The United Nations: Managing Unrealistic Expectations

Waheguru Pal Singh Sidhu

Speaking in 1954, Dag Hammarskjöld, the second and, perhaps, the most iconic secretary general of the United Nations (UN), reminded the world that “the United Nations was not created in order to bring us to heaven, but in order to save us from hell.”¹ Today, as the UN marks its 75th anniversary it is failing to prevent humanity’s march to hell, and is literally going bankrupt. At a time when states are prioritizing “nation first” doctrines that unabashedly challenge the existing global order, and are leading to renewed global geopolitical contestation—coupled with the rise of emerging powers that are pushing for accommodation within the present system—the narrative of the crises in multilateralism in general, and the possibility of the demise of the UN in particular is not unfounded.² With a revanchist Russia, a resurgent China, and a rudderless United States, locked in confrontation over trade, a renewed nuclear arms race, contestation over cyber security and emerging technologies, and in proxy wars in Syria, Ukraine, and Venezuela, the UN has
been rendered increasingly ineffectual in addressing many pressing global threats and challenges. Moreover, the Trump administration’s pronouncements to withdraw from the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT), the Paris climate agreement, the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) on Iran’s nuclear program, and the Human Rights Council, in addition to jettisoning its international commitment on refugees, and disengagement on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), have only been matched by China’s disregard for the rules of the international trading system, and international law as evident by its robust actions in the South China Sea, among others. Clearly, these actions have not only weakened many of the multilateral norms painstakingly established, especially since the turn of the century, but have also stymied the efforts of the UN—as an arena, agent, and actor—to effectively deal with more urgent peace and security, development, and human rights crises.

In its role as an arena, the UN functions as a convener and provides the venue for state (and increasingly civil society) actors to cooperate or, indeed, confront each other in its various deliberative bodies; in its role as an agent, the UN acts on behalf of its member states, and seeks to implement decisions made by them, notably in political and peacekeeping missions, and the development field; and in its role as an actor, the UN—particularly the secretary-general and the senior management group, along with the heads of the various agencies—often exercise independent decisions-making and implementation, which is sometimes contrary to the interest of member states. Of course, not all of these roles are siloed and there is considerable overlap, and, indeed, tension between the agent and actor role.³

The UN’s role as an arena in multilateral processes is still in evidence, and it continues to influence the global discourse and norms on peace and security, development, and human rights. However, its role as agent and actor in the implementation of these norms, agreements, and treaties remain uneven at best and non-existent at worst, primarily on account of the renewed contestation, particularly among the permanent five members (P5) of the UN Security Council,⁴ as well as from the African Union—at least in mediation efforts. Nonetheless, partly on account of the absence of any other universal organization, the UN is likely to remain a relevant actor, agent, and arena for most of the twenty-first century, even as it grapples with new challenges that its founders never envisaged at the time of its creation in 1945. Among these are the expanding peacekeeping mandates, terrorism, and pandemics (such as Covid-19); the political, technical, and financial hurdles in implementing the SDGs;
the climate crisis; and dealing with the opportunities and threats of cyberspace, emerging technologies, and revolution in information and telecommunication.

Against this backdrop, the chapter begins with a review of some of the salient norms, principles, practices, and institutions established in the UN related to peace and security, development, and human rights in the twenty-first century. As a corollary, it will assess the role of new non-state and sub-state actors in the creation of these norms. The chapter then examines the implementation and operationalization of these norms to assess their effectiveness, or lack of it. The following section argues that despite the apathy or indeed the hostility toward the UN, especially by the dominant and emerging powers, the UN is likely to remain a primary (but not necessarily the only) arena for the development of norms, especially if it can engage new actors and device processes that can circumvent great power indifference or intimidation. The conclusion considers three possible scenarios of the UN’s role in shaping global norms over the next decade.

**A Long Awaited Post Cold War Resurgence**

After the Cold War inflicted hiatus the UN experienced an unexpected but long awaited renaissance in the final decade of the twentieth century, which culminated in the 2005 World Summit to mark the UN’s 60th anniversary. The epochal Outcome Document issued on the occasion highlighted four priority areas: development; peace and collective security; human rights and rule of law; and strengthening of the UN. The document strongly endorsed the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) by 2015 and, remarkably, anticipated the contours of the yet to be negotiated SDGs when it reaffirmed that “sustainable development in its economic, social and environmental aspects constitutes a key element of the overarching framework of United Nations activities.” Indeed, development is prioritized in the document and more than half of it is dedicated to the issue, and many of the recommendations related to sustainable development were subsequently reflected in the SDGs. In the peace and security arena the document created the Peacebuilding Commission, Peacebuilding Fund, and the Peacebuilding Support Office. Additionally, the UN’s mediation capacity was strengthened, along with its counter-terrorism strategy, which led to the establishment of a stand-alone counter-terrorism office. It also institutionalized the role of women
in peace and security, first articulated in UN Security Council resolution (UNSCR) 1325 in October 2000. Under human rights the concept of responsibility to protect (R2P), wherein each “individual states has the responsibility to protect its populations from genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity,” was formally adopted. Additionally, the cachexia-ridden Human Rights Commission was to be replaced by a more responsible and robust Human Rights Council. The document also welcomed “the positive contributions of the private sector and civil society, including non-governmental organizations, in the promotion and implementation of development and human rights programmes.” Finally the document reaffirmed “democracy is a universal value” and established the Democracy Fund.

In short, the 2005 Outcome Document (despite several drawbacks; for instance, the existential threat posed by weapons of mass destruction finds no mention) revealed a desire among UN members to make the world body fit for purpose in the twenty-first century. The document was just one of many manifestations of institutional activism during the period; several other innovations were launched by the Security Council and other processes. Today, despite the fact that many of the norms and institutions set up in the Outcome Document have suffered severe setbacks, the trend of creating new norms and institutions has not entirely dissipated. This section will review some of the key normative, and institutional innovations in the UN universe since the dawn of the twenty-first century in general and the 2005 Outcome Document in particular.

