sup> Locke's ideas, which defined sovereignty in relation to the consent of individuals and civil society, were also consistent with liberal democracy. In the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, liberal scholars, who were opposed to the Austinian juristic theory of the state, defined sovereignty in terms of people's rights. For example, Harold Laski claimed that sovereignty belonged to the people. In recent times, some liberals have argued that transnational forces and NGOs have a legitimate role in world politics, and that sovereignty should not stand in their way. The liberal perspective on sovereignty readily accommodates the norms, power and regulatory mechanisms that underpin global governance.

Constructivists have had a lot to say about sovereignty in the past decade. Indeed, some of the severest critics of our knowledge of sovereignty have been constructivists and critical theorists. Rob Walker, for instance, recognises sovereignty as 'the primary constitutive principle of modern political life', but he argues that its history has not been properly explained and suggests that it is necessary 'to be wary of the conventional history of... state sovereignty'.<sup>33</sup> Constructivists are critical of those who treat sovereignty as an unchanging institution. Reus-Smit, for example, has argued that it is the constitutional structures of society that determine the nature of sovereignty. The norms that underpin global governance are part of the constitutional structures.

The assumptions that underpin sovereignty date back to the Peace of Westphalia, which inaugurated a new 'international' legal order for Europe. The Westphalian regime, which brought about a

break from the previous religious order, is best remembered for making the territorial state the cornerstone of the modern international system. Since then, the development and reinterpretation of sovereignty has closely mirrored the evolution of the state and the prevailing norms of global governance. However, sovereignty has not always been honoured. In Europe, sovereignty was occasionally subverted with a view to maintaining the balance of power. This is partly why Stephen Krasner has claimed that breaches 'to the Westphalian model have been an enduring characteristic of the international environment'.<sup>34</sup> Krasner has more recently written of sovereignty as 'organized hypocrisy'.<sup>35</sup> Others have suggested that sovereignty can be understood only with reference to particular historical periods.

Sovereignty has undergone various transformations in accordance with the prevailing norms of global governance. Whenever serious crises undermine the legitimising principles of sovereignty, new norms are negotiated, and these norms often reflect the preferences of the hegemonic states. It is the processes of negotiating the rules for sovereignty which Biersteker and Weber had in mind when they argued that sovereignty was socially constructed.<sup>36</sup> They posited that it is 'the practices of states and non-state agents [that] produce, reform and redefine sovereignty and its constitutive elements'. In such social interactions, all participants help, in varying degrees, to shape, and are also shaped by, the structure of the system. A global structure that is characterised by power politics and secret diplomacy is likely to favour the notion that sovereignty resides with governments. However, a global order, which is committed to the promotion of democracy and human rights, would favour popular sovereignty. Thus, it is the norms, values and institutions which underpin global governance that determine the nature of sovereignty.

Westphalian sovereignty was perceived to reside with the political leaders and governments. Under this system, the defence of sovereignty provided governments with an excuse to impose dictatorial rule. This autocratic sovereignty was undermined first by the 1776 American

revolution, with its emphasis on popular sovereignty, and then by the 1789 French revolution, with its ideas of equality, fraternity and liberty. After the Napoleonic wars, the Vienna Congress in 1815 was hostile to populist ideas and legitimised neo-Westphalian sovereignty based on monarchical control. This underwent change after World War I, when the 1919 Versailles Conference legitimised sovereignty based on the nationalist norm. However, this norm did not apply to African and Asian political entities, which had come under European colonialism. Thus in its evolution, sovereignty has oscillated between governmental 'proprietaryship' and popular 'possession'.

Sovereignty has closely been identified with territory for more than 350 years, but the inviolability of territorial integrity and the non-intervention norm were given more emphasis at the end of World War II. This extra emphasis privileged the state over its people. The Cold War, which, in Alexander Wendt's words, 'was a structure of shared knowledge that governed great power relations', ensured that this state-centric interpretation of sovereignty was supreme.<sup>37</sup> During this period, recognition of new states was determined by whether or not they were ready to respect the non-intervention norm and to uphold juridical sovereignty. Popular sovereignty and good governance had no room in this scheme, partly because the two superpowers – the US and the Soviet Union - could not agree on what form of internal governance was desirable. With the end of the Cold War, Western powers have emphasised normative values and empirical sovereignty, and this has given the impression that sovereignty is increasingly being associated with the democratic norm. However, the emphasis which the Western states and international financial institutions have placed on liberal democracy and popular legitimacy, appears to be geared towards consolidating Western hegemony. The processes of globalisation have facilitated this consolidation of Western hegemony.

