



THE ROLE OF GOVERNANCE IN ACHIEVING UN GLOBAL GOALS

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Global governance brings together various actors to coordinate collective action around the world. This concept encompasses all the institutions, policies, rules, procedures and initiatives by which states and their citizens seek to bring more predictability, stability and order into their responses to transnational challenges and is largely achieved through international organisations. In fact, the goal of global governance is to provide global policies and services, in particular peace and security systems, justice and conflict mediation, functioning markets and unified standards for trade and industry.

In the current international context, sustainable development is an important goal of global policy, and intergovernmental and governmental agencies as well as private sector companies have a duty to explore different approaches to how national intergovernmental and national strategies, policies and projects address issues. Global governance guidelines are formulated, implemented and evaluated to support the achievement of the 2030 Agenda objectives.

Keywords: global governance; United Nations; good governance; governance; sustainable development; 2030 Agenda;



INTRODUCTION

Global governance has become a term used in all the social sciences. However, the concept of *global governance* raises two sets of unresolved issues. One has to do with the claims of the legitimate exercise of authority, the other with democratic values. Unlike local and national theories of governance, a social contract between citizens and global governance institutions has not yet been sufficiently developed to provide a sufficient basis for legitimacy.

The influence of civil society on international decision-making and the role of intergovernmental organisations and transnational corporations in world politics have a major impact on global governance. The term *global governance* was coined to a greater extent in the early 1990s, becoming a key concept of a political program of international reform, as well as a conceptualised tool in political research. Various issues, analysed at the time by the goal of global governance, referred to “*the role of enterprises in environmental policy, the negotiation and implementation of public health policies, peacekeeping, sexual policies, prohibitions on arms trafficking, regulation of world trade, and last but not least, the reform of the United Nations system*” (Koenig-Archibugi, 2011, p. 393).

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THE IDEA OF GLOBAL GOVERNANCE IN THE CONTEMPORARY ERA

Although “*global governance*” is an attribute of post-Cold War neoliberal policy, there seems to be no commonly accepted definition of the concept, and disagreement over the nature of governance severely limits its usefulness in analysing politics and international relations. Consequently, we will approach global governance as a useful scientific concept for the implementation of norms and the evaluation of large-scale transformations around the world to achieve the sustainable development goals of the UN 2030 Agenda.



The term “global governance” has become increasingly important as the process of globalisation intensifies, with all its components and the emphasis on the importance and impact of global issues such as population growth and migration, water, food, environmental protection and biodiversity, energy resources, economic development, conflict prevention and resolution or terrorism.

In our view, the term *global governance* has become increasingly important as the process of globalisation intensifies, with all its components and the emphasis on the importance and impact of global issues such as population growth and migration, water, food, environmental protection and biodiversity, energy resources, economic development, conflict prevention and resolution or terrorism. These issues required an international approach, which over time has diminished the role of the nation-state by transferring specific regulatory powers to international institutions.

Although often associated with the concept of governance, political authority, public institutions and their control, the concept of *governance* involves official political institutions that control and coordinate relations between social actors, can implement decisions and policies, have a recognized authority and enter into relations with other levels of governance.

Adil Najam¹ defined *global governance* as “*the management of global processes or phenomena in the absence of a global government*” and Thomas Weiss² considered that “*global governance refers to concrete arrangements for solving global problems involving not only the UN and specialised agencies but also other non-state actors*” (Weiss, 2013, p. 195). Thomas Weiss and Ramesh Thakur defined *global governance* as “*a complex of official and informal institutions, mechanisms, relations, processes between and between states, markets, citizens, organisations, both intergovernmental and, through which collective interests are articulated globally, which establishes the rights and obligations of actors and mediates differences and conflicts between them*” (Ibid.).

According to Rod A.W. Rhodes³, the term “*governance*” is popular, but inaccurate. It has at least six uses, referring to: the minimum state;

¹ Pakistani intellectual Adil Najam serves as inaugural dean of Boston University’s Pardee School of Global Studies.