**Peace and Security**

In the peace and security arena, the UN witnessed several constructive developments, some of which are noted in the 2005 Outcome Document. Other initiatives related to UN peacekeeping in particular, including the so-called Brahimi report sought to gradually increase the scope and ambition of peacekeeping, while facing the growing challenges of going into places without peace to keep. This resulted in some multidimensional operations with expanded mandates to protect civilians, ensure rule of law, and conduct elections. While the operationalization of these mandates has been particularly problematic for a number of reasons—including tensions with the traditional peacekeeping principles of consent, impartiality, and use of force only for self-defense—the UN’s peace enforcement role was considered to be inevitable. Consequently, even the 2015 high-level
independent panel on peace operations (HIPPO) sought to make them more effective.\textsuperscript{13} While the recommendations of the HIPPO report to address serious shortcomings are yet to be implemented, and notwithstanding the presence of other peacekeeping actors, the UN remains “the world’s primary peacekeeper by a considerable margin [and] there is evidence that the Security Council’s authority as the source of peacekeeping mandates has strengthened with time.”\textsuperscript{14} This is despite the fact that the UN is missing in action in Libya and Yemen for no fault of its own.

Other initiatives included UNSCR 1325 on women, peace, and security, which partly contributed to the establishment of UN Women (in 2010)\textsuperscript{15}; UNSCR 1373 on terrorism (adopted in 2001 in the wake of the 9/11 attacks), which led to the establishment of the Counter-Terrorism Committee (CTC) and, in 2004, the Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate (CTED) mandated to provide the CTC with expert advice\textsuperscript{16}; and UNSCR 1540 (which was passed in 2004, and requires governments to legislate and enforce laws to prevent non-state actors, especially terrorist groups, from acquiring weapons of mass destruction—WMD), which led to the creation of the so-called 1540 Committee.\textsuperscript{17} Apart from the Council led initiatives, the UN General Assembly also successfully negotiated two significant treaties: the 2013 ATT to establish common standards and reduce illicit arms trade, and the 2017 Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW), which proscribes signatories not to use, threaten to use, develop, produce, manufacture, acquire, possess, stockpile, transfer, station, or install nuclear weapons.\textsuperscript{18} Among these UNSCR 1540, and the TPNW are of particular salience on account of their far reaching normative implications and will be discussed in more detail.

**UNSCR 1540**

Passed in the wake of the 9/11 attacks, and the dominant narrative of the link between Iraq and WMDs, this resolution is a rare instance where the Council has donned the role of a legislative body; 1540 mandates all UN members to pass appropriate domestic laws to ensure that non-state actors, including terrorist groups, are unable to attain weapons of mass destruction or the necessary material and expertise to build them. Passed under Chapter VII of the UN Charter, 1540 also empowers the Council to enforce the mandate. As a sop, the 1540 Committee has followed a more cooperative and collegiate approach to encouraging UN
members to pass necessary domestic legislation, and also establish institutions to enforce them domestically. However, following the discovery of undeclared chemical weapons in Syria, and the fact that Damascus had lied in its initial 1540 declaration, the Council passed resolution 2118 in 2013, which includes a section that mandates all UN members to “inform immediately the Security Council of any violation of resolution 1540,” thus empowering the 1540 Committee to verify all reports. UNSCR 1540 was passed unanimously for at least three reasons. First all P5 members were in agreement of the necessity of such a sweeping resolution. While many of the P5 sponsors of this resolution have used non-state actors as proxies to violate the sovereignty of their adversaries, there was an overall consensus that allowing any groups to have access to WMD capabilities would be extremely dangerous and detrimental in the long run. Second, prompted by post-9/11 concerns of a terrorist WMD attack, states (such as Pakistan), which were particularly worried about the implications of the resolution and sought to push-back, were browbeaten into submission by the P5. Third, although the resolution was addressed to UN member states, the tip of the spear was aimed at non-state actors, especially terrorist groups, from acquiring WMDs, and did not directly impinge on proliferation by states, which made it more palatable.

Resolution 1540 might be considered a partial success in the UN’s efforts to address WMD proliferation to non-state actors by requiring states to legislate, regulate, and enforce rules to prevent non-state actors from obtaining these weapons and the means to deliver them. In doing so it established the norm of states not facilitating non-state actors from acquiring WMD. Yet, its implementation remains uneven and far from complete. Apart from the lack of capacity of some states to actually report on the implementation of 1540 nationally, other states have deliberately misreported their WMD holdings and steps taken to prevent WMD from falling into the hands of non-state actors. However, with the exception of Syria, the Council has been reluctant to enforce the mandate of 1540, partly on account of lack of P5 consensus and partly because of the perils of enforcement.

Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW)

If 1540 proved that the P5 could compel the Council to legislate for all UN members, then the TPNW proves the inability of the P5 to block a crucial normative treaty that takes aim at the core of their military
prowess—their nuclear arsenals. Born out of the civil society movement (spearheaded by the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons—ICAN\textsuperscript{21}) concerned with the humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons, and supported by several leading non-nuclear European nations (notably Austria, Ireland, Sweden, and, initially, Switzerland), the TPNW process emerged from the UN open-ended working group (OEWG) created by the General Assembly in 2015 “to substantively address concrete effective legal measures, legal provisions and norms that will need to be concluded to attain and maintain a world without nuclear weapons.”\textsuperscript{22} All the nuclear-armed states, except North Korea, boycotted the OEWG.

The OEWG voted to recommend the start of negotiations and, in 2017, 124 non-nuclear weapon states—including the Netherlands, a NATO member and a prominent nuclear umbrella state (which reportedly stores US nuclear weapons at Volkel Air Base)—gathered in New York to negotiate a “legally binding instrument to prohibit nuclear weapons, leading towards their total elimination.” This congregation caused great consternation among the nuclear-armed states and their shielded allies as amply demonstrated when the United States, the United Kingdom, and France, along with several countries that live under a nuclear umbrella, publicly protested against the conference, and sought to justify their decision to boycott it.

The trepidation of the nuclear-armed states is justified for a number of reasons. First, the TPNW strengthens the non-use norm of nuclear weapons, and, in doing so, challenges the very premise of nuclear deterrence. Second, it also questions the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) canon that nuclear weapons are an entitlement bestowed upon a handful of countries that had tested a weapon before the treaty entered into force in 1970. Third the TPNW challenges the belief that the security of most of the world’s nations—indeed, world order itself—is based on the possession of or protection by nuclear weapons. Fourth, it also contests the idea that nuclear weapons cannot be banned, and nuclear disarmament is possible only as part of a process of “general and complete disarmament,” as outlined in Article VI of the NPT, implying that nuclear weapons might be the last to be eliminated. Finally, the TPNW plugs a serious legal gap in that nuclear weapons (unlike chemical and biological weapons) were the only WMD that were not prohibited by international law. This was an unfathomable lapse given the potential of nuclear-weapon use to lead to global extinction.\textsuperscript{23} In doing so, the TPNW also strengthens the human
security norm by highlighting the existential humanitarian consequences posed by the use of nuclear weapons.

