



## Navigating the Tension Between National Interests and Global Cooperation: Contemporary Governance Challenges in Defense and Security

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### Abstract

In the contemporary landscape of global governance, persistent tensions exist between national strategic interests and the urgent need for international collaboration. Major global challenges such as climate change, digital security, and inequality demand coordinated responses across nations. Yet, state actors often prioritize sovereign goals, creating friction in efforts toward collective action. This study examines these tensions and evaluates the relevance of international institutions like the United Nations (UN) and World Trade Organization (WTO) amid shifting power dynamics, rising nationalism, and protectionist policies. Employing a qualitative descriptive approach through literature review, the research analyzes how the fragmentation of global governance undermines institutional effectiveness. The study emphasizes that developing countries are gaining influence due to demographic shifts and economic growth, highlighting the need for inclusive decision-making processes. Findings indicate a legitimacy crisis among international institutions struggling to adapt to these geopolitical shifts. The study concludes that overcoming structural polarization requires balancing national interests with cooperative global strategies. Strengthening institutional capacity and embracing inclusive policies are essential for ensuring long-term security, stability, and sustainability in an increasingly interconnected world.

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## INTRODUCTION

Contemporary global governance is increasingly shaped by shifting power dynamics, rising nationalism, and the expanding role of non-state actors. The dominance of nation-states that once defined international order is now contested by the emergence of transnational networks, international organizations, and private actors (Forman & Segaar, 2006). These developments have led to the proliferation of multilateral arrangements and institutions, yet concerns remain about legitimacy, accountability, and effectiveness in addressing global challenges (Murphy, 2000; Weiss & Wilkinson, 2014). The interplay between globalization, neoliberal reform, and institutional adaptation has placed governance at the center of contemporary debates. Despite the strengthening of global civil society, sovereign states continue to wield decisive influence, often prioritizing national agendas in ways that generate friction with collective international objectives.

At the core of these dynamics lies the tension between national interests and global cooperation. The theme is selected as a central object of analysis because it illustrates one of the most pressing dilemmas of the twenty-first century: reconciling sovereignty-driven goals with the responsibility to address transnational problems such as climate change, terrorism, pandemics, and digital inequality. Urgency arises from the reality that national priorities often undermine collective responses, producing gaps in institutional legitimacy and weakening multilateral frameworks. Rising protectionism, populist politics, and great-power rivalry increasingly constrain the ability of organizations such as the United Nations and the World Trade Organization to foster consensus. For developing countries, the issue carries profound implications since global governance outcomes directly affect domestic stability, economic resilience, and strategic security.

The objectives pursued in this discussion are threefold. First, to explain the underlying causes of conflict between sovereignty-centered interests and cooperative global initiatives. Second, to evaluate the role of international institutions and multilateral frameworks in mediating these contradictions. Third, to identify governance approaches that may strengthen legitimacy, inclusivity, and effectiveness in responding to shared challenges. By outlining these aims, the discussion emphasizes that national and global priorities are not inherently contradictory, but require institutional designs and political leadership capable of harmonizing them.

For the sake of clarity, the structure is arranged into four main sections. The initial section sets out the methodological framework employed in the analysis. The following section develops the core discussion, focusing on the interplay between national interests and global cooperation through theoretical perspectives and empirical cases. A subsequent section highlights the necessity of coordinated responses and explores opportunities for reform in contemporary governance arrangements, including polycentric and network-based models. The concluding section offers recommendations and reflections on the broader implications of the findings, with particular attention to the relevance for Indonesia's defense and security context. Through this organization, the discussion seeks to capture the complexity of global governance while pointing toward more adaptive and inclusive directions.

## METHODS

Qualitative research was employed in order to analyze the dynamics of contemporary global governance, focusing on the challenges, opportunities, and future directions that characterize the international order. According to Creswell (2017)

qualitative research is an approach that seeks to understand and interpret social phenomena by emphasizing meaning, context, and complexity rather than numerical measurement. Similarly, Bryman (2012) explains that qualitative inquiry prioritizes depth of interpretation through textual, historical, and institutional sources. This methodological choice is appropriate because the issues under consideration—such as power shifts, nationalism, and institutional reform are normative and multidimensional in nature, making them unsuitable for statistical generalization.

