

THE EMERGING NEW WORLD POLITICS: NEW CONTOURS OF 21ST CENTURY
GEOPOLITICS

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Abstract

This article analyzes the features and consequences of the evolving new political order, examining both affirmative and adverse dimensions of contemporary statecraft, its principal trajectories and dynamism. The study focuses on global challenges, systemic crises, foreign policy conduct, interstate geopolitical confrontations, and the contemporary relevance of international governance institutions.

Key words

Multi-civilization, “ductile diplomacy”, “Cold War”, USA and China, UN, global political landscape, limited sovereignty, regional conflicts and alliances.

Main Part. In today’s increasingly globalized era, the future trajectory of the world political order and the stages in the formation of new geopolitical arrangements are generating diverse perspectives among the international community and experts. The main contours of the new political order indicate that the world is transitioning from a unipolar system to a multipolar and multi-civilizational world order. At the same time, new interpretations of global conflicts and strategic confrontations are emerging, the global political landscape is undergoing fundamental transformations, and regional issues are influencing sustainable development. Furthermore, states are increasingly forming regional alliances and pursuing multi-vector foreign policies—often described as “ductile diplomacy”—which reflects the emergence of a new geopolitical configuration of the world.

From the 1940s onward, the consequences and outcomes of the “Cold War” between the United States and the Soviet Union led to dramatic shifts in world politics, especially with the collapse of the USSR at the end of the 20th century. During the Cold War, global politics was bipolar, and the world was divided into three parts: the democratic and wealthy states led by the United States; the poorer, communist states aligned with and led by the Soviet Union, which were engaged in economic and military rivalry with each other; and the countries that chose not to align with either bloc.¹ The latter came to be known by the international community as Third World countries, and thus the world gradually began moving toward a multi-civilizational framework.

¹ Huntington, S. P. (1996). *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order*.

Simon & Schuster. 16p.

Today, unlike during the Cold War when the world was divided into two or three parts, it is associated with seven or eight major civilizations. In the 21st-century international system, at least six major powers—the United States, Russia, China, Europe, Japan, and possibly India—are entering into conflicts with one another. Such confrontations are giving rise to new political rivalries and are playing a key role in shaping emerging political principles.²

Firstly, the Russian Federation has entered into confrontation with the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), and its invasion of Ukraine in 2022 clearly demonstrated this. Thus, the post-Cold War period of limited sovereignty and relative peace has come to an end. This indicates that the global landscape is undergoing profound and fundamental change.

Secondly, regional conflicts are entering an increasingly intense phase. Tensions between the United States and China, the Israel–Palestine conflict, the renewed escalation of conflicts in the Middle East, and the expansion of NATO are among the factors undermining global peace.

Moreover, the disruption of the balance of power in regions such as Eurasia—which accounts for nearly more than half of the world’s GDP—along with the comprehensive rise of China, India, and Russia as new geopolitical powers challenging the hegemonic position of the United States, is exerting a significant influence not only on the regional architecture but also on the formation of a new global political order.

Thirdly, the continuation and expansion of proxy wars, supported by hegemonic powers, remain a major concern for the international community. In the future, the increase and spread of such proxy conflicts could have negative consequences for the emerging global political order. For instance, the Russia–Ukraine proxy war (2022–2024) has resulted in the deaths of an estimated 760,000-800,000 civilians and military personnel from both countries during this period, highlighting the significant role that proxy wars play in today’s political arena.

It should be emphasized that recently, the adoption of multi-vector policies by states has increased the significance of “ductile diplomacy,” enabling countries to participate in opposing geopolitical actions. This approach allows them to survive and navigate effectively in complex circumstances.

Moreover, states are placing significant emphasis on regional alliances and partnerships. Regional summits and conferences, along with official international meetings, help build trust and strengthen ties between countries within these alliances. For example, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) remains a key regional forum today. The participation of its 10 member states (Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, and Vietnam), along with dialogue partners such as China, Japan, Korea, India, the United States, Russia, Australia, and New Zealand—countries of considerable geopolitical importance—contributes to the further development of trade, economic, transport, and logistics systems among the regions.

Furthermore, in recent years, international organizations and institutions have been losing their effectiveness, and trust in them is declining. For example, the international community has

² Henry A. Kissinger, *Diplomacy* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1994), pp. 23-24.



little confidence in the United Nations’ (UN) ability to resolve today’s global conflicts and crises. Its failure to address the civil wars in the Middle East—particularly in Syria and Yemen—the crisis in Afghanistan, and the conflict in Ukraine, with wars and instability still ongoing in these regions, clearly illustrates this point. According to data, between 2000 and 2025, Russia used its UN veto power 27 times, the United States 16 times, and China 10 times, highlighting the weakening influence of the UN in recent years. This indicates that the UN is unable to exert its authority over key players on the global “chessboard.”³

Similarly, the political influence of the International Criminal Court (ICC) is steadily declining. Many view this institution as a tool of Western powers. Several leading countries in the world do not recognize the ICC and show disregard for its jurisdiction.

Moreover, in recent years, international organizations and institutions have been losing their effectiveness, and distrust toward them is increasing. For instance, the international community has almost no confidence in the United Nations’ (UN) ability to resolve current global conflicts and crises. Its failure to address civil wars in the Middle East—particularly in Syria and Yemen—the crisis in Afghanistan, and the conflict in Ukraine, with wars and instability still ongoing, clearly demonstrates this. According to data, between 2000 and 2025, Russia exercised its UN veto 27 times, the United States 16 times, and China 10 times, indicating the UN’s weakening influence in recent years. This shows that the UN is unable to exert its authority over key players on the global “chessboard.”

Casualties in the Ukraine War(2022-2024)	Civilizations (thousands)	Military (thousands)
2022- year	150,000	100,000
2023-year	160,000	120,000
2024-year	130,000	130,000
2025-year	120,000	125,000

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³ <https://asean.org/>



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