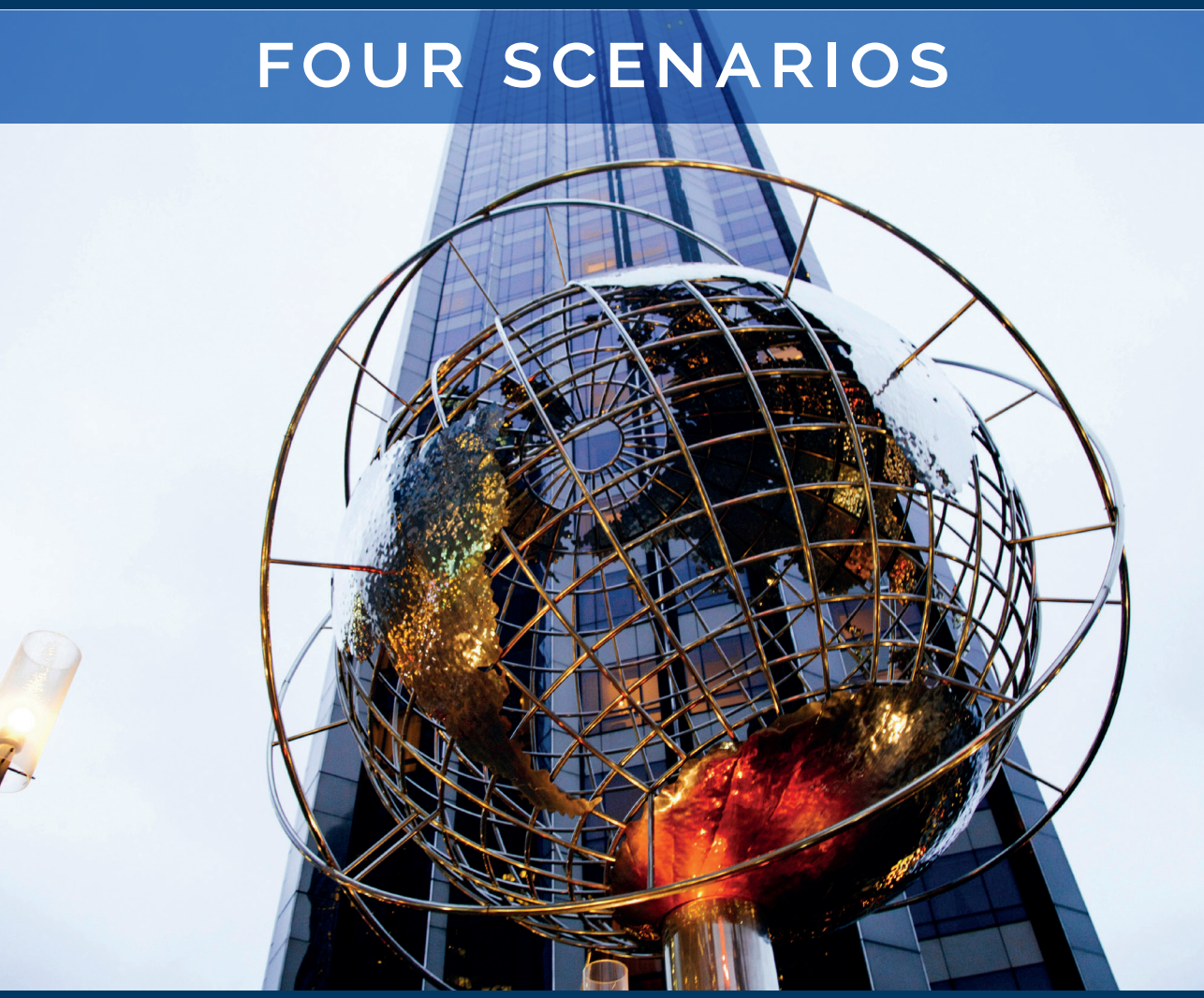
The Great Powers and the Survival of the Liberal International Order

FOUR SCENARIOS



Ayabulela Dlakavu

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ITUTA

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Ayabulela Dlakavu

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Research justification

The Liberal International Order (LIO), the widely accepted international system that seeks to ensure world peace and security by governing the conduct of states, is faced with major challenges. Some of the biggest challenges emanate from the conduct of the Permanent Five members (P5) of the United Nations Security Council (UNSC), namely the United Kingdom (UK), China, France, Russia and the United States (US). The UNSC is the United Nations' apex organ and, therefore, ultimately responsible for seeking to maintain world peace and security in the context of the LIO. The central argument of this book is that the survival of the LIO depends on the established behaviour of the P5 towards it, as these are the nation-states entrusted with the guardianship of this order. The methodologies applied to advance the book's argument are foreign policy analysis (FPA) and scenario-building methodologies. These methodologies are explained in detail in Chapters 3 and 4, respectively.

The foreign policies of the P5 do not always conform to the principles of the LIO and can sometimes be said to threaten it. Consequently, the liberal order and its primary institutions, such as the UN, could find themselves in a legitimacy and survival crisis. To unpack this, the foreign policies of these five Great Powers need to be analysed in order to establish whether or not they retain their confidence in the LIO or are seeking to establish parallel international orders that exist alongside or in opposition to it. The book goes beyond analysis and applies forecasting methodologies to predict possible futures of the LIO and global governance more generally. The book's evaluation of the LIO through the actions of the P5 and using these actions as key variables in the forecasts about the future of the LIO and global governance represents the book's authentic contribution to the study of global governance and foreign policy.

This book contributes to scientific knowledge by merging FPA and scenario-building methods to highlight the *cause-and-effect* relationship between Great Power behaviour and international orders. Its value lies in its descriptive, analytical, predictive and prescriptive qualities. This is a book written by a scholar for scholars and, as a result, the book is relevant to foreign policy scholars interested in the future of human organisation, peace, security and development in the 21st century and beyond.

The contents of this book have been developed from my PhD thesis, representing a substantial refinement of the latter content. This book represents a reworked version (more than 50%) of the author's dissertation 'An analysis of the post-1989 foreign policies of Britain, China, France, Russia and the United States of America: Implications for the liberal international order in the 21st century', a thesis submitted to the Department of Politics and International Relations, Faculty of Humanities at the University of Johannesburg, Johannesburg, in fulfilment of the requirements for the Degree of Doctor of Literature & Philosophy (DLitt et Phil) in Political Studies with Professor CA Georghiou (supervisor), and Professor SE Graham (co-supervisor) and Professor C Landsberg (co-supervisor); as well as a reworked version (more than 50%) of the

author's dissertation, 'The West in Libya 2011: A realist war or an 'R2P' intervention?', a dissertation submitted to the Department of Politics and International Relations, Faculty of Humanities, at the University of Johannesburg, Johannesburg, in fulfilment of the requirements for the Degree of Master of Arts (MA) in Politics, with Professor Suzanne Graham as supervisor.

I declare that this book conforms to international ethical standards and has not been plagiarised.

Ayabulela Dlakavu, Department of Politics and International Relations, Faculty of Humanities, University of Johannesburg, Johannesburg, South Africa.

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Biographical note

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Foreword

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It has been said that the most accurate way to understand the workings of the United Nations (UN) is not through its rather idealistic *Charter* but rather through the record of donations it receives annually from states (Claude 1967: xv)[1]. Such a study would point to an organisation driven by the uneven capabilities of some of its members and defined by privilege (bought by money and maintained through allusions to international law, military power and perhaps the complacency of its naysayers). Such inequality is inscribed into the very structure of the institution. Subject to the most criticism is the unique status enjoyed by the four victors of World War II (China, Russia, the United Kingdom and the United States of America), as well as France (which did not so much win the war as allied itself with the victors).

These countries are the only ones to be permanent members of the United Nations Security Council (UNSC), which gives them the power to veto any decisions made by the Council. Given the UN system's structure, however, the UNSC permanent five (P5) members have powers that extend beyond UNSC deliberations. Among other things, they have the final say on the enforcement of the International Court of Justice's decisions and, as recently as 1994, had the mandate to run colonies in transition.

Much has been made of this uneven terrain in the generations of scholarship that have followed the UN's establishment, and with good reason. Studies have shown the gridlock that the UNSC leads to, and calls have been made for representation through reform. Where there is little scholarship, however, is on the usefulness of the UNSC for the P5 themselves. It is here that the contribution of Dr Ayabulela Dlakavu's book is most evident and pertinent. On it hangs the question of the methods by which the most powerful states in the world are to pursue their interests, and thus the future of the very system of international organisation prevalent since the end of the Cold War, styled the LIO. For if the UNSC is no longer

1. Reference: Claude, IL Jr 1967, *The Changing United Nations*, Random House, New York.

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of use to the P5, what other means might they use to achieve their goals? And what, then, of the so-called rules-based mode of international engagement?

Dlakavu's book shows that the P5's foreign policies do not always conform to the principles of the liberal international order and are actively undermining it by establishing parallel international orders of their own. That is a return to a pre-WWII landscape that may very well produce WWIII.

It is in looking at the potential swansong era of the UNSC that we appreciate the scope of the accomplishments of 1944 and 1945 in setting up such an institution. Through his rigorous methodology, Dlakavu prognosticates that there are four scenarios that are likely to materialise. His strongest predictions should concern all policymakers; unilateral Chinese dominance and world war seem to be distinct probabilities. Yet it is clear from Dlakavu's extraordinary and forward-looking analysis that for both its defenders and critics alike, the UNSC's status quo is not sustainable as it is.

Preface

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This book is an exercise in FPA, with a view to forecasting the future of the international order and the world as we know it. Throughout history, the foreign policy postures and actions of nation-states have created international order as well as disorder, thereby demonstrating the dependence of the world system on their conduct. In the 21st century, non-state actors are also exerting significant influence over the international order.

The purpose of this volume is twofold. The first is to examine the root causes of the efficacy, stability or instability of the hegemonic LIO, which was founded after World War Two (WWII). The text focuses specifically on the degree to which the foreign policies of the founding Great Powers have affirmed or violated the values, aims and institutions of the LIO since the end of the Cold War in 1989. The second is to forecast whether the LIO will survive the 21st century, taking into account the foreign policy positions of the permanent five (P5) members of the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) and their attitudes towards the LIO since 1989. The P5 are the *de facto* founders of the LIO, as manifested in their occupation of the five permanent seats in the UNSC, the highest decision-making organ of the UN, which anchors the LIO. They are the UK, the People's Republic of China (PRC), the French Republic, the Russian Federation, and the United States of America (US).

This book has been in the making since my research towards my Master's (MA) degree in International Relations, in which I examined the military intervention of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) in Libya in 2011, at the time of protests against the regime of Colonel Muammar Gaddafi (former & late Libyan president). The North Atlantic Treaty Organization is a key LIO security alliance, and its intervention resulted from a UNSC resolution. However, despite its stated purpose of restoring political and social order and protecting Libyan citizens against internal repression, the intervention resulted in sustained social instability.

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Likewise, the decisions and actions of the P5 continue to shape the politics and lives of people across the world and will also determine the continued existence, modification or collapse of the LIO in the 21st century. Therefore, this volume is an exercise in FPA based on empirical case studies and aimed at forecasting the future of the world as we know it.

Chapter 1

The significance of the Liberal International Order

Introduction[2]

This introductory chapter provides an overview of the Liberal International Order (LIO), the central topic of this volume. First, the problems confronting the LIO and their causes are outlined in some detail. The main causes of those problems are identified as the foreign policies of the Permanent Five (P5) members of the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) since the end of the Cold War. Next, it justifies the selection of the P5 and their individual and collective foreign policies for the case studies at the centre of this book. The concept of 'Great Power', which is central to this justification, is explained in some detail. This chapter then articulates the central question that this book seeks to answer, setting the scene for the subsequent chapters and their systematic attempts to address aspects of this

2. This book represents a reworked version (more than 50%) of the author's dissertation 'An analysis of the post-1989 foreign policies of Britain, China, France, Russia and the United States of America: Implications for the liberal international order in the 21st century', a thesis submitted to the Department of Politics and International Relations, Faculty of Humanities at the University of Johannesburg, Johannesburg, in fulfilment of the requirements for the Degree of Doctor of Literature & Philosophy (DLitt et Phil) in Political Studies with Professor CA Georghiou (supervisor), Professor SE. Graham (co-supervisor) and Professor C Landsberg (co-supervisor); as well as a reworked version (more than 50%) of the author's dissertation, 'The West in Libya 2011: A realist war or an 'R2P' intervention?', a fissertation submitted to the Department of Politics and International Relations, Faculty of Humanities, at the University of Johannesburg, Johannesburg, in fulfilment of the requirements for the Degree of Master of Arts (MA) in Politics, with Professor Suzanne Graham as supervisor.

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complex issue. Therefore, this chapter sets the scene for the central theme of the cause-effect relationship between Great Power foreign policies and their impact on global governance and international order, specifically the LIO. Lastly, the subsequent chapters are outlined, providing the reader with a thematic guide to the rest of the volume.

A snapshot of the Liberal International Order

The LIO is the international system established by the victors of WWII, specifically the US and the UK. As its name suggests, this post-war system of international cooperation was based on the doctrine of liberalism. Liberal international institutions, such as the UN, became the hallmarks of the LIO (Mearsheimer 2018, p. 3). Despite being founded on liberal values, the liberal order immediately faced challenges created by the bipolar *realpolitik* of the Cold War. This international system was founded on a *balance of power* between the US and its liberal Western bloc on the one hand and the Soviet Union and its communist Eastern bloc on the other (Deudney & Ikenberry 1999, p. 179).

In this era, the liberal Western bloc sought to mobilise the Global South to join the LIO, and the communist Eastern bloc attempted to mobilise the Global South to join the Communist International Order (Ikenberry 2018, p. 7). The decline in the economic and political power of the Soviet Union in the 1980s led to the end of the Cold War in 1989 and the collapse of the Soviet Union itself in 1991 (Fanani 2014, p. 96). This resulted in the LIO being the sole global order from 1989 onwards.

The central question and key problem that this book seeks to address is whether or not the LIO will survive the 21st century. The LIO's future is uncertain due to increasing US unilateralism, the resurgence of Russia (the former leader of the Soviet republics) in international affairs, and China's growing prominence on the world stage. Moreover, French unilateralism in Francophone Africa and Britain's withdrawal from the European Union (EU) present further challenges to the survival of the LIO (WEF 2015, p. 2). Following its monopoly over global governance since the end of the Cold War, the uncertainty surrounding the LIO's survival affects all nation-states and their populations. The future of the LIO has major implications for global peace and security, global economic and political governance, and international development more broadly.

The aims of this book

The aims of this book are twofold. First, I examine the root causes of the efficacy, stability or instability of the LIO, focusing on the degree to which

the foreign policies of the founding Great Powers have affirmed or violated its values and goals since the end of the Cold War. The second is to forecast whether the LIO will survive the 21st century, taking into account the foreign policies of the five Great Powers *vis-à-vis* the liberal order since 1989. Essentially, the Great Powers are those sovereign states that have a greater influence over world politics than all the other states combined (Economic Reconstruction Organisation 2006, p. 1). The five Great Powers – and founding members of the LIO – are the UK, UK, France, Russia and China.

The justification for selecting the five Great Powers and their foreign policies and international conduct as a core independent variable for determining both stated aims are as follows. First, despite the emergence of newly industrialising states (known as Emerging Powers), the five Great Powers remain the five Permanent Five (P5) members of the UN Security Council (UNSC), the UN's primary decision-making structure. As such, they are ultimately responsible for maintaining world peace and security, and for ensuring the relevance, effectiveness and survival of the LIO. Moreover, these Great Powers have overwhelming global influence, both individually and collectively. While Emerging Powers possess economic power (and regional political power), this does not necessarily translate into the political, military and cultural power that the Great Powers have accumulated over centuries. Similar to Emerging Powers, non-state actors have become influential in the global political economy but are not as influential as sovereign states, which remain the primary actors in world affairs and retain a monopoly over setting the global agenda.

The main question this book addresses is the following: Will the LIO survive the 21st century, given the post-1989 foreign policies of the P5? Its hypothesis is as follows: ultimately, the P5 view the LIO as a means of achieving their own goals and advancing their own national interests. Therefore, they view LIO as a means and not an end. As such, they could abandon the LIO should they deem it obsolete or a hindrance to achieving their national interests. This hypothesis is informed by the observation that the LIO, like its predecessors (which are discussed below), has not been entirely unrivalled but has coexisted simultaneously with various parallel orders. For example, it has coexisted with the Soviet international order from 1945 to 1989 and with emerging orders centred on the Global South in the 21st century.

This book investigates the impact of the foreign policies of the five Great Powers on the LIO. Therefore, it is an exercise in FPA, with the aim of forecasting whether the LIO will survive the challenges posed by the P5 or whether it will be usurped by parallel orders introduced and led by any of these states, thereby creating a multipolar world order. In such a multipolar international system, world power would be diffused among the five Great Powers and the parallel orders they may introduce. Moreover, the book

seeks to predict whether the LIO, like pre-1945 international orders, will end as a result of great power warfare or whether it will be peacefully surpassed by an alternative order.

The post-Cold War conduct of the Permanent Five towards the Liberal International Order

Scholars throughout history have proposed the ideal ways of establishing and sustaining 'international order'. For instance, in 1795, Immanuel Kant wrote an essay titled *Perpetual peace: A philosophical sketch* in which he argued that since states cannot prevent war by themselves, they ought to cooperate and collectively satisfy six 'Preliminary articles of perpetual peace' that would lead to a harmonious world community of states. These were:

1. States should sign honest peace treaties that do not conceal a hidden agenda to reignite war later.
2. State sovereignty should be protected (the international law which declares that each state has the right to exercise independent authority within its territory, uninterrupted by external influences).
3. Permanent or standing state armies should be gradually abolished.
4. States should not use debts owed to them by other states to control the latter.
5. No state should intervene in the domestic affairs of any other state.
6. During war, states should exhibit ethical conduct and not commit atrocities that will make future friendly relations impossible, such as killing innocent civilians (Brown 1992, p. 31).

Kant then added three Definitive Articles for entrenching global peace. First, all states must have a republican constitution that guarantees civil rights, because this would enable citizens to prevent their leaders from waging unnecessary wars. Second, a federation of world states must be established that will collectively guard against aggressive states and ensure a peaceful world community. Third, all states must grant foreigners a right to hospitality, which will prevent hostility against foreigners, ensure peace, and make human beings world citizens (Brown 1992, p. 36). Taken together, Kant posited that the Preliminary and Definitive Articles would entrench a stable international order and lasting peace among sovereign states.

In the discipline of international relations (IR), Kant's proposal has come to be classified under the umbrella of normative theory. According to Viotti and Kauppi (1987, p. 5), normative theory in IR focuses on *what should be* – the way the world ought to be organised, and the values that political

decision-makers should adhere to in the course of their activities. Normative scholarship is an ancient practice, given that the best forms of political rule and international organisation have occupied the minds of philosophers for centuries. This literature overview of the conduct of the P5 in the post-1989 international system governed by the LIO provides a snapshot of the relevance of the LIO for its five powerful founding states.

The LIO is facing major challenges created by the conduct of four of the P5. The US – one of the prime movers in establishing the LIO – has adopted an increasingly unilateralist foreign policy stance (Malone and Khong 2003, p. 1; Hanson 2018). Russia is seeking to return to its former powerful Soviet days – at least in Eastern Europe (Garcia 2018, p. 104), and China is playing an increasingly active and assertive international role (Zhang 2015, p. 6). Lastly, in withdrawing from the EU, the UK has moved away from multilateralism towards a more unilaterally determined foreign policy, which could be interpreted as yet another Great Power state rejecting an LIO institution in favour of nationalism and nationalist economic policies (Etiubon & Ibietan 2018, p. 27; Twining 2016).

France is the only Great Power that remains committed to multilateral cooperation, a cornerstone of the LIO. However, its unilateral forays into Francophone Africa, also known as *Françafrique*, in the post-colonial era, is another example of how Great Powers tend to undermine the LIO in pursuit of their national interests. Indeed, Francophone Africa continues to be an important sphere of influence for France and has been a foreign policy focus for successive French governments (Melly & Darracq 2013, p. 3).

These foreign policy positions could plunge the LIO and its core institutions, such as the UN, into a legitimacy and survival crisis. They need to be analysed more closely in order to establish whether or not these Great Powers retain their confidence in the LIO or have established other international orders existing alongside or in opposition to the LIO. We need to establish whether such alternative international orders or systems are likely to replace the LIO, or whether their progenitors intend to use them as bargaining tools in the course of attempts to reform the LIO.

We also need to establish whether a Great Power War is likely between the US (in partnership with its traditional Western allies) on the one hand, and either China or Russia (or a reformist alliance of China, Russia and like-minded allies) on the other. This is necessary because Great Power wars have often erupted whenever shifts have taken place in the global distribution of military, economic and political power (Smith, Hadfield & Dunne, 2012, p. 41). However, we also need to consider the possibility of the first-ever negotiated shift of global power from the West to the East through the formation and institutionalisation of an alternative order to the LIO.

Organisation and summary of the chapters

Ten more chapters will follow. Chapter 2 sets out the conceptual framework relevant to this book. It explicates the central concepts of foreign policy, national interest, FPA, Great Power status, global governance, and the essence of the LIO. It also outlines the relationships among these core concepts in explaining state conduct and international organisation (i.e., global governance).

Chapter 3 outlines the foreign policy analytical framework by articulating the key individual, intrastate and international system determinants of a state's foreign policy. Chapter 3 explains FPA as the analytical framework underpinning the book, outlining the three-level determinants of foreign policy. Foreign policy analysis is the overarching method used to examine the international positions and actions of the P5.

Chapter 3 then explains and justifies the application of Realism and Liberalism as the two most useful theoretical lenses for examining the LIO. Reasons for adopting these two theories as a complementary theoretical framework are provided. Literature and document reviews illuminate key concepts and theories explaining state foreign policies and the constitutive elements of various international orders.

Chapter 4 sets out the methodology used to predict four possible futures of the LIO and global governance (Chapter 11). Chapter 5 identifies and evaluates international orders in the post-1984 nation-state era, including the era of the LIO. It examines the design, purpose, operation and demise of previous international orders in the post-1648 nation-state system. It also examines the design, purpose, operation and defining features of the LIO, including an evaluation of its effectiveness and impact on the international system.

Chapter 6 is a case study of the UK's post-1989 foreign policy conduct and its attitude towards the liberal order. Key behavioural trends and actions *vis-à-vis* the liberal order are identified and explained, and an assessment is made about whether London's national interests continue to be served by the LIO. It determines the extent to which London has affirmed or violated the LIO and the resultant implications for its future. Chapters 7 to 10 comprise similar case studies of the US, France, Russia and China.

Chapter 11 utilises the forecasting methodologies outlined in Chapter 4 and the findings of Chapters 6–10 to build scenarios for the LIO in the rest of the 21st century. The actions and attitudes of the P5 members are the independent variable, while the future of the liberal order is the dependent variable. Chapter 12 contains thematic discussions, conclusions and recommendations about the sustainability of the LIO and the foreign

policies of the P5. Chapter 12 highlights the key findings of this book and recommends the best policy choices for the P5 as well as other prominent institutions and role players in the world order.

Conclusion

The LIO has been institutionalised over nearly 80 years. While the influence of non-state actors over global affairs has increased, nation-states, particularly the P5, still have great collective and individual power and authority, enabling them to set the main agendas in international affairs. The continued existence of the LIO depends largely on its responsiveness to the national interests of nation-states, including the P5, its *de facto* guardians. This chapter has begun to point to several warning signs for the LIO, which have an impact on its lifespan and the general trajectory of global governance. Through FPA and forecasting methodologies, this book examines the key survival challenges to the LIO, outlining its possible futures during the rest of the 21st century. Chapter 2 provides the theoretical and conceptual frameworks for the rest of the book, which will enable us to determine whether the LIO will continue to shape our lives in the rest of the 21st century and beyond.

Chapter 2

The conceptual framework

Introduction

This chapter provides the conceptual framework that is important for advancing the aims of this book, as elucidated in Chapter 1. The chapter explains the central concepts of foreign policy, national interest, Great Power, global governance, and the essence of the LIO. These core concepts and their interdependence constitute the conceptual framework for this book. The importance of these interrelated concepts is that they serve as key variables in this book's quest to map the established international behaviour of the P5, a key ingredient and factor when forecasting the likely scenarios for the LIO and global governance in this 21st century and beyond. In the social sciences, a conceptual framework is important because it serves the purpose of contextualising a stated research problem and the aims of the research undertaken.

In the context of this book, the ensuing elaboration on the interconnected concepts, namely foreign policy, national interest, Great Power, global governance, and LIO, are important because they contextualise the central research question, problem, and aim on which this book is based (as per Chapter 1). This ensuing conceptual framework is, therefore, central in addressing the central question and aims of the book and also proffering solutions to the problem of the uncertain future of the LIO.

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The conceptual framework

The key concepts utilised in this book are foreign policy, national interest, Great Power, global governance, and LIO. In what follows, these concepts are defined, and the linkages among them are explained.

Explaining foreign policy

International relations scholars define the concept of *foreign policy* in different ways. Buchanan (2002, p. 97) explains foreign policy as a state's decisions and actions of making war and seeking peace; its stance towards international law; its participation in the global economy through trade and trade treaties; its participation in international financial institutions and regimes; and its provision of aid to other countries and international organisations, aimed at combating global poverty.

Holsti (1990, p. 83) defines foreign policy as the ideas or actions undertaken by states with the aim of solving an international problem or promoting changes in the policies, attitudes or actions of other states or non-state entities in the international environment. It also refers to interactions between domestic forces and actors and external forces and actors. The latter definition recognises the role of non-state actors in foreign policy.

According to Rani (2008, p. 2), states also use foreign policy to convince other states to behave in ways that are consistent with their values and goals, as well as international law. Examples of foreign policy activities include sending a diplomatic note to the government of another state or forming military alliances with other states (Holsti 1990, p. 83). Rani (2008, p. 2) also regards foreign policy as the extension of a state's domestic policy in the international environment. In this way, a state continues to pursue its domestic or intrastate objectives in the external environment. Significantly, when states decide to isolate themselves and not form relationships with other states, this is also classified as foreign policy.

Russett, Starr and Kinsella (2010, p. 13) define foreign policy as a blueprint that guides a state's actions and behaviour in the pursuit of its goals in the international environment. Thus, foreign policy guides a state's pursuit of resources, economic, political and military power, as well as cooperation with other states on matters of common concern. This definition recognises that states also seek to influence the conduct of other states and non-state actors in the global arena. It is worth noting that states can and have acted contrary to their stated foreign policy positions (Russet et al. 2010, p. 136).

Said et al. (1995, p. 22) define foreign policy as a sovereign state's attempt to achieve the common goals of its citizens in the external environment.

In this view, the goals pursued by a state's foreign policy emanate from certain aspirations, needs and wants that are shared by their citizens. Thus, foreign policy seeks to pursue the collective values, aspirations, needs and wants of the citizens of a particular polity. Said et al. (1995, p. 23) make the important point that foreign policy decisions are made and implemented solely by governments. This is because governments are the political actors entrusted with the responsibility of pursuing the aggregate interests of their populations. Once a government makes a foreign policy decision, it implements this via various tools of statecraft, such as diplomacy. Diplomats are the representatives of a state in foreign countries and international organisations, who are responsible for communicating and pursuing a given state's foreign policy goals *vis-à-vis* external entities. State can also pursue their foreign policy by means of war, foreign aid and trade.

Foreign policies often promote the values of an elite social, economic or political group in a given society, and not the values of all its citizens and groups (Said et al. 1995, p. 24). Moreover, foreign policy often seeks to secure a state's territorial integrity and pursue the prosperity of its citizens as well as the primary objective of safeguarding its sovereignty, security and independence.

Despite being the prerogative of government, however, foreign policy is often influenced by various interest groups pursuing different goals, such as private businesses, non-governmental organisations, labour unions and political parties (Said et al. 1995, p. 26).

Foreign policies are also shaped by states' role conceptions. This essentially refers to foreign policymakers' perceptions of their nation's position in the international system. Role conception is based on the perceptions of foreign policy elites of a nation-state's values, status and capabilities (Erhan & Akdemir 2018, p. 5). Notably, a state's foreign policy objectives are limited by its military and economic capabilities. This is because foreign policy is pursued in an international environment that lacks a legitimate and effective authority to regulate the behaviour of all states (Said et al. 1995, p. 27).

‘National interest’ and its association with foreign policy

Foreign policymakers transform foreign policy values into goals, which then direct a state's foreign affairs. A state's foreign policy objectives are collectively referred to as its *national interest* (Erhan & Akdemir 2018, p. 7). This term was coined by the Realist philosopher Hans Morgenthau, who argued that all foreign policy is informed and determined by the national interest (Russett et al. 2010, p. 138). This implies that a given state's

international actions are essentially meant to further its national interest. This conception of national interest as the engine that drives a state's foreign policy presupposes that the national interest represents the common, unified goals, values and aspirations of a particular state, constituted by a government, citizens, and civil society. This implies a national consensus on the national interest among the various stakeholders that constitute the state: politicians, political parties, state institutions, the business sector, civil society organisations and citizens (Buchanan 2002, p. 98).

This also implies that national interest is the primary determinant of a state's foreign policy, with the preferences of state leaders and global political and economic factors serving as secondary determinants. Mudenga (2016, p. 1) defines national interest as the articulated long-term aspirations and goals of sovereign states in the international realm. National interest is also described as the most vital interests and needs of the state, with survival being paramount. National interest also refers to a state's efforts to protect its physical territory, political and cultural identity against foreign intrusions (Mudenga 2016, p. 1). It is these national interests that guide foreign policy decisions and the international actions pursued by a national government on behalf of the state.

A given state's national interest tends to reflect its size and material circumstances, such as its size, population, wealth, internal divisions, geography and major economic activities. National interest is also shaped by a particular state's history and governance institutions. Moreover, according to Said et al. (1995, pp. 27–28), national interest fulfils two important functions: first, it gives direction to a state's foreign policy; and second, it prescribes alternative foreign policy options when a state is required needs to respond immediately to matters arising from the international system. From these varied conceptualisations of national interest, the book adopts the common view of all: that the national interest reflects the aggregate national development and security goals adopted by a nation-state, which then direct a state's relations with other nation-states and other actors in the international system.

Thus, national interest provides short-term and long-term direction to a state's relations with other states and non-state actors, and in respect of issues arising in the international environment. As such, national interest can be defined as an aggregation of a state's values and foreign policy goals. Morgenthau argues that the national interest of every national government is to pursue and accumulate more power than other states in the international system (Russett et al. 2010, p. 138). A key theoretical area of contention is that Realists view national interest as the pursuit of military power and security, whereas Liberals view this as a state's pursuit of long-term economic and social welfare while conducting relations with other states and non-state external entities (Russett et al. 2010, p. 137).

International systems and orders

According to Latham (1997, p. 419), the main areas of interest for IR scholars are sovereign states, the international system within which states operate, and the international orders created by sovereign states as a means of providing structure to an epoch. Thus, the discipline of IR defines each period of history in terms of the international system and/or international order that prevailed at that time. For example, the interwar period in the 20th century (1919–1939) is often defined in terms of the attempt to establish a global governance system in the form of the League of Nations. Likewise, the period 1945–1989 is often referred to as the Cold War system, defined by the rivalry between the US-led LIO on the one side and the Communist International Order led by the Soviet Union on the other.

The definition of epochs in terms of the prevailing international system or order is reinforced by IR theories and sub-schools. For instance, Liberals often focus on the rules, norms and international institutions that define the international order of a particular epoch (Latham 1997, p. 420).

An *international order* refers to the body of rules, norms and institutions that govern relations among the key actors in the international system (Mazarr et al. 2016, p. 7). Likewise, Abrahamsson (2008, p. 4) defines an international order as a system of structures sustained by norms and rules that regulate international economic relations and political cooperation among states. In this context, 'structure' refers to intergovernmental organisations and alliances among states. Braumoeller (2017, p. 1) defines international order as a set of laws and practices to which powerful states voluntarily choose to submit in exchange for international peace and security. These international laws and practices possess international legitimacy and exist as mechanisms for maintaining a power equilibrium among states. Thus, they serve as constraints on the foreign policy choices available to sovereign states. By the same token, the absence of international order increases the risk of international conflict, particularly Great Power warfare (Braumoeller 2017, p. 2).

Kocs (2019, p. 1) asserts that an international order is created when the multiple political actors that coexist in the international system make a conscious decision to construct one. Therefore, an international order emerges from and exists within the wider international system. Latham (1997, p. 420) argues that the distinguishing characteristic of an international order, as against an international system, is that international orders are purposefully designed to advance the common interests of states, such as mediating conflicts and enhancing interstate cooperation.

An international order also relies on states that have the political will and capacity to adhere to the established rules of the international order

and to accept the incumbent hegemon's leadership of such an order. Weak or failed states that are vulnerable to manipulation by revisionist states can lead to the demise of an incumbent order (Abrahamsson 2008, p. 9). Essentially, if the revisionist states succeed in co-opting weak states into an anti-order international campaign, such an order will experience revolt, lose international legitimacy and collapse. This is the reason why the US decided to support the economic reconstruction of Germany and Japan after 1945. The rationale was that if these former adversaries could recover within a US-led liberal order, they would have no compelling reason to secede from the liberal order, or seek to reform it (Abrahamsson 2008, p. 9). Thus, the US government's investment in German and Japanese economic recovery was a foreign policy of co-option, with the intention of absorbing these two former adversaries into the LIO. This was meant to prevent the Soviet Union from recruiting Japan and (West) Germany into the alternative Soviet-led Communist International Order.

For its part, an *international system* is constituted by state and non-state actors that exist in the international environment, irrespective of how they relate to each other. In *The anarchical society: A study of order in world politics* (1977), Hedley Bull defines an international system as a system constituted by states that interact with each other on a regular basis. According to Bull, these states influence each other's actions within the international system formed through their coexistence (Watson 1987, p. 147). In its natural state, the international system is anarchic, as per Realist assertions, with no world government exercising authority in order to ensure global order. This drives sovereign states to establish an international order aimed at regulating interstate relations and ensuring international peace and security (Kocs 2019, p. 1).

Another difference between an international order and an international system is that the former is defined and constituted by laws, norms, rule-making institutions, and international political organisations that structure relationships between states (Mazarr et al. 2016, p. 7). An example of a law forming a cornerstone of the LIO is Article 2 of the UN Charter, which prohibits UN member states from violating the sovereignty of others (Kocs 2019, p. 2). This means that UN member states are not permitted to invade each other or to interfere in each other's domestic affairs. Importantly, states join the UN voluntarily, which makes the liberal order underpinned by the UN a voluntary, purposeful and legitimate order that constrains the foreign policy choices of the 193 member states that are signatories of the UN Charter and have ratified this important source of international law.

It becomes clear that these features of an international order work to produce and maintain structured relations among states in the international system, as opposed to anarchy and war. These rules, norms and institutions function as ordering mechanisms that provide structure and dilute or

mitigate anarchy in the international system. The end goal of any international order, regardless of historical epoch, is to establish international stability and peace (Latham 1997, p. 419).

These definitions show that an international order is constructed through a combination of alliances among states, formal, informal or private organisations, and the rules, norms and requirements established by treaties, conventions, or other means. By contrast, an international system involves all aspects of political, economic, social, cultural, ecological and other forms of interactions among states. While an international order is characterised by rules-based relations among states, an international system is not necessarily orderly and may be marked by random and even chaotic relations among states and non-state actors (Mazarr et al. 2016, p. 8).

As noted by Kocs (2019, p. 3), international orders are often established by the most powerful states (i.e., Great Powers) in the international system because they possess the economic and military capabilities needed to sustain and enforce international orders and their norms values and laws. Consequently, international orders tend to reflect the preferences, values, beliefs and interests of their powerful founding states (Kocs 2019, p. 3). Furthermore, an international order tends to reflect the short-term and long-term security interests of the prevailing Great Powers (Abrahamsson 2008, p. 4). Once formed, an international order can survive for as long as the Great Powers retain the ability and will to sustain it (Kocs 2019, p. 3). Therefore, international orders are not static or permanent – they change or disintegrate when the security environment, dominant values, and perceptions of threats change.

According to Grinin (2016, p. 79), international orders collapse because of changes in the international balance of power and the resultant interstate wars. These shifts in the international distribution of power are caused by factors such as intrastate rebellions, the fall of dynasties, and/or changes in government. Differences in ideology, disparities in economic growth and development, territorial expansion, and disparities in technological advancement and military power are further factors that lead to changes in the international distribution of power among states. Such changes in global power distribution often lead to war and the collapse of international orders and/or alliances (Grinin 2016, p. 79). Such collapses precipitate periods of international disorder until a new international order emerges.

The victors of a major international war tend to create a new international order that reflects their shared values, principles and aspirations (Kocs 2019, p. 3). As such, international orders tend to reflect the prevailing concentration of global power. For instance, the current LIO reflects the concentration of global power in the Western hemisphere, particularly the US, despite the rising power of China and a resurgent Russia. If China

becomes the global hegemon in this century, there may be major changes to the incumbent liberal order. These changes may come through war, as demonstrated by the historical succession of international orders.

An international order does not necessarily need to exert decisive or dominant influence over the conduct states. This is because the foreign policies of states are influenced by a range of factors, including the preferences of political leaders as well as other intrastate forces (Mazarr et al. 2016, p. 8).

Throughout history, there have been two main types of international order: power-based orders and liberal orders (Mazarr et al. 2016, p. 10). Power-based international orders are conservative arrangements that seek to achieve temporary peace by maintaining power equilibrium among the prevailing powerful states, a condition known in IR as a *balance of power*. Power-based orders tend to delay conflict and war rather than prevent them.

By contrast, liberal international orders are founded on common values, interests, rules, institutions, and a web of security alliances (Mazarr et al. 2016, p. 11). Liberal conceptions of international order have been proffered by theoreticians and politicians ranging from Immanuel Kant to Woodrow Wilson. The latter's Idealism underpinned the largely ineffective interwar (1919–1939) international order embodied in the League of Nations. Empirically, an international order becomes disputed when Great Powers harbour competing visions of that order or when Emerging Powers seek to reform the incumbent order or create alternative orders. An Emerging Power is defined as a state that exhibits extraordinary economic growth and an associated increase in military capability, which enable it to wield greater regional and global influence. Moreover, an Emerging Power often uses its capabilities to advocate for global governance reform, which is essentially the reform of international institutions, values and/or norms (Wiess & Abdenur 2014, pp. 1750–1751; Fonseca, Paes & Cunha 2016, pp. 51–52).

While international orders can help prevent conflicts among states, those orders are often founded on principles that can themselves lead to interstate wars. For example, the LIO is underpinned by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), which was adopted by the UN General Assembly in 1948. This has led to the adoption of the Responsibility to Protect (R2P) doctrine, in terms of which the UN may intervene in the internal affairs of UN member states – or infringe their sovereignty – if they violate the human rights of citizens or fail to prevent such violations (Braumoeller 2017, p. 2). While such interventions are permitted on the basis of protecting human rights, humanitarian war is still war and involves the loss of life and economic and infrastructural damage that results from

any war. Therefore, the principles of human rights and R2P that form the cornerstones of the LIO are themselves potential sources of conflict. This was demonstrated when, in 2011, a multi-state NATO-led coalition began a military intervention in Libya – authorised by a UNSC resolution – to bring an end to the Libyan civil war triggered by the repression of political protest against the regime of Muammar Gaddafi.

Constitutive elements of the Liberal International Order

Mazarr et al. (2016, p. iii) define the LIO as a global governance mechanism constituted by international economic institutions, political and security organisations, and liberal political norms. According to Kundnani (2017, p. 4), the LIO comprises three components: a security order, an economic order and a human rights order. These three constitutive components position the LIO as an open and rules-based order.

The security order

This order refers to the rules that regulate interstate relations and the general conduct of states. International law is a major instrument of the security order because it defines what states can and cannot do in the international system. For instance, the UN Law of the Sea of 1982 outlines international law and norms that govern the behaviour of states at sea and guide the resolution of maritime disputes (Kundnani 2017, p. 4). The rationale of international law and norms is to govern relations among states and to maintain international peace and security. According to Mazarr et al. (2016, p. 14), the security order is further strengthened by collective security organisations such as the UN and NATO.

A major feature of the security order is collective security organisations such as the UN and NATO. The NATO is a military alliance of 31 states – 29 European states as well as the US and Canada. It is based on the North Atlantic Treaty, signed in Washington, D.C., on 4 April 1949. It is a collective security system, whose member states agree to defend each other against attacks by third parties.

The rationale for its formation was the fear of Soviet imperialism after World War II. Western European states appealed to the US to maintain its political and military presence in Europe after the end of the war in order to help prevent Soviet expansion into Western Europe. Consequently, NATO was formed by 12 states, namely the US, the UK, France, Canada, Portugal, Norway, the Netherlands, Italy, Luxembourg, Iceland, Denmark and Belgium (Cizik & Novak 2015, p. 2). Since then, its membership has expanded to 29 European states plus the US and Canada.

The preamble to the treaty states:

> [*The parties to this*] Treaty reaffirm their faith in the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and their desire to live in peace with all peoples and all governments. They are determined to safeguard the freedom, common heritage and civilisation of their peoples, founded on the principles of democracy, individual liberty and the rule of law [...] [*and*] resolved to unite their efforts for collective defence and for the preservation of peace and security.

Article 3 commits member states to develop their individual and collective capability to resist armed invasions from external actors. Article 5 states that an armed attack on one or more signatory states would be considered an attack on all and commits member states to defend those states 'by all means necessary', including military action (North Atlantic Treaty 1949, pp. 1–2).

The Liberal International Economic Order

The LIO is further reinforced by an economic order. Kundnani (2017, p. 5) argues that this economic order is the primary focus of most IR scholars when analysing the LIO.

The Liberal International Economic Order largely emanated from the Marshall Plan, the foreign aid mechanism introduced by the US government after World War II to fund the reconstruction of European economies. It was enabled by the *Economic Recovery Act of 1948*, approved by the US Congress after the communist overthrow of the Czechoslovakian government in February 1948. Its objectives were to establish free-market economies, enable a good standard of living, and eliminate trade barriers between Western European states. Through financing the economic reconstruction of Europe, the US government sought to counteract the rise of Soviet-funded communist governments across Eastern Europe (Constitutional Rights Foundation 2015, p. 2). Precarious post-war economic conditions appeared to make Europe vulnerable to Soviet-sponsored communist revolutions.

Between 1948 and 1952, about US$13 billion worth of aid was disbursed to 16 Western European states, including West Germany, helping to reignite industrial production and economic growth to pre-World War II levels (Eichengreen 2010, p. 1). Through the Marshall Plan, the US was able to create a US-aligned Liberal International Economic Order in Western Europe (Constitutional Rights Foundation 2015, p. 3). In principle, the Marshall Plan was also open to the Soviet Union and its Eastern European satellites; however, the Soviet government dismissed the Marshall Plan as an attempt by the US government to control Europe economically. This is because beneficiaries of the Marshall Plan were required to relay information about their economies to the US government. Eastern European states also

rejected the Marshall Plan, taking their cue from the Soviet Union (Magid 2012, p. 3).

The Organisation for European Economic Co-operation (OEEC) was established to allocate and distribute Marshall Plan aid to Western Europe. The OEEC (1948–1961) was constituted by the following member states: Austria, Belgium, the UK, Denmark, France, Greece, Iceland, Italy, Luxembourg, Norway, the Netherlands, Portugal, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey and West Germany. It also sought to promote economic cooperation among European states, reduce trade barriers, facilitate unrestricted intra-European trade, and explore the creation of a European customs union or free trade area (Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs 2017, p. 3; OECD 2020).

The OEEC declined in significance following the discontinuation of the Marshall Plan in late 1951. In September 1961, the OEEC was replaced by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), which has a broader membership beyond Europe. The OECD is a liberal multilateral economic institution made up of 38 democratic member states. It functions as a multilateral peer-to-peer forum, enabling its member states to discuss and compare socioeconomic experiences, investigate policy solutions to common problems, identify best practice and coordinate members' domestic and foreign policies (OECD 2006, p. 7). It was established as the economic counterpart of NATO.

The Liberal International Economic Order is also reinforced by global economic and financial institutions such as the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF), as well as multilateral trade forums (Mazarr et al. 2016, p. iii). The IMF is an international financial institution (IFI) whose mandate is to facilitate and promote global economic stability and growth by providing macroeconomic policy advice and emergency balance of payments financing for its member nations (Fritz-Krockow & Ramlogan 2007, p. 1). As of 1 January 2024, the IMF is constituted by 190 member states (IMF 2024). The IMF and its twin institution, the World Bank, anchor the liberal international economic order. The World Bank Group provides development finance to middle and low-income countries, thereby reducing poverty and facilitating prosperity worldwide. It consists of five institutions:

1. The International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD)
2. The International Development Association (IDA)
3. The International Finance Cooperation
4. The Multilateral Investment Guarantee Agency (MIGA)
5. The International Centre for Settlement of Investment Disputes (ICSID).

The IBRD (which provides development finance to governments of middle-income and creditworthy nation-states) and the IDA (which provides interest-free loans to the poorest nation-states) are regarded as the primary

institutions of the World Bank Group (The World Bank 2003, p. 4). As of 1 January 2024, 189 nation-states are members of the World Bank (The World Bank 2024).

The General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) was an international trade agreement, signed in October 1947 (effective from 1 January 1948), under which signatory states agreed to reduce trade barriers and promote open international trade. GATT succeeded in reducing barriers to international trade (such as tariffs and quotas) through successive international trade negotiations and agreements between its member states (Kundnani 2007, p. 5). In January 1995, GATT was replaced by the World Trade Organisation (WTO). Since its inception, the WTO has further regulated trade among states through its trade rules. Moreover, the WTO has absorbed China (in 2001) and Russia (in 2012), making it a truly global regime (Kundnani 2017, p. 5). Its near-universal membership is one of the primary drivers of hyperglobalisation, a key outcome of the LIO.

The EU is a paramount liberal political and economic union that has also succeeded in integrating former communist states into the LIO. Therefore, it is one of the key institutions entrenching the LIO. It is a political and economic union made up of 27 European states. The EU was established by the *Maastricht Treaty* in February 1992 and came into force on 1 November 1993. However, its roots can be traced back to the European Economic Community (EEC), which was established by the *Treaty of Rome of 1957*. The aim of the EEC was to foster economic integration and preserve peace and liberty among its member states (EEC 2012, p. 4).

The 12 founding states that signed the *Maastricht Treaty* in 1992 resolved to establish the EU as a mechanism for fostering greater European political and economic integration, organised by a common foreign, security and defence policy (*Maastricht Treaty* 1992, p. 4). The EU's level of economic integration is exemplified by the following indicators: the EU customs union; the EU single market, which allows the free movement of capital, goods, services and people; a common trade and agricultural policy for its member states *vis-à-vis* non-EU states; and a common currency (the euro), which has been adopted by 20 of the 27 EU member states. Therefore, the EU (like its predecessor, the EEC) is a pillar of the LIO, as it coordinates the foreign, defence and trade policies of its member states, all of which subscribe to liberal political and economic values.

The EU encompasses various institutions tasked with harmonising laws and adopting common economic, social and foreign policies for all member states (Congressional Research Service 2019, p. 1). The *European Commission*, the executive arm of the EU, proposes laws for all EU member states and implements the EU's decisions and common policies. The *Council of the European Union* (one of two legislative institutions of the EU) has a

mandate to discuss, amend and adopt laws proposed by the *European Parliament* (the second legislative institution of the EU). The *European Council*, which is constituted by heads of state and government of EU member states, has the power to decide EU defence and foreign policy, as well as its overall political direction and priorities. The *European Council* also has the authority to adopt the laws proposed by the European Parliament and the Council of the European Union (European Commission 2012, p. 3). For its part, the European Central Bank manages the euro and the EU's monetary policy (Congressional Research Service 2019, p. 2).

The EU plays a key role in promoting and entrenching economic liberalism, democracy, and peace in Europe, which has a history of violence and disorder.[3] Therefore, the liberal international economic order is founded on principles of economic liberalism such as free trade and the unrestricted movement of capital, knowledge and people. These principles of economic liberalism are the primary drivers of *hyperglobalisation* – the term referring to a highly interconnected and interdependent global economy and international system (Kundnani 2017, p. 5).

The human rights order

The third component of the LIO is the international *human rights order*. Its principal drivers are the UN Charter, which was signed in 1945, and the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights* (UDHR), which was adopted by the UN General Assembly in 1948. The UN Charter commits all UN member states to observe and promote human rights and freedoms irrespective of race, sex, language or religion. Likewise, the UDHR declares human rights as the foundation of global freedom, justice and peace. The UDHR commits UN member states to promote universal respect for and the observance of human rights and basic freedoms. Due to the Cold War, the human rights order has taken longer to entrench than the security and economic orders. Human rights as a liberal value did not enjoy universal support in the non-liberal world during the Cold War. However, the end of the Cold War allowed Western states to expand liberal ideology and values (such as human rights) to the post-communist and post-socialist states of the now-defunct Soviet order (Kundnani 2017, p. 6).

A further boost to the human rights order was the adoption in 1998 of the *Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court*, which paved the way for the establishment of the International Criminal Court (ICC) in July 2002. As of 1 January 2024, 123 nation-states have ratified the *Rome Statute* and

3. Refer to a political map of the EU that displays the expansion of the LIO into the now-defunct Communist International Order at https://www.polgeonow.com/2016/06/map-which-countries-are-in-the-eu.html.

are therefore parties to the Rome Statute of the ICC (ICC 2023). According to Article 5 of the *Rome Statute* (2011, p. 3), the founding aim of the ICC is to prosecute individuals who commit human rights violations such as genocide, crimes against humanity, war crimes and crimes of aggression. Therefore, the ICC was established as a means of enforcing the human rights order. At the UN World Summit of 2005, the human rights order was further bolstered by the adoption of the R2P principle, which commits all UN member states to prevent human rights violations such as genocide, war crimes and crimes against humanity beyond their sovereign territory. This permits the UN to breach a member state's sovereignty if that state commits these human rights violations or fails to prevent them (Kundnani 2017, p. 6).

Conclusion

The conceptual framework provided in this chapter serves as the point of departure for the book's quest to examine P5 attitudes and behaviour towards the LIO since 1989, with a view to forecast the future of the liberal order. In essence, this chapter has identified foreign policy, national interest, international order and the LIO as central interconnected concepts to this book's central question, problem and aim. An emerging theme from this conceptual framework is that any international order is a product of the foreign policies of founding states, who create such an order as a means to pursue common national interests. For this book, the focus is on the LIO and the extent to which the post-1989 foreign policies of the P5 have advanced the values and aims of this liberal order. Likewise, the behavioural trends of the P5 toward the LIO, as highlighted in Chapters 6–10, also provide an indication of the extent to which the liberal order has remained relevant and responsive to the national interests of the P5 between 1989 and 2024. Importantly, Chapters 6–10 examine the international actions of the P5 states *vis-à-vis* all three components of the LIO (i.e., human rights, security and economic components of the LIO). The next chapter provides an overview of the analytical and theoretical frameworks that guide the FPA chapters (6–10) and the forecasts explained in Chapter 11.

Chapter 3

Foundations for analysis and forecasting: The analytical and theoretical frameworks

Introduction

This book employs FPA to explore the post-Cold War policies of the P5 and their consequences for the LIO. FPA is also used as the foundation for the scenario-building exercise in Chapter 11. It can be defined as a method that seeks to explain the foreign policy decisions and behaviour of states in the international system. Furthermore, FPA seeks to identify who the main actors are in the foreign policy decision-making process and the factors influencing their foreign policy decisions (Smith et al. 2012, p. 14). Main actors include state institutions, such as the Office of the President and/or Prime Minister, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and intelligence agencies. Non-state actors – including business, the media, and civil society – also influence foreign policymaking processes. For example, the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) controls state machinery and the government's agenda and is therefore a key non-state actor in China's foreign policy decisions and actions.

The ultimate goal of the FPA is to understand how foreign policy decisions are made, why state leaders make certain foreign policy choices, and why states then undertake certain actions in the international environment. Moreover, the FPA seeks to assess the opportunities and

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constraints presented by the international environment, which affect the foreign policy options and actions of states (Breuning 2007, p. 16).

FPA operates on three levels: the individual, the nation-state, and the systemic (international) level. Causal factors across these three levels constitute the analytical framework for this book.

The second half of this chapter identifies and justifies the application of Realism and Liberalism as the two theoretical lenses of the book when examining the LIO. Together, the conceptual and theoretical frameworks provide a foundation for the concise and comprehensive analyses of the post-1989 foreign policies of the P5 *vis-à-vis* the LIO in Chapters 6–10. Realism and Liberalism are foundational IR theories that, when consulted jointly, can explain phenomena of international cooperation and stability, as well as conflict and volatility. The analytical and theoretical frameworks succinctly explain the key cause-effect factors (i.e., foreign policies of the P5 and their resultant phenomena) used to forecast the likely scenarios regarding the future of the LIO presented in Chapter 11.

Individual-level factors

Bojang (2018, p. 7) asserts that it is individuals who make foreign policy decisions and not states. According to Russett et al. (2010, p. 13), the decisions of foreign policymakers are influenced by individual convictions, preferences, personality traits, intellectual strengths or weaknesses, and personal values, beliefs and world views. Often, foreign policymakers must make a decision without conclusive facts, which compels them to rely on their own intellect, intuition, analytical ability, values, personal aspirations and preferences (Russett et al. 2010, p. 15). Even though government institutions and society can constrain a leader's personal preferences, beliefs and aspirations, these personality traits often determine a state's foreign policy trajectory during times of crisis and uncertainty.