If nuclear-armed states, especially the P5 are unhappy with the momentum of the ban negotiations and treaty, then they have only themselves to blame; these negotiations were a direct result of the diminishing faith in the NPT process, the Conference on Disarmament, and the nuclear-centered world order that persevered after the Cold War ended. The merits, or lack thereof, of the TPNW notwithstanding, the treaty underlines that new actors—civil society movements—along with a gathering of small and middle powers can contribute to norm creation within the UN framework, despite stiff and vocal opposition from P5 members and their influential allies. ICAN’s contribution to the TPNW proceedings and process was recognized by the award of the 2017 Nobel Peace Prize. Justifying the award the Norwegian Nobel Committee praised ICAN “for its work to draw attention to the catastrophic humanitarian consequences of any use of nuclear weapons and for its ground-breaking efforts to achieve a treaty-based prohibition of such weapons.”

Development

The end of the Cold War saw the scope for multilateral development open significantly. This was evidenced by the creation of the Human Development Report (HDR), the related Human Development Index (HDI) in 1990, and, more significantly, their acceptance by UN members. The HDR/HDI was a more holistic way of measuring development as compared to the unidimensional Gross Domestic Product (GDP) measure. The 1992 Rio “Earth Summit,” where Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) and civil society actors played a prominent role, soon thereafter set the stage for serious deliberations on sustainability, climate change, and development. This momentum culminated in the top-down and relatively modest eight MDGs in 2000. The MDGs served to put a “spotlight on the issue” even if they ignored “important elements of the development enterprise, such as freedom and technological innovation, while framing a mostly basic needs agenda.” This is unsurprising given that the MDGs were prescribed exclusively for countries of the global South by, as one UN insider put it, “a bunch of mostly men from the global North who dreamed up the goals while sitting in a basement with little consultation with the target countries.” Perhaps the singular contribution of the MDGs was to pave the way for the
uber-ambitious SDGs in 2015. The SDGs, along with the Paris climate change agreement, are probably the two most significant achievements in the development arena in particular and the UN universe in general. Consequently, their impact will be examined in some detail.

*Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)*

By most accounts the SDGs were the result of “the most inclusive and comprehensive negotiations in UN history.”\(^28\) The SDG agenda, negotiated by the UN membership, as well as civil society groups, foundations, and NGOs over three years is, perhaps, the most ambitious roadmap ever drawn up by the world body.\(^29\) It lists 17 goals ranging from “Goal 1: End poverty in all its forms everywhere” through “Goal 10: Reduce inequality within and among countries” to “Goal 17: Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development”, and a staggering 169 targets that need to be monitored and implemented by 2030.

The development aspect apart, the SDGs are salient for the UN’s political role as a global norm setter for several reasons. First, the inclusive manner in which the SDGs were negotiated (and indeed might have contributed to the runaway ambition evident in the scope of the goals) underlined that UN members were able to achieve remarkable consensus in the development field, despite the deep political differences that have stymied cooperation in other areas. This in turn has led UN members to take ownership of the goals. For instance, even before the goals were formally adopted India’s government asserted that as many as 11 of the 17 SDGs—including “Goal 5: Achieve gender equality and empower women and girls” and “Goal 11: Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable” were already part of its agenda.\(^30\) This ownership is also evident in the enthusiasm of most countries in presenting their voluntary national reports (VNR). While most countries have presented a VNR at least once (with notable exceptions like the United States, Iran, Somalia, and Myanmar which have not presented a single report), many countries (such as Brazil, Egypt, Indonesia, Mexico, and Turkey) have presented three VNRs. Although their rationale for doing so varies, clearly, they see benefits in the VNR process.

Second, although the SDGs are notionally about development, the goals have significant implications for peace and security as well as human rights, especially of women and minorities. One, perhaps inadvertent, consequence of this has been that the SDGs have empowered citizens
to hold their governments responsible for delivering on the goals. This has spawned the recognition of rights among civil society in all countries, including those, where such rights are not guaranteed. Third, the “all of government” approach inherent in implementing the goals has empowered the role of not only all branches of the national government, but also state governments, local municipalities, and even village-level governance structures. Additionally, civil society organizations, NGOs, foundations, and even the corporate sector have been engaged in the onerous challenge of implementing these goals.

Finally, the adoption of the SDGs coincided with the economic rise of the global South and more substantial South–South cooperation. The 2013 HDR, aptly titled *The Rise of the South: Human Progress in a Diverse World* noted: “For the first time in 150 years, the combined output of the developing world’s three leading economies—Brazil, China and India [BIC] – is about equal to the combined GDP of the longstanding industrial powers of the North – Canada, France Germany, Italy, the United Kingdom and the United States [six of the original G-7].”

Simultaneously, South–South cooperation, which for most of the twentieth century was a mere slogan, is emerging as a vital factor not only in the economic growth of poorer countries but also the human development of their populations. This cooperation is evident at several levels. At the ideational level the less developed countries can learn and benefit from the success of the emerging economies of the South; their experience is more relevant to the developing countries than the experience of the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) countries. At the practical level, South–South cooperation in investment, finance, technology transfer, and trade were key new factors in facilitating the economic growth of the global South—and complementary to the traditional North–South finance flows.

One indication of this is the rise in South–South trade from 8.1 percent in 1980 to 26.7 percent of total world trade today. In addition, nearly half of all remittances sent home by emigrants from the South come from workers living in other developing countries. Similarly, growth in low-income countries would have been lower by as much as 1.1 percentage point between 2007 and 2010 had China and India registered a fall in growth rate similar to that of developed economies. Moreover, global South countries have increased their share of global Foreign Direct Investment to 50 percent and, as an example, nearly half the financing for infrastructure projects in Sub-Saharan Africa over the past decade came
from countries and regional funds of the South. Similarly, the BICs have emerged as the largest donors outside the OECD. Consequently, increased South–South cooperation—even as North–South cooperation stagnates or recedes—is likely to be a key factor in achieving the SDG targets.