Within this qualitative tradition, a descriptive approach was applied in order to systematically capture and present the characteristics of the research object. The descriptive element allows the discussion to focus on mapping the interplay between national interests and global cooperation without imposing predictive models or quantification. Library research was used as the primary technique for data collection, involving a structured review of scholarly literature, institutional reports, and global policy documents. This process enabled the integration of theoretical perspectives with empirical insights from disciplines including international relations, political economy, and governance studies (Neuman, 2014).

The analysis draws on several major theoretical frameworks. International relations theory provides the foundation, particularly realism, liberalism, and constructivism, to explain how state and non-state actors behave in negotiating sovereignty and cooperation (King et al., 1994; Nye & Goldsmith, 2011; Wendt, 1999). Global governance theory contributes to understanding the fragmentation and legitimacy crises facing institutions (Murphy, 2000; Weiss & Wilkinson, 2014) while network governance and polycentric governance models highlight the growing relevance of flexible, multi-actor arrangements in fragmented systems (Acharya, 2016; R. E. Kim, 2020). By employing these theoretical lenses, the research ensures interpretive rigor in examining the relationship between national interests, institutional structures, and the prospects for more inclusive and adaptive governance.

## **RESULT AND DISCUSSION**

### **The Tension Between National Interests and Global Cooperation**

The tension between national interests and global cooperation is a recurring theme in international relations. Pursuing national interests often conflicts with global justice and cooperation (Nye & Goldsmith, 2011). However, some argue that multilateralism, especially for powerful nations like the United States, can align with national interests (Nye & Goldsmith, 2011). This tension is evident in international organizations such as the United Nations, where intergovernmental and transnational forces often collide (Cronin, 2002). The challenge of balancing national sovereignty with international objectives is particularly pressing in the context of economic globalization (Bagwell & Staiger, 2018; Obstfeld, 2021). Multinational enterprises further complicate this balance, creating tensions among nations (Fowler, 1965). Regional cooperation, as seen in Central Asia, offers potential solutions to these conflicts (Abdullaev & Teacher, 2021). Ultimately, careful institutional design and enhanced multilateral cooperation may help reconcile national interests with global objectives, though significant political obstacles remain (Obstfeld, 2021).

The pursuit of national interests often creates competitive dynamics between states (S. E. Kim & Urpelainen, 2014). Yet, the increasing need for international collaboration is apparent, particularly in fields like scientific research and environmental protection (Barskiy, 2024; Marginson, 2018). This tension is also reflected in

multinational enterprises (Fowler, 1965) and organizations like the UN, which must navigate competing intergovernmental and transnational interests (Cronin, 2002). Globalization has intensified both cooperation and competition, fostering interdependence but also widening gaps between developed and developing countries (Magdoff, 1992). Managing global commons requires integrating diverse stakeholder interests through complex processes (Stang, 2013). Nonetheless, international cooperation in scientific and technical fields offers potential for harmonizing national and global interests, spurring innovative development (Barskiy, 2024).

A clear example of the tension between national interests and global cooperation can be observed in the Paris Agreement on Climate Change. Despite the scientific consensus on the urgency of climate action, many countries struggle to commit to ambitious targets due to concerns over economic growth and energy security. Some nations prioritize their fossil fuel industries, even though this may lead to higher greenhouse gas emissions. Developing countries also argue that they should not be held to the same standards as developed nations, given their historically smaller contributions to climate change. The Paris Agreement, while a significant step toward global cooperation, remains voluntary, allowing countries to withdraw or adjust their commitments, complicating efforts to enforce collective climate action.

The challenge of balancing national interests and global cooperation is not limited to climate change. It spans across various global issues like terrorism, resource scarcity, and health crises, as seen in the COVID-19 pandemic. Scholars propose several approaches to reconcile national sovereignty with global collaboration, including institutional design (Bagwell & Staiger, 2018) and reconfiguring national interests to address global threats (Beardsworth, 2018). Despite the political obstacles, aligning national and global interests is critical for addressing interconnected challenges (Nye & Goldsmith, 2011). Enhanced multilateralism may support globalization while addressing domestic concerns, although tensions remain between maintaining national sovereignty and pursuing collective global solutions (Obstfeld, 2021).

