



India and New World Order

This editorial is based on [At G20, the end of old multilateralism - and the beginning of a new order](#) which was published in The Indian Express on 05/09/2023. It talks about the decline of the traditional multilateral world order and the emergence of a new one, highlighting India's pivotal role in this transformation

For Prelims: [Globalization](#), [Climate change](#), [G20](#), [G7](#), [UN](#), [IMF](#), [World Bank](#), [BRICS](#), [African Union](#), [Association of Southeast Asian Nations \(ASEAN\)](#), [European Union](#), [Quad](#), [AUKUS](#), [Global South](#)

For Mains: New Multilateral World Order, Reasons behind Decline of Existing Multilateralism, How can India Shape the New World order

It's clear that post-Cold War [multilateralism](#), which involves cooperation between multiple countries, has reached a low point both on a global and regional scale. This is evident from the recent East Asia Summit in Jakarta and the [G20](#) summit in Delhi, which underscore the serious and possibly permanent problems in the previous system of global cooperation.

Post-Cold War multilateralism refers to the period after the end of the Cold War in 1991, when many countries around the world engaged in various forms of cooperation and coordination on issues such as trade, security, human rights, and environmental protection. This was facilitated by the absence of major conflicts between the two superpowers, the United States and the Soviet Union, and their respective allies. The post-Cold War multilateralism was based on liberal principles such as democracy, rule of law, and free markets, and was supported by institutions such as the United Nations, the European Union, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, and the World Trade Organization.

What is the New World Order?

The new multilateral world order is a term that refers to the emergence of new forms of cooperation and dialogue among different countries and regions in the 21st century. It is a response to the challenges and opportunities posed by [globalization](#), climate change, pandemics, terrorism, and other issues that require collective action and shared solutions.

Some of the features of the new multilateral world order are:

- The expansion and diversification of the existing multilateral institutions, such as the [UN](#), [the IMF](#), [and the World Bank](#), to include more voices and perspectives from the developing world and the [Global South](#).
- The creation and strengthening of new regional and sub-regional organizations, such as the [BRICS](#), [the African Union](#), [the Association of Southeast Asian Nations](#), [and the European Union](#), that aim to promote regional integration, development, security, and cooperation.

- The emergence of informal networks and initiatives, such as the Alliance for Multilateralism, the [G20](#), and the [Quad](#), that seek to address specific issues or challenges that transcend national boundaries and require coordinated action.
- The recognition of the multipolar reality of the world, **where no single country or bloc can dominate or dictate the global agenda**, and where different actors have to engage in dialogue and negotiation to find common ground and mutual benefit.

What are the Reasons behind Decline of Existing Multilateralism?

- **Rise of China and its Expansionism:** One of the primary reasons behind the decline of existing multilateralism is the rise of China as a global economic and military power. **China's expansionist policies, both in Asia and globally, challenge the existing multilateral order.** Its unilateral efforts to alter borders with neighbors and its assertive territorial expansionism have created tensions and destabilized regional and global institutions.
- **Economic and Security Threats from China:** The economic and security threats posed by China have compelled countries like the United States, Japan, and India to reevaluate their engagement with China. This has led to efforts to de-risk their massive economic interdependence with China, which has implications for existing multilateral economic institutions.
- **Russian Actions:** The **Russian occupation and annexation of Ukraine's Crimea in 2014 marked a significant challenge to the post-Cold War security order**, particularly in Europe. This event disrupted multilateralism by causing rifts and conflicts in the international community.
- **Contradictions Within the Multilateral System:** The multilateral system itself has **faced internal contradictions and challenges.** These internal disagreements and conflicting interests among member states have weakened the effectiveness of multilateral organizations and impeded consensus-building.
- **Rise of Alternative Security Forums:** In response to China's expansionism, **alternative security forums like the Quad, AUKUS, and trilateral compacts have emerged.** These forums reflect a shift away from traditional multilateral institutions, raising questions about the continuing relevance and centrality of existing regional organizations like [ASEAN](#).
- **Changing Perspectives of Key Players:** The changing perspectives of key players, such as India, have also contributed to the decline of existing multilateralism. **India's evolving view of the international order, shifting from concerns about a "unipolar Asia" dominated by China to a more proactive engagement with the United States and its allies**, has altered the dynamics of multilateralism in the Indo-Pacific region.
- **Global Financial Crisis and Expanding the G7:** The 2008 global financial crisis underscored the need to expand the [Group of Seven \(G7\)](#) to include middle powers to restore global economic stability. While this was a positive step toward addressing global challenges, it also highlighted the limitations of the existing multilateral framework.

How can India Shape the New World order?

- India can play a **leading role in the Quad and ASEAN**, as well as other regional and sub-regional forums, to promote a free and open Indo-Pacific region that is based on the rule of law, respect for sovereignty, and peaceful resolution of disputes.
 - India can also enhance its maritime security cooperation with like-minded countries to counter the challenges posed by China's assertiveness in the region.
- India can **contribute to the re-globalisation process** by diversifying its trade and investment partners, especially in the Global South, and by developing its domestic capabilities in key sectors such as manufacturing, services, and innovation.
 - India can also **advocate for a more democratic and equitable global governance system** that reflects the realities and aspirations of the emerging economies.
- India can **use its hosting of the G20 summit as an opportunity to showcase its vision and achievements as a global leader**, as well as to forge consensus on important issues such as [climate change](#), sustainable development, health security, and digital transformation.
- India can also **bridge the gap between the developed and developing countries by highlighting their common interests and challenges**, and by proposing solutions that are inclusive and pragmatic.

Drishti Mains Question:

The world is currently witnessing the emergence of a new multilateral world order. Discuss the reasons behind the decline of the old World Order and how India can contribute to this transition.

UPSC Civil Services Examination, Previous Year Questions (PYQs)

Q. In which one of the following groups are all the four countries members of G20? (2020)

- (a) Argentina, Mexico, South Africa and Turkey
- (b) Australia, Canada, Malaysia and New Zealand
- (c) Brazil, Iran, Saudi Arabia and Vietnam
- (d) Indonesia, Japan, Singapore and South Korea

Ans: (a)

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