² Thomas G. Weiss, distinguished researcher in International Relations and Global Governance, with special expertise in United Nations policy, currently a professor at Princeton University.

³ Roderick Arthur William Rhodes, usually quoted as R.A.W. Rhodes, is a British professor of political science at the University of Southampton and director of the Center for Political Ethnography.

corporate governance; the new public management; good governance; socio-cyber systems; and self-organising networks. The author states that governance is the attribute of “self-organising, inter-organisational networks” and argues that these networks “complement markets and hierarchies as governing structures for the authoritative allocation of resources and the exercise of control and coordination” (Rhodes, 1996).

The international arena of the first half of the 21st century, however, needs a catalyst, still unidentified in our opinion, for the unification of the world beyond borders, to reform or build global institutions that can effectively manage the challenges facing humanity in the near future. Solving this puzzle could be to expand and legitimise global governance. Global governance, being essentially a collective consciousness, a framework that proposes global relations and a common play space that integrates all spheres of a society, including the social, economic, political, cultural and environmental sectors, can ensure, through a unified vision, solutions to the challenges facing humanity.

This can be done, but only if all actors in the system, including states, leaders and political figures, quasi-state actors, the corporate sector and institutions, NGOs, multinational corporations (MNCs) and the financial system work together to form a coherent structure that can greatly influence the foundations of the system. At the same time, Parag Khana, a well-known specialist in international relations, proposed the idea of mega diplomacy. He says, “We are moving into a post-Westphalian world, a populous world where authoritarian actors are not just governments. There are companies” (Khana, 2018).

“In the current context, it is not just about the United Nations, the International Court of Justice, the World Bank, and bilateral relations between the United States and Russia or China. It is about a much more important set of players”, said Khanna. “So mega diplomacy would mean forging new coalitions among the .gov world, the .com⁴



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⁴ A .com is a company that carries out activities mainly through their website. The internet is the key component for such a company.



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world, the .org⁵ world, the .edu world. This is mega diplomacy” (Ibid.). He explains how diplomacy has expanded as a tool in various fields such as armies of private mercenaries, artificial intelligence and technology; humanitarian agencies and non-governmental organisations; education sector, schools and universities; religious institutions and organisations and more.

Given that global governance is the sum of informal, formal values, norms, procedures, and institutions that help states, intergovernmental organizations, civil society, and transnational corporations to identify, understand, and address cross-border issues, we consider their functionality to be a defining challenge, given that international leaders too often fail to agree on resolving regional tensions or disputes, not to mention concerted action to address transnational issues at the intersection of peace, security and justice.

In order to clarify the issues related to the meaning of the notion of governance/government, as well as the context in which they are used, we agreed with Mark Bevir’s⁶ statement that “*governance encompasses all government or a network – on a social system (family, tribe, formal or informal organization, a territory or between territories) through the laws, rules, power or language of an organised society*” (Bevir, 2012, p. 1).

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The opinion of many of the international political analysts, of some professors with outstanding publications in the field of political science, is that in contemporary society the process of global

⁵ Non-profit organisation that carries out its activity online.

⁶ He is a professor of political science and director of the Center for British Studies at the University of California, Berkeley, where he currently teaches political theory and philosophy, public policy and organization, and methodology.

governance is subject to many negative manifestations. In this regard, Robert Johansen, Professor Emeritus at the International Institute for Peace Studies at Notre Dame University and a contributor to *21st Century Global Dynamics*, supports the theories of Ahmet Davutoğlu⁷, published in an essay in March 2017, in which warns us of the dangers of “*growing populist autocracies, exclusivity, unilateralism [and] selfish pursuit of narrowly defined national interests to the detriment of common values and goods*” (Johansen, 2017), which in our view severely affects the idea of global governance.

The essence of the concept of global governance is the need for better cooperation between governments, more fruitful cooperation between governmental and non-governmental actors, more coordination within the United Nations system and a central position of people in politics.