In practice, however, two SDG reports show that by 2019...despite progress in a number of areas over the past four years, on some of the Goals, progress has been slow or even reversed. The most vulnerable people and countries continue to suffer the most and the global response has not been ambitious enough.

For instance, extreme poverty has reached the lowest point since its tracking began. And yet, at the current pace, we are still not on track to end poverty by 2030. Similarly, many countries are taking actions to protect our environment, but the health of our earth is still deteriorating at an alarming rate.

Clearly, while achieving the SDGs by 2030, according to the UN Foundation “will require heroic and imaginative effort, ...and agility to adopt to new information and changing trends,” the goals and the high-level political forum (HLPF) to facilitate their implementation has led to innovative ways to do business, and offers a radical departure from the past moribund approaches to development. One such innovation—albeit controversial—is the Strategic Partnership Framework between the UN and the World Economic Forum which identifies six areas of focus—financing the 2030 Agenda, climate change, health, digital cooperation, gender equality and empowerment of women, education and skills. While it remains to be seen how this partnership will work in practice in a Covid-19 ravaged world, it certainly reflects new thinking.

**Climate Change**

The 21st meeting of the Conference of Parties (or simply COP21) to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) held in Paris witnessed initiatives to tackle one of the biggest challenges confronting humanity; and on 12 December 2015 the gathering reached a landmark agreement to combat climate change, and to accelerate and intensify the actions and investments needed for a sustainable low-carbon future.

COP21 can be seen as an interesting departure from the usual UN process. The 1991 Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC),
which led to the UNFCCC was meant to side-step the traditional UN processes. However, it reached its nadir when COP15 ended with a tepid agreement in Copenhagen in 2009. It was, according to Lumumba Di-Aping, chief negotiator for the G77 group of 130 developing countries, “the lowest level of ambition you can imagine” and “…nothing short of climate change scepticism in action.” Against this backdrop, COP21 was a deliberate fudge to overcome the severe roadblocks highlighted in the COP15 debacle. Consequently, the issue of accountability for climate change was sidestepped; much of the “institutionalization” called for in COP15 negotiations was abandoned; and, unsurprisingly, COP21 was voluntary and the setting, meeting, reporting were to be determined by states, and not multilateral arrangements. It was the inevitable price to pay for a successful outcome.

Nonetheless, the so-called Paris climate agreement set the ambitious goals to keep global temperature rise this century well below 2 °C above pre-industrial levels, and to pursue efforts to limit the temperature increase even further to 1.5 °C; increase the ability of countries to deal with the impacts of climate change; and at making finance flows consistent with a low Green House Gas emissions and climate-resilient pathway. Additionally, the parties also agreed to put forward their best efforts through nationally determined contributions (NDCs), and to strengthen these efforts in the years ahead.

While the implementation (or lack thereof) of the agreement has drawn international opprobrium, especially following the decision of the Trump administration to cease participation in it, there are several other hurdles, including whether to work toward a fossil free future or a low-carbon economy, and how to create a legal framework to sustain climate finance, especially for developing nations. However, several other initiatives facilitated on the sidelines of the official deliberations reflect noteworthy new approaches to addressing a crucial global problem.

The first is the Breakthrough Energy Coalition (BEC), spearheaded by Bill Gates, which includes leading Indian and Chinese entrepreneurs, and reflects that any UN efforts to successfully implement the agreement would require engagement with the private sector. This coalition—announced during the course of COP21—aims to provide venture capital to bring riskier and untested new technologies related to electricity generation and storage, transportation, industrial use, agriculture, and energy system efficiency to the market. More than the $20 billion capital that BEC aims to offer over the next decade, it is the idea of making profit
while addressing climate change challenges which is truly noteworthy.\textsuperscript{37} The second is the launch of Mission Innovation (http://mission-innovation.net/), a dramatic initiative to accelerate public and private partnership to “address global climate change, provide affordable clean energy to consumers, including in the developing world, and create additional commercial opportunities in clean energy.”\textsuperscript{38} This includes the investors from the BEC and 20 countries, including Brazil, China, India, and the United States who “represent 75 percent of the world’s CO2 emissions from electricity, and more than 80 percent of the world’s clean energy R&D investment.” Again the most interesting aspect of this initiative is to leverage the public–private partnership—both in the global North and South—to promote joint ventures that can make clean energy economically viable. Both the Mission Innovation and BEC were recognized by the UNFCCC as “a landmark commitment to dramatically accelerate public and private global clean energy innovation.”\textsuperscript{39}

Third, the Indo-French led International Solar Alliance (ISA) of 121 countries, which hopes to raise $1 trillion to scale-up solar energy development by 2030, particularly in the tropical sun-drenched countries, was also announced at COP21. Apart from bridging the technology and finance gap the Alliance is also an effort to bridge the North–South divide, which has stymied cooperative approaches to addressing climate change. The ISA has already partnered with the World Bank, “adopted interim regulations that follow UN standards,” and “desires eventually to be part of the UN system as a related agency.”\textsuperscript{40}

Additionally, the pledge of the Least Developed Countries Fund along with the launch of the Transformative Carbon Asset Facility by the World Bank and four European nations at COP21 is also likely to have contributed to the successful outcome.\textsuperscript{41} More importantly, while countries like India and China continue to echo their rights under the “common but differentiated responsibility” concept, these initiatives, coupled with the voluntary nature of the Paris agreement, underline that these emerging powers are willing to play a guarded role in shaping the norms, mechanisms, and institutions to deal with global climate change both nationally and internationally.

