

GLOBAL GOVERNANCE  
AND THE UN SYSTEM

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# THE OBJECTIVES OF INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION

# BASIC OBJECTIVES OF INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION

- Managing Interdependence.
- Fostering the development of societies through common norms/standards (gradually building global citizenship)
- Correcting the asymmetries that characterize the world economic system (Equality of nations).

# SOME FEATURES OF THIS TYPOLOGY

- This typology coincides with the historical origin of institutions (pre-WWI, post-WWI, post-WWII)
- The first requires sharing autonomy / responsible sovereignty
- In the latter two, the Nation-state continues to exercise its autonomy, though embedded in agreed principles/norms.
- The UN system is at the center of all of these forms of cooperation.

# TWO CONCEPTUAL ISSUES

- ❖ Concept of “global public goods”: should refer either to interdependence of to the whole “global public domain”.
- ❖ In turn, the concept of development has two entirely different meanings:
  - Cooperation with developing countries
  - Development of societies. In terms of the Preamble to the UN Charter, the determination “to promote social progress and better standards of life in larger freedom.”

# MANAGING INTERDEPENDENCE

- Responds to different demands:
  - ✓ “Pure” global/regional public goods (in the economic sense).
  - ✓ Goods with significant externalities.
  - ✓ Global/regional commons.
  - ✓ Shared infrastructure.
- Relatively well developed in certain areas: contagious diseases, trade rules, international transportation rules.
- Major gaps: climate change, global macro and financial stability
- No (or very limited) cooperation in others: economic migration, tax cooperation.

# DEVELOPMENT OF SOCIETIES

- Economic and social rights.
- International conventions issued approved by UN member states.
- Principles and goals agreed in UN Summits and Conferences (the UN Development Agenda).
- MDGs and post-2015 agenda, with a new focus on rising inequalities.
- This agenda has been built in strong partnership with civil society

# ECONOMIC ASSYMETRIES OF THE GLOBAL ORDER

- Technological and productive: technological progress is highly concentrated and diffusion may be affected by IPRs
- Financial and macroeconomic: global reserve system, financial market segmentation, different room of maneuver of counter-cyclical macroeconomic policies
- Asymmetries in the degree of mobility of factors of production: limited labor mobility, particularly of unskilled labor



# APPROACHES TO INTERNATIONAL INEQUALITIES

- Two basic forms of interventions:
  - ✓ Global rules (trade, IPRs, financing) that recognize the different levels of development
  - ✓ Financing: ODA, MDBs, climate
- Concepts coined around UN processes:
  - ✓ “Special and differential treatment”
  - ✓ “Common but differentiated responsibilities”.
- With the increased differentiation of developing countries, need to redefine the scope of the first two concepts (already so in trade).

# GOVERNANCE STRUCTURES

# THE ESSENTIAL DILEMMA OF THE INTERNATIONAL SYSTEM (1)

- ❖ The basic dilemma: contrast between economic globalization and the national (or even local) domain of politics.
- ❖ Rodrik's *globalization paradox*: “we cannot simultaneously pursue democracy, national determination, and economic globalization”.
- ❖ Therefore: “A thin layer of international rules that leaves substantial room for maneuver by nation governments is a *better* globalization”.

# THE ESSENTIAL DILEMMA OF THE INTERNATIONAL SYSTEM (2)

- ❖ Kaul's *sovereignty paradox*: "in policy fields marked by GPG-type challenges and interdependence, such behaviour [shying away from cooperation] actually undermines rather than strengthens states' policymaking capacity".
- ❖ Therefore: need to combine openness and policymaking sovereignty = notion of responsible sovereignty: exercise it in a way that is fully respectful of the sovereignty of others.
- ❖ This is particularly true for the first form of cooperation. For the second and third, sovereignty within the boundaries of global rules.

# BUILDING A BETTER STRUCTURE

1. Build a dense network of global, regional and national institutions:

- ✓ Recognizes more clear the domain of democratic politics and of the “policy space” that it requires.
- ✓ More balanced in terms of power relations.
- ✓ More consistent with the principle of responsible sovereignty.
- ✓ Strong subsidiarity principle.

# BUILDING A BETTER STRUCTURE

2. Need to overcome the tension between inclusiveness/legitimacy and effectiveness (which some time hides a defense of existing power relations):

- ✓ “Elite multilateralism” (G-7/8, now G-20).
- ✓ Veto power: UN Security Council.
- ✓ UN: equal voting power
- ✓ The BWIs model: weighted voting + constituencies
- ✓ WTO model: consensus through “concentric circles” (which may imply unequal relations).

The first three are unacceptable. So, some variant of the last two?

# BUILDING A MORE REPRESENTATIVE STRUCTURE

3. Equitable participation of developing countries in global decision-making (the “original sin” of post-war arrangements):

- ✓ Unfinished process of increasing “voice and participation” in the BWIs
- ✓ Do not sideline the UN, as it is the most open forum.

But, equally, give voice to small countries.

# BUILDING A BETTER STRUCTURE

4. Effective systems of monitoring, accountability for, and (at the end) compliance with international commitments, which would depend on the type of cooperation:

- ✓ Most developed: WTO dispute settlement.
- ✓ A success story = the Montreal Protocol.
- ✓ Monitoring of international conventions: ILO, CEDAW.
- ✓ Well-developed surveillance: IMF Article IV, WTO's Trade Policy Reviews.
- ✓ The peer review model: OECD, African Union, Human Rights Council.
- ✓ High profile global national evaluations (the MDGs model) + Evolution towards a peer review process



# THE COHERENCE OF THE SYSTEM

# THE APEX ORGANIZATION

- ❖ “Elite multilateralism” (the G-20): advantages and concerns:
  - ✓ Advance over the G-7/8
  - ✓ But it is a self-appointed, ad-hoc body, with problems of representation and legitimacy.
  - ✓ Awkward relation with existing broad-based multilateral institutions.
- ❖ Desirable evolution towards a decision making body of the UN *system*, based on constituencies: the Global Economic Coordination Council.
- ❖ The UN as a center of analysis, and as a forum for dialogue and consensus.

# THE ROLE OF ECOSOC

## ❖ Basic objectives:

- ✓ Helping the UN work as a system in the policy area
- ✓ Monitoring and mutual accountability for UN Development Agenda
- ✓ Global Development Cooperation Forum
- ✓ Oversight of operational activities (board of boards of Funds and Programmes).

## ❖ Critical institutional issues:

- ✓ Duplication of functions GA-ECOSOC.
- ✓ ECOSOC itself as a system.
- ✓ Relations with Funds and Programmes
- ✓ Relations with Specialized agencies and with the BWIs – based on issues?

WHAT ARE THE FORCES  
FOR CHANGE?

# FORCES FOR CHANGE

- ❖ Civil society: good for expanding the agenda, and transparency and accountability, but not necessarily for policy.
- ❖ Rise of emerging powers:
  - ✓ Some have become part of the game, but has it solved the old problem of representation?
  - ✓ Need to redefine “common but differentiated responsibilities”.
  - ✓ It may lead old powers to be less willing to shoulder the costs of global leadership, whereas emerging powers are not willing to do so.
- ❖ The old challenge: unequal power relations – need for leadership by the powerful countries.

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