Indeed, throughout history, many states have pursued foreign policy actions such as declaring war as a result of the personal ambitions and convictions of their leaders. For instance, Nazi Germany invaded Czechoslovakia in 1939 not because it really needed to, but because of Adolf Hitler's personal ambition to make Germany the pre-eminent state in Europe and perhaps a global hegemon (Weisiger 2013, p. 107).

The domestic characteristics of states

The foreign policy postures and choices of states are influenced by various domestic (i.e., intrastate) factors. A state's history and political values play an important role. National political leaders often look to the past for guidance when deciding on foreign policy actions (Rani 2008, p. 5). As a result, they

tend to continue along the same path followed by their predecessors. For example, generations of American presidents have continued to promote democracy and free-market capitalism worldwide. For instance, the importance of US democratic values, such as freedom of expression and people's rights to elect a government of their choice, has been used by successive US governments to gain the support of American citizens for efforts to overthrow authoritarian governments elsewhere in the world (Russet et al. 2010, p. 18). Examples include Afghanistan (2001), Iraq (2003) and Libya (2011), with the US acting either unilaterally, in concert with allies, or via NATO (Congressional Research Service 2020, p. 20).

Successive US governments have justified these invasions to their citizens by arguing that they promote democracy and other enlightened values beyond American borders. Moreover, they demonstrate how a nation's history and its political values can combine to determine its foreign policy actions. Thus, a combination of history and enduring national values greatly influences the foreign policy choices and actions of states.

Foreign policy has also been greatly influenced by colonialism. Bojang (2018, p. 5) argues that the foreign policies of many Asian and African states are still shaped or influenced by their erstwhile colonial masters. For instance, France remains a key political, economic and cultural partner and ally of many former French colonies, particularly in Africa. The same is true for the UK and its close relationship with former colonies and members of the British Commonwealth (Bojang 2018, p. 5). Thus, one can observe that the political and economic ties formed under colonialism cultivated a culture of involvement by former colonial powers in the political and economic affairs of former colonies. Indeed, both France and the UK tend to have extensive commercial and financial interests in their former colonies, which work to sustain their influence over foreign policy positions and options.

The type of political system and government is an additional determinant of foreign policy. The foreign policies of a democratic government are constrained by accountability institutions, such as parliament and the judiciary. Therefore, democratic governments need to justify any radical foreign policy decision or action that departs materially from the previous norm (Russett et al. 2010, p. 17). For instance, the British government needed to stage a referendum (held in June 2016) before it could withdraw from the EU. By contrast, authoritarian regimes can make foreign policy decisions more rapidly because they are not constrained by democratic institutions, and because they often reflect their rulers' personal vision of the given state's role in world affairs (Bojang 2018, p. 6).

Well-coordinated public opinion, particularly in democratic political systems with an entrenched democratic political culture, also influences

foreign policy (Rani 2008, p. 7). For instance, growing public opposition to US involvement in the Vietnam War (1955–75) – a proxy war caused by the Cold War rivalry between the US and the Soviet Union – eventually forced the US government to withdraw its troops from Vietnam. Thus, public opinion tends to influence foreign policy in democratic political systems, in which governments are accountable to citizens. However, for public opinion to be effective in pressuring and influencing foreign policymakers, it must be coordinated and consistent (Rani 2008, p. 8).

By contrast, authoritarian governments face fewer restraints on their foreign policy options. For example, the Russian government under President Vladimir Putin did not need the support of its citizens when it annexed the Crimean Peninsula from Ukraine in March 2014. Moscow was able to pursue such a radical foreign policy due to Russia's entrenched authoritarian political culture, whereby Russian citizens and political institutions are generally subservient to their government.

Another intrastate factor that influences foreign policy agendas is that of the level of economic development. Industrialised states tend to formulate foreign policies aimed at maintaining their dominance of trade and financial markets in the global economy (Bojang 2018, p. 6). States with industrialised economies have the resources to finance ambitious foreign policy goals, such as building and maintaining military bases in foreign countries, as a means of leveraging global influence (Russett et al. 2010, p. 17). Moreover, states with industrialised economies provide economic aid and loans to developing and underdeveloped states in exchange for influencing or controlling their domestic and/or foreign policies. A case in point is China's use of aid and infrastructure investment to African states through the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) in exchange for political influence in Africa.

Conversely, states with developing or underdeveloped economies tend to pursue more limited foreign policy agendas. As a result of limited resources, these developing and underdeveloped states tend to cede a portion of their domestic and foreign policy autonomy to industrialised countries in exchange for development aid and loans (Bojang 2018, p. 6).

Military capabilities also determine a state's foreign policy options. States with significant 'hard power' capabilities (in the form of military strength and the capacity to institute economic sanctions) have the option of using force when pursuing their foreign policy goals. Hard power is often exercised by Great Powers when diplomacy is ineffective in achieving the desired foreign policy objectives (Smith, Hadfield & Dunne 2012, p. 39). For example, when Russia could not prevent political change in Ukraine in 2014, it decided to annex Crimea in order to maintain its historical links with the latter territory. By contrast, states with weaker military capabilities are often compelled to seek military alliances with states with strong armed

forces or join international security organisations as a means of ensuring their defence and protection.

Foreign policy is also influenced by a state's geographic location, as well as geographical features. For example, the initial US decision not to enter either of the two world wars in the 20th century was enabled by its location on the western side of the Atlantic Ocean, far away from Europe (Rani 2008, p. 7). Moreover, it is generally accepted that Germany's location in the centre of Europe and its resultant quest for *lebensraum* [German: living space] led to its invasions of neighbouring states, which triggered WWII. Moreover, a state that is located in a warring or war-prone geographic region will be compelled to seek military alliances in order to safeguard its security. Put differently, states in such regions are sometimes forced to embrace war in order to protect themselves and their populations.

Foreign policy choices and agendas are also influenced by states' geographic size and the size of their populations (Rani 2008, p. 6). On the one hand, states with large territories and populations and with powerful armed forces and industrialised economies tend to possess the resources that enable them to pursue ambitious foreign policies. For example, the large population, military might and industrialised economy of the US have allowed this superpower to develop and maintain an extensive foreign policy agenda that includes military alliances with traditional allies as well as promoting democratic ideals across the world. China and Russia are also large countries with large populations and, therefore, highly active in the security, economic and political affairs of their respective regions as well as in world affairs.

Foreign policies are also influenced by the availability of natural resources. For example, extensive oil reserves have turned the Middle East into an important and influential player in the global political economy. Due to the centrality of oil in the global economy, the oil-rich Middle Eastern states of Bahrain, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait and Qatar have been able to pursue an influential, and at times assertive, foreign policy through the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) (Russet et al. 2018, p. 10). Indeed, possession of this scarce but vital resource has enabled these oil-endowed states to withstand global condemnation of their domestic human rights records.

States with small territories and populations tend to pursue more modest foreign policies. However, some small states – such as Israel and Qatar in the Middle East, as well as the UK – play a major role in international affairs (Bojang 2018, p. 5).

International system factors

There are factors in the international system that tend to compel or pressure states into pursuing certain foreign policies. The first of these is

international law. International law is a set of rules created by states to regulate interstate relations. International law and norms, such as the principle of sovereignty, seek to limit what states can do in the international arena and to protect the independence of all states, thereby deterring state(s) from invading other states (Bojang 2018, pp. 2–3).

However, states that are dissatisfied with international law and the principle of sovereignty tend to pursue a revisionist foreign policy that goes against the provisions of international law. This is a feasible option due to the non-binding nature of international law. Revisionist states tend to invade and/or subjugate other states (Rani 2008, p. 4). Indeed, various revisionist countries have directly or indirectly pursued foreign policies that violate international law. As a case in point, the Russian annexation of the Crimean Peninsula in March 2014 can be regarded as a direct violation of the international law of sovereignty. Moreover, violations of international law are not limited to revisionist states. For example, the American invasion of Iraq in March 2003 was also a violation of international law. There are also cases of indirect violation of international law, such as when a state covertly intervenes in the domestic affairs of another state. Examples of indirect violations of international law include the various proxy wars sponsored by the US and the Soviet Union during the Cold War.

Thus, international law tends to inspire either conformist, status quo-type foreign policies or to stimulate revisionist foreign policies by states that see no value or virtue in international law.

The interdependence of states in the form of trade, interstate investments and aid

According to Rani (2008, p. 4), states that trade heavily with one another are more likely to work towards maintaining good political and economic relations, and to avoid or manage emerging conflicts. For example, increased financial and trade relations among EU member states have made war less likely among them. This is a significant development, given that Europe is historically prone to large-scale interstate wars such as the Napoleonic wars of the 19th century and the world wars of the 20th century.

The global distribution of military and economic power is one of the key international factors that determine the foreign policies of states. When the international system is dominated by two powerful states, a condition known as bipolarity, other, less powerful states are compelled to align themselves with either of those superpowers (Russet et al. 2018, p. 14), with little scope for independent foreign policymaking. The Cold War was an example of such a bipolar distribution of global power. Most states had to choose between aligning themselves with either the US and its

democratic Western allies or the Soviet Union and its communist Eastern allies.

When there are multiple Great Powers with equal economic and military capabilities, this is known as a *multipolar* distribution of global power; a Great Power is defined as a nation-state with two key capabilities: first, it possesses demonstrable global authority and is able to influence events across the globe. Second, it possesses agenda-setting capability, which enables it to persuade many other states to take certain issues seriously and take action (Stevenson 2019, p. 1). In a multipolar international system, smaller states are able to pursue their national interests in a flexible way and form relations with states of their choosing (Bojang 2018, p. 3). As such, smaller, developing states have greater foreign policy autonomy in multipolar international systems.

Changes in the international environment, such as the rising political influence and economic power of an emerging hegemonic state, can also influence the foreign policy options and choices of the rest of the states in the international system (Rani 2008, p. 10). For example, the emerging political influence and economic power of the Soviet Union in the second half of the 20th century compelled many Eastern European states to adopt pro-Soviet foreign policies in exchange for economic aid.

International organisations, such as the UN, facilitate interstate interactions and cooperation on matters of common interest, including trade and defence. These international organisations are an attempt at *global governance*, which refers to the collective management of common problems at the international level. Global governance is exercised by global and regional institutions, international law, and non-governmental organisations (Office of the Director of National Intelligence 2010; Mulley 2008, p. 1). Therefore, a state's foreign policy is further influenced by its membership of global and regional organisations since it partially relinquishes its sovereignty to those institutions (Bojang 2018, p. 4). For instance, the UN Charter forbids member states from arbitrarily invading other states, which compels states to resist the temptations of territorial subjugation. However, powerful states such as the G5 tend to use their influence to control the agenda of international organisations. At times, powerful states have also gone against popular decisions taken by international organisations. However, international organisations remain a key international factor that influences the foreign policy agenda of any given state.

Military alliances are international security arrangements that further influence the foreign policy agendas of their member states (Bojang 2018, p. 4). Like international law, alliances shape the foreign policy decisions of member states because they are obliged to respond to the requests of

alliance partners and should avoid foreign policies that are offensive to alliance partners. In the 21st century, NATO remains a premier and institutionalised military alliance which shapes the foreign military actions of its 31 member states (two in North America and 29 in Europe). *Inter alia*, NATO has called on its member states to intervene in various conflicts, such as the Kosovo War (1999), Afghanistan (2001) and Libya (2011).

These three foreign policy determinants play a major role in explaining and partially predicting a state's foreign policy and will be used – in conjunction with the theoretical framework that follows – to explain the foreign policies of the G5 and develop the scenarios of the future of the LIO and global governance.

Theoretical framework: A guide to explaining events in international affairs

Realism and Liberalism are two foundational IR theories which provide contrasting explanations of the determinants of a state's foreign policy and the goals pursued by states in international affairs. These contrasting views are often referred to as the *First Great Debate* in IR and continue to dominate IR and foreign policy discourse. Furthermore, Liberalism and Realism are empirically testable IR theories that describe, explain, predict and prescribe the behaviour of states in international affairs. These four features of Liberalism and Realism make them invaluable to this book's twin objectives of analysing the attitudes of the P5 towards the LIO, and to forecast whether their foreign policies and actions are likely to maintain or collapse the LIO. An additional reason for adopting these two theories as the theoretical framework is because they are able to explain contrasting phenomena of peace, international order, and cooperation, as well as conflict and war. Given the focus of this book on the era 1989 to 2024, it is important to have a dual theoretical framework that is not limited to explaining either periods of order and cooperation or conflict and instability.

Realism

Realism's perspective on interstate behaviour and international affairs is premised on four basic assumptions. The first is that human beings are inherently selfish and competitive, always seeking to dominate and exert power over others (Smith et al. 2012, p. 36). Because states are managed by human beings, this translates into states that pursue power and domination over other states. As a result, realists view international relations as an arena destined for conflict and a struggle for domination and power (Russett et al. 2010, p. 28).

A second assumption of realism is that the behaviour of states is mainly driven by their national interest. This includes ensuring the survival of the state and the security of its population and securing more military and economic power relative to other states (Jackson & Sorenson 2013, p. 66). For Realists, states are rational, unitary actors whose foreign policies are primarily aimed at pursuing their national interests regardless of their political values or political and economic systems (Russett et al. 2010, p. 28).

A third assumption of realism is that there is no world government to regulate the conduct of states in the international environment, a condition known as *anarchy*. Anarchy means that states must rely on self-help. This means, in turn, that states must ensure their own security and survival and can resort to violence against other states if this is needed to ensure their security and achieve their national interests. Therefore, due to anarchy, Realists believe that states are primary actors in the international system, and that all other actors – such as international organisations – are subservient to them (Russett et al. 2013, p. 29).

In the absence of a world government to regulate state behaviour, conflicts and wars are inevitable because the main foreign policy goals of states are to pursue their national interests of survival, power accumulation, security and domination. Since states are unequal in terms of military and economic power, there is an international hierarchy based on these power differences. This hierarchy determines the foreign policy behaviour of states, with each state acting according to its power capabilities. Furthermore, realists understand the international environment as being primarily determined by a struggle for power and domination among Great Powers. Weaker states are less important and are used as proxies in the struggle for global domination among the Great Powers (Jackson & Sorensen 2013, p. 66).

Therefore, according to realism, the foreign policy of any state is driven by the urge to ensure its security and survival. In an anarchic world, security and survival are ensured by pursuing greater military and economic power relative to other states. This is clearly relevant to the main theme of this book, namely the degree to which the P5 are likely to adhere to the LIO or pursue divergent foreign policy goals.

Indeed, realism's depiction of the relationship among the Great Powers as a competition for global hegemony accounts for the ways in which they occasionally bypass international organisations in their pursuit of national ambitions. Various realist sub-schools have emerged over time, which are discussed below.

Classical realism

To understand *classical realism,* one needs to understand its inspiration, namely the Peloponnesian War in Ancient Greece. Thucydides's study of

the Peloponnesian War (431–404 BCE) is regarded as a founding contribution to and starting point of Classical Realism. The Peloponnesian War was a war between rival military alliances in Ancient Greece, led by Athens and Sparta. These were the two most powerful Greek city-states following the Greek–Persian War (499 BCE–449 BC), in which all Greek city-states had formed an alliance that defeated the Persian Empire. During this war, Athens was able to drive the Persians out of the smaller Greek city-states, which then fell under Athenian control. Thus, by the end of the Greek–Persian War, Athens controlled many Greek city-states (Jackson & Sorensen 2013, p. 68).

Smaller Greek city-states that had not fallen under Athenian rule and the bigger city-states, such as Sparta, then formed a military alliance known as the Peloponnesian League to counteract any further Athenian expansion and domination. This alliance included the city-state of Corinth. When Athens got into a trade and naval competition, and later conflict, with Corinth, the other members of the Peloponnesian League (led by Sparta) became involved, resulting in the Peloponnesian War (431–404 BCE). This became an armed conflict between the Sparta-led Peloponnesian League and the Delian League, an alliance between Athens and the smaller Greek city-states that had come under its control during the Greek–Persian war (Jackson & Sorensen 2013, p. 68).

After the war, it was recorded in the ground-breaking *History of the Peloponnesian War*, written by Thucydides, an Athenian historian who also served as an Athenian general during the war. According to Thucydides, the war was caused by the power disparities between powerful Athens and the less powerful city-states led by Sparta. When the weaker city-states decided to form a military alliance to prevent Athens from being too powerful and expanding further, this led to an escalation of insecurities that had already been caused by Athens's supremacy at the conclusion of the Greek–Persian War. With the creation of a military alliance (the Peloponnesian League) to balance against further Athenian expansion, Athens itself shored up its alliance with the city-states it had annexed under its control (the Delian League). A conflict between Athens and a member of the Peloponnesian League (Corinth) then led to a widespread conflict between the two oppositional alliances (Athens-led Delian League against the Sparta-led Peloponnesian League). This was essentially a war caused by Athens's quest for Greek supremacy and the Peloponnesian League's attempts to prevent Athenian supremacy, which would threaten the autonomy and security of the league's members (Waring 2015, p. 3).

Thus, one can argue that Thucydides's diagnosis of the causes of the Peloponnesian War is the founding text of the theory of realism. His diagnosis that the accumulation of power by Athens and the reactionary attempt by the Peloponnesian League to counterbalance this power

remains a core element of realism in the 21st century. Furthermore, these ideas of power accumulation, insecurity and the counterbalancing of power remain central determinants of foreign policy and state conduct in this century.

Another early classical realist was the Florentine diplomat, philosopher and historian Niccolò di Bernardo dei Machiavelli (1469–1527), often called the father of modern political philosophy and political science. He argued that the purpose of foreign policy was to preserve the independence and survival of the state, via military power as well as diplomatic statecraft. His main assumption was that the international system was a dangerous and anarchic environment. However, he did concede that the international system also created opportunities for states to accumulate power and wealth, provided they had crafty, skilful and even ruthless leaders. Thus, Machiavelli concluded that foreign policy was an instrument of power accumulation by skilful leaders who could anticipate and exploit economic opportunities in the international arena better than the leaders of rival states. Most notably, he argued that states should denounce morality and selfishly pursue their foreign policy goals of security and survival, even by means of violence (Jackson & Sorensen 2013, pp. 69–70).

In essence, Machiavelli advocated Realist statecraft, namely that states should proactively pursue their economic and military interests and secure those interests more rapidly and more efficiently than others. The state was responsible for ensuring the security of its citizens, a goal devoid of any moral constraints, which should guide its decisions and actions in the international environment.

Thomas Hobbes (1588–1679 ce) is another classical realist whose philosophy remains relevant to current foreign policy. In essence, Hobbes argues that while the creation of a state nullifies domestic anarchy in order to ensure the internal security of its citizens, this is not replicated in the international environment, which is essentially anarchic. This anarchic state, brought about by the absence of a world government, results in states pursuing their own security at all costs. This, in turn, creates an international security dilemma in that one state's efforts to secure itself by building strong armed forces result in others feeling paranoid, insecure and suspicious. These threatened states then reacted by accumulating their own military power. The result is an international system characterised by insecurity, mistrust, suspicion, and paranoia among states (Jackson & Sorensen 2013, p. 72).

Hans Morgenthau's significant contribution to classical realism is outlined in his book *Politics among nations: The struggle for power and peace* (1948). In this seminal work, Morgenthau (1904–1980) premises his Realist

thesis on his observation that human nature is innately selfish, with humans being inclined to pursue their desire for power and advantage over others. This inevitably leads to conflicts. Because states are led by human beings, interstate relations are also based on power politics, whereby each state seeks to advance its own national interests and ambitions by gaining more power than others (Wiecklawski 2011, p. 109).

Morgenthau outlines six principles that determine interstate relations. The first principle is that relations between states are governed by objective laws that are rooted in human nature. Since human nature is characterised by selfishness, self-interest, egoism and the pursuit of power, interstate relations are also based on power, competition, and a desire to dominate the international system (McQueen 2016, p. 2). The second principle is that the foreign policies of all states are based on their national interest. This essentially refers to the pursuit of military, economic and technological advances that will enable them to dominate other states and, eventually, the international system (Morgenthau 2006, p. 4).

The third principle is that the pursuit of national interest is a universal foreign policy principle followed by all states throughout history and remains relevant irrespective of time and place. The fourth is that morality has no place in foreign policy and that the only morality to which a state is bound is to ensure that it provides for the safety and security of the population under its jurisdiction and care (McQueen 2016, p. 2). Thus, while individuals are morally obliged to act in ways that are just, states are primarily obliged to ensure their territorial security and survival by all means necessary, even if this means violating the moral principles of liberty in the process. According to this principle, a state can declare war and suspend civil liberties if the end result is the continued survival of itself and its people.

The fifth principle of Morgenthau's realist philosophy is that the political actions of states should be guided by practicality and rationality rather than morality or ideology. This means that a state's foreign policy must pursue its goals of security, survival and power in the most efficient and practical way possible (Morgenthau 2006, p. 9). The sixth principle is that politics is an autonomous sphere that is not bound or governed by ethics. However, ethics does have a regulatory role to play in order to prevent unpleasant and brutal interstate relations. The main point is that ethics must remain subordinate to political processes if it is antithetical to the attainment of the state's national interest (McQueen 2016, p. 2).

Therefore, Morgenthau places the pursuit of national interest and the accumulation of power at the centre of foreign policy, thereby ensuring a state's continued freedom from control by other states. Like Machiavelli, he believes that morality and ethics should not constrain the state's pursuit of

its foreign policy goals. Morality applies to ordinary citizens, whereas national governments have a permanent political mandate to ensure the survival and welfare of the state, which should not be constrained by morality.

Therefore, Thucydides, Machiavelli, Hobbes and Morgenthau all place the pursuit of power at the centre of foreign policy and state behaviour. For classical realists, this is the central determinant of any state's foreign policy. This is necessary, they believe, to preserve the independence of those states from foreign control and to ensure the security of their populations.

Neorealism and its sub-schools

Kenneth Waltz (1924–2013), the founder of neorealism, also known as structural realism, is regarded as one of the most important IR theorists of the past 50 years. Waltz introduced the notion of Neorealism in his seminal book *Theory of International politics* (1979), thereby reviving the relevance of realism in IR scholarship. Waltz reiterates the classical realist assertion that nation-states are the primary actors in an anarchic international system devoid of a world government. Another assumption that neorealism shares with classical realism is that in the anarchic international system, the primary foreign policy goal of states is to ensure their survival and maintain their sovereignty (Mearsheimer 2009, p. 241).

Neorealism distinguishes itself by arguing that a state's foreign policy and behaviour is actually determined by the structure of the international system, its components, and the continuities and changes within this international system. In particular, Waltz argues that rather than human nature as per classical realism, the foreign policies and actions of states are determined by the distribution of military and economic power in the international system (Mearsheimer 2009, p. 241). Neorealism postulates that powerful states are vital because they can determine what happens to the other states in the international system. In essence, then, powerful states serve as the *de facto* managers of the international system. In a *unipolar system*, military and economic power is concentrated in one state, a hegemon, which then determines the rules of the international system (James & Brecher 1988, p. 33). The international system can be a *bipolar system*, whereby there are two powerful states (i.e., superpowers), or a *multipolar system*, populated by multiple powerful states with similar military capabilities, economic power and influence. The distribution of power is important because it determines the degree of foreign policy autonomy available to the rest of the states that constitute the international system (Telbami 2002, p. 160).

A bipolar international system comprising two competing hegemonic states, such as the US and Soviet Union during the Cold War, compels other states to align themselves with either of the two hegemons in order to

obtain benefits from them. The two hegemons seek to incorporate non-hegemonic states into their respective spheres of influence, thereby limiting the power and influence of the rival hegemonic state. The benefits of aligning with either of the two hegemons come in the form of investments, preferential trade agreements, financial aid and military security arrangements (James & Brecher 1988, p. 33).

In a bipolar international system, the two hegemons are also confined to balance-of-power foreign policies, whereby both seek to recruit other states for inclusion in their sphere of influence, thereby containing the power and influence of the rival hegemonic state (Waltz 1964, p. 882). Therefore, a bipolar distribution of power restricts the autonomy of foreign policy in non-hegemonic states. Bipolarity also restricts the foreign policy choices of the two hegemons that control the international order, with both hegemons competing for control over non-hegemonic states and territories.

Neorealists also assert that the foreign policies of states in a multipolar world order are determined by issues of the balance of power. In essence, most of the powerful states in a multipolar system are inclined to adopt domestic and foreign policies that seek to prevent one state from attaining global hegemony, which would then threaten the security of the rest. Moreover, neorealists postulate that states will even go to war to preserve the power equilibrium that maintains a multipolar order (Schweller 2016, p. 4).

Essentially, the bipolar Cold War international system compelled the US and Soviet Union – the two superpowers in that system – to adopt foreign policies aimed at preserving a balance of power and containing the military capabilities, economic power, and political influence of the other. Likewise, the Cold War system confined the majority of other states to forming relations or an alliance with either of these two superpowers in exchange for trade, investment and security benefits. It is worth noting that, despite numerous proxy wars, the Cold War order did not result in a war between the US and the Soviet Union.

In contrast with bipolarity, neorealism contends that a multipolar international system – comprising multiple Great Powers of roughly equal military and economic capabilities – results in greater foreign policy autonomy and options for all states (Wade 2011, p. 351). Indeed, a multipolar system allows smaller and less powerful states to exercise greater foreign policy autonomy and a variety of means for pursuing their economic and financial interests in the global political economy. Waltz (1964, p. 882), however, argues that despite offering greater foreign policy independence for states, a multipolar system is less stable than a bipolar system. Empirically, multiple Great Powers pursuing their varied, and sometimes competing, national interests inevitably run into conflict with each other,

resulting in Great Power wars. The two world wars of the 20th century resulted from multipolar international systems – for instance, World War II broke out because of the imperialist territorial expansion ambitions of Japan, Nazi Germany and Italy. The 1930s multipolar order was, therefore, inherently unstable, resulting in WWII. By contrast, bipolar international systems are more stable because they consist of two powerful states that seek to maintain a mutual balance of power (power parity) and are able to exercise caution and resolve their issues through compromise, thereby reducing the potential causes of a Great Power war (Waltz 1964, p. 882).

John Mearsheimer (1947–) is another significant contributor to neorealism. Like Waltz, Mearsheimer argues that a bipolar distribution of power leads to a more peaceful international community of states. This is because two hegemons with roughly equal military power, ensuring mutually assured destruction (MAD) in the event of war, are forced to manage their conflicts and prevent direct military warfare. Furthermore, Mearsheimer asserts that the bipolar Cold War system was effective in transforming a historically violent Europe into a peaceful and stable region. This is in contrast to pre-1945 multipolar systems in which multiple European great powers (the UK, Germany, Italy and the Soviet Union) fought successive wars with each other in the absence of a hegemon that could have managed European relations in that period (Jackson & Sorensen 2013, p. 82–83). Therefore, the existence of two hegemonic states in an international system can mitigate anarchy by acting as *de facto* policing states that provide foreign policy direction and a degree of stability.

Mearsheimer agrees with Waltz that the foreign policies of states are essentially determined by the international distribution of power and labels his theory *defensive realism*. Waltz's essential argument is that states accumulate power in order to maintain a balance of power, thereby ensuring that no state becomes too powerful to consider invading or threatening others. This policy of maintaining a relatively equal distribution of global power ensures the security and survival of states in an anarchic international system. Waltz's rationale is that this accumulation of military and economic power by a state will deter external threats and invasions, thereby ensuring its security. For Mearsheimer, states are more aggressive than the way in which Waltz portrays them, arguing instead that states essentially seek hegemony in the international system – not just to maintain a balance of power aimed at ensuring their security and survival (Toft 2005, p. 383).

Mearsheimer thus offers an *offensive realist* thesis that shares many of the assumptions of other realist sub-schools. First, offensive realism asserts that, due to the structure of the international system, Great Power relations often end in conflict. Echoing his realist predecessors, Mearsheimer argues that the anarchic nature of the international system results in insecurity for all states. Amid such anarchy, states rely on self-help to ensure their security

and survival. The best means of attaining security for any state is to attain more power relative to other states, with the ultimate aim of becoming a global or regional hegemon. The pursuit of global hegemony particularly applies to Great Powers because they have a limitless appetite for power (Snyder 2002, p. 152). States pursue power through various means. One is to wage war against another state. Another is to 'blackmail' rival and/or weaker states into conceding resources and information. Another way of weakening rivals is to keep them involved in protracted and costly conflicts while gaining more power on the sidelines (Shiping 2008, p. 150).

Mearsheimer also highlights the importance of supplementing the relentless pursuit of absolute power with balances of power – in other words, matching the power and capabilities of other states. This is a further means of ensuring state security and survival. Forming alliances is one way of achieving a balance of power (Toft 2005, p. 385). Consider the following examples of the enduring US foreign policy of creating balances of power with those of rival states, also known as *containment*. First, the US contained China's influence in East Asia by empowering Japan and South Korea, both traditional Washington allies since WWII (Hass, Mcelveen & Williams 2020, p. 43). Moreover, after 1945, the US embarked on a foreign policy of globally containing and outlasting the Soviet Union. The endeavour by states to become hegemons through power accumulation and creating balances of power is the essence of Mearsheimer's theory of *offensive realism*.

History amply corroborates the offensive realist assumption of the relentless pursuit of power by great powers. For instance, WWII was caused by Nazi Germany's insatiable quest for European domination. Likewise, the offensive realist assertion of the need for creating balances of power is corroborated by recent developments in global governance. The formation of the BRICS+ bloc (Brazil, Russia, India, China, South Africa, Egypt, Ethiopia, Iran, and Saudi Arabia) is a case in point. BRICS+ defines itself as a regional bloc seeking to reform the LIO so that it becomes more responsive to the interests of the Global South. Alternatively, one can postulate that the BRICS+ bloc has the covert objective of balancing US hegemony in Eastern Europe, Asia, East Asia, South America and Africa. Arguably, China and Russia seek to contain US and NATO global influence through BRICS+.

The third structural realist (neo-realist) sub-school is *hegemonic stability theory*. Essentially, this argues that when a single state dominates the international system, it tends to create stability and an established international order (Smith et al. 2012, p. 41). For example, the current international order is led by the US as a sole superpower (Wade 2011, p. 350). This order is essentially regulated by liberal international institutions, such as the UN, the EU, the World Bank and the IMF, as well as international law. These institutions and international law provide order to the international system. The US is one of the founding states of the UN and

other liberal international institutions, and its continued endorsement and financial support provide them with global legitimacy. Through these international institutions, the US has been able to project its political and economic values, thereby entrenching its global influence while simultaneously bringing order to the international system (Smith et al. 2012, p. 41).

The fourth structural realist perspective, *power transition theory*, dictates that a war is likely to occur whenever an Emerging Power begins to reach the same level of economic and military power as an established hegemon. Should the emerging state defeat the incumbent superpower, the international order could collapse. Smith et al. (2012, p. 41) predict that the emergence of China as a superpower in the current international order could lead to war with the US for two reasons. First, the US may wage a war against China to preserve its hitherto unrivalled hegemony. Alternatively, as the emerging hegemon (China) reaches power parity with the incumbent hegemon (the US), it may seek to contest for sole leadership of the international system through war, with an expectation of winning. Following this, the Emerging Power could reform the existing order or replace it with a new order (Tammen, Kugler & Lemke 2011, p. 2).

According to the power transition theory, the current liberal order – underpinned by the UN – would collapse if China were to defeat the US in the hypothetical war for global supremacy. China would then configure an international order of its own, underpinned by international institutions that would protect and promote its political and economic values.

Liberalism

Liberalism provides an optimistic view of foreign policy, interstate relations and the international system. Like realism, liberalism is an umbrella IR perspective that encompasses various sub-schools. However, they all share the following core assumptions. Liberals hold a positive view of human nature, arguing that humans have the capacity to reason and cooperate. While they agree that human beings are self-interested and competitive, they also posit that humans have many common interests, such as survival and success, and that they can achieve these common interests through collaborative action and cooperation (Jackson & Sorensen 2013, p. 100).

Since states are created and managed by humans, they can also cooperate to achieve their mutual goals in the international system. This potential for interstate cooperation is enhanced by the fact that states, like humans, have common foreign policy goals, such as ensuring their survival, military and economic security and development. Therefore, liberals believe that the anarchic international system can be replaced with or superseded by peaceful coexistence and cooperation between states. Consequently,

liberals reject the realist assumption that war and conflict are inevitable (Jackson & Sorensen 2013, p. 100). These assumptions of human reason and the capacity to cooperate are the unifying factors for the various sub-schools of liberalism: Idealism, liberalism, institutional liberalism and interdependence liberalism. All these sub-schools describe, explain and prescribe factors that drive a state's foreign policy.

Idealism

Idealism is an early 20th-century strand of liberalism which prescribes the ideal foreign policy posture that all states should pursue. The Idealism sub-school emerged after WWI and was driven by the prevailing post-war sentiment of preventing the hitherto unprecedented loss of life and human suffering as caused by the war (Russett et al. 2010, p. 27). Since this war was largely caused by military alliances and balance of power politics, post-1918 Idealism called for the reform of the international system as well as a shift from authoritarian rule towards democratic forms of governance.

US President Woodrow Wilson was a leading figure of post-1919 idealism, based on his Fourteen Points Programme, which effectively advocated a new international order based on liberal values. The first point called for the political independence of all states and the universal establishment of democratic governments. The rationale behind this call for universal democracy is that democratic values and ideals would put an end to authoritarian governments and autocrats, who are empirically inclined to initiate international wars (Jackson & Sorensen 2013, p. 36).

The second point advocates the establishment of a League of Nations, which would regulate interstate behaviour and guarantee the sovereignty of both powerful and weak states. This international organisation would be founded on a mission of ensuring interstate cooperation, peaceful coexistence, and world security (Jackson & Sorensen 2013, p. 36). Wilson's belief in the ability of an international institution, the League, to bring about world peace and security is a basic assumption shared by theories that fall under the umbrella liberal IR perspective.

Idealism was grounded in the belief that the League would make common rules for peaceful interstate relations, thereby eradicating the war-prone balance of power foreign policies that had led to WWI and other international wars. Idealists also posited that the League would be able to punish aggressive states that invade others, thereby deterring states from pursuing foreign policies that would disrupt international peace (Russett et al. 2010, p. 28). The failure of the League to pacify relations between states and the subsequent outbreak of WWII, resulted in scholarly disillusionment with idealism.

Interdependence liberalism

Robert Keohane and Joseph Nye introduced the notion of *interdependence liberalism* in their well-known book *Power and interdependence* (1977). It revived liberal IR thought in the 1970s. Interdependence liberalism posited that higher levels of interdependence among states were compelling them to pursue foreign policies based on cooperation. The 1973 world oil crisis, caused by OPEC's decision to stop exporting oil to Western countries, showed that states depended on each other survival. The embargo led to the rapid increase of global oil prices and higher levels of inflation but also raised standards of living (Kegley & Blanton 2011, p. 41).

The OPEC decision had global economic consequences, demonstrating that decisions and events taken by one economic bloc could destabilise the entire global economy. Therefore, the 1973 world oil crisis demonstrated the economic interconnectedness between all states, which Keohane and Nye referred to as *complex interdependence* (Kegley & Blanton 2011, p. 41).

According to them, OPEC's oil embargo also revealed changes in the nature of power. The use of crude oil, a crucial economic commodity, as a bargaining tool demonstrated that economic power was a key source of influence in the global political economy. The elevation of economic power had eroded the hitherto unrivalled and privileged status of military might in world affairs. Indeed, industrialised countries had, since the 1950s, gradually shifted away from a preoccupation with the accumulation of military power towards a foreign policy whose aim was to attain economic development. To this end, those industrialised countries had increased trade relationships and investments among each other (Jackson & Sorensen 2013, p. 106). This has led to unprecedented levels of interdependence among states, with political and economic events in one state having significant impacts on others. This was the essence of economic and financial organisation.

Interdependence liberalism holds that the awareness of this interdependence compels states to denounce war and seek cooperation and the peaceful resolution of interstate conflicts. This is because war would disrupt mutually beneficial trade and investments among states and jeopardise their primary goal of achieving economic development and prosperity. This interdependence not only organises the relationship between the states in the Global North but also defines the economic and financial linkages between the Global North and Global South. These economic, trade and financial linkages have made war an undesirable foreign policy option and tool for most sovereign states (Walker 2013, p. 150). The states of Western Europe, through their membership in the EU, are the most vivid example of the complex interdependence that has

resulted in more cooperative relations among states. Thus, international organisations also facilitate and entrench the interdependence between states and, therefore, their cooperation. The significance of international organisations in shaping foreign policy is further articulated by *institutional liberalism*.

Institutional liberalism

The school of thought *institutional liberalism*, also known as *liberal institutionalism*, is another sub-school of liberalism. An international institution is defined as an international organisation or any rule that governs the foreign policies and actions of states. Institutional liberals argue that international institutions can promote and facilitate cooperation between states on issues of common concern, such as defence, trade and investment. For example, the WTO sets international free trade rules and policies that ought to be adopted and followed by all its member states, with the aim of increasing volumes of international trade. For institutional liberals, international institutions can influence the foreign policy of states, thereby reducing the unpredictability of the international system and facilitating greater cooperation and peace among states (Moravcsik 2002, p. 166).

Republican liberalism

Republican liberalism is premised on the assumption that liberal democratic governments are inherently peace-inclined and war-averse compared to non-democratic governments. The founder of this sub-school is held to be Immanuel Kant. It holds that democratic states are peace-inclined because of their domestic political cultures that advocate the peaceful resolution of conflicts. This then translates into peaceful relations among democratic states because democratic regimes share the common value of seeking peaceful relations as well as collective and consultative conflict resolution (Jackson & Sorensen 2013, p. 115). Therefore, there is a *zone of peace* among democratic nations, which can also be referred to as the *Pacific union*. Moreover, economic cooperation and interdependence between democratic nations further strengthen peaceful relations among democratic governments.

Conclusion

FPA and its three levels of analysis are adopted as a key method for explaining the foreign policies of the P5 toward the LIO from 1989 to 2024. This analytical framework is adopted in Chapters 6–10, whereby each country's international behaviour in the post-Cold War epoch is explained, particularly its implications for the liberal order.

The discipline of IR continues to be defined by the Great Debate between realism and liberalism, which is still ongoing. This is because these two IR theories provide testable contrasting perspectives of the international system and the relations among entities that constitute this system. These two theoretical traditions have sought to provide alternative explanations for prominent historical events – the Peloponnesian War, the Napoleonic Wars, the two world wars, the Cold War, and the end of the Cold War. In so doing, these two contrasting IR perspectives have demonstrated their analytical and prescriptive capacity and have aided and sustained the rise of IR as an independent and relevant social science discipline (Ikenberry 2009, p. 2005; Villanueva 2012, p. 2).

Despite the proliferation of new theories seeking to explain events in world politics, such as constructivism, the enduring ideas of *anarchy, power*, *interdependence*, *order* and *change* put forward by realism and liberalism remain key factors that drive events in the international system (Ikenberry 2009, p. 206). For this reason, liberalism and realism will play a major role in identifying the drivers for the four scenarios built in Chapter 11, in tandem with the FPA analytical framework outlined earlier in this chapter.

Taken together, these two theories are able to explain instances of international peace, cooperation and international order (which are key propositions of liberalism) as well as instances of international conflict and war (which realist theories view as an inevitable eventuality in international affairs). It is therefore beneficial to apply both liberalism and realism as a joint theoretical framework when examining the attitudes of the P5 towards the LIO and building scenarios for the latter.

The principles and ideas of these founding IR theories are enduringly useful for analysing interstate relations and foreign policy, and also effectively explain many historical events and processes. This includes the trade war between the US and China that began in 2019. *Power transition theory* allows one to understand that the new US trade barriers in respect of Chinese imports represent an attempt by Washington to contain China's rapidly rising economic power, which challenges the hegemony of the US. Likewise, idealists have been vindicated in their prediction of how international institutions can ensure international peace. Indeed, the UN has managed to prevent a direct Great Power war for more than 70 years. Chapter 4 explains how these conceptual and theoretical frameworks will be utilised to build the liberal order and global governance scenarios in Chapter 11.

Chapter 4

Methods for forecasting the future of the Liberal International Order

Introduction

This chapter sets out the methods used in Chapter 11 to construct scenarios of the development of the LIO in the 21st century. It starts by defining the notion of forecasting and explaining its utility for political science and IR. Next, it reviews the origins and evolution of forecasting, giving the reader an idea of the application of this practice across time.

As noted previously, the purpose of this book is to forecast the future of the LIO and global governance in the 21st century. This is done via scenario-building methodology. The post-1989 international conduct of the Great Powers serves as the key independent variable.

This chapter begins with a definition of scenario-building, its origins and its evolution. Various scenario-building methods and processes are outlined. Next, it sets out the method used to determine which of the four scenarios developed in Chapter 11 is the most likely to be realised. It concludes by examining how it seeks to generate scientific and pragmatic forecasts of the future of the LIO and global governance by applying scenario-building method, liberal and realist assumptions about state behaviour (Chapter 3), lessons from past international orders (Chapter 5), and the case studies of the post-1989 international conduct and attitudes of each of the P5 towards the LIO (Chapters 6–10).

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Defining forecasting, its salient features and some caveats

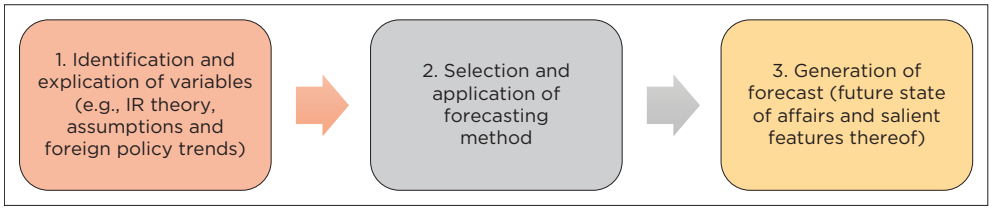
According to Dowding and Miller (2019, p. 1001) the main purpose of political science is to explain politico-economic events, which requires a degree of scientific forecasting. They define this as the practice of predicting future events. Sylvan and Thorson (1980, p. 265) conceptualise forecasting as statements about what is *likely* to happen in the future. The word *likely* is an admission that forecasts may turn out to be false or inaccurate. Therefore, forecasts are an estimation of probable future events based on defined variables and not definitive statements about what will happen in the future. Therefore, the rationale for forecasting lies in the fact that the future is essentially uncertain (Sylvan & Thorson 1980, p. 269). An example of forecasting is weather forecasting, whereby meteorologists estimate likely weather patterns that may be experienced at a specific location in a specific period. According to Sylvan and Thorson (1980, p. 265), forecasting is an important human activity which is used, among others, to make important foreign policy decisions, such as whether or not to invade foreign countries. Key factors (variables) that tend to inform forecasts are informed intuition, as well as extrapolations (estimations) based on tested scientific theories or established trends. Forecasting in the economic and social sciences is an established art, with game theory premised on the *prisoner's dilemma*, being a well-known basic forecasting method. The prisoner's dilemma is an intuitive forecasting method whereby the course of action chosen by an individual or group is influenced by an anticipation of the likely choice of action by another individual or group facing a similar predicament. Therefore, the prisoner's dilemma is a quasi-realist behavioural game in which an individual or group makes a choice based on their self-interest to preserve themselves at the expense of another person or group who faces a similar issue. In economics, game theory has evolved into a quantitative forecasting methodology that uses mathematical equations to build economic scenarios. These are used to aid economic decision-making and particularly to avoid adverse outcomes (Cave 1987, p. 1).

In peace and conflict research (an IR subfield), forecasting is defined as predictions about unrealised outcomes based on forecasts generated by models. Such models rely on data to generate plausible outcomes (Hegre et al. 2017, p. 113). Therefore, forecasting in peace and conflict research is quantitative in nature, based on quantitative data and the use of quantitative modelling tools (via automation). Similarly, Chapman (1971, p. 319) defines forecasting as a practical form of thinking and theorising whose objective is to proffer pathways towards the achievement of an ideal and valued state of affairs. This objective makes forecasting a

purposive and normative practice that humans cannot escape because they inhabit a world of multiple future probabilities with no certainties. Chapman (1971, p. 318) further notes that forecasts are based on intellectual assumptions attributable to various theories. With the benefit of these foundational assumptions and theories, forecasters then analyse events and apply specific forecasting techniques to generate plausible alternative futures. Forecasting methods can be either *quantitative* (in the form of statistical modelling) or *qualitative* – in the form of expert analytical narratives and projections (Wang & Chaovalitwongse 2011, p. 2). In terms of this definition, forecasting is a rational, methodical and scientific process through which various future possibilities – or possible futures – are identified.

A constituency of researchers is said to be preoccupied with the objective of improving the capacity of political science to forecast future political events. It is argued that this would position political science research as the 'gold standard' of the social sciences (Dowding & Miller 2019, p. 1001). There are two types of forecasting in political science: *pragmatic* and *scientific*. *Pragmatic forecasting* is exploratory and includes the use of empirical evidence (facts and data) to predict electoral outcomes, coups, revolutions and civil wars. Chapter 10 partly adopts this approach when using post-1989 behavioural trends (i.e., patterns of evidence over time) of the P5 to forecast the future of the LIO.

On the other hand, *scientific forecasting* refers to the use of theoretical assumptions to predict the future (Dowding & Miller 2019, p. 1002). Similarly, Sylvan and Thorson (1980, p. 265) define *scientific forecasts* as a typology of forecasting whose purpose is to predict future events based on explicit theoretical assumptions. International relation theories such as realism and liberalism typically make assumptions about human nature and behaviour, as well as assumptions about how states are inclined to behave in the international environment (as per Chapter 2). Such theoretical assumptions can be used as inputs when forecasting or predicting future events in international politics. An example of scientific forecasting in IR is the application of realism (specifically *balance of power* theory) as a forecasting variable (input) to infer that Russia will continue to annex former Soviet states in the 21st century, which may predispose liberal Western states to declaring war on Moscow to contain its resurgence in Eastern Europe. Notably, scientific forecasting in other disciplines is based on the application of formal models, such as statistical models and econometric models. Despite the technical differences between pragmatic and scientific forecasting, the common denominator is that both use causality to forecast future events (Dowding & Miller 2019, p. 1002).



Source: Compiled by the author based on cited literature.
Key: IR, international relations.

FIGURE 4.1: The process of generating scientific and pragmatic forecasts.

Essentially, forecasting is concerned with the identification of independent variables whose relationships are examined to predict their plausible impact on the future. This book merges *scientific* and *pragmatic* forecasting because theory and empirical evidence are mutually reinforcing in the fields of political science and IR, enabling the production of triangulated forecasts. The process of generating a scientific and pragmatic forecast is depicted in Figure 4.1.

Therefore, the forecasts of the future of the LIO (and global governance) in Chapter 11 are also informed by the grand IR theories outlined in Chapter 2 and empirical facts about P5 behavioural trends recorded in Chapters 6–10. The dynamics and lessons learnt from previous international orders (Chapter 5) are also a key source of evidence to be factored in when forecasting the likely futures of the LIO. Variables (including theories, assumptions, and the analysis of trends) are an essential foundation for the generation of systematic, pragmatic and scientific forecasts (Sylvan & Thorson 1980, p. 267).

According to Chapman (1971, p. 320), political theory and history are key variables to be considered when forecasting future political events. He argues that pragmatism and an open mind are essential when forecasting what nation-states are likely to do in the future and how such behaviour may affect the behaviour of other states. Moreover, he asserts that interdependence among states (as exemplified by trade), shared values (for instance, democracy), shared aspirations (such as development, peace and security), steady behavioural trends, and possibilities of dramatic changes are additional factors (variables) to be considered when forecasting events in international politics. These considerations of key variables make forecasting in IR a theoretical, evidence-based and rational exercise. When conducted in such a systematic way, forecasting in IR can be classified as a scientific and prudent activity.

Chapman (1971, p. 320) cautions that forecasting aims to reduce uncertainty about the future, not eliminate it – the latter being impossible.

Furthermore, forecasting's reliability is dependent upon understanding the context, calculation, choice, and constraints that characterise the particular subject (issue) under study.

The extensive comparative analysis in Chapter 5 of the LIO and previous international orders since 1648 is a key aspect of this book that aids an understanding of international orders, the foreign policy choices available to states that are party to international orders, and the constraints that such orders present to states when acting in the international system. Equally, the detailed enquiry into the post-1989 behavioural patterns of the P5 *vis-à-vis* the liberal order (the primary focus of Chapters 6–10) provides key variables that enhance the reliability and rationality of the scenarios developed in Chapter 11.

The utility of forecasting

This subsection outlines the utility of forecasting in IR, political science and general politics.

Peace and security studies

In the field of *peace and conflict research*, forecasting is undertaken to serve as an early warning mechanism through which security experts seek to prevent or manage the outbreak of conflict by adopting proactive or reactionary policies. The traditional forecasting method among peace and security experts is to undertake an in-depth qualitative analysis of the security landscape of a given state or region. This analysis is then used as the basis of intuitive and/or extrapolative forecasts of how, when and why violent conflict may erupt in a given state or region. Key sources of qualitative data include the security expert's knowledge and intuition, open-source data and reports from the media, embassies and intelligence (security) services (Goldstone 2008, p. 2).

The key factors (independent variables) include the type of political system, political culture, ideology(s), the responsiveness of government to citizens' needs, income per capita, conflict in neighbouring states, political or economic discrimination, the marginalisation of population groups (ethnicity, religion and race), economic and demographic trends, and any history of prior conflict. By manipulating these independent variables, peace and security experts estimate (calculate) the risk of near-term conflict or instability (i.e., the dependent variable). When forecasting the possibility of conflict, peace and security, experts often refer to a specific nation-state that experienced conflict due to a set of causal factors. Such a nation-state is referred to as a *model case*

(Goldstone 2008, p. 5). For instance, if one were to forecast the possibility of internal armed conflict in South Africa, any state in the Middle East and North Africa could be used as a model case because they experience(d) internal armed conflicts or instability due to the Arab Spring that began in December 2010.

A key limitation of forecasting is the issue of accuracy, and this is an acknowledged issue that quantitative and qualitative forecasting methods seek to resolve. As a result of this limitation, the forecasting of peace and conflict has often been the subject of scepticism because, as in other disciplines, the predictions do not always come true. Despite this limitation, a key utility of forecasting in peace and conflict studies is that it provides an opportunity for governments to anticipate, prevent and/or manage possible causes of conflict. Second, forecasting augments the research agenda from a focus on explaining phenomena, towards exploring alternative events that could occur in future based on trend interrogation. A *trend*, in this instance, refers to an established pattern of events or behaviour that has developed over time (Hegre et al. 2017, pp. 113–114).

The utility of forecasting in this book is that it identifies and highlights the collective impacts of the behaviour of the P5 on the LIO and global governance in the 21st century. The scenarios presented in Chapter 11 predict what the world is likely to look like later in this century. Such forecasts can be of use to foreign policy decision-makers in the UK, China, France, Russia the US, other states, and non-governmental organisations. Moreover, they may be used as reference points for scholarly review, appraisal and criticism, depending on whether the LIO survives, is reformed, or collapses. Therefore, the book is of use to foreign policy, global governance and global political economy experts, students and researchers.

Political risk forecasting

Political risk forecasting is a type of forecasting used by public policy and investment consulting firms. For instance, Frost and Sullivan – an international consulting firm – pioneered the monthly *World Political Risk Forecast (WPRF)* report. The WPRF report provides forecasting information about 60 countries of interest to investors. Five of the 60 countries are profiled in depth in terms of a number of social, political and economic risk factors. The report then provides short-term forecasts (18 months) and longer-term forecasts (five years) for each of the five profiled countries based on a projection of the estimated impact of the identified socioeconomic and political risk factors (Bauzon 2000, p. 34).

Such forecasts by Frost and Sullivan (and other risk consultancy firms) are not only useful to investors (multinational corporations), but also to financial institutions and governments. All these stakeholders are interested in the risk profiles of countries to which they are investing or lending money. Likewise, governments are interested in understanding potential risks faced by countries they trade with in order to counteract any potential risks to imports and exports.

Election forecasting

Election forecasting is another practice that has adopted forecasting as an area of interest. According to Lewis-Beck and Stegmaier (2014, p. 322), it was only after 1980 that election forecasting in the US became a systematic, quasi-scientific practice. The systematic forecasting of presidential electoral outcomes since 1980 has been informed by the adaptation of processes followed in meteorology when forecasting the weather. Indeed, weather forecasting has been more accurate and reliable following the adoption of the following input variables: barometric pressure, temperature, density, humidity, velocity and precipitation. All these variables are factored into a computer or weather model to provide a three- to five-day forecast (Lewis-Beck & Stegmaier 2014, p. 322).

Since 1980, election forecasts have adopted standard independent variables (similar to weather forecasting) that are examined to predict the outcomes of US presidential elections. These are the state of the economy, candidate popularity (measured according to public opinion polls), behavioural theory of elections, and incumbency. These four independent variables have been adopted by other electoral outcomes forecasters outside of the US, thereby standardising and systematising the forecasting of electoral outcomes internationally (Lewis-Beck & Stegmaier 2014, p. 323). A key caveat for this electoral forecasting method is that it may not be appropriate in certain political systems where the electorate votes according to certain factors such as ethnicity and historical affinity with a particular political party.