In the environmental sphere, the conflict between national interests and global cooperation is particularly pronounced. Countries often prioritize short-term economic gains over long-term environmental protection, as seen in resistance from major polluting nations to global climate initiatives (Jan-Erik Lane, 2020). However, some argue that economic growth and environmental protection can be reconciled, as demonstrated by Singapore's policies (Susskind et al., 2014). Addressing these challenges requires innovative approaches, such as self-enforcing agreements (Susskind et al., 2014) and adapting environmental policies to country-specific contexts (Keller, 1996). Ultimately, bridging the gap between national interests and global environmental cooperation remains a critical task for both policymakers and researchers.

The tension between national interests and global cooperation is a core issue in international relations because countries often prioritize their own goals, which can contradict the need for collaboration on global challenges. This tension arises when nations focus on their economic, security, or political interests, which can conflict with broader goals like global justice, environmental protection, and cooperative governance.

### **National Interests vs Global Cooperation**

At the heart of this tension is the idea that nations, especially powerful ones, pursue their own interests, which can sometimes be at odds with the interests of the global community. National interests typically revolve around sovereignty, economic growth,

security, and maintaining political influence. On the other hand, global cooperation often calls for collaboration on shared issues like climate change, economic inequality, terrorism, or public health crises.

Colonomos (2019) highlights that pursuing national interests can undermine global justice. For example, developed countries often push their own trade and economic policies, which may disadvantage poorer nations. However, some scholars, such as Nye & Goldsmith (2011) argue that multilateralism cooperation between multiple countries can sometimes align with national interests, especially for powerful nations like the U.S. For example, by supporting international organizations like the United Nations or the World Trade Organization, the U.S. can maintain global stability, which in turn benefits its own economic and security goals.

### **Role of International Organizations**

International organizations, such as the United Nations (UN), face the difficult task of balancing national sovereignty with the need for transnational cooperation. Cronin (2002) explains that the UN is a prime example of this tension, as it must mediate between countries that often have conflicting interests. For instance, the Security Council's permanent members (the U.S., China, Russia, the UK, and France) frequently veto or push policies based on their national interests, which can obstruct the global peace and security agenda.

### **Economic Globalization and National Sovereignty**

One of the areas where this tension is most visible is economic globalization. Globalization encourages free trade, the movement of capital, and multinational enterprises, which can lead to economic growth. However, it can also increase economic inequality and strain national sovereignty. Point out that countries struggle to balance the benefits of being part of the global economy with protecting their domestic industries and workers (Bagwell & Staiger, 2018; Obstfeld, 2021). For example, in trade agreements, nations may have to sacrifice certain protections for their local economies in exchange for global market access, leading to domestic unrest or backlash against globalization.

### **Multinational Enterprises and Economic Tensions**

The role of multinational corporations (MNCs) further complicates this dynamic. These corporations often operate across borders, making it difficult for individual nations to regulate their activities effectively. According to Fowler (1965), MNCs can sometimes exploit differences in national laws, labor standards, and tax policies, creating economic imbalances and tensions between nations. These companies, while contributing to economic growth, can also exacerbate wealth disparities and put pressure on developing countries to lower environmental or labor standards to attract investment.

### **Regional Cooperation and Potential Solutions**

Despite these challenges, regional cooperation provides a potential way to address conflicts between national and global interests. Abdullaev & Teacher (2021) points out that in Central Asia, for example, countries have started collaborating more on issues like water management, security, and energy, which are vital to their shared economic and environmental future. Regional organizations can offer a middle ground, where countries can protect their national interests while also working together on specific regional concerns.

### **Climate Change and the Paris Agreement**

The Paris Agreement on Climate Change is a key case study in how national interests conflict with global cooperation. There is a strong scientific consensus that urgent action is needed to address climate change, yet countries often hesitate to commit to significant emissions reductions because of their economic interests. For instance, countries that rely heavily on fossil fuels, such as oil producers, are reluctant to transition to renewable energy, as this could harm their economic growth and job markets.

