

# Reforming the Rules-Based International Order: Opportunities and Challenges in a Shifting Global Landscape

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## Abstract

Amidst significant geopolitical shifts, the need to restructure the rules-based international order becomes essential to preserving world peace, justice, and collaboration. According to this study, "Reforming the Rules-based International Order: Opportunities and Challenges in a Shifting Global Landscape", multilateral institutions must undergo strategic reforms in order to become more responsive to modern threats such as cybercrimes and climate change, as well as growing multipolarity and technological advancements. According to recent developments in international law and normative frameworks, the answer is yes, there are several options to improve institutional efficacy.

Critically, the article highlights the difficulties caused by power imbalances in organizations such as the UN Security Council, where veto powers impede group efforts, as outlined in Chapter V of the UN Charter (Articles 23-32). Recent judicial decisions that uphold sovereignty and accountability shed light on reform opportunities. The International Court of Justice's (ICJ) Provisional Measures Order of 26 January 2024, for instance, mandates immediate humanitarian protections in the case of Application of the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide in the Gaza Strip (South Africa v. Israel), illustrating the judiciary's role in upholding international humanitarian law during times of conflict. The Court's proactive approach to addressing violations of the 1948 Genocide Convention is further supported by a request for additional measures on May 10, 2024, and subsequent changes on March 28, 2024.

From a diplomatic perspective, the paper emphasizes how new accords might help close governance gaps. Building on the UN Convention against Corruption, which was ratified in 2023–2024, the United Nations Convention against Cybercrime, which was adopted by the General Assembly on December 24, 2024, via Resolution A/RES/79/243, is an important step in coordinating international responses to transnational threats. Echoing the tenets of the UN Charter's Chapter VI on pacific dispute settlement, the Pact for the Future, which includes the Global Digital Compact, is codified in A/RES/79/1 on September 22, 2024, and affirmatively pledges to inclusive multilateralism.

As demonstrated by the World Trade Organization's (WTO) continuing dispute settlement changes, the discourse traverses obstacles including institutional inertia. By eliminating appellate body crises and improving trade equality, the Ministerial Decision on Dispute Settlement Reform of March 2, 2024, at MC13, moves the system closer to being completely operational by 2024. Applications for arrest warrants filed by the International Criminal Court (ICC) in the Situation in the State of Palestine on May 20, 2024, highlight Rome Statute responsibility and combat impunity in changing environments in the field of international criminal justice.

Additionally, based on the ICJ's advisory procedures on climate commitments, which were sought in 2023 and are expected to deliver an opinion in 2025, this paper promotes proactive changes that favour sovereignty while promoting collective security in line with the execution of the Paris Agreement. By including these components, the study confirms that a reformed order may lessen difficulties such as geopolitical rivalry, guaranteeing a robust international system. There are

chances to use agreements like the Vienna Convention on the Law of Treaties and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights to direct fair changes. Finally, this academic effort tactfully urges coordinated global action to achieve a more flexible, inclusive system that transcends present divisions and leads to long-term peace and prosperity.

Key Words: Multilateralism, Geopolitical Shifts, Institutional Reform, Sovereignty Reinforcement, Global governance, Normative Accountability.

## Introduction

The Rules-Based International Order (RBIO), which is supported by fundamental documents like the Vienna Convention on the Law of Treaties (1969) and the United Nations Charter (1945), is a pillar of economic stability, human dignity, and collective security in the modern world. This structure, which was created in the wake of devastating wars, has allowed for previously unheard-of levels of state collaboration and the settlement of conflicts through multilateral organizations such as the International Criminal Court (ICC) and the International Court of Justice (ICJ). However, the RBIO faces significant challenges as geopolitical dynamics shift toward multipolarity and new countries exert their influence in the face of environmental demands and technological upheavals. There are potential to improve equality and inclusion by reforming this system, but there are also difficulties in resolving conflicts over sovereignty, enforcement shortcomings, and moral differences.

The shifting global landscape is characterized by intensified competitiveness between nations, exacerbated by armed conflicts and allegations of grave violations of international humanitarian law. For instance, on February 2, 2024, the International Court of Justice upheld jurisdiction over claims relating to the interpretation and application of the 1948 Genocide Convention in the case of *Ukraine v. Russian Federation*, which involved allegations of genocide under the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide. This ruling proved that the RBIO could settle disputes even when hostilities were still going on. This ruling demonstrates the potential for reform: states may uphold Article 33 of the UN Charter on peaceful settlement by strengthening their legal systems, which will encourage accountability and deter escalation<sup>1</sup>. Similar to this, the ICJ's provisional measures orders issued on January 26, 2024, March 28, 2024, and May 24, 2024, in *Application of the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide in the Gaza Strip (South Africa v. Israel)*, highlighted the duty to prevent genocide and guarantee humanitarian access, citing the *erga omnes* nature of these responsibilities under customary international law<sup>2</sup>. These interventions demonstrate how flexible the RBIO is and provide opportunities to more effectively include human rights covenants, like the 1966 International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, into conflict resolution.

Though, there are number of difficulties, especially with regard to its enforcement and compliance. Under the Fourth Geneva Convention (1949) and other international humanitarian law, the ICJ's Advisory Opinion of July 19, 2024, on *Legal Consequences arising from the Policies and Practices of Israel in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem*, ruled that some of Israel's actions were illegal and demanded an end to them as well as compensation<sup>3</sup>. This ruling highlights weaknesses in the RBIO, where the concept of self-determination, which is inscribed in Article 1 of the International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights (ICESCR, 1966), is strained by extended occupations and non-adherence. Crucially, as stated in Resolution 2625 (XXV) on *Friendly Relations* (1970), these incidents highlight the shortcomings of advisory processes, which are not legally enforceable, and advocate for reforms to strengthen the UN General Assembly's involvement in follow-up.

In addressing claims of racial discrimination in conflict areas, the ICJ's judgment of November 12, 2024, on preliminary objections in an *Application of the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (Armenia v. Azerbaijan)* further exemplifies these tensions by confirming jurisdiction under the 1965 CERD Convention. This ruling emphasizes the RBIO's potential to develop by integrating anti-discrimination standards into peace processes, but it also illustrates the difficulties posed by lengthy conflicts that undermine institutional confidence<sup>4</sup>. Under the Rome Statute (1998), the ICC's October 6, 2025, guilty finding in *Prosecutor v. Ali Muhammad Ali Abd-Al-Rahman* for war crimes and crimes against humanity in Darfur shows how universal jurisdiction may be used to combat impunity. On the other hand, the conviction in *Prosecutor v. Al Hassan Ag Abdoul Aziz Ag Mohamed Ag Mahmoud* for crimes in Mali on June 26, 2024, highlights enforcement obstacles, including as appeals and deficiencies in state cooperation, in accordance with Article 86 of the Rome Statute<sup>5</sup>.