A key lesson from electoral and weather forecasting is that forecasting methods should be based on relevant independent variables, inclusive of relevant theories. The dependent variable (actual forecasts) will be generated from an identification and analysis of the chosen independent variables, how they relate to one another, and how they can produce plausible outcomes. Thus, forecasting involves the identification of *causal relationships* between independent and dependent variables. The utility of

forecasting in meteorology and elections forecasting provides key lessons for the scenario-building exercise in Chapter 11.

Forecasting and foreign policy decision-making

Sylvan and Thorson (1980, p. 269) use Adolf Hitler's foreign policy decision-making prior to World War II as a classic case study of the use of forecasting in the foreign policy process. Some of the key causes of WWII included the terms of the *Treaty of Versailles of 1919*, German expansionism in the 1930s, and the policy of appeasement adopted by the UK and France *vis-à-vis* German aggression. The actions that triggered WWII were Hitler's annexation of all of Czechoslovakia (contrary to the 1938 Munich Agreement with the UK, France and Italy to only annex the German-speaking Sudetenland territory) and the invasion of Poland on 1 September 1939 (Dailey & Lyth-Lawley 2012, pp. 119–121).

When calculating the likely response of the UK and France to the planned annexations of Czechoslovakia and Poland, Hitler predicted the following. First, he thought that the UK and France were unlikely to declare war but were likely to continue with their established policy of appeasement of the 1930s *vis-à-vis* Germany. Thus, he believed the annexation of all of Czechoslovakia (1938) and the invasion of Poland (1939) would not have significant consequences. The British and French policies of appeasement and disinclination for war throughout the 1930s were two key variables in terms of which Hitler predicted that an armed response by those two countries was unlikely (Sylvan & Thorson 1980, p. 269).

In hindsight, Hitler overestimated the extent of British and French appeasement and disinclination for war in Europe. As it turned out, his decision to invade Poland in 1939 was the flashpoint that ignited British and French discontent with Nazi Germany's repeated violations of the *Treaty of Versailles*. This example provides three lessons. The first is that forecasts can turn out to be false. The second is that Hitler's forecasting variables were correct, but he interpreted them incorrectly by exaggerating (overestimating) the extent of British and French appeasement. A third lesson is that political forecasting is not a random process but a systematic and rational activity that considers key factors and their likely outcomes in the future. In this case, Hitler's decision to invade Poland was based on the anticipation of likely responses from Paris and London. Unfortunately, his interpretation of what the Polish invasion might mean for the UK and France was incorrect. A closer analysis of domestic and international factors influencing the UK and France might have led to cautious foreign policy decisions.

One could argue that Hitler should have anticipated that the UK and France would never allow Germany to overrun all of Europe. Thus, political

forecasting, particularly with respect to foreign policymaking, requires the identification and analysis of key foreign policy factors. Equally important is an accurate and rational anticipation of the consequences (risks and rewards) of foreign policy decisions.

Scenario-building: Its origins and evolution

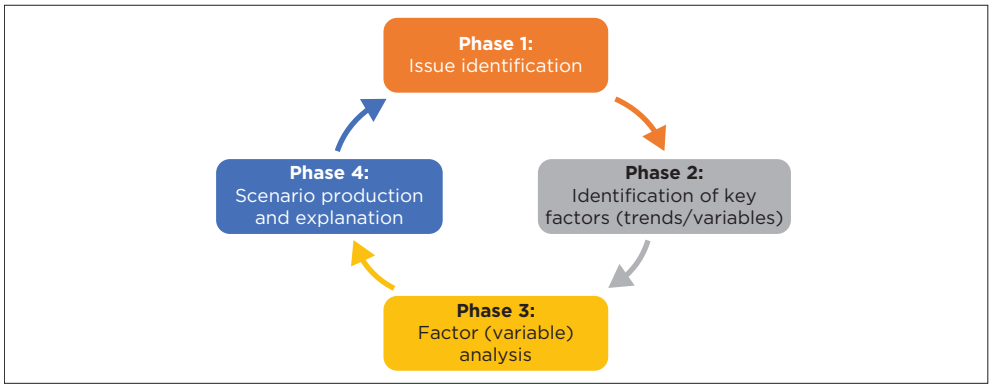
The forecasting methodology chosen for this book is scenario-building. Five scenario-building techniques are adopted: *trend analysis and extrapolation*, *systematic-formalised scenario techniques*, *creative-narrative scenario-building*, *trend impact analysis*, and *cross-impact analysis*.

The origins and purpose of scenario-building

Scenario-building is a forecasting methodology that dates back to ancient history. In the field of political science (particularly political philosophy), treatises on the best form of governance and statehood are the earliest examples of scenario-building. For instance, Plato's seminal text *Republic* constructs an ideal state (city-state) in which governance is exercised by 'philosopher kings'. The forecast is that a polity ruled by philosopher kings would probably prosper and provide a good life for citizens because such ideal rulers would possess the wisdom and intelligence needed to run the state efficiently and effectively. On the other hand, military strategists throughout history have made use of scenarios in the form of war game simulations in order to plan for armed attacks or probable invasions (Bradfield et al. 2005, p. 797).

Kosow and Gabner (2008, p. 1) define a *scenario* as a description of a possible future. Importantly, a scenario also describes the processes that will lead to that future situation or event. In the process, a scenario typically identifies and explains the key factors that will cause or drive future developments. An important disclaimer is that scenarios are hypothetical constructs that forecast *likely* future events, and do not predict the future with any certainty. Nonetheless, Wang and Chaovalitwongse (2011, p. 3) assert that scenario-building can generate fairly accurate and reliable forecasts when key factors (independent variables) are identified correctly, and their possible consequences are appropriately estimated or simulated. While scenario-building methods vary, they tend to follow a similar process of identifying and explaining key factors and determining how they may play out in the future. Possible futures and their essential features should be described in detail (Kosow & Gabner 2008, p. 12).

Scenarios are used for the following reasons: First, they broaden existing knowledge by exploring alternative futures and the pathways towards such



Source: Compiled by the author based on cited literature.
FIGURE 4.2: Four phases of the scenario-building process.

futures. Second, scenarios can help individuals, organisations, and nation-states develop ideal images of the future they want and how to get there. A third utility, they can help role players to devise strategies for moving towards a desired future (Kosow & Gabner 2008, p. 20). The opposite is also true in the sense that scenarios can help individuals and institutions to identify undesirable futures, and to devise strategies to avoid them being realised. Bradfield et al. (2005, p. 795) add that scenario-building is useful for strategic business planning, crisis management, some forms of science, public policymaking, and future institutes. and educational institutions.

The scenario-building process typically unfolds in four phases. Phase 1 involves the identification of a phenomenon or issue (topic) whose future is uncertain. Phase 2 involves the identification of key factors, trends or events (independent variables) that will determine – or drive – the outcome of that phenomenon or issue. Phase 3 involves the analysis of these key factors. In this stage, theory begins to play a useful role. Phase 4 involves the generation of the scenario (dependent variable), or the description of a possible or plausible future – in essence, the way in which the factors identified and analysed in the previous phases may play out in the future (Kosow & Gabner 2008, p. 25). The relationship between Phases 3 and 4 is commonly referred to as *causality* – the cause-effect relationship between the *independent variables* (key factors and trends) and *dependent variables* (the resultant outcome). Figure 4.2 depicts the basic phases of a scenario-building process.

Two key criteria when constructing scenarios are as follows. First, they should be plausible (meaning that they should fall within the realm of rational possibility). Second, the independent variables (key factors) should be as relevant and appropriate as possible (Kosow & Gabner 2008, p. 38).

Scenario-building methods used in this book

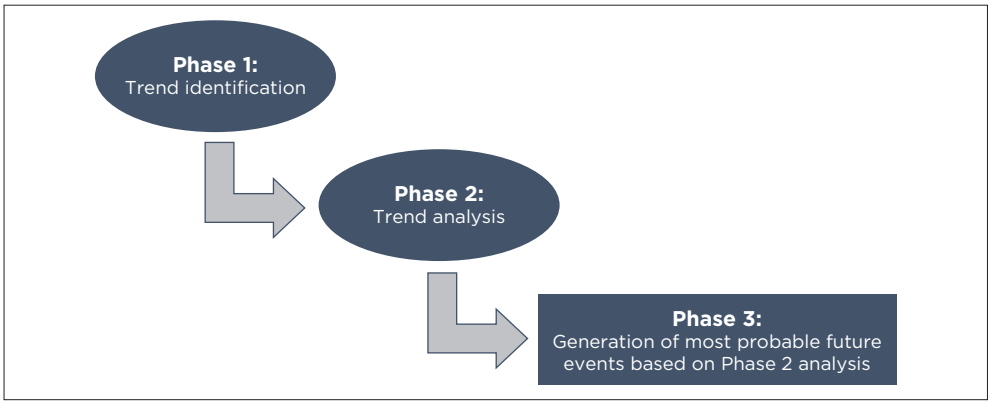
The various scenario-building methods to be utilised in Chapter 11 are as follows.

Trend analysis and extrapolation

A *trend* is a pattern that develops over a period of time. For instance, a pattern of violating international law over a 10-year period constitutes a trend. The point of departure for *trend analysis and extrapolation* is to identify a trend by observing or considering long-term data or behaviour. Once a trend (for instance, the sustained violation of international law) has been identified, its causes are examined and used as the basis for projecting the most probable future events (Kosow & Gabner 2008, p. 44). Therefore, *trend analysis and extrapolation* uses trends as the key independent variables (key factors or drivers) most likely to determine future situations or events. Figure 4.3 depicts the process (steps or algorithm) followed by trend analysis and extrapolation forecasting methods.

Trend impact analysis

Trend impact analysis (TIA) was developed in the 1970s as a means of addressing the limitations of trend analysis and extrapolation. The primary limitation of the latter method is its inability to forecast or consider *unexpected* future events due to focusing on the *most probable* future events. By contrast, TIA identifies key trends and then extrapolates a range of alternative events that may result from those trends – from the *most*



Source: Compiled by the author based on cited literature.

FIGURE 4.3: Trend analysis and extrapolation.

likely to the *least likely*. TIA also explores how these alternatives may develop or occur in the future (Bradfield et al. 2005, p. 801). Therefore, TIA adopts a more 'open' outlook when forecasting future events and may offer more scenarios relative to trend analysis and extrapolation, even though the two forecasting methods may use the same data or observations. The following steps (or algorithm) are used to generate forecasts ranging from 'highly likely' to 'least likely', as well as 'unprecedented':

1. Identify key data, historical factors or established trends that drive the uncertainty of a particular phenomenon, issue or topic under scrutiny.
2. Estimate 'possible' future events or outcomes that may be produced by the identified factors (established trends).
3. Generate a list of 'unprecedented' or 'improbable' events (outcomes) that may occur and deviate from the more likely outcomes forecast in Step 2.
4. Apply expert knowledge of the topic to determine the probability of the unprecedented (improbable or least likely) events; why, when and how they could happen; and their expected impact and features (Bradfield et al. 2005, p. 801).

Systematic-formalised scenario technique

This is an exploratory but systematic scenario-building method that generates forecasts in the following way. First, key factors (trends or variables) driving the uncertainty of a particular phenomenon are identified and defined. Second, the various factors are analysed individually, with the estimated impact of each factor taken as the basis of possible future events. For instance, this would involve examining the possible impact of each of the following US foreign policy actions which would affect the future of the LIO: adherence to international law, violation of international law, promoting multilateral cooperation through liberal order institutions, and disregarding multilateral institutions in favour of unilateralism. The third step is to compare the possible outcomes of the various independent variables. These possible outcomes (forecasts) are then ranked on a continuum comprising *most likely*, *conceivable*, *unlikely* and *unthinkable*. Systematic-formalised scenario techniques are often applied in computerised quantitative studies in which statistics serve as key inputs (Kosow & Gabner 2008, p. 59). The qualitative equivalent of the systematic-formalised scenario method is cross-impact analysis (CIA), which is discussed below.

Creative-narrative scenario-building method

Creative-narrative scenario-building relies on intuition and an intricate knowledge of the relevant issue or phenomenon. This method is often used to formulate a desirable (normative) future state of affairs and explore a greater range of future probabilities. Given the normative,

intuitive and exploratory nature of this scenario-building method, it does not *strictly* conform to the step-by-step algorithmic processes associated with the previously described methods. Despite being less formal, creative-narrative scenario-building methods do follow the basic principles of formulating scenarios: identifying and analysing key factors likely to drive a phenomenon or issue whose future is uncertain; and exploring the various possible future outcomes that may be affected by such factors (Kosow & Gabner 2008, p. 61).

The creative-narrative method is less formal due to its consideration of the forecaster's intuition and its subjective interpretation of key factors that serve as vital inputs when predicting the future. Despite being 'less formal' (i.e., the 'why' is not easy to explain when using one's subjective instinct), this method has the potential to generate rational and accurate forecasts when the forecaster has expert knowledge of the issue at hand. Intuition ('gut feel') is rational when one has very close knowledge of a particular state of affairs whose direction and future is uncertain. Intricate knowledge enables the forecaster to explore a range of possible futures that are within the parameters of plausibility and rationality. Creative-narrative scenario-building is often used in foreign policymaking. One such example is the keen interest of various foreign policy experts in China's probable international actions in the uncertain current decade (Kosow & Gabner 2008, p. 65).

Cross-impact analysis

The CIA method was developed in 1966 by Theodore Gordon and Olaf Helmer at the RAND Corporation, a US global policy and research think-tank (Shatz & Chandler 2020, p. i). CIA is based on the assumption that future events do not happen in a vacuum or in a linear way but are also affected by other events in the surrounding environment. These events and the surrounding environment influence the likelihood of certain events happening relative to others. CIA compares and determines the likelihood of certain events happening relative to others through the following phases (algorithm):

1. Identify and compare two or more forecast future events and their causal factors (including their surrounding environments).
2. Examine the probability of each forecast on a scale from *high probability* to *low probability*. This second step is rigorous and holistic and refers to other forecasts. For instance, if Forecast A occurs, will Forecast B happen? Likewise, if Forecast B happens, what is the likelihood of Forecast A occurring? If Forecast B cannot happen in the absence of Forecast A, then Forecast A has the greatest impact and is therefore the most probable.
3. Select the forecast that has a *high probability* of happening in the future (Bañuls & Turoff 2011, p. 2).

Therefore, the CIA method is not a hard-core forecasting method relative to the others. In essence, it is a means of analysing forecasts that have already been generated to determine which is the most likely to occur relative to the others. Therefore, it examines the likely impact (effect) of each of the forecasts on the others, and the forecast that is estimated to have the greatest impact on the others is chosen as the most likely to occur in the future. Instinct and expert knowledge play a major role in this scenario-building method.

The forecasting method adopted for this book

The first four scenario-building methods described in this chapter are applied in Chapter 11 to generate four scenarios about the future of the LIO and global governance in general. The analysis of key elements that build, sustain and collapse international orders in Chapter 5 is also considered, as are the detailed case studies of the post-1989 foreign policies of Britain, China, France, Russia and the US (Chapters 6–10). Moreover, the two traditional IR theories of liberalism and realism, and particularly their assumptions about state behaviour, are used to structure the four scenarios. 21st century. Lastly, CIA is utilised to estimate which of the scenarios are most likely to be realised.

Conclusion

By using the abovementioned scenario-building methods, this book seeks to add to knowledge about Great Power behaviour and the potential impact of the individual and collective actions of these powerful nation-states on the stability and direction of the international order and global governance. By combining IR theory and FPA (Chapter 3), scenario-building methods (Chapter 4), lessons from past international orders (Chapter 5), and the case studies of the foreign policies of the P5 (Chapters 6–10), it highlights the non-arbitrary nature of the rise, survival and fall of international orders (in this case, the incumbent LIO). Therefore, the scenarios generated in Chapter 11 constitute a scientific examination of the interface between Great Power behaviour and the international order. They combine trends in the international behaviour of the P5 since 1989, IR theory, and the history of international orders to estimate the medium- and long-term impact of these variables on the international order.

The scenarios presented in Chapter 11 are scientific, pragmatic and systematic, produced with clear algorithms that highlight the *cause-effect*

relationship between Great Power behaviour (the independent variables) and international organisation (the dependent variables). The next chapter reviews notable international orders of the modern nation-state system in the post-1648 epoch, with a view to identifying the drivers of their establishment, management, survival and collapse.

Chapter 5

Evaluating international orders in the nation-state era

Introduction

This chapter evaluates the design, purpose, operation and demise of international orders in the post-1648 nation-state system. The aim of this exercise is to identify common patterns in the conceptualisation, design, implementation and management of international orders that precede the current LIO. This will provide important insights into the rise, survival and fall of international orders. The first section interrogates how a typical international order emerges, how it is maintained, and how it collapses.

The second section identifies and evaluates international orders in the post-1648 modern state system. The 18th- and 19th-century orders that took shape in Europe, East and Southeast Asia are reviewed, and their key features are identified.

The third section analyses international orders in the 20th century. Following the unprecedented loss of life during WWI, the League of Nations was established to prevent another international war. The international order represented by the League of Nations disintegrated in 1939, following the outbreak of WWII in Europe. Following the end of the war in 1945, two parallel international orders emerged, which drove the emergence and intensification of the Cold War. These orders, the US-led LIO and the rival Soviet-led Communist International Order, dominated international relations from 1945 to 1989. Following the disintegration of the Communist

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International Order in 1989, the LIO became the sole international order, wielding enormous political, economic and cultural influence across the world, and ultimately resulting in a process of global interconnectivity that came to be known as globalisation.

The *Treaty of Westphalia* and the development of the modern, institutionalised international order

International rules and pillars of ordered coexistence among states have a long and violent history (Grinin 2016, p. 76). According to Mazarr et al. (2016, p. 10), the origins of the idea of an international order can be traced to the introduction of the Westphalian system of sovereign states in 1648. The *Treaty of Westphalia of 1648* brought an end to the Thirty Years' War in Central Europe which was triggered by religious differences between the Protestant and Catholic states of the Roman Empire. This seemingly religious war then transformed into the Thirty Years' War during which Catholic and Protestant states formed non-religious and strategic alliances to prevent any state from gaining hegemony over the entire Europe (McGinchey 2017, p. 12). Thus, the Thirty Years' War was fought to maintain a balance of power and to prevent the emergence of a European hegemon in the 17th century.

Key lessons learnt from the Thirty Years' War are as follows. First, the international balance of power needs to be maintained by supporting the weaker coalition against the stronger one. Second, national interest is paramount in determining foreign policy relative to other interests, such as religious and ideological interests (Grinin 2016, p. 78).

For instance, France, a Catholic state, supported the weaker coalition of Protestant states in their war against the Catholic Habsburg Empire, which was striving for global supremacy (Grinin 2016, p. 78). France's national interest in ensuring its security against a possible future attack from the Habsburg Empire was more important than the religious beliefs it shared with the Habsburg Empire. Consequently, France chose to support the weaker coalition of Protestant states as a means of containing the power of the latter. This attempt to achieve a balance of power in the 17th-century international system thus yields a significant foreign policy lesson, namely that the principle of sovereignty established by the *Treaty of Westphalia* should prevent states from subjugating other states in the quest for regional or global supremacy.

As noted earlier, The Thirty Years' War was ended by the *Treaty of Westphalia of 1648* (Abrahamsson 2008, p. 5). It introduced the international law of sovereignty as the legal principle underpinning the post-1648

international order, and those subsequent to it (Grinin 2016, p. 78). This international law of sovereignty has since become a standard feature of the domestic and foreign policies of sovereign states. Thus, one could argue that the modern sovereign state system was founded by the *Treaty of Westphalia*. Mazarr et al. (2016, p. 10) posit that the Westphalian international order was founded on a balance-of-power politics among the Great Powers, a form of European regional governance that would dominate world politics until 1945 – and arguably to this day.

The Westphalian sovereign state was created for the primary purpose of ensuring peace, stability, and the security of citizens. The formation of a sovereign state requires citizens to cede a portion of their fundamental rights to the state in exchange for protection against domestic and/or external security threats (Abrahamsson 2008, p. 7). Due to the absence of a world government, states found that the international system was anarchic, with one state's attempt to arm itself to ensure its security resulting in the paranoia and insecurity of others. This is the phenomenon of the security dilemma as per the Realist theory described in Chapter 2. It is this security dilemma that has resulted in major international conflict and warfare throughout history.

States have created international orders to counteract international anarchy and the wars it breeds. Every international order created since 1648 has been characterised by a unique governance system and form of legitimisation that reflects the prevailing international distribution of power among the founding states. In essence, any international order requires a hegemonic state that enforces the international order's adopted rules and norms through sanctions, with the support of the Great Powers, which are party to such an order. Historically, leaders of international orders tend to maintain order through a mixture of soft power, in the form of dominant values and ideologies, as well as hard power, in the form of military force and coercive economic sanctions. When the leader of an international order experiences challenges from Emerging Powers, the incumbent hegemon historically tends to resort to coercive power (military force) to preserve its position as an international leader and, by extension, the existing international order (Abrahamsson 2008, p. 7).

International orders in the post-1648 modern state system

According to Henry Kissinger (1923–2023), former US Secretary of State, National Security Advisor during the Cold War, and a major foreign policy thinker, the post-1648 modern state system has never experienced a truly universal international order. Instead, there have been successive international orders that have emerged and collapsed due to forces beyond

the control of individual states. To Kissinger, the lack of permanency in post-1648 international orders is due to the inevitable power imbalances among states, as well as varying foreign policy ambitions between and among states (Anderson 2015, p. 137).

Power imbalances are inevitable and are caused by states' changing economic and military capabilities. Throughout history, a state that develops significantly in economic, social, and military terms tends to adjust its foreign policy ambitions, interests, and goals (Anderson 2015, p. 137). Such changes in economic and military power necessarily result in shifts in the global distribution of power.

As per the realist and liberal theories, the international system is anarchic, despite the creation of international orders in different epochs. When one state becomes more powerful than the rest, it creates insecurity and fear among the rest, which then perceives the powerful state as a threat. The powerful state may also harbour ambitions of global domination. Given the feat of the powerful state, some of the insecure states may revert to defensive foreign policy actions such as forming collective defence alliances. These new alliances may, in turn, fuel paranoia, fear, suspicion and/or insecurity on the part of the powerful state, pushing the latter to embark on assertive foreign policies such as subjugating the dissenting states (Smith et al. 2012, p. 39). All these foreign policies lead to war and the disintegration of an incumbent international order.

The historical experiences, ideologies and interests of various nation-states are additional dynamics that affect the survival of an international order (Grinin 2016, p. 79). Kissinger uses an example of the communist Eastern European order that emerged around the same time as the establishment of the liberal order after WWII. The US-led LIO was underpinned by liberal international political and economic institutions, while the Soviet-led Communist International Order was underpinned by its own unique institutions. The two international orders waged an enduring ideological, economic, cultural and technological struggle, with each order seeking to position itself as the leading vehicle of socioeconomic and political progress across the world (Latham 1997, p. 419). This was essentially the Cold War international system, whereby the global distribution of power was vested in these two rival international orders anchored by US and Soviet economic and military power.

Kissinger further posits that the survival of an international order depends on the foreign policy interests and goals of states, particularly the interests and aspirations of the powerful states (i.e., great powers), which tend to be the founders and enforcers of international orders (Anderson 2015, p. 138). Thus, if one or more of the founding states perceive an international order to be a hindrance to its interests and foreign policy goals, this may presage the collapse of an international order.

The 18th- and 19th-century European international orders

In the 18th and 19th centuries, France and the UK established international orders in the form of military-political alliances. These enabled first France (in the 18th century) and then the UK (in the 19th century) to control the international distribution of power in their favour (Grinin 2016, p. 79). Significantly, the transition from a French-led international order in the 18th century to a British-led international order in the 19th century came about because of the Napoleonic Wars.

The French Revolution and attempts to create a French-led European order

The French Revolution of 1789 represented a fundamental challenge to the established tradition of monarchical rule in Europe and had dire consequences for foreign policy and subsequent relations among European states. The republican government that overthrew the French monarchy, led by King Louis XVI, emphasised a government that was responsive to the interests of citizens. This contrasted with the monarchical rule that had pursued the interests of the royal family (McGlinchey 2017, p. 14). France's transition into a republic based on the values of liberty, equality and fraternity contradicted the monarchical regimes that ruled most of Europe.

The French Revolution of 1789 had a significant impact on the relations between Europe's monarchies and the French Republic and resulted in the establishment of a new European order in the early 19th century. In 1792, war broke out between the revolutionary French nation-state and the monarchies across Europe. The war was initiated by France's declaration of war against Austria because the latter had stationed its armed forces on the then border with France in protest against the French Revolution and also to confine the resultant chaos to French territory. The war against Austria ignited the French Revolutionary Wars (1792–1802), during which the revolutionary French Republic waged wars against the First Coalition (1792–1797) and Second Coalition (1798–1802) formed by the anti-revolutionary monarchies of the UK, Austria, Prussia, Russia and other European countries. In these French Revolutionary Wars, the French army under Napoleon's command was able to wage territorial wars for 10 years, in which France recorded victories over Austria and Prussia in 1792 (no territorial gains); achieved victory over and the territorial conquest of Northern Italy in 1796; and wrested control of the Netherlands from Austria in 1797 (Oxford Reference 2020).

Following its territorial conquests, France installed republican regimes to replace the incumbent monarchies. One can interpret this as France's attempt to create a republican international order across Europe that

would embody the values of the French Revolution and, by extension, to secure its existence. The UK, as the incumbent European superpower and monarchy, joined both the First and Second Coalitions as a means of containing the French Republic's expansionism across Europe during the 10-year French Revolutionary Wars (McGlinchey 2017, p. 14).

In 1802, France and the UK signed the *Treaty of Amiens*, which ended hostilities between the two countries and as well as the decade-long French Revolutionary Wars that had brought instability, chaos and violence to Europe (Oxford Reference 2020). Thus, in the late 18th century, Europe was fundamentally reshaped by France's attempts to create a republican international order. These attempts resulted in war and disorder as the French Republic's ambition of creating a republican order was resisted by the monarchies seeking to preserve monarchical rule and contain the spread of republicanism.

The Napoleonic Wars (1803–1815) broke out after the collapse of the *Treaty of Amiens* that had ended the French Revolutionary Wars a year earlier. After 1803, France transitioned from a republic to a nationalist regime. The Napoleonic Wars were caused by France's pursuit of European hegemony and its quest for direct and indirect control over Continental Europe by overthrowing incumbent European monarchies. Various coalitions of monarchies, led by the UK, fought to contain France's efforts to create a French empire across continental Europe. This coalition of monarchies eventually defeated France in 1814 (Schneid 2012, p. 1).

The Concert of Europe international order (1815–1914)

The Congress of Vienna (September 1814–June 1815) is regarded as one of the most important international conferences in history, due to its resolutions that provided guidelines for the conduct of interstate relations in Europe. After the end of the Napoleonic Wars, the Congress of Vienna sought to develop a long-term peace plan for war-torn Europe. Parallel to the Congress of Vienna, the monarchical governments of Russia, Austria and Prussia formed the Holy Alliance that sought to contain liberalism and secularism in Europe. Liberalism and secularism are ideologies that contributed to the outbreak of the French Revolutionary Wars and their subsequent evolution into the Napoleonic Wars (Grinin 2016, p. 81). When observing these objectives of the Congress of Vienna and the Holy Alliance, one can clearly note the overt attempts to create ordered international relations by the 19th-century great powers. The Congress of Vienna[4] and

4. Refer to a copy of the political map adopted by the Congress of Vienna in 1815 at https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Map_congress_of_vienna.jpg#/media/File:Europe_1815_map_en.png.

the Holy Alliance evidently had a common objective of ensuring long-term peace and security in Europe and preventing another major European war.

The Concert of Europe (1815–1914) was the international order established by the 19th-century Great Powers that had won the Napoleonic Wars: Austria, Russia, the UK and Prussia. It was established by the Congress of Vienna (Grinin 2016, p. 81). At the conclusion of the Napoleonic Wars in 1815, the UK emerged as the dominant power in Europe in terms of wealth and resources, while Russia was a potential powerhouse due to being granted significant portions of Poland's territories by the Congress of Vienna. Austria's power was predominantly political and diplomatic because its prime minister, Prince Klemens von Metternich, was the chairperson of the Congress of Vienna. With the previously mentioned distribution of power in mind, the common goals uniting the European Great Powers were as follows. First, to prevent any continental rivalry and competition to acquire hegemony in Europe, because such a competition had motivated France to start the Napoleonic Wars. Second, to prevent or contain intrastate radical and revolutionary movements that could trigger violence and regime change across Europe (Lascurettes 2017, p. 4).

The Concert of Europe was formed to maintain an equal distribution of power among the post-1815 European Great Powers and to prevent any changes to the borders and political map drawn at the Congress of Vienna (Slantchev 2005, p. 565). Latham (1997, p. 423) corroborates this by asserting that the Concert of Europe was not based on ideology but rather sought to act as a forum for maintaining an equal distribution of power among the European Great Powers following the lengthy and costly Napoleonic Wars. The rationale was that power parity among the Great Powers would ensure lasting peace and security, and avert the emergence of a European hegemon as well as another European War (Latham 1997, p. 423). By implication, the 19th-century Great Powers assumed that a hegemon would destabilise Europe due to the hegemonic tendency of seeking to control and subjugate less powerful states.

Essentially, the Concert of Europe was founded on four core resolutions. First, the Great Powers were given separate status in European affairs and tasked with maintaining peace. Second, only the Great Powers had the authority to establish and refine territorial borders and ensure political order. The resistance to changes in territorial borders was designed to prevent territorial expansion and to maintain a roughly equal distribution of power among the great powers. The third resolution was to establish a dispute resolution mechanism in the form of periodic Great Power meetings. This was also aimed at preventing a Great Power war. Since the victors of the Napoleonic Wars were monarchies, the fourth resolution of the Concert was a commitment to defend conservative (non-revolutionary) sovereign states across Europe (Lascurettes 2017, p. 7). In 1818, Austria, the UK, Prussia

and Russia resolved to end their occupation of France following the latter's restoration of monarchical rule. Furthermore, France was admitted as the fifth Great Power that would co-lead the Concert of Europe, together with the other four Great Powers.

Therefore, the Concert of Europe was an international order based on the common interest of avoiding war in Europe by preserving the conditions of peace established by the Congress of Vienna. These conditions included maintaining an equal distribution of power among the European Great Powers and preserving Europe's political map, which the victors of the Napoleonic Wars agreed to at the Congress of Vienna.

From the onset, a conservative Holy Alliance faction within the Concert of Europe emerged, constituted by the monarchies of Russia, Austria and Prussia. It sought to contain the ideologies of nationalism and liberalism, as they threatened the survival of monarchical forms of rule (Grinin 2016, p. 81). The first phase of the Concert of Europe managed to prevent interstate war in Europe until 1853, when the Crimean War broke out.

From 1815 until the 1850s, the Concert of Europe succeeded in maintaining European peace and cooperation, even when this compromised the national interests of the major European powers that could benefit from territorial expansionism (Braumoeller 2017, p. 2). For instance, the Concert was able to persuade Russia to abandon its ambition of conquering the territories of the weakening Ottoman Empire. In addition, the UK resisted a foreign policy of subjugating the Netherlands and making it a British satellite state. France also decided against a foreign policy of territorial expansion despite the territorial ambitions of many of its leaders (Lascurettes 2017, p. 11).

Another important feature of the Concert of Europe was that each Great Power managed to create and maintain a sphere of influence to advance its respective economic, political and cultural interests without the need for armed territorial expansion (Slantchev 2005, p. 566). For instance, the UK's sphere of interest was the Low Countries – Belgium, the Netherlands, Luxembourg, the Iberian Peninsula and North America. Meanwhile, Russia's spatial area of influence and interest was parts of Eastern Europe, Persia (modern-day Iran) and the territories of the declining Ottoman Empire. Prussia and Austria jointly managed the confederation of German states, while France gradually built political, economic and cultural influence across the southern and eastern Mediterranean after being admitted as a Great Power in 1818. Importantly, the Great Powers respected each other's sphere of influence and interest (Lascurettes 2017, p. 12), which enabled them to avoid armed confrontations. This was a key achievement of the Concert from 1815 to 1853, despite not having any of the formal institutions that have become the hallmarks of the 20th- and 21st-century international orders.

Another factor that enabled the Concert of Europe to foster peace in Europe was the credible threat of retaliation by the other Great Powers if one decided to embark on territorial expansion. This threat was credible because all the European Great Powers had roughly equal military capabilities (Slantchev 2005, p. 568). It is therefore evident that the Concert of Europe was able to manage the foreign policy ambitions of the Great Powers between 1815 and 1853, thereby preserving Europe's balance of power and political map.

The seeds of division among the Great Powers emerged from intrastate political changes. Lascurettes (2017, p. 14) posits that the rise of liberal governments in the UK and France resulted in these two Great Powers moving away from the Concert's central resolution of supporting conservative monarchical regimes across Europe. The UK and France then became a quasi-liberal faction within the Concert, which compelled the conservative eastern European monarchies of Prussia, Russia and Austria to form an anti-revolutionary (anti-liberal) alliance (Lascurettes 2017, p. 14). Thus, the differing political ideologies and governance systems of the liberal and anti-liberal factions within the Concert contributed to its decline in effectiveness by the 1840s.

Grinin (2016, p. 821) validates the aforementioned divisions within the Concert by arguing that the gradual overthrow of monarchies in Europe, coupled with industrialisation, led to a foreign policy shift towards the end of the 1840s. Post-1848 Europe was dominated by *Realpolitik*, whereby each state sought to form alliances that advanced its ideological, military and economic interests (Grinin 2016, p. 81). This change in Europe's foreign policy posture culminated in the outbreak of the Crimean War in 1853.

The Crimean War (1853–1856) was the only all-European War that broke out during the Concert of Europe, which lasted for almost a century from 1815 to 1914 (Badem 2010, p. 2). It was a military confrontation between the Russian Empire and an alliance of the UK, France and Sardinia. It had various causes. The precipitating issue was Russia's annexation of the Ottoman Empire's Holy Land territory (located within Crimea), which was occupied by the Eastern Orthodox Christian minority that shared a common religion with the Russian Empire. For its part, France supported the Roman Catholic minorities in the Holy Land, as Catholicism was the dominant religion in France. Therefore, France was not willing to allow Russia to annex the territory occupied by the Roman Catholic minority, which shared the same Catholic beliefs as the majority of France's population (Brain 2018).

Despite the importance of religion in 19th-century Europe, the primary cause of the Crimean War was the decline of the Ottoman Empire's power and the resultant 'Eastern Question' of who would rule the territories of the

Ottoman Empire should it disintegrate. The seemingly impending fall of the Ottoman Empire emboldened the Russian Empire, which sought to take over control of the Ottoman territories. Sensing Russian ambitions for territorial expansion, the UK and France formed an alliance with the Ottoman Empire to prevent Russian expansion and possible Russian imperialism over Europe and the Middle East (Badem 2010, p. 47). The alliance between France, the UK, Sardinia and the Ottoman Empire successfully defended Crimea's Holy Land territory from Russia's advances. This alliance also succeeded in preserving Ottoman control over its Middle Eastern territories. Moreover, it admitted the Ottoman Empire (a southeastern European and Middle Eastern power) into the Concert of Europe international order (Brain 2018; Badem 2010, p. 2).

With the further benefit of historical hindsight, one can discern that Russia's annexation of Ottoman territory contradicted the spirit and rules of the Concert of Europe and would have resulted in expanded Russian power and influence in Europe and the Middle East. Put differently, the Russian annexation of Crimea would have disrupted the balance of power among post-1815 European great powers. One can, therefore, conclude that France and the UK fought the Crimean War to preserve the European balance of power as per the founding aim of the Concert of Europe.

The unification of Germany in 1871 and the subsequent rise of the German Empire in terms of military and economic power relative to the UK, the incumbent hegemon, represented a significant change in Europe from the 1870s onwards (Cox & Camparano 2016, p. 34). A unified Germany, located in central Europe, became more powerful than any other Continental European state, signalling an unequal distribution of power.

The power transition theory (examined in Chapter 2) asserts that when an Emerging Power (in this case, Germany) nears power parity with the incumbent hegemon (the UK), a Great Power war often erupts. In such a context, power transition theorists predict that the incumbent hegemon will wage war against the Emerging Power to retain its hegemonic position. Alternatively, the Emerging Power can wage war against the incumbent hegemon to take over the position of the hegemon and amend or overthrow the existing international order.

Germany's unification compelled the UK, France and Russia to form a Triple Entente by 1907, whose purpose was to contain German expansion and imperial ambitions (Grinin 2016, p. 82). At the same time, Germany formed an alliance with Austria–Hungary. The fragmentation of Europe into two rival alliances showed that, by the turn of the century, the Concert of Europe was no longer a fully effective international order. In the event, the polarisation of Europe into two rival alliances set the scene for WWI (Grinin 2016, p. 82). Power Transition theorists believe that the underlying cause of

WWI was the struggle for European supremacy between Germany, as the Emerging Power, and the UK, the incumbent hegemon in Europe seeking to retain its leadership of the continent (Cox & Camparano 2016, p. 38). When Europe descended into WWI, the Concert of Europe ceased to exist as an international order.

The international order in 18th- and 19th-century East Asia

Under the imperial Qing Dynasty, China established an empire in East Asia by the 18th century. Neighbouring Annam (present-day Vietnam), Siam (now known as Thailand) and Burma (later known as Myanmar) were all tributary states that functioned as satellites of the Greater Chinese Empire in East Asia (Stanford University 2008, p. 16). Among other things, this shows that 18th-century China and its satellite East Asian territories did not meet the criteria of sovereign statehood as prescribed by the *Treaty of Westphalia*. Instead, East Asia's relations were dominated by the existence of a dominant Chinese Empire, in contrast with European attempts to preserve the sovereignty of states and establish an international order[5].

Bin Wong (2000, p. 1) posits that a distinct political order had developed in East Asia by the early 19th century under the leadership of the imperial Qing Dynasty. China, under the rule of the Qing Dynasty, was the *de facto* leader of East Asia's political order. The Qing Dynasty established an East Asian and Southeast Asian order informed by China's interests in economic and political stability. In East Asia, China adopted a foreign policy of maintaining extensive influence over pro-China tributary governments. For instance, it had maintained a strong influence over successive Vietnamese governments since the beginning of the Common Era (ce).

China's tributary system in Southeast Asia was arranged in such a way that Vietnamese and other Southeast Asian rulers customarily provided exotic and precious goods to the Chinese government between the 16th- and 19th-centuries. These goods were offered to China in exchange for China's recognition of the independence of these territories, as well as Chinese policing of the Southeast Asian region and maintaining its stability and peace. China also suppressed rebellions threatening pro-Chinese ruling governments in Burma and Vietnam as part of its leadership responsibilities in the Southeast Asian region (Bin Wong 2000, p. 3).

In Northeast Asia, China's hegemony was somewhat unclear and contested by Japan and Mongolia, while Korea functioned as a Chinese

5. See an 18th- and 19th-century political map of the Qing Dynasty and its neighbouring satellite states in East Asia at https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Qing_Dynasty_1820.png.

satellite state and benefited from its trade relations with China (Bin Wong 2000, p. 5). As a result, one can deduce that Northeast Asia did not have a clear regional leader since Japan and Mongolia did not recognise China as a regional hegemon. In fact, Mongolian rulers had a history of invading northern Chinese territory and even ruled China between the 13th- and 14th centuries (Bin Wong 2000, p. 6). China's disputed leadership in Northeast Asia was in contrast to its hegemonic position in East and Southeast Asia, where it had satellite states and enforced stability and supported the rule of many governments in its tributary or satellite states.

Despite never fully establishing a Western-style political order in East Asia from the 16th to the 19th century, China's East Asia political order was based on long-held regional customs and principles. The main principle was that China would provide order and stability to its weaker East Asian neighbours, which would, in turn, recognise and legitimise China's hegemony in the region. China's position as the leader of the East and Southeast Asian regions experienced challenges from European states towards the middle of the 19th century.

In the middle of the 19th century, the Qing Dynasty effectively grounded Chinese foreign policy on the principle of protecting China against nomads and other foreign influences, such as advances by European powers (Grinin 2016, p. 79). Furthermore, the Qing Dynasty and its satellite territories resisted European influence and advances by imposing restrictions on European trade. These trade restrictions culminated in the Sino–British War, also known as the First Opium War, which was fought from 1840 to 1842 (Stanford University 2008, p. 16). The First Opium War ended in a British victory. The Treaty of Nanking mandated China to cede the territory of Hong Kong to the UK and to open Chinese ports to the UK and, later, other European states (Stanford University 2008, p. 16). Thus, the First Opium War resulted in the extension of European influence to East Asia, signalling an erosion of Chinese dominance in the region.

In 1856–1858, the UK and France fought the Second Opium War against China, with the aim of gaining more trade ports from the ruling Qing Dynasty. The *Treaty of Tientsin* of 1858 ordered China to open more ports for European trade. Therefore, 19th-century East Asia experienced European expansionism, in contrast with the Concert of Europe that forged peaceful coexistence and cooperation in Europe. From 1859 to 1867, France invaded and eventually annexed Vietnam, which was then a Chinese satellite state. In 1863, France also took Cambodia, making the East Asian territory a French protectorate. Laos also became a French Protectorate in 1893 (Stanford University 2008, pp. 16–18). Through these successive annexations, France became a major colonial power, exerting significant influence over East Asia in the 19th century.

French influence in East Asia matched British influence in the same region, established through the Opium Wars. As a result, one can conclude that European domination of East Asia was an extension of the commitment of the European Great Powers to the 'spheres of influence' principle that helped to maintain peace in Europe. While European states respected each other's sovereignty, they did not extend this principle to the non-European world in the course of the 19th century. As noted by Bin Wong (2008, p. 8), the Sino–European treaties of the mid-19th century eroded China's sovereignty and hegemony in the East and Southeast Asian region and negatively affected Chinese commercial interests.

The early international orders in the 20th century

World War I pitted the Central Powers (a coalition formed by Germany, Austria–Hungary, Bulgaria and the Ottoman Empire) against the Allied Powers (a coalition of the UK, France, Russia, Italy and the US). The Allied Powers were victorious and, in 1919, established a post-war order through the *Treaty of Versailles*, also known as the Paris Peace Conference. The *Treaty of Versailles* summarily blamed WWI on Germany and its allies and ordered post-1919 Germany to pay significant reparations. It also ordered the defeated power to restrict the size of its armed forces to a maximum of 100,000 personnel. Furthermore, the *Treaty of Versailles* forbade Germany from militarily occupying its Western territories known as the Rhineland (Morgan 2015). These peace terms of the *Treaty of Versailles* had important consequences, particularly with respect to Germany's conduct in the international arena in the 1930s.

The League of Nations (1920–1939)

After the end of WWI, a new international order succeeded the defunct Concert of Europe, anchored by the first intergovernmental institution: the League of Nations. The US emerged as the new global hegemon in the post-WWI era. The League of Nations was created by the *Covenant of the League of Nations* as prescribed in Part I of the *Treaty of Versailles* of 1919 (Treaty of Versailles 1919, p. 48). The *Treaty of Versailles* formally ended World War I, and its victors (the UK, France, Japan, Italy and the US) used the Treaty as a mechanism for setting the terms for post-war international relations and the international order (Braumoeller 2017, p. 2).

The Paris Peace Conference of 1919 was convened to establish a peaceful world order after the 20 million deaths of WWI and produced the *Treaty of Versailles*. One of the major decisions of the *Treaty of Versailles* was the formation of the League of Nations, which would function as a collective

security forum that would ensure peaceful relations among states, with the right to sovereignty and self-determination being enforced by the League (US Department of State 2009). Thus, the victorious coalition of the Allied Powers established a post-WWI international order that was meant to be regulated by the League, the first intergovernmental organisation established in the history of the post-1648 international system.

The idea of the League of Nations was first mooted by US President Woodrow Wilson in his *Fourteen Points* speech delivered to the US Congress in January 1918. These were 14 conditions that needed to be met to ensure a peaceful post-1918 world. The 14th point called for the creation of an international organisation – the League of Nations – which would safeguard the sovereignty of all states, regardless of their military and economic capabilities (Cox & Camparano 2016, p. 45).

As the prevailing global hegemon, the US Congress did not ratify the *Treaty of Versailles* in March 1920, so the US never joined the League of Nations (US Department of State 2009). The US Senate did not endorse the *Treaty* because Article 10 seemed to cede US war powers to the League of Nations, which was tantamount to surrendering US sovereignty to the League. The Soviet Union also did not join the League of Nations. Following the communist revolution of 1917, the leaders of the Soviet Union were suspicious of the League of Nations and any form of international organisation because they believed the imperial great powers would try to use it to control weaker states (Hazard 1946, p. 1021). As an alternative, the Soviet Union established the Communist International (Comintern) in March 1919, which served as an association of socialist political parties worldwide. Its mission was to establish a Soviet-led Communist International Order by supporting communist revolutions throughout Europe (Degras 2009, pp. 2–4). Therefore, from the outset, the League of Nations experienced legitimacy challenges owing to the absence of the US and the Soviet Union, plus the existence of a parallel Comintern.

The League of Nations attempted to establish new norms and principles of international relations. It sought to establish open, just, and honourable relations between states, which would then produce international cooperation, peace, and security (*Treaty of Versailles of 1919*, p. 48). These new rules and principles were meant to govern interstate relations in tandem with international treaties (including the *Treaty of Versailles*) and international conventions that constituted international law in the early 20th century (Grinin 2016, p. 82).

For much of the 1920s, relations among European states were relatively peaceful, accompanied by the gradual easing of the reparations imposed on Germany by the *Treaty of Versailles*. This relative peace was punctuated by Germany's admission into the League of Nations in September 1926.

The onset of the Great Depression in 1929 had major implications for domestic and foreign policymaking in the 1930s (Morgan 2015). However, without US membership and leadership, the League was unable to enforce the rules and norms codified in the *Treaty of Versailles*, resulting in international chaos in the 1930s. The efficacy of the League of Nations depended on the willingness of the Great Powers to forsake some of their foreign policy objectives in exchange for achieving its collective goals of lasting international peace and security. However, as former British Prime Minister Winston Churchill asserted, the interwar order failed because the political leaders of the Great Powers supported the norms and goals of the League only in words, while their states' international actions contravened its principles. In 1932, Churchill remarked: 'I cannot recall any time when the gap between the kind of words which statesmen used and what was actually happening in many countries was so great as it is now' (De Visscher 1957, p. 53).

The post-1919 League of Nations order lacked the support of the US as the incumbent hegemon, while other Great Powers still harboured ambitions of regional and global domination. Such a context of non-hegemonic backing and power contestations was not conducive to a functional international order underpinned by interstate cooperation, order and adherence to international law (De Visscher 1957, p. 55). Other international factors that contributed to the League's ineffectiveness include the Great Depression of 1929, which compelled states to adopt isolationist and inward-looking policies.

Japan's September 1931 invasion and annexation of Manchuria, the northeastern territory belonging to China, illustrated the League's inability to prevent international aggression and imperialism. Japan's annexation of Manchuria contravened the self-determination principle in the *Treaty of Versailles*. However, fellow members of the League did not respond militarily on behalf of China. Instead, the League appointed the Lytton Commission to investigate Japan's actions. It released its report in October 1932. It stated that the annexation was unlawful, and that Japan should return the territory to China. However, the League failed to take meaningful action against Japan. The Japanese government rejected the League's report and withdrew from the League of Nations in February 1933 (Hoover Institution 2009, p. 1). Moreover, the rise of Nazi Germany under Adolf Hitler and Germany's subsequent violations of the *Treaty of Versailles* resulted in tensions between it and the European Great Powers such as the UK, France and the Soviet Union. These tense European relations also showed that the League was ineffective (De Visscher 1957, p. 57).

The rise to power of Hitler and the Nazi Party in January 1933 and the subsequent imperialist German foreign policy from 1933 onwards further dented the credibility of the League of Nations order. Hitler's foreign policy

goal was to restore Germany's status as a European Great Power by transforming Eastern Europe into a German satellite region. This was Hitler's foreign policy goal of acquiring 'living space' [German: *Lebensraum*] for Germans in Eastern Europe (Walsh-Atkins 2001, p. 29).

In October 1933, Germany began to implement its foreign policy goals by withdrawing from the League's Conference for the Reduction and Limitation of Armaments and the League itself. Hitler further justified the withdrawal by arguing that the *Treaty of Versailles*, which had established the League, had been harsh on Germany and was restricting Germany to a life of disarmament, while Western Europe did not disarm (Magliveras 1991, p. 33). In July 1934, Germany attempted to overthrow the Austrian government and replace it with a pro-Nazi regime. France, the UK and other major powers in the League failed to reprimand Germany. The Austrian government was, however, able to withstand the Nazi-sponsored insurgency.

From 1933, Nazi Germany began to violate the German disarmament clause in the *Treaty of Versailles*, first by introducing compulsory military conscription for German youths (Walsh-Atkins 2001, p. 30) and then by launching large-scale military rearmament programmes.[6] Fearing Nazi Germany's imminent expansion, the Soviet Union joined the League in September 1934, hoping to bolster its capacity to contain aggression in Europe. Germany's military rearmament was a further step towards the implementation of its foreign policy of transforming Eastern Europe into a German proxy geopolitical region. Germany was clearly disrupting and challenging the League of Nations international order, as well as blatantly violating the *Treaty of Versailles*.

The foreign policies of Benito Mussolini's fascist regime in Italy were yet another major challenge to the League of Nations order. From September 1935 until May 1936, Italy also violated the *Treaty of Versailles* by invading Abyssinia (Ethiopia) (Grip & Hart 2009, p. 2). The League failed to apply full economic sanctions against Italy because member states did not regard the invasion as a threat to their national interests and wanted to avoid entering into a possible war with Italy (De Visscher 1957, p. 58).

In May 1936, the Italian army defeated the Ethiopian army and annexed Ethiopia. The League's failure to hold Italy accountable proved that its mission of ensuring lasting peace and non-aggression was secondary to its member states' national interests. The League was again unable to deter acts of aggression by a member state (Italy) or able to defend the sovereignty of one of its member states (Ethiopia).

6. See a map depicting Nazi Germany's expansionism and violation of the *Treaty of Versailles* between 1936 and 1939 at https://www.worldhistory.org/image/18715/europe-on-the-eve-of-wwii-1939/.

In March 1936, Germany violated another clause of the *Treaty of Versailles* by reoccupying its Western territory, the Rhineland. The League again failed to deter Germany from doing so. The UK's position on Germany was based on empathy towards Berlin due to the punitive nature of the *Treaty of Versailles*. As a result, it settled on a foreign policy of appeasing Germany during its initial actions of rearmament and the violation of the *Treaty of Versailles*. This foreign policy posture, coupled with the League's indifference, emboldened and affirmed the Nazi government's foreign policy of expansion into Eastern Europe (Walsh-Atkins 2001, p. 30).

During the Spanish Civil War (July 1936 to April 1939), League member states violated Spain's sovereignty by supporting both warring groups. The UK, France and the Soviet Union supported the incumbent coalition government of republicans and communists, while Germany and Italy (non-League members) supported the insurgent nationalists with armed forces and armaments (Morgan 2015). The decision by League members to participate in the Spanish Civil War contravened the self-determination principle in the *Treaty of Versailles*.

In November 1936, Germany, Japan and Italy formed the Anti-Communist International Pact, also known as the Rome–Berlin Axis. This loose coalition laid the foundation for the Axis Coalition that would later fight against the Allied Powers (the UK, France, the Soviet Union and the US) during WWII (Walsh-Atkins 2001, p. 31). In March 1938, Germany annexed Austria, while the League was again unable to prevent it. In September 1938, Germany, the UK, France and Italy signed the *Munich Agreement*, which ratified Germany's annexation of the western Czechoslovakia territory known as the Sudetenland (Alexandroff & Rosecrance 1977, p. 414). The *Munich Agreement* was a deliberate violation of Czechoslovakia's sovereignty.

Not content, Germany decided to occupy the rest of western Czechoslovakia in March 1939 and turn the latter nation into a German satellite state (Alexandroff & Rosecrance 1977, p. 408). At this point, the UK and France realised that their foreign policy of appeasement towards Germany was ineffective and would not constrain it from expanding across continental Europe. The UK and France had hitherto chosen appeasement instead of punishing Germany's violation of the *Treaty of Versailles*, which was the legal basis of the post-WWI international order.

Poland was a relatively new state created by the *Treaty of Versailles* after WWI and was granted the German port of Danzig (Korkuc 2019, pp. 7–9). Sensing that Germany would turn its attention to Poland, the UK moved to assure the Polish government of its support in case of a German invasion. Before invading Poland, Germany signed a non-aggression pact with the Soviet Union in August 1939 to avoid a possible major war with

Western powers and the Soviet Union in the east simultaneously. Germany's invasion of Poland on 1 September 1939 finally compelled the UK and France to declare war on Germany, resulting in the outbreak of WWII (1939–1945) (Henig 2005, p.39). The descent into war confirmed the collapse of a lethargic and ineffective League of Nations order.

The withdrawals of Japan, Nazi Germany and Italy from the League during the 1930s further punctuated the legitimacy crises of the League as a global collective security mechanism. With so many Great Powers seceding from it, the League was hardly a major force in international relations, and by the mid-1930s the post-1919 League order was evidently in a shambles. It is argued that the League was incapable of curbing the imperial ambitions of Japan, Germany and Italy in the 1930s because it was not supported by the US. Without the membership of the US, the League lacked the capacity to enforce its principles for maintaining world peace as prescribed in the *Treaty of Versailles* (Braumoeller 2017, p. 2). Moreover, the UK and France's foreign policy of appeasement towards Hitler from 1936 to 1939 was pursued outside of the League of Nations. This can be construed as their disregard for the League, which was designed to be the apex multilateral forum for addressing global peace and security issues in the post-1919 era.

