

## GLOBAL INSIGHTS

# The John Holmes Memorial Lecture: Global Governance in a Copernican World



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FOR ALL THE DIPPING POLITICAL SCIENCE DOES INTO SUCH DISCIPLINES AS economics, physics, and sociology for our theory and metaphors, it is (as Carl Sagan no doubt would have agreed) astronomy that provides the best conceptualization of the twenty-first-century international system. The Cold War system of the second half of the twentieth century was a lot like the ancient philosopher-astronomer Ptolemy's theory of the universe. For Ptolemy, the earth was at the center with the other planets, indeed all the other celestial bodies, revolving around it. And so too was the United States at the center of the Cold War world. It was the wielder of power, the economic engine, the bastion of free world ideology. When the Cold War ended with the demise and defeat of the Soviet Union, US centrality seemed even more defining; it was the sole surviving superpower. The US economy was driving globalization. Democracy was spreading all over. The world seemed even more Ptolemaic.

Not anymore. The twenty-first-century world is more like the theory of the universe developed in the early sixteenth century by the Polish astronomer-cosmologist Nicolaus Copernicus, who posited that the earth was not at the center, that the sun was, and that the earth had its own orbit around the sun, and other planets had their own orbits around the sun not the earth. So too in the twenty-first century, the United States is not at the center. It has its own orbit. Other planets (countries) also have their own sources of influence, their own national interests, their own identities, and their own domestic politics. This Copernican world is evident geopolitically with other powers rising (China), recovering (Russia), seeking to reinvigorate (European Union), emerging (e.g., India, Brazil, and Turkey), and engendering their own revolutions (e.g., Tunisia and Egypt). It is evident economically with globalization having what the United States' own National Intelligence Council assessed as a "less of a 'Made in the USA' character." It is evident ideologically amidst what my colleague Steve Weber and I have called the "global marketplace of ideas." It is evident culturally as with the comment by a New York art dealer after an auction dominated by newly moneyed non-Western collectors that "for the first time in nearly two hundred years the Western world doesn't make the decisions about our future."<sup>1</sup>

What is less clear, though, is what the sun is in our version of a Copernican world, keeping planets (countries) from crashing into each other. It is not the United Nations: it helps, but only partially. It is not just having a more multilateralist president of the United States. Indeed, the “what is the sun” question is fundamental to global governance.

This article, drawn from my 2011 John W. Holmes Memorial Lecture at the annual meeting of the Academic Council of the United Nations System, has two main objectives: develop this Copernican model theoretically and draw out some of its principal policy implications from a global governance perspective.

### **Theoretical Bases of the Copernican World**

The Copernican world model has three comparative theoretical advantages. First, it picks up on the diffusion and dilution of power that realists underestimate and that makes the twenty-first-century international system less than hegemony, whether of the persistent US version or the prospective Chinese one. Second, it gets at the greater contestation of systemic ordering principles than liberal institutionalist theories acknowledge. Third, it brings the state back in, checking against too-exclusive focuses on global architecture and other systemic-level factors in ways consistent with the crucial role states still must play in the multidimensionality of global governance.

#### *Diffusion and Dilution of Power*

One of the most seductive deceptions of the George W. Bush years was that, once he was gone, the United States would regain its global reputation and place of leadership and all would be well. But the world was changing in many ways that would have been in play even if there had not been a George W. Bush presidency—and have continued even though Barack Obama is now president. Deep systemic forces have been causing power to be both diffused (spreading to many more actors) and diluted (traditional sources becoming less potent).