THE UN CONTRIBUTION TO ENRICHING THE CONCEPTS OF GLOBAL GOVERNANCE AND GOOD GOVERNANCE

The UN system has constantly sought, in the 1990s, to clarify and enrich the concept of good governance. Nuances and categorical statements on the advantages and disadvantages of unrestricted market liberalization were introduced. The UN has sought to cautiously temper the aggressiveness of neoliberal ideas applied to the problems of the world economy and to bring into question the effect of increased marginalisation of some member countries as an effect of globalisation.

First, UN added new perspectives to political governance. To the standard notions of traditional democracies, such as multiparty elections, separation of powers, have been added attributes such as universal protection of human rights, anti-discrimination laws, impartial and efficient administration of justice, transparency of public agencies, accountability for decisions by senior civil servants,



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⁷ Academician, politician and former Turkish diplomat, Prime Minister of Turkey between 2014 and 2016 and leader of the Justice and Development Party, holder of several political positions.



substantial participation of citizens in the debate on public policies and their alternatives. One of the most important nuances developed in the UN system was the assertion of the close link between civil and political rights and economic, social and cultural rights, an interdependence now recognised but insufficiently reflected in legislation and applied in practice.

The second feature of the UN vision of good governance is the emphasis on the need to restore the balance between the public and private sectors in the economic sphere. This was a reaction to the ex-departmental approaches of the Reagan and Thatcher administrations that whatever governments do, the private sector will do better, or that free markets, free trade, and capital flows will have a positive effect on all members of society and all states. The intellectual climate of economic thinking dominated by the “*Washington Consensus*” almost made heretical theories that an efficient market economy required the existence of a strong state.

In particular, two of the UN regional commissions, the Economic Commission for Africa and the Economic Commission for Europe, have argued that strengthening the state, not its withdrawal, can boost the effectiveness and legitimacy of economic policies. The UNDP Regional Office for Eastern Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States recommends “*a strong and legitimate government with sufficient confidence in its legitimacy to enable a strong civil society, and a network of non-governmental institutions and regulations capable of developing a functioning economic system, the strengthening of democratic procedures and the wide participation of the population in public life*” (UNDP, 1997, p. 1).

This perspective was echoed in the World Bank’s internal turmoil, influenced by Joseph Stiglitz, the future Nobel laureate in economics, who said in a 1997 report that “*there is a growing recognition that certain goods and services necessary public services can only be provided through international cooperation. Thus, strengthening the capacity of states will also mean more efficient partnerships and institutions, at international and domestic level*” (World Bank, 1997,

p. 131). Following UN intervention, liberalisation programs in the last decade of the 10th century put more emphasis on the notion of leadership and management, but also on democracy, human rights, access to justice and fundamental freedoms, which diminished the strength of the exponents of the “*minimalist state*” arguments.

In a brief description, for the UN, good governance at the national level means efficiency, accountability, legality, representativeness and transparency. Globally, “*states need to be more aware of their dual role in our global world*”. In addition to the separate responsibilities that all states have for their own societies, states are collectively the custodians of common life on the planet, “*a life that belongs to the citizens of all states*” (United Nation, 2000, p. 13).

The conceptual difficulties are great. As Emmerij, Jolly and Weiss point out, “*both nationally and globally, government is more than government. But for the world, government exists without any world government. Global government is a contemporary formulation that expresses this reality. It can be seen at best as a heuristic tool to describe the confusing and accelerating transformation of the international system*” (Emmerij, Jolly, Weiss, 2001, p. 197).

A milestone in the analysis of these issues was the work of the Commission on Global Governance, a body composed of independent experts, whose final report (*Our Global Neighbourhood*, 1995) was discussed and analysed in the UN system and reflected in subsequent conceptual and practical efforts. The issue was widely discussed in 1999 in the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) Human Development Report, the flagship document of the United Nations Development Program and the UN’s vision for development (1999). Notable, for example, is the launch of the challenge contained in this report, which proposed the notion of the “*invisible heart*” (international solidarity) instead of Adam Smith’s “*invisible hand*” as the core of the imperatives of global governance.