\textit{Human Rights}

In the sphere of human rights most advocates might assert that the UN’s efforts have either stalled or, worse, retreated, especially in the
face of opposition from P5 members, particularly China, Russia, and the United States. They might point to the quiet disappearance of the Human Rights Up Front initiative (launched by Secretary General Ban Ki-Moon in 2013) under Antonio Guterres. Although the initiative sought to strengthen the preventive work of the UN and to stress the value of early warning signals of crises to come—which would have supported Guterres’ own priority on prevention—it is missing from the secretary-general’s reforms. While efforts to promote and protect human rights might have regressed under the present incumbent of the 38th floor at UNHQ in New York, there is ample evidence that other actors within the UN system—notably the Geneva-based UN High Commissioner for Human Rights (UNHCHR)—have taken on the mantle of being the global voice of conscience. For instance, during her tenure Navi Pillay earned the wrath of Myanmar by highlighting the killing of minority Rohingya Muslims in Rakhine state. Her successor, Zeid Ra’ad al-Hussein, was even more outspoken about human rights abuses in Syria, Myanmar, Yemen, Iraq, Congo, Venezuela, and Nicaragua, and also called out Hungary, Poland, and Austria, among others, on their intolerance and oppression, especially of migrants and minorities. He justified his role as one of putting up a mirror before all governments. Predictably, speaking unpalatable truth to states came at the price of being a one-term incumbent, and al-Hussein did not seek a second term because “to do so, in the current geopolitical context, might involve bending a knee in supplication.” Similarly, his successor, Michelle Bachelet, a former victim of torture, and former president of Chile, used her socialist credentials to engage Venezuela, and still, much to the perturbation of the regime, presented a scathing report on human rights abuses there. Yet, she also managed to ensure continued country access to her officers.

The efforts of the UNHCHR notwithstanding, the promotion of human right norms have lagged behind those in the peace and security and development arenas. There are, however, two areas where human right norms continue to evolve and have made progress. The first is the revamped Human Rights Council, which despite all its justified flaws, has developed the process of Universal Periodic Review (UPR). The second is the process of special procedures and independent investigations.

**Human Rights Council**

Established in 2006, to replace the Commission on Human Rights, the Human Rights Council (HRC) was an effort to overhaul the body,
“which had been hampered for years by the politics of intransigence, geopolitical rivalries and inadequate concern for the victims of human rights violations around the world.”

Although the Council’s membership has often been dismissed as a group of some of the worst human rights violators, in reality between 2007 and 2015 “over 74 per cent of the Council’s members met the Freedom House standards of free and partly free” states. Additionally, in 2005 the General Assembly passed a resolution establishing the UPR to assess the human rights records of all 193 UN members. Remarkably, all UN members have participated in the first cycle of the UPR, which began in 2008 and ended in 2011. This process allowed an unprecedented international scrutiny of each member’s human rights record, including states with egregious human rights records. The process has also allowed for new actors at the national level to participate either directly or through shadow reports. According to Ted Piccone: “The UPR process is adding another layer of transparency and accountability for upholding international human rights norms; nearly half of the recommendations made to states were fully or partially implemented just two-and-a-half years after the first round of reviews.” While the exit of the United States from the HRC in 2018 has, clearly, dented the reputation of the Council, it also reflects poorly on the ability of Washington to play a leadership role. In departing from the HRC the US—a traditional champion of human rights norms—has weakened not only its own reputation but also the ability to operationalize norms it had promoted.

**Special Procedures & Independent Investigations**

In addition to the UPR, one of the great innovations of the HRC was to mandate special procedures, which set up special rapporteurs, independent experts, or working groups who serve in their individual capacity. The special procedure mandates could be either thematic (e.g., Special Rapporteur on poverty and human rights) or country specific (e.g., Special Rapporteur on human rights in the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea).

Moreover, the UN has also witnessed an increase in the special investigation missions, and since the end of the Cold War the UNHCHR has supported or deployed nearly 50 such commissions or missions. A recent Group of International and Regional Eminent Experts on Yemen established by the HRC presented a scathing report and accused all the warring factions as well as their extra-regional allies (including France, the
United Kingdom, and the United States, which provided weapons to one side in the conflict) of “possible war crimes.” Similarly after a detailed six-month investigation, Agnes Callamard, the Special Rapporteur on extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary executions presented a damning report that held Saudi Arabia responsible for the “premeditated execution” of journalist Jamal Khashoggi. The report asserted that Saudi Arabia’s actions violated at least six tenets of international law and “constitutes an international crime over which other States should claim universal jurisdiction.” While this report clearly establishes the norm against this practice, it leaves it to the will of states to act against offenders.

Separately, the creation—by the General Assembly—of the International, Impartial, and Independent Mechanism to Assist in the Investigation and Prosecution of Persons Responsible for the Most Serious Crimes under International Law committed in the Syrian Arab Republic Since March 2011 (IIIM-Syria) and the Independent Investigative Mechanism for Myanmar (IIMM), to gather evidence of crimes are noteworthy initiatives (for details of the IIIM-Syria and IIMM see Jennifer Trahan’s chapter in this volume).

Similarly, even UN Security Council resolution 2286 of May 2016, while reiterating the boilerplate “need to promote and ensure respect for the principles and rules of international humanitarian law” significantly urged states “to ensure that violations of international humanitarian law related to the protection of the wounded and sick, medical personnel and humanitarian personnel exclusively engaged in medical duties, their means of transport and equipment, as well as hospitals and other medical facilities in armed conflicts do not remain unpunished.”

Conclusion: Unrealistic Expectations & Three Future Scenarios

This survey of some key initiatives since the end of the Cold War reveals that the UN witnessed a burst of normative and operational creativity primarily on account of unprecedented P5 unity in the early days of the twenty-first century. However, even as this P5 unity eroded over the past few years and tensions rose, not only among the established powers but also among them and other emerging powers, the UN was still able to push through some significant norms. These were strongest in the development field and weakest in human rights, with peace and security initiatives falling in the middle. Predictably, the UN was most visible in
its role as an arena (although in some cases, such as cyber space, other venues were preferred by some of the key actors), less effective in its role as an agent, and, perhaps, the least influential as an implementing actor. This was partly on account of limited consensus among the key powers on specific issues (especially those related to cyber security) and partly on account of the greater role played by new actors, such as civil society, NGOs, and even the corporate world in creating these norms. This in turn has led to unrealistic expectations that either having established these norms, or having the norms thrust upon it, the UN is now in a position to implement them.

On the contrary, these norms, coupled with the deterioration in great power relations and rising geopolitical contestations, have on the one hand raised expectations of the UN’s abilities to deliver (especially among its relatively new non-state constituencies) while on the other the same geopolitical competition and great power rivalry is likely to stymie the UN from doing so. This, clearly, poses a dilemma for the UN: will it be able to manage these unrealistic expectations or will it be able to carve out a role to deliver, despite the far from conducive global scenario?