Consider the paradox of reputation. As much as neoconservatives in the United States tried to deride concerns about the damages that the Iraq War and other aspects of the Bush foreign policy did to the country’s global reputation as liberal feel-goodism, there were quite tangible foreign policy impacts (e.g., domestic political opposition in Turkey and India that constrained military cooperation on the Iraq War). But while the Obama administration has been strategic instead of sentimental in seeing how reputation restoration would reduce this basis for opposition to US policies, it has overestimated the support-inducing effect of more favorable dispositions toward the United States. President Obama is loved in Europe, but NATO troop commitments to Afghanistan did not increase very much. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton

strikes great rapport with town hall meetings in almost every country she visits, but often comes back with policy “asks” not met by host governments. The paradox is in its being more the case that negative reputation leads to noncooperation than positive reputation makes for cooperation.<sup>2</sup>

Power diffusion is especially evident in the eastward and southward shifts in economic dynamism. You can choose your data about China and its larger and larger global economic role. But it is not just China. As Jeffrey Immelt, General Electric’s chief executive officer and now chair of the White House economic competitiveness advisory panel, acknowledges, “The billion people joining the middle class in Asia”—not US consumers—“are the engines driving global growth.”<sup>3</sup> And it is not just Asia. The largest initial public offering in 2009 was in Brazil. Brazilian companies are now the world’s second largest mining and meat-producing companies, and the Acu Superport currently under construction in Brazil is one and one-half times the size of Manhattan Island. By 2015 Dubai International Airport is projected to overtake London Heathrow Airport as the busiest for passenger traffic with over 75 million passengers per year. Overall, emerging economies have been accounting for about 60 percent of global growth the past few years, up from about 25 percent a decade ago. The International Energy Agency projects that more than 90 percent of growth in world oil demand will come from countries that are not members of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development. In 2010, emerging-market firms accounted for one-third of the world’s \$2.4 trillion in mergers and acquisitions. All told, whereas in 1950 US–Canada–Western Europe accounted for 68 percent of global gross domestic product, projections are for less than 30 percent by 2050.

Neither does the United States have the diplomatic stage as much to itself anymore. While it still takes on lead diplomatic roles more often than anyone else, there has been a “pluralization of diplomacy.” One aspect of this is that there are more states with more relations with one another on a wider range of issues than ever before. Brazil added almost forty embassies over the past decade. Turkey and Russia held their own heads of state meeting on energy cooperation and broader global partnership issues on the margins of the 2010 Group of 20 (G-20) summit. Indian prime minister Manmohan Singh’s 2010 visit to Saudi Arabia was the first by an Indian prime minister since Indira Gandhi in 1982. Various Gulf Cooperation Council countries have enhanced their relations with Russia. The China–Japan–South Korea trilateral meetings have expanded their agendas. The emergence of new diplomatic brokers is another aspect: states are playing third-party roles such as Qatar in Lebanon and Darfur, Brazil in some South American conflicts, and Turkey in the Middle East. When it comes to the Israeli–Palestinian conflict, the United States will continue to have a role, but without the Camp David exclusivity of years past.

There also are more claimants to soft power. The Turkish Islamist democracy model, while not without its own internal tensions, is admired by many.

Lifting 30 million people out of poverty has made Brazil “a laboratory and model for globalization with a social conscience.”<sup>4</sup> Scandinavian social democracy is being seen as getting a lot more right than others, as in Denmark’s designation by *Forbes* magazine as the best country in which to do business. Meanwhile US soft power is not as robust as the country’s exceptionalists like to claim. Electing an African American, Barack Obama, to the presidency was seen by many around the world as a validation of the core claims of equal opportunity and acceptance of diversity. But anti-immigration sentiment against Hispanics and increasing tensions with Muslim Americans cut in the other direction. And while the US political system still stands out as a guarantor of individual freedoms, its policy capacity is hardly a model. In which areas of public policy is the United States a world leader these days: health care, or public education, or infrastructure? It closes museums while others build them. Even its vaunted Horatio Alger social mobility lags, not leads, most other industrial democracies.<sup>5</sup>

While military power has been less diffused—the United States still has ample superiority over any other state or potential coalition—it is being diluted in two respects. The first is that the military balance is much less central to overall systemic structure than during the strategic nuclear deterrence of the Cold War era. It bears heavily on some issues such as regional security in the Asia Pacific and the Gulf. But in a world in which there is much less of a shared and overarching threat, the currency of military power is less convertible to other forms of power and influence than when such threats were more defining. Second is the capabilities-utility gap between military superiority as traditionally measured and the utility of that superiority for achieving strategic objectives given the prevalence of asymmetric warfare. Examples include not only the United States in Iraq and Afghanistan, but others such as the 2006 Israel-Lebanon war and the 2006–2008 Ethiopian intervention in Somalia, in neither of which did military superiority suffice for achieving strategic objectives.