In terms of trade governance, the World Trade Organization's Panel Report of November 30, 2022, in Indonesia – Measures Relating to Raw Materials (DS592), upheld GATT 1994 principles and demonstrated how resource nationalism poses challenges to the rules-based trade order. The panel's decision rejected export bans on nickel ore. According to the Doha Declaration (2001), reforms might use the Marrakesh Agreement (1994) to better meet the requirements of poor nations and advance sustainable development<sup>6</sup>.

Achieving a diplomatic balance is essential in order to reform the RBIO. This includes utilizing opportunities for inclusive multilateralism, such as those provided by the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (1992) and its Paris Agreement (2015), while also critically addressing issues like uneven treaty ratification and UN Security Council veto paralysis. Examining these processes, this paper suggests strategies to create a robust system that preserves national sovereignty and advances common international interests.

## **I. Evolving Geopolitical dynamics and the Need for Reform**

The normative foundation of post-World War II International Law is under unprecedented strain from shifting geopolitical circumstances. As power dynamics alter, multipolarity increases, and new threats like cyber vulnerabilities and climate change arise, reform is desperately required. This examines these processes and highlights how adaptive systems are essential to preserving global stability. It does this by using current court rulings and international legal frameworks.

### **a. Shifting Power Balances and Multipolarity**

As new countries challenge old conventions, modern geopolitics is marked by a shift from unipolar dominance to multipolarity. Trade disputes and territorial claims are two ways that this change shows itself, and adjustments are required to accommodate a range of interests without compromising the fundamental values of cooperation and sovereignty.

The rise in trade conflicts that reflect protectionist inclinations in the context of global supply chain realignments is a relevant example. For example, the complaint in DS623 (China v. United States), filed on March 26, 2024, challenged tax credits under the Inflation Reduction Act, claiming they are discriminatory subsidies that support the manufacture of green technologies in the United States. This instance demonstrates how national industrial strategies may undermine the Marrakesh Agreement's global trade regulations, by establishing the World Trade Organization (1994), namely the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) Articles I and III<sup>7</sup>. The Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism is also contested as being incompatible with GATT Article XX in DS639 (Russian Federation v. European Union), which was filed on May 12, 2025. This case highlights the conflicts between fair trade practices and environmental requirements<sup>8</sup>.

In order to handle unequal power dynamics properly, these issues highlight the necessity of restructuring the WTO's dispute settlement body, which has been inactive since 2019 owing to appellate body vacancies.

### **b. Erosion of Multilateral Institutions**

Due to their veto capabilities, multilateral organizations like the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) are seen as outdated and perpetuating injustices. This is made worse by geopolitical differences, as seen by long-running conflicts when international law enforcement is ineffective.

According to contemporary human rights monitoring, conflicts make institutional degradation worse. The UN Human Rights Report 2023 shows the profound divisions that threaten peace, with violations in places like the Occupied Palestinian Territory and Ukraine exposing flaws in accountability frameworks. This is consistent with nations' duties under Article 2 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR, 1966), which mandates that they provide remedies for infringement. In addition, UNSC Resolution 2699 (2023) on Haiti integrates human rights under UN Charter (1945), Chapter VII, and requires monitoring to prevent abuses in multinational security deployments<sup>9</sup>.

Expanding UNSC membership, as suggested in current General Assembly deliberations, is one of the reform imperatives in order to improve legitimacy and reflect contemporary geopolitical realities.

### **c. Emerging Threats: Climate and Cyber Security**

Since cyber threats and climate change transcend national boundaries, geopolitical dynamics include non-traditional realms that need for updated legal frameworks.

This is illustrated most effectively by disagreements pertaining to climate change, where the 2015 Paris Agreement is being strained due to unequal implementation. Countervailing tariffs on electric cars were examined for potential

conflicts with subsidy rules under the Agreement on Subsidies and Countervailing Measures (1994), Article 8, in the 2024 case of DS630 (China v. European Union). This highlights the necessity for integrated frameworks and reflects larger difficulties in bringing trade regulations into compliance with the 1992 UN Framework Convention on Climate Change<sup>10</sup>. The vulnerabilities in cyber security are increased by the lack of legally enforceable agreements. Although it is not legally enforceable, the Tallinn Manual 2.0 (2017) applies established laws, such as the 1949 Geneva Conventions, to cyber activities during wartime<sup>9</sup>. Recent studies draw attention to the dangers of unregulated digital frontiers and call for changes similar to those made in the International Law Commission's 2001 Draft Articles on State Responsibility.

#### **d. Judicial Interventions and Legal Precedents**

In order to resolve geopolitical rifts, international law is essential. According to OHCHR studies, the European Court of Human Rights (ECtHR) has established precedents that, in the face of conflicts, have strengthened the European Convention on Human Rights (1950). For example, cases concerning violations pertaining to conflicts in 2023–2024 underscore the obligations of Article 2 on the right to life<sup>11</sup>.

In order to address geographical resource issues, the Inter-American Court of Human Rights (IACtHR) has published advisory judgments on environmental rights in the Americas that relate them to the Pact of San José and the American Convention on Human Rights (1969).

#### **e. Imperatives for Structural Reform**

In order to revitalize treaties such as the 1969 Vienna Convention on the Law of Treaties to reflect modern circumstances, diplomatic agreement is needed to reform the rules-based system. The UN Human Rights Report 2022 calls for enhanced transitional justice using tools like the Rome Statute (1998) and warns of crises that disregard the law<sup>12</sup>.

One of the recommendations is to resurrect the United Nations' Pact for the Future (2024), with a focus on fair representation. Ultimately, in order to create a resilient system in the face of changing environments, changes must strike a balance between sovereignty and community security.

## **II. Opportunities in Judicial Precedents and Accountability Mechanisms**

Judicial precedents and accountability procedures are essential tools in the dynamic world of global governance for upholding the rules-based international order. These frameworks encourage adherence to multilateral commitments, correct power imbalances, and facilitate fair settlements of international conflicts by interpreting and implementing international rules. The prospects presented by recent advancements in international law are examined this, with a focus on how they support systemic changes in the face of evolving geopolitical circumstances.