It is the chaotic period of the 1930s that led Braumoeller (2017, p. 2) to declare that the League of Nations international order was relatively successful in maintaining European peace in the 1920s but unravelled in the 1930s – ultimately collapsing and resulting in the outbreak of WWII in 1939. One can argue that relative international peace in the 1920s was possible because European economies and societies were still recovering from WWI. In the 1930s, the League could not persuade member states to support its collective objective of maintaining world peace and security. The League also failed to persuade member states to adhere to international law (particularly the *Treaty of Versailles*) in the 1930s, with the resultant imperial actions and the violations of international law leading to WWII and the collapse of the League of Nations order. Moreover, compliant League members were unwilling to risk war with the aggressor states (Germany, Italy and Japan), which effectively paralysed the League's capacity to defend its member states.

One can also argue that the terms of the *Treaty of Versailles*, the legal foundation of the post-WWII order, were sources of its demise. In annexing states such as Czechoslovakia and Poland, the Nazi government was seeking to reclaim the territories taken from Germany by the *Treaty of Versailles*. Thus, while designed to lay the foundations of a post-1919 order, the *Treaty* also fuelled German discontent and chaos in Europe in the 1930s.

The contrasting international orders of the post-1945 era

At the end of WWII, the domestic and foreign policies of the US and the Soviet Union seemed to diverge. The post-1945 international system was characterised by a bipolar distribution of power, with the US and the Soviet Union emerging as the global superpowers. They had differing ideologies and political and economic systems. Each of these superpowers embarked on a quest to spread its ideology and political and economic system globally after WWII (Grinin 2016, p. 83). The US and its liberal allies founded the LIO, anchored by the UN, the Bretton Woods institutions and NATO (see Chapter 2), while the Soviet Union formed a Communist International Order (CIO) with its communist allies (predominantly Eastern European allies), enforced by the *Warsaw Pact*. These rival international orders prescribed foreign and domestic policy norms and principles for their respective member states. The LIO was arguably more universal than the CIO. This is because the liberal order was underpinned by the UN and the Bretton Woods institutions. These institutions had a global membership, while the CIO institutions were more European-centric. Given that the LIO was dealt with in Chapters 1 and 2, the ensuing section provides an overview of the CIO.

The Soviet-led communist international order (1945–1989)

The Soviet Union's initial attempt at creating a CIO was to form the Information Bureau of Communist and Workers' Parties (1947–1956), commonly known as the Cominform. The Cominform was an international body that coordinated the activities of communist parties and states across Europe. In June 1948, the Cominform resolved that all its members should adhere to Soviet political, economic and social systems. All states in the Cominform subsequently followed Soviet economic policies, including the collectivisation of agriculture and industrial expansion in the form of state-owned corporations (Korbonski 1964, p. 5).

Therefore, the Soviet Union used Cominform to extend its control over communist states and parties. Through Cominform, the Soviet Union laid the foundation of a communist order that would allow it to control Eastern European states, including the communist parties governing those states. Such coordination of political, economic and social life in satellite states is a characteristic of an international political and economic order.

The Council for Mutual Economic Assistance (COMECON) was founded in January 1949 by the Soviet Union and its satellites, namely Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Poland and Romania. The COMECON was the Soviet Union's response to the Marshall Plan, the US government's plan to

help Europe recover from the economic impacts of World War II. The main purpose of the COMECON was to provide mutual economic assistance (aid), coordinate foreign trade, and share economic information, in order to fortify Soviet control over Eastern Bloc economies (Godard 2018, p. 192). The COMECON was later joined by Albania (February 1949) and East Germany (September 1950). China, Cuba, Yugoslavia, North Korea, Mongolia and North Vietnam participated as observers in COMECON meetings in the 1950s. In June 1962, Mongolia became the first non-European member of the COMECON. According to Korbonski (1964, p. 5), the COMECON was an institutional instrument through which the Soviet Union sought to create a CIO in Eastern Europe and maintain its control over its satellite states. This order was intended to contain the influence of the US-led LIO in Western Europe that was being institutionalised through the Marshall Plan and its successor, the OEEC.

One can interpret the COMECON as having been created by the Soviet Union to prevent the Soviet satellite states from seeking aid under the Marshall Plan and being absorbed into the US-led Liberal International Economic Order. However, the COMECON changed from an instrument of containment into an actual international economic order that coordinated the trade and economic relations of the Eastern bloc. The COMECON even began to manage the currencies of communist states belonging to the CIO. Korbonski (1964, p. 5) argues that through the Cominform and the COMECON, the Soviet Union was able to build an integrated Soviet international political and economic order that governed the international and domestic affairs of the communist Eastern European states.

As a means of countering the expansion of NATO and its absorption of West Germany (hitherto under Western occupation) on 9 May 1955, the Soviet Union and its Eastern bloc established the *Warsaw Pact* on 14 May 1955. Its founding members were the Soviet Union, the People's Republic of Albania, the People's Republic of Bulgaria, the Hungarian People's Republic, the German Democratic Republic (East Germany), the Polish People's Republic, the Rumanian People's Republic (Romania) and the Czechoslovak Republic (Warsaw Pact 1955, p. 1).[7]

The Soviet Union exerted enormous political influence over the member states of the Warsaw Pact by virtue of having liberated them from Nazi Germany and having subsequently occupied them during and after WWII (Jackson School of International Studies 2017, p. 1). Having occupied these states, the Soviet Union proceeded to install pro-Soviet communist governments after 1945.

7. See a map of the *Warsaw Pact* signatory states at https://worldhistorycommons.org/cold-war-europe-military-alliances-map.

The *Warsaw Pact*, founded in May 1955, also known as the 'Treaty of Friendship, Cooperation and Mutual Assistance', was the Soviet Union's response to the formation of NATO in 1949. NATO had been established as a means of containing Soviet expansion in Europe. Article 3 of the *Warsaw Pact* committed the eight signatory states to collectively defending each other against any attack or threat of an attack emanating from outside the military alliance. Moreover, Article 4 obliged member states to defend a fellow member state under attack by all means necessary, including military assistance. The *Treaty* mandated member states to defend a fellow member state under attack in their individual capacity or through collective defence coordinated by the *Warsaw Pact*. The *Warsaw Pact* was institutionalised through a political consultative committee in which all member states were represented, as well as a joint command for the armed forces of all members. These two *Warsaw Pact* structures were tasked with managing member states' political relations as well as coordinating their armed forces in the event of a threat or actual armed attack on one of the member states. Moreover, it obliged member states to respect each other's sovereignty (*Warsaw Pact* 1955, p. 2).

While the *Warsaw Pact* was initially established to counteract the formation of NATO, it actually became a strategic military alliance that provided muscle to the Soviet-led communist order in Eastern Europe. Therefore, one can conclude that the *Warsaw Pact* was the military institution of the Moscow-led CIO during the Cold War. It complemented the COMECON and the Cominform, which functioned as the economic and political arms of the CIO, respectively.

The commitment to observe and respect the sovereignty of *Warsaw Pact* members proved to be a farce. Moscow indirectly controlled the pro-Soviet communist governments of the other seven *Warsaw Pact* members. *Warsaw Pact* member states were effectively Soviet satellite states. In 1956, in the so-called Hungarian Revolution, populists overthrew the pro-Soviet communist government and installed a new government, which withdrew from the *Warsaw Pact*. The Soviet Union then invaded Hungary, removed the new government, and installed a new communist government (Jackson School of International Studies 2017, p. 2).

The Soviet Union also crushed attempted reforms by the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia in August 1968 (Jackson School of International Studies 2017, p. 2). Thus, one can conclude that the *Warsaw Pact* was the military instrument of the Soviet Order in Eastern Europe, enabling the Soviet Union to maintain communist regimes in its Eastern European sphere of influence.

The CIO of Eastern Europe disintegrated in the 1980s due to the Soviet Union's economic decline and other domestic political changes. The end of

the Cold War in 1989 and the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991 signalled the collapse of the CIO, leaving the LIO as the sole international order. Even former member states of the CIO joined the LIO and adopted Western political and economic systems.

Conclusion

The common themes emerging from this analysis of the various post-1648 international orders are as follows. First, international orders are usually established following an international war involving the Great Powers. Second, the international order is usually established through an international treaty that ends a specific international war. Such an international order is usually designed by the victors of a recently concluded international war and consequently tends to reflect the values, foreign policy interests and preferences of the victors. An added goal of all the international orders we have examined is that they seek to create an ordered way of life in the international environment to avoid international wars.

The third lesson is that international orders endure for a long time when all (or most of) the Great Powers have been integrated into the international order. If Great Powers, particularly superpowers, do not belong to an international order, they are ineffective. The League of Nations is an example of an order that failed to coordinate the foreign policies of the Great Powers or to ensure international cooperation. The reasons for the League's ineffectiveness are that the US never joined the League, while the Soviet Union only joined when chaos erupted in Europe in the 1930s. Moreover, the League of Nations largely failed because it was founded on a treaty that arguably erred in solely blaming Germany for WWI. Such a foundation led to German discontent, with Berlin eventually seceding from the League. Thus, a key lesson to be learnt is that an international order requires the buy-in of all Great Powers to be effective in managing global affairs.

Fourth, this analysis reveals that once a Great Power begins to view the prevailing international order as antithetical to its domestic values and foreign policy ambitions, it will begin to withdraw from it. When one Great Power secedes from an international order and perhaps convinces other allies to secede as well, the order in question will tend to experience a legitimacy crisis. The potential for Great Power differences and clashes then increases because those within the international order tend to clash with the Great Power outside it on key foreign policy issues, such as international law and other commitments that bind members of an international order together.

Thus, the values and interests of member states are an important factor that determines the survival of an international order. The LIO is the most institutionalised and universal international order of the post-1684 era. However, its survival in this century will depend on the foreign policies of the P5. The policies and attitudes of the Great Powers towards the LIO are examined in detail in Chapters 6–10.

This expansive examination of post-1648 international orders is important because it uncovers key lessons on how and why international orders emerge, what sustains them, and how and why they collapse. This will determine the future of the liberal order and global governance. For instance, Germany, Japan and Italy seceded from the League of Nations in the 1930s as they saw it as antithetical to their imperial ambitions. Such inconsistency between the League's goals and the goals of those three imperial states can be regarded as one of the major reasons for the League's inability to contain Germany's, Japan's, and Italy's expansionist foreign policies. As a result, the three imperial states embarked on expansionist foreign policies that eventually resulted in a conflict with the other Great Powers (the UK and France). This resulted in WWII, and the disintegration of the League of Nations. If the current LIO is unable to retain the confidence of some of the Great Powers, it could also disintegrate in a way.

Chapter 6 examines the UK's post-1989 foreign policies and actions, notably their impact on the international laws, norms, values, and institutions that constitute the LIO. Thus, Chapter 6 seeks to understand the extent to which London has advanced or undermined the liberal order since 1989. It provides independent variables for the scenario-building exercise in Chapter 11.

Chapter 6

The United Kingdom's foreign policies since 1989 and its attitude towards the Liberal International Order

Introduction

This chapter is the first of five FPA case studies and assesses the UK's post-1989 foreign policies and conduct towards the LIO. Key foreign policies and actions *vis-à-vis* the LIO between 1989 and the current decade are identified and explained, and an assessment is made of whether the LIO still serves London's national interests. The foreign policies of the post-1989 administrations of Margaret Thatcher, John Major, Anthony Blair, Gordon Brown, David Cameron, Theresa May, Boris Johnson, Elizabeth Truss and Rishi Sunak are all examined, particularly their implications for the human rights, security and economic orders of the LIO. Quantitative data in the form of British investment in Liberal International Economic Order institutions such as the World Bank and IMF, participation in GATT and WTO free trade negotiations, and contributions to the UN are further dimensions of the analysis of the UK's behaviour towards the LIO. The FPA of the UK post-1989 allows us to determine the extent to which London has affirmed or violated the LIO and the resultant impact on the latter's future. The findings of this chapter provide key independent variables for the scenarios built in Chapter 11.

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The foreign policies of post-1989 British governments

The UK's foreign policies since 1989 can be systematically analysed by focusing on the governments of its post-Cold War prime ministers: John Major (1990–1997); Anthony 'Tony' Blair (1997–2007); Gordon Brown (2007–2010); David Cameron (2010-2016); Theresa May (2016–2019); the volatile Boris Johnson (July 2019–September 2022), Elizabeth 'Liz' Truss (September–October 2022) and Rishi Sunak (October 2022– November 2024).

Since 1945, British foreign policy has been premised on maintaining a special relationship with the US, ambiguity and reluctance about European integration, and participation in multilateral political and economic institutions. European integration aims to ensure welfare, security and stability among European states (Molder 2018, p. 153). European integration began in the 1950s with the establishment of the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC), which integrated the coal and steel industries of six European states – Belgium, France, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands and West Germany – into a single market. In 1957, these six states formed two other supranational European institutions: the EEC, whose aim was to forge economic integration between them, and the European Atomic Energy Community (EAEC), whose purpose was to produce nuclear power and distribute it to the same six member states (European Parliament 2018, p. 3). In 1967, the ECSC, EEC and EAEC merged into the EEC. In 1992, the EEC member states established the EU by adopting the *Maastricht Treaty*. This background to European integration is important when examining British foreign policy. The UK has traditionally adopted a relatively independent foreign policy and has been reluctant to fully integrate into the various institutions championing European integration – the ECSC, EAEC, EEC and EU (Oliver 2015, pp. 7–8). At the same time, British governments have sought to act as a balancer of affairs in Continental Europe (Molder 2018, p. 154). The following subsections assess the various post-1989 foreign policies and actions of British governments, with the aim of examining the extent to which these policies and actions have supported or undermined the LIO.

The foreign policy of the Major administration (1990–1997)

John Major succeeded Margaret Thatcher as Conservative Party leader and prime minister in 1990. The Thatcher administration (1979–1990) had largely focused on domestic priorities such as entrenching neoliberal policies. In foreign affairs, it had partnered with the US to sponsor anti-Soviet

insurgents in Afghanistan during the Soviet–Afghan War (1979–1989), as part of solidifying its close ties with the US (Wallace & Oliver 2004, p. 4). The Thatcher government had inherited the foreign policy objective of maintaining a close relationship with the US from successive post-1945 British governments. According to Schnapper (2019, p. 4), this enduring commitment was calculated to ensure Washington's support for the UK against communist or Soviet threats during the Cold War.

The UK's alliance with the US also stemmed from Washington's economic aid for war-damaged Europe after WWII, enabling European states to rebuild their economies. Post-1945 commitment to cultivating a relationship with the US and NATO also allowed the UK to retain its influence in global affairs despite its military and economic decline (Daddow & Schnapper 2013, p. 330). This transatlantic relationship came at the expense of Europe, as the UK has often aligned with the US on major international issues (Schnapper 2019, p. 5). Instances of the UK's pro-US foreign policy decisions are described below.

The Major administration's policy towards the European Union and North Atlantic Treaty Organization

Upon assuming power, Major's administration declared its desire to re-establish a balance in the UK's foreign policy, with an equal focus on maintaining close relations with both the US and Europe. To this end, it signed the *Maastricht Treaty* in February 1992. This committed the British government to economic integration and monetary union, the latter implemented through a proposed single and stable European currency. The *Maastricht Treaty* committed the UK and other signatory states to establishing a common citizenship for the citizens of EU member states. Moreover, the *Treaty* bound signatory states to implement a common foreign and security policy (CFSP), a common defence policy, and an eventual common defence force that would ensure Europe's independence (Council of European Communities 1992, pp. 3–4). The reference to an eventual common defence force can be construed as the EU's aim of reducing or terminating its dependence on NATO.

Despite the *Maastricht Treaty*'s emphasis on establishing a European security and defence policy, the Major administration maintained that the EU's security policy needed to be consistent with NATO's security policy framework (Dryburgh 2008, p. 7). Thus, it still viewed NATO as the primary guarantor of European security despite the call for an independent EU defence and security policy and the security objectives enshrined in the *Maastricht Treaty*. This can be construed as the continuation of the UK's

traditional pro-US foreign policy focus at the expense of European integration and cooperation on defence and security matters.

The Major government concluded its term in 1997 without adopting a firm position on the proposal by EU members to amend the *Maastricht Treaty* in order to empower the EU Parliament to formulate laws on issues such as immigration and to enact common foreign and security policies. Naturally, member states would have to cede some of their sovereignty to the EU when accepting the proposed amendment of the *Maastricht Treaty*. Therefore, the decision on whether to cede some of the UK's foreign policymaking powers to the EU Parliament was deferred to the incoming government of Tony Blair (Wallace & Oliver 2004, p. 5). The unwillingness or inability of the Major administration to take a position on augmenting the legislative powers of the EU Parliament illustrates the UK's historic reluctance and ambiguity *vis-à-vis* European integration.

The Major administration's policy towards the United States of America

Throughout its tenure, the Major government also displayed continuity with the post-1945 British foreign policy tradition of maintaining close relations with the US. For instance, the UK contributed an armed force towards the US-led coalition that intervened to defend the sovereignty of Kuwait against the Iraqi invasion in August 1990. Between October 1990 and February 1991, a coalition of US, UK, French, Saudi Arabian, Egyptian and Kuwaiti armed forces defended Kuwait and repelled Iraq's annexation of its oil-rich neighbour (Wallace & Oliver 2004, p. 5). This is an example of the Major government's commitment to its alliance with the US, as well as to defending international law by restoring the sovereignty of Iraq. Sovereignty and multilateral cooperation on matters of world peace and security are core values of the LIO.

The Major administration's policy towards the peace and security situation in Europe following the disintegration of the Soviet Union

The UK's commitment to peace in Europe proved ambiguous during the outbreak of the Yugoslav Wars of Independence by constituent republics of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, beginning in 1991. The Yugoslav Wars, also known as the Balkans conflict, were wars of independence by the former constituent republics of the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, waged from 1991 to 2001. The fall of communism in 1989 and the disintegration of the Soviet Union in 1991 were a key inspiration for the quest for independence among formerly socialist republics of the Yugoslav federation. The six

republics of the Yugoslav federation were Serbia, Slovenia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Macedonia and Montenegro[8].

Serbia was the *de facto* leader of Yugoslavia. The Yugoslav wars of independence were transformed into ethnic conflicts among the various nationalities of Yugoslavia. A key issue leading to the Bosnia conflict was the federal government of Yugoslavia's determination to keep the federation intact against the will of constituent republics that favoured independence. After Croatia and Slovenia declared their independence, the federal Yugoslav government, located in Serbia (Belgrade), rejected the declarations. Due to significant Serbian ethnicities in the secessionist states, war broke out between the new governments and the ethnic Serbs loyal to the federal government in Belgrade (Brundell 2020, p. 4).

The Major government initially did not intervene in Yugoslavia, viewing the Yugoslav Wars as a problem to be resolved by Continental Europe's great powers, namely France and Germany. It believed that no vital British interests were at risk as a result of these wars. From February 1992, however, the UK implemented the UN's economic sanctions against Yugoslavia and supported the UNSC decision to deploy the United Nations Protection Force (UNPROFOR) to Bosnia and Herzegovina and Croatia between 1992 and 1995 (Wallace & Oliver 2004, p. 5). It also participated in NATO's Operation Deliberate Force against the Yugoslav (Serb) army from August to September 1995. These multilateral interventions pushed Serbia and the former Yugoslav republics (Bosnia and Herzegovina and Croatia) towards a negotiated ceasefire through the *Dayton Peace Accords* signed in December 1995 (Office of the Permanent Mission of the United States of America to the United Nations 1995, p. 2).

The Major administration's decision to participate in these multilateral interventions in Yugoslavia was informed by an alarming rise in civilian casualties amid allegations that Serbian forces were committing genocide and ethnic cleansing against secessionist ethnic groups. Genocide and ethnic cleansing contravene international law and the security and human rights values of the LIO and can be interpreted as the factors that compelled the Major government to participate in UNPROFOR and the NATO intervention. Thus, the Major government moved from an initial policy of indifference *vis-à-vis* Yugoslavia towards a policy of participating in the multilateral UN and NATO interventions in order to protect human rights and manage the Yugoslav crisis. Therefore, we can conclude that the Major government defended the human rights values of the liberal order through its participation in UNPROFOR and NATO's Operation Deliberate Force in Yugoslavia. London's support for these multilateral interventions helped to restore relative peace and security in the Balkans in 1995. In May 1997, the

8. See a map depicting the constituent republics of the Yugoslav Federation at https://www.icty.org/sid/321.

Labour Party led by Anthony (Tony) Blair won the British elections, thereby replacing Major's Conservative Party administration.

The foreign policies of the Blair administrations (1997–2007)

According to Lunn, Miller and Smith (2008, p. 9), Tony Blair's foreign policy rested on five pillars, namely activist interventionism to promote and protect human rights, maintaining a special relationship with the US, reform of the EU, arms regulation and international development. It is often argued that interventionism is a defining foreign policy position of Blair's 10-year tenure as British prime minister. Interventionism was premised on the Blair government's commitment to an ethical, human rights orientation in formulating and implementing foreign policy (Molder 2018, p. 157).

Enacting the interventionist foreign policy

Following the Labour Party's victory in the 1997 general election, the first Blair administration upheld the principle of multilateral cooperation by maintaining a peacekeeping force in the Gulf region in order to prevent another Iraqi invasion of Kuwait and in collaboration with the US military (Wallace & Oliver 2004, p. 7). Blair's activist interventionism began in earnest during the Kosovo War of Independence (1998–1999) in Serbia, which formed part of the broader Yugoslav Wars of Independence. The Kosovo War occurred between the secession-seeking Kosovo, a province within Serbia, and the Serbian government. Kosovo was (and remains) constituted by an Albanian ethnic majority and a Serb minority ethnic group. The Albanians had long resisted Serb rule over Kosovo province. When the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia began to disintegrate following the secession of Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina, the enduring ambition for independence among Kosovo Albanians was ignited. In the 1990s, Kosovo Albanians established the Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA), which accelerated Kosovo's resistance to Serb rule, even transforming this resistance into armed insurgency (Posen 2003, p. 43).

Sensing an imminent violent insurgency by the KLA, the federal government of Yugoslavia in Serbia launched a military offensive against the KLA and its supporters in the Drenica Valley in Kosovo in February 1998. This resulted in a few thousand civilian and KLA casualties and spurred greater numbers of the majority Albanian population in Kosovo to join the KLA insurgency. Another military raid by Belgrade against the secessionists in Kosovo in 1998 displaced many Albanians, leading to a humanitarian emergency in Kosovo. With heightened violence and a

humanitarian crisis in Kosovo, Europe and NATO began to monitor the Kosovo War (Posen 2003, p. 43). In September 1998, the UNSC passed Resolution 1199, which called for a ceasefire, the withdrawal of Serbian forces from Kosovo, and negotiations between Belgrade and Kosovo.

In October 1998, NATO imposed an armistice between Belgrade and the KLA under the following conditions: Belgrade would reduce its military presence in Kosovo while the KLA would reduce its military activity, and the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) would deploy 800 unarmed observers, known as the Kosovo Verification Mission (KVM), to monitor adherence to the armistice. The KLA violated the NATO armistice by recruiting more soldiers and expanding its control over territory which Belgrade had demilitarised. Belgrade responded with a military offensive against Albanians in Kosovo, which resulted in casualties. Between January and March 1999, the UK, France and the US (in their capacity as NATO members), as well as Russia and Germany (the latter two representing the OSCE), summoned Belgrade and the KLA to Rambouillet, France, for peace negotiations.

The Rambouillet negotiations led to a peace agreement. However, there was little input from the warring parties, namely Serbia and the KLA. The agreement, known as the *Rambouillet Accords*, proposed democratic self-government for Kosovo and respect for human rights. NATO would occupy the province from 1999 to 2001, following which a referendum would be held to decide on its independence from Serbia (Office of the Permanent Mission of France to the United Nations 1999, p. 4). Belgrade refused to sign the *Rambouillet Accords* due to the proposed independence of Kosovo and NATO military occupation (Posen 2003, p. 48). One can observe that the *Rambouillet Accords* were unfair to minority Serbs in Kosovo because any referendum on Kosovo's independence would inevitably be supported by the majority Albanian population in the province.

Following Belgrade's rejection of the *Rambouillet Accords*, and the escalation of violence in Kosovo, the OSCE's unarmed KVM observers were evacuated from the war-torn province. NATO then resolved to use airstrikes against Belgrade between March and June 1999 in what became known as Operation Allied Force. They were not authorised by the UNSC and also struck Albanian refugees and the Chinese Embassy. In June 1999, Serbia agreed to end the war in Kosovo in exchange for the cessation of NATO's airstrikes. Belgrade further agreed to withdraw its armed forces from Kosovo and to accept a NATO peacekeeping force as well as a UN administration mission in Kosovo. These peace terms were incorporated into UNSC Resolution 1244 of June 1999. Notably, neither NATO nor UNSC Resolution 1244 created a pathway towards Kosovo's full independence (Latawski & Smith 2003, p. 9).

One can conclude that the Blair government implemented its principle of active interventionism in respect of the Kosovo War first by voting in favour of UNSC Resolution 1199 of September 1998, which condemned the Kosovo War and called for the withdrawal of Serbian troops from the province. The UK's commitment to defending human rights then compelled the Blair administration to vote in favour of the NATO armistice against the Serbian government and the KLA in October 1998. The UK also endorsed the OSCE KVM peacekeeping operation that enforced UNSC Resolution 1199. Furthermore, the Blair administration participated in the drafting of the multilateral *Rambouillet Accords* under the stewardship of NATO and the OSCE. When Serbia violated the *Rambouillet Accords* (albeit due to their Kosovo bias), the UK endorsed and participated in the three-month NATO airstrikes against Belgrade, which compelled Serbia to end the Kosovo War in June 1998. One can interpret the intervention in Kosovo in 1998 and 1999 as part of Blair's and the Labour Party's commitment to humanitarian intervention in order to avoid atrocities similar to those experienced in the Balkans, which had partly resulted from the lack of international intervention in the early 1990s. (This also played a role in the Rwandan Genocide between April and July 1994).

Therefore, under Blair's premiership, the UK embarked on a programme of multilateral interventionism that ended the Kosovo War. However, given that the NATO airstrikes were not authorised by the UNSC, they violated the *UN Charter* and, therefore, international law. As signatories to the *UN Charter*, the UK and its NATO partners would have been aware that only the UNSC has the prerogative to authorise military force and the infringement of state sovereignty. Despite transgressing international law, one can argue that the airstrikes were implemented as a means of preventing atrocities such as genocide and protecting the human rights of Kosovo Albanians, including their rights to self-determination. This is the eternal dilemma embodied in the sovereignty versus human rights debate.

The Blair government's commitment to humanitarian interventions was again on display when British armed forces intervened in war-torn Sierra Leone, a former British colony. Between March 1991 and January 2002, Sierra Leone was ravaged by a civil war between the incumbent government and its Sierra Leone Army (SLA) and the insurgent Revolutionary United Front (RUF). During the bloody 11-year war, more than 70,000 people are reported to have died, thousands more were mutilated, and almost half the population was displaced. Atrocities were committed by both warring parties and continued despite military interventions and condemnations by the UN Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL) and the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) (Scott 2016, p. 182).

The civil war had endured despite these international interventions partly because warring parties were financing themselves from Sierra

Leone's vast diamond resources, known as 'blood diamonds', in a complex war caused by state failure, socioeconomic underdevelopment and deprivation. Despite being the former colonial master of Sierra Leone, the UK did not contribute military personnel to the UNAMSIL. This was partly due to the UK's interventions in the Gulf, the Balkans and Kosovo in the 1990s, which coincided with the civil war in Sierra Leone.

In April 2000, the insurgent RUF violated the UN-sponsored 1999 *Lomé Peace Accord* by attacking a UNAMSIL base, thereby reigniting its insurgency. Sensing the advancement of the RUF towards Freetown, the Sierra Leone capital, the UK intervened in mid-2000 with an initial aim of evacuating British citizens. This initial objective expanded after the RUF captured UNAMSIL peacekeepers and confiscated their arms Blair's administration then ordered a full-blown intervention to rescue UNAMSIL soldiers, free British soldiers held hostage by militias affiliated to RUF and help the Sierra Leone Army to fight the RUF (Scott 2016, pp. 182–183).

Shortly after British intervention, the civil war tilted in the government's favour, with British forces staying on for an additional two years to disarm and demobilise the RUF and other militias and reintegrate them into post-war society. The Blair government also committed itself to state-building and economic reconstruction to ensure stability and sustainable peace in Sierra Leone between 2000 and 2002 (Scott 2016, p. 185). In January 2002, the Sierra Leone civil war was declared over. In May 2002, Sierra Leone held elections, with the incumbent president, Ahmad Kabbah, winning by a considerable margin (BBC 2018).

Thus, one can observe that Blair's first Labour administration intervened in another conflict, this time a former colony in West Africa. This intervention was undertaken with the initial aim of evacuating British nationals from Freetown before the arrival of RUF rebels. It then developed into a bigger humanitarian intervention to liberate UNAMSIL peacekeepers and captured British soldiers from the RUF and affiliated militias. At this juncture, the UK augmented the aims of its intervention to include the preservation of the democratically elected Kabbah government in Freetown.

Thus, the UK not only ensured the protection of its British citizens but also liberated UN peacekeepers as well as preserved democracy in Sierra Leone while also ending the 11-year civil war. Moreover, London also invested in post-war state-building, economic reconstruction and the disarmament of RUF forces in order to ensure stable and sustainable peace and security in its erstwhile West African colony. One can conclude that by preserving democracy, liberating UN peacekeepers and ending the civil war, the British intervention in Sierra Leone advanced the values of the LIO by contributing to the restoration of peace and security in the West African nation-state and ending a decade of atrocities and other human rights violations.

Blair's government also supposed the US government's 'War on Terror' in response to the terrorist attack on the World Trade Centre in New York on 11 September 2001. The Global War on Terror can be interpreted as another avenue used by Blair to further strengthen the UK's relationship with the US while simultaneously seeking to nullify the perceived security threat posed by terrorists to Western nations (Lunn et al. 2008, p. 11).

About 3,000 people, including a number of British nationals, died in the 11 September (9/11) terror attack. Responsibility for the attack was attributed to the al-Qaeda terrorist group, which had bombed the American embassies in Tanzania and Kenya in 1998, killing 200 people. In October 2000, al-Qaeda was also suspected to have bombed a US naval ship in Yemen, killing seven people (Warbrick & McGoldrick 2003, p. 245). Therefore, the US government believed it had valid reasons to respond to these targeted and orchestrated terrorist attacks. It was supported by UNSC Resolution 1368 of 12 September 2001, which classified the 9/11 terror attacks as a threat to international peace and security and mandated the UNSC to punish those responsible. Similarly, NATO responded by identifying the 11 September terror attacks as an attack on NATO in its entirety and calling on all NATO members to embark on collective action against its perpetrators (Warbrick & McGoldrick 2003, p. 246). The Blair government participated in and committed to the retaliatory resolutions of both the UNSC and NATO.

The US government discovered evidence that al-Qaeda leader Osama bin Laden was responsible for the 9/11 attack on New York City. The Blair government also uncovered evidence that the Taliban Islamic fundamentalist government of Afghanistan was harbouring and sponsoring al-Qaeda within its territory. In exchange, al-Qaeda was providing financial support to the Afghan Taliban regime. This was construed as support by the Taliban for international terrorism, which meant that the Taliban government itself was a threat to international peace and security. Following this evidence, the US and UK governments jointly lobbied other states to join the international war against terrorist groups and their sponsors (Warbrick & McGoldrick 2003, p. 246). This campaign culminated in the passing of UNSC Resolution 1373 on 28 September 2001, which called on UN member states to halt the financing of terrorism, refrain from supporting terrorists in any form, and cooperate bilaterally or multilaterally in taking actions against terrorists (UNSC Resolution 1373, 2001, pp. 2–3).

With a supporting resolution in place, the UK, US and other allies invoked their right to collective self-defence as enshrined in Chapter 7, Article 51 of the *UN Charter*, launching military attacks against al-Qaeda and the Taliban regime in Afghanistan in October 2001. The military operation, named Operation Enduring Freedom, was essentially a US-led coalition rather

than a UN or NATO-led mission (Warbrick & McGoldrick 2003, p. 246). Indeed, one can add that Article 51 of the *UN Charter* empowers a UN member state(s) to embark on individual or collective self-defence if the UNSC has not adopted such a resolution (*UN Charter* 1945, pp. 10–11). As a result, the military action of the UK, the US and other allies against al-Qaeda and the Taliban in Afghanistan was within the parameters of the *UN Charter*, a key source of international law and a pillar of the LIO. The UK's participation in Operation Enduring Freedom in October 2001 can, therefore, be interpreted as adherence to the *UN Charter* while simultaneously strengthening the coveted transatlantic relationship with the US, a traditional ally since 1945.

The 43-day air and ground military strikes under Operation Enduring Freedom culminated in the overthrow of the Taliban as the government of Afghanistan in December 2001. After being replaced by a UNSC-sponsored transitional authority, the Taliban became an insurgent group against the incumbent government (Warbrick & McGoldrick, 2003, p. 247). In August 2021, the Taliban regained control of Afghanistan following the withdrawal of US armed forces after 20 years of resisting domestic governments backed by US and British armed forces (Brooking 2021).

The Blair government's foreign policy pillar of regulating armaments for world peace was cited as a key factor in its decision to invade Iraq in cooperation with the US in 2003. As early as November 1997, Blair had received unverified British intelligence reports that the Iraqi government was manufacturing Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD) – a major threat to world peace and security. The US government was equally concerned about Iraq's alleged WMD programme (Wallace & Oliver 2004, p. 8). By 2002, the Bush administration had augmented the 'War on Terror' policy to include a neo-conservative element of seeking to install democratic regimes across the Middle East. As part of this neo-conservative agenda, the US had labelled Iraq and Iran as the 'axis of evil' due to their alleged possession of WMD, setting the scene for the 2003 Iraqi invasion.

In April 2002, Bush and Blair met and agreed to invade Iraq. For Washington, this was part of its neo-conservative foreign policy agenda in the Middle East, and for London, it was part of its foreign policy pillar of international arms control. Blair sought to gain UNSC authorisation for the invasion to avoid alienating the British public and Britain's EU partners – the French government, in particular, was sceptical about invading Iraq without concrete evidence of a WMD programme (Wallace & Oliver 2004, p. 10).

In November 2002, the UNSC passed Resolution 1441, which granted Iraq an opportunity to allow the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and the UN Monitoring, Verification and Inspectors Commission (UNMOVIC) to inspect Baghdad's armaments production facilities. This would have

determined whether Iraq was developing WMD, as per the British and US claims. The UNSC gave the Iraqi government 30 days to comply and to declare its chemical, biological and nuclear weapons arsenal. Resolution 1441 also implored Iraq to comply with previous UNSC disarmament resolutions dating back to 1991. It concluded by stating that the WMD allegations remained under investigation until the IAEA and UNMOVIC provided a report to the UNSC (UNSC Resolution 1441, 2002, p. 5).

The IAEA and UNMOVIC visited Iraq in December 2002 and found no evidence of WMD. As a result – contrary to British and US wishes – the UNSC saw no grounds for authorising military force against Baghdad. The British and US governments decided to invade Iraq in any case, citing Iraq's failure to disarm since 1991 despite numerous UNSC resolutions urging it to do so (Crichton, Lamb & Jacquette 2010). In February 2003, France, Russia and Germany rejected a joint British–US proposal to the UNSC to authorise the invasion of Iraq. In March 2003, the UK and US invaded Iraq without UNSC authorisation.

With no evidence of WMD and no UNSC authorisation, the invasion was a violation of Iraq's sovereignty and the *UN Charter*. The US clearly invaded Iraq as part of its augmented post-9/11 neo-conservative agenda of exporting democracy to non-democratic geopolitical regions such as the Middle East. The UK, for its part, arguably joined the invasion to demonstrate its commitment to maintaining close ties with Washington. This was despite domestic opposition to the invasion, even within Blair's governing Labour Party. The invasion of Iraq led to the overthrow of Saddam Hussein's Ba'athist government, which led, in turn, to an insurgency supported by other militias, Iran and al-Qaeda, between 2003 and 2011 (BBC 2016).

Consequently, the British–US invasion that had sought to instil democracy in Iraq mushroomed into a civil war between the imposed democratic government and the ousted Hussein government and its allies. A similar outcome unfolded in Afghanistan between 2000 and 2021. One may, therefore, conclude that – contrary to the UNSC's stated goal of safeguarding world peace and security – the neo-conservative policy of imposing democratic regimes in the Middle East worked to destabilise the region. While they were permanent members of the UNSC, the UK and the US were effectively enacting foreign policies that contradicted the UNSC mandate, thereby undermining the LIO.

The Blair administration's policy towards the European Union

Another pillar of Blair's foreign policy was reforming the EU and placing the UK at the centre of the regional organisation, as per the 1997 Labour Party election manifesto (Lunn et al. 2008, p. 29). Under the Blair

government, London signed the 1997 *Treaty of Amsterdam*, which amended the *Maastricht Treaty*. In doing so, the Blair government agreed to the following binding commitments:

- A commitment to basic social rights
- Establishing an EU common market and implementing economic integration policies
- Implementing a CFSP and common defence policy that would lead to Europe's independence in ensuring European peace and security
- Facilitating the free movement of people
- Making the EU a more interconnected entity whose decisions would benefit populations and member states
- Transforming the EU into an economic and monetary union characterised by a single currency (EU 1997, p. 7).

By signing the *Treaty of Amsterdam*, the Blair administration appeared to implement its undertaking in its election manifesto to reform the EU and place the UK at the centre of the reformed regional body. However, it did not implement certain provisions of the Treaty of Amsterdam. Throughout Blair's 10-year premiership (1997–2007), the UK opted out of the EU's policies on immigration, border control and policing. Perhaps the UK's reluctance in these areas reflected its historic preference of not ceding too much of its sovereignty to the EU and its predecessors (the EEC and the ECSC).

The UK also chose not to join the EU's *Schengen Agreement*, which can be interpreted as the continuation of its reticence in respect of European integration. Thus, despite its stated commitment to the EU, a key post-1989 institution of the LIO, the Blair administration preferred to maintain British sovereignty as opposed to ceding some of its autonomy to the EU. This did not place London at the centre of the EU. Moreover, it opted not to implement the EU's Economic and Monetary Union (EMU) Stage Three policies which, among other provisions, called on member states to adopt the euro as a common currency (Lunn et al. 2008, pp. 30– 31). According to Molder (2018, p. 158), the Blair administration's rejection of a single currency (the euro) and the EU passport (the Schengen visa) signalled the UK's resistance to deep integration with the EU. Instead, the UK opted to preserve its sovereignty and maintain its national currency – the pound sterling.

Despite the *Treaty of Amsterdam*'s call for a European defence mechanism, the Blair government declared that NATO would remain the preferred collective security system for the UK and advocated this for the EU as well – a pronouncement made at the 1998 EU Heads of Government meeting (Wallace & Oliver 2004, p. 7). Situating the EU's common security and defence proposal within the established NATO framework assured the

US that the UK still believed it was playing a key role in European security. In so doing, the Blair government demonstrated its commitment to NATO as the premier collective defence system of the LIO. Thus, despite committing itself to an EU CFSP as set out in the *Treaty of Amsterdam*, the Blair administration demonstrated a preference for NATO to take the lead in European security matters while also seeking to retain British independence on matters such as immigration and the regulation of the movement of people into the UK.

However, the second Blair government (2001–2007) did endorse the expansion of the EU by incorporating Eastern European states, a former Soviet sphere of influence. This can be construed as the UK's commitment to the universalisation of democracy, free trade and democracy, as these ideals are the conditions that applicant countries must meet before admission to the EU (Lunn et al. 2008, p. 34). Therefore, Blair's Labour Party was committed to absorbing former Soviet satellite states into the LIO through EU expansionism in Eastern Europe. Through this policy of supporting EU expansionism, London demonstrated its commitment to expanding the scope of the LIO.

After a decade as British prime minister, Blair resigned in June 2007 at a special Labour Party conference, handing over the party leadership and premiership to Gordon Brown.

The foreign policy of the Brown administration (2007–2010)

According to Dyson (2016, p. 121), Brown's foreign policy was shaped by his government's domestic and international response to the global financial crisis (GFC) of 2008. The GFC developed out of the 2007 US financial crisis, triggered by a housing and stock market crash – a direct result of excessive lending by US commercial banks and other financial institutions. Due to the integration of global financial markets in the hyper-globalised 21st century, the US stock market crash inevitably gave rise to a global crisis (Verick & Islam 2010, p. 3). Responding to the GFC was the Brown administration's most important challenge.

Brown, a former Chancellor of the Exchequer (the British term for a minister of finance) – and his current Chancellor, Alistair Darling, are credited with preventing the collapse of the British financial sector at the onset of the global financial recession in 2008. Having witnessed the collapse of major US financial institutions, Brown's government chose to inject government funds into British financial institutions in order to prevent their collapse – which would have led to the collapse of the British economy (Dyson 2016, p. 131). Given the seeming success of this strategy, Brown

then led the international response to the financial crisis. The UK's pursuit of multilateral cooperation in response to the global recession was born out of a realisation that the GFC required multilateral cooperation and management. Flowing from this, the Brown government embarked on a foreign policy of lobbying foreign governments to devise and adopt a common response to the financial crunch, based on Britain's Keynesian approach to managing the crisis (Dyson 2016, p. 130).

Amid signs that the British government's strategy was working, Brown addressed a Eurogroup meeting (i.e., a meeting of eurozone finance ministers) in October 2008, sharing the British government's recapitalisation strategy and urging eurozone states to adopt the same approach. This won the support of other EU member states as well as that of the US government (Dyson 2016, p. 131). The Brown government's leadership of the international response to the GFC was further punctuated by its hosting of the April 2009 Group of Twenty (G20) Summit. The G20 is the premier platform for international economic cooperation, constituted by the heads of state and government, finance ministers and central bank governors of the 20 leading economies in the world (Dal Cais 2016, p. 2). The summit adopted the UK's recapitalisation strategy as the international blueprint for responding to the GFC. Moreover, it decided on a US$1 trillion pledge to recapitalise the IMF and the World Bank, which would use these funds to recapitalise and revive the global economy in turn (Nanto 2009, p. 5). One can conclude that the Brown administration was the undisputed leader of the post-2008 multilateral response to the global financial meltdown. The fact that Brown advocated a multilateral financial solution to the global crisis underscores his Labour government's commitment to multilateral cooperation and the multilateral economic and financial institutions of the Liberal International Economic Order.

Despite leading the multilateral response to the global crisis, Brown's Labour Party lost the May 2010 general election to David Cameron's Conservative Party. This defeat is attributed to the Brown government's unchecked public spending, which resulted in mounting government debt. This created divisions between Brown and members of his administration – Labour leaders began to contradict each other in public, which led to a loss of public confidence prior to the election (Heppell & Theakston 2013, pp. 144–146).

The foreign policy of the Cameron administration (2010–2016)

According to Beech and Munce (2019, p. 120), humanitarian intervention and upholding human rights globally were central pillars of David Cameron's Conservative Party government. This indicates a continuation of the

humanitarian interventions of the Blair administrations (1997–2007). The Cameron administration's focus on a humanitarian foreign policy agenda affirmed the UK's commitment to the UDHR (1948) and the *European Convention on Human Rights* (ECHR) of 1950 (Beech & Munce 2019, p. 118). One can argue that the UK had made a significant commitment to the post-1945 human rights agenda of the LIO, and the Cameron administration appeared to adhere to this tradition.

William Hague, Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs from 2010 to 2014, declared in 2012 that the Cameron administration's foreign policy would be guided by international law and justice. Furthermore, Hague highlighted the Cameron government's commitment to multilateral cooperation as a vehicle for resolving complex threats to international peace and security (Beech & Munce 2019, p. 120). These foreign policy declarations underscored the Cameron administration's support for multilateral cooperation within the framework of the LIO, particularly its human rights system and international law.

Humanitarian intervention as a pillar of Cameron's foreign policy

The Cameron administration's commitment to humanitarian intervention was tested during the Arab Spring that swept through the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region. In March 2011, the British government participated in the NATO military intervention in the Libyan civil war, which was authorised by *UNSC Resolution 1973* (Daddow & Schnapper 2013, p. 338). The *UNSC Resolution 1973* (2011, p. 3) invoked Chapter Seven of the *UN Charter*, enacted a no-fly zone over Libya, and mandated willing UN member states to intervene in the North African state to protect citizens against war crimes and other atrocities by the Muammar Gaddafi government. Since this was a humanitarian intervention, *UNSC Resolution 1973* implored UN member states not to deploy occupation forces but rather to use airstrikes.

On 22 March 2011, NATO resolved to implement *UNSC Resolution 1973* by imposing a no-fly zone over Libya, implementing an arms embargo on Tripoli and launching Operation Unified Protector (OUP), comprising air and naval strikes against Libyan military forces. NATO unilaterally extended its military intervention from March to October 2011, when Gaddafi was captured and killed by Libyan rebels (*Al Jazeera* 2018; NATO 2015).

NATO's implementation of *UNSC Resolution 1973* halted the Libyan government's human rights violations against its rebelling civilian population, who were joining the wider 'Arab Spring' movement that sought political change in the Arab world. The Cameron government's participation in the formulation and adoption of *UNSC Resolution 1973*, as well as its

participation in the NATO military intervention, can be interpreted as advancing international law, human rights and international justice. However, its participation in NATO's unilateral decision to extend its intervention in Libya to October 2011 exceeded the scope of *Resolution 1973*, helping the insurgent groups to overthrow the Libyan regime and kill Gaddafi.

In August 2013, the Cameron administration lost a motion in the British Parliament that proposed British military action against the Syrian government following the alleged use of chemical weapons against its insurgent civilian population. This was Syria's wave of the Arab Spring (BBC 2013). Cameron had argued for military action to protect Syrian citizens against the chemical weapons allegedly discharged by Damascus, which constituted war crimes and crimes against humanity. The British Parliament rejected Cameron's proposal based on the results of the previous protracted British interventions in Iraq and Libya and the significant financial and military resources required to implement such interventions (Beech & Munce 2019, p. 121). Despite being vetoed by parliament, the Cameron administration's willingness to intervene in Syria to protect the human rights of Syrians points to its commitment to the international human rights system and human rights declarations passed by institutions and conventions of the LIO.

☐ Cameron's foreign policy towards the European Union

According to Molder (2018, p. 167), the eurozone debt crisis sprang from dwindling foreign investment in EU countries after the 2008 global financial crisis. A key consequence of the GFC was the EU immigration crisis, caused by Europeans starting to flee from bankrupt states to stable ones such as the UK. This emboldened the anti-EU faction within the Conservative Party to compel Cameron to commit the party to staging a referendum on the UK's future membership of the EU. This formed part of the party's 2015 election manifesto.

Many British citizens and leaders shared anti-EU sentiment, seeing the UK as a secluded and sovereign island nation-state that should be independent of the EU and Continental Europe. Despite being a liberal conservative who believed the UK should remain in the EU, Cameron agreed to incorporate the referendum into the Conservative Party manifesto for the May 2015 general election in order to win significant Eurosceptic voters and secure a second term as prime minister (Chung & Kim 2019, p. 3).

The Conservatives won the election. This compelled Cameron to make good on the manifesto promise and organise a referendum. In the June 2016 EU referendum, the majority of British citizens (52%) voted for the UK to leave the EU – a phenomenon known as 'Brexit' (Chung & Kim 2019, p.

2). Given that he had voted for the UK to remain in the EU, Cameron resigned as Conservative Party leader and prime minister in July 2016. He was succeeded by Theresa May, the Conservative Party leader who was tasked with delivering the UK's withdrawal from the EU.

The foreign policies of the post-Brexit administrations (2016–2024)

According to Oppermann, Beasley and Kaarbo (2020, p. 133), the post-Brexit administrations of Theresa May and Boris Johnson did not put forward clear British foreign policies. Their administrations sought to maintain the UK's Great Power status by adopting the following policies:

1. Maintaining close ties with the US and making financial contributions to NATO
2. Seeking to be a global trading state that pursues bilateral free trade agreements which favour UK interests
3. Becoming a regional partner to the EU through a negotiated exit trade agreement
4. Seeking to be a leader of the Commonwealth of Nations (Oppermann et al. 2020, p. 133).

It could be argued that the UK's withdrawal from the EU (effective 31 January 2020) restored its sovereignty and freedom to determine its own foreign policy across various sectors, free of EU institutions and common policies. However, without the EU and its institutions, it now has fewer options for exerting global political and economic influence. This implies that the UK has to rely on its own statecraft, influence in NATO, and close relations with the US. It is awareness of the loss of EU influence that drove the post-Brexit governments of May and Johnson to seek closer relations with the US and the Commonwealth. Maintaining a close relationship with the US, the biggest economy and the leader of the LIO, enables the UK to maintain global influence by aligning with Washington's foreign policy objectives and actions. Leveraging US political and economic power helps the UK to maintain its global influence.

Equally, the UK's prioritisation of the Commonwealth, a political association of 54 former British colonies and territories, is another means by which post-Brexit London seeks to fertilise new trade and political partnerships, thereby maintaining and projecting global influence. Likewise, one can explain London's commitment to being a regional partner to the EU and its self-identification as a global trading state as an attempt to secure and safeguard the UK's commercial interests, economic development and security. By seeking to become a regional trade partner to the EU, which was achieved through the December 2020 *EU–UK Trade and*

Co-operation Agreement (EC 2020), the UK seeks to retain many of the favourable trade and economic benefits through its free trade agreement with the EU. Likewise, by positioning itself as a global trading state post-Brexit, the UK seeks to pursue bilateral free trade relationships at a global level.

Boris Johnson's foreign policy concept of 2022, titled 'Global Britain in a Competitive Age', continued to prioritise the UK–US relationship as the cornerstone of London's foreign policy. Additionally, the Johnson administration identified Russia as an existential threat to the UK, Europe and the liberal West. To this end, the Johnson administration championed the strengthening of the alliance between NATO, Britain and the EU to withstand the alleged Russian threat to European security, citing the Russia–Ukraine war that began in February 2022. To this end, the Johnson administration provided military support in the form of weapons to Ukraine, seeking to defend Kyiv from Russian annexation (Ankara Center for Crisis and Policy Studies 2022). In September 2022, Johnson resigned and was succeeded by Elizabeth 'Liz' Truss.

The foreign policies of Liz Truss and Rishi Sunak in the dynamic 2020s

In her inaugural speech as UK prime minister, Liz Truss committed her government to revitalising the British economy, providing energy security, and defending democracy worldwide, identifying Russia as an enemy of democracy, notably as a result of its invasion of Ukraine. She went as far as labelling this 'Putin's war' (Middleton 2022). The Russia–Ukraine War is dealt with in greater detail in Chapter 8. Clearly, Truss sought to continue Johnson's previous policy of providing Kyiv with military support in its war with Russia. Given that Western Europe depends on Russia for natural gas – a key energy source – the Moscow–Kyiv War is a vital military and economic security issue for Europe. In the event, the Truss premiership only lasted 50 days due to her attempt to introduce unfunded tax cuts and related economic policies. This resulted in the crash of the British financial market, including a significant weakening of the pound sterling, as well as rising inflation.

Rishi Sunak succeeded Truss on 25 October 2023. His domestic and foreign policy outlook has chimed with that of Johnson and Truss, his Conservative Party predecessors: reviving the UK economy and social services; continuing the special UK–US relationship; defending liberal values; and supporting Kyiv in its war with Moscow. A somewhat nuanced position by the Sunak administration is that of containing Chinese influence over the UK (Falk 2022), albeit a natural outcome of the UK's prioritisation of the special relationship with Washington.

In terms of implementation, the Sunak administration has responded as follows to the two biggest crises of the volatile 2020s. It provides military, diplomatic, economic and humanitarian support to Ukraine and exhorts UK allies to do the same (Suleiman 2023). Furthermore, Sunak's administration rejects any ceasefire proposals that are not based on Russia's recognition of Ukraine's sovereignty. This is a significant foreign policy position because it affirms Kyiv's right to sovereignty while also displaying London's bypassing of multilateral solutions to the Russia–Ukraine War. It could be argued that, as a permanent member of the UNSC, the UK should champion a multilateral mediation solution to the Russia–Ukraine War as opposed to arming one side of the conflict.

On 7 October 2023, Hamas, an armed pro-Palestine liberation group, launched an attack on southern Israeli towns near the Gaza Strip, which reignited the Israel–Palestine conflict. Hamas governs the Gaza Strip, one of two territories that constitute the informal State of Palestine (France24 2023). Following WWI and the disintegration of the Ottoman Empire, the UK was given a mandate by the League of Nations to govern present-day Palestine. As a result, it could be argued that the JUK should play a leading role in resolving the Israel–Palestine conflict. After all, London was at the centre of the developing conflict between the two Middle Eastern nation-states in the 20th century. Before WWI, Palestine was one of the territories of the Ottoman Empire (1517–1917). According to Luxenberg (2008, p. 1), in the year 70 ce (i.e., the first century), the Roman Empire (625 bc–476 ce) conquered the Jewish territory and nation in Jerusalem and renamed the territory as 'Palestine'. Over time, the territory was occupied by various empires and peoples, the last of which was the Ottoman Empire. Following World War I, the victorious Allies (UK, France and the US among others) created three new nation-states from the collapsed Ottoman Empire: Iraq, Syria and Lebanon (Beck 2016). The League of Nations then provided Britain with a mandate to govern Palestine, in line with the 1917 Balfour Declaration. The *Balfour Declaration* was written by the UK Foreign Secretary, Arthur James Balfour, to Lord Rothschild of the British Jewish community. It was a statement of intent on behalf of the British government, promising British Jews that the UK would establish a Jewish state within Palestine (Balfour 1917). This was against the background of the advent of Zionism at the end of the 19th century, expressing the belief that Jewish people worldwide should return to the 'Jewish Homeland' in Palestine following the persecution of Jews in Russia and Eastern Europe.