In sum, if we are true to the definition of hegemony—“the position of being the strongest and most powerful and *therefore able to control others*”—the United States is no longer a hegemonic power.<sup>6</sup> On what major issues is the United States able to control others? In Afghanistan, it has had a devil of a time with Hamid Karzai and Pakistan. And what about Israel and its position on peace talks, Saudi Arabia and flexibility on the Arab Peace Initiative? The G-20 and US preferred positions on trade balance targets and China currency revaluation? Climate change and the Copenhagen imbroglio? While the United States still has greater relative power, absolutely and relatively, than any other single actor—“the largest minority shareholder in Global Order LLC,” as Bruce D. Jones puts it—this is well short of hegemony.<sup>7</sup>

What about China? Can it achieve hegemony akin to prior power transitions? Its military is growing. The world has never seen as large an economy growing at this fast a pace for so many years. It is influential on almost every major global issue—North Korea, Iran, finance, trade, India-Pakistan, African

development, and climate change. But even assuming that it aspires to hegemony, an assessment on which China experts disagree, comparable systemic dynamics of power diffusion and other hallmarks of a Copernican world make Chinese hegemony highly unlikely.<sup>8</sup>

The year 2010 was instructive in this regard. After two decades of generally cooperative Asian regional policies, China did much more regional muscle flexing, including assertive moves in the East China Sea and South China Sea, defending North Korea despite its provocations, export limits on rare earth minerals, and border disputes with India. These moves spurred counter-moves from a range of neighbors, not just long-standing US allies Japan and South Korea but also Indonesia and Vietnam, setting up an almost classic balancing situation for the United States. Globally, China's threats to punish states that attended the 2010 Nobel Peace Prize ceremony for human rights activist and political prisoner Liu Xiaobo were largely dismissed as petulant. And its business-is-business approach has been inciting resistance in Africa, Latin America, and elsewhere over labor, environmental, and other issues. For example, opposition to Chinese investment was the key issue in Zambia's September 2011 presidential election with Michael Sata riding this issue to a victory that ousted an incumbent party that had been in power for twenty years. Peaceful rise is one thing; assertive dominance quite another.

Even a regional power like Brazil has been running into push backs from neighbors. In the Union of South American Nations, the US-less subregional organization for which Brazil has been a moving force, fellow members have been supportive of the assertion of South American pride and capacity while also being concerned that Brazil not become too dominant within it. So also have major Brazilian-financed projects in Argentina, Peru, Ecuador, Guayana, and especially Bolivia been stalled or derailed by opposition based on a mix of specifics of the deals (e.g., environmental damage or not hiring locals) and overarching concerns about Brazilian aspirations for regional hegemony.<sup>9</sup>

In sum, there no longer is hegemony and there is not going to be for the foreseeable future. It is not the answer, whether desired or feared, to twenty-first-century global governance.

### *Liberal Institutionalism Contested*

The ordering principles of the post-World War II order are being contested to a much greater extent than liberal institutionalists acknowledge.<sup>10</sup> In the following, I discuss three points along these lines: twenty-first-century nationalism, viability of the Bretton Woods system, and attractiveness of the liberal democracy model.