#### **a. Evolving Jurisprudence in State Responsibility and Dispute Resolution**

In order to explain state duties under foundational treaties, international tribunals have increasingly assumed jurisdiction over complicated interstate problems. Regarding the interpretation of the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide 1948, there has been a significant improvement. The International Court of Justice (ICJ) rejected preliminary arguments on admission and scope and upheld its authority to decide issues pertaining to the implementation of the convention in the case concerning charges of genocide. The Court's ruling on February 2, 2024, expanded the scope

of preventive diplomacy by establishing that requests for declaratory relief regarding non-violation of treaty obligations fall within its jurisdiction (ICJ, *Allegations of Genocide under the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide (Ukraine v. Russian Federation)*, Judgment of 2 February 2024, ICJ Reports 2024, p. 1)<sup>1</sup>. In addition to reducing escalation in armed conflicts and strengthening the normative framework of the Genocide Convention (United Nations, *Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide*, 9 December 1948, 78 UNTS 277), this precedent highlights opportunities for states to seek judicial clarification on treaty compliance.

Additionally, participation procedures have been expanded by procedural developments, such as the acceptance of several third-party interventions under Article 63 of the ICJ Statute. Since more than 30 governments filed declarations in the aforementioned case, a collaborative approach to interpreting international commitments was fostered. This evolution, which culminated in orders on June 9, 2023, and further modifications in 2024, demonstrates how judicial procedures may incorporate a variety of viewpoints, by enhancing the legitimacy of the global order (ICJ, *Order of 9 June 2023 on Admissibility of Declarations of Intervention*). The UN Charter's emphasis on peaceful resolution (*United Nations Charter*, 26 June 1945, Article 33) presents opportunities to change conflict resolution through the use of such inclusion<sup>1</sup>.

## **b. Enhancing Individual Accountability in International Criminal Law**

International criminal law accountability procedures provide vital chances to strengthen state collaboration and prevent crimes. The effectiveness of the International Criminal Court (ICC) in pursuing core crimes has been proved by recent convictions pertaining to war crimes and command responsibility. For example, the Court's role in implementing the Rome Statute's provisions on superior responsibility was demonstrated in a case involving events in Darfur, where the accused was found guilty on 27 counts of war crimes and crimes against humanity and sentenced to 20 years in prison on December 9, 2025 (ICC, *Prosecutor v. Ali Muhammad Ali Abd-Al-Rahman*, ICC-02/05-01/20)<sup>5</sup>. By elucidating the evidence requirements for command culpability under Article 28 of the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court, this case promotes reforms (17 July 1998, 2187 UNTS 3)<sup>13</sup>.

Similar to this, a prosecution involving Mali shows how to combine reparations and accountability when a defendant is found guilty of war crimes and crimes against humanity and given a 10-year sentence that was modified in 2025 (ICC, *Prosecutor v. Al Hassan Ag Abdoul Aziz Ag Mohamed Ag Mahmoud*, ICC-01/12-01/18, Judgment of 26 June 2024; Sentencing Decision of 20 November 2024, as adjusted 23 July 2025). The reparations orders, which were issued in December 2024 and advanced through hearings in 2025, support victim-centered changes and are consistent with the remedial provisions of the Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (*International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights*, 16 December 1966, 999 UNTS 171, Article 2(3))<sup>13</sup>.

The ICC's authority to affect state conduct is demonstrated by the arrest warrants it issued for high-ranking officials in the midst of current conflicts. Citing Articles 7, 8, 25, and 28 of the Rome Statute, warrants issued on March 17, 2023, March 5, 2024, and June 24, 2024, targeted alleged war crimes, such as attacks on civilians and unlawful deportation (ICC, *Situation in Ukraine, Warrants for Vladimir Vladimirovich Putin et al.*, ICC-01/22, 17 March 2023; *Sergei Ivanovich Kobylash et al.*, 5 March 2024; *Sergei Kuzhugetovich Shoigu et al.*, 24 June 2024). These measures, which are strengthened by Ukraine's acceptance of the Rome Statute on January 1, 2025, open up possibilities for hybrid accountability models and increase the international order's ability to withstand impunity<sup>14</sup>.

## **b. Strengthening Mechanisms through Treaties and Multilateral Frameworks**

Accountability may be embedded in the environmental and human rights spheres according to recent treaty developments. Covenants can make it easier for judges to monitor state commitments, as demonstrated by the Regional Agreement on Access to Information, Public Participation, and Justice in Environmental Matters in Latin America and the Caribbean, which went into effect on April 22, 2021 (United Nations, *Escazú Agreement*, 4 March 2018, UNTS Volume II, Chapter XXVII-18). This document, which is in line with Principle 10 of the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development (1992), provides examples of how to incorporate public involvement into accountability systems and could influence international reforms under the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (9 May 1992, 1771 UNTS 107)<sup>15</sup>.

The International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights (16 December 1966, 993 UNTS 3) and restorative justice are highlighted in ongoing reparations in ICC cases, like those anticipated to be finished in 2026 (ICC, *Prosecutor*

v. Dominic Ongwen et al., Reparations Implementation, as per ASP/23/10, 2024). In order to promote a more unified rules-based system, these frameworks offer chances to unify national and international jurisprudence<sup>16</sup>.

Summarily, these treaty integrations and judicial developments provide diplomatic avenues for reform, stressing inclusion, prevention, and enforcement to successfully negotiate global issues.

### III. Challenges from Institutional Inertia and Power Asymmetries

The rules-based international order, which is rooted in multilateral organizations such as the United Nations, continues to have challenges in adjusting to the changes occurring in the world today. While power asymmetries worsen inequality across states by giving preference to a small number of powerful players over consensus, institutional inertia, which is typified by inflexible structures and procedural legacies from post-World War II frameworks, frequently opposes required reforms. As demonstrated by recent court rulings and treaty implementations, these dynamics erode fair governance and obstruct efficient responses to international concerns.

#### a. Entrenched Structural Rigidities in Multilateral Frameworks

When established organizations are reluctant to change, they are exhibiting institutional inertia and continuing to use antiquated procedures that do not take into account the geopolitical landscape of today. Despite changing statehood and international interconnectedness, the 1945-adopted United Nations Charter's membership and decision-making provisions have seen few changes, serving as an example of this. Article 108 of the Charter imposes a high bar that hinders reform attempts by requiring a two-thirds majority in the General Assembly and confirmation by every permanent member of the Security Council. As examined in the International Law Association's 2011 report on UN Reform Through Practice, which highlights how bodies like the Security Council have increased their powers—such as creating international criminal tribunals under Chapter VII—without formally amending the Charter, this rigidity is exacerbated by implied powers doctrines. However, by avoiding extensive structural overhauls, such techniques frequently serve to entrench inertia<sup>17</sup>.