Globalisation and Global Governance

Global governance and globalisation have a chicken-egg relationship. One is said to be a cause, or product, of the other. This essay will not engage in the argument as to whether globalisation precedes global governance or vice versa. Neither of them can be traced to a specific date. What is clear is that globalisation has become one of the most commonly used terms in International Relations, although (or because) its meaning remains imprecise. Jan Aart Scholte has argued that globalisation ‘refers to processes whereby social relations acquire relatively distanceless and borderless qualities’.<sup>38</sup> This is a useful starting point, but it does not say much about the globalisation processes. As with many social phenomena, the theoretical framework in play determines the meaning attached to globalisation.

Realists, for example, do not think much of globalisation because of the importance they attach to the state and national interests. To them, globalisation is basically a product of ‘positional competition’ by states, in their efforts to gain advantage in non-military sectors. For some Third World analysts, globalisation is a form of Westernisation and colonisation that can be traced back several centuries. They perceive it in terms of the domination of the Third World by industrialised countries. The market-oriented liberals, on the other hand, have defined globalisation primarily in terms of the contemporary movement of capital, investment and other economic interactions, thereby equating it with economic interdependence. They sometimes regard globalisation as the hidden force behind economic cooperation, financial markets, and free trade rules. Thus the establishment of the World Trade Organization in the mid-1990s was a major development in global governance. Hurrell and Woods summed up the liberal perspective in which globalisation is a ‘process of increasing interdependence and global enmeshment which occurs as money, people, images, values, and ideas flow ever more swiftly and smoothly across national boundaries’.<sup>39</sup> The ‘flow’ of people across state borders has to be qualified, as most developed countries have restricted the entry of Third World peoples. For constructivists, globalisation is a part of the global structure that constitutes the identities and interests of international actors and is, in turn, constituted by the interactions of these actors.

In this essay the term globalisation is used to describe the intensity and breadth of interactions within the political, technological, economic, social and cultural domains, most of which are derived from Western, and especially capitalist, values and practices. Due to improvements in information technology, globalisation partly refers to the processes through which social, political and economic relations can be instantaneous throughout the world and may sometimes elude state attempts at restriction. In a globalised world, political, cultural, economic and social events tend to become more interconnected. The emphasis is on the size, depth and speed of interactions.<sup>40</sup>

Globalisation implies universalisation, harmonisation and homogeneity, which ultimately mean that the values, institutions, interests and norms of some peoples and societies have to be sacrificed. To the extent that globalisation implies the promotion of values and standards derived from the West, it inevitably poses a threat to the existence of non-Western traditions and institutions. The threat that globalisation poses to Third World peoples is not only more severe but also of a different type from that it presents to those of the global North.

While some liberals have suggested that globalisation has eclipsed the state both within its territory and internationally, realists argue that globalisation has in fact been created and maintained by states. As Ian Clark has observed, globalisation could be seen as a symptom of 'wider political and economic policies' and 'the product of specific state policy choices'.<sup>41</sup> There is no doubt that globalisation has had some effects on state behaviour. Rapid changes in the technology of transport and communications have made it necessary for policy makers to devise new ways of responding to both domestic and global problems. In this sense, globalisation is a restructuring process that cannot be ignored by policy makers. However, states, especially the great powers, still determine the environment in which other international actors operate. For example, it was the developed countries that organised financial rescue plans for Indonesia, South Korea and Thailand in 1997. It is partly for this reason that some have argued that globalisation is directed by states' policies.

Explaining how globalisation relates to global governance requires a re-iteration of my earlier discussion of sovereignty. Sovereignty not only defines the identities and capabilities of groups in world politics but also limits the ability of outsiders to interfere in domestic affairs. Thus, sovereignty determines agency or the capacity for independent action in world politics. In this sense, sovereignty and self-determination are interrelated. Self-determination provides a theory to explain when state boundaries are legitimate and when not, thus implying guidelines to use for deciding whether they should be honoured or not. The pursuit of self-determination legitimises sovereignty. Like sovereignty, what self-determination involves has changed over time. A monarch could, literally, claim that his military capacities presented a *fait accompli* without worrying too much about whether he had the right to rule: he was, materially, self-determining. The French and American revolutions challenged this position and spread the notion that sovereignty ought to be popular. Then the twentieth century produced two competing norms regarding ‘who’ the ‘self’ is in self-determination, each norm embodied in an international treaty. The Treaty of Versailles promoted ethnic self-determination and thereby legitimated sovereignty based on the nationalist norm.<sup>42</sup> However, later international treaties, including the charters of the UN and the Organisation of African Unity, promoted state self-determination, thereby legitimating sovereignty based largely on the territorial norm. What these conceptions shared was the idea that a group ought to be able to determine its own future, and that sovereignty was necessary to enable true autonomy.