*Twenty-first-century nationalism.* While not as aggressive or antagonistic as in other eras, twenty-first-century nationalism is quite assertive of national interests and identities. Some, such as Gideon Rachman, see transnational problems feeding competition and rivalry more than facilitating cooperation,

leading to a zero-sum more than a win-win world.<sup>11</sup> While I do not go this far, I do agree with questioning liberal internationalism's positing of major threats as largely global public-goods ones and cooperation as principally a collective-action problem. This confuses the aspirational with the actual in three respects: state interests are more divergent than asserted; even when interests are shared, prioritizations vary among states; and even when interests are shared and priorities are in synch, there often are significant substantive differences over strategy. As to global public goods, I spend much of my Globalization and Governance graduate course, with students for whom public goods is almost a catechism, bringing out the gap between the ought and the is, how many of the issues that by their nature should be treated as global public goods but are not yet treated as such.

*Viability of the Bretton Woods system.* The Doha Round is deadlocked limping into its second decade, the issues more complex and difficult than as cast in the standard free trade–protectionism dichotomy. The international financial system has had two huge global crises within four years, the first emanating from one of the ostensible paragons (the United States) and the second from the other (Europe). There is no question that the G-20's role in the 2008–2009 global financial crisis exemplified the kind of cooperation that the liberal order can produce. But this was a “fellowship of the lifeboat” that ensuing G-20 summits have made look more like the exception than the rule. Both scaling up and generalizability of the G-20 are questionable. Moreover, while the dollar is not going to be replaced, it is not going to retain its quasi-monopoly position. Brazil, Russia, India, and China (BRIC), now the BRICS with South Africa added, are pushing increasingly hard on these issues. As stated at the 2011 BRICS summit, “Recognizing that the international financial crisis has exposed the inadequacies and deficiencies of the existing international monetary and financial system, we support the reform and improvement of the international monetary system, with a broad-based international reserve currency system providing stability and certainty.”<sup>12</sup> Whether this transition is stabilizing or destabilizing is its own question: the point here is trend lines toward systemic change. Can we really be that confident that the Bretton Woods system, a liberal internationalist pillar, remains viable?

Indeed the fundamental state-market balance, which by Bretton Woods rules and norms and according to the prevalent modernization-development model limited the former and maximized the latter, is being challenged. The crucial challenge is not from neoprotectionism, or neomercantilism, or authoritarian capitalism: these are too dichotomous to capture the current debate and practices. It is more about “purposive state intervention to guide market development and national corporate growth,” both internationally (e.g., in currency markets) and as more sophisticated versions of the “developmental state.”<sup>13</sup> Given whose economies are growing faster, whose financial sector

plunged the world into crises, and where some of the dynamic innovation is (e.g., green technology), it is not hard to understand the appeal of such alternative models.

*Attractiveness of the liberal democracy model.* The end of history and other prognostications of a democratic century are increasingly questionable. Whereas in the late 1990s the European Union's position on human rights issues in the UN General Assembly was supported over 70 percent of the time, by 2008–2009 its support was down to 50 percent.<sup>14</sup> Or let us take the heralded color revolutions of the 2000s: the bloom is off the Georgian rose, the peel off the Ukrainian orange—and, to indulge further, the cedars felled in Lebanon. Similarly state building in postconflict societies is proving to be best as “hybrid” models that “rely on local customs, politics and practices” that may take time to move toward democracy, or not.<sup>15</sup> As to the Arab Spring, we know that it was antiauthoritarian; whether it will be prodemocracy remains to be seen. To the extent that it is, it may not be the Western liberal version but one drawn in its own Copernican ways from its own history, religion, culture, and prevalent socioeconomic challenges.

### *The State Is Dead, Long Live the State*

For all the focus on the international institutional architecture of global governance, the nation-state remains the central unit of twenty-first-century order. The global governance agenda is full enough and difficult enough even if states are effective in their territorial domains and policy roles. When they are not, whether as failed or failing states or states that use their power and position to externalize their own costs and problems of adjustment, multilateral institutions are that much more burdened and undermined. It is in this sense that, as important as cooperation at the international level is, the nation-state remains the central unit of twenty-first-century order. It is where resources are most concentrated. It is where primary identities still lie. For these and other reasons the state needs to live long, live well, and live effectively, providing the state-level capacity necessary not only for domestic stability but also for global order.