Against this backdrop, there are three possible scenarios for the future role of the UN. The first scenario is the continued centrality and relevance of the UN-centered global governance system. However, this scenario would require several conditions to manifest. First, there would have to be P5 convergence, if not rapprochement, especially on key peace & security issues. In particular, this would depend on the United States rededicating itself to the UN though enlightened leadership. Additionally, the UN system would have to undergo drastic systemic and procedural reforms to accommodate emerging state powers on one hand and non-state actors—especially civil society and corporate sector—on the other. While the latter process is in evidence, the former is still not discernible. Under this scenario the UN might embrace a multi-stakeholder approach rather than a traditional multilateral approach, especially in areas, such as international development, climate change, and digital cooperation, where it might be more useful.

If the UN is unable to undertake this critical transformation, then the second likely scenario might be the growing irrelevance or even demise of an unreformed UN-centered global governance system. Such a scenario might unfold in different ways. While seemingly far-fetched, the most dramatic would be a great power global nuclear conflict that could destroy earth, along with the UN. Equally, the inability to prevent planetary
destruction on account of climate catastrophes would inevitably also lead to the end of the UN. Less dramatically, but equally existential, it might involve P5 members either withdrawing from different UN arenas (as the US has done from the HRC) or simply refusing to adhere to their commitments (as China appears to be doing in the case of the South China Sea arbitration). This would be akin to the collapse of the League of Nations on the eve of the Second World War. Or the UN system might be rendered peripheral if existing or emerging powers seek other venues instead of the UN to serve their interests. For instance, the emergence of the so-called Group of Twenty (G20) as an alternative to the unreformed UNSC, and its increasing role in issues normally dealt with at the Council, is evidence of this trend.

Finally, there is the possibility of what Stewart Patrick has described as “Messy Multilateralism.” In such a scenario there would be a multiplicity of forums, and forum shopping not only by the states but also the corporate sector as well as civil society actors. In this scenario charter or treaty-based permanent institutions would co-exist with ad-hoc, flexible, purpose-built groupings (such as the G20); instead of formal legally binding obligations, there would be voluntary codes of conduct (as is the case with the climate agreements); instead of a comprehensive approach to issues and challenges, there would be piecemeal approaches; and interactions among the various actors would be simultaneously transgovernmental, multi-level, and multi-stakeholder. In such a scenario the UN is unlikely to retain its primacy in global governance and might be reduced to being just one of the many arenas, agents, or actors addressing the existing and emerging global challenges in the twenty-first century.

Questions for Discussion

1. What factors contributed to the renaissance of the UN at the end of the Cold War? What major initiatives were launched in the area of peace and security, development, and human rights?
2. How has the retreat of leading powers from the multilateral arena, and emergence of great power contestation impacted the UN-centered global governance system?
3. How are rising powers, developing countries, and South–South cooperation shaping global governance norms and institutions?
4. How are non-state actors, including civil society groups and cities, and the corporate sector shaping global norms and institutions?
5. What are the necessary ingredients in the making and establishing of norms? What factors explain the success or failure of norms, agreements, and treaties?

6. What are some of the new existential global challenges confronting the UN? Is the UN capable of managing them?

7. What are prospects for reform of the UN-centered global governance system? What pre-conditions are necessary for these reforms to succeed?

Notes

1. Hammarskjöld, Dag. 1954. Address at University of California Convocation. Berkeley, CA, 13 May. UN Press Release SG/382, 13 May 1954.

2. Indeed, while there has been a long tradition of UN-bashing by avid opponents of multilateralism (see, for instance, Gardiner, Nile. 2007. The Decline and Fall of the United Nations: Why the U.N. Has Failed and How It Can Be Reformed, 7 February. The Heritage Foundation. https://www.heritage.org/report/the-decline-and-fall-the-united-nations-why-the-un-has-failed-and-how-it-can-be-reformed. Accessed 10 January 2020; @realDonaldTrump. 2016. The United Nations has such great potential but right now it is just a club for people to get together, talk and have a good time. So sad! Twitter, 26 December. https://twitter.com/realDonaldTrump/status/813500123053490176. Accessed 20 March 2020; and Rhodan, Maya. 2017. Here Are All the Times Donald Trump Bashed the United Nations Before Speaking There. Time. https://time.com/4946276/donald-trump-united-nations-general-assembly/. Accessed 10 January 2020) even strong proponents of UN-centered multilateralism are now sounding the alarm. See, for example, Stewart, Patrick. 2015. World Weary. Foreign Affairs, 20 October; von Einsiedel, Sebastian et al. 2015. The UN Security Council in an Age of Great Power Rivalry. UNU Working Paper 04; Ross, Carne. 2016. The UN Is Failing: Is It Heading the Way of the League of Nations? The Guardian, 10 March; Weiss, Thomas G. and Daws, Sam. 2018. The United Nations: Continuity and Change. The Oxford Handbook on the United Nations, edited by Weiss, Thomas G. and Daws, Sam. New York: Oxford University Press; and Mantovani, Cecile and Farge, Emma. 2019. Lights Out for Multilateralism? Alarm as U.N. Faces Cash Squeeze. Reuters, 19 December. https://reut.rs/399sHTC. Accessed 10 January 2020.
3. For a more detailed discussion on the UN’s various roles, see Karlsrud, John. 2016. *Norm Change in International Relations: Linked Ecologies in UN Peacekeeping Operations*, pp. 36–38. London: Routledge, and Andreev, Alexander. 2007. To What Extent are International Organizations (IOs) Autonomous Actors in World Politics? *Opticon1826*. https://www.ucl.ac.uk/opticon1826/archive/issue2/ViPS_HS_International_Organisations.pdf. Accessed 10 January 2020.

4. See von Einsiedel, Sebastian et al. 2015. The UN Security Council in an Age of Great Power Rivalry. *UNU Working Paper 04*, and Gowan, Richard. 2019. Three Troubling Trends at the UN Security Council. *ICG Commentary*.