With globalisation, the interpretation of sovereignty and state capacity for independent action in world politics has been affected by two factors. The first is that values, which are associated with the West, have been universalised and depoliticised. This has made possible the second factor, namely the change in international norms relating to development trajectories. There are no longer alternative paths to successful development. Modernisation theory, discarded decades earlier, has made a comeback. Third World societies are arrayed on a single line: successful, civic, progressive and Western, at one

end; failed, ethnic, primitive and non-Western, at the other. This has delegitimised political life outside the West, making intervention in non-Western states acceptable.

Globalisation has prompted observers to claim that the earth has become a global village. However, if the earth is a global village, it is one where only some inhabitants retain their traditions, cultures, rituals and symbols. Western-derived rules and standards have constructed the so-called global village. The interests and values of non-Westerners are largely ignored, except mainly as tourist attractions. The 'global' values, which are trumpeted under the banner of globalisation, were not arrived at through reflection and consensus in the international society. They are the norms, symbols and standards that have been promoted by the powerful Western countries largely for their own benefit. Non-state actors, and especially the NGOs, concerned with numerous problems such as human rights abuses, poverty, environmental degradation and weapons of mass destruction have facilitated the promotion of Western values in the Third World.

It is no wonder that as the forces for harmonisation and universalisation grow, non-Western peoples and their communities are striving to preserve control over local identities, symbols and values. Thus localisation, nationalism, and ethnic and religious revivalism have assumed significance partly because of the threat which universalisation and harmonisation pose to different cultures, standards and interests. These defensive reactions by non-Westerners to some aspects of globalisation do not suggest that their identities and interests have always remained stagnant. They merely signal that the globalising processes are too enormous and too fast. Indeed, it is partly through the speed of its challenge to diversity and identity that globalisation constitutes a threat to the security of Third World peoples. It is perhaps for this reason that UN Deputy Secretary-General Louise Fréchette has argued that globalisation brings uncertainties in which 'there are losers as well as winners'. She touched on the nerve of globalisation's contradictions when she observed that 'globalisation confronts us with the challenge of reconciling the imperatives of global markets with the socio-economic needs of the world's people; and

of realising its full potential while minimising the threat of new divisions in our world, of backlash and recourse to the damaging “isms”... populism, nationalism, ethnic chauvinism, fanaticism and terrorism’.<sup>43</sup>

The non-Western peoples and communities view globalisation as a cause of alienation: they feel apathetic, detached, socially dislocated, powerless and normless in the face of globalisation. They are apathetic because they see themselves as outsiders in the global village. They also feel the globalisation processes have cast them aside. Alienation undermines what has been described as human security.<sup>44</sup> In this instance, it results from the differences in power, opportunities and advantages between the West and the non-Western societies.

Recent attempts to assert ‘Asian values’ are partly a reaction to globalisation. There is no consensus among the people of Asia as to what constitutes ‘Asian values’, but it is a label with which some political leaders seek to legitimise certain forms of internal political order. Political leaders who seek to maintain authoritarianism and contain the opposition within their societies have exploited ‘Asian values’. These leaders may be believed by sections of the population, especially when they argue that their goal is to preserve Asian traditions in the face of the globalisation juggernaut. Similarly, Islamic resurgence can be explained partly in terms of efforts by some Muslim groups to prevent the total erosion of their cultures. Occasionally, radical groups have used the cover of this resurgence to engage in political violence. For example, the establishment of the Hezbollah in Lebanon's Bekaa Valley in the early 1980s by Iranian zealots, was partly based on the fact that the Shia Muslims in Lebanon were treated as second-class citizens both economically and politically. But, Hezbollah was funded by the Iranian regime as part of its efforts to promote its own brand of Islam and to reshape the Middle Eastern regional order. The result was insecurity for foreigners in Lebanon and hostage seizures.