However, in 1916, the British government had asked the Arab Palestinians to stage a revolt against the Ottoman Turks and, in exchange, undertook to grant Palestine its independence under Arab leadership (Luxenberg 2008, p. 2). Therefore, the UK government had promised to establish Palestinian

independence under the leadership of two different ethnic and religious groups: Arabs and Jews.

Between 1923 and 1948, Palestine was under British control as per the League of Nations mandate. During this period, London's mandate was challenged by Arab nationalism and Zionism, seeking the establishment of an Arab or Jewish state, respectively. A 1939 British government White Paper proposed a secular, independent nation-state that would be neither Arab or Jewish, but inclusive of both nations. This plan was disrupted by the outbreak of WWII. In 1947, the UK announced its intention to terminate its League of Nations mandate to govern Palestine. In November 1947, the UN General Assembly disregarded the UK proposal for a single secular Palestinian state and voted instead to establish two separate states, namely an Arab and Jewish state, with Jerusalem placed under international administration.

The Jews accepted this recommendation, but the Palestinian Arabs and Arab states did not and launched an armed conflict against the Jewish population to prevent the creation of a Jewish state within Palestine. Despite the Arab resistance, the State of Israel declared its independence on 14 May 1948, enduring war against the Arab states that Tel Aviv won in 1950, resulting in control of 78 per cent of Palestine and half of Jerusalem, while the Arab states retained control of the West Bank and Gaza (Luxenberg 2008, p. 5) The State of Palestine (i.e., the Gaza strip and the West Bank) was only established in November 1988 because the constituent territories had been under the control of either Israel or the neighbouring Arab states.

The UK's stance on the current conflict between Hamas and Israel is important for two reasons. First, Britain is partly responsible for the enduring conflict between Israel, Palestine and its Arab allies. Second, London has a permanent seat in the UNSC, whose mandate is to maintain international peace and security as per the *UN Charter*. The Arab–Israeli war is a permanent threat to international peace and security and, by extension, a constant flashpoint for a global war that could lead to the collapse of the LIO and organised global governance.

The Sunak administration's response to the now Israel–Palestine (rather than Israel–Hamas) conflict has been to support Tel Aviv's military retaliation in the name of self-defence. However, London has assured the British Parliament that it would urge Israel not to harm civilians, that it would seek to enable humanitarian aid to Gaza and to achieve a two-state solution in terms of which Israel and Palestine would become sovereign, independent states (House of Commons Library 2024, pp. 18–19).

London's support for Israel in what has become a war against Hamas and Palestinian civilians is controversial, especially since the Israeli Ambassador to the UK has informed the UK government that Tel Aviv has no plans to allow the establishment of a sovereign Palestinian state (Bell 2023). Should the Sunak government continue to support Israel despite its opposition to an independent Palestinian state, London would be depriving Palestine of its due sovereignty. Put differently, Britain would contravene international law by supporting a nation-state that occupies another territory illegally, amounting to 21st-century colonialism. A further problem with British support for Israel is the mounting casualties in Gaza, including the deaths of innocent civilians, among them many children. According to Oxfam International (2024), the death rate in Gaza is the highest in all major 21st-century conflicts thus far, with an average of 250 Palestinians being killed a day by the Israel Defence Force (IDF). It could be argued that, as a P5 member, the UK should not support a government that seems to be committing genocide against Palestinians, as this contravenes Britain's mandate as a UNSC member of maintaining world peace and security.

The United Kingdom's policies towards Bretton Woods and other economic institutions of the Liberal International Order

The Liberal International Economic Order is a key constitutive element of the LIO, and the UK's foreign policy is a good indicator of whether it supports the economic order or not. As outlined in Chapter 2, the Liberal International Economic Order is constituted by the Bretton Woods IFIs, the WTO, and like-minded economic institutions such as the EU. Member fees are a primary source of the IMF and World Bank's operating capital. The UK is a founding member of both, contributing significant financial resources that enable these IFIs to extend much-needed development loans to middle and low-income countries. In the IMF, country member fees are referred to as 'member quotas', with a country's contribution based on its size and position in the global economy (IMF 2023). Currently, the UK remains the sixth-largest financial contributor to the IMF's cash flow, contributing SDR20 155 million, the equivalent of US$26 916 million (IMF 2024).

We need to recall that the IMF is a watchdog over and manager of the international monetary system, a lender of last resort to countries, oversees the balance of payments of member states and advises them on economic and fiscal policy. The UK's financial contributions to this important IFI are significant, given this unprecedented era of financial globalisation and recurrent global, regional, and national financial crises that threaten nation-states and their populations.

London is also a major shareholder in the World Bank Group, with its financial contributions to the Bank's balance sheet totalling US$70,364 for the financial years 2018–2022 (World Bank 2023). These financial contributions enable the World Bank to pursue its goals of promoting economic development and reducing poverty. The UK is also a member of the WTO, whose goal is to continue the GATT mandate of removing barriers to trade in goods and services, as outlined in Chapter 2. During its membership in the EU, the UK was part of the Global North bloc that refused to reduce protectionist trade policies in the agriculture sector, which extends an unfair advantage to the agricultural sectors of the industrialised nations relative to their counterparts in the Global South (Balaam & Dillman, pp. 144–145). Therefore, it is observable that the international trading system is not based on principles of fair and equitable trade, as the UK and its fellow industrialised nations persist in implementing nationalist and protectionist economic policies that place the agricultural sectors of these Global North economies at an advantage, and the agricultural products of the Global South at a disadvantage. Therefore, London has contributed to the structurally unequal international trading system that hinders the development potential of the Global South. Such economic nationalism contradicts the principles of the GATT/WTO free trade regime, which is meant to enable market access for the agricultural products of developing economies.

Conclusion: Trends in the United Kingdom's behaviour towards the Liberal International Order

This review of the foreign policies of successive British administrations provides the following lessons about the UK's entrenched post-1989 policies towards the LIO. First, successive Conservative Party and Labour Party governments have constantly prioritised the British–US relationship, sometimes at the expense of international law – a cornerstone of the LIO. For instance, under the Blair premiership, the UK and US unilaterally pursued terrorists and regimes purported to be sponsoring terrorism. The global 'War on Terror' included a covert neo-conservative agenda whereby the US and UK toppled Iraqi and Afghan governments and replaced them with proxy democratic regimes that caused internal civil wars and further complicated the complex security situation in the Middle East. The unauthorised invasions and their contributions to civil wars in the Middle East contradicted the UK and Washington's responsibility to safeguard world peace and security in terms of their UNSC mandates.

The Major administration (1990–1997), the Brown administration (2007–2010), and the Cameron government (2010–2016) are notable for pursuing

foreign policies that advanced the value of multilateral cooperation in order to ensure international security, using LIO institutions. The Major administration condemned Iraq's invasion of Kuwait (1990) through the UNSC and subsequently contributed to a multilateral force that defended Kuwait's sovereignty. Likewise, Brown's administration led the international response to the 2008 global financial crisis by using the G20, the EU and the key economic institutions of the LIO that seek to advance international economic security and development. For its part, the Cameron administration also contributed to the UNSC-sponsored NATO intervention in Libya (2011) aimed at halting the humanitarian crisis in the North African state, protecting its civilian population, and advancing human rights. However, the UK's participation in an augmented agenda of the NATO intervention in Libya to include the toppling of the Gaddafi regime was outside the mandate of *UNSC Resolution 1973* and violated Tripoli's sovereignty. As a result, Libya continues to face internal instability.

The UK's official exit from the EU on 31 January 2020 was primarily driven by London's desire to wrestle back its policymaking sovereignty, an enduring issue for the UK *vis-à-vis* European integration. The Conservative Party administrations since 2019 of May, Johnson, Truss and Sunak have been dominated by the need to respond to the Russia–Ukraine conflict and the Israel–Palestine conflicts, which have the potential to create European and Middle East wars, and even a global conflict. In respect of these potential flashpoints, the UK has adopted foreign policies of bypassing the UNSC and the UN, choosing instead to support the unilateral backing of Kiev and Tel Aviv by the US. Such a foreign policy posture has the potential to make the diplomatic and political institutions of the LIO irrelevant. However, the UK has consistently supported the economic institutions of the LIO, which has been good for global economic governance. These British policies will be utilised as independent variables for the scenario-building exercise in Chapter 11.

Chapter 7

The United States of America's foreign policies since 1989 and its attitude towards the Liberal International Order

Introduction

This chapter is a case study of the US government's post-1989 foreign policy, its IR actions and activities, and its attitude towards the LIO. Trends in its conduct towards the LIO are analysed to determine the extent to which Washington's post-1989 foreign policy has affirmed or undermined the LIO. Inferences follow about the extent to which the LIO has been beneficial for and/or aligned to American national interest, such that Washington retains confidence in an order it has anchored since 1945.

At the end of WWII, the US emerged as one of two superpowers and proceeded to promote its liberal values and market economy ideas globally through the institutions of the LIO. Following the end of the Cold War in 1989, along with the Communist International Order, the US-led LIO remained as the sole international order. The ensuing subsections analyse the foreign policies and international behaviour of post-1989 US governments, particularly in relation to the values and institutions of the liberal order.

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The aim of this analysis is to determine whether the post-1989 US governments have affirmed or undermined the values and institutions of the LIO. Such US actions in the international environment and their effect on the LIO are utilised as key independent variables for the scenarios built in Chapter 11.

The chapter begins with a review of the foreign policies of the Hebert Bush administration (1989–1993), highlighting the extent to which the US advanced the LIO and its values in this historic era of transition from the Cold War globally. The second section of this chapter then reviews the foreign policies of the two Clinton administrations (1993–2001), and their implications for the liberal order at a time where the LIO remained a relatively unrivalled and universal order. Third, the Bush administrations' international actions (2001–2009) are reviewed, and their impact on the liberal order's effectiveness is highlighted. The Barack Obama administrations (2009–2017) are explicated in section four, including Washington's contributions to the functioning and effectiveness of the LIO during this era. The fifth section evaluates the foreign policies of Donald Trump's tenure (2017–2021), and the impact thereof on the LIO. The FPA exercise concludes with a review of the ongoing presidency of Joseph Biden, and how its international actions are impacting the LIO. Section seven then provides an overview of Washington's foreign policy toward the Liberal International Economic Order, with a determination provided regarding the US's contributions to global economic governance. Section eight then concludes on key behavioural trends of the US that have been identified in the FPA exercise between 1989 and 2024, and the vitality of these trends for the forecasting chapter (Chapter 11).

The foreign policies of the HW Bush administration (1989–1993)

The US has had two presidents called George Bush – George HW Bush 1989–1993), and his son, George W Bush (2001–2009). O'Reilly and Renfro (2006, p. 17) describe George HW Bush as a 'moderate, informed and prudent' president with foreign policy expertise, having served as US Ambassador to the UN from 1971 to 1973.

George HW Bush oversaw US international relations at a time when communism had collapsed in Eastern Europe, the Soviet Union was disintegrating, German reunification was imminent, and Japan's rising economic development was threatening US economic hegemony (O'Reilly & Renfro 2006, p. 21). The Cold War and the Soviet Union had been central subjects of US foreign policy for about 42 years. Therefore, one can conclude that the George HW Bush administration had to operate in an uncertain and volatile international environment that was changing rapidly after four decades of Cold War politics.

In December 1989, Bush's Republican government invaded Panama and overthrew its president and former Central Intelligence Agency operative, General Manuel Antonio Noriega. Noriega had been charged with drug trafficking in Central America by US federal courts in the cities of Tampa and Miami. He was also accused of seeking to suppress democracy in Panama by rejecting the electoral victory of rival Guillermo Endara in the May 1989 presidential election. Moreover, due to the unrest resulting from the annulment of the election results, he was accused of endangering the lives of US citizens living in Panama. The US army, under the auspices of Operation Just Cause, removed Noriega from power and replaced him with Endara, who had won the 1989 presidential election (Danzer 1998, p. 852). This invasion was not authorised by the UNSC and, therefore, violated international law.

Between 1989 and 1991, the Bush administration sought to ensure a peaceful dissolution of the Soviet Union in order to prevent war in Eastern Europe. It also sought to normalise the security situation in the oil-rich Persian Gulf, which had been affected by the Iraq–Iran War (1980-88) initiated by Iraq as a pre-emptive measure to prevent Baghdad from experiencing a similar Shia Islam Revolution as had occurred in Iran in 1979. In October 1989, in a bid to strengthen peace in the Persian Gulf following the end of the Iraq–Iran War in 1988, Bush signed *National Security Directive 26,* which sought to normalise US-Iraqi relations. The eight-year war between Baghdad and Tehran caused significant economic and infrastructural damage to both nations (Alnasrawi 1986, p. 873).

To rebuild its post-war economy and service rising international debt, Saddam Hussein's Iraqi government tried unsuccessfully to lobby OPEC to increase world oil prices to boost Iraqi oil revenues. With OPEC not helping, the Iraqi government opted to invade the oil-rich but small neighbouring state of Kuwait on 2 August 1990. The Bush administration immediately condemned Iraq's invasion, calling on Baghdad to withdraw its military forces from Kuwait, a sovereign state protected by international law (O'Reilly & Renfro 2006, p. 22).

On the same day of 2 August 1990, the US government instructed its ambassador to the UN to call for a UNSC emergency meeting to deliberate on Iraq's invasion of Kuwait. Still, on the same day, the UNSC adopted *Resolution 660*, which condemned Iraq and ordered its military to withdraw from Kuwait while calling on Iraq, Iran and the League of Arab States to resolve the Persian Gulf crisis. *Resolution 660* concluded by noting that the UNSC would continue to monitor the Iraq–Kuwait crisis.

Iraq disregarded *Resolution 660*, and on 6 August 1990, the UNSC passed Resolution 661, which authorised economic sanctions and an arms embargo against Iraq and Kuwait (since the latter was now under

Baghdad's control). Baghdad continued its occupation of Kuwait, which violated international law as well as *UNSC Resolutions 660* and *661*. In response, on 29 November 1990, the UNSC adopted Resolution 678, which ordered Iraq to withdraw from Kuwait by 15 January 1991 and ordered UN member states to use all means necessary (including military force) should Iraq not do so (*UNSC Resolution 678*, 1990b, pp. 27–28).

Following Baghdad's failure to withdraw from Kuwait, the Bush government led a coalition of 35 UN member states that embarked on Operation Desert Storm, a military operation designed to terminate the Iraqi occupation, which started on 16 January 1991 (Danzer 1998, p. 855). This constituted the Gulf War, in which the US-led coalition liberated Kuwait from Iraqi occupation on 28 February 1991 (O'Reilly & Renfro 2006, p. 23). The Bush administration's commitment to resolving the 1990–1991 Kuwait crisis via the UNSC indicated US support for multilateral solutions to security challenges, thereby endorsing the UNSC as a key security institution of the LIO. By leading Operation Desert Storm and its liberation of Kuwait, the Bush administration demonstrated its commitment to sovereignty and upholding international law, as per its UNSC mandate.

Due to a recession and rising taxes, George HW Bush lost the November 1992 presidential election to the Democratic Party candidate, William 'Bill' Clinton. Below, we examine the foreign policy of the two Clinton administrations and their impacts on the LIO.

The foreign policies of the Clinton administrations (1993–2001)

According to Dumbrell (2010, p. 269), the foreign policies of the Clinton administrations were premised on globalisation, democratic peace (maintaining good relations with liberal democratic states), and US internationalism in the form of humanitarian interventionism.

The Clinton administrations *vis-à-vis* humanitarian crises

Despite being the sole superpower in the 1990s, the first Clinton administration is noted for not intervening in the early years of the Yugoslav Wars of Independence in the Balkans. Washington's non-intervention in the wars between Serbia (the federal government of Yugoslavia) and the seceding constituent republics can be construed as a lack of urgency in preventing or containing human rights violations. Human rights are a core value of the liberal order, of which the US is a co-founder and leader. Similarly, the Clinton government chose not to act or pursue effective multilateral action to prevent or contain the human rights violations – notably genocide – that

occurred in Rwanda in 1994. Between April and July 1994, at the peak of the Rwandan Civil War, members of the Hutu government and other members of the dominant Hutu ethnic group killed about 800,000 ethnic Tutsis (Riley 2019). The failure of the US and the UN to intervene in the Rwanda crisis was inconsistent with the human rights values of the LIO and posed questions about the universality of the US and UN human rights commitments.

As noted by Dumbrell (2010, p. 270), the first Clinton administration (1993–1997) did not intervene in the early years of the Yugoslav Wars and in Rwanda due to prioritising the US economy, which had been in recession since 1991. Thus, the Democratic Party government adopted an isolationist foreign policy. The Clinton administration saw the Bosnian War (part of the broader Yugoslav Wars) as a European security issue requiring European intervention. The US public also did not advocate for Washington's intervention. Furthermore, the consequences of the Bosnian War, such as immigration, hardly impacted Washington. US isolationism meant that NATO did not intervene in the Balkans, prompting European states to consider a European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP), which would seek to address threats to European security (Dumbrell 2010, p. 270).

In April 1994, however, the US government led a NATO airstrike campaign against Bosnian Serb military posts in order to halt escalating human rights violations against the Muslim Bosnian population that was seeking independence from the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Riley 2019). Washington's shift from indifference towards humanitarian interventionism was a response to growing US Congress criticism of the Clinton administration's inaction in respect of the deteriorating humanitarian situation in Bosnia. The NATO airstrikes against Bosnian Serbs, known as Operation Deliberate Force, complemented the UNPROFOR, the UN peacekeeping force deployed in Bosnia between 1992 and 1995 (Dumbrell 2010, p. 271).

In 1995, the US, Russia and other great powers persuaded the Serbia-led Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, Croatia, and Bosnia and Herzegovina to end the Bosnian War. The three warring states signed the *General Framework for Peace* in Bosnia and Herzegovina (also known as the Dayton Accords) on 21 November 1995 in Dayton in the US state of Ohio. In terms of the accords, the warring states agreed to peace and the establishment of Bosnia and Herzegovina as a sovereign state comprising two entities: the Serb-dominated Republika Sepska and the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina (Office of the Permanent US Representative to the UN 1995, pp. 2–3).

Therefore, the first Clinton administration (1993–1997) shifted from its earlier isolationist foreign policy *vis-à-vis* Europe towards multilateral cooperation to resolve the Bosnian War. By pursuing multilateral solutions, the Clinton administration upheld the value of multilateral cooperation in

respect of the LIO. This multilateral intervention halted the humanitarian crisis that had developed out of the Bosnian War.

The Kosovo War (February 1998–June 1999) presented the Clinton administration with another humanitarian crisis to consider in southeastern Europe. With the federal government of Yugoslavia (namely Serbia) committing atrocities against the secessionist Albanian population in the province of Kosovo, the US and its allies had to respond through action or inaction. The delayed intervention in Bosnia was a tough lesson that had regrettable humanitarian consequences. By 1998, the UK – a traditional ally of the US – was under the premiership of Tony Blair, a supporter of humanitarian interventionism. In February 1999, the US, through NATO and the OSCE, drafted the *Rambouillet Peace Agreement* with little input from Serbia and Kosovo. The peace agreement proposed Kosovo's self-governance and a future referendum about the province's independence. In February 1999, Serbia refused to sign the *Rambouillet Agreement* due to its pro-Kosovo nature. As a result, NATO, led by the US, launched airstrikes against Serbian strategic targets between March and June 1999. This intervention was not authorised by the UNSC, the only LIO institution with the authority to authorise an intervention in the domestic affairs of a sovereign state. The NATO intervention, plus Russian persuasion, forced Serbia to agree to the *Rambouillet Agreement* in June 1999 (Dumbrell 2010, p. 271). The agreement ended the Kosovo War and also granted it significant autonomy from the federal government of Yugoslavia (Serbia).

The Clinton administration *vis-à-vis* the North Atlantic Treaty Organization's expansionism

The Clinton administration also restored NATO's role in counterbalancing the resurgence of nationalist sentiment in Russian politics after 1993. The US saw Russian nationalism as the first step towards Moscow reclaiming Central and Eastern Europe – a historical Russian sphere of influence (Dumbrell 2010, p. 273). Russia's possible resurgence in Central and Eastern Europe threatened the democratisation of newly independent former communist states in the region. Democracy is a primary value of the LIO, and the US was determined to absorb the former Soviet satellite states into the LIO through NATO. It, therefore, viewed NATO's absorption of Central and Eastern European states as a means of spreading and entrenching democracy and capitalism in the region while simultaneously preventing Russia's nationalist resurgence.

The Clinton government succeeded in convincing Western European states to agree to the accession of Hungary, Poland and the Czech Republic to NATO at the latter's summit in Madrid in 1997. These three states became

the first former *Warsaw Pact* members to join NATO in 1999 (Dumbrell 2010, pp. 274–275). This is significant because states that join NATO commit themselves to building and maintaining liberal democratic political systems and market economies in accordance with the principles of the *North Atlantic Treaty* (1949, p. 1). Therefore, it is clear that the Clinton administration's commitment to NATO expansion was aimed at absorbing the former Soviet satellite states in Central and Eastern Europe into the neoliberal military alliance. NATO is an enduring institution of the LIO, with its members adopting liberal democracy and capitalism – core values of the liberal order.

The Clinton administration *vis-à-vis* the liberal trade order

The US government participated in the finalisation of the Uruguay Round of the GATT in 1993. *Inter alia*, the Uruguay Round augmented multilateral trade rules to govern services and intellectual property. Notably, it resolved to establish the WTO as the premier international organisation governing international trade from January 1995, replacing GATT (WTO 2000, p. vi). Washington's active involvement in seeking multilateral free trade agreements through GATT, as well as its support for a more expansive liberal international trade regime under the WTO, points to the US commitment to the Liberal International Economic Order.

In sum, the Clinton administration can be said to have advanced the LIO through NATO expansionism into Central and Eastern Europe and the founding of the WTO to promote free international trade. The Clinton government also advanced the LIO's human rights values through humanitarian intervention in the Yugoslav Wars. However, it failed to intervene in Rwanda. The Clinton administration's participation in NATO's intervention in Kosovo was not authorised by the UNSC and therefore contravened international law. Therefore, Clinton's presidential term presented challenges and benefits for the liberal order. In January 2001, Clinton was succeeded by George W Bush, whose foreign policy is discussed in the next section.

The foreign policies of the George W Bush administrations (2001–2009)

According to Pfiffner (2003, p. 192), when the Republican administration of George W Bush assumed office in January 2001, its focus was more on domestic policy issues, such as tax cuts, than on foreign policy. However, 9/11 abruptly shifted the Bush administration's focus, placing the 'War on Terror' at the forefront. This war was driven by the American public's fear,

anger, and desire for retribution (Leffler 2013, p. 195). Moreover, fears of follow-up terror attacks convinced Bush to press forward with the 'War on Terror' – a commitment to fight and extinguish terrorist groups and governments sponsoring terrorism worldwide.

Another terrorist attack would not only claim to move citizens' lives but would also endanger America's founding institutions and democratic values (Leffler 2013, p. 197). Thus, 9/11, as well as possible future terrorist attacks society, compelled Bush to seek Congress's approval of the 'Global War on Terror' on 20 September 2001. In his address to Congress, Bush justified this on the grounds that it would punish those responsible for 9/11, thereby acting as a deterrent, and prevent future terror attacks on the US and its citizens. By acknowledging that 'America has no truer friend than Great Britain', Bush signalled the start of a joint US–British international counterterrorism campaign (*Washington Post* 2001).

Bush classified the 9/11 attacks as a continuation of al-Qaeda's coordinated attacks on US embassies in Kenya and Tanzania in August 1998, amounting to symbolic attacks on Washington's values of democracy and freedom. The Taliban government in Afghanistan was found to be a sponsor of al-Qaeda, *inter alia,* by providing it with training bases (Pfiffner 2003, p. 161). In exchange, al-Qaeda provided military and financial support to the Taliban in order to help it maintain power and control of Afghanistan against insurgent groups. In condemning the Taliban regime's harbouring of al-Qaeda, Bush signalled an imminent retaliatory attack on Afghanistan. Moreover, he did not label the 'War on Terror' as a US war only, but a war to defend democracy – a foundational value in terms of which hundreds of societies were governed (*Washington Post* 2001). From this perspective, Bush positioned the war as a defence of the founding values of the LIO.

On 7 October 2001, the US and Britain jointly invaded Afghanistan following the Taliban's refusal to shut down al-Qaeda camps and hand over its leader, Osama bin Laden. The US and British forces overthrew the Taliban regime in November 2001, replacing it with the insurgent Northern Alliance group that had been warring with the Taliban since 1996 (Leffler 2013, p. 198). Lack of US financing for post-invasion nation-building led to protracted insurgencies throughout Afghanistan in the 2000s.

The US viewed the Afghan invasion as the first of many invasions whose aim was to eliminate international terrorist groups and to reduce the risk of any further attacks on US territory. Iraq was the next target, due to Baghdad's chronic violation of UNSC disarmament resolutions since the 1990s (Leffler 201, p. 200). The Bush administration also alleged that the Hussein government was in possession of WMD (Pfiffner 2003, p. 161). In the context of the post-9/11 era, Washington argued that it wanted to minimise the risk of Iraq selling WMD to terrorist groups, thereby providing

them with ammunition to initiate deadlier terror attacks against the US. The Bush government had explored the possibility of removing Hussein's Ba'athist socialist regime in Iraq since 2001.

Secondary goals of invading Iraq included the exporting of democracy to another Middle Eastern Arab state (after Afghanistan), and securing oil supplies from a pro-US democratic regime in Baghdad (Leffler 2013, p. 2002). It is this secondary goal of exporting democracy to the Middle East that has led the Centre for Security Studies (2008, p. 1) to argue that Bush's first term came to be defined by its neo-conservative foreign policy agenda. By definition, a neo-conservative foreign policy agenda entails a preference for interventionism, particularly to advance democracy in non-democratic regions or states. The post-9/11 international security environment certainly enabled the Bush administration to pursue a neo-conservative agenda within the broader and more legitimate 'Global War on Terror' foreign policy (CSS 2008, p. 1). The invasion of Afghanistan and the subsequent installation of a democratic government in Kabul were the genesis of Washington's neo-conservative vision of transforming the Middle East from an authoritarian into a democratic geopolitical region.

From March to May 2003, the US – ably supported by Britain and other allies – invaded Iraq and toppled the Hussein regime. This invasion was not sanctioned by the UNSC because China, Russia and France were not convinced by the US's evidence of Iraq's WMD, presented to a UNSC meeting in February 2003. After deposing Hussein's Ba'ath regime, the US installed a new government that would work to establish democracy in Iraq. This installation of democracy validates the assertion that the Bush administration pursued a neo-conservative agenda within the broader counterterrorism foreign policy framework. The overthrow of the Hussein regime led to a protracted Iraqi civil war (2003–2011) between insurgent groups and the newly installed government, with US armed forces US fighting on the side of the latter. About 112,500 Iraqi civilians are alleged to have died during the Iraqi civil war (Bassil 2012, p. 29).

One can therefore conclude that the Iraqi invasion of 2003 is partially understandable in the context of fear arising from 9/11 and the possibility of Iraq selling WMD to terrorist groups. However, the Bush administration also seems to have used 9/11 as a tool for enacting unilateral invasions in order to export and impose democracy on Iraq (CSS 2008, p. 1). This invasion went against the UNSC's advice and was therefore unlawful as per the *UN Charter* – which recognises the UNSC as the only organ with the power to authorise the use of military force. This means that the US violated international law, a key pillar of the LIO. Therefore, the US sought to promote democracy, a key value of the LIO, by violating a pillar of the same order, namely international law. Moreover, Washington's invasion of Baghdad violated the LIO's principle of multilateralism.

To conclude, the Bush administration presented the LIO and its institutions with a range of international peace and security challenges. Under the Bush presidency, the US seemed to adopt a unilateral approach and attitude to international affairs. In particular, the neo-conservative foreign policy of exporting democracy to the historically non-democratic Middle East region transgressed international law despite cautions issued by the UNSC. The 2007 US financial crisis, which developed into the global financial crisis of 2008, resulted in the partial renunciation of the Bush administration's neo-conservative and unilateral foreign policy (CSS 2008, p. 1). Bush left the US Presidency amid a financial crisis in January 2009, to be replaced by Barack Obama.

The foreign policies of the Obama administrations (2009–2017)

Barack Obama's administrations continued the post-1945 US foreign policy tradition of protecting and securing core US interests while simultaneously regulating world affairs as the incumbent superpower (Salonius-Pasternak 2015, p. 3).

The Obama administration *vis-à-vis* terrorism in the Middle East

Upon assuming office in 2009, the Obama administration set out to withdraw US armed forces from Middle Eastern conflicts (Unger 2016, p. 1), and eventually withdrew US forces from Iraq in December 2011. This arguably created a vacuum that enabled the evolution of the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL), also known as ISIS (Islamic State of Iraq and Syria), which is classified as a terrorist group by the UN. In 2014, ISIS captured significant territory, which compelled the Obama administration to redeploy US troops in order to shore up the government in Baghdad and preserve Iraq's sovereignty (Salonius-Pasternak 2015, p. 3).

Some critics say Washington's withdrawal from Iraq in 2011 was untimely, further worsening the precarious security situation. The withdrawal of US troops provided a vacuum that empowered ISIS and precipitated the proliferation of insecurity in Iraq and the broader Middle East region. As a permanent member of the UNSC and the leader of the LIO, Washington's withdrawal from Iraq can be regarded as a contradiction of the LIO's primary goal of facilitating world peace and security. Iraq's internal political instability had been amplified by the Bush administration's overthrow of an incumbent Iraqi government. From that point onwards, the argument goes, the US should have shouldered the moral responsibility of peace-making and nation-building in Iraq.

The Obama administration continued the 'War on Terror' by fighting al-Qaeda forces in Afghanistan. Specifically, the US continued to lead the UN-authorised NATO force, known as the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF), whose aim was to strengthen the capacity of Afghan military forces to enable them to prevent the infiltration and operation of terrorist groups in Afghanistan. Importantly, ISAF (2001–2014) was a legitimate operation that was supported by the UN and the Afghan regime, with the latter calling for ISAF's gradual withdrawal between 2012 and 2014. Moreover, the Obama administration opted to retain about 5,000 US soldiers in Afghanistan beyond the dissolution of ISAF in 2014 to prevent the emergence of a powerful terrorist group or groups in Afghanistan, as had been the case with ISIS in Iraq (Salonius-Pasternak 2015, p. 4).

One can therefore commend the Obama administration's commitment to the counterterrorism operation (ISAF) in Afghanistan, which had a legal mandate from the UNSC and the Afghan government. Just as important, the US-led ISAF worked to ensure peace and security in Afghanistan between 2001 and 2014, which is consistent with Washington's obligation as a member of the UNSC to safeguard world peace and security. The Obama administration can also be commended for maintaining a military force in Afghanistan beyond the ISAF mandate, in the interest of preventing the emergence of a powerful terrorist group that could further destabilise the delicate peace and security situation of the Middle East.

The Obama administration and international arms control

The Obama administration also signed the *New Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty* (*New START*) with Russia in April 2010. The *New START* is aimed at gradually reducing the production of offensive nuclear weapons. In 2015, the US, Britain, China, France, Russia and Germany (the P5+1) plus the EU also signed the *Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action* with Iran, with the aim of containing its nuclear armament programme in exchange for ending the economic sanctions previously imposed by the US and the EU (Unger 2016, p. 5). Therefore, one can conclude that the Obama administration was determined to reduce nuclear proliferation through diplomatic forums and agreements. These arms control deals can be construed as the Obama government's commitment to safeguarding world peace and security, which are founding objectives of the LIO.

The Obama administration's stance on the Arab Spring

Etzioni and Appel (2012, p. 478) commend the Obama administration's management of the Arab Spring – waves of insurgencies that overthrew

some governments in the MENA region, while leading to political reform in others. Therefore, the Arab Spring was a historic period of political instability and insecurity in the Arab world that had significant consequences for non-Arab states in terms of increased immigration and the need for humanitarian interventions in order to halt atrocities. In 2011, the Obama government and other UNSC members passed *Resolution 1973*, which authorised a humanitarian intervention in Libya aimed at halting war crimes and crimes against humanity purported to have been committed by the Gaddafi regime against rebelling citizens. However, Etzioni and Appel (2012, p. 478) criticise the US and NATO for having augmented the UNSC humanitarian resolution to pursue the objective of helping insurgent groups to overthrow the Gaddafi government. This unauthorised agenda was opposed by Russia and China, which are permanent members of the UNSC. While NATO succeeded in deposing the Gaddafi regime, the North African state has since descended into anarchy and a protracted political crisis.

In sum, at the onset of the Arab Spring, the Obama administration initially helped to enhance security in the MENA region by participating in a UNSC resolution that authorised NATO's humanitarian intervention in Libya. However, the US and NATO's pursuit of a regime change agenda was outside of the UN mandate of the humanitarian intervention in Libya, and was correctly opposed by China and Russia. The regime change agenda in Libya would go on to handicap the UNSC's ability to authorise further humanitarian interventions in other Arab states that were experiencing atrocities similar to those witnessed in Libya. As a result, one can conclude that the Obama administration's foreign policy efforts during the Arab Spring produced mixed results. On the one hand, the Obama government collaborated with the UNSC's directive of protecting human rights – a key value and pillar of the liberal order – in Libya. On the other hand, Washington's extra-legal pursuit of regime change handicapped the UNSC's ability to discharge its mandate of ensuring security in other states experiencing the Arab Spring.

The Obama administration's geopolitical strategy towards China and Russia

In February 2016, the Obama administration established the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP), a free trade agreement (FTA) with 11 other Asia-Pacific countries: Australia, Japan, Peru, Malaysia, Vietnam, New Zealand, Chile, Singapore, Canada, Mexico and Brunei. This proposed trade agreement (from which the US withdrew under the Trump administration in 2017) was designed as an archetypal free trade deal that would expand US trade and investment in the Asia-Pacific region. The Obama administration pursued the TPP as a means of expanding US influence in the Asia-Pacific, which has risen in importance in the global economy (Fergusson, McMinimy &

Williams 2016, p. 1). This region is home to three of the world's seven biggest economies, namely China, India and Japan. Moreover, it accounts for 38 per cent of imports into the US, making it a key region in terms of the latter's economic interests (Unger 2016, p. 3).

Obama aptly described the TPP as the 'pivot to Asia' project. Critics of the TPP in the US (including Obama's presidential successor, Donald Trump) argued that it would accelerate the decline of American manufacturing as it seemed to favour the manufacturing sectors of Asia-Pacific countries. Upon closer analysis, the TPP can be regarded as a geopolitical instrument through which the Obama administration sought to extend its Asia-Pacific influence, thereby counterbalancing China's rising influence and expansionist ambitions in the region (Unger 2016, p. 3). This is the primary reason why Obama saw the TPP as a 'pivot to Asia'. According to *Power Transition Theory* (see Chapter 2), an established hegemon (the US) will seek to maintain its supremacy by containing a rising power. The TPP was designed as an equaliser to China's rising economic power and ambitions in the Asia-Pacific region.

Given its exclusivity, the TPP encroached on and contradicted the mandate of the WTO, the premier trade organisation of the Liberal International Economic Order, which seeks to establish trade rules and regulations for all nation-states. Therefore, the TPP was a parallel trade regime to that of the WTO, thereby undermining the latter.

The Obama administration also pursued a bilateral free trade agreement with the EU, known as the *Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership* (TTIP), aimed at eliminating regulatory obstacles to US–EU trade and investment (EC 2016, p. 2). Negotiations for the TTIP began in 2013; however, the Trump administration pulled the US out of the TTIP before signature in 2017. One can argue that the Obama administration pursued the TTIP as a mechanism for fostering closer relations with the EU (which now includes former Soviet satellite states of Central Europe) as part of the grand strategy of maintaining US hegemony relative to a resurgent Russia, which traditionally wields influence in Central and Eastern Europe.

Counterbalancing Moscow's resurgence became important after Moscow's annexation of the Crimean Peninsula from Ukraine in March 2014. In response to the annexation of Crimea, the Obama government imposed economic sanctions on Russia. Moreover, in June 2014, the US adopted the European Reassurance Initiative (ERI), which financed the deployment of US forces in Europe as well as the combat training of the armed forces of the US and other NATO member states. Through the ERI, the Obama regime deployed US armed forces to four Central European NATO members, namely Latvia, Lithuania, Estonia and Poland, as a means of deterring Russia from annexing those former Soviet satellites (Salonius-Pasternak 2015, p. 6).

One can argue that the Obama administration used its military power as well as the multilateral security alliance (NATO) to contain a seemingly resurgent and revisionist Russia, thereby preserving the sovereignty of NATO members, which are former Soviet satellite states. Sovereignty is a universal right conferred on all states by various sources of international law, including the UN Charter, an essential legal instrument of the LIO. Thus, the US-sponsored ERI and deployment of American soldiers to Latvia, Lithuania, Estonia and Poland can be seen as measures to protect their sovereignty, thereby advancing international law. However, one can also classify Washington's interests in preserving the sovereignty of these former Soviet proxy states as an attempt to curb resurgent Russian influence in Central and Eastern Europe.

Therefore, it could be concluded that the Obama administration adopted a hybrid foreign policy. On the one hand, it sought to advance the LIO through multilateral cooperation on peace and security issues, particularly at the onset of the Arab Spring. It also reverted to the entrenched US habit of pursuing peace and security through unilateral action, as witnessed in Iraq *vis-à-vis* ISIS. Moreover, the Obama administration pursued an established Realist policy of counterbalancing the rising power of China in the Asia-Pacific and Russia in Central and Eastern Europe. Once more, the US reverted to its established strategy of using a liberal order institution (NATO) to advance its geopolitical (hegemonic) and power-balancing objectives in Europe.

Given this, one can conclude that the Obama administration's stance towards the LIO was largely determined by US interests. In particular, one can argue that his administration viewed the liberal order as an optional instrument for pursuing core US interests in the international system, particularly maintaining its hegemony in Europe and extending this to the Asia-Pacific to contain Moscow and Beijing's influence simultaneously. In January 2017, Obama was succeeded by Donald Trump. An analysis of Trump's foreign policy and its implications for the LIO follows.

The foreign policy of the Trump administration (2017–2021)

According to Trifkovic (2017, p. 28), Donald Trump set out to pursue an isolationist foreign policy by moving away from Washington's decades-long tradition of pursuing a prominent role in global affairs. Certainly, Trump adopted an alternative (albeit not unprecedented) 'America First' doctrine when assuming the presidency in 2017. He also initially questioned the reason for NATO's existence – a key military alliance that has ensured Western European and North American security since 1945 while also advancing the values and principles of the liberal order (Trifkovic 2017, p. 28). Therefore, the

Trump government initially seemed to relieve the US of its leadership role in relation to the LIO, a position it had occupied since the end of World War II.

The impact of international responsibilities on Trump's envisioned isolationism

Despite Trump's preference for an isolationist foreign policy and a nationalist focus on domestic needs and interests, his administration found it difficult to move away from the established globalist focus of the US foreign policy apparatus. A case in point is the contrary statements made by US security officials at the February 2017 Munich Security Conference (MSC), a 58-year-old international security forum of security and economic policy decision-makers from various states. At the 2017 MSC, US Vice President Mike Pence reassured the EU that 'the United States strongly supports NATO and will not waver in our commitment to our transatlantic alliance' (German Council on Foreign Relations, 2017). Moreover, Pence conveyed the Trump administration's commitment to NATO and the liberal order's values of freedom, democracy and the rule of law (including international law). To this effect, Pence and members of Congress further denounced Russia's annexation of Crimea in March 2014 as a violation of Ukraine's sovereignty.

This confirmed the US commitment to the liberal order despite Trump's election and post-election promise to divorce Washington from its international responsibilities.

The Trump government continued with the established global counterterrorism policy of the Bush and Obama administrations as part of the enduring goal of ensuring US and global security. In August 2017, Trump affirmed the global counterterrorism policy by declaring the continuing deployment of US armed forces in Afghanistan, Iraq and Syria as a means of containing ISIS and al-Qaeda in the Middle East. He also warned Pakistan to stop its alleged sponsoring of terrorist groups, which remained a threat to Middle Eastern and global peace and security (Trifkovic 2017, pp. 46–47).

In November 2020, however, near the end of its term, the Trump administration announced the withdrawal of a significant number of US military personnel from Afghanistan, Iraq and Somalia. This move was aimed at fulfilling Trump's 2016 election promise to withdraw the US from international conflicts. However, the US security apparatus did not implement the Trump order due to US oil interests in Syria and the potential proliferation of terrorism in the Middle East in the event of the withdrawal of American soldiers, with ISIS being a constant threat (Schmitt, Gibbons-Neff, Savage & Cooper 2020).

Therefore, permanent US security and oil interests compelled the Trump administration to continue with the US tradition of fighting terrorism in the

Middle East. This was despite Trump's election promise to withdraw US armed forces from external conflicts and to focus on America's domestic economy and affairs. Therefore, the US remained a key peace and security actor in the Middle East. Washington's continued military presence in the Middle East can be interpreted as a continued effort to safeguard and advance world peace and security, as per its standing mandate as a permanent member of the UNSC – a key organ of the liberal order.

The US–China trade war

In June 2018, the Trump administration imposed tariffs and other trade barriers on Chinese imports on the basis of purported unfair trade practices and intellectual property theft. The US tariffs and other trade barriers were intended to compel Beijing to change its purported unfair commercial and trade practices. For its part, China accused Washington of attempting to curb its rise as a global economic power and responded in kind by imposing its own tariffs on US exports to China. This economic conflict became known as the US–China trade war, with each country adopting economic nationalist policies in respect of the other (Jicha 2020, p. 1034).

The WTO is the institution in the Liberal International Economic Order responsible for regulating international trade. The fact that the Trump administration did not seek to address its trade grievances against China through the WTO points to Washington's lack of confidence in its ability to curb China's purported unfair trade practices. Therefore, the trade war could plunge the WTO into a crisis. The Trump administration's unilateral efforts to impose protectionist trade barriers on Chinese goods contradict the liberal international trade system which the WTO seeks to entrench. Trump's trade war against China is a key independent variable for the scenario-building exercise in Chapter 11.

The Trump administration's stance on the World Health Organization

In July 2020, the Trump administration notified the UN of its decision to withdraw from the World Health Organization (WHO), the UN agency mandated to provide specialist leadership and cooperation on global health issues. The US government cited its dissatisfaction with what it saw as the WHO's failure to manage the COVID-19 pandemic, particularly its unwillingness to investigate the purported origins of the virus in China. Washington argued that the WHO's unwillingness to independently investigate claims of the origins of the virus in China points to Beijing's undue influence over the WHO (Salaam-Blyther, Blanchfield, Weed & Gill 2020, p. 1). The notice of withdrawal pointed to the Trump administration's uneasy

relationship with yet another institution of the liberal order. President Joseph Biden reversed Washington's withdrawal from the WHO in January 2021 (Morales 2021) – a boost for the global health organisation, given that the US is its biggest source of funding. Biden replaced Trump as US president in January 2021, with his tenure stretching into the turbulent current decade.

Joe Biden's foreign policies in a turbulent decade (2021–2025)

In February 2021, Biden declared that US foreign policy decisions and actions would be primarily informed by domestic interests. However, he also expressed his administration's commitment to multilateral cooperation with other nation-states, announcing that 'America is back' (The Conversation 2021). Moreover, he declared that his administration would not tolerate Russian aggression, including alleged interference in the domestic affairs of other states through cyber-attacks and other forms of aggressive statecraft. Biden further asserted that Washington would not tolerate China's violation of human rights and intellectual property rights or its attacks on global governance. However, despite these and other stern statements on containing Moscow and Beijing's international manoeuvres, Biden indicated Washington's willingness to cooperate with Russia and China on matters of mutual interest, such as arms control (The White House 2021).

The February 2021 foreign policy briefing seemed to show that the Biden administration would seek to reaffirm US leadership and commitment to multilateral cooperation within the framework of the LIO. Biden's reversal of the US exit from the WHO is another affirmation of Washington's commitment to the institutions of the liberal order. Biden's seemingly globalist foreign policy differs from that of the Trump administration, whose posture *vis-à-vis* the liberal order was rather inconsistent. In September 2021, the Biden administration entered into a trilateral security alliance with Australia and the UK (i.e., AUKUS), also known as the Indo-Pacific security pact (*Al Jazeera*, 2021). This is meant to bolster the three states' collective defence capabilities in the Indo-Pacific region. This can be construed as Washington's latest attempt to challenge and contain its 21st-century rival, China, in the Indo-Pacific region[9].

Biden's stance on two significant conflicts of the 2020s

The Biden administration has declared Moscow an unprovoked aggressor in the Russia–Ukraine war that began in February 2022. Washington

9. See the map depicting the scope of the AUKUS trilateral military at https://theauthenticpost.com/indo-pacific-domination-of-the-us-and-chinas-response/.

actually argues that Moscow has been at war with Ukraine since Russia's annexation of Crimea in 2014, which the US regards as Ukrainian territory (Congressional Research Service 2023a, p. 1). In an effort to compel Russia to withdraw from Ukraine, Washington has collaborated with the UK and the EU to impose economic sanctions on Moscow. At the same time, the US, UK and EU continue to provide significant military and economic aid to Kyiv. In an effort to deter any further Russian expansion in the region, the Biden administration and NATO have expanded their military presence in Central and Eastern Europe (Congressional Research Service 2023a, p. 1).

On 2 March 2023, the UN General Assembly adopted *Resolution ES-11/1* calling on Russia to withdraw from Ukraine, with 141 of 194 member states voting in favour, 32 abstaining, and five voting against. The resolution was prepared by the EU in collaboration with Ukraine and countries from other world regions immediately after the UNSC was prevented from acting by a Russian veto on 25 February (UN 2023). The resolution deplored 'in the strongest terms' the aggression by Russia and affirmed the international community's commitment to the sovereignty, independence, unity and territorial integrity of Ukraine. It also called for unimpeded access to humanitarian assistance (*UN General Assembly Resolution ES-11/1 2022*). The text was approved by 141 countries. Only five UN member states voted against it, namely Russia, Belarus, North Korea, Eritrea and Syria. Many of Russia's closest partners did not follow their normal voting patterns (UN 2023).

From observation, no attempt has been made to invoke the powers of the UNSC in respect of the invasion of Ukraine for the simple reason that this would certainly be vetoed by Russia. The UNSC consists of 15 members: the P5 and ten non-permanent members elected for two-year terms by the UN General Assembly. As noted previously, the P5 are China, France, the Russian Federation, the UK and the US. Besides their special status as permanent members, they also have the right to veto any resolution before the council. Put differently, if any of the P5 casts a negative vote, the resolution lapses.

The UNSC is the only body authorised to invoke Chapter 7 of the *UN Charter* to deal with a threat to international peace. In other words, it is the only body that can authorise military interventions. In the context of the Ukraine crisis, Russia will certainly veto any attempt to censure it or act against it in the UNSC. The only other option for UN members is to adopt non-binding resolutions in the General Assembly that have more symbolic than substantive value. Therefore, due to its perennial veto problem, the UNSC is paralysed once again and unable to resolve the problem of the Russian invasion of Ukraine.

In the meantime, the US, the EU and the UK have imposed sanctions on Russia and are arming Ukraine (British Broadcasting Corporation 2024). One can argue that this US involvement in an Eastern European matter is not only about Ukraine's sovereignty but also about Washington's quest to contain Moscow's resurgence in its historical sphere of influence in Eastern Europe. Indeed, the Russia–Ukraine conflict signals a return to Cold War balance-of-power politics involving a US-led Western bloc of nations against Moscow. Therefore, the LIO is unable to resolve the Russia–Ukraine conflict because it is less important than America's primary national interests, namely to expand and maintain democracy in the former Soviet satellite states in Eastern Europe, such as Ukraine. Given its polarising effect, this conflict has the potential to ignite World War III and is a key independent variable for the scenario-building exercise in this book. The driving forces behind Moscow's invasion of Ukraine are examined in greater detail in Chapter 9.

As regards the Israel–Palestine conflict (October 2023–), the US has continued its decades-long support for Israel since the latter's founding in 1948. Throughout the Arab–Israeli conflicts of the post-1948 period, Washington has supported Tel Aviv partly because Israel and the US share the same democratic and economic values, as opposed to the Arab states, which have different value systems (Hutchinson 2023). Therefore, US support for Israeli retaliation after the Hamas attack of 7 October 2023 followed a long-standing trend of unequivocal US support. Since October 2023, the Biden administration has deployed military aircraft, ships, weapons and troops to the Middle East to strengthen Israel's military capabilities *vis-à-vis* Hamas and other pro-Palestinian armed groups (Congressional Research Service 2024, p. 8).

Given the indiscriminate Israeli attacks on Gaza and the mass killing of civilians, it is regrettable that a UNSC permanent member is arming a warring party that is killing non-combatants. Such a unilateral act of arming a warring party is contrary to best conflict resolution practice. Washington has lost credibility as a mediator because it is an indirect participant in the war between Israel and Hamas and the killing of innocent Palestinians. The US has also diminished the UNSC's potential to be a mediator or arbitrator in the Israel–Hamas conflict because of its hasty decision to militarily support one side (Tel Aviv) before pushing for a non-military solution.

In sum, the longevity of the LIO will be determined by the UNSC's ability to achieve its mandate of ensuring world peace and security. The unilateral US decision to actively and aggressively support Israel is a key factor in the scenario-building exercise in this book. Previous Washington engagements in Middle Eastern conflicts have been protracted and resulted in security crises. The outcome of this latest conflict is still unclear. Chapter 11 generates forecasts on its likely impact (and that of US involvement) on the LIO and global governance.

The United States of America's policy towards the Liberal International Economic Order

Country shareholdings in the Bretton Woods IFIs are based on financial contributions, and the US is the majority shareholder in both the IMF and the World Bank. It is an enduring leader of the World Bank, and all presidents of the Executive Board of Directors that runs the day-to-day operations of the Bank are nominated by the US. Washington contributes 15.8% of the World Bank's operating budget, giving it a 15.8% majority shareholding. The next four largest shareholders are China, France, Germany and the UK (Congressional Research Service 2023b, p. 1). This means that the US exercises significant control over World Bank decisions, among others, about loans to middle and low-income countries aimed at reviving or strengthening their economies. This provides Washington with significant indirect power over the global economy, especially since World Bank loans include conditions such as policy advice to borrowing nations. Therefore, the World Bank is a key instrument through which the US is able to influence the socioeconomic policies of borrowing from middle-income countries and the poorest creditworthy nation-states. The Bank's utility to US global economic power and influence explains why Washington has been determined to maintain its position as the largest financial contributor. One will recall the Bank's insistence during the 1980s that borrower nations adopt neoliberal Structural Adjustment Policies, which led to many developing countries adopting neoliberal economic policies and moving away from nationalist and socialist economies.

Besides being an instrument of US economic power and influence over foreign governments' policymaking, the World Bank has had a positive impact on countries with budget deficits, providing them with capital injections. World Bank funding allows borrowing governments to embark on development projects such as infrastructure development and poverty alleviation interventions such as investing in health and education systems. Washington is also the largest shareholder in the IMF, which is mandated to ensure the stability of the international monetary system – a crucial function in the era of financial globalisation where a currency and financial system collapse in one country can destroy global financial markets within days. In 2022, Washington's quota (i.e., membership financial commitment) to the IMF was US$117 billion, and an additional US$44 billion in supplementary funds. These contributions enable the IMF to fulfil its mandate by monitoring member nations' economic and finance policies; providing loans to member nations experiencing balance of payments deficits (i.e., insufficient budget to repay debts and pay for imports); and building the capacity of member nations to develop and implement sound domestic policies (Congressional Research Service 2022, p. 1).

Without the credit facilities provided by the World Bank and IMF, the liberal order would probably be less useful to nation-states, reducing or removing their incentive to participate in the LIO. Therefore, the Liberal International Economic Order is an incentive scheme that further legitimises the LIO, providing a pull factor for nation-states to remain members.

Washington also remains a member of the WTO international free trade system. In 2020, the WTO ruled that Washington's unilateral decision to impose tariffs on Chinese goods (which kick-started the US–China trade war) in 2018 violated the rules of its multilateral free trade regime. The Trump administration was unhappy with this ruling, arguing that the international trade body had disregarded US complaints about the Chinese government's inadequate policies to protect intellectual property rights, which Washington alleges amount to unfair trade practices (Swanson 2020). Despite this dispute, the Trump and Biden administrations have remained active members of the WTO. This is important since the WTO seeks to remove barriers to international trade that create enabling conditions for global economic development. Therefore, support for the Bretton Woods institutions by the US and other P5 members is central to the future of the LIO, and their foreign policies toward the Liberal International Economic Order are important independent variables in the scenarios developed in Chapter 11.