5. Norms are ‘a standard of appropriate behavior for actors with a given identity’, according to Katzenstein, Peter J. 1996. *The Culture of National Security: Norms and Identity in World Politics*, p. 5. New York: Columbia University Press. Katzenstein and other constructivist theorists suggest that norms evolve through four stages: first, norm entrepreneurs—whether state or civil society actors—initiate and promote specific ideas or norms of behavior, such as the ending slavery or abolishing the death penalty. Second, depending on the endorsement that norm entrepreneurs can garner from influential actors in the global system, there is a diffusion of these norms and they are said to emerge. Third, these norms then spread or cascade through a process of socialization either on their own or with the support of key actors. Finally, the norms are internalized and institutionalized by everyone and become common practice. The UN, clearly, is instrumental as arena, agent or actor, in the creation and establishment of norms. For details of norm creation, see McDonald, Matt. 2018. Constructivism, pp. 50–51. *Security Studies: An Introduction*, edited by Williams, Paul D. and McDonald, Matt. London: Routledge; Finnemore, Martha and Sikkink, Kathryn. 1998. International Norm Dynamic and Political Change. *International Organizations*, vol. 52, no. 4, pp. 887–917; and Florini, Ann. 1996. The Evolution of International Norms. *International Studies Quarterly*, vol. 40, no. 3, pp. 363–389.

6. See United Nations General Assembly resolution 60/1. 2005 World Summit Outcome. A/RES/60/1, 24 October 2005, p. 3. https://bit.ly/2PxLwrD. Accessed 20 March 2020.

7. Ibid, p. 2.
8. Ibid, p. 30.
9. Ibid, p. 38.
10. Ibid, p. 30.
11. United Nations General Assembly. 2000. Report of the Panel on United Nations Peace Operations. A/55/305–S/2000/809, 21 August 2000. https://undocs.org/A/55/305.
12. For a cogent critique see Pugh, Michael. 2008. Peace Enforcement. *The Oxford Handbook on the United Nations*, edited by Weiss, Thomas G. and Daws, Sam. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

13. See United Nations General Assembly. 2015. Uniting our strengths for peace: politics, partnership and people: report of the High-level Independent Panel on Peace Operations. A/70/95–S/2015/446, 17 June 2015. https://undocs.org/A/70/95, and Sidhu, W.P.S. 2015. Keeping Peace Among Peacekeepers. *Mint*, 22 June. https://www.livemint.com/. Accessed 10 January 2020.

14. Bellamy, Alex J. and Williams, Paul D. 2015. Trends in Peacekeeping Operations, 1947–2013. *The Oxford Handbook of United Nations Peacekeeping Operations*, edited by Koops, Joachim A., Tardy, Thierry, MacQueen, Norrie, and Williams, Paul D. Oxford: Oxford University Press, p. 10.

15. See UN Women. https://www.unwomen.org/en/about-us/about-un-women and United Nations Security Council resolution 1325. S/Res/1325, 31 October 2000. https://undocs.org/S/RES/1325(2000).

16. See United Nations Security Council Counter-Terrorism Committee. https://www.un.org/sc/ctc/ and United Nations Security Council resolution 1373. S/Res/1373, 28 September 2001. https://undocs.org/S/RES/1373(2001).

17. See United Nations Security Council 1540 Committee. https://www.un.org/en/sc/1540/ and United Nations Security Council resolution 1540. S/Res/1540, 28 April 2004. https://undocs.org/S/RES/1540(2004).

18. See Arms Trade Treaty at a Glance. 2016. *Arms Control Association*, January. https://www.armscontrol.org/factsheets/arms_trade_treaty and The Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons at a Glance. 2017. *Arms Control Association*, September. https://www.armscontrol.org/factsheets/nuclearprohibition. Accessed 20 March 2020.

19. Sidhu, Waheguru Pal Singh. 2015. Weapons of Mass Destruction: Managing Proliferation. *The UN Security Council: From the Cold War to the 21st Century*, edited by Malone, David, von Einsiedel, Sebastian, and Ugarte, Bruno Stagno. Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner.

20. United Nations Security Council resolution 2118. S/RES/2118, 27 September 2013, para. 14. https://undocs.org/S/RES/2118(2013).

21. ICAN, which was launched in 2007 grew to include nearly 500 non-governmental and civil society organizations in 101 countries by 2017. http://www.icanw.org/.

22. United Nations General Assembly resolution 70/33. Taking Forward Multilateral Nuclear Disarmament Negotiations. A/RES/70/33, 11 December 2015. https://www.undocs.org/A/RES/70/33.
For details see, Sidhu, Waheguru Pal Singh, Associate Professor, Center for Global Affairs, New York University. 2017. The Nonproliferation Review, vol. 24, nos. 5–6, pp. 485–493.

See the Nobel Peace Prize for 2017. https://www.nobelprize.org/prizes/peace/2017/press-release/. Accessed 20 March 2020.

For the origins of HDR and HDI see Sen, Amartya. 1990. Development as Capability Expansion. Human Development and the International Development Strategy for the 1990s, edited by Griffin, Keith and Knight John. London: Macmillan; Haq, Mahbub ul. 1995. Reflections on Human Development. Oxford: Oxford University Press; Stanton, Elizabeth A. 2007. The Human Development Index: A History. Political Economy Research Institute, Working Paper Series 127; and Jolly, Richard. 2018. Human Development. The Oxford Handbook on the United Nations, edited by Weiss, Thomas G. and Daws, Sam. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

See Malone, David M. and Medhora, Rohinton P. 2016. Development. The Oxford Handbook of International Organizations, edited by Katz, Jacob, Hurd, Ian, and Johnstone, Ian. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

UN Development Programme officials. Personal interview, July 2019.

See United Nations Foundation, Sustainable Development Goals. https://unfoundation.org/what-we-do/issues/sustainable-development-goals/. Although the antagonism between the global North and global South on one hand, as well as the top-down approach (mostly by states) and the bottom-up approach (primarily by civil society actors) on the other, made the negotiations contentious, the process was truly global and democratic.

For details see Dodds, Felix, Ambassador Donoghue, David, Leiva Jimena Roesch. 2017. Negotiating the Sustainable Development Goals: A Transformational Agenda for an Insecure World. New York: Routledge, and Khan, Farrukh. 2016. The SDG Story: An Insider Account of How It All Came About. Impakter. https://impakter.com/sdg-story-insider-account-came/. Accessed 10 January 2020.

Sidhu, W.P.S. 2015. Another Development Task for India. Mint, 16 September. https://bit.ly/2PAezeh. Accessed 10 January 2020.

United Nations Development Programme. 2013. The Rise of the South: Human Progress in a Diverse World, pp. 12–13. Human Development Report 2013. New York: United Nations Development Programme. The global South is generally understood to be countries that do not belong to the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), with one or two notable exceptions, such as Chile.