Developing nations, which have historically contributed less to greenhouse gas emissions, also argue that they should not be held to the same strict standards as developed nations. They feel it is unfair to ask them to curb their emissions when they need economic growth to lift their populations out of poverty. This creates a major obstacle in achieving the ambitious global targets needed to limit global warming. Even though the Paris Agreement allows countries to set their own targets, its voluntary nature makes it difficult to enforce, and countries can easily withdraw from their commitments, as seen when the U.S. withdrew under the Trump administration (though later rejoined under Biden).

### **Global Challenges Requiring Collective Action**

Beyond climate change, other global challenges, like terrorism, resource scarcity, and public health crises, further illustrate the need for balancing national interests with global cooperation. The COVID-19 pandemic is a prime example of how no country, no matter how powerful, can handle global crises alone. The pandemic exposed the limits of national responses and highlighted the need for collective security measures, such as international cooperation in vaccine distribution and public health protocols.

Scholars Beardsworth (2018), suggest redefining national interests to better align with global needs. For instance, instead of viewing climate change, terrorism, or pandemics as separate from national security, countries could integrate these issues into their national interest frameworks. Doing so would encourage greater participation in global governance initiatives, which often provide solutions to these shared challenges.

### **Environmental Governance and the Economy**

Another area where this tension is evident is environmental governance. Countries frequently prioritize short-term economic gains over long-term environmental protection. Major polluters, like some developed and developing countries, often resist international environmental agreements because they fear that stricter regulations will hurt their economies (Jan-Erik Lane, 2020). This resistance undermines global efforts to combat environmental degradation. Yet, some nations have managed to find ways to balance economic growth with environmental protection. Singapore, for example, has implemented policies that support both economic development and sustainability. This shows that reconciling national interests with global environmental goals is possible, though it requires careful planning and a long-term perspective.

The recurring tension between national interests and global cooperation poses significant challenges, but it is not insurmountable. As Bagwell & Staiger (2018) propose careful institutional design and redefining national interests to incorporate global challenges can help countries navigate these competing priorities. Multilateral cooperation remains a crucial tool for addressing global issues like climate change, public health, and economic inequality.

However, achieving these goals requires overcoming political obstacles, as nationalism and populism rise in many countries. Obstfeld (2021) notes that the erosion of the Bretton Woods system, which helped balance global market forces and domestic economic stability, has contributed to discontent with globalization. Restoring confidence in global institutions and designing frameworks that address both national and global concerns are essential steps toward a more balanced and cooperative international system.

### **The Impact of Nationalism and Protectionism**

The rise of economic nationalism and protectionism has been observed globally, affecting trade, foreign direct investment, and immigration policies (Bolle et al., 2019). This trend has surfaced in both advanced and emerging economies, often driven by political factors and economic crises (Patunru, 2018; Pryke, 2012). While some countries have raised tariffs and trade barriers, the overall impact on global trade has been limited (Kee et al., 2013). Nevertheless, this resurgence of nationalism poses challenges for supply chain management and multinational enterprises (Charpin, 2022). The populist surge has also influenced foreign policy, potentially complicating relationships with allies and trading partners (Carpenter, 2017). Despite these trends, the complexity and interdependence of the global economy make a complete reversal of trade unlikely (Pryke, 2012). The long-term consequences of economic nationalism remain debated, with potential impacts on resource allocation, economic growth, and international cooperation (Martín, 2021; Mayall, 1984).

The United States-China trade war is a clear example of growing economic nationalism and protectionism. Initiated in 2018 under the Trump administration, this conflict saw tariffs imposed on billions of dollars' worth of Chinese products, with China retaliating with its own tariffs. This trade war led to several significant consequences:

1. Heightened Trade Barriers: Both nations saw substantial increases in the cost of goods exchanged due to tariffs.
2. Supply Chain Disruptions: Global supply chains were disrupted, leading to higher prices for both consumers and businesses.
3. Impact on Global Trade: Although the overall effect on global trade was limited, the conflict contributed to a slowdown in global economic growth.
4. Challenges for Multinational Corporations: Companies operating between the U.S. and China faced uncertainty and disruption.
5. Tension in Bilateral Relations: The trade war exacerbated tensions between the two countries, increasing geopolitical strains.