Instead, though, the state has been the principal locus of twenty-first-century disorder. During the Cold War much of global instability was “outside in” (i.e., the internalization into states with their own tensions and conflicts of the US-Soviet global rivalry). The twenty-first-century dynamic is more an “inside out” one of the increased susceptibility of the international community to threats and other disruptions that emanate outward from inside states. Thus, while it may be true that “what happens in Vegas stays in Vegas” as the tagline of a recent US commercial had it, what happens inside states does not stay inside states. This pertains, for example, to popular uprisings against repressive governments that transmit to other countries and scramble regional geopoliti-



tics; failed states that become safe havens for terrorist groups with global operations; mass atrocities that cause refugee flows across borders, which then feed into neighbors' ethnic and other conflicts; inadequate public health capacity to prevent disease outbreaks from becoming pandemics; financial bubbles that are created domestically, but burst globally; and carbon emissions that spew forth to warp the climate globally. This Vegas dilemma is posed by the domestic locus with transnational effects of so many twenty-first-century threats.

This has put conceptions of state sovereignty and the balance between rights and responsibilities at the center of global governance. The classical Westphalian conception of "the complete autonomy of the state to act as it chooses," has been less absolute and fixed than often claimed and more functionalist and relative.<sup>16</sup> Even going back to the seventeenth century, works by Hendrik Spruyt and others show that there were competitors to the sovereign state, and that it prevailed less because of any inherent normative superiority than because it better served the political interests and economic and social conditions of the day.<sup>17</sup> With regard to the 1945–1990 period, many point to Article 2(7) of the UN Charter as the embodiment of sovereignty as rights: "Nothing contained in the present Charter shall authorize the United Nations to intervene in matters which are essentially within the domestic jurisdiction of any state." To the extent that this was true, it was because of the functionality of the sovereignty as rights interpretation in the context of decolonization and superpower interventionism.<sup>18</sup> The affirmation of the rights of states thus was viewed as largely consistent with the rights of the individuals within those states to self-determination and to live free from external repression or worse.

Yet even during that period, there was a degree of relativity. The UN Charter, as then Secretary-General Kofi Annan stressed, "was issued in the name of 'the peoples,' not the governments of the United Nations. . . . The Charter protects the sovereignty of peoples. It was never meant as a license for governments to trample on human rights and human dignity. Sovereignty implies responsibility, not just power." Even Article 2(7) needs to be qualified, according to Annan, with "the important rider that this principle shall not prejudice the application of enforcement measures under Chapter VII. In other words, even national sovereignty can be set aside if it stands in the way of the Security Council's overriding duty to preserve international peace and security."<sup>19</sup> What we get here is consistency in the functionality criteria that are now working against sovereignty as rights-strict constructionism and for sovereignty as responsibility in two senses: outward responsibility to others in the international community significantly affected by what happens inside the state, and inward responsibility to fundamental rights of its own peoples. Striking this rights-responsibilities balance may well be the single most crucial challenge that we face.

This, then, is the Copernican world: power diffused and diluted more than realists portray, post–World War II norms and institutions more contested than



liberal internationalists acknowledge, and the nation-state still more central than most theories of global governance convey. I pose it as a framework, not a new-ism: its value is its “analytic eclecticism” bringing together elements of paradigms too often treated as strictly competing.<sup>20</sup>

What, then, are the policy challenges? How do we achieve global governance in a Copernican world?

### **Policy Challenges**

Clearly, our Copernican world does not have a single source of global governance equivalent to the solar system’s sun. Then, again, the sun itself is a collection of gas and other matter not a single object. My focus here is on three key components of global governance: the US role, a strengthened norm of global responsibility, and the need for capable states.