However, it is not only non-Western peoples that fear the impact of globalisation on their interests. French government officials have expressed serious concerns about the relationship between free trade and culture, particularly with regard to trade in audio-visual products. France was among

several European countries that criticised aspects of the 1993 GATT agreement because of its potential impact on French culture and identity. Canadians have struggled with the potential of imported books and periodicals to edge out Canadian content, and have experimented with laws that establish excise tax or minimum quotas for Canadian content. And many of the most powerful Western countries, the engines behind globalisation, re-enact the same confrontation domestically with immigrants. Even with the enormous power asymmetry intact, some local French, Americans, Germans and Australians, for example, fret publicly over the ‘threat’ that supposedly immigrants pose to their culture. Nevertheless, the West as a whole celebrates globalisation.

#### The UN and the Future of Global Governance

Globalisation and global governance will go on with or without the UN. Global governance has so far reflected mainly the interests of Western societies, but the UN has the potential to make it truly global. It has the potentiality to ensure that the ideas, norms and rules, which underpin global governance, reflect the diversity of values and interests in the world. The UN needs to work out its programmes in such a way that, wherever possible, racial, gender, cultural and economic inequalities are taken into account. In ‘gazing beyond the horizon’, Deputy Secretary-General Fréchette has emphasized three broad imperatives for the UN: legitimacy; instruments and institutions; and effectiveness. These are very important factors, but they are more complex than they first appear. This is because the UN means different things to various groups. In the remaining part of this essay, I will briefly look at how realists, liberals and constructivists view the legitimacy of the UN and finally suggest that the UN ‘managers’ need to reinterpret the charter consistently.

The UN appears to straddle the borderline between realism and liberalism, and it has lasted this long partly because it has been perceived by both realists and liberals to be in their interest. Realists care

about the legitimacy of the UN, but for them this legitimacy is derived from the UN serving as an *instrument* of state interests. A UN without the potentiality to serve as a device through which states use their power to pursue national interests, has little legitimacy for the realists. There is no doubt that sections the UN, especially the Security Council, serve as a platform for power politics.<sup>45</sup> What generally concerns Third World states is that most of the power within the UN is held by Western countries, which dominate the international system politically, economically, technologically and militarily. Western countries also have the means to promote their values and norms more effectively than the non-Western states. That is why Samuel Huntington has argued: 'The West in effect is using international institutions, military power and economic resources to run the world in ways that will maintain Western predominance, protect Western interests and promote Western political and economic values'.<sup>46</sup> Other realist scholars have made similar claims in relation to the Western states' control of the UN and other international organisations. For example, John Mearsheimer has argued: 'The most powerful states in the system create and shape institutions so that they can maintain their share of world power, or even increase it'.<sup>47</sup> If the UN is to remain acceptable to the majority of people around the world, it has to erase the perception that it serves as a mechanism through which the values of powerful states are imposed on the weaker ones.

If realists have been mainly interested in the exercise of power and the pursuit of national interests, liberals have been interested in the UN's *universalist* and *progressive* character. Liberals believe the UN has put power politics under check and facilitated the collective management of global public goods. From some liberal perspectives, the UN derives legitimacy from its inclusiveness and its potential to bring about human progress. As Ramesh Thakur has argued: 'The greatest strength of the United Nations is that it is the only universal forum for international cooperation and management. It must continue to play a central role in establishing a normative order which strikes a balance between the competing demands of equity and political reality'.<sup>48</sup> On the issues of democratisation and

participation, some liberals have argued that the UN has neglected non-state actors for too long. Hence the increasing calls for the UN to involve the 'global civil society' more deeply in global governance. There is no doubt that a good number of NGOs have achieved phenomenal success in specific issue-areas. However, agreeing on a mechanism for their participation with the UN in global governance is likely to raise difficult questions. NGOs have the capacity to do a great deal, but they have no obligation to do anything. Voluntary organisations are not accountable, even in theory, to those whom they serve. The UN requires great ingenuity to pursue democratisation without compromising the effectiveness and universal acceptability of its action.

For constructivists, the legitimacy of the UN is derived largely from its *constitutive* and *transformative* character. The UN is both a product, and producer, of ideas, norms and state interests and identities. The world's leading constructivist in the International Relations discipline, John Ruggie, is a senior adviser to the UN Secretary-General. Ruggie has said his transition from academia to the UN 'went surprisingly smoothly because it quickly became apparent that creative leadership in international organization is social constructivism in action'.<sup>49</sup> The UN has been an agent of transformation. It has generated numerous ideas on such issues as development, the environment, human rights, women's rights and peacekeeping. In this respect, the UN has become a very important norm-setting organisation. As the interests, preferences and identities of member states are neither fixed nor exogenously given, the UN has participated, however marginally, in influencing the way they are defined and redefined.