The International Court of Justice's (ICJ) recent advisory rulings demonstrate how advisory functions are impacted by this inertia. The International Court of Justice (ICJ) emphasized states' obligations under the Paris Agreement and the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) in its Advisory Opinion of July 23, 2025, on Obligations of States in Respect of Climate Change. The ICJ also emphasized that states have different responsibilities depending on their historical emissions. Nevertheless, Article 96 of the Charter's non-binding advisory opinion provision highlights inertial constraints because implementation depends on voluntary compliance as institutions slowly adjust to pressing environmental demands<sup>18</sup>.

#### b. Veto Mechanisms and Hierarchical Power Distributions

The UN Security Council's veto authority, which is given to the five permanent members (P5) by Article 27(3) of the Charter and permits any P5 state to thwart substantive decisions, is where power imbalances are most noticeable. The impartiality of the international order has been distorted by this clause, which was meant to guarantee great power unanimity but has instead allowed selective enforcement. According to the International Law Association research, veto usage still prevents action on important matters, but abstentions have been construed as non-vetoes, increasing Council flexibility. Vetoes have, for example, stopped resolutions addressing humanitarian emergencies in armed conflict situations, so maintaining imbalances where P5 interests take precedence over collective security<sup>17</sup>.

In order to address these discrepancies, the ICJ's Advisory Opinion of July 19, 2024, on Legal Consequences Arising from the Policies and Practices of Israel in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, affirms duties under both customary international law and the 1949 Fourth Geneva Convention<sup>18</sup>. According to the Council press statement SC/15874 of October 30, 2024, which voiced concern over legislative measures impeding UN operations but produced no legally binding action, the Security Council vetoes hinder enforcement of the opinion, which criticizes long-term

occupations and settlement policies as violations<sup>19</sup>. In the Relocation of the United States Embassy to Jerusalem (Palestine v. United States) proceedings, jurisdictional challenges under the Vienna Convention on Consular Relations (1963) reflect resistance to judicial oversight, highlighting the ways in which asymmetries enable powerful states to avoid accountability<sup>20</sup>.

### c. Judicial Interpretations of Treaty Obligations amid Imbalances

The impact of power imbalances on treaty enforcement is demonstrated by recent ICJ cases. Invoking the 1946 and 1994 Conventions on the Privileges and Immunities of the United Nations and the Safety of United Nations and Associated Personnel, the Advisory Opinion of October 22, 2025, on the Obligations of Israel in Relation to the Presence and Activities of the United Nations, Other International Organizations, and Third States in and in Relation to the Occupied Palestinian Territory, requires unhindered UN operations<sup>19</sup>. However, asymmetries occur when powerful nations pass domestic legislation that violates international accords, such as Israel's actions against UNRWA, underscoring inertial delays in group reactions<sup>18</sup>.

In tackling these issues, national courts have often used UN accords. Panels decided on export bans under GATT Article XI in WTO Dispute Settlement Body decision DS592 (Indonesia – Measures Relating to Raw Materials, approved 30 November 2022), demonstrating how resource imbalances in trade systems sustain institutional biases in favour of wealthier nations. Similar to this, the UN Convention against Cybercrime, which was finalized in 2024, attempts to standardize responses to cyber threats but encounters obstacles to adoption because of disparities in implementation capabilities<sup>6</sup>.

### d. Pathways Forward: Balancing Equity and Efficacy

Although none have been successful since 1955, overcoming these obstacles calls for subtle strategies, such as using Article 109 of the Charter for periodic review conferences. Supported by the 2005 World Summit Outcome (A/RES/60/1), the Responsibility to Protect Theory is an example of practice-based development; nonetheless, its selective implementation, which is demonstrated by veto-blocked interventions, perpetuates inequalities<sup>17</sup>. Judicial methods to minimize inertia are suggested by recent ideas, such as those in the Basel Peace Office discourse on veto constraints via ICJ advisory decisions on Chapter VI responsibilities<sup>21</sup>.

In aggregate, as recent ICJ rulings and treaty practices show, power imbalances and institutional inertia undermine the legitimacy of the international system. To overcome these, coordinated diplomatic efforts are needed to promote inclusive changes and guarantee the order's viability in a multipolar world.

## IV. Leveraging New Treaties for Enhanced Global Cooperation

In a time of economic interdependence, ecological problems, and geopolitical upheavals, new treaties are essential instruments for reshaping the rules-based international order. By facilitating group action on international challenges, these agreements navigate power imbalances and advance fairness and stability. Although effective implementation and adjudication procedures are necessary for success, governments might improve collaboration by utilizing modern multilateral instruments. This highlights the transformational potential of recent developments by examining them and drawing on international legal systems.

### a. The Role of Multilateral Treaties in Addressing Transnational Challenges

Modern treaties that prioritize collective security and sustainable development have become the cornerstone of global governance. The Agreement on the Conservation and Sustainable Use of Marine Biological Diversity in Areas Beyond National Jurisdiction (BBNJ Treaty), which was adopted on June 19, 2023, under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, is an example of this tendency. By establishing procedures for marine protected areas, environmental impact assessments, and benefit-sharing from marine genetic resources, this treaty builds on the 1982 UNCLOS and encourages governments to work together to stop the loss of biodiversity. It highlights prospects for inclusive ocean governance and requires 60 ratifications to enter into effect. The EU and numerous Pacific Island countries were among the early signatories (United Nations General Assembly Resolution A/RES/77/321, 2023)<sup>22</sup>.

In addition, the 2022-endorsed Global Partnership for Effective Development Co-operation (GPEDC) Work Programme 2023–2026 builds on the Busan Partnership Agreement (2011)'s tenets of enhancing assistance effectiveness via national ownership and responsibility. By emphasizing inclusive partnerships over unilateralism, this framework aims to alter the international order by advancing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and incorporating the SDGs into bilateral and multilateral aid<sup>23</sup>.

The influence of these accords is further enhanced by national implementation. Adopted in 2022, the United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF) for Tajikistan 2023–2026 supports capacity building to improve governance and the rule of law while also aligning with state goals such as the state Development Strategy 2030<sup>24</sup>. In a similar vein, Kazakhstan's UNSDCF 2026-2030 Results Matrix highlights goals under SDG 17 for global collaboration in science and technology, while SDG 7 doubles energy efficiency<sup>25</sup>. These frameworks show how treaties may foster reform by operationalizing international standards locally.

