

# Multilateralism, SDG implementation and policy responses

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# Is Multilateralism on the Wane? What about SDGs?

- Possible signs:

United States as the hegemon of the liberal world order

1. withdrew from the Paris agreement
2. withdrew from the Trans-Pacific Partnership
3. withdrew from UNESCO
4. withdrew from the Iran deal
5. withdrew from an International Court of Justice (ICJ) protocol and pulled out of a 1955 friendship treaty with Iran
6. did not sign the UN Global Migration Compact
7. is leaving the Intermediate-range Nuclear Forces (INF) treaty

However, so far it is only the USA that is disappearing from the world's map

=>walking away from multilateral agreements does not weaken multilateralism; it only isolates and decreases the influence of the USA

- While it is true that the existence of a hegemon increases the likelihood for the provision of international public goods and the establishment of international organizations(regimes)

For example the USA as global hegemon a) played a major role in creating and maintaining open and stable monetary, trade, foreign aid, and environmental regimes; b) gave other states the incentive to abide by the regime principles, norms, and rules

- It is equally true that the provision of such international public goods/IOs could continue if other major states desired it! (coalition of willing)

But

- If others start challenging and undermining international organizations and their norms, then the international system, as we know it, might collapse.

- The EU, for its part, clearly has a strong multilateral desire, but it is weakened by internal divisions. If it were to overcome them, it could be the champion of multilateralism we need; for now, however, it is too divided.
- China would put its weight behind a multilateral world order, but China's leaders seem prepared to use multilateral structures only when it suits them.
- Coalitions can be built to address particular issues or on a regional basis; but preserving – let alone deepening – the existing system of global governance and the successful achievement of SDGs will be impossible without US support.