Conclusion: Trends in the United States of America's behaviour towards the Liberal International Order

An examination of the foreign policy conduct of successive post-1989 US administrations shows that the US has demonstrated a complex relationship with the LIO and its institutions. This relationship is primarily complicated by US hegemonic interests. For instance, it is evident that the euphoria at the end of the Cold War resulted in the George HW Bush administration pursuing multilateral cooperation through the LIO to resolve international security issues. This shows that the US was keen to globalise the LIO. However, post-1993 US administrations have tended to use liberal order institutions to pursue their hegemonic interests. For instance, the administrations of Clinton, George W Bush, Obama and Trump have violated international law and bypassed institutions of the LIO in many instances where unilateral action has served their geopolitical interests.

Likewise, the Biden administration continues to place US hegemonic interests above the LIO by unilaterally supporting Ukraine and Israel in their wars against Russia and Hamas (Palestine), respectively. These foreign policies are made outside of UN structures and the majority of the world's nation-states. Importantly, US involvement in both aforementioned wars

has the potential to determine the fate of the LIO. What is important to note, however, is Washington's continued support of the Liberal International Economic Order – a key legitimator of the LIO, given the importance of global economic governance.

This inconsistent behaviour and attitudes towards the LIO provides important insights which serve as independent variables for the scenarios built in Chapter 11. The next chapter evaluates the post-1989 foreign policies of the French Republic, to determine the extent to which Paris has supported or undermined the LIO since the end of the Cold War.

Chapter 8

France's foreign policies since 1989 and its attitude towards the Liberal International Order

Introduction

This chapter investigates France's post-1989 conduct and attitude towards the LIO. The chapter begins by explaining the foreign policy posture and actions of the Mitterrand administrations and their implications for the LIO. Mitterrand's tenure coincided with the end of the Cold War and the unipolar order under US hegemony. The second section of the chapter then focuses on France's foreign policy positions and actions during the administrations of Chirac, highlighting the impact of these foreign policies on the effectiveness of the liberal order. The third section of the chapter then elaborates Sarkozy's foreign policy positions and actions during his single term as French president, particularly how these international positions and actions affirmed or undermined the liberal order. Fourth, the foreign policy of the Hollande administration is then examined in terms of its implications for the LIO. Fifth, the foreign policy of the two administrations of Macron are then scrutinised, particularly the extent to which they have affirmed or undermined the liberal order. The chapter then concludes by highlighting notable behavioural trends and actions of post-1989 French administrations *vis-à-vis* the liberal order, resulting in a finding about the

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extent to which Paris's post-1989 foreign policy has impacted on the efficacy and sustainability of the liberal order. This chapter essentially examines the alignment between France's national interests and the values and mandate of the LIO.

The foreign policies of the Mitterrand administrations (1981–1995)

The end of the Cold War and Mitterrand's vision for the European Union

Francois Mitterrand's presidency of the French Republic lasted from May 1981 to May 1995. Therefore, he steered France through the uncertain last decade of the Cold War, as well as the immediate post-1989 international system. According to Troitino, Farber and Boiro (2017, p. 136), Mitterrand's administrations essentially worked towards creating an EU of two circles in the early 1990s: a politically and economically integrated inner circle comprising Western European states, and an outer circle of Central and Eastern European states that would be economically integrated with the first. The idea was that this form of economic integration would gradually transform former Soviet satellite states in Central and Eastern Europe into market economies. In this Western-centric EU, France would be the *de facto* political leader, with Germany as the economic engine. Mitterrand's administration also sought to create an extensive FTA between the French-led EU and former French colonies in Africa (Troitino et al. 2017, p. 132).

In essence, Mitterrand sought to transform Western Europe and Francophone Africa into French spheres of influence, thereby enabling France to re-emerge as a global hegemon in the late 20th century. Notably, his pursuit of hegemony through leadership of Europe and Francophone Africa was a continuation of the foreign policy objective of *French grandeur* (French greatness and splendour) adopted under the former French president Charles de Gaulle, who led France from 1959-1969 (Fenby 2018).

Mitterrand's policy towards the founding of the European Union

Given these ambitions, Mitterrand's government had a significant impact on the founding of the EU. Through the EU, France sought to deepen European political and economic integration beyond the integration achieved by the preceding European regional organisations – the ECSC and the EEC. Since the early 1990s, therefore, French foreign policy had been Europeanised, with Mitterrand in particular placing the formation of the EU at the centre of its foreign policy agenda (Tekin 2008, p. 140). Furthermore, France led the

EU's adoption of the CFSP, which was incorporated into the Maastricht Treaty in 1993. The CFSP was designed to make the EU an integrated security community that would gradually reduce its dependence on NATO and Washington (Cogan 2011, p. 262). Mitterrand worked to position France as the leader of an independent EU, seeking to use the regional organisation to re-establish Paris as a global leader on par with the US. Therefore, Mitterrand was continuing the Gaullist tradition of seeking to restore '*la gloire et la grandeur de la France*' [the glory and greatness of France] (Rieker 2006, p. 515). Power accumulation was a key foreign policy objective of Mitterrand's administration in the immediate post-Cold War era. With the EU under French control, France could counterbalance the power of the US, the sole superpower in the early 1990s following the disintegration of the Soviet Union (Regilme & Parisot 2017, p. 6). It can be argued that Mitterrand saw the EU as a tool through which France could prevent a unipolar concentration of global power in Washington.

The United Nations as avenue of securing French global interests and influence

In the early 1990s, Mitterrand's government increased France's contributions to UN peacekeeping operations, eventually accounting for 10 per cent of the UN peacekeeping forces deployed worldwide (Rieker 2006, p. 518). In this way, Paris sought to manage a changed international security environment after 1989. The immediate post-Cold War era was characterised by regional conflicts (particularly the Yugoslav Wars) and the resultant humanitarian crises and immigration challenges. Thus, the Mitterrand administration adopted a foreign policy position of supporting UN humanitarian interventions overseas as a means of simultaneously furthering human rights and European and world peace and security, as well as projecting French interests and influence across the globe. In particular, UN peace operations were a means by which Mitterrand's administration sought to influence events in areas where it had strategic or historical interests (Tardy 2016, p. 612).

It is clear that France's post-1989 support for UN peacekeeping was a convenient means of demonstrating French political and military power and influence irrespective of the changed international environment (Tardy 2016, p. 612). However, this also positioned France as a strong supporter of a core institution of the liberal order – the UN. French financial and human resource contributions to UN peacekeeping missions globally in the 1990s strengthened the UN's capacity to safeguard world peace and security in an uncertain and volatile post-Cold War environment. The post-1989 international environment was characterised by Eastern European instability and wars of independence following the collapse of communism

and the subsequent disintegration of the Soviet Union. The Mitterrand administration's political and military support to the UN enabled the global institution to intervene and facilitate the negotiation of the ending of the Bosnian War in 1995. France supported the UNSC's condemnation of Iraq's invasion of Kuwait and also participated in the UNSC-authorised intervention to repel Iraq and restore Kuwait's sovereignty in early 1991. This demonstrated France's commitment to the right to sovereignty as provided for by international law, a key pillar of the LIO.

The foreign policies of the Chirac administrations (1995–2007)

Jacques Chirac succeeded Mitterrand as president of the French Republic in May 1995. French foreign policy during his two terms spanning 12 years in office will be examined below.

The French Republic *vis-á-vis* the United Nations during Chirac's presidency

The Chirac administration continued France's foreign policy posture of resolving international issues through multilateral institutions. It sought UN authorisation and legitimation for international actions such as economic sanctions and military interventions. To this end, the Chirac administration consistently pressured the US to address international issues such as terrorism through the UN. This was evident when France opposed Washington's decision to unilaterally invade Iraq in 2003 without sufficient proof that Baghdad was in possession of WMD (Belkin 2011, p. 2).

The policy of the Chirac administrations towards the European Union

Apart from supporting the UN, the Chirac administration mobilised European states to formulate an EU common security and defence policy (CSDP) in 1999, which would enable the EU to address Europe's security needs independently of the US and NATO (Belkin 2011, p. 2). The CSDP is an augmentation of the EU's CFSP. Rieker (2005, p. 3) asserts that Chirac's administration supported the enlargement of the EU to include former communist states in Central and Eastern Europe. Since joining the EU requires prospective members to adopt democracy and market economies, one can view the enlargement of the EU as the spreading of the foundational values of the LIO. This would also serve the purpose of containing and/or limiting Russia's geopolitical resurgence in Central and Eastern Europe, which are historical spheres of influence for Moscow (Rieker 2005, p. 4).

Initially, the Chirac government was reluctant to support EU enlargement, preferring instead to deepen the political and economic ties among the 15 Western European states that had established the EU in 1993. This initial reluctance was due to the fact that France had a better chance of establishing control of a smaller but closer EU, whereas it would struggle to exert control over an enlarged EU of 25 members. Chirac's initial fear was that an enlarged and looser EU would end up adopting a pro-US foreign policy (also known as an Atlanticist policy), with France losing its grip on the EU to Washington (Rieker 2005, p. 7). This fear of US influence was founded on the reality whereby the US possessed the economic and financial resources that could compel Central and Eastern European states to seek closer ties with Washington in the post-1989 international environment. Chirac's objective of containing US hegemony was a common policy adopted by French presidents since the de Gaulle presidency in the 1960s (Emmert & Petrovic 2014, p. 1364).

The French Republic was eventually persuaded by the majority argument within the EU which viewed enlargement as inevitable and necessary in terms of geopolitics and the establishment of liberal values in the former Soviet zone of influence. In his official state visit to Lithuania in July 2001, Chirac expressed France's support for EU enlargement, arguing that it was a means of uniting Europe. With France's support, 10 states from Central and Eastern Europe were admitted into the EU on 1 May 2004 (Rieker 2005, p. 9). Therefore, by acceding to EU enlargement, France contributed to the spread of democracy and capitalism into Central and Eastern Europe. This symbolised the expansion of the LIO into a region formerly governed by the Soviet-led communist international order.

Under Chirac, the French Republic continued to frame its foreign policy within the parameters of the LIO, in order to ensure its continued relevance in global affairs. Equally notable is Chirac's commitment to Mitterrand's vision of positioning the EU as An independent, French-led institution which could contain US hegemony in world politics.

The foreign policy of the Sarkozy administration (2007–2012)

Nicolas Sarkozy succeeded Chirac in May 2007. Sarkozy's personal for mending relations with the US was one of the hallmarks of his election manifesto. A year after ascending to the presidency, Sarkozy's government had to respond to the global financial crisis, emanating from the American financial crisis, and committed itself to searching for multilateral solutions. To this effect, it exercised leadership in the EU; the Group of Eight (G8) – an economic forum of the eight largest economies that discusses global economic matters (now known as the G7 after Russia's expulsion in 2014

following its annexation of Crimea); and the G20 – a global economic forum of governments and central bank governors from 19 industrialised and industrialising states and the EU (Rowdybush & Chamorel 2012, p. 163). Thus, one can assert that Sarkozy continued with the established French foreign policy of using multilateral institutions to resolve international issues – in this case, the 2008 global financial crisis and its economic fallouts.

As president of the European Council (an EU organ composed of Heads of State and Government, which sets the political direction of the EU), Sarkozy successfully negotiated a Russia–Georgia ceasefire in August 2008. The Russia–Georgia conflict was a war between Georgia and its secessionist regions of South Ossetia and Abkhazia. These two regions were militarily supported by Russia (Bartuzi, Petczynska-Natecz & Strachota 2008, p. 6). Therefore, France led the EU's mediation of the Russia–Georgia War, thereby helping it to restore relative peace in Georgia despite Russia retaining its military forces in South Ossetia and Abkhazia.

France's reintegration into the North Atlantic Treaty Organization's military command structure

In March 2009, Sarkozy reintegrated France into NATO's Command Structure (NCS), which implements decisions by the North Atlantic Council, NATO's premier decision-making body (NATO 2018, p. 1). Under De Gaulle, France had withdrawn from the NCS in the 1960s in protest against unilateral US decisions within NATO. Since its establishment in 1949, NATO has served as the military arm of the LIO, and France's return symbolised the Sarkozy government's active support for this military alliance. This was particularly significant, as France was a founding member of NATO (Bozo 2014, p. 380).

Sarkozy's decision to reintegrate France into NATO's military command structure was partly motivated by NATO's transformation in the post-Cold War era, particularly its humanitarian interventions in the Wars of Independence in Central and Eastern Europe (Bozo 2014, p. 381). Like the EU, NATO absorbed Central and Eastern European states in 1999 (Poland, Hungary and the Czech Republic) and 2004 (Bulgaria, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia). Given France's long-term primary goal of being Europe's political leader, it was prudent for it to re-engage with a transformed NATO as a fully integrated member and leader. It is also worth noting that France's reintegration into NATO was initiated by the Chirac administration in 1996, as France began to see the potent impact of a transformed NATO in European security (Cameron & Maulny 2009, p. 2). Moreover, it is clear that Paris began to view NATO's military capacity as a viable means for the UN and EU to enforce multinational resolutions.

Bozo (2014, p. 383) concludes that Sarkozy's decision to reintegrate France into NATO's military command structure was taken to enable Paris to advocate a European security agenda and focus within NATO (as opposed to NATO pursuing a US agenda). Importantly, Sarkozy's decision was not random nor extraordinary, but a finalisation of France's post-1989 willingness to rejoin NATO and assume its leadership position as a founding member of the alliance. With NATO enjoying broad European membership after absorbing more Central and Eastern European states, France identified a ripe moment to 'return' to NATO and to place Europe at the centre of NATO's security policy. The French Republic's full return to NATO in 2009 also came at a time of improved Paris–Washington relations, with the Bush administration scaling down its unilateralism and re-engaging with Europe as an equal partner (Cameron & Maulny 2009, p. 2).

The Sarkozy administration regarded NATO as increasingly aligned with France's Europeanisation agenda, unlike during the Cold War when it was seen as a vehicle for a US-driven unilateral strategy against the Soviet Union. Sarkozy viewed NATO as a transformed, genuinely multilateral military alliance, open to French influence and supportive of European interests. As such, his administration saw NATO as yet another institution of the LIO through which France could strengthen its influence over European and global affairs. In essence, Chirac and Sarkozy sensed that NATO could be mobilised or manipulated into advancing or defending French interests in global affairs. France's full reintegration into NATO was a boost to the LIO. However, it also reflected France's strategy of using multilateral institutions to maintain and strengthen its influence in global affairs, thereby retaining its Great Power status. Paris has held this foreign policy objective and strategy for decades.

Sarkozy's policies towards Africa and the Middle East

Nicolas Sarkozy's administration also set out to renew the French Republic's relations with Africa and the Middle East. In Africa, Sarkozy's government acted contrary to international law by militarily intervening in the Second Ivorian Civil War (November 2010–April 2011), caused by the disputed presidential election of October 2010. The incumbent president, Laurent Gbagbo, had refused to accept electoral defeat by Alassane Hassan Ouattara – an outcome supported by the international community. France had provided Ouattara with military support in the course of his campaign against Gbagbo, who was renowned for being anti-France during his presidency. France intervened in the Ivorian conflict despite the deployment of a multilateral UN peacekeeping force. This helped Ouattara's forces to defeat Gbagbo in April 2011, upon which Ouattara ascended to the presidency (Momodu 2018).

France's direct military involvement in the Second Ivorian Civil War was a violation of the Ivory Coast's sovereignty and undermined the UN's legitimate peacekeeping force. Such direct involvement in a former colony's internal affairs can be regarded as an instance of neo-colonisation. France also participated in the initial UNSC-authorised humanitarian airstrikes by NATO against the Gaddafi regime during Libya's Arab Spring. France (through NATO) subsequently helped Libyan rebels to overthrow the Gaddafi regime in August 2011, which was not provided for by the *UNSC Resolution 1973* (Chamorel 2012, p. 166). Therefore, France initially honoured an authorised humanitarian intervention in Libya whose purpose was to protect Libyan lives and human rights – key founding values of the LIO. However, NATO's unlawful augmentation of the intervention to overthrow the Gaddafi regime was not prescribed by *UNSC Resolution 1973* and violated Libya's right to self-determination. Gaddafi's overthrow ignited a decade-long period of political instability and violence in this North African country.

The following are observations on the above actions by the Sarkozy government. The Sarkozy administration can be commended for using LIO institutions to restore political stability and peace in Europe. The use of the EU to mediate in the Russia–Georgia War was a victory for multilateral cooperation on matters of international peace and security. Likewise, France's use of liberal order institutions such as the G8 and G20 to manage the global financial crisis of 2008 underscored the continuing importance of the LIO in addressing global economic security challenges in the 21st century. However, the Sarkozy administration erred by backing an insurgency that overthrew the Gaddafi regime, contrary to *UNSC Resolution 1973*, which had only authorised airstrikes to preserve Libyan lives. Moreover, France undermined a UN peacekeeping force in the Ivory Coast by implementing its own parallel military intervention, which points to a neo-imperialist relationship with its former colony. Following the May 2012 election, the Sarkozy administration was replaced by a Socialist Party government led by François Hollande.

The foreign policy of the Hollande administration (2012–2017)

Hollande's policy towards the Arab Spring

François Hollande's foreign policy was predominantly shaped by the Arab Spring revolts and revolutions in the MENA region, the subsequent mushrooming of terrorist groups as a result of the Arab Spring, and instability in the Sahel region consisting of former French colonies (Jacinto 2017). Hollande expressed regret at the UN's inability to intervene in the Syrian civil war, which had developed out of Damascus's own experience of Arab

Spring revolts. The UNSC's paralysis partly emboldened the Syrian regime to use chemical weapons against its civilian population in an effort to maintain its grip on power and to suppress insurgents seeking regime change and/or reform. The emergence of ISIS, the killing of civilians, the migration crisis and the destabilisation of neighbouring Iraq and the entire Middle East are consequences of the Syrian civil war between the Russia-backed Assad regime, ISIS, and other anti-government insurgents, which in 2023 was at a stalemate. These consequences are partly attributable to the UNSC's long-standing failure to take action against the Bashar al-Assad regime in Syria, despite evidence of atrocities (Adams 2015, p. 3). This is because the P5 are unable to implement *UNSC Resolution 2254* of 2015, which called for pathways for the political resolution of the Syrian civil war. Since 2015, therefore, the UNSC has been confined to humanitarian aid resolutions between April 2012 and January 2023 (Security Council Report 2024). This UNSC paralysis is due to the likelihood of a veto, given that the P5 support opposing sides in the Syrian Civil War. One can, therefore, concur with Hollande's assertion that, when faced with the crisis of the Syrian Arab Spring, the UNSC failed to discharge its mandate of protecting human life and safeguarding global security. The R2P principle of the UN declares that state sovereignty is conditional upon a state's capacity to protect its citizenry against atrocities such as genocide, war crimes and crimes against humanity. As the premier institution responsible for defending the human rights order and ensuring global peace and security, the UNSC failed to hold the Assad regime responsible for human rights violations. Therefore, as a permanent member of the UNSC, Hollande's government was culpable of failing to manage the precarious security and human rights situation in Syria that has helped to destabilise the Middle East.

Hollande's policy towards the Sahel region

The Hollande administration undertook military interventions throughout the predominantly French-speaking Sahel region, which includes Senegal, Mauritania, Mali, Chad, Algeria, Niger, Burkina Faso and Nigeria (Piser 2017, p. 1). In January 2013, France launched the military operation 'Serval' in order to defend the Malian government against the National Movement for the Liberation of Azawad (MNLA). The MNLA is a jihadist militant group formed in 2010 that is seeking independence for northern Mali, which the group identifies as *Azawad*. Beginning its insurgency in 2012, the MNLA had seized control of much of northern Mali by April 2012 (Maiga 2016, p. 2). Due to alleged links between the MNLA and the al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM) terrorist group, France's Operation Serval transformed into a regional peace and security operation known as Operation Barkhane, aimed at fighting terrorism in collaboration with other Sahel governments.

The expanded regional military operation led to the greater deployment of French armed forces in the Sahel between 2012 and 2017. However, this predominantly Francophone region remains unstable. Critics attribute this to Hollande's overemphasis on military action (hard power) without supplementing this approach with soft power in the form of diplomacy, post-conflict reconstruction and institution-building (Piser 2017, p. 2). Despite criticism, one of the major successes of Operation Barkhane (August 2014–November 2022) had been its relative success in neutralising AQIM since the Sahel Summit of January 2020 (Tull 2021, p. 1). Operation Barkhane, therefore, remained beyond Hollande's presidency, signalling its vitality in Paris. The Hollande government's unilateral military interventions in the Sahel region are a continuation of the French tradition of maintaining strong military, economic and political ties with its former African colonies, which are collectively referred to as *Francafrique* (Piser 2017, p. 2). One can, therefore, argue that the Hollande administration's interventions in *Francafrique* were not authorised by the premier security institution of the liberal order – the UNSC. It may be argued that France's unilateral military interventions in the Sahel were enacted in the interest of preserving the sovereignty of Sahel states and restoring security therein. However, one can also argue that such unilateral forays into Francophone Africa[10] were intended to maintain France's post-colonial economic interests and political influence in this historical French sphere of interest (Powell 2020). Due to not being authorised by the UNSC, Hollande's interventions in the Sahel were, therefore, contrary to the spirit of international law and multilateralism through the framework of the UN as the body responsible for global peace and security. Hollande's foreign policies in the Sahel, particularly in relation to the LIO, are important in understanding the established behavioural trends of Paris in the 21st century.

The foreign policy of the Macron administration (May 2017–)

Emmanuel Macron succeeded Hollande as President of the French Republic in May 2017 and was re-elected in 2023. Upon assuming power, Macron's foreign policy vision was to maintain France's traditional support for EU institutions as well as seeking to maintain strong relations with French-speaking West Africa (Grunstein 2017, p. 1). Despite its historical influence, France's political and economic ties in *Francafrique* are increasingly challenged by the emergence of Chinese, US and Russian interests in the region.

10. See a map depicting a map of Francophone Africa at https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Francophone_Africa.svg.

Macron's policy towards the Middle East and the Sahel

Macron's first administration initially reinforced the Barkhane counterterrorism operation in the Sahel, which was initiated by the Hollande administration. Defending the Mali government against the northern jihadist insurgency threat from the MNLA and other militia remains was a cornerstone of Operation Barkhane. In January 2020, the Macron administration held a Sahel Conference in Pau, France, attended by representatives of the governments of Burkina Faso, Chad, Mali, Mauritania and Niger. Its aim was to revitalise the fight against terrorist groups and other armed groups across the Sahel region (Tull 2021, p. 1). Therefore, one can argue that the Macron administration has continued the Paris tradition of prioritising the maintenance of French influence in Francophone Africa through military operations that determine political dynamics and power in the region. These interventions in the Sahel are not authorised by the UNSC. A plausible explanation for France's continued involvement in the region is that it views *Francafrique* as a part of France rather than an autonomous region whose security issues should be resolved by the African Union (AU) or the UNSC. It can be argued that France traditionally employs a Realist approach in its relations with Francophone Africa, viewing the region as a sphere of influence that serves French economic and diplomatic interests.

In recent years, however, the Macron administration has experienced challenges to its post-colonial influence in Francophone Africa, particularly in the Sahel. In 2023, the governments of Burkina Faso, Mali and Niger severed political relations and military cooperation with Paris, with the vacuum seemingly filled by Russia through the Moscow-affiliated private militia, the Wagner Group (Lawal 2023). Therefore, France's influence in the Sahel appears to be dwindling. This can be viewed as an opportunity for France to allow former French colonies more space for self-determination, enabling them to chart their own independent political and economic paths as per their right to sovereignty enshrined in international law, a core pillar of the liberal order.

France's armed forces are also deployed in the anti-ISIS coalition in Syria and Iraq. France joined the anti-ISIS coalition during Hollande's presidency. The anti-ISIS alliance includes the US, Britain, other European allies and governments in the Middle East, which are committed to containing and defeating ISIS and restoring peace in the region (Grunstein 2017, p. 1; Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs 2024). Notably, the anti-ISIS coalition is not authorised by the UNSC, as Russia has vetoed resolutions aimed at authorising humanitarian interventions in Syria (Scharf 2016, p. 1).

France's participation in the anti-ISIS airstrikes operation (2014–2020) was motivated by the wider global counterterrorism campaign by the great

powers, despite the campaign's fragmented nature. The ultimate goal of the global war on terrorism is to defend the sovereignty of incumbent regimes, defend human rights and ensure international security. A key concern relating to the anti-ISIS coalition, however, is the 1 417 civilians reported to have died in anti-ISIS airstrikes on Syria and Iraq (Khan 2021). Humanitarian interventions are intended to protect civilians, not to kill them, and the latter amounts to a violation of a universal human right. Therefore, making a value judgement about France's involvement in the anti-ISIS coalition is a complex matter, firstly because the coalition functions without a UNSC mandate. It can, however, be argued that the cause of fighting global terrorism is a just and legitimate one due to the destabilising nature of terror groups such as ISIS. The anti-ISIS coalition seeks to prevent ISIS's goal of overthrowing the incumbent governments in Syria and Iraq. Thus, the goal of the anti-ISIS coalition is consistent with the value of sovereignty, a key value of the liberal order, and a basic right of all states under international law.

The Macron administration's policy towards the North Atlantic Treaty Organization

In November 2019, Macron described NATO as 'brain-dead' since – due to the Trump administration's ambiguous stance towards this body – it could no longer rely on traditional US financial support. As a contingency plan in case of NATO's decline, Macron urged the EU to become more self-reliant and provide for its own security (*The Economist* 2019). Macron's call is an established French policy position that dates back to the De Gaulle presidency in the 1960s. Thus, one can conclude that Macron seeks to position the EU as an autonomous organisation that takes primary responsibility for the security needs of its 27 member states. Such a move would bring into question the future of NATO, the military enforcer of the LIO and its values since 1949.

Macron was re-elected in April 2022. His second administration supports EU and NATO expansion, among others, to counteract Russian expansion in the form of its invasion of Ukraine. The biggest international crises to which the Macron administration has had to respond are the Russia–Ukraine conflict (2022–) and the Israel–Hamas–Palestine war.

Macron's stance on the Russia–Ukraine war

France's traditionally nuanced foreign policy relative to the US and its other Western European allies was on display at the onset of the Russian invasion of Ukraine. France has adopted a balanced position of standing with Europe in support of Ukraine's independence while simultaneously expressing a

desire for a diplomatic resolution of the conflict inclusive of both Kyiv and Moscow (Welc 2023, p. 2022). This was a significant posture because France had assumed the presidency of the Council of the EU in January 2022, a month before the start of the invasion. In contrast with the other Western European states and the US, Paris was critical of Moscow while also opening the door to a diplomatic resolution of the conflict at a time when France's allies were providing Ukraine with military and economic support. Best practice informs us that mediation requires the ability to bring both warring parties to the negotiating table. Having chosen to side with Ukraine, other Western states limited their capacity to mediate in the war between these Eastern European neighbours.

At the end of 2022, however, the Macron administration shifted its stance by committing itself to support Ukraine until it achieved victory over Russia. Moreover, France appears to be advocating an expansion of the EU that may include Ukraine, which departs from the French tradition of preferring a deeply integrated and smaller EU to an expansive but fractured one (Caulcutt 2023). One could argue that Macron's change in posture could be part of France's historic ambition to be the *de facto* leader of the EU, which requires Paris to maintain the favour of its allies in the Brussels-based regional political and economic union.

One may conclude that France's initially balanced position of supporting Ukrainian sovereignty while opening the door to a diplomatic resolution was aimed at restoring peace to Ukraine. Had France succeeded in convincing the rest of the EU to facilitate mediation, perhaps the armed conflict, civilian casualties and displacements could have been avoided. Peace and security are the ultimate goals of the LIO, and France appears to have been a champion of the restoration of peaceful relations between these two Black Sea neighbours. On the other hand, France's change of policy to solely supporting Ukraine post-December 2022 can be construed as having reduced the capacity for mediation. With Paris emerging as a vocal supporter of the eastward expansion of the EU, Macron has removed France as a prospective mediator. This is because it was the invitation to Ukraine to join NATO and the EU that had led Moscow to launch the invasion in order to prevent Ukraine from joining the liberal regional economic union. Russia regards the eastward expansion of the EU and NATO as a US encroachment on Russia's historic sphere of influence. The Russia–Ukraine war is an important independent variable in the scenario-building exercise in Chapter 11.

Macron's stance on the Hamas–Israel–Palestine war

Another current threat to world peace and security is the Hamas–Israel–Palestine conflict (2023–). Once again, the Macron administration adopted a balanced policy to this Middle Eastern crisis, condemning Hamas's attack

on Israel in October 2023 while equally condemning Israel's indiscriminate bombing of civilians in the Gaza Strip in retaliation. The Macron administration has called on all parties to the conflict to adopt a ceasefire (Adler & Luckhurst 2023). This would effectively end civilian casualties and internal displacements, which are human rights violations. In choosing to condemn human rights violations by the two warring parties while also presenting a pathway towards peace, France champions the human rights order and the ideals of peace and security that define the LIO. At a time when the international community is polarised between Israel and Palestine, France's statements are illustrative of a responsible Great Power that seeks to diffuse a conflict with wide implications for Middle Eastern and global peace and security. This conflict in the Middle East is also a key independent variable in the scenario-building exercise in Chapter 11.

France's policy towards the Liberal International Economic Order

France, a founding member of both Bretton Woods institutions in 1945, is the fifth largest contributor to and shareholder in the IMF, with a 4% subscription quota and share of the vote (IMF 2016). Paris is also a member of all five institutions of the World Bank Group. France's cumulative US$10,861 million contribution to the IBRD (the biggest institution and facility of the World Bank Group) represents about 4 per cent of the IBRD's operating budget, which gives Paris a 3.9% voting share (World Bank 2024). France's financial and technical contributions help the World Bank to provide long-term infrastructure development loans and poverty alleviation interventions to its 189 member nations. Without the World Bank's credit facilities, the Liberal International Economic Order would probably not enjoy its current levels of participation, credibility and influence in the global political economy.

France's participation in and contribution to the IMF international monetary system have a positive impact on its legitimacy and longevity. The IMF has played a major role in resolving national and international financial crises in the 20th and 21st centuries, including the 1980s debt crisis in Latin America and parts of Africa, the 1997 Asian financial crisis, and the 2008 global financial crisis. Therefore, France's financial and technical contributions have contributed to the IMF's positive impact in sustaining the Liberal International Economic Order.

Since 1 January 1995, France has been a member of the WTO, which plays a major role in regulating a global free trade regime that enables countries to trade freely with each other (World Trade Organisation 2024). Therefore, France is a key member and supporter of the Liberal International Economic Order, an important pillar of the broader LIO.

Conclusion: Trends in France's attitude and conduct towards the Liberal International Order

This chapter has provided the following insights regarding the impact of post-1989 French foreign policies on the LIO's three constitutive elements (the human rights order, the liberal international economic order, and the security order). The administrations of Mitterrand, Chirac, Sarkozy, Hollande and Macron all show that France's policy *vis-à-vis* the LIO has been dependent on its interests and history while also affirming liberal values at certain times. When it comes to *Francafrique*, France continues to act unilaterally without UNSC authorisation, acting as a central factor in the peace and security situation of French-speaking Africa for much of the 1989–2024 era. France has, therefore, established Francophone Africa as a quasi-French order, an order serving French interests that exists in parallel to the liberal order.

France has consistently supported the EU, viewing the regional organisation as a pathway to global influence. The same is also true for the World Bank and IMF, where France remains a major contributor to the balance sheet of the Bretton Woods institutions that remain key drivers of the Liberal International Economic Order and global economic governance. Furthermore, France used LIO institutions (the EU, G8, G20, UN and NATO) to respond to the 2008 global financial crisis and the Arab Spring. A key shortcoming of France and the LIO institutions (notably the UNSC and NATO) has been the failure to intervene in Syria within the parameters of the R2P principle adopted by the UN in 2005. The UNSC's failure to take action is partly attributable to NATO's manipulation of *UNSC Resolution 1973* of 2011, in terms of which France and its fellow NATO members pursued a regime change objective that fell outside the humanitarian provisions of the UNSC Resolution.

The current Russia–Ukraine and Israel–Palestine conflicts have all the characteristics of previous European, regional and global conflicts. France's policies towards these conflicts have been notably nuanced, creating opportunities for the restoration of peace. However, Paris's attempts to promote the EU's eastward expansion into Russia's historical sphere of influence have helped to prolong the Ukraine invasion. Russia's foreign policies and actions post-1989 and their impact on the LIO and its future are examined in Chapter 9.

Chapter 9

Russia's foreign policies since 1989 and its attitude towards the Liberal International Order

Introduction

This chapter is a case study of Russia's post-1989 foreign policy and attitude towards the LIO. Observable trends in Moscow's foreign policy are identified, leading to conclusions about the extent to which Russia has affirmed or undermined the LIO. In essence, the chapter identifies the extent to which Russia's post-1989 foreign policy and national interest have impacted the LIO's efficacy and sustainability.

Russia underwent a dramatic transformation following the end of the Cold War in 1989. This included seismic shifts in national identity as well as foreign policy. This analysis will begin by explaining the reforms in the Soviet Union in the 1980s that set the scene for the collapse of communism in Eastern Europe, the end of the Cold War in 1989, and the dissolution of the Soviet Union in 1991. The dissolution of the Soviet Union gave birth to the modern-day Russian Federation, and its post-1991 foreign policies are closely examined – in particular, the factors determining the foreign policies of the administrations of Boris Yeltsin, Vladimir Putin and Dmitry Medvedev. Of particular interest is whether the foreign policies of these post-1991

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Russian administrations have supported or undermined the LIO. Likewise, the international actions and positions of Moscow demonstrate the degree to which its national interests align with the values of the liberal order.

The chapter begins with a review of the foreign policies of the Gorbachev administration, whose policies engineered the end of the Cold War and the dissolution of the Soviet Union. These were monumental changes in the international system of states, with a particular impact on international order and global governance. Second, the chapter reviews the foreign policy posture and actions of the Yeltsin administration, particularly their impact on the liberal order in the 1990s era of great change globally and regionally in Eastern and Central Europe. Third, the chapter reviews the foreign policy posture and actions of the first two presidential terms of Putin in the new millennium, and the extent to which Moscow's foreign policies affirmed or undermined the LIO in the 2000s. Fourth, the chapter provides an analysis of the foreign policies of Medvedev's administration, particularly their impact on the liberal order. Fifth, the chapter evaluates the foreign policies of Russia since the return of Putin to the administration in 2012, and the extent to which Moscow has impacted the effectiveness and sustainability of the liberal order in this long era of Putin's presidency. The chapter then concludes by highlighting key trends in Russia's post-1989 attitude and international behaviour towards the LIO, and how these trends feature in the scenarios produced in Chapter 11.

The final years of the Soviet Union and the transition to the Russian Federation (1985–1991)

Mikhail Gorbachev was the last general secretary of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU) and, therefore, the last leader of the Soviet Union before its disintegration in 1991. Upon assuming leadership of the CPSU and the Soviet Union in 1985, Gorbachev adopted a domestic policy known as *glasnost*, which sought to make government institutions more open and transparent. *Glasnost* was complemented by the *perestroika* policy, whose aim was to transform the Soviet Union socially, economically and politically in order to halt its economic decline and waning superpower status in the 1980s (Dzirkals 1990, p. v). This included reforming the socialist-oriented Soviet economy towards a market economy, signalling a radical shift in Soviet political thinking under Gorbachev's leadership.

Glasnost also included a foreign policy dimension of improving the Soviet Union's relations with the liberal Western nation-states with which Moscow had engaged in the decades-long ideological Cold War. Gorbachev saw cooperation with the West as a means of reviving the socioeconomic development of the Soviet Union (Makarychev, del

Camara & Gusev 2010, p. 223). In 1987, the Soviet Union signed the *Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty* with the US, thereby effectively eliminating its nuclear and conventional ground-launched ballistic and cruise missiles from various Central and Eastern European bases (*Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty* 1987, p. 1). This agreement signalled Moscow's withdrawal from the arms race and indicated that the Soviet Union no longer viewed the US and the West as adversaries.

In 1989, the Soviet Union withdrew its armed forces from Afghanistan, where they had been deployed to preserve the communist Afghan regime against the Mujahedeen insurgent groups which were supported by Washington. This was the Soviet–Afghan War (1979–1989), a typical proxy war in the Cold War context. It had proven costly at a time when the Soviet economy was in crisis; however, Moscow had invested heavily in the war as part of the Brezhnev Doctrine of supporting communist regimes against capitalist forces of change (Makarychev et al. 2010, p. 223).

Gorbachev introduced media freedom to further improve relations with the West, allowing the media to criticise Moscow's past and present domestic and foreign policies. Amid proliferating media criticism of past policies that had led the Soviet Union to the brink of economic ruin, Glasnost inspired the emergence of nationalist movements in the constituent Soviet republics that sought political and economic independence from Moscow (Dzirkals 1990, p. v). The nationalist movements were also inspired by Moscow's abandonment of the Brezhnev Doctrine, leading to the overthrow of communist governments across Central and Eastern Europe between 1989 and 1990. These revolutions were not opposed by the Gorbachev regime, nor did Moscow oppose the reunification of democratic West Germany with East Germany, which had been part of the Soviet sphere of influence throughout the Cold War (Makarychev et al. 2010, p. 224). The nationalist revolutions and subsequent declarations of independence across Central and Eastern Europe effectively ended the Cold War and accelerated the disintegration of the Soviet Union.

It is, therefore, evident that, by the late 1980s, Gorbachev had moved the Soviet Union towards democratisation and market reforms while cooperating with the West in international affairs. In November 1990, the Soviet Union voted in favour of the US-sponsored *UNSC Resolution 678*, which sought to restore Kuwait's sovereignty following an Iraqi invasion in August 1990 (*UNSC Resolution 678*, 1990b, pp. 27–28). Moscow's support for a *UNSC Resolution* initiated by the US pointed to the Soviet Union's foreign policy paradigm shift towards cooperating with the US and the liberal order.

Gorbachev's domestic and foreign policy reforms in the late 1980s and early 1990s compelled hard-line communists within the CPSU to stage an

unsuccessful coup in June 1991. After the failed coup, Boris Yeltsin – who had been elected as president of the Russian Soviet Republic in June 1990 – banned the CPSU from operating within the Russian Soviet Republic. Following this, the Soviet republics of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania declared their independence from the Soviet Union. In December 1991, Gorbachev resigned as president of the Soviet Union, which duly dissolved. The remaining 12 Soviet republics (Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova, Russia, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Ukraine and Uzbekistan) declared independence. The Yeltsin government in Moscow began forging a new Russian identity after decades of Moscow's leadership of the Soviet Union (BBC 2013).

One can, therefore, observe that Gorbachev's tenure as leader of the CPSU and the Soviet Union was defined by a foreign policy shift towards cooperation with the US and the LIO. This shift was informed by the declining Soviet economy, compelling Gorbachev to detach the Soviet Union from Cold War politics. Cooperation with Western countries and support for the LIO offered better economic opportunities for the Soviet Union. To capitalise on these opportunities, Moscow set out to gradually collapse the Communist International Order that had drained Soviet resources. Following the end of the Cold War in 1989 and the dissolution of the Soviet Union in 1991, Yeltsin was responsible for building a new Russia. Its foreign policies had important implications for the LIO, and vice versa.

Russia's new identity and foreign policy under the Yeltsin administration (1991–1999)

Following the dissolution of the Soviet Union , , Boris Yeltsin's administration had to build a new Russian identity, which significantly impacted the Russian Federation's foreign policy posture. The interplay between Russia's new identity, its domestic interests, and its foreign policy was an interesting dynamic in a brand-new world post-1991.

Pursuit of a cooperative foreign policy with the West

Following the dissolution of the Soviet Union in 1991, Yeltsin became the leader of an autonomous Russian Federation. The new Russia was a democratising state and had to operate in a Western-led international system dominated by the US-led liberal order. The identity of being a new democracy went on to shape the immediate foreign policy choices and actions of the Yeltsin administration. According to Aboyade (2018, p. 73), Russia's post-1991 foreign policy was informed by a new identity and the

desire to continue with the Gorbachev foreign policy position of cooperating with Western states and adapting to the LIO.

The rationale for cooperating with the West was to attract Western economic assistance and investment in order to modernise the Russian economy. Similarly, Donaldson (2000, p. 288) argues that the primary aim of Yeltsin's pro-Western foreign policy was to create a non-threatening international environment, which would enable Russia's economic and political development in the post-1991 epoch. In fact, Yeltsin's administration aimed for significant Russian participation in institutions of the liberal order in order to improve Moscow's appeal to Western states and investors (Donaldson 2000, p. 289).

A further strategic goal sought through cooperating with the West was to make Russia a Great Power in the long run, reinforced by a modernised economy and military might (Aboyade 2018, p. 77). Thus, despite being a new nation, the Russian Federation's long-term goal of becoming a Great Power was essentially fuelled by a desire to reach the superpower status of the Russian Empire (1721–1917) and the Soviet Union (1922–1991).

Between 1991 and 1994, Russia avoided leadership of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), comprising former Soviet satellite states, on the grounds that this would slow the market-oriented economic reforms that were necessary for attracting Western aid and investment (Donaldson 2000, p. 290). The leadership of the CIS would also divert Russia from its planned participation in institutions of the liberal order. Founded on 8 December 1991, the CIS was an association of former Soviet Republics. Its founding member states were Russia, Ukraine, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Armenia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan and Turkmenistan (Selamzade 2020, p. 59).

The Yeltsin administration's liberal foreign policy sparked nationalist opposition in Russia. Russian nationalists argued that the pro-Western foreign policy would reduce Russia to a junior partner to Western states and a junior member in institutions of the LIO (Rumer 1995, p. vii). Instead, they called on Yeltsin's administration to prioritise relations with Central and Eastern Europe, which would enable Moscow to protect Russia's interests and heritage in the former Soviet republics that still hosted a significant number of Russians (Donaldson 2000, p. 291).

By 1992, Russia's pro-Western foreign policy had not yielded the intended level of Western aid and investment. The nationalists, led by the Liberal Democratic Party, advocated a shift towards creating a Russian empire and returning Moscow to its erstwhile superpower status (Aboyade 2018, p. 77). The nationalist foreign policy proposition delivered relative success for the Liberal Democratic Party in the December 1993 parliamentary elections (Donaldson 2000, p. 292).

Post-1993 shift away from the West

By the end of 1992, the Yeltsin administration had itself become dissatisfied with the meagre economic returns of the pro-Western foreign policy (Rumer 1995, p. vii). From April 1993 onwards, Yeltsin adopted a new nationalist-oriented foreign policy concept that prioritised relations with former Soviet republics while opposing NATO's expansion into Central and Eastern Europe, which were former Soviet spheres of influence. Notably, Yeltsin's 1993 foreign policy statement maintained that post-1991, Russia was still a great power by virtue of retaining influence and being a guarantor of stability in Eastern Europe (Rumer 1995, p. viii). As a result, Yeltsin's administration sought greater voluntary political and economic integration with former Soviet republics in Eastern Europe through the CIS. It sought to position Russia as the leader of the CIS because Moscow was still the most industrialised nuclear power within the regional organisation. Eastern Europe is a geopolitical region that historically serves Moscow's economic interests and is politically subservient to Russia, making Moscow a natural leader of the CIS. Moreover, Yeltsin's foreign policy aim was to establish the CIS as an enforcer of peace during the volatile post-1991 period of independence and civil wars in Eastern Europe. Notably, Russia declared that it envisaged the CIS to act in terms of mandates issued by the UNSC, which pointed to the Yeltsin government's willingness to adhere to international law and cooperate with the UN (Donaldson 2000, pp. 292–294). However, this willingness to cooperate with the UN did not last long.

Yeltsin's stance on the Yugoslav wars

Russia also began to support ethnic Serbs and Serbia during the Yugoslav Wars (see Chapter 5), in direct opposition to NATO's support for secessionist Yugoslav republics. It did so in order to contain the democratisation of former Yugoslav republics, which had the potential to spill over into Central and Eastern Europe. Such regionalisation of democracy would transform this region into a US sphere of influence at the expense of Russian historic political influence and economic interests (Reljić 2011, p. 2). Thus, Yeltsin's administration now opposed NATO and the West on major global security issues, particularly the civil wars in the Balkans. This regional contestation was similar to that experienced during the Cold War.

Russia's relations with the West worsened in March 1999 when NATO admitted three former Soviet satellite states in Central Europe, namely the Czech Republic, Hungary and Poland (Daalder 1999, p. 52). Inevitably, the Yeltsin administration was alarmed by NATO's expansion into Central Europe. Between March and June 1999, NATO intervened in the Serbia-Kosovo War on behalf of Kosovo secessionists (the KLA). This intervention (primarily airstrikes against Serbia) was not authorised by the UNSC and

therefore violated Serbia's sovereignty. Serbia had been an ally of Russia since the early 1990s.

The North Atlantic Treaty Organization's expansion into Central Europe and its simultaneous intervention in the Kosovo province of Serbia seemed to vindicate Russia's perception of NATO as an expansionist entity that was perpetuating Cold War politics. Russia had become dissatisfied with the LIO, whose military institution had expanded into Russia's zone of influence and intervened in its affairs, as in the case of Serbia (Donaldson 2000, p. 313). Despite disapproving of NATO's intervention in Serbia, the Yeltsin administration used diplomacy to persuade Serbia to agree to a ceasefire with the Kosovo secessionists in June 1999 (Cordesman & Burke 2000, p. 27). Under the Russia-negotiated *Military Technical Agreement* (NATO 1999, p. 1), Serbia agreed to withdraw its forces from Kosovo and also agreed to the deployment of an international security force to maintain the ceasefire.

By meditating on the Kosovo War, the Yeltsin administration demonstrated its commitment to safeguarding international peace and security despite its preference for Serbia to retain control of Kosovo. Through its recommendation of a transitional international security force, the Yeltsin administration demonstrated its commitment to multilateralism – a key feature of the LIO – in resolving international security issues.

In December 1999, Vladimir Putin succeeded Yeltsin as president of the Russian Federation. Putin's foreign policies in the new millennium, particularly regarding the LIO, are important factors that could decide the future of the LIO and global governance.

The foreign policies of the first two Putin administrations (1999–2008)

Putin's administration was confronted with the challenge of reconciling the relatively incoherent foreign policy legacy of the Yeltsin administration. As seen above, Yeltsin initially sought to integrate Russia into the LIO but then reverted to a nationalist policy of returning to an Eastern European focus and containing NATO's influence. Later, however, he worked with the West to resolve the Kosovo crisis. These shifts in foreign policy were a consequence of pressures from two opposing Russian political groupings – the more 'liberal' political elites who advocated a pro-Western foreign policy and the nationalist group seeking to reposition Russia as a leader of Eastern Europe through the CIS (Nitoiu 2017, p. 41).

Towards the end of his first presidential term, Putin began entrenching a nationalist and assertive foreign policy agenda aimed at restoring Russia's Soviet-era great power status. To limit opposition to this nationalist foreign policy, Putin centralised foreign policymaking in the Office of the President,

thereby limiting deliberation and space for opposition. Putin legitimised this assertive and nationalist foreign policy by convincing the Russian public that Western NATO and EU expansion into Eastern Europe was an attempt to subjugate Russian and Soviet history, culture and interests (Nitoiu 2017, p. 42).

Putin's initial détente *vis-à-vis* the West

Initially, Putin's administration cooperated with Western states to address common international security threats. For instance, Russia ratified *START II* in April 2000, which had been signed by Russia and the US in 1993. This was a bilateral Russia-US treaty seeking to reduce the production and use of long-range offensive missiles (*START II Treaty* 1991, p. 1). After 9/11, Russia also joined the US-led global war on terror to combat a common security threat, namely international terrorist groups. It even supported all NATO members and other allied states that had invaded Afghanistan in October 2001 in order to root out al-Qaeda from its Afghan bases (Ambrosio 2005, p. 1189).

The establishment of the NATO-Russia Council (NRC) in May 2002 was yet another indicator of Russia's security cooperation with the West. The NRC was set up to facilitate consultation, consensus and joint decision-making between Russia and NATO on security issues of common concern. The NRC led to greater NATO-Russia cooperation on counterterrorism, crisis management and arms control (NATO 2020, p. 1). Therefore, the establishment and operationalisation of the NRC illustrates the initial commitment of the Putin administration to cooperation with the West, particularly on security issues. By supporting the US-led global war on terror, ratifying *START II*, and forming the NRC, the first Putin administration demonstrated a willingness to revert to the early 1990s Russian enthusiasm for cooperating with the Western states and the LIO.

Russia's return to a nationalist foreign policy

Russia's cooperation with the West began to wane after Washington's unilateral and unsubstantiated military invasion of Iraq in 2003. In September 2002, Russia, China and France opposed a draft UNSC resolution submitted by the Bush administration to authorise the planned invasion of Iraq. This was due to a lack of tangible proof that Baghdad was in possession of WMD. Therefore, Moscow opposed the invasion of Iraq based on international law and the preservation of Iraq's sovereignty. An additional reason for Russia's opposition to the Iraqi invasion was Moscow's cordial relations with Baghdad, having signed a US$40 billion economic and trade deal with Iraq in August 2002 (Ambrosio 2005, p. 1197).

Therefore, Moscow opposed the Iraqi invasion of March 2003 because it believed this would violate Baghdad's sovereignty and threaten Russian economic interests, which were vital to a resurgent Russian economy. Moreover, the actual invasion by the US and its Western allies was an illustration of US unilateralism, as the UNSC did not sanction the intervention (Ambrosio 2005, p. 1199). It could be argued that the invasion of Iraq by the US and its Western allies was the first issue that caused Russia's dissatisfaction with the West.

NATO and the EU's absorption of former Soviet satellite states in Central and Eastern Europe further alienated Putin's administration from the West. At this juncture, Putin's first administration (2000-2004) adopted a nationalist and assertive foreign policy seeking to contain Western expansion in a historically Russian sphere of influence and interest (Nitoiu 2017, p. 42). The sustained economic growth of the Russian economy during Putin's first term also enabled Moscow to implement its nationalist foreign policy agenda (Makarychev et al. 2010, p. 225). Therefore, Moscow adopted a foreign policy of re-establishing Russia as the *de facto* leader of Eastern Europe.

Thus, one can observe that Russia's move towards a nationalist foreign policy was informed by its goals of containing US unilateralism and Western influence in Russia's historic sphere of influence, namely Central and Eastern Europe. To Russia, having a neighbourhood that adopts and practices pro-Western domestic and foreign policy was antithetical to Russian strategic and economic interests in the region. It had to act to preserve its political influence, trade and economic interests in Central and Eastern Europe. As such, the balance of power politics, economic interests, geopolitics and history were primary determinants of Moscow's adoption of a nationalist foreign policy by the mid-2000s.

Putin's second administration (2004–2008) was characterised by an entrenched distrust and suspicion of the West, particularly following the pro-democracy 'colour revolutions' in the former Soviet republics (the Rose Revolution in Georgia in 2003 and the Orange Revolution in Ukraine in 2004). The colour revolutions in Georgia and Ukraine succeeded in achieving democratic change in these former Soviet republics. Russia viewed these revolutions as being covertly sponsored by the West. Specifically, Putin viewed the spread of Western-style democracy in the former Soviet geopolitical region as part of the West's strategic aim of wresting control of Central and Eastern Europe from Russia, thereby absorbing the region into the LIO (Nitoiu 2017, p. 43).

Following the colour revolutions, Putin's second administration adopted an assertive foreign policy *vis-à-vis* Eastern Europe, seeking to re-establish Moscow's influence in the region and preventing or containing the

absorption of more former Soviet republics into liberal order institutions such as NATO and the EU. This policy of reasserting influence and control over Eastern Europe was vital to Russia's long-term objective of regaining its status as a Great Power in global affairs (Nitoiu 2017, p. 43). The Putin regime identified the CIS as the multilateral instrument through which Russia could exercise its dominance and influence in the former Soviet republics (Georgia, Ukraine, Azerbaijan, Armenia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan). The second Putin administration also used its oil and gas resources to impose Moscow's will on and influence fellow CIS member states. These resources are key economic instruments through which Russia pursues and achieves its foreign policy objectives, particularly towards its 'near abroad' neighbourhood of Eastern Europe (Secrieru 2006, p. 5).

Russia's relations with the new pro-US governments in Georgia and Ukraine were especially hostile during Putin's second administration. Russia–Georgia relations had already degenerated in the 1990s following Georgia's declaration of independence after the dissolution of the Soviet Union in 1991. Georgia's Abkhazia territory had sought independence from Georgia since the 1990s, with Russia supporting the secession. In his second term, Putin decided to support the secession of the two regions – Abkhazia and South Ossetia – as a means of preventing or delaying Georgia's plans to join NATO (Makarychev et al. 2010, p. 226).

Clearly, by the end of Putin's second term as president, the Russian Federation had adopted a foreign policy of reclaiming its status as a superpower in Eastern Europe. Putin also used this as a tool to contain and repel NATO and the EU's further expansion into the region, thereby containing the Eastern expansion of the liberal order. The CIS became one of the key instruments for containing the absorption of Eastern Europe into the liberal order. Sponsoring domestic insurgencies in pro-democratic Eastern European states was an additional tool used by Putin to delay or repel Georgia and Ukraine's absorption into NATO and the EU.

Dmitry Medvedev succeeded Putin as Russian president in December 2008. His foreign policies and attitude towards the LIO are examined next.