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BASIC PRINCIPLES OF GLOBAL GOVERNANCE – THE 2030 AGENDA

Due to the fact that there is no commonly accepted definition of the concept of *governance*, disagreement about its nature severely limits its usefulness in the analysis of sustainable development policy. As we have seen above, global governance is understood and applied in different ways, from shaping a political agenda to framing global economic structures into a political architecture, to a critical view of global governance as a potentially hegemonic discourse, and as an analytical perspective on world politics. Due to the ambiguity surrounding this concept, in this subchapter we will treat global governance from a scientific perspective by trying to define its usefulness in achieving “*governance of global sustainability*”.

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Fulfilling the *2030 Agenda Goals*, as well as other nationally and internationally agreed development goals that support this agenda, is one of the great challenges facing humanity as public sector reforms needed to implement the SDGs continue to be a major challenge annoying in many countries. Thus, the sustainable development of humanity depends to a large extent on society’s ability to design efficient, stable and legitimate systems of governance, at local, national and international level, capable of concretely addressing this challenge.

As the most prominent international organisations such as the UN, the EU or the World Bank argue, effective global governance cannot be achieved without a set of democratic principles, unanimously accepted and implemented by all actors in the global political scene.

Aware of this, the UN Economic and Social Committee (ECOSOC) approved on 2 July 2018, at the proposal of the Committee of Experts on Public Administration (CEPA) and the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA), *three characteristics, fundamental attributes*, for the effectiveness of global governance: effectiveness, accountability and inclusion.

This achievement would be an important starting point, without such guiding principles, as the implementation of the SDGs risks being inconsistent and inefficient. governance, national realities, capabilities and levels of development but respecting national policies and priorities.

The eleven basic principles of global governance proposed by ECOSOC and applicable to all public institutions, including legislative, executive and administrative bodies, the security and justice sectors, independent constitutional bodies and corporations, which may be involved in the implementation of the SDGs are: *“the principle of competence, transparency, useful policies, collaboration, integrity, independent oversight, leaving no one behind, non-discrimination, participation, subsidiarity and intergenerational equity”* (ESC, 2018).

They are designed to help interested countries, voluntarily, build effective, responsible and inclusive institutions at all levels, in order to achieve a common vision for peoples and the planet that can be incorporated into the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

In this regard, the UN Committee of Experts on Public Administration states that *„principles gain depth and become operational only through the promotion of related strategies and the use of common practices, as an integral part of the evolution of the global governance process in the context of sustainable development”* (CEPA).

The operationalisation of the principles and the undertaking of related strategies, which can become effective in any context, particular or general, thus becomes essential to move to the next step – the implementation of practices. To be useful, under the auspices of good governance, the associated practices will need to be clear, relevant, feasible to implement and based on sufficient empirical evidence of their impact on achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Good governance is a goal of sustainable development in itself, and is seen as an aspiration under Goal 16 of the 2030 Agenda – which supports *„promoting a peaceful and inclusive society, ensuring access to justice for all and building efficient, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels”* (United Nations – 1). At the same time,



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The 2030 Agenda can be a new way of governing, ultimately defined, not by legally binding international agreements, but by objectives. Goal governance can have great potential, but success will depend on a number of institutional factors, including how states act on their 2030 Agenda commitments and how they strengthen related global governance arrangements vis-à-vis their national and local ambitions.

we must recognise good governance as a means to an end, which is an essential lever for the transformation of the system, which is necessary to achieve all the 17 SDGs⁸.

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Governments accountable and receptive to their citizens, transparent in their reporting on the use of public resources and decision-making, and creating opportunities to participate in the delivery of policies and services. Good governance comes from a set of favourable political conditions in which people have the right to vote, exercise supervision and seek redress from politicians and officials. The real test of good governance is when citizens feel safe and trust in governments to conduct public affairs in the interests of society as a whole, rather than for a privileged few.