#### *The US Role of Modulating the Leadership Trope*

The United States as “the leader,” while still the bipartisan trope of choice in US politics, is much too Ptolemaic for a Copernican world.<sup>21</sup> While it remains generally true that most countries believe that global problems are most likely to be resolved or at least effectively managed if the United States plays a constructive role, there is much less deference to US preferences and privileges—and much less buying into “there is no alternative” (TINA) and much more inclination to “there must be an alternative” (THEMBA).

It is difficult to crisply conceptualize such a more-than-this, less-than-that, US role. There is no clear historical precedent in prior international systems, no evidently applicable analogy from leadership in business or other sectors, or even an insightful metaphor. While not cogent imagery, it can be expressed analytically in terms of optimization rather than maximization; that is, less emphasis on the expansiveness of the US role and the extent of control the US maintains over institutions, processes, and relationships than on the effectiveness of those institutions, processes, and relationships for the provision of global governance. Optimization is less about making sure that one runs things than that things get done. It recognizes that whether because of historical relationships, priorities of interests, factor endowments, issue area specializations, or other factors, different states and different international organizations have different comparative advantages for taking the lead on different issues. It requires a conception of the national interest that is more flexible than fixed in its preference ordering, holding to redlines but open to options that, while not always first order, optimize compared to other likely outcomes. It also requires a national self-concept that has plenty of room for national pride, but acknowledges that the United States is not the font of all wisdom or the exemplar of all policy effectiveness.

With regard to the UN and other multilateral institutions, the long-standing tension in US policy between prerogative encroachment and policy enhance-

ment—that is, does multilateralism enhance US capacity to achieve policy goals more than the constraints on freedom of action and other impediments encroach US prerogatives?—needs to be resolved on the policy enhancement side.<sup>22</sup> To be sure, John Bolton-type views aside, many international institutions often have inefficiencies and other “pathologies.”<sup>23</sup> But the nature of the era is such that there is much more to be gained from enhancing international institutional capacities than is lost from limits on unilateral prerogatives. A key part of this is being even more proactive in opening up the leadership of international institutions to greater twenty-first-century representativeness. This is going to happen anyway; it therefore is strategic to be a part of making it happen, get some of the credit, and have some shaping effect. Support for the shift from the Group of 8 to the G-20 and the announcement of support for a permanent Security Council seat for India have both played out this way. So push before being pushed on the World Bank presidency (an opportunity for which, as of this writing, appears to have been missed), on a Brazilian Security Council seat, and on other such issues.

The United States also needs to get better at forging partnerships and not just talking about them, engaging in the give and take of hammering out genuine collaboration rather than just saying, “Follow our lead.” Call it a “sweet-spot partnership strategy” as a diplomatic analogy to the COIN counterinsurgency warfare doctrine. A key factor in the degree of success that COIN had in the Iraq surge was the shift in approach, from going in and imposing its sense of what was right and in the Sunnis’ interests to assessing the stakes and developing a strategy more attuned to the perspectives of those with whom it sought to work.<sup>24</sup> A sweet-spot strategy that takes account of differences in priorities and perspectives as well as personalities and politics seems applicable to partnership diplomacy as well, so we do less talking past each other and get a better shot at finding common ground around a position of core shared interests. Among other things, this recognizes that for states long confined to senior-junior relationships with the United States there are crucial elements of identity in the tone as well as the terms of twenty-first-century partnerships.

What this modulated leadership strategy lacks in rhetorical resonance, it makes up for in savvy and shrewdness. It remains true that few international problems can be met without the United States playing a significant role. But how it plays that role—when it pushes, when it persuades, when it recognizes that not all the best ideas are made in Washington, DC—should be based more on what solves problems rather than what sounds rhapsodic.