However, there is a perception in the Third World that the UN's transformative power has been harnessed by the West and works to the detriment of non-Western interests. Some of these criticisms came out at the 1993 UN conference on human rights in Vienna, where China and developing countries described the universalisation of human rights as a conspiracy by Western governments to pressure non-Western states to change their identities and political and economic systems. However, the Vienna

Declaration and Programme of Action achieved a classic compromise by stating that 'human rights are universal, indivisible and interdependent and interrelated', while also recognising 'the significance of national and regional particularities and various historical, cultural and religious backgrounds'. The Vienna Declaration underscored the clash of two principles - universalism and relativism. Western countries and NGOs from both the North and the South supported the universalist perspective, while non-Western states took the relativist line. The conference also underlined the imperative for the UN to devise a formula through which its ideas and norms in the future reflect the diversity of the global village.

The exigencies of global governance in this millennium require the UN to rethink its norms, structures, procedures and practices. If the UN were to make a difference to global governance, it would need to address more seriously the imperative for democratisation in its agencies, taking account of growing demands for transparency and popular participation. Greater openness cannot be achieved without creative efforts to recast sovereignty. Thakur has argued in the introduction of this volume that the 'partial erosion of the... principle of national sovereignty is rooted today in the reality of global interdependence', but there is a general perception that this 'erosion' is too slow and too minimal. For example, in discharging their responsibilities in the human rights area, UN secretaries-general have often been constrained by the UN charter, especially Article 2(7) that prohibits intervention 'in matters which are essentially within the domestic jurisdiction of any state'. This part of the charter has previously been interpreted in a manner in which it has indirectly shielded dictators from the international scrutiny of their human rights records. However, in his address to the General Assembly in September 1999, Kofi Annan said 'Nothing in the charter precludes a recognition that there are rights beyond borders' (UN Press Release 1999). This line of re-thinking should be stretched further. With the rapid changes brought about by globalisation, what was 'essentially' within the domestic jurisdiction of states in 1945 may not remain so in this millennium. Therefore, it is incumbent upon the UN 'managers' to reinterpret

the charter to reflect the new global realities. It would be a travesty if the UN charter were to serve as a hindrance to the evolution of state sovereignty. The imperative is to reinterpret the charter consistently.

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<sup>1</sup> I am deeply indebted to Sue Downie, Kanishka Jayasuriya and John Mugambwa for useful comments on earlier drafts of this paper.

<sup>2</sup> Commission on Global Governance, *Our Global Neighbourhood*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995, p.2.

<sup>3</sup> For purposes of this essay, the terms 'global politics' and 'international politics' are used interchangeably.

<sup>4</sup> K.Jayasuriya, 'Globalization, Law and the Transformation of Sovereignty: The Emergence of Global Regulatory Governance', *Indiana Journal of Global Legal Studies*, 6(2), 1999, 425-455.

<sup>5</sup> Commission on Global Governance, *op.cit.*, p.4. \

<sup>6</sup> Other theories such as feminism, critical social theory and the International Society approach would powerfully illuminate some aspects global governance, but space does not allow me to explain them here. However, I will refer to them in the essay when necessary.

<sup>7</sup> S.M.Walt, 'International Relations: One World, Many Theories'. *Foreign Policy*, no.110, 1998, p.44.

<sup>8</sup> M.Mastanduno, 'Preserving the Unipolar Moment: Realist Theories and US Grand Strategy After the Cold War'. *International Security*. 21(4), 1997, pp.49-88.

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<sup>9</sup> K.N.Waltz, *Theory of International Politics*. Reading, Mass: Addison-Wesley, 1979.

<sup>10</sup> M.Mastanduno and E. B. Kapstein, 'Realism and State Strategies After the Cold War' in Kapstein and Mastanduno (eds), *Unipolar Politics: Realism and State Strategies After the Cold War*. New York: Columbia University Press.

<sup>11</sup> M.Doyle, *Ways of War and Peace*. New York: W. W. Norton and Co., 1997.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, p.210.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, p.211.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, p.211.

<sup>15</sup> C.Reus-Smit, *The Moral Purpose of the State*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1999; J.G.Ruggie, *Constructing the World Polity*. London: Routledge, 1998; A.Wendt, *Social Theory of International Politics*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999.

<sup>16</sup> Commission on Global Governance, *op.cit.*, p.69.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*, p.7.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, p.81.

<sup>19</sup> G.Evans, 'Cooperative Security and Intrastate Conflict'. *Foreign Policy*. 96, 1994, p.9.

<sup>20</sup> B.Boutros-Ghali, *An Agenda for Peace*. 2nd edn. New York: United Nations, 1995, p.44.