This trade conflict highlights the complexities between national interests and global economic dynamics. While the U.S. aimed to address issues like intellectual property theft and trade imbalances, China sought to protect its economic interests against protectionist policies. The situation underscores the difficulty in maintaining a rules-based international trading system in the face of rising economic nationalism.

In recent years, nationalism and protectionism have increasingly challenged the liberal global order and multilateral cooperation (Finnemore, 2014; Fratzscher, 2020). This trend is marked by populist leaders promoting "country first" policies, skepticism towards global institutions, and anti-immigration rhetoric (van de Wijngaert et al., 2014). Ironically, countries with more nationalist consumers may still sustain liberal trade policies (Hadjiyiannis et al., 2022). However, protectionism often leads to higher unemployment, slower economic growth, and decreased trade, especially in low-income

countries (Martín, 2021). The rise of economic nationalism mirrors the pre-World War II era (Carpenter, 2017), partially attributed to the decline of the Bretton Woods system, which had reconciled market forces with domestic economic stability (Obstfeld, 2021). Current trends in economic nationalism and unilateralism pose challenges to global economic integration and could further escalate geopolitical tensions (MacIsaac & Duclos, 2020).

The impact of protectionism on globalization is complex. While globalization has fostered economic interdependence, it has not eliminated protectionist measures, which have evolved into non-tariff barriers (Kostoeva, 2024). Protectionism often emerges as a response to economic globalization, particularly during crises (Bussière et al., 2011; Scott, 2019). Despite the centrality of free trade to the international economic order, protectionist policies persist, creating a paradox for globalization (Demir & Seppli, 2017). The rise of "global protectionism" diverges from traditional forms and has potential implications for economic growth (Enderwick, 2011). Additionally, globalization influences support for cultural protectionism, both positively and negatively (Bekhuis et al., 2013). Historically, globalization has always challenged nationalism (Robertson, 2004) and recent events reflect the ongoing conflict between economic integration and domestic demands, underscoring the need for enhanced multilateral cooperation to balance globalization with public sentiment (Obstfeld, 2021).

Brexit, the United Kingdom's exit from the European Union, stands as a significant example of rising nationalism and protectionism. The 2016 Brexit referendum was fueled by nationalist sentiments, with a desire to regain control over the UK's economic and immigration policies. Brexit has had several important consequences:

1. **Increased Protectionism:** The UK has introduced tariffs on imports from the EU and other countries, raising costs for consumers and businesses.
2. **Trade Disruption:** Trade between the UK and the EU has been disrupted, leading to economic uncertainty and job losses.
3. **Weakened Multilateralism:** The UK's departure has weakened the EU's capacity to promote multilateral cooperation.
4. **Increased Geopolitical Tensions:** Relations between the UK and its European neighbors have been strained, heightening geopolitical tensions.

Brexit illustrates how nationalism and protectionism can significantly impact global politics. Though driven by domestic concerns, the decision to leave the EU has had far-reaching effects on the international order. It underscores the broader consequences of nationalist and protectionist policies, reminding policymakers of the importance of balancing national sovereignty with the benefits of international cooperation.

### **The Role of Technology**

The rapid advancement of digital technologies presents both challenges and opportunities for global governance in the 21st century. These technologies are reshaping traditional paradigms, demanding adaptable regulations and closer global collaboration (Alfarizi et al., 2024). While international organizations are crucial in addressing shared challenges, they face obstacles such as political polarization and resource constraints (Sinaga et al., 2024). The governance of emerging technologies is complex, as they have the potential to fundamentally alter human capabilities and societal structures (Allenby, 2011; Mordini, 2004). Despite the difficulties in managing technological innovation, it can contribute to solving global issues like climate change (Young, 2021). The information revolution has created an alternative universe that

challenges traditional concepts of territoriality and governance. This new landscape requires a deep understanding of the interplay between technical, political, economic, and social norms (Brousseau et al., 2012) as well as effective controls and partnerships across the public-private divide (Caparini & Gogolewska, 2021).