## **b. Judicial Reinforcement through Recent International Adjudication**

In interpreting and upholding new accords, international courts are essential because they set precedents that promote international cooperation. Recent instances highlight the importance of treaty-based trade barrier resolution in the World Trade Organization's (WTO) dispute settlement mechanism. To promote fair trade by guaranteeing non-discriminatory incentives for clean energy, the panel in DS623: United States — Certain Tax Credits under the Inflation Reduction Act (consultations requested 26 March 2024, China v. United States) examined subsidies that might violate GATT 1994 Article III and the Agreement on Subsidies and Countervailing Measures<sup>7</sup>. In a similar vein, the panel that was created on February 7, 2024, for DS622: European Union — Anti-Dumping Measures on Stainless Steel Hot-Rolled Flat Products from Indonesia, invoked Article 2 of the Anti-Dumping Agreement to explain calculating methodology in order to combat protectionism and promote economic cooperation<sup>26</sup>.

Citing the 1948 Genocide Convention, the International Court of Justice (ICJ) ordered on January 26, 2024, that Israel implement the provisional measures in Application of the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide in the Gaza Strip (South Africa v. Israel)<sup>2</sup>. This order required Israel to prevent acts of genocide and permit humanitarian access, thereby reinforcing treaty obligations for human rights in the midst of conflict (ICJ Reports 2024, p. 1). This ruling demonstrates how treaties may be utilized to guarantee compliance, even when enforcement concerns still persist.

In order to bring domestic law into compliance with international norms, national courts also refer to international treaties. In the U.S. Supreme Court case *Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians v. Michigan* (decided 13 March 2025), the Court upheld tribal fishing rights under the 1836 Treaty of Washington, interpreting it alongside modern environmental conventions like UNCLOS to support sustainable resource management<sup>27</sup>. This integration demonstrates how modern collaboration is facilitated by previous treaties that have been revitalized by new interpretations.

## **c. Overcoming Implementation Barriers in a Multipolar World**

Despite these developments, the effectiveness of treaties is hampered by issues with ratification and compliance. The sluggish ratification of the BBNJ Treaty—just 10 governments by the middle of 2025, which reflects geopolitical divisions, especially with regard to technology transfer between developed and poor countries (UNCLOS Article 266). Similar to this, UN assessments on development cooperation have identified budget shortages for the GPEDC's 2023–2026 program<sup>28</sup>.

By clarifying subsidies under the SCM Agreement and promoting transparent enforcement, WTO's DS618: European Union — Countervailing Measures on Certain Products from Indonesia (panel report appealed 11 August 2023) exemplifies the strategic suggestion to strengthen dispute resolution<sup>29</sup>. Improved UN supervision, as required by periodic assessments of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), can fill in the gaps. For example, Spain's 2024 report under ICCPR Article 40 included migration policies in line with the Global Compact for Migration<sup>30</sup>.

## **d. Future Prospects: Toward Resilient Global Frameworks**

Innovative diplomatic approaches, such as hybrid systems that combine hard legislation with soft obligations, are necessary to capitalize on new accords. In order to further the New Agenda for Peace and integrate new cybersecurity standards with treaties like the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, the UN is requesting \$170 million in its Multi-Year Appeal for the Department of Political and Peace Building Affairs (2023–2026)<sup>31</sup>. These initiatives help lessen difficulties in the changing global environment by putting equality first, promoting a cooperatively based, reformed system.

## V. Climate and Environmental Imperatives in Reform Agendas

The rules-based international order is at a turning point in its history, and any viable reform plan must be anchored by climatic and environmental imperatives. The growing body of research on human-caused GHG emissions emphasizes how fragmented governance might make multilateral frameworks outdated. Therefore, in order to maintain resilience against existential risks, reform must include intergenerational justice, fairness, and mandatory environmental due diligence into the fundamental framework of the global order, building on current treaties and developing law.

### a. Jurisprudential Milestones: Clarifying Obligations through Authoritative Adjudication

Principal international tribunals have recently issued advisory rulings that have clarified states' responsibilities and provided crucial legal support for transformation. Anthropogenic GHG emissions are considered "pollution of the marine environment" under Article 1(1)(4) of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS, Montego Bay, 10 December 1982), according to the unanimous Advisory Opinion on the Request submitted by the Commission of Small Island States (Case No. 31) issued by the International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea (ITLOS) on May 21, 2024<sup>32</sup>. According to ITLOS, Part XII imposes due diligence obligations under Articles 192 and 194(1)–(5) to prevent, reduce, and control such pollution from all sources, including atmospheric pathways, using action based on the best available science and in line with the Paris Agreement's temperature goals (adopted on December 12, 2015, and going into effect on November 4, 2016)<sup>33</sup>. The Tribunal emphasized the mutual support between the Paris Agreement and UNCLOS (paragraphs 129–136, 200–229), calling for environmental impact assessments that take cumulative effects into account (Articles 204–206), capacity-building for vulnerable States (Article 202), and international and regional cooperation (Article 197)<sup>34</sup>. According to these conclusions, maritime preservation is an essential component of the new global order.

Furthermore, in its Grand Chamber ruling in *Verein KlimaSeniorinnen Schweiz and Others v. Switzerland* (Application no. 53600/20) dated April 9, 2024, the European Court of Human Rights (ECtHR) acknowledged that Article 8 of the European Convention on Human Rights (Rome, 4 November 1950) includes a positive obligation to provide effective protection against the grave negative effects of climate change on lives, health, well-being, and quality of life. The Court determined that Switzerland's regulatory system had serious flaws, such as the lack of a quantifiable national carbon budget or comparable GHG restriction mechanism in line with the Paris Agreement's 1.5°C route. It also identified infringement of Articles 8 and 6. While maintaining discretion over implementation methods, states benefit from a smaller margin of appreciation of the need for mitigation in line with international commitments<sup>35</sup>. By bridging the gap between environmental law and human rights, this approach emphasizes the need for local frameworks to operationalize international principles with quantifiable goals.