As we mentioned earlier, the influence of civil society on international decision-making and the role of intergovernmental organizations and transnational corporations in world politics have a major impact on global governance. As an essential aspect, in order to act in the same direction, the beneficial one, in terms of the link between global governance and sustainable development, it is necessary to define new forms of cooperation between global actors, beyond the traditional negotiations under international law.

⁸ *The 17 Sustainable Development Goals of the UN 2030 Agenda* can be accessed on the website of the Romanian Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Here is a strict list: *No poverty; Zero hunger; Good health and well-being; Quality education; Gender equality; Clean water and sanitation; Affordable and clean energy; Decent work and economic growth; Industry, innovation and infrastructure; Reduced inequality; Sustainable cities and communities; Responsible consumption and production; Climate action; Life below water; Life on land; Peace and justice strong institutions; Partnerships to achieve the goal* (<https://www.mae.ro/node/35919>, retrieved on 17 February 2022).

The influence of non-state actors, especially transnational corporations, is quite strong and is not limited to simple lobbies during negotiations to adopt rules that do not target their own interests. Thus, new forms of cooperation must increasingly become the key factor for the success of the institutions and mechanisms for establishing common rules and for their explicit implementation in global governance.



CONCLUSIONS

In a rapidly globalising world where virtually everything flows: information, trade, finance and people, good global governance can serve as a beacon to help us effectively address the many challenges specific to contemporary human interaction. But in order to overcome the challenges facing global governance, the efficiency, effectiveness and legitimacy of collective action by the interested parties need to be improved.

In order to face the new transnational political, social and environmental challenges that can have a direct impact on any state, a cooperative, international approach is needed. And strengthening global governance mechanisms, as well as extending and manifesting them where appropriate, can be an effective solution to any critical situation. Globalisation has brought with it both new opportunities and many challenges. Pollution does not respect international borders, while terrorism, drugs, the proliferation of small arms, climate change, the spread of pandemics, and other cross-border issues not only dominate the political agendas of each state, but also require international cooperation to address them effectively. In short, global governance consists of an intentional order that emerges from institutions, processes, rules, formal agreements and informal mechanisms that govern action for the common good.

Simply put, global governance consists of an intentional order that emerges from institutions, processes, rules, formal agreements, and informal mechanisms that govern action for the common good. This should become more and more a custom in the political and economic sphere, in the context of the call for accountability and

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An effective form of global governance, inspired by the goal of serving the common good, which seeks equitable representation of people in decision-making is based on knowledge and social inclusion. Such a government can provide opportunities and benefits that will drive exclusive populism and terrorism back and strengthen the values of human dignity.

transparency, as global governance requires a responsible and moral structure. These two elements, which are essential and indisputable, must be universally recognised as a backbone of the framework between nations and international organisations and bodies for the common good.

Global governance encompasses activity at the international, transnational and regional levels and refers to activities in the public and private sectors that transcend national borders. In this conception of global governance, cooperative action is based on rights and rules that are implemented through a combination of financial and moral incentives. In the absence of a single institution of authority or a global governmental structure, global governance can encompass elements and methods from both the public and private sectors.

An effective form of global governance, inspired by the goal of serving the common good, which seeks equitable representation of people in decision-making is based on knowledge and social inclusion. Such a government can provide opportunities and benefits that will drive exclusive populism and terrorism back and strengthen the values of human dignity. The benefits would probably include practical respect for the human rights of all people, including the right to escape poverty and the basic necessities of life.

To this end, regional governance and home affairs must be trusted and respected in order to maintain the development and management of state infrastructure and the conservation of natural resources. Emerging regional powers must refrain from dominating the playing field and, at the same time, facilitate trade and regional agreements to stimulate global governance by mobilizing people, stimulating imports and exports and managing resources efficiently.

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ROMANIAN
MILITARY
THINKING