### *The Norm of Global Responsibility*

Much important work is being done on international institutions. Structure, membership, mission, and other institutional design issues have to be gotten right. Ultimately, though, making collective action less aspirational and more actual and closing the ought/is gap in global public goods rests on a conception of global responsibility that strengthens the rationale for all states to pur-

sue internationally shared not just nationally centric interests. Global responsibility is not altruism; the formulation is more than, not instead of. But it is a sense that states need to do more than just push narrow, competitive, and often zero-sum national interests. It comes back to the interconnectedness of this global era and the reality that states, even the most powerful, require cooperation with others to achieve their national interests. My first-order preference may be my own national interest. But if I am inherently unlikely to be able to achieve that, my preference shifts to a definition of my national interest that is more shared with the national interests of other states, which also cannot achieve their first-order preferences on their own.

To be sure, the very definition of global responsibility is highly contested normatively. Who defines it, on what terms, through which processes, and with what accountability? On these and other such questions, balances must be struck that provide the mutuality necessary for international cooperation. I provide two examples below: historical justice and Common but Differentiated Responsibility (CDR), and state sovereignty and the Responsibility to Protect (R2P).

*Historical justice and Common but Differentiated Responsibility.* However the differentiation is made—developed/developing, center/periphery, colonials/colonies, first world/third world, superpower/small power—questions of who benefited how much from past international systems comes into play in determining current responsibilities. The norm of CDR, affirming that all states share responsibility for addressing present problems but with respective shares varying based on each state's contribution to the problem and relative capacity to contribute to amelioration, has had some success in addressing historical legacies in global environmental policy. The 1987 Montreal Protocol on Ozone Depletion applied CDR to require differentiated cost-bearing and remedial action based on who bore the greatest responsibility for the existence of the problem and reaped the greatest benefits from atmospheric damage being a production externality. It also requires all states to bear some costs and be in compliance with nondepletion regulations going forward in the name of the common responsibility of averting a future crisis. On global warming and climate change, however, even though CDR was inscribed in the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change and the Kyoto Protocol, it has not worked as well. How differentiated the responsibility should be, as set in actual costs and tasks, has been both more substantively complicated and more politically contentious. Yet for all the disagreement, the question remains one of how to set CDR terms not whether the norm should apply.

CDR also has potential applicability as a basis for establishing mutuality in other policy areas. The global environment is far from the only policy area carrying issues of historical justice. Others include long-standing North-South disputes over technology transfer, poverty alleviation, and global health priorities. It is worth thinking about these and other issues.

*State sovereignty and the Responsibility to Protect.* The rights-responsibilities balance in state sovereignty comes through especially strongly in R2P. First developed in 2000–2001 in the wake of Bosnia, Rwanda, and Kosovo by the International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty (ICISS), R2P affirms that governments and any other group within states have a responsibility not to commit atrocities against their own people.<sup>25</sup> When they fundamentally violate that responsibility, the international community has its responsibility to protect endangered peoples, including but not exclusively and especially not primarily through military intervention. Gareth Evans, who has played a lead role in the intellectual development as well as the policy application and political support building, stresses that R2P is about the full range of strategies (diplomatic, economic, social, governance, and legal) and across the conflict cycle starting with prevention and continuing through postconflict reconstruction. Evans also stresses avoiding too broad a scope, “R2P being stretched to deal with all the world’s ills,” keeping it focused on genocide and other mass atrocities.<sup>26</sup> While leaving some moral dilemma about other grave problems, this is both pragmatic in prioritizing the most heinous crimes against humanity and strategic in the sense that, if R2P can be made to work, it could have a demonstration effect for other domains in striking a balance between where the sovereign rights of states end and their responsibilities, whether inward or outward, begin.