In response to the UN General Assembly resolution 77/276 (29 March 2023), the International Court of Justice (ICJ) issued its Advisory Opinion on Obligations of States in respect of Climate Change on July 23, 2025. In the Opinion, duties under the United Nations Charter, the United Nations FCCC (New York, May 9, 1992), the Paris Agreement, UNCLOS, the duty of due diligence, the prevention principle, and the rights in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights are explained<sup>36</sup>. It discusses the legal ramifications for serious harm brought about by actions and inactions, paying special emphasis to tiny island developing states as well as current and future generations. In addition to treaty responsibilities, the ICJ upholds customary no-harm and due diligence principles, providing a global standard for holding States responsible within reformed organizations.

### b. Harmonisation and Equity in Multilateral Environmental Governance

Prioritizing coherence throughout the UNFCCC regime and associated instruments is essential for reform objectives. Operationalized by consecutive Conference of the Parties (COP) decisions, the normative core of the Paris Agreement is provided by Article 2(1)(a) temperature objective and Article 4 nationally determined contributions (NDCs). The new collective quantified goal on climate finance was adopted by the parties at COP 29 (Baku, November 2024), where they committed to triple support for developing nations in order to address historical injustices

under the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities (Paris Agreement, Article 2(2))<sup>37</sup>. These choices, coupled with the programming methods of the Global Environment Facility (FCCC/CP/2025/8), highlight how important it is to change the multilateral financial architecture in order to allocate resources in a predictable and equitable manner.

The necessity of integrated ecosystem-based approaches is further demonstrated by the Rio de Janeiro Convention on Biological Diversity (June 5, 1992) and the UNCLOS Agreement on the Conservation and Sustainable Use of Marine Biological Diversity of Areas Beyond National Jurisdiction (BBNJ Agreement, adopted March 4, 2023)<sup>38</sup>. In order to avoid forum-shopping and normative fragmentation, reform must incorporate these synergies.

### **c. Challenges of Fragmentation, Enforcement, and Geopolitical Realities**

There are always enforcement gaps, even in cases when the jurisprudence is unambiguous. The fundamental tenets of UNCLOS and the Paris Agreement are good-faith implementation and periodic review, rather than mandated adjudication for all issues. Implementation asymmetries are exacerbated by varying capacities, while geopolitical tensions make it challenging to agree on loss and damage or technology transfer<sup>39</sup>. For instance, critical analysis warns that reform risks remaining aspirational if it does not include climate problems in Security Council agendas or enhance non-compliance processes under Article 15 of the Paris Agreement.

### **d. Diplomatic Opportunities for Transformative Integration**

Opportunities to incorporate climate imperatives into more extensive institutional transformation are many. Concrete avenues are provided by proposals to operationalize the ICJ and ITLOS rulings through UN General Assembly follow-up resolutions or to incorporate environmental due diligence inside the World Trade Organization's dispute settlement interpretation. Prioritizing the BBNJ Agreement's universal ratification and expedited NDC submissions by 2025 in line with the first worldwide stocktake should be the focus of diplomatic activities. Reactive crisis management may give way to proactive planetary stewardship by putting fairness, science, and accountability at the center of the rules-based system<sup>40</sup>. This will guarantee its validity and effectiveness for future generations.

## **VI. Diplomatic Pathways toward Inclusive Multilateralism**

An enhanced diplomatic architecture is necessary for the reform of the rules-based international order in a time of significant geopolitical reconfiguration, intensifying climate imperatives, and enduring institutional imbalances. This endeavour, which is rooted in the goals and tenets of the UN Charter, aims to balance effective collective action with sovereign equality. Current jurisprudential rulings and normative developments highlight both structural flaws and practical solutions for a multilateral system that is really durable, egalitarian, and representative. Using only official UN and international court sources, the study that consequently explores at these trends via institutional, legal, and economic lenses.

### **a. Reinvigorating Multilateral Governance: The 2024 Pact for the Future**

At the Summit of the Future on September 22, 2024, the Pact for the Future was unanimously adopted as General Assembly resolution 79/1. This agreement represents the most extensive intergovernmental commitment to systemic transformation since the Millennium Declaration. Action 38 and paragraph 6 make it clear that global governance must change in order for the multilateral system, which is centered on the UN, to become "more effective and capable... just, democratic, equitable and representative of today's world... inclusive [and] interconnected". Action 39 commits Member States to reform the

Security Council to render it “more representative, inclusive, transparent, efficient, effective, democratic and accountable”, prioritising redress of historical injustice to Africa, enhanced representation for Asia-Pacific, Latin America and the Caribbean, and increased voice for developing countries and Small Island developing States, consistent with Sustainable Development Goal 16.8. Action 40 mandates intensification of intergovernmental negotiations under General Assembly decision 62/557 without delay, while Action 41 calls for strengthened Council-General Assembly relations, including full implementation of resolution 76/262 (the “veto initiative”) and resolution 377 A (V) (“Uniting for Peace”) <sup>41</sup>.

These clauses crucially highlight the conflict between veto dynamics and aspirational rhetoric. The 79th session framework (document A/79/556) is still in use as of late 2025 for the Intergovernmental Negotiations process, although quantifiable agreement on veto limits or permanent membership enlargement is still elusive <sup>42</sup>. However, as noted in the updated Co-Chairs' Elements Paper (August 2024), the Pact's focus on accountability procedures offers a diplomatic means of bridging convergences.

## **b. Jurisprudential Anchors: ICJ Advisory Opinions of 2024 and 2025**

The International Court of Justice has issued two significant advisory opinions that provide authoritative interpretations that must guide any reform path. The Court unanimously upheld in *Legal Consequences arising from the Policies and Practices of Israel in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem* (Advisory Opinion, 19 July 2024) that annexation, settlement expansion, and extended occupation breaches the ban on forcible land acquisition as well as the Palestinian people's inalienable right to self-determination (paragraphs 178–267) <sup>3</sup>. According to Articles 40–41 of the ILC Articles on State Responsibility, it declared Israel's presence to be illegal and placed duties erga omnes on third states to abstain from providing aid or support <sup>43</sup>. The ruling emphasizes the boundaries of unilateralism within the rules-based system by specifically referencing the UN Charter, the Fourth Geneva Convention, and customary law.

The General Assembly's resolution 77/276 (29 March 2023) on the *Obligations of States with Regard to Climate Change* (Advisory Opinion, 23 July 2025) is equally important. The Court said that in order to safeguard the climate system for current and future generations, States are required by the UNFCCC, the Paris Agreement, UNCLOS, the ICCPR, the ICESCR, and customary international law to exercise due care. It acknowledged the premise of preventing severe transboundary impact and confirmed the 1.5°C limit as a pertinent benchmark <sup>44</sup>. In addition to directly confronting fragmented governance, these findings strengthen the need for inclusive decision-making in international financial and environmental organizations by elevating climate commitments from aspirational policy to legally obligatory charges.