Sidhu, W.P.S. 2013. India and the Ascendency of the Global South. Yojna, pp. 10–13.
33. United Nations. 2019. SDG Progress Reports 2019: Are We on Track to Achieve the Global Goals? https://www.un.org/development/desa/en/news/sustainable/sdg-progress-reports-2019.html. Accessed 10 January 2020.

34. Crossette, Barbara. 2019. As the SDGs Falter, the UN Turns to the Rich and Famous. PassBlue. https://www.passblue.com/2019/07/23/as-the-sdgs-falter-the-un-turns-to-the-rich-and-famous/. Accessed 10 January 2020.

35. Vidal, John, Stratton, Allegra, and Goldenberg, Suzanne. 2009. Low Targets, Goals Dropped: Copenhagen Ends in Failure. The Guardian, 18 December. https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2009/dec/18/copenhagen-deal. Accessed 10 January 2020.

36. For details of BEC see http://www.breakthroughenergycoalition.com/en/index.html.

37. Revkin, Andrew C. 2015. As World Leaders Launch Paris Climate Talks Monday, Bill Gates Will Launch a Supporting Science Push. Dot Earth New York Times Blog, 27 November. https://dotearth.blogs.nytimes.com/2015/11/27/as-world-leaders-launch-paris-climate-talks-monday-bill-gates-will-launch-a-supporting-science-push/. Accessed 10 January 2020.

38. For details see http://mission-innovation.net.

39. United Nations, Climate Change. 2015. Mission Innovation—Clean Energy, Initiative. https://unfccc.int/news/mission-innovation-clean-energy. Accessed 10 January 2020.

40. United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific. 2019. The UN Interagency Technical Mission to the International Solar Alliance (ISA). https://www.unescap.org/events/un-interagency-technical-mission-international-solar-alliance-isa. Accessed 10 January 2020.

41. For details of these initiatives see Carbon Brief Staff. 2015. Analysis: The Key Announcements from Day 1 at COP21. CarbonBrief, 30 November. https://www.carbonbrief.org/analysis-the-key-announcements-from-day-1-at-cop21. Accessed 10 January 2020.

42. Norris, Jennifer. 2018. Why Is Human Rights Absent from the Secretary-General’s Prevention Agenda? IPI Observatory, 9 October. https://theglobalobservatory.org/2018/10/why-human-rights-absent-sg-prevention-agenda/. Accessed 20 March 2020.

43. Lynch, Colum. 2020. U.N Chief Faces Internal Criticism Over Human Rights. Foreign Policy, 4 February. https://foreignpolicy.com/2020/02/04/un-chief-antonio-guterres-internal-criticism-human-rights/. Accessed 20 March 2020.

44. Gladstone, Rick and Sengupta, Somini. 2018. Michelle Bachelet, Ex-President of Chile, Picked as Next U.N. Rights Chief. New York Times, 8 August. https://www.nytimes.com/2018/08/08/world/americas/
michelle-bachelet-united-nations-human-rights.html. Accessed 10 January 2020, and Lederer, Edith M. 2018. Outgoing UN Rights Chief: No Regrets for Speaking Up. AP, 3 August. https://apnews.com/9b4c3a9e617e447d94c58a42903d00cd. Accessed 10 January 2020.

45. Nebehay, Stephanie. 2019. Killings, Torture Still Going on in Venezuela: U.N. Rights Chief. Reuters, 9 September. https://www.reuters.com/article/us-venezuela-security-un/killings-torture-still-going-on-in-venezuela-u-n-rights-chief-idUSKCN1VU11B. Accessed 10 January 2020, and United Nations Office of the High Commissioner of Human Rights. 2019. Venezuela: High Commissioner Bachelet Details Plans for New Human Rights Assistance, 18 December. Office of the High Commissioner of Human Rights. https://www.ohchr.org/EN/NewsEvents/Pages/DisplayNews.aspx?NewsID=25438&LangID=E. Accessed 10 January 2020.

46. Piccone, Ted. 2016. Ten Years Later: The Status of the Human Rights Council. Testimony prepared for the Tom Lantos Human Rights Commission of the U.S. Congress, 17 May. The Brookings Institution. https://bit.ly/2I1DgMD. Accessed 10 January 2020.

47. Ibid.

48. United Nations General Assembly resolution 60/251. 2006. Human Rights Council. A/RES/60/251, 3 April 2006. https://www2.ohchr.org/english/bodies/hrcouncil/docs/A.RES.60.251_En.pdf.

49. See United Nations Human Rights Council. https://www.ohchr.org/EN/HRBodies/UPR/Pages/upcycle1.aspx.

50. Piccone, Ted. 2016. Ten Years Later: The Status of the Human Rights Council. Testimony prepared for the Tom Lantos Human Rights Commission of the U.S. Congress, 17 May. The Brookings Institution. https://bit.ly/2I1DgMD. Accessed 10 January 2020.

51. United Nations Human Rights Council. 2019. Yemen: Collective Failure, Collective Responsibility—UN Expert Report. UN Media. https://www.ohchr.org/EN/HRBodies/HRC/Pages/NewsDetail.aspx?NewsID=24937&LangID=E and https://www.ohchr.org/EN/HRBodies/HRC/YemenGEE/Pages/Index.aspx. Accessed 20 March 2020.

52. United Nations Human Rights Council. 2019. Khashoggi Killing: UN Human Rights Expert Says Saudi Arabia Is Responsible for “Premeditated Execution”, 19 June. Office of the UNHCHR. https://www.ohchr.org/EN/NewsEvents/Pages/DisplayNews.aspx?NewsID=24713. Accessed 10 January 2020.

53. United Nations Security Council resolution 2286. S/Res/2286, 3 May 2016. http://unscr.com/en/resolutions/doc/2286.

54. Patrick, Stewart. 2014. The Unruled World: The Case for Good Enough Global Governance. Foreign Affairs, January/February, vol. 93, no. 1, pp. 58–73.
FURTHER READING

Independent Commission on Multilateralism. 2016. *Pulling Together: The Multilateral System and Its Future*. New York: International Peace Institute.
Mingst, Karen A., Karns, Margaret P., and Lyon, Alynna J. 2017. *The United Nations in the 21st Century: Dilemmas in World Politics*. Boulder, CO: Westview Press.
Weiss, Thomas G., and Daws, Sam (eds.). 2018. *The Oxford Handbook on the United Nations*. New York: Oxford University Press.