<sup>21</sup> A.Roberts, *Humanitarian Action in War*. Adelphi Paper No. 305, London, Oxford University Press, for The International Institute of Strategic Studies, 1996.

<sup>22</sup> L.Gordenker and T. G. Weiss, 1996. 'Pluralizing Global Governance: Analytical Approaches and Dimensions' in T. G. Weiss and L. Gordenker (eds.) *NGOs, the UN and Global Governance*. Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner, p.17.

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<sup>23</sup> Some passages in this paragraph are taken from the final report of the Governance workshop, which was prepared by Professor John Groom.

<sup>24</sup> T.J. Biersteker and C.Weber (eds), 1996. *State Sovereignty as Social Construct*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, p.2.

<sup>25</sup> A.James, 'Sovereignty: ground rule or gibberish?' *Review of International Studies*, 10(1), 1984, p.12.

<sup>26</sup> N.L.Wallace-Bruce, *Claims to Statehood in International Law*. New York: Carlton Press, 1994, p.58.

<sup>27</sup> H.J.Morgenthau, *Politics Among Nation: The Struggle for Power and Peace*. New York: Knopf, 1967, p.299.

<sup>28</sup> J. Bodin, *On Sovereignty*, J.H.Franklin, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992, p.1.

<sup>29</sup> A.B.Murphy, 'The sovereign state as a political-territorial ideal: historical and contemporary considerations'. In Biersteker and Weber, *State Sovereignty as Social Construct*, p.85.

<sup>30</sup> F.H.Hinsley, *Sovereignty*. Cambridge. Cambridge University Press, 1986, p.26.

<sup>31</sup> C.Reus-Smit, *The Moral Purpose of the State*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1999, pp.87-121.

<sup>32</sup> Cited in Doyle, *op.cit.*, p.206.

<sup>33</sup> R.B.J.Walker, 'Sovereignty, Identity and Community: Reflections on the Horizons of Contemporary Political Practice.' In *Contending Sovereignties: Redefining Political*

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*Community*, eds R. B. J. Walker and S. H. Mendlovitz. Boulder: Lynne Rienner, 1990, pp. 159 and 171.

<sup>34</sup> S.D.Krasner, 'Compromising Westphalia'. *International Security*. 20(3), 1996, p.115.

<sup>35</sup> S.D.Krasner, *Sovereignty: Organized Hypocrisy*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1999.

<sup>36</sup> T.J.Biersteker and C.Weber, eds, *Sovereignty as Social Construct*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996, p.11.

<sup>37</sup> A.Wendt, 'Constructing International Politics'. *International Security*. 20(1), 1995, 71-81.

<sup>38</sup> J.A.Scholte, 'The Globalization of World Politics'. In S. Smith and J. Baylis (eds.) *The Globalization of World Politics*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997, p.14.

<sup>39</sup> A.Hurrell and N.Woods, 'Globalisation and Inequality'. *Millennium*, 24(3), 1995, p.447.

<sup>40</sup> S.M.Makinda, 'Globalisation as a policy outcome'. *Current Affairs Bulletin*, 74(6): 4-10.

<sup>41</sup> I.Clark, *Globalisation and Fragmentation*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997.

<sup>42</sup> S.M.Makinda, 'The United Nations and State Sovereignty: Mechanism for Managing International Security'. *Australian Journal of Political Science*, 33(1), 1998, 101-115.

<sup>43</sup> Speech of the Deputy Secretary-General, UN University, 21<sup>st</sup> January 2000.

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<sup>44</sup> R.Thakur, 'From National to Human Security'. In Harris, S. & Mack, A. (eds). *Asia-Pacific Security: The Economics-Politics Nexus*. St. Leonards, Sydney: Allen & Unwin, 1997.

<sup>45</sup> The UN is so big and differentiated that generalisations about its activities are bound to be inaccurate.

<sup>46</sup> S.P.Huntington, 'The clash of civilizations?' *Foreign Affairs*, 72(3), 1993, p.40.

<sup>47</sup> J.J.Mearsheimer, 'The False Promise of International Institutions'. *International Security*, 19(3), 1994/5, p.13.

<sup>48</sup> R.Thakur, 'UN Peacekeeping in a New World Disorder'. In R. Thakur and C. A. Thayer, (eds). *A Crisis of Expectations*. Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1995, pp.21-22.

<sup>49</sup> J.G.Ruggie, *Constructing the World Polity*, London: Routledge, 1998, p.xii.