While well short of ensconced, R2P has been gaining ground. At the UN it was accepted in principle, albeit with some damping down at the 2005 World Summit, and with some further strengthening in the years since, both generally and as manifested in the March 2011 Security Council resolution on Libya. The Obama administration broadly affirmed it first in its 2010 National Security Strategy and then in the State Department’s Quadrennial Diplomacy and Development Review, following on with measures within the department and on an interagency basis (Presidential Study Directive–10, or PSD-10) to create greater capacity and overall higher priority.<sup>27</sup> While far from an enthusiastic endorser, China has had more mixed and nuanced positions than often ascribed.<sup>28</sup> Some states still stick to a sovereignty-strict constructionism, some even more post-Libya in response to what they see as the overly broad US-NATO interpretation and application. While acknowledging historical context and ongoing concerns about big power discretionary interventionism, we come back to the ICISS report’s warning that “what is at stake here is not making the world safe for big powers, or trampling over the sovereign rights of small ones, but delivering practical protection for ordinary people at risk of their lives, because their states are unwilling to protect them.”<sup>29</sup>

### *Capable States: Internal Legitimacy and Policy Capacity*

How will states live long and live well, and be the capable states we need them to be, not only for the interests of their own peoples but also as crucial layer in global governance? Two criteria define a *capable state*. It has internal le-

gitimacy in the eyes of its own people and it has the policy capacity to deliver on the crucial challenges its national society faces.

This conception of capable states is both less than and more than democracy. It is less than democracy in allowing for the possibility that a people may deem its political system and government legitimate even if it is not based on elections. This does not include peoples cowed into submission. But it does acknowledge that for countries with mass poverty, endemic injustice, and other pressing human needs—that is to say, much of the world today—people are looking not just to be protected *from* government, but also to be protected *by* government. That never has and never will justify repressiveness, but it does recognize that in many societies political legitimacy is a function of performance not just process. Bruce J. Dickson makes a similar point about China that, contrary to the “conventional wisdom . . . that there *should* be support for democracy in China, given the litany of problems we see in the popular media . . . more often, however, these protests are aimed at making the state govern better, not govern differently.”<sup>30</sup> If it cannot govern better—and there are increasing protests over inequality, environmental degradation, product safety, transportation safety, taxes, and other issues—it will lose its claim to performance-based legitimacy. The only certainty about the Arab Spring is that democracy will not spring forth like Athena from Zeus’s head. Mixed models may develop that establish claims to legitimacy that the likes of Hosni Mubarak and Zine El Abidine Ben Ali lacked, but may not fit classical democratic models. Or an Arab Winter may follow the Arab Spring.

Capable states entail more than democracy in going beyond the input side—elections, legislative processes, and lawmaking—to policy outputs. While the strengths of liberal democracies in protecting civil liberties and individual rights remain unrivaled, their policy capacity to deliver on the crucial problems that their societies face is increasingly being questioned. The special interest-ism of the US model, which runs deeper than partisanship to such systemic structural issues as divided power and interest group capture, has brought worrisome policy paralysis.<sup>31</sup> Much of the European Union is the welfare state gone amok. Four of Japan’s last five prime ministers have remained in office barely or even less than a year. Even keeping historical perspective and trying not to overreact to current problems, there is serious questioning about whether the stresses we are seeing in the social compacts underpinning so many advanced industrial societies are just marginally worse than those witnessed a few decades ago or whether they may be more fundamental—with Vegas dilemma consequences not only for their own people but globally as domestic policy failures are externalized, intentionally or unintentionally.

## Conclusion

The need for global governance is not an if question. It is a how question. This requires assessing the world as it is, not how it was. The Copernican world

metaphor is an effort to capture the structure and dynamics in ways with both theoretical value and policy applicability. 🌐

## Notes

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29. ICISS, *Responsibility to Protect*, p. 11.

30. Bruce J. Dickson, "Updating the China Model," *Washington Quarterly* 34, no. 4 (Fall 2011), p. 53.

31. This goes back to James Madison's Federalist No. 10 warning about the danger of "factions": a "minority of the whole, who are united and actuated by some common impulse of passion, or of interest, adverse to the rights of other citizens, or to the permanent and aggregate interests of the community." What would Madison think if he heard about K Street or if he read *Politico*? See also Theodore J. Lowi, *The End of Liberalism: The Second Republic of the United States* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1979); Mancur Olson, *The Rise and Decline of Nations: Economic Growth, Stagflation and Social Rigidities* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1982).