The foreign policy of the Medvedev administration (2008–2012)

Upon assuming the presidency, Medvedev continued to pursue Putin's foreign policy goal of positioning Russia as a great power with significant influence in international affairs. He also continued with Putin's policy of denouncing unilateralism in international affairs, arguing that it destabilised the international environment and led to violations of international law

(Tichy 2014, p. 536). Specifically, the Medvedev government identified US unilateralism as a major threat to international and Russian security, advocating the adoption of multilateralism instead. It prioritised multilateral cooperation, specifically in the CIS, positioning this Eastern European organisation as a means of containing NATO and the EU's expansion in this former Soviet sphere of influence (Oldberg 2011, p. 3). In particular, the Medvedev administration opposed NATO's intention to admit Georgia and Ukraine as member states (Tichy 2014, p. 537). Given that they were two former Soviet republics, their proposed membership of NATO was perceived as a threat to Russia's leadership, influence and strategic economic interests in Eastern Europe.

The Russo–Georgian War as example of Medvedev's containment policy

In August 2008, the Medvedev administration implemented its foreign policy of containing Western influence in Eastern Europe by intervening in the internal conflict between the former Soviet Republic of Georgia and the insurgent regions of South Ossetia and Abkhazia. These two regions had sought to secede from Georgia since the latter's independence after the dissolution of the Soviet Union in 1991 (Cohen & Hamilton 2011, p. vii).

Following the Rose Revolution of 2003, Georgia applied for membership in NATO, which Russia wanted to prevent. By supporting the secessionist regions and recognising their independence, Medvedev sought to undermine and/or overthrow the democratic government of Georgia (Moshes 2012, p. 19). The aim was for a pro-Russian government to emerge and halt Georgia's absorption into NATO.

On 1 August 2008, Russian-backed South Ossetian forces started shelling Georgian villages, provoking a military response from Georgia. On 8 August, Russia launched a land, air and sea invasion of Georgia, which it referred to as a 'peace enforcement' operation. Russian and South Ossetian forces fought Georgian forces for several days until the latter retreated. Russian naval forces also blockaded part of the Georgian Black Sea coastline, and the Russian air force attacked targets within and beyond the conflict zone. The French president, Nicolas Sarkozy, negotiated a ceasefire agreement which came into force on 12 August. On 26 August, Russia recognised the independence of Abkhazia and South Ossetia from Georgia, and the Georgian government severed diplomatic relations with Russia. Russia withdrew most of its troops from undisputed parts of Georgia on 8 October (Cohen and Hamilton 2011, p. iii). Russia is said to have emerged from the conflict with its international relations largely unharmed. The brief Russo–Georgian War is regarded as the first European war of the 21st century.

It can be observed that Russia's military intervention in Georgia was unilateral and inconsistent with international law. It also contributed to further instability in Georgia. In violating Georgia's sovereignty, Russia violated its UNSC mandate of maintaining and safeguarding international peace and security, thereby deviating from the founding objectives of the liberal order.

Protection of Russian interests and assertion of influence in Eastern Europe

In May 2009, the Medvedev government adopted a new national security doctrine that declared Russia's commitment to protecting Russia's interests in Eastern Europe. This included the protection of Russian immigrants' interests across the region. The doctrine then classified NATO's expansion into Eastern Europe as a threat to Russia's national security (Grajauskas 2009, p. 2). To protect Russia's interests and contain NATO, Moscow deployed its armed forces in unstable Eastern European states such as Latvia, Georgia and Ukraine (Tichy 2014, p. 540). This was done in order to intimidate those states and discourage them from joining NATO.

In February 2010, the Medvedev administration adopted a military doctrine that emphasised Russia's willingness to use military force to achieve its national interests and the interests of Russian immigrants abroad. It also declared Russia's willingness to use military force to maintain international peace and security and called for the establishment of a European collective security organisation that would address Europe's security matters. It stated that such a European security organisation would be more relevant than NATO, which was an obsolete Cold War structure not suited to the 21st-century security complex of Europe (Tichy 2014, p. 544). The Military Doctrine, therefore, continued with the long-established Russian policy of seeking to contain NATO and, by extension, US hegemony.

In sum, it is clear that the Medvedev administration rejected NATO, a key pillar of the LIO. However, the Military Doctrine declared Russia's commitment to using military force to ensure international peace and security, which corresponds with the *UN Charter* – an important source of international law. The Military Doctrine's provision for Russia's use of military force for peace and security purposes is consistent with international law and can be interpreted as Russian support for the rules-based liberal order.

Medvedev's policy towards the Arab Spring

Towards the end of Medvedev's presidency, Russia – as a permanent member of the UNSC – had to respond to international security issues

emerging from the Arab Spring insurgencies across the MENA region. While abstaining, Russia did not oppose *UNSC Resolution 1973* adopted in March 2011, which authorised NATO airstrikes in Libya, aimed at halting the atrocities committed by the Libyan government against its civilian population (*UNSC Resolution 1973*, 2011, p. 1). When NATO went beyond the provisions of *UNSC Resolution 1973* by supporting insurgent groups to overthrow the Gaddafi regime, Russia expressed its opposition on the basis of sovereignty and international law (Reuters 2011).

It is notable that Russia did not veto the initial NATO humanitarian intervention as a means of protecting Libyan citizens' lives and human rights. In the process, the Medvedev regime indirectly reaffirmed the human rights values of the LIO by not vetoing the humanitarian intervention. It is equally notable that Russia opposed NATO's violation of the provisions of *Resolution 1973* when the military alliance decided to assist domestic insurgent groups in overthrowing the Gaddafi regime. These actions violated Libya's sovereignty and deterred the UNSC from authorising similar humanitarian interventions in Syria and other Arab Spring contexts (Terry 2015, p. 163).

When the Arab Spring reached Syria in March 2011, Russia unilaterally chose to assist the Bashar al-Assad government, helping it suppress the uprisings. This intervention was informed by Russian interests – it has strong economic ties with Syria, is dominated by significant Russian arms sales to Damascus (Hill 2013), and is complemented by entrenched diplomatic relations. These are underlined by Russia's naval base in the Syrian port of Tartus, which was established after the 1980 Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation between the Soviet Union and Syria (Oligie 2019, p. 95; Tichy 2014, p. 549). Therefore, Damascus is a long-standing ally of Moscow in the Middle East. The Medvedev government even vetoed the proposed UNSC resolution to introduce economic sanctions against the Syrian government in October 2011. Another reason for Moscow's support for Damascus was to halt the wave of democratic revolutions in the MENA, fearing that such revolutions might spread to the former Soviet republics and Russia itself (Tichy 2014, p. 550).

One can conclude that Russia supported the Syrian government to protect Russia's economic interests and halt the wave of democratisation at the expense of Syrian citizens' human rights and their right to self-determination. In this case, Russia chose its national interests at the expense of the LIO's human rights values. In May 2012, Putin returned to the Russian presidency for a third term, succeeding Medvedev. The ensuing section analyses Putin's foreign policy since 2012, particularly its implications for the LIO.

The foreign policies of Putin's third and fourth presidential terms (2012–)

Since his return to the Russian presidency, Putin has continued with Moscow's foreign policy of reasserting its dominance and influence in Eastern Europe. Between 18 and 23 February 2014, pro-EU protests erupted in Ukraine with the aim of forcing President Viktor Yanukovych to step down. Protesters accused him of stalling the EU–Ukraine Association agreement that would align Kyiv with the EU's policy framework and lead to Ukraine joining the EU (Shveda & Joung 2016, p. 85). For Russia, closer EU–Ukraine relations would have a negative impact on Moscow-Kiev political and economic relations. On 23 February 2014, in what became known as the Ukrainian Revolution, the pro-EU movement overthrew the Yanukovych government. The Putin administration viewed this as part of EU and NATO expansion into Russia's sphere of interest and influence and an attempt to challenge its regional hegemony (Aboyade 2018, p. 82).

Russia responded by annexing the Crimean Peninsula from Ukraine in March 2014. The Soviet Union gifted Crimea to the Ukraine Soviet Republic in February 1954 as a symbol of friendship and unification (Saluschev 2014, p. 38). When Ukraine sought integration with the EU and NATO, Russia concluded that the Ukrainian Revolution had been organised to move Kyiv out of Moscow's orbit. Thus, after 60 years, Russia chose to militarily reclaim the Crimean Peninsula from Kyiv (Aboyade 2018, p. 82; Grytsaienko 2014, p. 9). By annexing Crimea, the Putin administration violated the sovereignty of Ukraine as well as international law. Moreover, the Crimean annexation led to further political instability, meaning that Moscow failed to uphold its mandate as a permanent member of the UNSC to preserve world peace and security.

Russia's support for anti-government separatist groups in the Donbas region of Ukraine was a further violation of Ukrainian sovereignty. Waged since April 2014, the secessionist war in eastern Ukraine, also commonly referred to as the Russo–Ukrainian War, had destabilised Kyiv and drained it of economic and military resources (Mykhnenko 2020, p. 1). The international media reported on Russian military assistance for the Russian-speaking Donetsk and Luhansk cities that sought to secede from Ukraine. The war by Russian-backed eastern groups was caused by Kyiv's signing of the *EU–Ukraine Association Agreement* in March 2014, with the intention to join the EU and NATO (BBC 2020; Reuters 2020). Russia's instigation of war in the Russian-speaking eastern region of Ukraine demonstrated Moscow's willingness to violate international law in order to achieve its goal of preventing Ukraine from joining the EU and possibly NATO.

On 21 February 2022, Russia announced its formal recognition of the Donetsk People's Republic and Luhansk People's Republic (i.e., the separationist territories in eastern Ukraine), followed by what Putin called a

'special military operation' in Ukraine on 24 February 2022 – effectively, a full-scale military invasion, aimed at removing the Ukrainian government from power. These two actions were the culmination of Moscow's battle to contain EU and NATO expansion into Ukraine since the revolution of 2014. In announcing the invasion, Putin referred to the expansion of NATO, a proxy of US foreign policy and hegemonic ambitions, into Eastern Europe as a key reason for the military action against Ukraine. Pointing to the emergence of a nationalist 'neo-Nazi' administration in Kyiv that was pro-NATO and US, Putin declared that Ukraine's admission into NATO was an existential threat to the Russian Federation. The advent of Ukraine's nationalism in 2014 and Kyiv's probable admission to NATO made it necessary for Russia to intervene in Ukraine to stop the advancement of NATO so close to Russian borders (*Al Jazeera* 2022).

The Masters (2023) asserts that Russia invaded Ukraine in February 2022 as a means of forestalling Kyiv's plans to join the EU and NATO, two liberal institutions that Moscow views as proxies and instruments of US ambitions to humiliate Russia and take over its historic Eastern European sphere of influence. From this viewpoint, it was inevitable that Russia, the US, NATO and the EU were on a collision course. Therefore, the war in Ukraine represents a window onto a future of international warfare should the US, NATO and EU persist with the policy of expanding into Russia's 'near abroad'.

Putin's objectives and actions beyond Eastern Europe

Under Putin, Russia has expanded its foreign policy agenda to include parts of the world that Moscow has not focused on since the decline of the Soviet Union in the early 1980s. According to Gurganus and Rumer (2019, p. 1), post-2012, Russia has sought to build stronger relationships and influence in Africa, Latin America and the Middle East. The focus on these regions points to Moscow's pursuit of grand Soviet-style foreign policy ambitions. Thus, Putin's administration has sought to move beyond a focus on Eastern Europe alone towards pursuing geopolitical ambitions in far-flung regions of the world.

Its commitment to reviving Russia as a Great Power has been demonstrated in the Syrian civil war. Moscow has steadily supported Bashar al-Assad's government against the insurgent groups (Aboyade 2018, p. 82), some of which are allegedly sponsored by the US and other Western states (Asseburg & Wimmen 2012, p. 3). Russia's intervention in Syria can, therefore, be interpreted as an attempt to contain Washington's efforts to export democracy to Syria as part of the US government's enduring hegemonic and neo-conservative ambition of spreading Western-style democracy throughout the world.

An additional reason for Moscow's support for Damascus is the close relationship between the two governments, with Russia being a major supplier of armaments to the al-Assad government (Oligie 2019, p. 99). Thus, Russia's defence of the al-Assad regime is also aimed at preserving Moscow's arms trade agreements with Damascus, which are under threat from the insurgent groups which may forge new trade relationships if they overthrow the Syrian government.

Putin's return to the presidency has seen Russia demonstrate its ability to influence global political events by various means, including cyberattacks and information craftsmanship. For instance, Russia has been accused of interfering in the 2016 US election in order to tilt the outcome in Donald Trump's favour (Gurganus & Rumer 2019, p. 2). It is certainly plausible that Russia preferred to have Trump in the White House, given that he had campaigned on an 'America First' ticket that seemed to suggest an isolationist foreign policy. This could be expected to result in Washington stepping back from its globalist foreign policy. An isolationist foreign policy would facilitate Russia's objective of restoring its historical hegemony in Eastern Europe, as well as its global ambitions. Without US backing, NATO is not a formidable threat to Russia's ambitions in Eastern Europe.

It has, therefore, become clear that Russia under Putin is willing to subvert international law to contain the expansion of NATO and the EU into Eastern Europe. Similarly, Russia seems willing to violate international law in pursuit of its regional and global strategic interests and objectives. Such a foreign policy posture has negative consequences for the LIO, particularly since Russia is a permanent member of the UNSC – a key guardian of the liberal order and international law.

Russia's policy towards the Sahel

Russia's 'return' to Africa has included the volatile Sahel region south of the Sahara. Since 2020, the Sahel has experienced four successful coups in Mali, Burkina Faso, Guinea and Niger. Russia has supported the military regimes that have ascended to power unconstitutionally, despite Western nations demanding their reversal (Ajala 2024). Military coups are essentially undemocratic, and Russia's backing of military juntas can be construed as endorsing the coups east and west of the Sahel in the 2020s. Russia's foreign policy of openly endorsing military juntas contradicts the democratic values of the LIO and may encourage other coups elsewhere in Africa. Indeed, Moscow has openly supported the military juntas in Burkina Faso (Maquindus & Sylvestre-Treiner 2023). In August 2023, Moscow warned the pro-Paris ECOWAS against overthrowing the military government in Niger, arguing that such an intervention could lead to a protracted domestic confrontation in Niger and a regional war (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the

Russian Federation 2023). It is also argued that Russia's befriending of military governments in the Sahel is part of its strategy of gaining international allies amidst its war against Ukraine (Ajala 2024). Moreover, friendly states in the Sahel (and the rest of Africa) may help Moscow alleviate the effects of the sanctions applied by Western countries because of the Ukraine invasion. Russia is also actively competing with France in the Sahel, looking to displace Paris as a diplomatic and military ally of choice in the Sahel, a historical French sphere of influence and economic interests (i.e., natural resources). Therefore, one can conclude that Russia has entered the 'Scramble for Africa 2.0' in the 21st century and that this is likely to increase political instability and insecurity in Africa as the great powers compete to establish spheres of influence. Such balance of power foreign policies in Africa by the great powers (particularly the P5) contradict the values of sovereignty, peace, and security of the LIO. In this renewed 'Scramble for Africa', Africa's sovereignty, peace and security are visibly sacrificed by the P5 to advance myopic national interests of prestige, natural resource accumulation and gaining political allies. Overall, therefore, the P5 appears to be looking to create quasi-orders that look to divide the continent into French, Russian, Chinese and American satellite states. These are parallel orders to the more universal liberal order, which may disintegrate if the politics of fragmentation persist.

Russian policy toward the Israel–Hamas–Palestine conflict

The Israeli-Hamas-Palestine conflict (October 2023–) has caused the biggest international security crisis since the beginning of the Russia–Ukraine war. Putin is said to have remarked to the Iraqi prime minister that the Hamas attacks on Israel were an outcome of Washington's failed policy of monopolising the Arab–Israeli peace process (Osbourne 2023). In 1947, the UN General Assembly passed Resolution 181 (II), which essentially embodied a two-state solution for the Israel–Palestinian territorial dispute, namely that the disputed territory should be divided into two separate and sovereign states, the state of Israel and an Arab state for Palestinians.

In essence, Putin blames the US for being a major factor preventing the effective resolution of the Israel–Palestine impasse, possibly due to Washington's enduring blanket support for Israel regardless of which side has been the aggressor since 1948. Moscow has held a telephonic conversation with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and also hosted a delegation of Hamas (Osbourn 2023). Moscow's efforts to engage with both sides are commendable. The main issue, however, is that the great powers and Arab states have failed Jewish and Arab people in the disputed territory for more than 76 years. Moreover, the UK played a

significant role in causing the problem through its conflicting promises of statehood to the Palestinians in 1916 and the Jews in 1917 (see Chapter 6).

A key observation, which Moscow recognises, is that the conflict between Israeli and Palestinian authorities and nationalist groups will only be resolved when both sides agree to a solution, whether a two-state solution as per *UNGA Resolution 181* or any other. Whether such a resolution will be peaceful or not remains to be seen. American military aid to Israel should be condemned, as per Moscow's criticism, because Washington is abusing its privilege as a hegemon to favour one side over the other. In this way, the US is sustaining the conflict while ruling itself out as a credible mediator. As things stand, Washington is a participant in the conflict, and Moscow is correct when it apportions part of the blame to US foreign policy. As long as the US and Russia continue to harbour conflicting positions on the conflict, the UNSC will not be able to facilitate the peaceful resolution of the Israel–Hamas–Palestine conflict and the broader Arab–Israeli conflict over the same disputed territory since 1948.

Russian policy towards BRICS+ and the Liberal International Economic Order

Russia has also been a champion of the expansion of the BRICS bloc, which now includes Egypt, Ethiopia, Iran, Saudi Arabia, and the United Arab Emirates. Upon assuming the presidency of the BRICS+ bloc, Putin declared that it should play an expanded role in the international financial system (Africa News 2024). This can be construed as an attempt by Moscow to position BRICS+ as an alternative to the Bretton Woods institutions. BRICS+ and its New Development Bank (NDB) could also help to mitigate Russia's economic isolation as a result of its invasion of Ukraine. Viewed from this perspective, Russia's influence over BRICS+ could result in a decentralised international monetary and financial system and order as opposed to the more centralised Bretton Woods order that has monopolised the international financial system in the post-1989 era.

Russia has evidently seen value in the liberal international economic order since the disintegration of the Soviet Union in 1991. It joined the IMF and the World Bank in 1992. The Soviet Union was a participant in the Bretton Woods conference of 1944, which founded the two IFIs that underpin the liberal international economic order (Gidadhubli & Bhattacharya 1992, p. 1728). However, following the advent of the Cold War, Moscow decided against joining the Bretton Woods institutions and established its own Communist International Order. By joining the IMF in 1992, Moscow became a voluntary member of this entity responsible for the coordination of the international monetary and finance system and lender of last resort.

Besides being a member of the World Bank, Russia is also the eighth largest shareholder in and contributor to the IBRD, the World Bank Group's biggest credit facility for member nations (Congressional Research Service 2023, p. 2). Russia's uninterrupted membership of and contributions to the World Bank and IMF since the dissolution of the Soviet Union demonstrates that Moscow views these institutions as important enablers of financial stability, economic development, and poverty alleviation. By implication, Moscow views these liberal institutions as vital to its national interest and the interests of the global economy. Therefore, it is a voluntary and active member of the liberal international economic order.

By joining the WTO in August 2012, Russia has also subscribed to the international free trade system. Since June 2022, however, it has thought about withdrawing from the WTO due to a decision by the US, Canada, Japan, and the EU to suspend its Most Favoured Nation status, thereby increasing tariff and non-tariff barriers for Russian goods and services (International Institute for Sustainable Development 2022). This formed part of the West's pressure on Moscow to withdraw from the war with Ukraine. This decision to apply economic sanctions and raise barriers to trade contradicts the WTO mandate and the principles of the international free trade system. Therefore, the WTO's free trade system is not immune to politics among the great powers, which further undermines its aims. Notwithstanding the economic warfare between the West and Russia in the context of the Russia–Ukraine War, Moscow remains a member of the WTO and continues to view the international free trade system as beneficial to its economic interests. Therefore, it is fair to conclude that Moscow views the liberal international economic order as vital to its economic interests, security and development, regardless of its issues with the US and its allies.

Conclusion: Trends in Russia's attitude towards the Liberal International Order

Having examined the foreign policies of post-1989 Russia, one can observe fluctuations in attitudes *vis-à-vis* the LIO. In the quest for a new national identity after the dissolution of the Soviet Union in 1991, Russia was prepared to operate within the liberal order as a means of attracting Western aid and investment. When this stance failed to achieve the desired goals, Russia reverted to a regional focus, looking to bend Eastern Europe to Russian economic and political interests and objectives. However, Yeltsin's regime still cooperated with Western states to resolve the Kosovo War.

Like his predecessor, Putin began his presidency by cooperating with the West in respect of responses to the global terrorism threat. However, when Western states began to manipulate the global war on terror for narrow neo-conservative reasons, Russia reverted to a mistrust of the West

and liberal order institutions, particularly NATO and the EU. The neo-conservative agenda of Western countries was perceived to be behind the democratic 'Colour Revolutions' in Georgia (2003) and Ukraine (2004). This emboldened Russia to revert to a nationalist foreign policy of defending Russian history, interests and influence in Eastern Europe, and containing Western encroachment.

Medvedev rose to the Russian presidency in the broader context of Russian–Western contestation in Central and Eastern Europe, and immediately got Russia entangled in the war between Georgia and the secessionist regions of South Ossetia and Abkhazia. After the Georgian War, Medvedev reasserted Russia's commitment to multipolarity in global affairs, and Russian leadership in Eastern Europe through the CIS. Under Medvedev, Russia opted not to oppose NATO's UNSC-authorised intervention in Libya because of purported human rights violations in the Arab state. However, NATO states exceeded the provisions of the UNSC Resolution 1973 by pursuing a regime change agenda.

Since resuming the presidency of the Russian Federation in 2012, Putin has imposed Moscow's new geopolitical objectives by annexing Crimea as a means of protesting against Ukraine's pursuit of EU membership. Russia has invaded Ukraine in order to prevent it from joining NATO and the EU. Beyond Eastern Europe, Russia supports Syria in its war against ISIS and other insurgent groups, supports the creation of an independent Palestinian state, and has lent support to military governments in the Sahel region of Africa. Russia is also suspected of meddling in the domestic politics of the US and other states in order to manipulate their electoral outcomes and/or political direction.

Russia, like the other four great powers, has had a significant impact on the LIO and its future in this century. As stated in Chapter 5, international orders tend to exist and survive as long as the great powers retain confidence in their ability to facilitate their national interests. The foreign policies of the Russian Federation play a major role in the scenario-building exercise in Chapter 11. The next chapter reviews the post-1989 foreign policies and actions of the PRC, specifically with a view to understanding Beijing's established behaviour towards the LIO, its norms and institutions.

Chapter 10

China's foreign policies since 1989 and its attitude towards the Liberal International Order

Introduction

This chapter evaluates China's post-1989 foreign policies and attitudes towards the LIO, determining the extent to which Beijing has affirmed or undermined the liberal order. It also evaluates the extent to which the LIO has enabled Beijing to advance its national interests, both internationally and domestically.

The PRC is perhaps the Great Power with the most enduring commitment to a particular ideology, namely communism (albeit adapted to Chinese circumstances and tailored to advance shifting perceptions of Chinese interests). The CCP has held political power since 1949 and remains the key determinant of Beijing's domestic and foreign policy agenda. Furthermore, the leader of the CCP often serves as the *de facto* leader of the PRC and wields enormous political influence.

The chapter systematically reviews China's post-1989 foreign policies and their impact on the liberal order as follows. First, the chapter examines the foreign policy concept and actions of the Deng Xiaoping administration that led China during the last decade of the Cold War (1980s) and a new

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unipolar world after the collapse of the Soviet Union (1990s). Second, the chapter evaluates the foreign policies of the Zemin administrations (1993–2003) and analyses how these policies aligned with or violated the LIO. Third, the chapter reviews the dynamic foreign policies of the Hu Jintao administration (2003–2013), highlighting the implications of an assertive Beijing on the liberal order. Fourth, the Xi Jinping administration's foreign policies are examined, with a particular focus on the extent to which these policies affirm or challenge the liberal order. As with the other chapters, I then focus on China's policy *vis-à-vis* the liberal international economic order to obtain a more holistic understanding of Beijing's systemic impact on the LIO. The chapter concludes by highlighting key trends in China's post-1989 attitude and behaviour *vis-à-vis* the LIO, and such trends are instrumental in the forecasting of the future of the liberal order and global governance outlined in Chapter 11.

Deng Xiaoping and the founding of a new Chinese foreign policy (1978–1993)

Deng Xiaoping is often regarded as the founder of China's economic modernisation. Upon assuming the leadership of the PRC in 1978, albeit without holding any official titles, Deng embarked on a mission to develop China economically.

Pursuing China's peaceful rise while maintaining Chinese values

Since 1978, the PRC's foreign policy has been informed by its economic reform programme (Zhao 1997, p. 114). Deng also opposed hegemony and worked towards reunification with Taiwan. However, the most important national interest was to pursue the PRC's economic development and modernisation, and this has been the quintessential goal informing the PRC's foreign policy from the 1980s onwards (Sofer 2012, p. 2). Successive CCP leaders and governments have posited economic development as the PRC's pre-eminent foreign policy goal. This demonstrates the enduring impact of Deng's conceptualisation of the PRC's national interest and its primacy in determining Beijing's foreign policy.

An important element of Deng's economic development drive was an emphasis on Chinese nationalism – achieving economic development with Chinese characteristics and on Chinese terms. To this end, Deng prioritised close political, economic and military relations with other countries in the Asia-Pacific region, viewing it as the PRC's strategic sphere of political and economic interests. In June 1989, the PRC government violently suppressed the Tiananmen Square demonstrations by students and workers who were

seeking democratic reforms. The Tiananmen demonstrations were a culmination of a four-year movement of students and workers who had advocated democratic reforms across China between 1985 and 1989 (Zhifei 2019, p. 1). The Tiananmen incident coincided and was partially inspired by the collapse of communism in Eastern Europe and the end of the Cold War, which gave hope of reform to pro-democratic Chinese groups. Beijing suppressed the pro-democracy demonstrations in order to avoid the same fate as Central and Eastern European communist regimes that had succumbed to democratic revolutions between 1988 and 1989 (Sarotte 2012, p. 161). Clearly, the Tiananmen crackdown was intended to send a message to the Chinese population that, despite events beyond China, the CCP would remain the supreme authority, and that Beijing would not embrace the democratic values of the LIO. It resulted in international economic sanctions against the PRC (Zhao 1997, p. 115).

The post-Tiananmen period and responses to the altered post-1989 international system

Deng also adopted market reforms in order to appease the reformists and pro-democracy groupings that had joined the Tiananmen protests. This was done in order to prevent the political instability that had erupted across Eastern Europe after 1989 (Cheng 1995, p. 7).

Additionally, Deng adopted an amended foreign policy doctrine that prioritised economic development and peaceful coexistence with the external world. This was also intended to attract foreign investment (Cheng 1995, p. 7). In particular, Beijing's post-1989 foreign policy focused on achieving economic modernisation by the middle of the 21st century and avoiding confrontations with Western states (Zhao 1997, p. 115). The commitment to maintaining peaceful coexistence with Western states continued despite Beijing's opposition to the West's hegemonic ambitions of imposing liberal systems and values on non-Western states.

Normalising relations with neighbours and contributing to peace and security in the Asia-Pacific region

To achieve its goal of economic modernisation and avoiding international isolation, Beijing pursued an Asia-oriented foreign policy. First, in 1990, the PRC normalised relations with Indonesia, which had severed its diplomatic ties with China in 1967 following the 1965 coup against the communist Indonesian regime. The post-1965 Indonesian military government had accused China of meddling in its domestic affairs (Sukma 2009, p. 591). Second, Beijing normalised relations with Vietnam in November 1991. Sino-

Vietnamese relations had been strained due to Vietnam's prioritisation of its relationship with the Soviet Union, which also had a complex relationship with China (Ang 2002, p. 1). In 1990, Beijing also established formal diplomatic relations with Singapore, which had been in an opposing bloc during the Cold War.

In the 1990s, Deng also set out to build better relations with Japan, a neighbour that had colonised China in the 1930s (Cheng 1995, p. 9). In 1992, the PRC contributed to the UN Transitional Authority in Cambodia (UNTAC), established by *UNSC Resolution 745 of 1992*, to restore stability, peace and security in that war-torn country (Zhao 1997, p. 123). The Cambodia conflict (1979–1991) was a struggle for power between the ruling Salvation Front communist government in the capital city of Phnom Penh and the Khmer Rouge insurgent group that ruled Cambodia between 1975 and 1979. The Khmer Rouge was a communist grouping. It had been ousted by the Salvation Front in 1979, and its war against the latter was supported by the PRC in the 1980s (Parliament of Australia 1991, p. 1).

In 1992–1993, following the Cambodia ceasefire of 1991, Cambodia was administered by the UNTAC. It also organised an election aimed at electing a new government which – despite ongoing violence – was held in May 1993 (Findlay 1995, pp. 81–82). UNTAC succeeded in restoring stability, peace and security in Cambodia. Therefore, by agreeing to its establishment via *UNSC Resolution 745*, Beijing had contributed towards the resolution of the Cambodian civil war. It is clear that Deng sought to establish a peaceful Asia-Pacific region that would be responsive to Chinese economic interests. In the process, his government also fulfilled its peace and security mandate as a permanent member of the UNSC by normalising relations with neighbouring states and assisting in the multilateral resolution of the Cambodian conflict. Thus one can conclude that, in this period, the PRC advanced the peace and security objectives of the liberal order in the Asia-Pacific region. In 1993, Jiang Zemin, General Secretary of the CCP since 1989, succeeded Deng as president of the PRC and effectively took over its leadership.

The foreign policy of the Jiang Zemin administration (1993–2003)

Under Jiang Zemin's leadership, the PRC continued its foreign policy of peaceful coexistence with the outside world. To this end, Beijing pursued closer relations with neighbouring states in Southeast Asia, Russia, and other states in Europe, Central Asia, Africa, and the Americas. For instance, Jiang visited the US in 1997 as part of the PRC's strategy of restoring China's image in Washington following the latter's dissatisfaction with the Tiananmen crackdown in June 1989 (Reuters 2009).

In October 2000, the Jiang administration founded the Forum on China–Africa Cooperation (FOCAC), intended to strengthen economic cooperation and trade relationships that meet the needs and interests of China and African states (Mackinnon 2013, p. 1). FOCAC was initiated as another instrument for advancing China's primary objective of economic development through peaceful means. It is a soft power mechanism that seeks to build economic and diplomatic relations between Beijing and states in Africa. Since its inception, FOCAC has led to the emergence of 12 areas of cooperation between Africa and China: agriculture, investment and enterprise cooperation; infrastructure; trade; finance; development assistance and debt relief; energy and natural resources; climate change; public health; education; poverty reduction; academia and think tanks (United Nations Development Programme 2015, p.2). In this context, the Forum provides an avenue for establishing and maintaining economic and political cooperation between the PRC and African countries. FOCAC can be regarded as China's own instrument for maintaining its politico-economic sphere of influence on this highly contested continent among the great powers.

In 2001, the PRC joined the WTO (Reuters 2009), another strategy aimed at achieving long-term economic development. China is a net exporter of goods and services, which means that the WTO trading regime favours the Chinese economy. China's accession to the WTO can also be interpreted as Beijing's integration into another institution of the LIO. This points to China's support for the Liberal International Economic Order. Through peaceful relations with the outside world and membership in FOCAC and the WTO, Jiang sought to ensure a favourable international environment to maintain China's average rate of growth of 9% per annum during Deng Xiaoping's rule (Institute of Developing Economies 2003, p. 38). Thus, one can conclude that Jiang continued with Deng's foreign policy of seeking peaceful relations and cooperation with states and multilateral institutions across the globe as a means of maintaining China's economic growth. Jiang's commitment to peaceful international relations was aligned with the LIO's commitment to world peace and security. Therefore, the PRC under Jiang shared the LIO's values of international peace and security.

At the 16th National Congress of the CCP in November 2002, Hu Jintao succeeded Jiang as general secretary of the ruling party. He assumed the presidency of the PRC in March 2003, making him the supreme leader of both the CCP and the PRC. The foreign policy of the Hu government had important consequences for the liberal order.

The foreign policy of the Hu Jintao administration (2003–2013)

Hu Jintao led China's shift towards an activist and assertive foreign policy in the first decade of the 21st century. This was a move away from the

low-profile, peace-seeking foreign policy adopted in 1978. The Hu government explained that this flowed from growing international calls for China to respond to issues affecting global development and stability (Zhao 2010, p. 364). China's shift towards an assertive foreign policy was also prompted by its rising power as a result of sustained economic development in the 1990s and 2000s, thereby granting Beijing hard power in international affairs. With rising power comes greater international responsibility. To demonstrate its shift towards an activist foreign policy, China's contribution to UN peacekeeping operations stood at 1,800 armed personnel and police in 2007. This made China the 13th largest contributor to UN peacekeeping operations in various localities across the world (Yahuda 2007, p. 340). This showed that China was assuming greater responsibility in international affairs in accordance with its UNSC mandate of safeguarding world peace and security.

Beijing's assertiveness and hard power in the international environment

The Hu government contributed to assertive multilateral efforts to safeguard world peace and security. In 2006 and 2009, Beijing joined the US and other great powers in condemning North Korea's nuclear weapons testing, despite China being a historical ally of Pyongyang. Similarly, in March 2007, China voted in favour of *UNSC Resolution 1747* (2007, p. 2), which tightened economic sanctions against Iran, particularly against arms trading to and from Iran. These sanctions were due to Tehran's failure to comply with prior UNSC nuclear disarmament resolutions (*UNSC Resolution 1747*, 2007, p. 1). China's participation in these decisive UNSC resolutions is another indicator of its move from passivity towards assertiveness, particularly on matters relating to regional and world peace and security.

China's policy towards Sudan

While on a state visit to Sudan in February 2007, Hu reportedly persuaded the government of Omar al-Bashir (former president of Sudan) to agree to a joint AU and UN peacekeeping force to help resolve the humanitarian crisis that had developed from the Darfur conflict. This conflict was initiated by Darfur rebel groups who mobilised against what they perceived as government oppression of non-Arab populations in the Darfur region (Large 2008, p. 93). China's proposal of a joint AU–UN peacekeeping force is said to have been motivated by Beijing's investments in Sudan, as well as Western pressure on China to take a stance on the Darfur conflict (Zhao 2010, p. 373). Irrespective of the reasons, China's bilateral proposal to Khartoum was a concerted effort to restore stability in Sudan and end the Darfur conflict. Thus, involvement in the affairs of another state was another

indication of China's move from non-intervention towards international activism, particularly on matters of interest to Beijing.

China's policy towards Somalia

In December 2008, Beijing agreed to *UNSC Resolution 1846* (2008, p. 3), which called for international action against pirates off the coast of Somalia. To this effect, Beijing deployed a naval force to the Somali coast as a counter-piracy initiative. This was another example of China's shift towards an activist foreign policy. Before Hu's presidency, Beijing had kept a low profile in world affairs, focusing instead on its domestic priorities (Zhao 2010, p. 358). While assertive, the deployment of the Chinese navy in Somalian waters was an implementation of the provisions of *UNSC Resolution 1846*, whose aim was to restore security and freedom of navigation for ships voyaging along the Somalian coast. Thus, China's naval deployment can be interpreted as support for actions proposed by the UNSC as a key institution of the LIO.

Using development aid to underline China's rising hard power and influence

Under Hu's presidency, the PRC provided economic aid to developing states across Africa, Asia and Latin America. According to Tjonneland (2020, p. 3), Chinese foreign aid has grown significantly since 2003. Between 2000 and 2007, Chinese infrastructure development aid to sub-Saharan African countries amounted to US$16 billion. This was not based on political conditions and was also extended to states regarded as 'rogue' by financial institutions of the LIO and the Global North (Berthelemy 2011, p. 7). The 'rogue' states are authoritarian regimes described as repressive by the Global North, such as the Republic of Côte d'Ivoire under Gbagbo and Zimbabwe under Robert Mugabe (Aidi 2018, p. 1). Therefore, one can conclude that the Hu administration's economic aid was an alternative to the aid offered by Western states and financial institutions such as the IMF and World Bank.

The disbursement of aid represents hard power for Beijing, cultivated after many years of sustained economic growth and development. Beijing's aid diplomacy is yet another example of China's activism in international affairs. Chinese development aid to the Global South has given rise to the 'Beijing Consensus', in terms of which trade and investments between China and African, Asian, and Latin American states have grown exponentially without China imposing policy prescriptions on their governments (Galchu 2018, p. 5).

China's development assistance and trade model in respect of the Global South is an alternative to the 'Washington Consensus'. This term denotes

the use of aid by liberal IFIs (notably the IMF and World Bank) to compel states of the Global South to adopt liberal political and economic reforms (Galchu 2018, p. 2). Through its alternative model of foreign aid, Beijing has cultivated closer ties with the Global South, which has resulted in China being a primary trade partner of the developing world, particularly since 2003. China's transformation as a major trading partner and provider of development aid to the Global South began under Hu's presidency.

Another example of Beijing's new-found assertiveness came during the 2009 global financial crisis when the Chinese Central Bank proposed replacing the US dollar as the international reserve currency (Zhao 2010, p. 358). Such an apparent challenge to the supremacy of the US dollar was equivalent to challenging Washington's leadership of the global financial system and economy, signalling Beijing's willingness to challenge the incumbent hegemon.

China's assertiveness in the Asia-Pacific region

Historically, the Asia-Pacific region is a key Chinese sphere of interest and influence. Indeed, tensions and wars arose with Taiwan in the 1950s and 1960s, India in 1962, the Soviet Union in 1969, and Vietnam in 1979. Since the adoption of Deng's peaceful coexistence doctrine in the 1980s, China has sought peaceful relations with its Asia-Pacific neighbours. This was important at a time when China's military and economic capabilities were growing. Deng's strategic thinking was that a peacefully rising regional power would be well received by other Asia-Pacific states, as opposed to a hostile rising power that could create regional instability (Shirk 1994, pp. 8–9; Zhao 2010, p. 374). Insecurity about China's rising power has been prevalent among states which have experienced border or maritime tensions with China, particularly those situated in the contested South China Sea, such as Vietnam, Brunei, Malaysia and the Philippines.

The Hu administration was assertive about China's long-held territorial and sovereignty claims in the South China Sea and used military force in some instances to punctuate these claims. The South China Sea is said to possess unexplored oil and natural gas deposits and facilitates trade worth about US$5 trillion a year (*Jakarta Post* 2023). China, Brunei, Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Taiwan (Beijing views Taiwan as its territory in any case) and Vietnam all claim to have territorial rights over these potential resources in the South China Sea. Such claims have caused enduring tensions among the Asia-Pacific states. These territorial claims date back to the 1970s and remain unresolved, with all the aforementioned states claiming sovereignty of the South China Sea islands and waters where the oil and natural gas are said to be located, and through which lucrative goods are transported (Center for Preventive Action 2018).

Hu's trade diplomacy in the Asia-Pacific

Despite the South China Sea disputes, China's sustained economic growth in the 2000s made it an engine of economic growth for the Asia-Pacific region. The Hu regime set out to build strategic economic relations with neighbouring states while reassuring them that Beijing would settle the South China Sea disputes through regional consultations (Zhao 2010, p. 375). In particular, the Hu administration signed preferential free trade agreements with the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), whose members included Indonesia, Thailand, Malaysia, Singapore, Vietnam, Myanmar, Cambodia, Brunei and Laos (Zhu 2008, p. 12; ASEAN 2015, p. 3). Many of those countries are embroiled in the South China Sea claims and disputes with China, thus affirming Beijing's strategy to ease the disputes through trade diplomacy. The trade diplomacy of the Hu administration managed to transform the ASEAN into a key Chinese trading partner, moving it away from its previous anti-China stance. ASEAN's anti-Beijing stance resulted from South China Sea disputes and general insecurity about the economic rise of Beijing among ASEAN member states (Zhao 2010, p. 375).

Under Hu's administration, Sino–Japanese relations entered a period of détente. This easing of diplomatic relations was precipitated by a notable growth in trade and investment between China and Japan in the early to mid-2000s. The economic interdependence of Beijing and Tokyo can be partly attributed to Hu's trade diplomacy in the Asia-Pacific, whose strategic aim was to create a favourable regional environment for Chinese economic growth. The improved Sino–Japanese relationship was punctuated by Hu's state visit to Japan in May 2008 (Chanlett-Avery, Dumbaugh & Cooper 2008, p. 1). The cordial Beijing–Tokyo relationship under Hu's leadership is notable, given the historically turbulent relationship between these East Asian neighbours dating back to the Japanese occupation of Manchuria in 1931 and the 1937 decision to colonise all of China (Kingston 2017). Having improved relations with Japan, it can be argued that Hu's trade diplomacy in the Asia-Pacific succeeded in mending China's relations with its neighbours, who are historically wary of Beijing. Therefore, this was a successful foreign policy that ensured relative peace and security in East and Southeast Asia.

Challenging the United States of America's hegemony in the international environment

The Hu administration formed strategic partnerships to counterbalance US hegemony in the international environment. This attempt to promote multipolarity was an indirect and peaceful means of challenging a unipolar

concentration of global power. In order to promote a multipolar distribution of power, Beijing built strategic bilateral and multilateral relationships with all the great powers, regional powers and regional blocs. For instance, China cultivated relations with Russia, France, the US, the UK, ASEAN, the EU, South Africa, Canada, Brazil, India, Mexico and Japan. In all instances, China emphasised common interests with the hope that they would nullify differences in ideological and political systems (Zhao 2010, p. 368).

The formalisation of the BRICS bloc of emerging economies is one of the international instruments through which the Hu administration sought to promote multipolarity in the international system. Since 2009, BRICS has become a formal regional political and economic organisation through which its constituent members have sought to create an alternative pathway to development for developing countries in the Global South. Specifically, it seeks to provide alternative sources of financial and technical development assistance to the Global South, with minimal policy prescriptions for developing states (European Parliament 2012, p. 4). China's co-founding of and participation in BRICS aligns with its foreign policy goal of creating multiple sites of global political and economic power, in order to prevent the concentration of global power in the US and the economic institutions of the LIO. This can be construed as a democratisation of global economic governance.

Conclusions about Hu Jintao's foreign policy

Under Hu Jintao's leadership, the PRC adopted a more assertive foreign policy that included support for UNSC resolutions on military intervention in Somalia and Sudan, as well as efforts to contain Iran's nuclear armament programme. China's support for these UNSC resolutions was a victory for the UNSC, as this enabled it to respond to pressing global security crises. Thus, China's activism bolstered the capacity of the LIO to constrain the nuclear programmes of Iran and North Korea and respond to the Darfur conflict and the piracy issue in Sudan and Somalia.

Beijing also became more assertive by remaining steadfast in its South China Sea territorial claims. However, the Hu administration adopted a nuanced approach to managing the Asia-Pacific region by strategically strengthening economic and trade relations with its regional neighbours despite the South China Sea disputes. Close economic ties with ASEAN ensured that the Asia-Pacific region remained receptive and responsive to Chinese economic interests. Strengthened economic relations with the Asia-Pacific region contributed to China's sustained economic growth and progress towards realising its long-term objective of economic development and modernisation.

Another important pillar of Hu's administration was to counterbalance US hegemony by forging ties with regional powers across the globe, in order to

ensure a multipolar distribution of political and economic power. China's co-founding of the BRICS bloc was a major strategic decision which promised to introduce multipolarity into global political and economic governance. At the 18th National Congress of the CCP in November 2012, Xi Jinping replaced Hu as general secretary and assumed the presidency of the PRC in 2013.

The foreign policy of the Xi Jinping administration (2013–)

Xi Jinping is still in power. Given China's position as a P5 member and emerging hegemon in this 21st century, the foreign policy posture and actions of his administration have had major consequences for the LIO and global governance.

Xi's Jinping's policy towards the South China Sea

Xi Jinping has continued Hu Jintao's assertive foreign policy. His administration has demonstrated its assertiveness by constructing military bases in the South China Sea, which has perpetuated the tensions and conflict between Beijing and its neighbouring states in Southeast Asia dating back to the 1970s (Kawashima 2019, p. 123).

The Belt and Road Initiative: An alternative global financial and trading order?

Upon ascending to the Chinese presidency in 2013, Xi called for a new model of international relations based on a principle of 'win-win' cooperation, global peace and development. To initiate this new model of international relations, the Xi government established the One Belt, One Road Initiative in September 2013, which has since been renamed the BRI. The BRI is an ambitious global infrastructure investment and development project spanning Asia, Africa, Europe, the Middle East and the Americas. It seeks to build road, rail and ocean infrastructure that will stimulate China-led global trade (Kawashima 2019, p. 123).

Beijing finances these infrastructure projects mainly through its state-owned banks and its sovereign wealth fund. The BRI is also partly funded by the World Bank; the Asian Development Bank (ADB), in which China, Japan and the US are major shareholders; the China-initiated Asia Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB); and the NDB, formed by BRICS member states in 2014 (Lee 2020). Given its diverse funding sources, the BRI enjoys a high level of global legitimacy.

At the Third Belt and Road Forum on International Cooperation held in Beijing in October 2023, Xi Jinping declared that more than 150 nation-

states and 30 international organisations had signed up for the BRI (Belt and Road Forum 2023). It seems clear that the BRI is China's tool for expanding its geopolitical political influence and economic strength. Given its provision of infrastructure development finance and promotion of trade among member nations, the BRI has the potential to make China the undisputed hegemon of the 21st century. Through the BRI, China has become an alternative source of development finance for the Global South, a role previously dominated by the IMF, the World Bank and other IFIs of the LIO.

According to the OECD (2018, p. 3) China is also securing trade partnerships with states that are part of the BRI, which means that Beijing is creating an alternative international trading system underpinned by Chinese terms and conditions. Indeed, McBride et al. (2020) describe the BRI as China's attempt to assert its position as a potential leader of the global economy. The BRI certainly has the potential to create an alternative Sino-centred international trade system in parallel with the WTO's international free trade regime, which faces various challenges from the protectionist policies of member states as well as regional trade agreements. The BRI could capitalise on those challenges and inconsistencies. Through the BRI, therefore, Beijing is accruing significant economic and political hard power.

Infrastructure development has the capacity to facilitate and stimulate economic activity and trade. From this perspective, China's BRI can be interpreted as a potential pathway to economic development for developing economies. This is particularly true for those developing states that are unable to meet the political and economic conditions attached to the financing offered by the World Bank and IMF. From this perspective, the BRI can be interpreted as an alternative financial, trade and economic order to the more established Liberal International Economic Order.

China's policy towards BRICS+

BRICS and its expansion in 2023 have received global attention due to their potential as an alternative to the LIO. The LIO has not experienced any significant challenge to its monopoly on global governance since the collapse of the Moscow-led communist order in the 1980s. However, this situation is changing rapidly. Formed in 2009, BRIC originally consisted of Brazil, Russia, India and China. In 2010, it was joined by South Africa, and the grouping became BRICS. In August 2023, at the 15th BRICS Summit held in Johannesburg, South Africa, the South African president, Cyril Ramaphosa, announced that six emerging market group countries (Argentina, Egypt, Ethiopia, Iran, Saudi Arabia, and the United Arab Emirates) had been invited to join the bloc. Even though Argentina later

withdrew its application, the other five invited countries have confirmed membership of the BRICS+ bloc. The expanded membership of what is now known as BRICS+ became effective on 1 January 2024. The grouping has, therefore, grown significantly in geographic scope and representation.

Speaking at the 15th BRICS Summit, Xi Jinping declared that the BRICS+ expansion represented a commitment by the bloc to strengthen political and economic cooperation and unity among developing countries and to meet their collective development, peace, and security interests (PRC Ministry of Foreign Affairs 2023).

These remarks indicate that Beijing views BRICS+ as a conduit for enhancing cooperation in the Global South in order to bring about mutual development and ensure the peace and security of the developing world. It also shows that Beijing under Xi Jinping is continuing with Beijing's 21st-century assertiveness, positioning the BRICS as an alternative international order for facilitating the social, economic and political well-being of developing nations.

The countries of the Global South have been members of the liberal political and economic order since its inception, yet the development gap between them and the Global North has largely remained unchanged. In positioning the BRICS+ as a vehicle for South-South political and development cooperation, China has created yet another mechanism through which it can institutionalise its seemingly inevitable hegemony.

BRICS+ now has a footprint in Africa, Asia, Latin America and the Middle East, the major regions of the Global South. Significantly, the BRICS expansion has ignited discourse about a possible BRICS+ currency. To make this a reality, BRICS+ would either need to establish a new institution to establish and manage the new currency or augment the mandate and structure of the New Development Bank (the BRICS+ bank) to enable it to do so. This will be explored further in the scenario-building exercise in Chapter 11.

BRICS+ members dominate the global production and trade system; have proven military capabilities; possess vital natural resources (natural gas, crude oil and minerals); and play a major and growing role in international finance (i.e., via the BRI and other Global South IFIs). However, they have not withdrawn from LIO institutions and can use BRICS+ as a bargaining tool to advocate reforms of those institutions in order to make it more responsive to the development, peace and security needs of the Global South. Beijing has clearly played a major role in strategically positioning BRICS+ in this way and must be aware of its potential advantages. The establishment of BRICS+ is a major independent variable for the scenario-building exercise in Chapter 11.

China's stance on the current peace and security crises

As an emerging hegemon, China's position on current threats to world peace and security has an important bearing on the world order and its future. An examination follows of China's stance on the current wars in Eastern Europe and the Middle East, both flashpoints that could trigger major international conflicts.

China's stance on the Russian invasion of Ukraine

Beijing has stressed the need for Russia and Ukraine, as well as other actors in the international system, to resolve the security concerns of both countries and end the 'Ukraine crisis'. It has consistently emphasised the importance of recognising the sovereignty of all states, whether weak or strong. Moreover, it has spoken out against the expansion of military blocs that threaten the security of non-members, particularly those reflecting Cold War politics (i.e., a reference to NATO). Moreover, Beijing has urged European states to build a collective defence mechanism that ensures the security of the region while leaving no state in the region in a state of insecurity (PRC Ministry of Foreign Affairs 2023). This amounts to a balanced proposal for re-establishing peace between these two Eastern European neighbours. China has called for Ukraine's sovereignty to be respected but also for Russia's security concerns about Kyiv's possible admission to NATO to be recognised. Beijing's stance is also consistent with the 2014 and 2015 ceasefire agreements between Ukraine and the pro-Russia separatist cities of Luhansk and Donetsk, known as the *Minsk Agreements* (I and II) brokered in Minsk, Belarus. Among others, the agreements mandated the OSCE to oversee the ceasefires.

Another important condition of the *Minsk Agreement* was the withdrawal of any foreign military formations and equipment, with Kyiv also granting semi-autonomy to Luhansk and Donetsk (*Al Jazeera* 2022). Kiev, the separatist regions, and Russia violated the terms of the Minsk Agreements, thereby leading to the invasion of Ukraine. Significantly, Beijing's stance and peace plan for the conflict have been aligned with an existing ceasefire framework (*Minsk Agreements*).

In emphasising the need for a peaceful resolution of the war in Ukraine, Beijing has shouldered its responsibility to promote global peace and security. Importantly, Beijing has championed the security interests of both warring states (Russia and Ukraine), while also urging external drivers of the conflict (NATO) to desist from reverting to Cold War politics. This would entail using Ukraine to heighten the insecurity of Russia, a nation that has vivid memories of NATO – a Cold War military bloc formed to challenge Moscow's historical influence and power in Eastern Europe.

The effects of the war have been far-reaching. Besides the loss of life, Ukraine has suffered damage to public and private property, and infrastructure, the large-scale displacement of citizens, and the disruption of its economy. Besides the loss of life of Russian soldiers, Russia has attracted increasing sanctions from the EU and the US, which is weakening its economy. The war has also polarised the world into pro-Ukraine and pro-Russia camps, and – given the direct and/or indirect participation of the EU, NATO and the US – continues to be a potential flashpoint of Great Power warfare. In the meantime, Russia and China issued a joint declaration of a 'no-limits' friendship during a state visit by XI Jinping to Russia in March 2023 (Sanjinez, Huang & London 2023). Xi reportedly told Putin that 'change is coming that has not happened in 100 years, and we are driving this change together' (Bachulska & Leonard 2023). Such a statement, along with the no-limits friendship, can be construed as Beijing's conviction that an alternative international order is taking shape that would be jointly led by China and Russia, replacing the 79-year-old liberal order that is increasingly being fragmented. As such, the Russia–Ukraine War and its dynamics and outcomes are key independent variables informing the scenarios in Chapter 11.

China's stance on the Hamas–Israel–Palestine crisis

The war between Israel and Hamas in the Palestinian territory of Gaza is another challenge to global peace and security. As an emerging hegemon and permanent member of the UNSC, China has inevitably proffered a policy position. During a visit to Egypt in January 2024, China's Minister of Foreign Affairs, Wang Yi, called for a ceasefire in the Gaza Strip and the creation of an independent Palestinian state constituted by territories as per the borders prior to the 1967 Six Day War[11], with east Jerusalem as its capital (*Agence France-Presse* 2023).

The causes of the Israel–Hamas–Palestine War that was reignited in October 2023 have been extensively discussed in Chapter 5. China's proposed resolution of the conflict could establish lasting peace. Fundamentally, the war between Israel and the Palestinian people is premised on territorial dispossession and can only be resolved by establishing an independent Palestinian state with full membership at the UN and other global and regional institutions.