Contemporary global governance faces significant challenges due to digital technologies, including concerns about data privacy, security, and digital inequality. The rapid development of these technologies has shifted power dynamics among states, businesses, and individuals (Flyverbom et al., 2019; Hansen & Porter, 2017). Privacy protection now extends beyond legal and technological considerations to encompass complex political and policy dimensions (Bennett & Raab, 2017). The governance of digital technologies requires innovative approaches, such as Privacy Enhancing Technologies (PETs) and multistakeholder organizations (Lindsay, 2018; McCarthy & Fourniol, 2020). However, these technologies also carry risks, including the potential to exacerbate inequalities and perpetuate discrimination (Costas, 2022). The emergence of a new economic logic based on digital surveillance presents unprecedented governance challenges (Caparini & Gogolewska, 2021). Addressing these issues requires international cooperation, flexible policies, and a careful balance between innovation and regulation (Brousseau et al., 2012; Lindsay, 2018).

Artificial Intelligence (AI) is a prime example of rapidly advancing technology with transformative potential across sectors such as healthcare, transportation, and finance. However, the rapid development of AI also brings significant challenges, including job displacement, privacy concerns, and security risks. The automation of tasks through AI could lead to job losses in certain industries, exacerbating economic inequality and possibly causing social unrest. Additionally, AI-powered surveillance systems raise concerns about privacy and civil liberties, as they collect and analyze vast amounts of data. The emergence of autonomous weapons systems introduces ethical dilemmas and the risk of unintended consequences. Furthermore, if the benefits of AI are not distributed equitably, it could deepen existing economic disparities. Governance of AI presents a complex challenge requiring collaboration among governments, businesses, and civil society. Effective AI governance depends on the development of ethical guidelines and regulations to ensure responsible AI development and deployment. International cooperation is essential, with organizations such as the United Nations playing a pivotal role in establishing global standards and facilitating collaborative efforts to address both the opportunities and risks posed by AI.

### **The Need for Coordinated Global Responses**

Global governance is increasingly characterized by fragmentation, with a proliferation of diverse actors and institutions beyond traditional multilateral frameworks (Acharya, 2016; Zürn & Faude, 2013). This fragmentation presents both challenges and opportunities for addressing complex global issues (Biermann et al., 2009). While some argue that fragmentation may be inevitable and potentially creative (Acharya, 2016), others emphasize the need for coordination to enhance effectiveness (Bradford & Linn, 2007; Zürn & Faude, 2013). The network approach has emerged as a promising method to analyze the structure and dynamics of global governance systems (R. E. Kim, 2020). Current governance arrangements tend to favor flexibility, voluntary measures, and partnerships over rigid, binding rules (Jang et al., 2016). Key factors shaping the future of global governance include individual empowerment, human security concerns, institutional complexity, and power shifts (Jang et al., 2016). Research

on institutional fragmentation now focuses on taking stock, understanding causes and consequences, and developing responses in various environmental governance domains.

Global governance faces significant challenges in addressing contemporary international issues, particularly in reconciling national interests with global cooperation. The persistence of national interests often undermines efforts for coordinated global responses (Amoah, 2011). This is evident in the response to the COVID-19 pandemic, where nationalism and vaccine diplomacy have hindered equitable global distribution (Morales & Morales, 2022). The liberal international order is under strain, with debates about its potential dissipation. Obstacles to effective global governance include the difficulty in justifying its normative case and the bias towards powerful interests in international public goods provision (Ritschl, 2012). The alignment of national and global interests requires reconfiguring national sovereignty and security (Beardsworth, 2018). New coalitions and multi-stakeholder arrangements are emerging, challenging traditional intergovernmental organizations (Forman & Segaar, 2006). However, global governance remains poorly understood and ineffective in addressing critical issues like climate change (Martine & Alves, 2019).