## **c. Economic and Institutional Rebalancing: Financial Architecture and Trade Reform**

The Pact's Actions 47–52, which include improved capital adequacy for multilateral development banks and the completion of the 17th IMF quota review by June 2025, expedite reform of the international financial architecture to bolster developing nations' voice in the IMF and World Bank. These pledges address long-standing criticisms of unequal voting power that compromise legitimacy <sup>45</sup>.

The multilateral trade system is demonstrating parallel progress. Adopted during the 13th WTO Ministerial Conference on March 2, 2024, the Ministerial Decision on Dispute Settlement Reform creates a formalized facilitator-led procedure and restates the goal of having a fully operational, accessible dispute settlement system by 2024. While maintaining the rules-based nature of WTO commitments under the Marrakesh Agreement, this resolves the Appellate Body deadlock <sup>46</sup>.

## **d. Diplomatic Convergence and Accountability Horizons**

In the end, successful reform depends on continued diplomatic cooperation on the Pact's implementation assessment during the 83rd General Assembly session and the Fourth International Conference on Financing for Development in 2025. Member States may operationalize a multilateralism that is not simply inclusive in language but successful in results by incorporating the ICJ's clarifications on self-determination, climate due diligence, and third-State duties with tangible institutional changes. In the face of enduring power imbalances, converting consensus papers into demonstrable behavioural

change is still difficult<sup>47</sup>. The UN Charter, recent treaty practice, and authoritative judicial pronouncements, however, provide the normative framework for a rules-based society that accurately reflects the realities of the twenty-first century.

## VII. Technological Innovations and Cyber Governance Reforms

Reforms to cyber governance are essential to maintaining a rules-based international order in a time when technological innovations like artificial intelligence and quantum computing are changing how people interact with one another globally. These changes balance innovation and security in the face of changing geopolitical settings by addressing vulnerabilities in digital ecosystems. Drawing on current global accords and judicial decisions, this framework highlights enforcement and harmonization issues while analysing prospects for multilateral collaboration.

### a. Evolving Multilateral Frameworks for Cyber Resilience

In order to combat cyber-dependent and cyber-enabled crimes, the General Assembly approved the United Nations Convention against Cybercrime on December 24, 2024, through resolution 79/243. The convention emphasizes the exchange of electronic evidence for major violations<sup>48</sup>. Primarily, as the legally binding UN document on cyber problems, this agreement requires nations to put preventative, investigation, and international cooperation mechanisms into place while embracing human rights protections under Articles 14 and 16<sup>49</sup>. In addition, the Budapest Convention on Cybercrime (Council of Europe, 2001), to which more than 60 state parties have committed to uniform punishment of unauthorized access and data tampering, continues to be a fundamental reference<sup>50</sup>. With effect from January 1, 2026, recent changes to China's Cybersecurity Law incorporate AI governance by requiring risk assessments and moral guidelines for AI applications in cybersecurity<sup>51</sup>. In line with the planned Cybersecurity Act 2 (January 20, 2026), which targets high-risk ICT providers and supply chain concerns, the EU's Cyber Resilience Act (2024) mandates security-by-design for digital products, with duties starting in 2026<sup>52</sup>.

### b. Judicial Precedents Shaping Technological Accountability

Current legal precedent emphasizes the conflict between responsibility and innovation. In the November 4, 2025, UK High judge case Getty Images v. Stability AI, the judge dismissed secondary infringement allegations for AI trained on copyrighted works outside of the UK on jurisdictional grounds, but it also brought attention to the difficulties in enforcing IP laws outside of the UK<sup>53</sup>. Similarly, in GEMA v. OpenAI (November 11, 2025, Case No. 42 O 14139/24), the Higher Regional Court of Munich determined that AI models reproducing song lyrics constituted infringement, proving that incorporated material in LLMs is reproduction under copyright law<sup>54</sup>. The case of Like Company v Google Ireland Limited (Case C-250/25, referred May 23, 2025) before the CJEU possibly clarifies the limits of fair use under EU law by addressing AI training on copyrighted data. In its 2024 rulings, the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit relaxed the pleading standards for federal trade secrets claims in AI contexts, facilitating the filing of theft lawsuits against tech businesses<sup>55</sup>. According to investigations into platforms like X for obscene outputs, the Supreme Court of India set stricter intermediary obligations for AI-generated material in recent 2024 directives under the Information Technology Act 2000 (amended 2023)<sup>56</sup>. The CJEU upheld online marketplaces as GDPR data controllers in its Russmedia judgment from 2025, mandating proactive identity verification and content monitoring<sup>57</sup>.

### c. Challenges in Harmonizing National and International Reforms

Although these initiatives emphasize quantum-resistant encryption and incident reporting under CIRCIA, national changes like the US National Cybersecurity Strategy (updated May 2024) are not expected to be implemented until 2026<sup>58</sup>. The planned January 20, 2026, modifications to the EU's NIS2 Directive streamline compliance and integrate with CSA2 for supply chain inspection<sup>59</sup>. India's Digital Personal Data Protection Act 2023, which addresses technologies like federated learning, requires cybersecurity checks for major data fiduciaries<sup>60</sup>. Disparities, such as the EU's rights-based strategy and China's state-centric model, might lead to disintegration, nevertheless. Despite calls for a new cybersecurity treaty, the UN's

Open-Ended Working Group on ICTs (2021–2025) is unable to reach an agreement on binding standards. In order to prevent abuse and ensure that changes promote an inclusive global order in the face of technological change, diplomatic efforts must give priority to capacity-building under the UN Convention<sup>61</sup>.

## VIII. Strengthening Human Rights Accountability in conflict Situations

To strengthen the rules-based international order in the changing world of global governance, it is essential to improve human rights responsibility during armed conflicts. Robust systems in the face of altering power dynamics and ongoing geopolitical conflicts guarantee adherence to international humanitarian and human rights law, reducing impunity and promoting enduring peace. Using established treaties and court decisions, this framework focuses at current judicial developments, implementation challenges, reform avenues, and underlying frameworks to highlight areas for group action.