The war between Israeli and Palestinian armed groups (and increasingly involving ordinary Palestinians in Gaza) has once more divided the world

11. See a depiction of China's proposal for a Palestinian state as per the 1949–1967 borders at https://medium.com/@thatpushback/is-this-the-end-of-palestine-israel-vs-palestine-01ad95f2429d.

into rival blocs. With respect to the war in Ukraine, the UNSC is paralysed because Israel is supported by the US, UK and EU, and any potentially constructive *UNSC Resolution* would be vetoed. Given the paralysis of the UNSC and the partisan participation of its Western members in the conflict, this is another war with the potential to be regionalised (which has happened in previous iterations of the broader Arab–Israeli conflict). Given the interests of the great powers in the region, a war in the Middle East could also trigger a global conflict. Therefore, this Middle Eastern impasse is another key factor informing the scenarios in Chapter 11.

China's attitude towards the Liberal International Economic Order

Like Russia, China has had a volatile relationship with the Liberal International Economic Order and only fully immersed itself in the IFIs and trade institutions anchoring this economic order in the 21st century.

China's policy towards the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund

China joined the IMF and World Bank in 1980. Since the start of the 21st century, China has become the third largest shareholder in the IMF, with a voting share of about 6% (Subacchi 2022, p. 4). This makes Beijing a key contributor to and decision-maker in this IFI, which is responsible for managing the global monetary and finance systems and acts as a creditor of last resort to countries with cash flow problems. China has also become the third-largest financial contributor to and shareholder in the World Bank, with a 6.1% shareholding and voting share (Humphrey & Chen 2021, p. 9). This gives Beijing important influence over the Bank's lending decisions and policies, thereby indirectly influencing the development trajectory of borrowing member nations. Equally importantly, China has become the second-largest borrower of World Bank funds, making the latter an important source of development finance for Beijing in its efforts to modernise its economy and society and improve the lives of its billions of citizens. China has, however, criticised the World Bank for not allocating sufficient credit for infrastructure development projects to its member countries (Subacchi 2022, p. 5).

Despite only joining these two Bretton Woods institutions in 1980, China has become a major shareholder in and borrower from both. These makes China an important stakeholder in the liberal international monetary and finance systems that have created an interdependent global economy. Therefore, one can conclude that Beijing has contributed to the globalisation of the Liberal International Economic Order, while also being a

significant beneficiary. However, it has also ventured beyond the confines of the Bretton Woods institutions in a bid to produce IFIs that are more responsive to the development contexts and needs of developing economies.

China's stance on the World Trade Organization

When Beijing joined the WTO in 2001, it was the sixth-largest exporter of goods in the global economy. In 2014, it became the biggest, surpassing the EU bloc. Clearly, WTO membership assisted China in reaching this position. Some countries and regional economic organisations have accused Beijing of violating the rules of the international free trade regime. They argue, *inter alia*, that Chinese state subsidies to state-owned companies have created artificial comparative advantages and that Chinese corporations violate intellectual property rights (Sapir & Marvoidis 2021).

In March 2018, the US government imposed tariffs on various Chinese imports as a means of compelling Beijing to adhere to the WTO trade regime. It alleged that the Xi administration was undermining free trade by imposing trade restrictions on other countries' exports, restricting foreign investment in China, and devaluing the Chinese currency and that China was violating the intellectual property rights of US technological companies (Carvalho, Azevedo & Massuquetti 2019, p. 1).

The Trump administration claimed that these unfair trade and monetary policies worsened the US trade balance and threatened its economy. Following the US imposition of tariffs on Chinese goods (primarily steel and aluminium products), Beijing retaliated by imposing tariffs on various US imports in April 2018 (Jain & Saraswat 2019, p. 1). Between 2018 and 2019, both countries kept on raising tariffs in a process that became known as the US–China trade war. By engaging in open economic warfare with Washington, the Xi administration demonstrated a more assertive foreign policy. This was a departure from the Deng Xiaoping and Jiang Zemin eras when Chinese foreign policy was based on the principle of peaceful coexistence with the outside world.

In September 2020, the WTO ruled that the US government's allegations of unfair trade policies were unfounded and that the trade war between the US and China violated WTO rules (BBC 2020). Formally, as a member of the WTO, China should have lodged a complaint against the US, instead of resorting to a trade war that threatened the liberal trading system. From a Realist perspective, however, it was within its rights to protect its economy by imposing reciprocal tariffs on US goods. Specifically, it has a duty to safeguard and defend the economic interests of 1.4 billion Chinese citizens. Therefore, it can be said that China disregarded the WTO trade regime in defence of its national economy. Regardless of the current challenges, the WTO has clearly helped China become the largest producer and exporter

of goods in the global economy. However, the BRI provides China with an alternative trade order that could provide it with an economic safety net. Such diversification of trade advantages is important given the allegations levelled against China within the WTO international free trade system.

Conclusion: Trends in China's attitude towards the Liberal International Order

China's attitude towards the LIO can be described as balanced. On the one hand, it continues to be a member of the UNSC, the apex UN organ that safeguards world peace and security. Its support for key UNSC resolutions and participation in peacekeeping missions across the globe contribute to world peace and security, which are fundamental values and goals of the liberal order. However, China has also contributed to the UNSC's inability to respond to conflicts that threaten world peace and security.

China's pursuit of economic development and modernisation since the 1980s has relied on systematic and strategic manoeuvres, which could be described as Realist. For instance, Beijing's territorial claims in the South China Sea are a source of regional instability and potential conflict with neighbouring states. Like its neighbours, China is claiming waters in the South China Sea in an effort to claim its potential oil resources and control the lucrative South China Sea transport route. Thus, economic interests – a key determinant of foreign policy according to the Realist theory of IR – are a driving force behind China's actions in the South China Sea.

Balance of power politics has also defined China's post-1989 foreign policy, particularly in the 2000s. Having risen to become the second-largest economy in the world, Chinese foreign policy in the 21st century has sought to counterbalance US hegemony by promoting a multipolar distribution of global political and economic power. To this end, China's significant contribution towards the founding and expansion of the BRICS+, Global South IFIs and the BRI can be interpreted as efforts to create a multipolar world with a devolution of global political and economic governance. The BRI seems to be a great leap towards assuming the mantle of global hegemon and creating an alternative financial and trade order. Despite this, China remains a major shareholder in the IMF and World Bank and a member of the WTO. It also benefits economically from the Liberal International Economic Order, which has helped it to become the world's second-largest economy. Of course, Beijing's participation in this order has occasionally brought it into conflict with the liberal great powers, as discussed previously in this chapter. All these dimensions of Chinese foreign policy towards the LIO are key factors informing the scenarios in the ensuing chapter.

Chapter 11

The future of the Liberal International Order and global governance in the 21st century and beyond

Introduction

This chapter seeks to forecast the future of the LIO and global governance in the 21st century by means of four scenarios. The rationale for this scenario-building exercise is uncertainty about the future of the LIO, as well as that of global governance. The five scenario-building methods outlined in Chapter 4 are used to construct a series of scenarios playing out the future of the LIO and global governance in the rest of this century and to determine which of those scenarios are the most likely to materialise. These five methods are trend analysis and extrapolation, trend impact analysis, systematic-formalised scenario techniques, creative-narrative scenario-building, and CIA. As described in Chapter 4, they follow similar steps (algorithms) when forecasting future events and processes. The first four methods are utilised to build four scenarios. CIA is then used to determine which of those four scenarios is the most likely to be realised.

The scenarios are based on the post-1989 foreign policies and conduct of the US, UK, France, China and Russia, and their individual and collective impacts on the functionality, responsiveness, and sustainability of the LIO.

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The foreign policies of the P5 since 1989 and their impacts on the LIO have been examined in Chapters 6–10. Further factors informing the scenarios include lessons from past international orders (Chapter 5) and insights from Realism and Liberalism about state behaviour in the international order (Chapter 2).

Liberal institutionalism (a sub-school of Realism) and *Power Transition Theory* (a sub-school of structural realism) are particularly useful for explaining incidents of international order and international conflict as well as dramatic change and, therefore, provide relevant insights into determining independent variables for the scenario-building process. The liberalism and realism sub-schools possess explanatory, prescriptive and forecasting qualities that benefit the ensuing scenarios about the future of the liberal order, global governance and the global political economy. The author's own intuition as a foreign policy and political economy expert has also provided useful insights for some of the scenarios.

As noted in Chapter 4, the factors (or drivers) selected to play a decisive role in a given scenario are known as *independent variables*, and the outcomes – in other words, the scenarios themselves – as the *dependent variables*. The relationship between the independent variables (i.e., the influencing factors or drivers) and the dependent variables (i.e., the scenarios) is commonly referred to as a *cause-effect relationship*.

Scenario One: *Běijīng shíkè* (the Beijing moment)

Trend analysis and extrapolation are used to construct this scenario in which China formally establishes an alternative economic, financial and political order, which rivals and then overthrows the LIO by 2050. Key independent variables are China's post-1989 international conduct and its impact on the LIO (Chapter 10), interpreted in terms of *power transition theory* (see Chapter 2) and lessons from previous international orders (Chapter 5), and using the FPA analytical framework (Chapter 3). The following section describes the independent variables that are likely to drive the new international order under Chinese leadership by 2050.

The independent variables driving this scenario

The US–China trade war points to an approaching power equilibrium between these two nation-states. As noted in Chapter 5, new international orders emerge when a new hegemon usurps the power of a declining hegemon. For instance, the US designed both the League of Nations order (1920–1939) and the LIO (1945–) by virtue of having led the winning coalitions in both world wars. It was able to construct these orders because

it had replaced the UK as the global hegemon after WWI. Power transition theory has played a role in identifying this independent variable.

The second independent variable is the fact that the 79-year-old LIO is displaying signs of paralysis and incapacity, particularly when faced with the challenge of preventing, managing, or resolving pressing threats to regional and international peace and security.

Key failures of the UNSC in the new millennium include its failure to prevent the invasion of Iraq, which resulted in an ISIS regime; its failure to prevent the invasion of Afghanistan, which ended with a victory for the Taliban; the mismanagement of the Arab Spring (i.e., Libya and Syria); the failure to implement the *UN General Assembly's Resolution 181 of 1947*, which provides for a two-state solution for Israel and Palestine; and its failure to prevent the Scramble for Africa 2.0 in which the US, France, Russia and China all appear to be wrestling for control over Africa with its immense natural resources. All these failures by the LIO are push factors that may persuade the affected regions to 'start afresh' in a newly configured international order led by Beijing.

The third independent variable is Beijing's rapidly growing military, economic and diplomatic power. China boasts the second-largest economy in the world, trailing the US economy by only US$9 billion in 2024 (Forbes India 2024). However, its gross domestic product (GDP) per capita is still low relative to those of the other 10 biggest economies. Furthermore, China has the largest navy in the world and also has advanced modern weaponry (Office of the Secretary of Defence 2020, p. ii). Its global power is manifested by the gradual entrenchment and expansion of a Beijing-led global order underpinned by the BRICS+ bloc, FOCAC and the BRI (as per Chapter 10). Indeed, BRICS+ is becoming increasingly institutionalised through the NDB, and FOCAC could be replicated in other geopolitical regions. Likewise, the financial institutions on which the BRI is based, such as the AIIB, have regional legitimacy that can transform into a Beijing-led international financial order. Therefore, China's global power is supplemented by existing diplomatic, economic, financial and cultural institutions, which could serve as pillars of an alternative international order. These institutions already function in parallel to the established economic and financial institutions of the LIO. If one follows this trend of Beijing-initiated institutions, it is plausible to argue that as China reaches power parity with the US, it could decide to position these institutions as the basis of a new world order based on alternative Chinese foreign policy values of international cooperation and mutual development, as expressed during the presidencies of Hu Jintao and Xi Jinping.

It is unlikely that China would strictly impose communist ideology on such an alternative order, meaning that capitalism and free trade could

continue within this new order. This is because Beijing has adopted an established principle of applying communism at home while operating as a capitalist entity abroad. Furthermore, China's global legitimacy as an emerging hegemon has partly been built on the concept of South-South cooperation. Therefore, it is plausible that the Global South values of equitable and just development could be positioned as some of the foundational values of such a Beijing-led order. BRICS+ and the BRI are certainly operating on this model, as noted in Chapter 10. Thus far, Scenario One projects that the Beijing-led intergovernmental and international financial institutions are likely to mature into an alternative Chinese-led international order. One can argue that the roots of this order already exist, as represented by Beijing-led institutions and forums such as BRICS+, the NDB, the AIIB and FOCAC. Should China reach economic, military and political power parity with the US, Beijing is likely to declare these institutions as pillars of an alternative international order (not a parallel or coexisting one), underpinned by values of South-South cooperation as well as equitable and just development.

The trade war between Beijing and Washington effectively violates WTO rules and illustrates China's willingness to forsake the rules of the liberal order when its interests are threatened – even by the incumbent superpower. Therefore, China has reached a point of hegemonic maturity, supported by assertive and effective statecraft. As mentioned previously, Beijing has built significant diplomatic power through FOCAC, BRICS+, Chinese-led financial institutions and the BRI. These Beijing-led institutions have international legitimacy because many countries benefit from them. If China were to see no value in remaining a member of institutions of the LIO (i.e., the UN and perhaps the IMF and World Bank (which Beijing only joined in the 1970s and 1980s, respectively), as well as the WTO (which China only joined in 2000), it would probably secede, in concert with numerous countries that are now members of the parallel Beijing order. These members include African states that participate in FOCAC summits, BRICS+ member states, and Middle Eastern, Asian and Latin American states that have joined the BRI. Therefore, China already wields global power, as do the international economic and political institutions created by Beijing.

China's possible secession from the LIO will not necessarily occur through armed warfare with the liberal great powers (the US, UK, France and the EU). It would probably be a diplomatic exit in the mould of the UK's secession from the EU. This would negatively affect the LIO, particularly the liberal economic and financial order, as China is a prime contributor to the IMF and a major shareholder in the World Bank (as per Chapter 9). Therefore, it is plausible that if China were to withdraw from the IMF, World Bank and the WTO and trigger similar withdrawals by its allies (members of FOCAC, BRI and other trading allies), the Liberal

Economic and Financial Order could forfeit global economic governance to the alternative Beijing order.

Losing China's contributions and repayments would reduce the financing capacity of the IMF and World Bank, thereby reducing their monopoly and capacity to stimulate and manage the global economy. Moreover, the possibility of gradual secessions by developing countries and their integration into an alternative Beijing-led financial order would mean a loss of revenue for the IMF and a loss of clients and revenue for the World Bank. This would further erode the LIO's self-sufficiency, sustainability and functionality.

Given China's significant involvement and participation in the financial institutions of the Liberal International Economic Order, it is unlikely that Beijing will secede in the short and medium term (i.e., during the next 20 years). However, the rapid emergence of the BRI and NDB, and China itself, as financiers of infrastructural and general economic development projects in the Global South, does not eliminate the possibility that China may secede from the LIO at any point, should it deem this necessary. Moreover, China and its affiliated financial institutions are increasingly seen as a vehicle for the development of the Global South. The Beijing order is free of the history of criticism often levelled against the World Bank and IMF as having failed the developing world through imperialist policy prescriptions that do not recognise the varied development contexts of the Global South. Therefore, the Beijing order has a viable market and may usurp the liberal financial and economic order.

Should China withdraw from the IMF and World Bank, it would probably leave the WTO as well. While China benefits from the WTO's trading regime, the diplomatic power it has accumulated enables Beijing to negotiate favourable bilateral trade agreements outside WTO structures. Given its export-oriented economy, the free trade rules and agreements of the WTO trade regime have certainly contributed to China's substantive economic growth (Boden 2012, p. 13). However, the emerging Beijing-led international order could replicate the WTO's international free trade regime. BRICS+, the BRI and FOCAC create an institutional architecture from which China could create a quasi-WTO institution.

As articulated in Chapters 1, 2 and 5, the UN is the anchor of the LIO. Its standing mandate of safeguarding world peace and security naturally aligns with China's long-term vision of economic modernisation and development. A war-torn world hampers international trade and impedes Beijing's economic growth and development. The BRICS+ bloc has not reached the level of organisation it needs to function as an effective peace and security mechanism. Despite its limitations, the UNSC and other UN organs and agencies possess global legitimacy and have succeeded in

some respects in maintaining international peace and security. In particular, the UNSC has managed to avoid direct armed conflict between the P5 since 1945.

As a rational actor, China is unlikely to vacate its permanent seat at the UNSC or to secede from the UN and its cross-sectoral agencies in the interim (i.e., before 2049 – its economic modernisation deadline). The FPA in respect of China since the 1980s in Chapter 10 has demonstrated that Beijing's actions are primarily determined by its domestic needs to ensure economic security for Chinese citizens. The UN creates a relatively stable international environment that has enabled the Chinese economy to reach high levels of economic growth, thereby improving the lives of its sizeable population. Therefore, should Beijing withdraw from the UN in the medium term, the LIO is unlikely to disintegrate entirely. The proliferation of international terrorism, the COVID-19 global health pandemic and perpetual poverty are global issues that position the UN and its agencies as essential mechanisms of global governance.

The value of international institutions resides in their capacity to coordinate those states seeking to cooperate and to find common solutions to global issues, as per the theory of Liberal Institutionalism (see Chapter 2). However, China is only likely to remain a member of the UN and the UNSC if no war erupts between the P5. By contrast, the current decade is proving to be volatile, with the great powers on opposing sides of major international crises (NATO's expansion in Eastern Europe, the Palestine question, purported terrorism in the Middle East, and the reunification of China and Taiwan). Any outbreak of war would necessarily result in the redundancy and collapse of the UN.

The UN network remains a primary forum that facilitates multilateral cooperation and agency in response to 21st-century socioeconomic challenges. As a rational actor, China is not oblivious to the utility of the UN network in coordinating multilateral action in response to the complex peace and security challenges of this millennium.

China's assertive military activity near Taiwan and the move to integrate Hong Kong into the authoritarian political system of mainland China are potential sources of armed conflict between Beijing and the liberal world (US, UK and the EU). The West has already warned China against meddling in Taiwan and has raised commensurate sanctions in this regard (Su 2021). China historically views Taiwan as part of its territory (along with Hong Kong and Macau). Under Xi's assertive leadership, Beijing is seeking to integrate those territories into mainland China.

Unlike Hong Kong and Macau (which are special administrative regions of China), Taiwan is an independent democratic state which broke away after the 1949 communist revolution. Should China forcefully annex Taiwan

(a US ally), war may break out between Beijing (and allies such as Russia) on the one hand and the democratic great powers and their associated military blocs on the other. While Taiwan would trigger this war, the underlying causes could include the attempt by the West (primarily Washington) to halt China's ascent to global leadership.

China's rise to global supremacy would represent a triumph of authoritarianism over democracy, and this clash of values and political systems is a sufficient source of Great Power conflict. Given that some of the great powers have accumulated chemical, biological and nuclear weapons, this war would be far deadlier than previous international wars. Such a Great Power war would certainly lead to the dissolution of the UN and the entire LIO.

Notwithstanding the possibility of conflict over Taiwan, the UN is likely to continue its monopoly over global peace and security issues in the interim. Beijing is unlikely to invade Taiwan in the foreseeable future (not before its economic modernisation deadline set for 2049). The global financial and economic order is likely to change, with the Beijing-led institutions likely to erode the IMF and World Bank's monopoly of global financial and economic governance. Thus, the emerging Beijing-led economic and financial order is likely to increase and consolidate its impact on the global political economy. Global economic and financial governance is, therefore, likely to be concentrated in two poles: the West (the Bretton Woods institutions and the WTO) and the Rest (the Beijing-led financial and economic institutions).

When all these variables are considered, China by itself is unlikely to push for the complete overthrow of the LIO because the UN system creates a favourable international environment that serves Beijing's 2049 economic vision. The only foreseeable way that China would endorse the complete overhaul of the liberal order is if war were to break out between two or more of the five great powers. Given their economic interdependence, relations between the US and China are unlikely to trigger an international armed conflict unless China annexes Taiwan in the near future.

Scenario Two: The sun sets on Western guardianship of the Liberal International Order

Scenario Two centres on the individual and collective impact of the foreign policies of liberal great powers toward the functionality and sustainability of the LIO. Chapters 6–9 outlined inconsistent actions and attitudes by the liberal great powers (Britain, France and the US) with respect to the LIO, which warrants separate sub-scenarios for each.

Can the centre hold? Post-1989 United States of America conduct towards the Liberal International Order

This subsection uses the systematic-formalised scenario technique (explained in Chapter 4) to forecast the future of the liberal order based on the identified patterns of US conduct towards the LIO post-1989. Washington's patterns of behaviour were identified in Chapter 7. The US has been the hegemon anchoring the liberal order since 1945, and its established conduct towards the liberal order is, therefore, the main independent variable on which this scenario (i.e., the dependent variable) is based.

After the dissolution of the Communist International Order and the Soviet Union, the LIO was the dominant order in the international system. Chapter 7 records US governments that sought to act within the parameters of international law and the principles of the liberal order more generally. This included Washington's leadership of interventions in Kuwait (Middle East) and the Balkans (southeastern Europe) through the UN. At that stage, the future of the LIO was positive and uncontested, demonstrated by its expansion into previously anti-liberal order regions that had been part of the communist order led by Moscow. At the end of the 1990s, however, Washington began to adopt a unilateral approach to international affairs that was antithetical to the liberal order. 9/11 and the subsequent international 'War on Terror' became a hallmark of Washington's foreign policy after 2001. It is clear that US unilateral tendencies threaten the survival of the LIO. Chapter 7 highlighted patterns of chronic US unilateral actions in the international environment. These actions have often bypassed and undermined the UNSC as the premier UN organ responsible for coordinating collective action on matters of international peace and security.

The primary reason why US unilateralism is a threat to world peace is that Washington has, at times, pursued a covert neo-conservative foreign policy agenda of overthrowing non-democratic regimes. This agenda has been disguised within the framework of the 'international war on terror'. Such neo-conservative foreign policies have been enacted in Iraq, Afghanistan and Libya (the latter through NATO), as referred to in Chapters 6–8. These military interventions led to the overthrow of incumbent governments and created a governance vacuum that has resulted in chronic instability, the proliferation of insurgencies, and terrorism in the Middle East. As seen in Chapter 7, the withdrawal of US armed forces from Afghanistan in 2021 after 20 years created a political vacuum that paved the way for the Taliban's return to power. This demonstrates that Washington's neo-conservative agenda is a threat to world peace and security. Therefore, this means that US unilateralism, as

personified by the neo-conservative agenda, has adverse long-term effects that threaten the founding ideals of the liberal order while also violating the sovereignty of affected nation-states. Instability in Afghanistan further complicates a precarious security situation in the Middle East when considering the operations of ISIS in Iraq and Syria. Moreover, Washington's insistence on NATO expansion in Eastern Europe is a contributing factor to the Crimean annexation in 2014 and the Russia–Ukraine War since February 2022. Likewise, Washington's involvement in the Israel–Hamas–Palestine crisis of 2023/24 inhibits the UNSC from implementing the UN General Assembly's resolution on a two-state solution adopted in 1947, with Israel and Palestine coexisting as sovereign states.

The US is a founder and leader of the LIO. However, Washington's unilateralism and neo-conservative and polarising actions in the Middle East and Eastern Europe have encouraged similar behaviour from the other great powers. France's unilateral meddling in Francophone Africa and Russia's interference in the domestic affairs of Eastern European states are examples of unilateralism by the other great powers, taking their cue from Washington. Chapter 5 found that when a sufficient number of great powers no longer have confidence in the utility of an international order, they tend to collapse such an order. Thus, if the US increasingly views multilateralism and the UN system as antithetical to its national interests, the UN is likely to collapse. This would probably have a domino effect on other liberal multilateral institutions, as the UN is the engine of the entire LIO. Therefore, should Washington no longer view the liberal order as responsive to its national interests, it will probably withdraw from it or destroy the order through its partisan foreign policies. Washington's refusal to join the League of Nations (1920–1939) shows that the US has a history of withdrawing from an order that is not amenable to its interests, despite being its architect. Chapter 7 identified possible signs of US disillusionment with the liberal order under Bush (Iraqi invasion), Obama (NATO's violation of *UNSC Resolution 1973* by contributing to the overthrow of Gaddafi's administration in Libya), Trump (threatening to withdraw from the WHO, initiating a trade war that violated WTO free trade values, and threatening to scale down US support for NATO), and Biden (blind support for Israel despite indications of the killing of Palestinian civilians in Gaza by the Israeli armed forces, and pushing for the NATO absorption of Ukraine despite the risks of Russian retaliation already manifested in the annexation of Crimea). While the US seems unlikely to withdraw from the liberal order in the near future, its unilateral actions in international affairs could encourage similar actions from other states. History has shown that unilateralism is a major cause of war and the disintegration of international orders (as per Chapter 5 findings).

Washington's unilateralism is a key factor that will probably encourage international law violations by other Great Powers and perhaps middle and less powerful nation-states and non-state actors as well. Such collective delinquency from the five great powers and other states is likely to undermine the foundations of the liberal order (i.e., international law and multilateral institutions). Should international law and liberal institutions such as the UN become superfluous, there would be no instrument to constrain the conduct of the US as well as other states. This would return the international system to the pre-19th century era of unmitigated anarchy that Hobbes dubbed the 'international state of nature'. Frequent international wars, chronic insecurity and instability are the most likely scenarios in the absence of compliance with international law and a disregard for consensus-building in international institutions. Should US unilateralism continue to inspire like-minded delinquency in the UK, France, Russia and China, all these scenarios are possible.

The establishment of the trilateral security alliance among the US, Britain and Australia in September 2021 (recorded in Chapters 6 and 7) is a Realist *balance of power* containment strategy against China, formed outside the UN and other institutions of the LIO. This containment strategy supplements the unilateral trade war with China that began under the Trump administration.

Balance of power and containment politics are founded on insecurity, fear and mistrust and have either triggered or caused Great Power wars in the past. For example, balance of power alliances were at the forefront of the Napoleonic Wars as well as the First and Second World Wars. In turn, these wars led to the disintegration of international orders. In sum, US unilateralism and partisan foreign policies that handicap the liberal order's ability to prevent, manage and resolve major international security crises will probably result in the liberal order becoming irrelevant and unable to meet its peace and security objectives, and, therefore, collapsing like the League of Nations in 1939.

The United Kingdom's post-1989 attitude towards the Liberal International Order: Affirmation or rejection?

This subsection applies *trend analysis and extrapolation* to forecast the possible impact of the UK's foreign policies on the future of the LIO. Independent variables that inform this scenario are the established attitude of London towards the LIO, as well as its related conduct in the post-1989 international environment. These independent variables were identified and explained in Chapter 6. According to the FPA conducted in Chapter 6, the UK's foreign policy has had important implications for the LIO. It found

that while the UK is a Great Power that subscribes to the liberal values of the LIO, London tends to display greater loyalty to the US rather than the norms and institutions of the LIO. Britain proved to be a willing ally of Washington's unilateral 'War on Terror' that involved a neo-conservative agenda. The UK's support for US unilateralism undermined the UN as the anchor of the liberal order in the 2000s.

London did, however, restore confidence in the liberal order and its economic institutions by advocating multilateral (G20) solutions and cooperation in response to the 2008 global financial crisis (see Chapter 6). After 2010, however, the UK began to withdraw from the EU. This was not a new issue, as Britain has had a long, difficult and ambiguous relationship with European integration, historically preferring to preserve its sovereignty (see Chapter 6). In January 2020, Britain officially left the EU and has since positioned itself as a global trading state while aligning with most US foreign policy positions.

A key finding of Chapter 6 is that Britain historically aligns itself with the US, even if this entails undermining international law and the institutions of the LIO. Given the variables referred to above, it is clear that the UK prioritises its national interests and friendship with the US above the LIO. London alone cannot collapse the liberal order. However, it could do so by aligning with the US and other allies in conflicts that serve their own interests and undermine the norms, values and institutions of the LIO. By not questioning or opposing US unilateralism and violations of international law in the post-1989 era, the UK has become complicit with future sources of international war, including the Ukraine–Russia War and the Hamas–Israeli–Palestine War.

Another independent variable with significant consequences for the survival or otherwise of the LIO is the mushrooming of Great Power spheres of interest, which essentially function as parallel quasi-international orders. These have been described in Chapters 6–10. The UK itself is seeking to reposition the Commonwealth as its sphere of interest. Its withdrawal from the EU and emphasis on the Commonwealth can be interpreted as London's attempt to restore its historical position as a leader of the former British colonies. Put differently, Britain is seeking to appropriate the Commonwealth as a British order that serves London's economic and diplomatic interests. Such a policy position may come at the expense of the WTO trade regime.

However, Britain's withdrawal from the EU and appropriation of the Commonwealth is unlikely to challenge the LIO to the same extent as US unilateralism and China's rising power. This prediction is made on the basis that Britain is no longer the diplomatic, economic and military powerhouse it used to be before the 20th century. Forbes India (2024) ranks the UK as the sixth-largest economy in the world in terms of GDP, while Global

Firepower (2021) ranks it as eighth in the world in terms of military strength. The UK may also struggle to make inroads into the Commonwealth, particularly in African countries that are now pro-China, Russia, China or the US. Therefore, on its own, the UK is unlikely to affect the future of the LIO and global governance. This is due to its declining political and economic power, as exemplified by the seamless way in which the EU absorbed the UK's exit between 2016 and 2020. The UK is only likely to have a significant impact on the LIO and global governance as part of a collective (i.e., through NATO and by jumping on the US bandwagon).

France's attitude towards the Liberal International Order: Affirmation or rejection?

France's likely impact on the future of the LIO and global governance is predicted via the dual application of *trend analysis and extrapolation* and *systematically, organised scenario techniques*. This scenario is generated by interrogating France's conduct and attitude towards the liberal order since 1989. This independent variable was analysed at length in Chapter 8. Based on the findings of Chapter 8, France has an established tradition of using the EU and the UN to exert diplomatic, economic and political influence in international affairs. At the same time, it bypasses these institutions when responding to events in Francophone Africa (also known as *Francafrique*). As shown in Chapter 8, France has adopted a culture of military intervention in the domestic affairs of Francophone African states in order to preserve its economic interests and political influence. However, French influence in French-speaking Africa may be declining, as demonstrated by the overthrow of pro-Paris regimes in the Sahel and the emergence of nationalist regimes or governments that appear to be pro-Russian. It remains to be seen whether other Francophone governments in Africa will follow the Sahelian trend of moving away from Paris's political and commercial influence. In the interim, France still maintains considerable influence over ECOWAS and the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS).

Taken together, these trends show that France believes the liberal order helps it to retain its Great Power status (i.e., serving French national interests). At the same time, its unilateralism in Francophone Africa is rooted in its colonial history and continued commercial domination in its former colonies. Therefore, one can conclude that France views Francophone Africa as a French sphere of interest and a quasi-French order. This amounts to a *de facto* parallel order which undermines this region's effective integration into the LIO. Therefore, one can predict that France is unlikely to forego its interests in Francophone Africa, especially if the Liberal International Economic Order faces a sterner challenge from the emerging Chinese financial, economic and political order (as outlined in Chapter 10

as well as Scenario One in this chapter). At the same time, France's commitment to the liberal order is based on the latter's capacity to accommodate Paris's ambitions for global influence and prestige. Should the LIO decline in the face of China's challenge, France will probably intensify its relations with *Francafrique* on an even bigger scale. This is because the primary interest of any state is to perpetually accumulate power in order to protect its security and that of its citizens, as per Realist IR theory outlined in Chapter 2. Therefore, one can predict that France, on its own, is unlikely to collapse the LIO; Paris is a major beneficiary of its global reach and impact. However, France's commitment to the LIO is based on its own interests and not on liberal values, and Paris is unlikely to defend the LIO if it weakens further as the 21st century progresses.

When isolated from the other four great powers, it is unlikely that France will have a decisive impact on the future of the LIO. Events of the post-1989 epoch do not point to any extraordinary event involving France alone that could trigger an international armed conflict and a collapse of the liberal order. However, France could have a significant impact on the future of global governance and the LIO as part of a collective – for example, if it were to fight an international war on the side of the US and Britain against 'revisionist' China and Russia.

The future of the Liberal International Order

Whenever the great powers have resolved global issues through multilateral institutions, they have affirmed and strengthened the LIO. In such instances, the liberal order has been positioned as a panacea for resolving common global issues. For instance, the reorganisation of the G8, G20 and IFIs during the 2008 global financial crisis illustrates the utility of liberal multilateral institutions in managing global financial shocks (see Chapter 5). Despite the emergence of alternative financial institutions from the BRICS+ bloc, the G20, G7 (G8 now-defunct since Russia's suspension in 2014), World Bank, IMF and EU remain significant stakeholders in global economic management. Therefore, the future of the Liberal International Economic Order seems stable in the short and medium term (2020–2050). However, China's alternative financial and economic order is an emerging alternative of choice, particularly in the Global South, where there are pockets of discontent about the impact of Bretton Woods institutions on underdeveloped and low-income countries. Likewise, the Global South is becoming weary of liberal great powers' pursuit of narrow unilateral foreign policy goals that are inimical to multilateral cooperation and actually undermine the peace and security of non-Western nation-states.

Overall, one can conclude that the unilateral international actions of the UK, France and the US in the 21st century are undermining the existence

and longevity of the LIO as the coordinator of collective action and interstate cooperation in world affairs. As its founding superpower and enforcer, US unilateralism is the biggest threat to the future of the LIO. Should US unilateral actions lead to war with China or Russia, the liberal order is likely to collapse.

According to the empirical findings of Chapter 5, international orders do not survive after Great Power conflicts and are often succeeded by a new order designed by the victors. According to Scenario One, China would probably lead the post-war order, given its economic and military capabilities, soft power and diplomatic standing that gravitates many states towards it. Equally significant is China's close relationship with another seemingly discontented Great Power, namely Russia, that has consistently called out US and Western threats to international peace and security. The established US foreign policy of unilateralism and its associated neo-conservative agenda has disillusioned the Global South. This grouping now looks to China and Russia as allies, further bolstering the emerging China-led order entrenched in BRICS+, the BRI and political cooperation mechanisms such as FOCAC and other regional ties that Beijing has forged with ASEAN and others. Such fragmented diplomatic institutions can be transformed into global collective peace and security institutions akin to the UN.

Scenario Three: Western expansion into Eastern Europe triggers World War III

Scenario Three is constructed with the *creative scenario-building method*, focusing on the possible effects of Russian foreign policy on the future of the LIO and global governance. The key independent variables informing this scenario are EU and NATO expansion into Central and Eastern Europe, as well as Russian pushback. These variables were extensively analysed in Chapter 9. Russia's documented history as the founder and leader of the now-defunct Communist International Order (see Chapter 5) is another independent variable used to build this scenario. Therefore, it is based on the following independent variables: lessons from previous world orders (Chapter 5) and the author's intuition about and knowledge of the volatile NATO, EU and Russian interface as outlined in Chapter 9.

Russia's international conduct in this century has primarily been caused by the expansion of liberal institutions (EU and NATO) into Central and Eastern Europe. NATO and the EU's expansion into Central and Eastern Europe, a historical Russian sphere of influence and strategic interests, is proving to be a source of insecurity and a potential flashpoint for a Great Power war. Indications of a potential war between Western powers and Russia are Moscow's annexation of the Crimean Peninsula (2014), the

resultant Western sanctions against Russia, and Russia's invasion of Ukraine (since February 2024), resulting in Western military and economic aid to Kyiv. As such, the expansion of the EU and NATO into Eastern Europe can be classified as a potential threat to the survival of the LIO, given its impact on the Federation's perception of its security in this historically Russian sphere of influence and strategic interests.

As outlined in Chapter 9, NATO's incorporation of former Soviet republics and satellite states in Central and Eastern Europe in 1999 (Czech Republic, Hungary and Poland) and 2004 (Bulgaria, Estonia, Latvia, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia and Lithuania) has been a source of *balance-of-power politics* between the West and Russia. The UN seems unable to resolve Great Power differences on these sorts of issues because the UNSC is often paralysed by the P5's veto powers. EU and NATO expansion into Eastern Europe can be interpreted as the appeal of liberal values to the region. Alternatively, it could be interpreted as attempts by the West to isolate and humiliate Russia in its geopolitical neighbourhood. Attempts by Georgia and Ukraine to join NATO and the EU have not been accepted by Moscow. Russia has even engaged in an internal war in Georgia in August 2008 to prevent this possibility. Furthermore, Moscow's annexation of Crimea from Ukraine in March 2014 and its instigation of a secessionist war in the Russian-speaking Donbas region in Ukraine since April 2014 is a coordinated attempt to halt Kyiv's incorporation into the EU and NATO. In February 2022, Russia invaded Ukraine in order to halt its accession to the EU and NATO (these events are dealt with in detail in Chapter 9).

This shows that Russia is willing to go to war to preserve its historical leadership of Eastern Europe in the face of Western expansionism. Given the UNSC's inability to prevent Great Power rivalries and proxy wars, the standoff between Russia and the West in Europe represents the most likely source of direct international armed conflict in this century. Russia's history and economic and diplomatic interests in Eastern Europe are sufficient motivation for Moscow to go to war. Moreover, Moscow's military actions in Georgia, Crimea and Ukraine are proof of Russia's willingness and readiness to wage war against the Western powers through these proxy states. This commitment is not fuelled by Putin's presidency alone but by Russia's long-standing interests in Eastern Europe. During the Cold War, different leaders opposed liberalism for more than 40 years. Moreover, liberalism is fundamentally antithetical to Russian values and interests, as well as its historical position as the leader of Eastern Europe.

Should Kyiv decide to join NATO and the EU, Russia would probably push for a military takeover of Ukraine as it did with Crimea, or it could install a pro-Moscow administration to reverse such a NATO and EU accession. Such a move could result in an international war between Kyiv

and its Western backers (the US, NATO and the EU). This would be a direct war between Russia and the West. Given the history and nature of the *balance-of-power* alliances, Russia could call on China and its other allies to assist in a war effort against the West. Given the numerous Western interventions that have had significant impacts on the Middle East, Africa and Eastern Europe, such a Great Power war could be on a world scale, with many aggrieved Global South nations joining the Russia–China bloc. China would probably join this war due to the unsettled historical matter of the reincorporation of Taiwan, which the West would inevitably want to prevent. Western exceptionalism and the neo-conservative agenda of transforming non-Western geopolitical regions and nations into democratic prototypes, even against their will, has created flashpoints in Ukraine (and central Europe in general), Palestine, Taiwan and Africa that could trigger WWIII.

The onset of such a Great Power war would probably collapse the LIO entirely. As noted in Chapter 5, no international order has survived a Great Power war because an order exists insofar as it is able to maintain peace among the most powerful states. The outbreak of war presupposes the failure of the order to preserve peace and balance the interests of the great powers. Following a Sino-Russian alliance victory in WWIII, the Chinese order would probably emerge as the new global order.

Scenario Four: The collapse of communist rule in China and the rejuvenation of the Liberal International Order

This fourth scenario utilises TIA to explore an unlikely phenomenon that has not been accounted for by the three preceding scenarios, namely the collapse of communist rule in China (i.e., the overthrow of the CCP). A key independent variable that could overthrow CCP rule in China is popular pro-democracy uprisings throughout the country, on the scale of the Arab Spring uprisings. China has already experienced pro-democracy movements in the form of the Tiananmen demonstrations in 1989 and the pro-democracy protests in Hong Kong (2019–2020). The successful overthrow of the CCP and the communist-inspired Chinese government could ignite waves of pro-democracy movements in non-liberal states such as Russia. Such a wave of dissent in historically non-liberal corners of the globe would probably affirm, rejuvenate and prolong the existence of the LIO well into the latter years of the 21st century. Based on historical and current trends, this scenario is unlikely to materialise. China's sustained socioeconomic development continues to raise the standard of living in mainland China, a situation that has become the norm since Deng Xiaoping took control in Beijing in the late 1970s.

Cross-impact analysis: Which scenario is most likely?

CIA is now applied to decide which of the four aforementioned scenarios is most likely to occur and determine the future of the liberal order and global governance. Based on an analysis of the four scenarios, Scenario One is the most likely to materialise, with China emerging as the undisputed global hegemon around the year 2050. By that time, Beijing's economic and financial order would probably have matured and surpassed the Liberal International Economic Order. Scenario Three is also likely, with a world war initiated by Russia expediting the collapse of the LIO and a new global dawn under a Beijing-led order. China would probably make use of this opportunity to incorporate Taiwan and finalise all claims in the commercially lucrative South China Sea. Likewise, Russia would probably use WWIII to re-establish its historical hegemony in Central and Eastern Europe. World War III is, therefore, a risky yet effective means for Russia and China to achieve their historical missions.

Thus, Scenarios One and Three (as well as the continuation of US unilateralism as projected in Scenario Two) may combine to move the world into a new era under Beijing's leadership and vision. Russia is unlikely to challenge Beijing in a post-WWIII context, given China's economic advantage and Russia's preoccupation with Eastern Europe. Furthermore, Beijing has thus far not threatened Russia's history and strategic interests in Central and Eastern Europe, and Russia has not opposed China's reunification ambitions and interests in the South China Sea. Moreover, China and Russia have coexisted without difficulty in BRICS+. Such a Beijing-led order would be centred on values such as international development cooperation through infrastructural development (i.e., the rationale for the BRI). The NDB and AIIB would probably be transformed into genuinely global financial institutions and replace the World Bank and IMF as the custodians of global financial and economic management. Given that the yuan is already a major international currency, it could replace the US dollar as the reserve currency. This would continue a tradition whereby the currency of an incumbent hegemon becomes the reserve currency. The growth of BRICS+ is proof of an international appetite for an alternative political and economic order.

China, Russia and their allies would probably co-create an intergovernmental organisation similar to the UN and akin to BRICS+, in terms of which each state's sovereignty is respected regardless of the size of the economy or ideological values. The new intergovernmental organisation would probably be based on existing international law (primarily with respect to sovereignty) as well as the values of global justice. Ideology is unlikely to be a central pillar of this future international

order. Such an intergovernmental organisation would be tasked with maintaining the post-war or post-LIO peace and security, which enables global economic development, prosperity and security. These are the permanent interests of most or all nation-states. China will probably replicate the WTO trade regime through the BRI model, given its success in removing barriers to international trade and general management of the global trading system. Thus, even if the WTO were destroyed, a new international trade organisation would probably be established to pursue the same goals, namely facilitating an international free trade system that would promote trade and economic growth among member states.

Conclusion: Will the Liberal International Order survive in the 21st century?

The scenarios presented in this chapter are informed by the drivers identified in the preceding chapters. As noted in Chapter 4, the scenarios are forecasts based on trends identified in Chapter 5 (post-1648 international orders) and Chapters 6–10 (analyses of Great Power foreign policies since 1989), as well as IR theory assumptions (Chapter 2). The scenarios in this chapter represent possible futures for the LIO, global governance and the world as we know it. They are scientifically constructed through the application of various scenario-building methods, making use of relevant independent variables as inputs into the scenario-building process.

On the basis of all four scenarios, the author believes that the LIO is *unlikely* to survive in the 21st century. This forecast is due to the trend of all five great powers circumventing (or being willing to circumvent) the principles, values, rules and institutions of the current LIO for their narrow national self-interests. When self-interests are elevated over collective interests, the future of the LIO becomes precarious. The brewing confrontations between liberal great powers and Russia in Eastern Europe are plausible flashpoints of direct international warfare, and so are the crises in the Middle East, the Sahel and East Asia (Taiwan and the South China Sea). The other reason why the LIO is likely to collapse is that its founding liberal values are not necessarily espoused by all countries in all world regions, and its continued enforcement could have major unintended consequences.

The emergence of a non-liberal hegemon (China) with an alternative political, financial and economic order (BRICS+ and BRI) provides us with a window into a possible future where Beijing is at the centre of global governance. China has emerged as a superpower and ally of choice for developing nations that have become disillusioned with the LIO and its inability to facilitate meaningful economic development and justice for the Global South.

China's emerging hegemony has already experienced its first test of strength in the form of the US–China trade war, and China firmly stood its ground. History is on the side of China, as no superpower of the post-1648 state system has maintained a permanent monopoly of global power and governance. Similarly, history indicates that no international order lasts forever.

Chapter 12 reflects this book's main findings regarding international orders and global governance and recommends key policy choices for the P5 and the anchors of future international orders and global governance.

Chapter 12

Conclusions and recommendations

Introduction

This chapter reflects the key findings of this book with regard to the future of the LIO and global governance and recommends key policy choices for the P5 and the anchors of future international orders and global governance. It also highlights important areas of study regarding the interface between state behaviour, the international order and global governance, and the need to entrench scientific scenario-building in IR scholarship as well as foreign policymaking by governments and non-governmental organisations.

Key lessons from this book

A key lesson emanating from this book is that international orders are inherently Great Power constructs which reflect the values and interests of those powerful nation-states. Another lesson is that, over time, international orders begin to lose relevance and effectiveness once their founding great powers begin to deviate from the established agreements and principles which anchor that particular international order. An associated factor is that when nation-states reach the threshold of Great Power status, they begin to question or challenge the acts of the established great powers or begin to deviate from the rules, norms and values of the order in question, setting the scene for polarisation within the established order. It is this

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polarisation among great powers that often leads to war and the disintegration of an international order. From the ashes of a fallen order, a new order arises, with the victors of the war or new great powers as its architects.

The Concert of Europe, League of Nations and Communist International Order collapsed after the Napoleonic Wars, WWI, WWII and the Cold War, respectively. The disintegration of the Soviet Union resulted in the collapse of the Moscow-led Communist International Order, allowing the US-led liberal order to emerge as the sole model of political, economic and social organisation, which was then championed globally, including nation-states that used to form part of the communist order. Signs of the liberal order's collapse are already visible in the form of violations of its values and principles by the US and its allies, including the forced removal from power of governments in the Middle East and Africa. This recurrent violation of international law is unsustainable and is causing growing disillusionment with the leaders of the LIO. Essentially, this current order is being maintained by IFIs, notably the World Bank, the IMF and the WTO. The two Bretton Woods institutions are important sources of development finance and also coordinate the international monetary system. However, the recent establishment of alternative international finance and trade facilitation mechanisms presents disillusioned nation-states with other international institutions to which they could defect. The IMF, World Bank and WTO are also being criticised because of their failure to facilitate the development of historically disadvantaged nation-states that have been marginalised in the global economy through Western-initiated systems such as the Atlantic slave trade, colonialism and neo-colonialism (with the last-named system being attributed to the Bretton Woods IFIs, GATT and the WTO).

Should the current great powers fail to correct the sources of discontent with the LIO, other nation-states have a credible alternative in the form of the BRICS+, the BRI, and new international finance mechanisms. These Chinese-led political, economic and financial systems have the potential to be globalised should the liberal order collapse through crises such as the Russia-NATO-US standoff in Central and Eastern Europe, Great Power mismanagement of conflicts in the Middle East, the outstanding Chinese reunification with Taiwan, and the Scramble for Africa 2.0. History informs us that hegemony does not last forever and that the sun may be setting on US hegemony and the 80-year-old LIO.

In what form could the Liberal International Order survive in the 21st century?

The LIO could only survive if its anchors (the P5) could reach a new consensus on the need to arrest the trends of unilateralism and violations

of international law and champion the collective interests of all states and regions. As with any other collective security setting, an international order needs to advocate and champion shared goals that respond to each member state's needs. A major pull factor for many nation-states of the Chinese global order is Beijing's respect for the sovereignty and domestic politics of other nation-states. By contrast, the LIO increasingly survives through the imposition of Western (primarily US) values and preferences. An international order based on fear and the application of hard power as opposed to diplomacy and rational persuasion is an inherently abusive system. The renewal and extension of the life span of the LIO will require that the current great powers adhere to international law, revert to multilateral cooperation to resolve common issues and adopt shared values such as human development, poverty alleviation, mutual respect for diverse cultures, mutual accountability and shared prosperity. Democracy and capitalism are of no use if they advance the interests of only 10% of the entire liberal order.

If the UN, the Bretton Woods institutions and the WTO were to seriously and unanimously advocate justice and the fair distribution of wealth (i.e., gains from economic development and poverty alleviation) to the majority of nation-states, the liberal order could be renewed as an order seeking to meet the needs of all nation-states. An international order that continuously recreates 'developed', 'developing' and 'underdeveloped' states is inherently unjust, especially when the underdeveloped regions have been in that state since the end of the formal enslavement of the Global South (i.e., colonisation). The underdevelopment of the nations of the Global South, despite their supposed membership of the LIO, means that it is of doubtful value to them and may impel them to turn to the alternative order being created by Beijing.

Can emerging orders such as BRICS+ improve international relations and global development?

The emerging Chinese-led order in the form of BRICS+ and the BRI should morph into a global order as long as China, Russia and the other great powers involved in this order maintain the values of development cooperation and respect for sovereignty. An international order whose members are bound by shared norms, international law and cooperation is bound to win the support and confidence of the collective. China should learn from the great powers dominating the LIO and past orders that violations of common principles, values and norms are the roots of an international order's collapse. Hegemonic arrogance and the use of hard power reduce the longevity of orders. Likewise, adopting a habit of being on the wrong side of international

law creates international chaos and instability. The best form of collective security is one in which decisions on matters of international peace and security should be taken by all member states, with a simple majority being required to adopt a resolution. By contrast, in the LIO, key decisions about international peace and security are taken (or not taken) by the exclusive UNSC, dominated by the P5, on behalf of 195 nation-states. Given their entrenched veto powers, the UNSC is often unable to reach consensus about the mediation or resolution of pressing international peace and security crises. The P5 often prioritise their narrow national interests and partisan friendships with states involved in perilous conflicts at the expense of mediation, conflict resolution and restoring peace and security.

The emerging international order led by China should avoid these characteristics of the current LIO, as they are causing disillusionment among many nation-states which prefer peace, security and justice. Moreover, the emerging international order should strive to meaningfully advance the Global South in the global economy while still facilitating the continued growth of the Global North. A just order is one that realises a positive sum game in terms of which the majority of nation-states accrue social and economic development benefits. At the same time, the Chinese-led order should continue to recognise the divergent cultures and religions of all states in the international system and not seek to impose foreign cultures and ideologies on historically distinct nations. International production and trade, international finance and monetary systems, innovation, education and technology are mechanisms of economic growth and development that do not require one nation to abandon its culture(s), religion(s) and ideology.

Asia, Latin America, and the Middle East have all developed while maintaining a significant degree of cultural and ideological sovereignty. The Chinese-led international order should afford the same sovereignty to regions such as Africa, which have not escaped the imposition of foreign political and economic ideologies under the LIO. This has contributed to the lack of sustainable development in Africa because development policies and political systems imposed from outside are not context-responsive and are, therefore, inappropriate. Therefore, the Chinese order arising out of the ashes of the LIO order should confer equal sovereignty on all nation-states, and the institutions of this emerging order should affirm, champion and respect this and its associated values.

The role of scenario-building in international relations scholarship and foreign policymaking

Scenarios and other forecasting methodologies should be given a more prominent role in foreign policy scholarship, teaching and learning as well

as policymaking, whether in static or dynamic periods. Forecasting enables strategic and proactive planning and decision-making, allowing governments and non-governmental actors alike to anticipate the likely and unlikely consequences of their foreign policies and actions. Current and future generations of foreign policy scholars and practitioners should engage with forecasting in order to improve its descriptive, analytical, prescriptive and predictive qualities in the vital realm of IR. International affairs is a dynamic domain even in times of relative stability because international anarchy can only be mitigated and not eliminated. In this permanent state of international anarchy, forecasting is imperative for states and non-state actors to remain alert about likely and unlikely events in a dynamic world.

Conclusions

The outcome of the scenario-building exercise leads the author to conclude that the LIO is no longer relevant and responsive to the national interests and preferences of the P5, both individually and collectively, and is, therefore, unlikely to survive in the 21st century. This forecast is informed by the growing trend whereby all P5 members are violating the principles, values and rules of the LIO and its institutions – including international law – in order to advance their purported self-interests. The elevation of self-interest over collective interests and international law creates doubts about whether the LIO will survive. Confrontations between the Western great powers and Russia are the most plausible flashpoints for major international warfare. The mismanagement of conflicts in the Middle East and Africa are further flashpoints of future international warfare due to the polarisation of the P5 and the rest of the world about these international peace and security crises. Taiwan and the South China Sea are further tests awaiting the LIO in the near future. Given the recurrent failures of the LIO, these tests in Asia are likely to further polarise the international system states between the liberal and non-liberal powers, namely China, Russia and their allies.

An additional reason why the LIO is likely to collapse is that its founding liberal values are not necessarily espoused by all great powers and other nation-states. The emergence of an alternative financial, economic, and political order anchored and enforced by a non-liberal hegemon (China) and Great Power (Russia) opens a window to a possible future order that is not underpinned by liberal values and ideologies.

The findings of this book on the rise and decline of international orders, as well as Great Powers' behaviour towards the LIO since 1989, confirm the impact of powerful states on international orders and their functionality. The future of the LIO and global governance, as forecasted in Chapter 11, is

a vital contribution that seeks to position IR not only as an analytical discipline but also as one that is able to reliably and scientifically forecast and anticipate events in world affairs. IR, and specifically FPA, should be proactive disciplines that interrogate the motives and *potential effects* of state conduct in order to predict the short-, medium- and long-term impacts of state actions on global governance and the international system. This book has systematically combined the arts of issue identification, description, diagnosis and scientific forecasting. The four scenarios of the liberal order and global governance developed in Chapter 11 are possible futures that may come to define the era of 2020–2050.

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Anchored in foreign policy analysis (FPA) and enriched by scenario-building methodologies, the research offers a rigorous, empirically grounded assessment of how Great Power behaviour shapes the evolution and potential futures of international order. By foregrounding the foreign policies of the P5 as key variables in global governance trajectories, the book provides an original contribution to scholarship on international relations, multilateralism and institutional resilience.

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