The global governance landscape is evolving, with developing countries increasingly asserting their influence in international decision-making processes (Kaul, 2013). This shift necessitates a reevaluation of traditional dichotomies between developed and developing nations (Neuwirth, 2010) and calls for greater inclusion of developing countries in global governance structures (Ocampo, 2010). However, challenges persist, as civil society actors and developing nations often face disenfranchisement in global policy-making arenas. The rise of BRICS countries has significant implications for other developing nations and global governance (Nayyar, 2016), while the G20's emergence as a dominant global governance agency raises questions about the representation of excluded states (Payne, 2010). To address these challenges, developing countries must assume greater responsibilities in global negotiations (Llyod, 2012), and new approaches to technology policy and regulation are needed to ensure their interests are represented in the digital economy (Kira, 2020).

### **Opportunities for Positive Change**

Global governance institutions, established post-World War II, are increasingly inadequate for addressing contemporary challenges (Bradford & Linn, 2007). These institutions face issues of fragmentation, unrepresentativeness, and ineffectiveness, necessitating reform to reflect current economic and demographic realities (Bradford & Linn, 2007). International organizations play crucial roles in policy formulation, norm-setting, and conflict resolution, but face challenges like political polarization and resource constraints (Sinaga et al., 2024). Reform opportunities include promoting multilateralism, fostering partnerships with non-state actors, and harnessing digital technologies (Sinaga et al., 2024). However, political will for significant reforms is lacking (Bradlow, 2018). Proposals for improvement include reconstituting the G-8 to include emerging economies (Bradford & Linn, 2007), creating new institutions to address governance gaps (Nayyar, 2016), and extending principles of national governance to the international level (Lopez-Claros et al., 2020). A more rigorous conception of global governance is needed to understand its historical context and prescribe future directions (Weiss & Wilkinson, 2014).

Contemporary global governance faces numerous challenges, including political polarization, resource constraints, and institutional inefficiencies (Sinaga et al., 2024).

However, opportunities exist for positive change through promoting multilateralism and shared responsibility. International organizations play a crucial role in addressing global issues, but must adapt to remain effective (Forman & Segaar, 2006). The concept of shared responsibility offers potential solutions, but also risks diffusing accountability (Nollkaemper, 2018). Reforming the multilateral system is essential to address current realities, requiring participation from diverse stakeholders (Espinosa, 2023). Strategies for improvement include adopting adaptive management practices, enhancing staff diversity, and fostering complementarity between organizations (Singh & Woolcock, 2022). Global governance structures based on transparency, economic efficiency, and social justice are desirable (Khan, 2004). Despite challenges, multilateral cooperation remains crucial for addressing complex global issues and ensuring collective security and well-being (Reus-Smit, 1998).

Global governance plays a crucial role in addressing poverty and inequality, with a shift from neglecting these issues to prioritizing them in recent decades (Hulme & Krishnan, 2021). The 2008 financial crisis exposed deficiencies in global governance structures to protect the world's poorest (Wilkinson & Clapp, 2010). International organizations like the OECD are attempting to establish new global social governance architectures to tackle inequality (Deeming, 2021). The organization of the global economy around value chains contributes to socio-economic inequality through asymmetries of market, social, and political power. Local governance processes are essential for implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and addressing multidimensional poverty. Proposed solutions include creating a new UN agency to address economic inequality, establishing global regulatory frameworks for the private sector, and rethinking the global economic architecture. Alternative approaches emphasize multi-level, territorial strategies and the role of social movements in challenging dominant power structures (McKeon, 2017).

Global governance is evolving in the 21st century, driven by digital transformation and increased civil society involvement (Alfarizi et al., 2024). Civil society organizations (CSOs) have transitioned from observers to active participants in governance mechanisms, promoting global public goods (Popovski, 2021). The engagement of civil society with governance institutions can lead to positive outcomes, as demonstrated by the East Timorese self-determination campaign (Smith & Muetzelfeldt, 2000). However, global governance faces legitimacy deficits, which civil society can help address through increased engagement and improved quality of interactions (Scholte, 2011). The role of civil society in governance has shifted towards co-governance and co-creation processes (Torfing & Ansell, 2017). Technology plays a crucial role in enhancing accessibility and participation in global governance, particularly for marginalized groups like the disability community (Trevisan, 2019). While civil society can contribute to democracy in global governance, it can also potentially undermine it (Scholte, 2011).