### a. Evolving International Legal Frameworks for Accountability

According to Common Article 3, Geneva Conventions; Protocol I, Art. 51, the 1949 Geneva Conventions and their 1977 Additional Protocols, which forbid acts like torture and indiscriminate attacks and require the humane treatment of both civilians and combatants, are the cornerstones of human rights protection in conflicts<sup>62</sup>. These are supplemented by the 1966 International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), which protects the rights to life and liberty even in the midst of conflict and is applicable extraterritorially in occupied areas (Art. 6, 9)<sup>63</sup>. Articles 7-8 of the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court (1998) establish individual accountability and prosecute war crimes, crimes against humanity, and genocide<sup>64</sup>. As upheld by current jurisprudence, the 1948 Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide (Article I) mandates obligations to prevent and punish such atrocities<sup>65</sup>. All of these tools work together to create a legally obligatory erga omnes responsibility that requires nations to respect standards regardless of the severity of the violence.

### b. Recent Judicial Developments Enhancing Accountability

Recently, international courts have made significant decisions that have strengthened accountability. The International Court of Justice (ICJ) ruled in its Advisory Opinion of July 19, 2024, that Israel's extended occupation of the Occupied Palestinian Territory was illegal, infringing against both the right to self-determination and the prohibitions against the acquisition of territory by force. Using the Fourth Geneva Convention (Article 49) and the ICCPR (Article 1) to uphold extraterritorial human rights duties in occupations, the Court ordered a swift departure, an end to settlements, and restitution<sup>66</sup>. In a similar vein, the International Court of Justice's Order of January 26, 2024, in the case of South Africa v. Israel, mandated that Israel guarantee humanitarian aid and preserve evidence in accordance with Articles II–III of the Genocide Convention in order to avoid genocidal activities in Gaza<sup>67</sup>. In the Palestine case, Pre-Trial Chamber I of the International Criminal Court (ICC) issued arrest warrants on May 20, 2024, for Israeli leaders Yoav Gallant and Benjamin Netanyahu for crimes against humanity, including murder (Article 7(1)(a)) and war crimes, such as using starvation as a weapon of mass destruction (Rome Statute, Art. 8(2)(b)(xxv))<sup>68</sup>. Additionally, warrants for sexual assault and hostage-taking against Hamas leaders were requested (Arts. 7(1)(g), 8(2)(c)(i)). Al Hassan Ag Abdoul Aziz was found guilty on June 26, 2024, by Trial Chamber X of war crimes and crimes against humanity, including torture and violations of personal dignity in Timbuktu (2012–2013), in accordance with Rome Statute Arts. 7(1)(f) and 8(2)(c)(ii)<sup>69</sup>. In December 2024, Ali Abd-Al-Rahman's trial in Darfur (Sudan), which dealt with crimes against humanity such as ethnic persecution (Art. 7(1)(h)), came to an end<sup>70</sup>. Citing European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR) Art. 2 (right to life) in the context of armed conflict, the European Court of Human Rights (ECtHR) upheld jurisdiction over extraterritorial violations in Donbas in Ukraine and the Netherlands v. Russia (Grand Chamber judgment, 25 January 2023)<sup>71</sup>.

### c. Challenges in Enforcement and Compliance Mechanisms

Despite these developments, enforcement continues to remain complex. Erga omnes responsibilities are compromised when ICJ decisions are not followed, as is the case with prolonged occupations (ICJ, Legal Consequences of the Wall Advisory Opinion, 9 July 2004)<sup>72</sup>. Access to ICC investigations is restricted in cases such as Afghanistan and Ukraine due to state non-cooperation (Rome Statute, Art. 86)<sup>73</sup>. Due to the blurring of state-non-state actor boundaries, hybrid conflicts make attribution under Additional Protocol II (Art. 1) more difficult<sup>74</sup>. Pursuits for universal jurisdiction are hampered by resource shortages in national jurisdictions, as stipulated in the Geneva Conventions' grave breaches regime (Art. 146)<sup>75</sup>. Uneven treaty ratifications are proof that political selection may undermine legitimacy.

### d. Pathways for Reform and Multilateral Cooperation

Opportunities abound through strengthened UN mechanisms, such as Human Rights Council inquiries integrating ICC referrals (UN Charter, Art. 13). By addressing emerging issues like cyberwarfare, treaty amendments may be able to strengthen ICCPR Exemption limitations (Article 4). Bilateral agreements for extradition that uphold the Rome Statute (Article 89) improve prosecutions. Aid should be stopped and illegal conditions should not be recognized, according to the ICJ's 2024 Advisory Opinion on collective third-state responsibilities. Diplomatic venues such as the UN General Assembly can be used to confirm conformance and promote a reformed order that is resilient to global changes<sup>66</sup>.

### Conclusion

Reforming the rules-based international order is more important than ever in a time of existential dangers like pandemics and climate change, technology upheavals, and geopolitical realignments. Decades of comparatively stable and prosperous conditions have been supported by this framework, which was created in the wake of international strife. However, as power spreads throughout a multipolar globe, growing nationalism, economic fragmentation, and asymmetric threats threaten to undermine its core values of multilateralism, sovereignty, and respect for international law. Harnessing this flux offers potential for renewal: including developing economies into decision-making processes may promote fair growth, and creative approaches to digital governance and sustainable development may help close gaps between established and rising powers. Such changes might turn possible conflicts into cooperative endeavours, guaranteeing that the world's commons—from internet to space—are governed with shared accountability.

The road ahead, meanwhile, is paved with significant challenges. Collective action is undermined by key actors' deep-seated distrust, which is made worse by trade wars, territorial disputes, and ideological conflicts. The selective enforcement of regulations by powerful regimes leads to skepticism, especially in developing countries that are struggling with debt and uneven access to resources. Adaptive standards that strike a balance between security and human rights are also necessary due to the expansion of non-state entities, which include everything from multinational businesses to extremist networks. Most importantly, changes run the danger of maintaining a hierarchical structure that alienates important stakeholders and may hasten fragmentation into conflicting areas of influence if they fail to address fundamental imbalances.

In order to effectively negotiate this changing environment, stakeholders need to give priority to inclusive discussions that go beyond a zero-sum mind set. Increasing participation in economic organizations and reforming the Security Council's veto power are two specific improvements that might strengthen organizations like the UN and restore their legitimacy. The development of strategic patience is also important. Multilateral treaties on developing technologies, in conjunction with bilateral efforts to boost trust, would reduce risks and open up opportunities for collaboration. In the end, a revised rules-based system needs imaginative leadership that is dedicated to compromise. Through accepting adaptability without sacrificing fundamental principles, the global community may create a robust framework that can maintain peace and advancement in the face of ambiguity. In an interconnected world where no country stands alone, failure to take decisive action runs the risk of destroying the foundation of international cooperation and endangering future generations.

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