## **CONCLUSIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS, AND LIMITATIONS**

This study has critically examined the evolving dynamics of contemporary global governance, highlighting the enduring tension between national interests and the imperatives of international cooperation. Drawing upon realism, liberalism, and constructivism, the research has illuminated how state-centric priorities, protectionism, and rising nationalism continue to challenge multilateral institutions and norms. Meanwhile, non-state actors and emerging coalitions offer pathways toward more inclusive, flexible, and adaptive governance.

The analysis also incorporated Indonesia's national security complexities—ranging from separatist movements and terrorism to maritime challenges and external geopolitical pressures demonstrating how global governance intersects with domestic stability and defense reform. These challenges affirm the need for ethical, participatory, and strategic governance frameworks that reconcile sovereignty with collaborative global responsibilities. As fragmentation and digital transformation reshape institutional architecture, the urgency to reimagine governance systems grounded in legitimacy, transparency, and shared responsibility has never been greater.

Recommendation is to strengthen global governance and address emerging systemic risks. This study recommends a multifaceted approach rooted in institutional reform, normative recalibration, and inclusive participation. First and foremost, revitalizing key global institutions such as the United Nations and the World Trade Organization is essential to ensure their structural responsiveness, representational fairness, and functional capacity in light of shifting global power dynamics. Enhancing their legitimacy involves acknowledging the growing influence of developing nations and incorporating their voices into governance processes.

A fundamental step in this reform process requires a reconfiguration of national interest frameworks. States are encouraged to transcend narrow, sovereignty-centered conceptions of self-interest and instead adopt more integrative perspectives that align domestic priorities with global public goods, ecological sustainability, and transboundary security imperatives. This realignment fosters greater synergy between national policy objectives and international collaborative efforts. In tandem, the promotion of multistakeholder engagement becomes indispensable. Effective global governance must be participatory and inclusive, embedding the perspectives of civil society organizations, indigenous communities, academic institutions, and the private sector in the design and implementation of policy. By democratizing governance spaces, such pluralistic engagement enhances legitimacy, innovation, and equity. Equally pressing is the need to establish ethical and collaborative international regulatory frameworks for emerging technologies. The accelerating proliferation of artificial intelligence, digital surveillance, and data infrastructures requires transnational coordination to safeguard privacy, reduce inequalities, and uphold human rights in the digital era. These technologies carry both transformative potential and significant governance challenges that must be addressed holistically.

In the Indonesian context, improving national security governance demands targeted reforms. Institutional accountability within the defense sector must be strengthened through enhanced civil-military relations, increased legislative oversight of budgetary decisions, and the modernization of maritime defense capabilities, especially in light of regional geopolitical pressures and strategic vulnerabilities. These steps are vital for bolstering Indonesia's credibility in global governance forums while ensuring domestic stability.

Lastly, innovation in policy design for non-traditional threats such as terrorism, natural disasters, and transnational crimes is imperative. Indonesia must continue to develop integrated national security strategies that reinforce resilience and responsiveness, combining preventive approaches with adaptive crisis management. Despite providing a comprehensive theoretical and contextual overview of contemporary global governance, this limitation of the study is inherently constrained by its qualitative descriptive design. The analytical framework relies heavily on literature review and conceptual synthesis, which, while rich in interpretive depth, does not include empirical

data or field-based validation. As a result, the absence of comparative case studies limits the ability to substantiate policy implications through direct observation or stakeholder engagement. Furthermore, although the research offers a detailed examination of Indonesia's security and governance landscape, the findings may not be fully applicable to other geopolitical or cultural contexts. Variations in institutional structures, regional dynamics, and political cultures could lead to divergent outcomes if similar governance strategies were applied elsewhere. These limitations suggest that future research would benefit from incorporating mixed-method approaches, cross-national comparisons, and fieldwork to enrich the empirical grounding and enhance the generalizability of insights.

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